Main Topic:

Personal Freedom from a Christian Psychological Perspective in Theory and Practice.

- **Clinical Consequences of the Therapist's Theology**

- **Learning to exert will**

- **"Why would you describe yourself as a Christian psychologist?"**

- **and others**

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About Theory and Practice

More about contemplative and spirituality aspects

editorial

I want what I should.

Does human free will - the title of this issue of the eJournal - mean the ability to decide, in the sense that I don't just react or create automatically, that I don't just proceed according to the law, and also carry responsibility?

Or perhaps it even means, as people think today, that real freedom is about a space of unlimited possibilities, free from all constraint, obligation and punishment?

But even a little reflection makes it clear that this kind of freedom does not actually exist, because every human being is is subject to conditions, obligations and dependencies from birth.

No child is asked whether it wants to be born, no child can choose its parents, its family, the city, the country in which it is born and many other things in the course of its life.

It is not a question of denying the requirements, but of the freedom to do something and yet, with and despite all the circumstances to create, design and decide for themselves. The human being is not under inevitable causal constraints from his past, his instincts, his environmental conditions, his environmental conditions, his feelings, ...

But: "I want what I should."?

It is not true that man in paradise was presented by God with a decision in the sense of choosing either good or evil. Rather, God asked him to decide not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man's freedom consisted in agreeing to God's commandment as an offer to choose for himself what he should do.

We are used to making a clear distinction in our thinking and language: either I determine - or I am determined. Either I am free - or I am not free. Either I do something or something is done to me. There is only active or passive.

Interestingly, the Greek language has a third verb form in addition to 'active' and 'passive', namely 'middle': I allow. I myself (active) allow, consent (middle) to something happening to me (passive).

This is a very good way of expressing the basic orientation of our life and the purpose of our freedom as given by God: to agree to the life that he has given us, to the intentions that he attaches to it, to the grace that he gives for it, to allow him to guide us.

I hope that this edition of Christian Psycholoy Around The World will open up relevant perspectives of this personal freedom in the field of Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Therapy.

Yours, Werner May
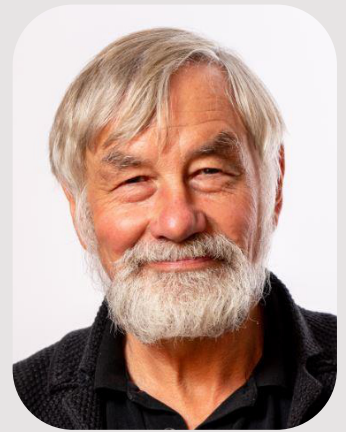
Why do we have a bilingual journal?
In our movement for Christian Psychology, we meet as Christians with very different backgrounds: different churches, different cul-tures, different professional trainings...

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hennry Wirth

In 2023, Hennry Wirth joined with Werner May to publish "Finale 2.0": www.finale2null.de/

Published to accompany a series of exhibitions, the book combined photos of Hennry Wirth's art objects with poems and texts by the author.
In this edition of the eJournal, we offer a presentation of the project.

Following studies in communication design in Würzburg, Germany, Hennry Wirth was responsible for concepts and creation as an artistic and creative director with various agencies.
He is a member of the professional association Berufsverband Bildender Künstler (BBK), the artistic network Das Rad (Christians in artistic professions) and the creative collective ODERMALSO, and has for many years been a member of the Alliance of German Designers (AGD).
www.design-comp.de

In his artistic work, he places the focus primarily on ecological and socio-political themes. The work is generally cross-medial, e.g. using pencil, objects, paint, performance and installation.

"Whoever leaves the beaten track will conquer new territory."

Regarding Finale 2.0:

In German, reaching the finale can apply equally to the climax of a concert or the last round of the World Cup. By definition, something has to precede the finale, whether this be years of practice and training, of being repeatedly put to the test, some moments of glory along the way... And even then, there is no certainty about the final result.

After centuries of waiting for the Messiah, after one-and-a-half to two years of Jesus' public ministry, after his suffering, death and resurrection, one can declare this finale to have reached its conclusion at Pentecost. God, the Holy Spirit, lives in and amongst us.

And now we can look forward in anticipation of a new Finale 3.0.

2.0?

2.0, a currently fashionable term invented in internet language, means that interaction can and should take place between users and technology or, analogously, between users and art.

This is the case here with Finale 2.0: the language of this art differs from what know in everyday life. For the things experienced or imagined, the artist finds other words, other pictures, other sounds... for this reality. If we "listen" to these pictures, we will discover new means of access to the life of Jesus. But "listening" also means taking time, considering and reconsidering at leisure, observing in oneself the resulting feelings, thoughts... In Hennry Wirth's words, "...The objects, drawings and pictures force one into a new and different way of seeing. The encounter with the cross and the resurrection, which has taken on everyday familiarity, suddenly appears in a new light. If this succeeds, it will be a great joy to me!"

And Finale 3.0?

 "We know, however, that the whole creation now continues to groan under its condition, as if it were in pains of childbirth. And even we, to whom God has of course already given his Spirit, the first part of our future inheritance, even we continue to groan inwardly, because the full completion of our destiny as God's sons and daughters has not yet come."
Romans 8:22-23

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USA

Germany

Switzerland

Italy

Spain

Brazil

Finnland

Russia

Poland

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of the eJournal Christian Psychology Around The World

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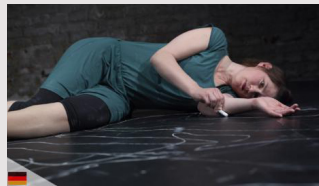
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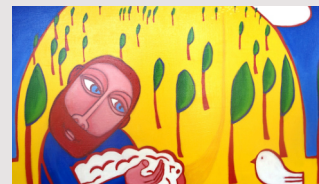
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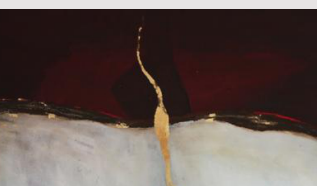
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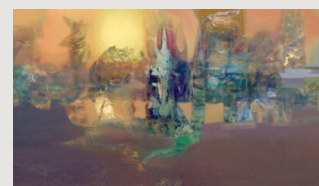
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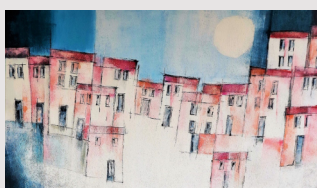
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See here: https://emcapp.ignis.de

Washing of feet

To get in the mood for the main topic

Dallas served as a pastor for seven years before transitioning into the counselling field. With a Master of Arts in Clinical Pastoral Counselling, he specialize in integrating faith and mental health, helping individuals walk in the fullness of life Christ offers. He is passionate about guiding others toward healing, wholeness, and the abundant life found in Him.

Dallas Gold (Canada):
Clinical Consequences of the Therapist's Theology
How Divine Sovereignty and Human Agency Coexist—and Shape the Work of Therapy.

This article explores the dynamic relationship between divine sovereignty and human agency from both theological and therapeutic perspectives. While deterministic views of God's control can lead to spiritual passivity or anxiety, a view that affirms free will aligns more closely with the biblical narrative and supports healthy psychological functioning. Drawing from Genesis 2 and integrating clinical insights on decision-making and autonomy, this piece argues that free will is not a threat to divine sovereignty, but a profound expression of it. In the therapeutic space, such a theological foundation allows for the empowerment of clients as active agents of change, rather than passive victims of predetermined circumstances. The article invites both counsellors and theologians to consider how deeply one's view of God shapes their view of the self—and how this impacts the work of healing and growth.

Theological Foundations in the Clinical Space

Free will is a difficult concept to grasp. So too is God's Sovereignty. Can God be God if He does not control every detail of the cosmos? Many have argued that He cannot—believing that without exhaustive control, God would be limited and therefore not divine. This article explores the alternative: that divine sovereignty and human agency are not opposing forces, but complementary truths. In therapy—where autonomy is essential to healing—this theological clarity has profound clinical consequences.

For years, I've wrestled with a particular question: What is more powerful—To control everything, ensuring every created thing abides by the Creator's will, or to create all things, freely give the ability to choose, and still accomplish what the Creator set out to do from the beginning?

I have come to favour the latter—not only because it resonates with human experience, but because it aligns with the biblical witness of a God who invites, entrusts, and empowers His most prized creation.

This conviction is not merely philosophical—it has real-world consequences. The way we understand God's relationship to human freedom shapes our posture toward life. A deterministic view of sovereignty tends to produce one of two outcomes:

1. Spiritual passivity — "It will all work out, no matter what I do."

2. Spiritual anxiety — "What if I choose wrong and ruin God's plan?"

Both are immobilizing. Neither cultivates the kind of robust, responsible agency needed for maturity and healing.

A Genesis Blueprint: God's Invitation to Agency
A brief glance at Genesis 2 offers theological clarity. In verse 19, we read:

> *"Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name."*
> *(Genesis 2:19–20, NIV)*

God gives Adam a task—to name the animals. But it's not a trick assignment. There is no divine correction or predetermined list. Whatever Adam names the animals, that becomes their name. This is not a minor point of semantics. It's a theological revelation: God grants genuine agency, and that agency is good. It's part of His image in us.

God doesn't desire carbon-copy, one-size-fits-all humans. He desires a diverse and creative people who understand just how fearfully and wonderfully they have been made (Psalm 139:14). When individuals recognize their uniqueness, they begin to grasp the vastness of their Creator's imagination.

Clinical Consequences of a Controlling Therapy
This conversation is not abstract. It lands directly in the counselling room. A great number of believers hold to a theology that emphasizes God's exhaustive control over all decisions and events. This article is not meant to correct doctrine, but to examine the natural psychological and clinical outcomes of different theological frameworks—particularly around free will.
It's been said the average adult makes 35,000 conscious decisions each day. To make wise, responsible choices, one must first believe that one has *real agency*. But if every detail is already predetermined and the believer's role is merely to "align" or "submit" to a fixed plan—or else—this undermines the development of mature, healthy decision-making.

Consider the child raised under a controlling parent. The result is often an adult who struggles to think independently—paralyzed by the fear of failure, and unsure how to trust themselves. Likewise, if

we conceive of God as micromanaging every detail of our lives, we risk raising up believers who are spiritually stunted—afraid to choose, unskilled in discernment, and unable to own their lives with holy courage.

Recognizing that God grants us agency does not diminish His sovereignty; rather, it enhances one's relationship with Him, allowing deep engagement in life with freedom, responsibility, and a healthy trust in His guidance.

Agency in the Therapeutic Space
Therapists are at their best when they can support the client's God-given autonomy. A deterministic theology often undermines this, subtly shifting the therapeutic posture from empowerment to passivity. If we believe everything has been preordained, we may treat clients more like victims of fate than responsible agents of change.

In such a framework, the counsellor may overly emphasize emotional validation while neglecting the invitation to decision-making, ownership, and responsibility. But a more integrated theology helps the therapist see clients not just as hurting—but as capable. Clients are not merely shaped by their circumstances; they have the power to shape their response.

This is the key clinical takeaway: Agency is not the enemy of sovereignty. It is the terrain where God invites us to live, choose, create, and grow.

Conclusion: Theology That Heals
When therapists hold a theology that honours both divine sovereignty and human agency, the clinical work becomes richer. Clients are seen not as problems to fix, or as fated stories to unfold—but as participants in a sacred, ongoing co-creation with God.

Empowering clients with this vision does more than dignify their story—it reflects the very heart of God. As therapists and theologians alike, we do well to ask: How does my view of God shape my view of people? And in turn: How does that view shape the healing process I help steward?
Let us, then, embrace a theology that fosters freedom, responsibility, and congruence—not just for our clients, but for ourselves.

about theory and practice

„Personal Freedom from a Christian Psychological
Perspective in Theory and Practice."

Michael and Valerie Murphy have been serving together in ministry since 1993. They have combined efforts in many areas, including Stephen Ministry leadership and facilitation, joy-based addiction/codependency recovery groups leadership, One Accord Marriage Retreats, Bible studies, and speaking engagements on Genesis-based care ministry models for both professional and lay caregivers. This includes multi-year presentations for the Society for Christian Psychology (SCP) Conferences and mentoring at European Leadership Forum (ELF) Conferences. Their hearts' passion is to assist in building a Biblical foundation for Christian care and growth through deepened Biblical understanding and spiritual formation.

Michael Murphy EdD is currently a contracted adjunct faculty for Psychology with Liberty University. Michael served as founder and Executive Director of Crossroads Community Counseling Center and the Pastor of Care and Professional Counseling at Crossroads Community Church in Naperville, IL from 2000-2014. He also co-founded Community Care Center, a nonprofit counseling center with his wife, Valerie in 2015. Together, they served as missionaries to Russia from 1993-1996.

Michael and Valerie Murphy (USA):

A Biblical View of Motivation

Motivation theories seek to explain why we behave the way we do and what energizes us to take action in the various activities of life. Most research looks at motivation without consideration of a potential Creator-designed categorical basis. This paper reviews the development of certain needs-based motivation theories, the movement of motivation theory from a hedonic to a more eudaimonic approach directed toward human flourishing, and it highlights key elements that may point to core needs that are designed into humanity at creation. It then explores the story of creation in Genesis and attempts to identify parallels to those core needs. It is the intent of this paper to establish a commonality with secular motivation research from a solid Biblical worldview.

A Biblical View of Motivation

The search for the foundation of motivation (why we do what we do) has been ongoing. As Paul Tripp (2014) comments, we all have a deep desire to know and understand, gifted with mysterious analytic gifts. Prior to the 1950s it was thought that motivation was a function of some type of non-nervous system tissue needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Maslow sought to move this idea into the psycho-

logical arena with his hierarchy of needs (Etzioni, 2017). Today, theories of needs/satisfaction-based motivation include Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Theory, Motivation Disposition Theory (MDT), Two-process Model of Psychological Needs, Maslow's Updated Hierarchy of Needs, Self Determination Theory (SDT) and many more (Deci & Ryan, 1985; McClelland, 1987; Sheldon, 2011; Lefrancois, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2020). It is not the intent of this paper to fully review or critique these theories, but to present an understanding of the needs/satisfaction-based motives drawn and then to consider core motivation from a Biblical perspective of creation.

We will first review the highlights of key secular motivational theories looking for common themes and core concepts, then seek to understand the research that has been done using solid observational research and analysis. We then will attempt to place these concepts into a Biblical understanding of motivations as presented in the creation account. It is our hope that this will allow Christian practitioners and researchers to better place their own work in the context of a Biblical design of humankind and how it impacts what we do and how we behave.

Review of Key Needs-Based Theories of Motivation
Maslow (1943) developed a somewhat fluid hierarchy of needs-based motivation theory, based on his meta-analysis and clinical work that is still well recognized in the modern day. A summary of his human-needs compilation is as follows:

Food (Physiological hungers); Safety (Orderly, Predictable, Organized and Familiar world; Love, (Giving and Receiving Love, Affection, Belongingness); Esteem (Self-respect, Self-esteem and the Esteem of others, based upon real capacity, achievement and respect from others. This is divided into Desires (first for Strength, for Achievement, for Adequacy, for Confidence in the face of the world, and for Freedom; second for Reputation, Prestige, Recognition, Attention, Importance or Appreciation); and finally, Self-actualization/Self-fulfillment, what a man can he must be (pp. 378, 381, 382).

Though the hierarchy of needs did not have a diagram during Maslow's lifetime, his followers developed the well-known pyramid. This is further delineated by Lefrancois (2013), also in pyramid form, as "Maslow's Updated Hierarchy of Needs" (Figure 5.5 as shown in George, et al., 2023, p. 269). This is broken down into:

Basic Needs (Deficiency Needs) and Meta Needs (Growth Needs): The Basic Needs include Physiological (Food, Drink); Safety (Psychological Safety, Security); Belongingness and Love (Affiliation, Acceptance, Attention); and Self-Esteem (Competence, Recognition, Approval). The Meta Needs include Cognitive (Knowledge, Symmetry); Aesthetic (Goodness, Beauty, Truth, Justice) and Self-Actualization (p. 269).

It was noted by Maslow (1943) that basically satisfied people were not the norm, and that research found this problematic:

But a want that is satisfied is no longer a want. The organism is dominated and its behavior organized only by unsatisfied needs...Thus man is a perpetually wanting animal... The average member of our society is most often partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied in all of his wants (pp. 375, 395).

He also clarified that there are multiple motivations for most behavior. "Any behavior tends to be determined by several or all of the basic needs simultaneously, rather than by only one of them" (p. 390).

McClelland began his work by defining what was called "the achievement motive" (1949). Together, McClelland and Pilon (1983) identified a needs-based motivation pattern in adults through discovery of the impact of parenting styles during the early stage of their childhood development. They found that parental attitudes or behaviors and practices at certain periods in a child's life were critical for healthy motive development. McClelland went on to delineate the Motive Disposition Theory (MDT) with the view that motives direct and energize action focused on need satisfaction. His focus was on "four major motive systems – the achievement motive, the power motive, the affiliative motive, and the avoidance motives" (McClelland, 1987, p. iv). The motive components also included the addition of hope and fear-based aspects (pp. 381-408). He believed that emotion/affective incentives underlie motivational movement and direction (1987, pp. 116-128; 2020, p. 236).

Deci and Ryan (1985), highly respected researchers in the field of motivational science through their prolific synthesis of research along with their own research and theories development, define motivation as "the energization and direction of behavior" (p. 3). Ryan and Deci identified three core needs-based factors in what they identify as intrinsic motivation. These are the needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). They emphasized that competence is only experienced as the locus of causality if it is internal to and self-determined by the individual (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000b), "meaning with a sense of volition and consent" (2008, p. 7). Deci & Ryan made it clear that this pertains to having experience of choice rather than assuming independence from others (2008).

Sheldon (2011) developed the "two-process model of psychological needs" which "distinguishes between needs that produce adaptive behaviors, called the needs-as-motives perspective...and needs as universally required experiences, called needs-as-requirements perspective" (Schüler et al., 2019, p. 40-41). The first is considered "wanting" as in behavior requirements and the second is "needing" as in experiential requirements. Like SDT theory, themes include achievement (competence), and affiliation (social relatedness). The third need factor that their research has shown is the need for power (p. 41).

Emergence of Two Directions of Motivation Theory
Deci & Ryan describe key historical development of motivation theory in their book Intrinsic Motivation

and Self-determination in Human Behavior (1985). They clarify that there are two directions that motivation theories have moved. One is mechanistic (extrinsic) in that the source of motivation comes externally from an environmental or outside source of physiological stimulation and the person is seen as passive. The second direction of motivation theories that Deci and Ryan (1985) identify is the expansion into what they describe as "organismic" theories or "intrinsic motivation" (labeled by Harlow, 1950: in noting exploration patterns that lacked alignment with extrinsic motivation definition). Intrinsic motivation was differentiated from extrinsic motivation as it was identified as "a primary central nervous system need that does not have an appreciable effect on non-nervous system tissues" (p. 17).

The original thought processing of this needs-based intrinsic view (SDT) for Deci and Ryan (1985) goes back to White, who in 1959 emphasized the necessity for an alternate motivational source to explain the anomalies of drive theory alone. White called this internal motivating energy "effectance motivation" (p. 27) because "organisms are innately motivated to be effective in dealing with their environments" (p. 19).

Development of Intrinsic Motivation Theory

In addition to White's effectance (competence) motivation theory, Deci & Ryan (1985) found a basis for their organismic theory in the psychoanalytic view that motivational energy development is found in the innateness of the ego. This is what White called "Independent ego energy" (p. 19) which expanded it beyond strict focus on id and social conflicts. Deci and Ryan go on explain their need-based conceptions: organismic theories tend to view the organism as active, that is, as being volitional and initiating behaviors. According to the later perspective, organisms have intrinsic needs and physiological drive, and these intrinsic needs provide energy for the organisms to act on... the environment and to manage aspects of their drives and emotions The active-organism view treats stimuli not as causes of behavior, but as affordances or opportunities that the organism can utilize in satisfying its need. (Deci & Ryan, 1985, pp. 3-4).

The foundation of this work is seated in "people's inherent motivational propensities" (needs) "for learning and growing..." (Ryan & Deci, 2020, p. 1).

Additionally, research has clearly validated that ultimately, reward-based motivators thwart intrinsic motivation (Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Deci, 1971; Lepper, Greene, & Nisbett, 1973, as cited in Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 59). Deci and Ryan interpreted this to mean that extrinsic reward moves people from an internal to an external sense of locus of causality. They further proposed that intrinsic motivation is "based in the organismic needs to be competent and self-determining" (1985, p 5.) with self-determining being defined as "free from control" (p. 30). As Deci and Ryan's (2000c) theories of motivation (SDT) development expanded, they delineated a progression from a lack of motivation through lessening levels of extrinsic motivation movement toward intrinsic motivation. This work supports intrinsic motivation as a more satisfying motivation for the individual.

Movement toward Motivational Well-Being (from Hedonic to Eudaimonic)

Most often, psychological concepts have been focused on the hedonic view of well-being (happiness) (Deci & Ryan, 2008). They state:

The hedonic approach used what Tooby and Cosmides (1992) referred to as the standard social science model, which considers the human organism initially to be relatively empty and thus malleable, such that it gains its meaning in accord with social and cultural teachings. (p.3).

Ryff and Singer (1989) challenged the hedonic model of psychological well-being, it's measures and prevailing viewpoint (the seeking of pleasure and avoidance of pain), through the application of the Aristotelian concept of eudaimonia (Aristotle, 2019). Rather than happiness, "generally defined as the presence of positive affect and the absence of negative affect" (Deci & Ryan, 2006, p. 1), a new category was needed. It was found that happiness literature was "hopelessly value laden in determining how people should function" (p. 1071). In contrast, the eudaimonic approach ascribes content to human nature and works to uncover that content and to understand the conditions that facilitate versus diminish it (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

It is important to note that the nature of humans does not move consistently toward good. According to Kaufman et al., we all have a dark side as well as light within. However, it varies with how consistently we "exhibit light vs. dark patterns of

thoughts, feelings and behaviors in our daily lives" (2019, p. 1).

Following is a deepening discussion on two perspectives, based on the work of a historic philosopher and that of current motivational researchers, that reviews how motivation can move one toward the "chief human good" (p. 3), or toward a lesser direction. From a Biblical perspective, we believe that God is our chief good (Mark 10:18), His original creation in Genesis was very good (Genesis 1:31), and that the "dark"ness mentioned above came with the fall of mankind (Genesis 3).

Further Development of Eudaimonic-Based Motivational Well-Being

Aristotle (4th Century B.C.E./2019) defines eudaimonia as the chief human good; "a certain sort of activity of the soul in accord with virtue" (p.14) and excellence that is lived out with moderation and reason. Ryff & Singer go on to emphasize that "virtue for Aristotle was a state of character concerned with choice in which deliberate actions are taken to avoid excess or deficiency" (2008, p. 16). Biblically there is alignment with Ecclesiastes 7:18: "It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes" (*New International* Version, 1978/2011).

In "Clarifying eudaimonia and psychological functioning to complement evaluative and experiential well-being: Why basic psychological needs should be measured in national account of well-being" (Martella & Ryan, 2023), it was proposed that a third category of need-based satisfaction be included, in addition to experiential well-being and evaluative well-being. According to Martella & Ryan, there is a need to broaden understanding and to empirically strengthen the psychological functioning aspect beyond life satisfaction. They go on to emphasize a key part of this assessment is consideration of the Aristotelian concepts of meaning and purpose in life, or "eudaimonic well-being" which is seen to be more about activity (virtues) and… "a way of living rather than a feeling" (p. 1125).

In 2017, Ryan and Deci summarized their efforts in their seminal work, Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. With their "social-psychological focus; they promote first, "social contexts to support engagement, vitality, thriving, and ascendant human functioning". Second, they specify "en-

vironmental and interpersonal factors that affect people's motivation, well-being, and performance." They hope to promote "greater awareness of processes that affect everyone and accordingly, allow them to make the choices and engage in the actions that constitute a more eudaimonic life". Of critical importance is consideration of the human autonomic capacity for mindfulness/"reflective awareness"; which empowers the opportunity for active choice making, improved need satisfaction, capacity "to care for others, and builds a fuller and more meaningful existence" (p. 647). Though Ryan et al., had completed research on Christian intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (1993), both Ryan and Deci present their work from a secular perspective.

Philosophical Perspective on Motivation

Demian Whiting (2020) introduces a philosophical thought that is meaningful to this concept of motivation. He sees that all things behave according to their intrinsic properties and muses what that might look like for humanity and motivation:

"A standard view in metaphysics has it that objects are disposed to behave in the ways they do in virtue of their intrinsic properties. A vase, for instance, is disposed to shatter in the event of being struck by a blunt instrument in virtue of the vase's atomic or molecular structure. This intrinsic property of an object is commonly known as the categorical basis for the way an object is disposed to behave. Now, human beings too are disposed to behave in certain ways when certain circumstances obtain, sometimes in beneficial and wonderful ways, other times in harmful and terrible ways. But if objects in general are disposed to behave in the ways they do in virtue of certain intrinsic properties of theirs, then the same must be true of human beings specifically. So the question arises: what in the case of ourselves might serve as a categorical basis for the different ways we are disposed to behave?" (Whiting, 2020, p. 3).

If what Whiting claims is true, a search for these intrinsic properties would be worthwhile. Whiting does go on to develop the idea that these properties are not to be found in either desires or beliefs, but in emotions (2020, See also McClelland, 1987 & 2020).

While Whiting's arguments are compelling, they fail to address the fact that emotions themselves seem to be derivative. We will seek to understand

Kiss - Betrayal

Kiss – Betrayal

these intrinsic properties from a viewpoint that certain needs were designed into us at the very creation of humanity and that the pursuit of these needs drive all human behavior.

Summary of Core Concepts

In summary, we can see then even with this limited view, motivation is an extremely complex topic with many aspects, nuances, and overlaps. There is a focus we can narrow in on from a psychological well-being perspective. This focus can include the findings discussed above that intrinsic motivation seems to result in a greater sense of well-being than purely extrinsic motivations. The concept of virtuous motivations (eudaimonic) is also a more effective motivation than is the pursuit of pleasure/avoid pain (hedonic) approach in achieving what has been called well-being and what the Bible calls flourishing (Psalm 92:12-13; Proverbs 14:11).

Secondarily, we can postulate that intrinsic motivation seems to be universal, if you will, as a function of who and what we are as human beings. The source of this intrinsic motivation is elusive and has served as the source of philosophical musing.

Finally, based on the work of Deci and Ryan that we have discussed above, we can categorize 3 key elements in intrinsic motivation that are key to any sense of general fulfillment. These three are: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It is important to understand that autonomy is not a sense of total self-direction, but a sense of choice in the direction one heads. Similarly, competence is not the accomplishment of perfection in performance, but a clear sense of the ability to move toward a goal. Relatedness can be simply characterized as the connection to others in ways that are not simply physical. This relatedness involves shared goals, commonality of worldview, and a sense of common beliefs.

In the following we will seek to develop the idea that our intrinsic motivations are, in fact, built into us by our Creator at the point of the very creation of humankind We will look at the Biblical story of creation for clues as to what these motivations are and how God intended them to function in us. It is our hope that this brings us to a better understanding of motivation from a Biblical worldview, allowing us to integrate the powerful research work of secular researchers into our Christian lives.

Parallels of Biblical Story of Creation with Key Motivation Theories

If, in fact, we are designed to pursue certain needs, we would expect that this design would be revealed in God's Word to us. We would expect it to be laid out in the story of creation where we see the explanation of why things are the way they are. Yet, such a clear statement of design seems elusive, if not absent.

However, a careful reading of Genesis chapters 1 and 2 can give us solid hints of such a design. Some are clear, such as the dominion of man over the created earth. Others must be winnowed from the story of God's glory revealed through all of creation. We will take a walk through these two chapters of Genesis focusing on the creation of humanity and suggest what they might reveal about God's design for us and how that impacts our motivations and behavior.

In previous writings, we have begun the development of such a process (Murphy, 2009; Murphy & Murphy, 2023b). These efforts were originally focused on developing the understanding of the role that these creation drives play in developing emotional fluency. Later it became apparent that these drives serve as the foundations of motivation, as well.

The story of the creation of humanity begins with, "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016, Genesis 1:26).

This verse sets the stage for exploration of the needs God designed within us from the beginning. We can see that we were created to desire the presence of God (PRESENCE of the Creator) in our lives as we are made in His image. We seek to find and understand the image that shapes us. We are driven by nature to grasp after the nature of the One whose likeness shapes ours. It is not just knowledge of the Creator that we seek, but we seek His presence in our lives. Genesis 3:8 tells us God walked in the Garden with that first couple satisfying this desire for His presence. This relatedness to the divine is made even more clear as we look at additional

verses here in the first two chapters of Genesis. In Genesis 2:7 we see that God is not distant but closely connected to us (PERSONAL). In this passage we see that God personally formed us and breathed life into us from Himself.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 states that God set eternity in the hearts of men, expanding on this desire for His Presence. Augustine, in his Confessions (1963), stated that "You have created us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." Psalm 42:1 it deepens this, "As deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God" (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016).

This drive is foundational in the Biblical context as shown in Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). This is then repeated by Jesus as the greatest command of life recorded in Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27.

Here we can see a parallel to the concept of relatedness in motivational theories. This relatedness runs at a deeper level than that considered in the secular study of motivation as this addresses the drive for relatedness with the divine. While others have recognized that interaction with the divine (labeled as religion) is an intrinsic motivator of human behavior, they do not attempt to found it on Biblical principles but approach it as a philosophical concept (Ryan, et al. 1993; Gorsuch, 1994; Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004; Gorsuch et al. 2009). This can serve to validate the existence of this drive based on observations of human behavior, but fail to identify the locus of the motivation.

We see relatedness in another aspect when we look at the second chapter of Genesis. In verse 18 God states that it is "not good" for man to be alone (even in the presence of God and the multitude of created beings) and then God acts to create woman (PRESENCE of other). We are not only created to need the presence of the divine, but we are created to need each other. In verse 24 we see that there is both passion and purity involved in this drive (PASSION & PURITY). We see these drives clearly echoed and developed in the entire book of Song of Solomon. We believe that these are the foundational drives that lie beneath the social concerns addressed by the prophets of the Old Testament and reinforced by Jesus' teachings on love in the New Testament. Jesus cites this drive for relatedness to others as the second greatest commandment when He quotes Leviticus 19:18 as recorded in Matthew 22, Mark 12 and Luke 10.

Secular motivational theories see this clearly and focus here well. Relatedness within a social environment is a key intrinsic motivational drive validated by Scripture and motivational research. As these theories also include the social environment, these align well.

In the passage first quoted above (Genesis 1:26), we also see purpose in our creation (PURPOSE). We were created with purpose (to have dominion) and seeking after purpose, acts as a motivating need. This purpose is further expanded in verse 28 when God tells Adam and Eve to multiply and fill the earth. Humanity is uniquely drawn to causes that are bigger than ourselves. This aspect of purpose is closely intertwined with relatedness. We are called to be participants (to PARtiCIPATE) in the overall plan of God's creation. It is not sufficient for us to simply exist; we need to see ourselves as crucial cogs in a greater plan. We feel this is the foundational-designed need of purpose. Interestingly, Ephesians, Chapter 1 addresses this need by directing our attention to God's purpose in choosing us even before establishing the foundations of the world. How large a plan we are part of!

As noted above, competence is also the ability to accomplish a task. We see competence in God's design in Genesis 2:19, "Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name" (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016). When given the task of naming the animals, what Adam called them became their name. The task was done competently and without revision by God.

Competence is also seen in Genesis 2:15 where the tasks of working and keeping the Garden of Eden are given to Adam (PRODUCtiVITY). The task involves both purpose and competence as the ability to accomplish the task is assumed.

This need fits into the motivational theory area of competence. Competence involves not just the ability to accomplish a task but also addresses the value of the task.

Finally, we see autonomy in the creation story. Adam was placed in the Garden and given permission to access all that existed within the Garden (PREROGAtiVE), with the exception of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16). This free-

dom within the garden with minimal restrictions matches well with the concept of autonomy.

In this brief overview of the story of creation we can find that God did intend for humanity to have certain drives that would guide them to perform the functions for which they were created. It is our position that these things are, in part, the "categorical basis" spoken of by Whiting (2020, p. 3). We find clear matching in the arenas of relatedness, competence, and autonomy that are central to the work of Deci and Ryan as explored above.

Additional potential drives derived from the first two chapters of Genesis are listed in the Appendix as food for further thought on this topic. This list was previously presented in papers by Murphy (2009) and Murphy (2023c). It is also worthwhile to consider that these drives were corrupted in the fall of mankind as described in Genesis chapter 3. The effect of this fall and potential redemptive movement for mankind has been explored and presented in Murphy & Murphy (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 & 2023a).

Conclusion

It is our hope and prayer that this paper can serve to ignite thinking on how our God- designed purposes still inform our behaviors today, albeit in corrupted ways. We see great value in the work of those who have gone before us and seek to simply influence an understanding of that work by providing a Biblical locus for the source of all that motivates us and that brings us true well-being.

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comment

Michael and Valerie Murphy have written an inspirative article about motivation. Their hope is that the article will open readers' eyes to see the Bible and especially the first chapters of Genesis through "the roots of motivations"-lenses. It certainly convinced me.

At the beginning of the article, many basic psychological theories of motivation are examined. Here they found intrinsically and extrinsically based motives, as well as aspects based on hope and fear. Maslow's needs-based theory of motivation was introduced. This theory has its foundation in humanistic psychology. Psychoanalysis also grows out of the ground where God has been ignored or excluded.

The Murphys' article has a "Creator-designed" categorical basis. Has God created us to be motivated by rewards or inner desires? What does God want human beings to achieve instead of self-fulfilment as presented by Maslow?

The Murphys direct us from a hedonistic – so typical to this age – to a eudaimonic view of happiness.
Happiness is often connected to obtaining pleasure. The concept of eudaimonia emphasises rather the aim of achieving a positive affect and diminishing the negative one. Eudaimonia is pursuing happiness by finding meaning and purpose.

Working with children and young people in long-term psychotherapy, I hear the needs of children crying out. Does anybody love me, who will see me, is anybody looking at me – the need to know that I am valuable, unique, seen and loved. They are motivated to do a lot in order to gain attention and love - they need a relationship which nourishes them. Children who growing up without nourishing relationships have no empathy. They are motivated to seek desperately more happiness for themselves; happiness which meets their needs for love and affirmation.

Some young people are ready to do harmful things to get any kind of relationship or sense of belonging. Some of them turn their motivation towards reaching "negative" goals – to harm or destroy, hurt the ones who have hurt them. Some youngsters are distorted in their motivations - they feel only a need for violent games, but are not be in touch with any altruistic motives. Have sins committed against them twisted their motivation system?

Does a safe childhood with secure attachment to parents lead to development of eudaimonia?

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Former articles by Päivimaria Kuivamäki

https://emcapp.ignis.de/17/#p=32

https://emcapp.ignis.de/6/#p=195

Children in their teens start to become independent of parents and to look for affirmation from their peers. Is that the point when a securely attached young person, who has been taught about loving God, is supposed to find his/her intrinsic motivation toward God? Does she/he grow up from dependence on parents and turn to and follow God, the Father, the Master, in her/his life decisions? To look up to the Painter who made her/himself? Making life decisions in a way pleasing to our heavenly Father? As a result of this process, the person would grow up to identity with professional competence etc.

Erikson's theory of a lifespan and eight developmental stages resonates with the development of motivation as well. A young person is motivated to find identity and is more self-centred, but if that stage and the developmental task are resolved well, the person is, as an adult, able to sacrifice her/his life for her/his children.

How society as a whole can support the development of eudaimonia.
Our societies seem to need more and more people who are intrinsically motivated, whose values tend more toward eudaimonia. If Christians start to become a minority in culture, this will demand greater inner strength and the organising of the whole motivation system to enable one to live contrary to the values offered by the surroundings, being motivated to find, for example, additional information to support biblical values - and finding happiness in that.

Two Finnish researchers have written about happiness and well-being. Harri Koskela wrote in his doctoral thesis about how Christian faith increases well-being nationwide. Koskela and Markku Ojanen (emeritus), PhD in psychology, have connected this happiness and well-being to Christian values. If Christian values could motivate people (inside), it would lead decision-making throughout society.

These and many other thoughts came to my mind while reading the Murphys' article.
Thank you so much for your work!
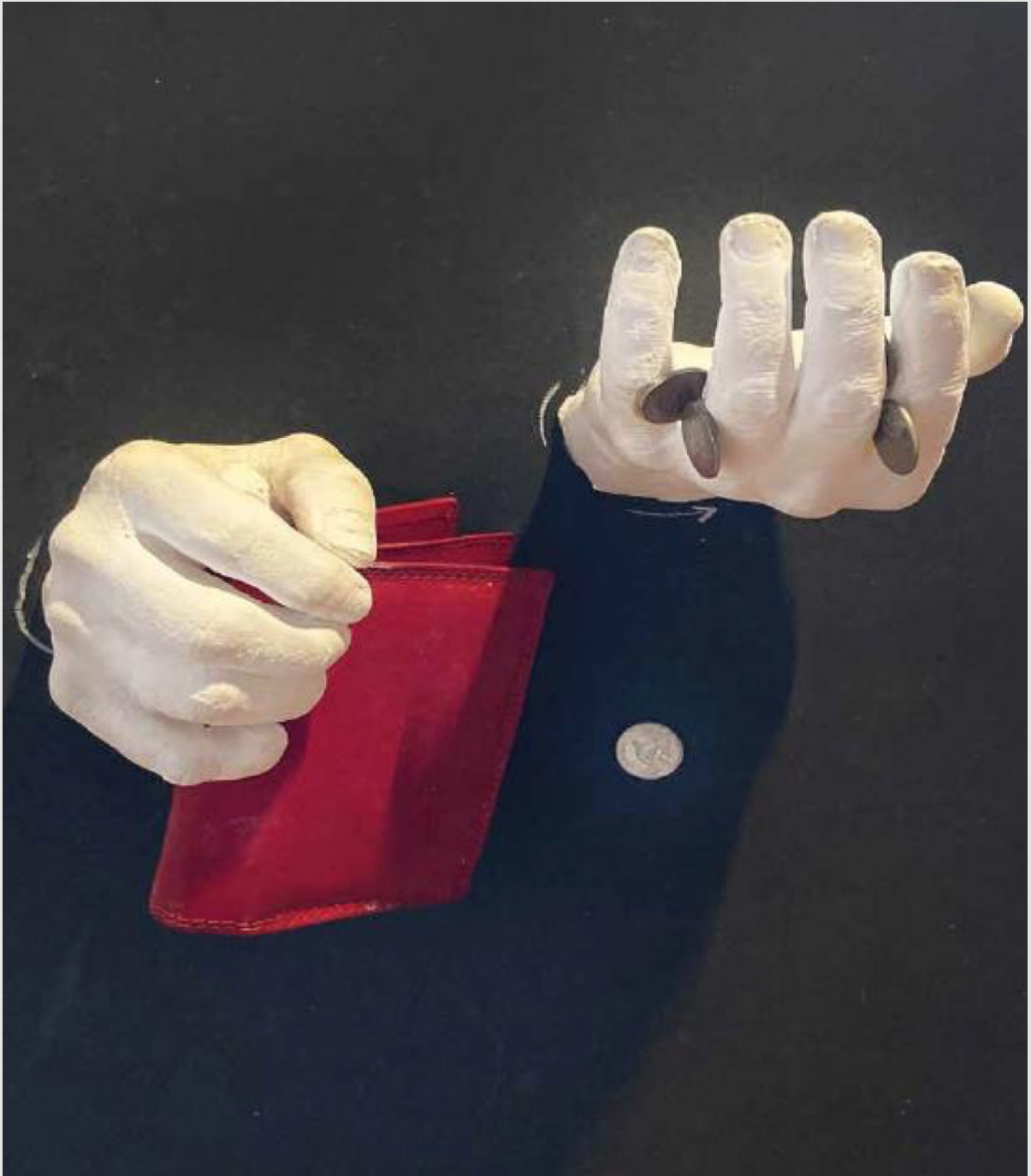
Greed / betrayed / sold

Katrin Kroll, trained as an educator, studied Christan psychology at the IG-NIS Academy, Germany, Christian counselor (IGNIS), psychotherapy (Heil-prG), focusing counseling, supervisor "I am touched by God's heart for people. That's why I love researching and teaching here at IGNIS how people can be supported in their development and how God himself meets them." Current tasks: President of the Institute for Christan Psychology, Education and Therapy in Switzerland https://icp.ch, Board member at IGNIS www.ig-nis.de, management and speaker in the area of children, youth and family, speaker in the counselor course.

Katrin Kroll, ausgebildete Erzieherin, studierte Christliche Psychologie an der IGNIS Akademie, Deutschland, Christliche Beraterin (IGNIS), Psycho-therapie (Heilpraktiker), Supervisorin. „Gottes Herz für Menschen berührt mich. Deshalb forsche und lehre ich hier an der IGNIS-Akademie gerne, wie Menschen in ihrer Entwicklung unterstützt werden können und wie Gott ihnen begegnet."
Aktuelle Aufgaben: Präsidentin des Instituts für Christliche Psychologie, Pädagogik und Therapie in der Schweiz (https://icp.ch), Vorstandsmitglied bei IGNIS (www.ignis.de), Leitung und Referentin im Bereich Kinder, Jugend und Familie, Referentin im Beraterlehrgang.

Former articles by Katrin: https://emcapp.ignis.de/22/#p=87

Katrin Kroll (Germany/Deutschland):

Learning to exert will – motivation and mastering tasks in counselling and therapy

Introduction
- Volition and will - an overview
- The will and dignity
- elf-love and love of others
- Case study

Range of possibilities
- Personality and disposition
- Experiences
- Abilities

Emotional abilities
- Perception
- Expression
- Regulation
- Drive energy and impulses
- Energy balance
- Impulses and impulse inhibition

Moral development
- Stage model
- Impulse control and morality

Didactics of the will

Concluding considerations

Wollen lernen – Motivation und Aufgabenbewältigung in Beratung und Therapie

Einführung
- Wollen und Wille – ein Übersichtsbild
- Das Wollen und die Würde
- elbst- und Fremdliebe
- Fallbeispiel

Möglichkeitsraum
- Persönlichkeit und Disposition
- Erfahrungen
- Fähigkeiten

Emotionale Fähigkeiten
- Wahrnehmung
- Ausdruck

Regulation

Antriebsenergie und Impulse
- Energiehaushalt
- Impulse und Impulshemmung

Moralentwicklung
- Stufenmodell
- Impulskontrolle und Moral

Willensdidaktik

Abschließende Betrachtungen

Introduction

As individuals, we learn during our childhood more and more about taking responsibility for our own lives. We need to develop a culture of, for example, cleaning our bathroom, organising dates with friends and meeting the challenges of the world of work. To do this, we naturally need a whole bundle of skills that should correspond to the task or challenge in question. But whether we can apply these skills in the respective situation depends, among other things, on whether we have the will to do so.

Of course, those seeking our advice in pastoral care, counselling and therapy come to us with the aim of mastering their lives better. And, of course, there can be very different issues that prevent them from coping with their tasks.

The current seminar is specifically dedicated to the question of what it takes to support people in developing and applying their will.

Will and volition – an overview

It is not always easy to get to the bottom of what prevents people from completing tasks. The question 'Do you even want to do this?' often remains unspoken. And even if the client answers this question in the affirmative, this does not necessarily mean that they are able to put this experienced will into practice.

But the will is not a simple function that we can switch on and off. Rather, in the psychological and educational research of recent decades, various topics have emerged as important and necessary for the development of a healthy 'exercise of the will'.

Einführung

Als Menschen lernen wir während unserer Kindheit mehr und mehr, selbst verantwortlich mit unseren Lebensbereichen umzugehen. Wir müssen eine Kultur entwickeln, um zum Beispiel unser Bad zu putzen, Termine mit Freunden zu gestalten und die Herausforderungen der Arbeitswelt zu bestehen. Dazu brauchen wir natürlich ein ganzes Bündel an Fähigkeiten, die im Einzelnen jeweils der Aufgabe oder Herausforderung entsprechen sollten. Ob wir aber diese Fähigkeiten auch in der jeweiligen Situation anwenden können, entscheidet sich unter anderem dadurch, ob wir den Willen dafür aufbringen.

Natürlich kommen unsere Ratsuchenden in Seelsorge, Beratung und Therapie mit dem Anliegen zu uns, ihr Leben besser zu meistern. Und natürlich können es ganz unterschiedliche Fragestellungen sein, die sie daran hindern, mit ihren Aufgaben zurechtzukommen.

Das aktuelle Seminar widmet sich im Speziellen der Frage, was es braucht, um Menschen darin zu unterstützen, ihren Willen zu entwickeln und anzuwenden.

Wollen und Wille – ein Übersichtsbild

Es ist nicht immer ganz einfach, dem auf die Spur zu kommen, was Menschen daran hindert, Aufgaben zu lösen. Oft bleibt die Frage: „Willst du das überhaupt?" eher unausgesprochen. Und selbst wenn der Klient diese Frage positiv beantwortet, heißt das ja noch lange nicht, dass derjenige diesen erlebten Willen auch in die Tat umsetzen kann.

Aber der Wille ist keine simple Funktion, die wir an- und ausschalten können. Vielmehr haben sich in der Psychologie- und Pädagogikforschung der letzten Jahrzehnte verschiedene Themen als wichtig und notwendig für die Entwicklung einer gesunden „Willensausübung" herauskristallisiert.

WILL
WILLE

Recognising, expressing and regulating
Emotionen wahrnehmen, ausdrücken, regulieren

Ethical development
Ethikentwicklung

Didactics of the will
Willensdidaktik

Erfahrung, Möglichkeiten, Fähigkeiten
Experience possibilities abilities

Antriebsenergie und Impulse
Drive energy and impulses

Selbst- und Fremdliebe
Self-love and love of others

The diagram is only a schematic representation of the 'active forces' on which the 'use' of the will depends. These are described in more detail in the following chapters.

The seminar explores the question of how the individual areas can be developed in such a way that a person can learn to use their will in the context of positive life development.

Let us first look at some considerations that precede this examination:

The will and dignity

The basic idea of our Christian view of humanity is that every person is created as an original and as such comes into the world with a special 'creation design'. This includes certain basic traits from birth, which are manifested in their DNA. In addition, God's 'idea of creation' creates a space of possibility within which humans can develop in interaction with their environment. Our belief is that, in this totality, a part of God's nature is revealed in His likeness in every human being.

This is also the basis of our concept of human dignity: man possesses value and is the centre of God's love simply in the fact of his being, without having to do or contribute anything else. Our constitution in Germany expresses this by describing human dignity as 'inviolable' and thus attaching great importance to persons in their intrinsic being.

Of course, as human beings we (mostly) want to develop as 'good' a life as possible from this basic provision of creation - no matter what that might be in detail. And somehow it is also a reflection of human dignity when we declare in international human rights how a person should be supported so that they develop as positively as possible.

My comments already show that there is an area of tension here. Human beings have value in themselves, but should and have the right to achieve positive development. This value is not called into question by negative developments, but the individual's sense of human dignity nevertheless comes under pressure when people 'fail' in their lives.

So when we think about the development of the will, we also find ourselves in the following areas of tension: To what extent do we intervene in the development of a person's will and where do we give them freedom, when do we stop a person from exercising their will in a harmful way, at what point is the maldevelopment of a person considered a

Das Schaubild zeigt nur eine schematische Darstellung der „Wirkkräfte", von denen der „Einsatz" des Willens abhängt. Diese werden in den folgenden Kapiteln näher dargestellt.

Das Seminar geht der Frage nach, wie die einzelnen Bereiche so gefördert werden können, dass ein Mensch lernen kann, seinen Willen im Rahmen einer positiven Lebensentwicklung einzusetzen.

Schauen wir uns doch vorher einige Überlegungen an, die dieser Betrachtung vorausgehen:

Das Wollen und die Würde

Die Grundidee unseres christlichen Menschenbildes ist es, dass jeder Mensch als Original geschaffen ist und als solches auch mit einem besonderen „Schöpfungsdesign" zur Welt kommt. Darin sind von Geburt an bestimmte Grundzüge enthalten, die sich zum einen in seiner DNA manifestieren. Darüber hinaus legt Gottes „Schöpfungsidee" einen Möglichkeitsraum an, innerhalb dessen sich der Mensch in Interaktion mit seiner Umwelt entwickeln kann. Unser Glaube ist es, dass sich in dieser Gesamtheit ein Stück von Gottes Wesen in einer Ebenbildlichkeit jedes Menschen zeigt.

Darin gründet sich auch unsere Vorstellung von der Würde des Menschen: Er besitzt Wert und ist Zentrum der Liebe Gottes in seinem Sosein, ohne dass er dazu etwas Weiteres tun oder beitragen müsste. Unser Grundgesetz in Deutschland drückt dies aus, indem es die Würde des Menschen als „unantastbar" bezeichnet und damit dem Menschen in seinem Sosein eine hohe Bedeutung zumisst.

Natürlich möchten wir (meistens), dass wir als Menschen aus dieser Schöpfungsgrundausstattung auch möglichst einen „guten" Lebensweg entwickeln – was auch immer das im Einzelnen sein könnte. Und irgendwie gehört es ja auch zu der Würde des Menschen, dass wir in den internationalen Menschenrechten beschreiben, wie ein Mensch unterstützt werden sollte, damit er sich möglichst positiv entwickelt.

Meine Ausführungen zeigen schon: Hier entsteht ein Spannungsfeld. Der Mensch besitzt Wert an sich, soll und darf aber eine positive Entwicklung erlangen. Der Wert wird von negativen Entwicklungen nicht in Frage gestellt, aber die Empfindung der Würde des Menschen gerät trotzdem unter Druck, wenn Menschen in ihrer Lebensführung „scheitern".

Wenn wir also über die Entwicklung des Wollens nachdenken, geraten wir auch in diese Spannungsfelder: Inwiefern greifen wir in die Wollensentwick-

threat to their dignity and, last but not least, how does the global community manage to ensure appropriate development support for the people currently living on earth?

We certainly cannot answer these questions here. I am merely placing them at the beginning of our seminar as a 'framework' for our considerations.

Self-love and love of others
A second basic consideration is people's attitude towards themselves and their environment. Children are not born with the relevant brain function to directly recognise or exercise their own dignity or will. At the beginning of human development, the child's expressions are still directly linked to needs and not yet an expression of a conscious human will.

Little by little, they first learn from us what value people and the world have, long before they learn to clearly and consciously recognise their own will and integrate it into the shaping of their lives.
They experience being cared for and protected and realise the value we as parents assign to people, things and contexts.

They experience our ability to love not least in how we can use our will to meet them.
In this way, parallel to (and sometimes as a condition of) the development of the will, a relationship to the self and to others emerges. Children develop a sense of self and ideas about the significance of objects or situations.

Attachment research describes this as a major milestone for the various levels of human development. Of course, this also applies to our topic: a child who discovers that it has a high value will more easily use his will to take care of himself. A child who learns that objects and tasks are important in different ways will learn to motivate himself more quickly to put in the effort to adapt to the object and the task. And finally, a child who feels securely embedded in relationships will understand more quickly which actions and circumstances are helpful for social interaction and which are not.

The development of self-love and love of others is therefore an important prerequisite for the development of healthy volitional functions.

lung eines Menschen ein und wo lassen wir ihm Freiraum, wann stoppen wir einen Menschen in einer schädigenden Willensausübung, ab wann wird die Fehlentwicklung eines Menschen bedrohlich für seine Würde eingeschätzt und, nicht zuletzt, wie schafft es die Weltgemeinschaft, eine entsprechende Förderung für die aktuell auf der Erde lebenden Menschen sicherzustellen?
Sicher können wir diese Fragen an dieser Stelle nicht beantworten. Ich stelle sie nur als „Rahmen" unserer Betrachtungen an den Beginn unseres Seminars.

Selbst- und Fremdliebe
Eine zweite Grundbetrachtung gilt der Einstellung des Menschen zu sich selbst und seiner Umwelt. Kinder kommen nicht mit der entsprechenden Hirnfunktion auf die Welt, die eigene Würde oder das eigene Wollen direkt zu erfassen oder auszuüben. Zu Beginn der menschlichen Entwicklung sind die Äußerungen des Kindes noch direkt bedürfnisverknüpft und noch nicht Ausdruck eines bewussten menschlichen Willens.
Sie lernen Stück für Stück zunächst von uns, welchen Wert Menschen und Welt besitzen, lange bevor sie lernen, einen eigenen Willen klar bewusst wahrzunehmen und in die Gestaltung des Lebens einzubinden.
Sie erleben es, versorgt und behütet zu werden, und bekommen mit, welchen Wert wir als Eltern Menschen, Dingen und Zusammenhängen zuweisen.
Sie erleben unsere Liebesfähigkeit nicht zuletzt darin, wie wir unseren Willen nutzen können, ihnen zu begegnen.
Auf diesem Weg entsteht parallel zur (und manchmal auch als Bedingung der) Willensentwicklung ein Selbst- und Fremdbezug. Kinder entwickeln eine Selbstzuwendung und Ideen darüber, was Gegenstände oder Situationen bedeuten.
Die Bindungsforschung beschreibt, dass dadurch ein großer Meilenstein für die verschiedenen Entwicklungsebenen des Menschen gelegt wird. Das gilt natürlich auch für unser Thema: Ein Kind, das entdeckt, dass es einen hohen Wert besitzt, wird leichter seinen Willen dafür nutzen, für sich zu sorgen. Ein Kind, das lernt, dass Gegenstände und Aufgaben unterschiedlich wichtig sind, wird sich schneller motivieren lernen, auch Anstrengung in Kauf zu nehmen und dem Gegenstand und der Aufgabe anzupassen. Und schließlich wird ein Kind,

Case study

Before turning to the various support levels for the development of the will, the following account serves as us as an example on which I orientate my remarks:

Ms. M. is 28 years old and lives alone. She grew up as the youngest child in a working-class family. Her experience was that, alongside her five siblings, she didn't really get her chance in the sibling group. The family's church background taught the children that they should not take themselves so seriously and that it is desirable to put impulses and needs aside. She has learnt little about relating to other people and leads a very withdrawn life as an adult. She left her parents' church as a young adult after a conflict and only draws on the resource of faith that she developed in her childhood in exceptional circumstances. After finishing intermediate school, she trained as a dental assistant. She was lucky (?) to find a job in the dental practice of a member of the congregation through her parents.

Her mother is a very caring woman. She tries to keep all difficulties away from her children. She takes on many tasks (cooking, cleaning, laundry, dealing with the authorities) for her children until they reach adolescence. The father is very strict and expects high achievements from his children: 'They should achieve something and earn a good living'. He punishes mistakes very harshly.

Ms M. moved into a Christian shared flat after her training, even though she herself had left the church. She has now lived there for almost ten years. In the last six months, two of her three flatmates have moved out at the end of their studies. The last flatmate now informs Ms M. that she is in a relationship and wants to terminate the flat share.

Ms M. is also informed by her boss that he is taking his well-earned retirement and selling the practice. The new owner wants to hold personal interviews with the employees and then take on or hire staff depending on their suitability.
The situation is very overwhelming for Ms M. As if paralysed, she often spends her free time in her room without making any effort to find a new home or contact the new boss. Every time she opens the computer to look for flat adverts or write an email

das sich in Beziehungen sicher eingebunden fühlt, schneller verstehen, welche Handlungen und Umstände hilfreich für soziale Interaktion sind und welche nicht.
So ist also die Entwicklung von Selbst- und Fremdliebe eine wichtige Voraussetzung für die Entwicklung gesunder Willensfunktionen.

Fallbeispiel

Bevor wir uns den verschiedenen Förderebenen der Willensentwicklung zuwenden, sei hier ein Beispiel skizziert, an dem meine Ausführungen sich orientieren werden:
Frau M. ist 28 Jahre alt und lebt alleinstehend. Sie ist als jüngstes Kind einer Familie im Arbeitermilieu aufgewachsen. Sie hat erlebt, dass sie neben ihren fünf Geschwistern im Geschwisterverbund nicht so richtig zum Zug kommt. Die kirchliche Prägung der Familie hat den Kindern vermittelt, dass sie sich selbst nicht so ernst nehmen sollten und dass das Zurückstellen von Impulsen und Bedürfnissen wünschenswert ist. Sie hat wenig gelernt, sich in Beziehung zu anderen Menschen zu setzten, und lebt als Erwachsene sehr zurückgezogen. Die Gemeinde der Eltern hat sie als junge Erwachsene nach einem Konflikt verlassen und greift auf die Ressource des Glaubens, den sie in ihrer Kindheit entwickelt hat, nur noch in Ausnahmefällen zurück. Nach einem mittleren Schulabschluss hat sie eine Ausbildung zur Zahnarzthelferin gemacht. Sie hatte das Glück (?), dass sie in der Zahnarztpraxis eines Mitglieds der Gemeinde durch die Vermittlung der Eltern untergekommen ist.
Ihre Mutter ist eine sehr fürsorgliche Frau. Sie versucht, alle Schwierigkeiten von ihren Kindern fernzuhalten. Bis ins hohe Jugendalter übernimmt sie viele Aufgaben (Kochen, Putzen, Wäschewaschen, Ämtergänge) für ihre Kinder. Der Vater ist sehr streng und erwartet hohe Leistungen von seinen Kindern: „Sie sollen es zu was bringen und sich ihren Lebensunterhalt gut verdienen". Er straft sehr unnachgiebig bei Fehlern.
Frau M. ist nach der Ausbildung in eine christliche WG gezogen, obwohl sie selbst die Gemeinde verlassen hat. Dort hat sie jetzt fast zehn Jahre gewohnt. Im letzten halben Jahr sind zwei der drei Mitbewohnerinnen am Ende ihres Studiums ausgezogen. Die letzte Mitbewohnerin teilt Frau M. nun mit, dass sie in einer Beziehung ist und die WG auflösen möchte.
Zudem erhält Frau M. die Mitteilung von ihrem

to her new boss, she feels overwhelmed and has symptoms of anxiety.
In her distress, she turns to a Christian counsellor...

What has to happen, so that someone like Ms. M. can learn to shape her own life situation? Let us look at the various levels on which support can be given.

Range of possibilities

Of course, everyone grows up in different circumstances. One person experiences many socially stimulating situations, another perhaps war and destruction. The opportunities that people find for their development are different.
There are three main levels involved:

Experiences: The development of volitional capacity depends, among other things, on how children experience their living environment. On the one hand, this can mean that they experience how role models shape or can shape life. On the other hand, all external biological, social, cultural, economic and political circumstances interact and form an 'experiential space' in which a person explores their own volitional space.

Abilities: As already mentioned, disposition and environment interact in a person's development. Of course, this also applies to the development of abilities that unfold within a person. On the one hand, there are talents that a person brings with them due to their nature, and on the other hand, there is support that a person receives from their environment.

Possibilities: Ultimately, of course, it also depends on the opportunities that arise for a person during his or her individual lifetime. In order to support a person seeking counselling in their development, it is first of all important to consider how the individual living environment needs to change so that there is room for experience and opportunities to practise already acquired skills or learn new ones.

Emotional abilities

When a child begins to take an interest in which things and people around them have what significance, the emotions that arise initially play an important role.

Chef, dass dieser sich in den wohlverdienten Ruhestand zurückzieht und die Praxis verkauft. Der neue Inhaber möchte mit den Angestellten persönliche Gespräche führen und dann nach Eignung Mitarbeiter übernehmen oder ausstellen.
Die Situation überfordert Frau M. sehr. Wie gelähmt verbringt sie die freie Zeit oft in ihrem Zimmer, ohne sich um eine neue Wohnung oder den Kontakt mit dem neuen Chef zu kümmern. Jedes Mal, wenn sie den Computer öffnet, um nach Wohnungsanzeigen zu schauen oder eine Mail an den neuen Vorgesetzten zu schreiben, empfindet sie Überforderung und Angstsymptome.
In ihrer Not wendet sie sich an einen christlichen Berater...

Möglichkeitsraum: Natürlich wächst jeder Mensch in anderen Umständen auf. Der eine erlebt ganz viele sozial positiv stimulierende Situationen, der andere vielleicht Krieg und Zerstörung. Die Möglichkeitsräume, die Menschen für ihre Entwicklung vorfinden, sind unterschiedlich.
Dabei geht es vor allem um drei Ebenen:

Erfahrungen: Die Entwicklung der Willensfähigkeit hängt unter anderem davon ab, wie Kinder ihren Lebensraum erfahren. Das kann zum einen beinhalten, dass sie erleben, wie Vorbilder Leben gestalten oder gestalten können. Zum anderen wirken alle äußeren biologischen, sozialen, kulturellen, ökonomischen und politischen Umstände zusammen und bilden einen „Erfahrungsraum", in dem ein Mensch den eigenen Willensraum erkundet.

Fähigkeiten: Wie bereits erwähnt, wirken Anlage und Umfeld in der Entwicklung eines Menschen zusammen. Dies gilt natürlich auch für die Entwicklung von Fähigkeiten, die sich in ihm entfalten. Da gibt es zum einen Talente, die der Mensch aufgrund seiner Anlage mitbringt, und zum anderen Förderungen, die dem Menschen aus seiner Umwelt zuteilwerden.

Möglichkeiten: Letztlich kommt es natürlich auch auf die jeweiligen Möglichkeiten an, die sich während der individuellen Lebenszeit eines Menschen für ihn ergeben.
Um einen Ratsuchenden in seiner Entwicklung zu unterstützen, ist es zunächst wichtig, zu überlegen, wie sich der individuelle Lebensraum verändern muss, damit Erfahrungsräume und Möglichkeiten

Some circumstances, people, things or events address immediate emotions such as joy, longing, rejection or anger etc. They activate areas in our brain that produce so-called 'hot reactions'. The child either 'wants' something very strongly or else absolutely 'doesn't want' it at all. However, this is not a conscious formation of will, but rather emotional reactions that are strongly mapped in certain areas of the brain and trigger intense bodily reactions such as heartbeat, breathing, muscle tension, surface tension, digestive or metabolic changes and block functions in the brain.

However, certain events or situations require the child to learn to cool down the 'hot' reactions so that it can develop 'cooler' reactions and fall back on them when the need arises - it learns to wait and postpone impulses.

Perception

The first step in so-called affect regulation is recognising one's own emotionality. Children need to become more and more aware of their own emotional reactions so that they have a starting point for consciously influencing them and, as adolescents and adults, become increasingly aware of when their emotions have a strong influence on a situation.

Expression

At the beginning, children cannot name the feelings that arise spontaneously in their experience. We help them by recognising the feelings themselves and moderating them. In this way, children get to know the possibilities of their language and their bodies to express their perception of emotions. Of course, it also helps them if there are people who are interested in and sympathetic to this expression. In the course of a person's life, a kind of culture of expression develops in this way, which is more or less helpful for the individual.

Regulation

Of course, it is not just about people realising and expressing the effects their environment has on them. They must also learn to influence the feelings that arise. They need to learn the skills of affect regulation:

für die Ausübung schon erlernter Fähigkeiten oder deren Neuerlernen gegeben sind.

Emotionale Fähigkeiten

Wenn ein Kind beginnt, sich dafür zu interessieren, welche Dinge und Menschen um es herum welche Bedeutung haben, spielen zunächst die entstehenden Emotionen eine wichtige Rolle.

Manche Umstände, Personen, Dinge oder Ereignisse adressieren unmittelbare Emotionen wie Freude, Sehnsucht, Ablehnung oder Ärger etc. Sie aktivieren in unserem Gehirn Areale, die sogenannte „heiße" Reaktionen hervorbringen. Das Kind „will" etwas sehr stark oder „will" etwas gar nicht. Dabei handelt es sich jedoch nicht um eine bewusste Willensbildung, sondern um emotionale Reaktionen, die sich in den bestimmten Gehirnregionen sehr stark abbilden und im Körper intensive Körperreaktionen wie Herzschlag, Atmung, Muskelanspannung, Oberflächenspannung, Verdauungs- oder Stoffwechselveränderungen auslösen und Funktionen im Gehirn blockieren.

Bestimmte Ereignisse oder Situationen erfordern es jedoch, dass das Kind die „heißen" Reaktionen abkühlen lernt, damit es „kühlere" Reaktionen entwickeln und im entsprechenden Fall darauf zurückgreifen kann – es lernt, zu warten und Impulse aufzuschieben.

Wahrnehmung

Erster Schritt der sogenannten Affektregulation ist dabei die Wahrnehmung der eigenen Emotionalität. Kinder müssen sich mehr und mehr der eigenen emotionalen Reaktionen bewusstwerden, damit sie einen Ansatzpunkt haben, diese bewusst zu beeinflussen und auch als Jugendliche und Erwachsene immer sicherer mitzubekommen, wenn die Emotionalität eine Situation sehr stark beeinflusst.

Ausdruck

Kinder können die spontan auftauchenden Gefühle in ihrem Erleben nicht von Beginn an benennen. Wir helfen ihnen, indem wir die Gefühle selbst wahrnehmen und diese moderieren. So lernen Kinder die Möglichkeiten ihrer Sprache und ihres Körpers kennen, um die Emotionswahrnehmung auszudrücken. Dabei hilft ihnen natürlich auch, wenn es Menschen gibt, die für diesen Ausdruck Interesse und Wohlwollen haben. Im Laufe eines Menschenlebens entsteht auf diesem Weg eine Art Aus-

- Physiological calming: Heat, cold, sounds, touch, smells, taste, breath, muscle relaxation, imagination
- Psychological distancing: distraction, inner distancing, cognitive restructuring, new information
- Bonding: human contact, positive self-contact, spiritual bonding

In order to develop and utilise one's own will more and more, a person must learn or relearn how to deal with their feelings in such a way that the constructive decisions of their own will can be well supported.

Drive energy and impulses
We have seen that people develop their will and motivation in interaction with the emotional states they experience. However, we have also realised that this varies greatly from individual to individual. The expression of our emotions and reactions depends both on our genetic disposition and on our experiences with our environment. This interplay produces a very unique composition of inner psychological 'energy': some people react very strongly and intensely emotionally and in their impulses, while others develop only few emotions and little drive.

Energy balance
Our energy balance or drive is influenced by many different factors:
- Basic personality structure
- Physical conditions and strength (illnesses, physique, stimulus filters)
- Cultural expectations and situational support
- Mental illnesses
- Systemic roles and 'energy sappers'

In order to develop a sensible application of will, it is important to assess your own energy levels and energy behaviour and to learn how to deal with them. Of course, particular attention should be paid to recognising your own limitations or framework conditions and including them in your considerations.

Impulses and impulse inhibition
In our everyday lives, more or less strong impulses arise in connection with our emotional reactions and our needs. These arise in the prefrontal lobe of

druckskultur, die für den Einzelnen mehr oder weniger hilfreich ist.

Regulation
Natürlich geht es nicht nur darum, dass Menschen mitbekommen und ausdrücken, welche Auswirkungen ihre Umwelt auf sie hat. Sie müssen auch lernen, selbst Einfluss auf die entstehenden Gefühle zu nehmen. Sie müssen Skills der Affektregulation erlernen:
- Physiologische Beruhigung: Wärme, Kälte, Töne, Berührungen, Gerüche, Geschmack, Atem, Muskelentspannung, Imagination
- Psychologische Distanzierung: Ablenkung, innere Distanzierung, kognitive Umstrukturierung, neue Informationen
- Bindung: menschlicher Kontakt, positiver Selbstkontakt, spirituelle Bindung

Um also den eigenen Willen immer mehr zu entwickeln und einzusetzen, muss ein Mensch erlernen oder neu lernen, mit seinen Gefühlen so umzugehen, dass die eigenen konstruktiven Willensentscheide gut unterstützt werden können.

Antriebsenergie und Impulse
Wir haben gesehen, dass Menschen ihren Willen und ihre Motivation in Wechselwirkung mit erlebten emotionalen Zuständen entwickeln. Aber wir stellen auch fest, dass dies beim Einzelnen sehr unterschiedlich ausfällt.
Die Ausprägung unserer Emotionen und Reaktionen hängt sowohl von unserer genetischen Disposition als auch von den Erfahrungen mit unserer Umwelt ab. Dieses Zusammenspiel bringt eine sehr einzigartige Komposition von innerpsychischer „Energie" hervor: So mancher Mensch reagiert sehr stark und intensiv emotional und in seinen Impulsen, während der andere nur wenig Emotionen und nur geringen Antrieb entwickelt.

Energiehaushalt
Unser Energiehaushalt bzw. Antrieb wird von vielen verschiedenen Faktoren beeinflusst:
- Persönlichkeitsgrundstruktur
- Körperliche Gegebenheiten und Kraft (Erkrankungen, Körperbau, Reizfilter)
- Kulturelle Erwartung und situative Förderung
- Psychische Erkrankungen
- Systemische Rollen und „Energiefresser"
Für die Entwicklung einer sinnvollen Willensan-

the brain and have a relatively direct effect on action and reaction planning. Which impulses are implemented for our everyday behaviour is also influenced by how impulse inhibition works in the brain.

Moral development

Once people have learnt to regulate their emotions and adapt their energy levels to the situations and tasks at hand, they naturally also have to assess which ethical aspects are currently important.
Let us take a look at how people develop moral skills over the course of their lives.

Stage model (after Kohlberg)

Pre-conventional level	
This level corresponds to that of most children up to the age of nine, of some youths and, of course even some adults. On this level, the child experiences for the first time that there can be other points of view besides its own, while the authority figures are however (as before) the models.	
1st stage – orientation on punishment and obedience:	In this phase, the child tries to keep to the set rules in order to avoid punishment.
2nd stage – instrumental/ relativistic orientation:	In the second stage, children recognise the mutuality of human relationships. They can learn to take in simple different perspectives, such as "tit for tat". In their behaviour, they attempt as far as possible to orientate themselves on obtaining pleasure and avoiding pain.

wendung ist es wichtig, den eigenen Energieumfang und das eigene Energieverhalten einschätzen und damit umgehen zu lernen. Besonderes Augenmerk sollte dabei natürlich darauf liegen, die eigenen Einschränkungen oder Rahmenbedingungen zu kennen und in die Überlegungen einzubeziehen.

Impulse und Impulshemmung

In unserem Alltag tauchen im Zusammenhang mit unseren emotionalen Reaktionen und unseren Bedürfnissen mehr oder weniger starke Impulse auf. Diese entstehen im Präfrontallappen des Gehirns und wirken sich relativ unmittelbar auf Handlungs- und Reaktionsplanung aus. Welche Impulse für unser Alltagsverhalten jeweils umgesetzt werden, wird auch davon beeinflusst, wie die Impulshemmung im Gehirn funktioniert.

Moralentwicklung

Wenn Menschen gelernt haben, ihre Emotionen zu regulieren und ihren Energiehaushalt an die anstehenden Situationen und Aufgaben anzupassen, müssen sie natürlich auch noch einschätzen, welche ethischen Gesichtspunkte aktuell wichtig sind. Schauen wir uns dazu an, wie Menschen moralische Fähigkeiten im Laufe ihres Lebens entwickeln.

Stufenmodell (nach Kohlberg)

Dieser Überblick nach Kohlberg gibt uns einen Einblick in die Entwicklungsherausforderungen, die ein Mensch überwinden muss, um die eigenen moralischen Entscheidungen zu treffen.

Präkonventionelle Ebene
Diese Ebene entspricht dem Niveau der meisten Kinder bis zum neunten Lebensjahr, einiger Jugendlicher und natürlich auch einiger Erwachsener. Auf dieser Ebene erlebt das Kind zum ersten Mal, dass es auch andere Sichtweisen neben der eigenen geben kann, die Autoritätspersonen sind jedoch (weiterhin) die Vorbilder.

Conventional level	
This is the level applicable to the majority of youths and adults.	
3rd stage - orientation on interpersonal relationships based on mutuality:	In this phase, the moral expectations of others are recognised and understood. The young people and adults wish to please the authority figure (good boy/nice girl), and this not simply out of fear of punishment. If the individual does not meet the expectations, feelings of guilt arise. Correspondingly, these individuals likewise base their moral expectations on the behaviour of others.
4 stage - orientation on law and order:	In a step going beyond the third stage, the individual recognises the significance of moral norms for the functioning of society. Expectations not directly placed on the child by attachment figures (general moral rules of society) are recognised and complied with, since they are necessary for maintaining social order.
Intermediate or transitional stage	
In the period of transition to adulthood, young people typically find themselves in a transitional phase. In order to break away from the conventional level of moral awareness, it is important to question moral norms and not blindly follow authority. In the transitional phase, people are not yet able to base the justification of norms on a new, intersubjective foundation; they are morally disoriented. People at this stage behave according to their personal views and emotions.	

1. Stufe – Die Orientierung an Strafe und Gehorsam:	In dieser Phase versucht das Kind, die gesetzten Regeln zu befolgen, um Strafe zu vermeiden.
2. Stufe – Die instrumentell-relativistische Orientierung:	In der zweiten Stufe erkennen Kinder die Gegenseitigkeit menschlichen Verhaltens. Sie können lernen, einfache andere Perspektiven einzunehmen, im Sinne von „Wie du mir, so ich dir". In ihrem Handeln versuchen sie, sich möglichst an Lustgewinnung und Schmerzvermeidung zu orientieren.
Konventionelle Ebene	
Dieser Ebene sind der Großteil der Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen zuzuordnen.	
3. Stufe – Die Orientierung an zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen der Gegenseitigkeit:	In dieser Phase werden die moralischen Erwartungen anderer erkannt und verstanden. Die Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen möchte der Autoritätsperson gefallen (good boy/nice girl) und das nicht nur aus Angst vor Strafe. Wird die Person den Erwartungen nicht gerecht, empfindet sie auch Schuldgefühle. Korrespondierend dazu richten diese Personen ebenfalls moralische Erwartungen an das Verhalten anderer.
4. Stufe – Die Orientierung an Gesetz und Ordnung:	In einem Schritt über die dritte Ebene hinaus erkennt der Mensch die Bedeutung moralischer Normen für das Funktionieren der Gesellschaft. Auch die nicht direkt von Bezugspersonen an das Kind gerichteten Erwartungen werden erkannt (allgemeine moralische Regeln der Gesellschaft) und befolgt, da sie für das Aufrechterhalten der sozialen Ordnung erforderlich sind.

Their morality is rather arbitrary; they consider terms such as "morally right" or "duty" to be relative. In a favourable case, they succeed in progressing to the 5th stage of moral awareness, but it is also possible that they remain in the transitional stage or fall back to the 4th stage. The intermediate stage is regarded as post-conventional, although moral judgments at this stage are not yet principle-driven.

Post-conventional level

Only a minority of adults reach the post-conventional level, usually only after the age of 20.

5th stage – legalistic orientation on the social contract:	Moral norms are now questioned and only regarded as binding if they are well founded. In the fifth stage, people are guided by the idea of a social contract. Certain norms are accepted on the grounds of justice or usefulness for all. Only around a quarter of all people reach this stage.
6th stage – orientation on the universal ethical principle:	Finally, the sixth stage is only reached by less than 5% of people. Here, the still diffuse justification of norms of the fifth stage is abandoned. Moral reasoning is now based on the principle of interpersonal respect, the rational standpoint of morality. Right action is harmonized with self-chosen ethical principles that rest on universality and non-contradiction, although these are no longer concrete moral rules but abstract principles (categorical imperative). Conflicts are to be resolved by argumentation involving (at least mentally) all those involved.

Zwischen- bzw. Übergangsstufe

In der Übergangzeit zum Erwachsenwerden befinden sich Jugendliche typischerweise in einer Übergangsphase. Um sich vom konventionellen Niveau des Moralbewusstseins zu lösen, ist es wichtig, moralische Normen zu hinterfragen und nicht blind Autoritäten zu folgen. In der Übergangsphase gelingt es dem Menschen noch nicht, die Begründung von Normen auf ein neues, intersubjektives Fundament zu stellen, er ist moralisch orientierungslos. Menschen dieser Stufe verhalten sich nach ihren persönlichen Ansichten und Emotionen. Ihre Moral ist eher willkürlich, Begriffe wie „moralisch richtig" oder „Pflicht" halten sie für relativ. Im günstigen Fall gelingt ihnen die Entwicklung zur 5. Stufe des Moralbewusstseins, es kann aber auch sein, dass sie in der Übergangsstufe verbleiben oder zur 4. Stufe zurückfallen. Die Zwischenstufe wird als postkonventionell angesehen, obwohl moralische Urteile auf dieser Stufe noch nicht prinzipiengesteuert sind.

Postkonventionelle Ebene

Nur eine Minderheit von Erwachsenen erreicht die postkonventionelle Ebene, meistens erst nach dem 20. Lebensjahr.

5. Stufe - Die legalistische Orientierung am Sozialvertrag:	Moralische Normen werden jetzt hinterfragt und nur noch als verbindlich angesehen, wenn sie gut begründet sind. In der fünften Stufe orientiert sich der Mensch an der Idee eines Gesellschaftsvertrags. Aus dem Motiv der Gerechtigkeit oder der Nützlichkeit für alle werden bestimmte Normen akzeptiert. Nur etwa ein Viertel aller Menschen erreicht diese Stufe.

Kohlberg's own stage model actually goes up to the 6th stage. Kohlberg later suggested that there could be a 7th stage in which moral judgements are transcendentally justified. This aspect was not systematically developed by Kohlberg; however, he assumes that only very few people reach this stage. The individual at stage 7 is filled with universal love, compassion or holiness. Kohlberg cites Jesus, Buddha and Gandhi as examples.

This overview based on Kohlberg gives us an insight into the developmental challenges that a person must overcome in order to make his or her own moral decisions.

Impulse control and morality

People want things. We have already discussed this in detail in the previous chapters. We have seen that the nature of the decision for or against things or behaviours depends on various factors. Moral choice is one aspect: what can or should I choose? Depending on which developmental phase a person is currently in, the basic decisions will differ (even if the execution of the will does not always correspond to the moral decision).

The task of counselling and therapy is certainly not to make moral decisions FOR the client. Rather, it is our 'job' to support our clients in mentalising their own moral attitude and, if necessary, to take further developmental steps.

Didactics of the will

We have now become acquainted with many factors that influence our will. In the following, we will present the very specific steps that a person can or should take in order to realise their will.

These processes, which are relatively unconscious for most people, are reflected in the so-called 'Theory of Mind', which we develop through our behaviour during childhood. This is our own inner 'mental map', which we use to approach tasks and situations ('This is how I always do it').

6. Stufe – Die Orientierung am universalen ethischen Prinzip:	Die sechste Stufe wird schließlich nur noch von weniger als 5% der Menschen erreicht. Hierbei wird die noch diffuse Begründung von Normen der fünften Stufe verlassen. Die Moralbegründung orientiert sich jetzt am Prinzip der zwischenmenschlichen Achtung, dem Vernunftstandpunkt der Moral. Das richtige Handeln wird mit selbstgewählten ethischen Prinzipien, die sich auf Universalität und Widerspruchslosigkeit berufen, in Einklang gebracht, wobei es sich nicht mehr um konkrete moralische Regeln, sondern um abstrakte Prinzipien handelt (kategorischer Imperativ). Konflikte sollen argumentativ unter (zumindest gedanklicher) Einbeziehung aller Beteiligten gelöst werden.

Das eigentliche Stufenmodell Kohlbergs geht bis zur 6. Stufe. Kohlberg hat später Vermutungen geäußert, es könne eine 7. Stufe geben, in der moralische Urteile transzendental begründet werden. Systematisch ausgebaut wurde dieser Aspekt von Kohlberg nicht; er nimmt jedoch an, dass nur sehr wenige Menschen diese Stufe erreichen. Das Individuum der Stufe 7 sei erfüllt von universeller Liebe, Mitgefühl oder Heiligkeit. Kohlberg zitiert als Beispiele Jesus, Buddha, und Gandhi.

Impulskontrolle und Moral

Menschen wollen Dinge. Das haben wir in den vorausgehenden Kapiteln schon intensiv besprochen. Wir haben gesehen, dass die Art der Entscheidung für oder gegen Dinge oder Verhaltensweisen von verschiedenen Faktoren abhängen. Die moralische Wahl ist ein Gesichtspunkt: Was darf oder soll ich wählen? Je nachdem, in welcher Entwicklungspha-

The corresponding skills that belong to the inner 'landmarks' are summarised under the technical term 'executive functions (EF)':

- -Goal setting: What goals do I set myself? What do I want to have / achieve? What do I focus my attention on and when? Which goals are more important to me, which are less important? How do I set my goals? What sources of inspiration do I have for setting my goals? Which corrections do I accept and from whom?

- Planning and implementation structuring: Which steps do I need/recognize in order to achieve my goal? Can I recognize and plan the right sub-steps? Am I familiar with aids, helpers and help-activation processes? Do I have ways of reviewing progress? Can I obtain feedback? Can I correct mistakes?

- Ability to inhibit impulses: Can I use affect regulation skills (see above) specifically to inhibit impulses? Do I recognize the impulse that arises and can I assess its intensity? Can I create a time delay in situations with emerging "hot" reactions? Can I focus my impulse inhibition on my goals and my planning/implementation?

- Self-motivation and self-reward skills: What do I use to support my own process? What supportive impulses can I organize for myself? Do I know when a goal has been achieved? Can I appreciate my efforts? Can I plan breaks and recognize and appreciate transitions?

This brief description shows that EF draws on many of the topics and areas that I have previously described. Nevertheless, these are skills that have to be learnt and practised in addition to their respective basic themes, because a person does not have them by themselves.

The task in counselling and therapy could therefore be to constantly reconsider with clients what the structure of the exercise of the will looks like and which new didactic steps would be helpful.

And it requires patience to take into account the fact that this learning also extends over a period of time.

se ein Mensch aktuell ist, werden sich die Grundentscheidungen dazu unterscheiden (auch wenn die Ausführung des Willens nicht immer der moralischen Entscheidung entspricht).
Aufgabe von Beratung und Therapie ist es sicher nicht, moralische Entscheidungen FÜR die Klienten zu treffen. Vielmehr ist es unser „Job", unsere Klienten darin zu unterstützen, die eigene moralische Einstellung zu mentalisieren und gegebenenfalls weitere Entwicklungsschritte zu gehen.

Willensdidaktik
Wir haben jetzt viele Faktoren kennengelernt, die unseren Willen beeinflussen. Im Folgenden sollen die ganz konkreten Schritte vorgestellt werden, die ein Mensch tun kann oder tun sollte, um seinen Willen umzusetzen.
Diese bei den meisten Menschen relativ unbewusst ablaufenden Prozesse bilden sich in der sogenannten „Theory of Mind" ab, die wir über unser Verhalten im Laufe der Kindheit entwickeln. Dabei handelt es sich um eine eigene innere „mentale Landkarte", anhand der wir Aufgaben und Situationen angehen („So mache ich das immer"). Die entsprechenden Fähigkeiten, die zu den inneren „Landmarken" gehören, werden unter dem Fachbegriff „exekutive Funktionen (EF)" zusammengefasst:

- Zielsetzung: Welche Zielpunkte setze ich mir? Was möchte ich haben / erreichen? Worauf richte ich meine Aufmerksamkeit zu welchem Zeitpunkt? Welche Ziele sind mir wichtiger, welche weniger wichtig? Wie setze ich mir Ziele? Welche Impulsgeber habe ich für meine Zielgebung? Welche Korrekturen lasse ich von wem zu?
- Planung und Umsetzungsstrukturierung: Welche Schritte brauche/erkenne ich, um mein Ziel zu erreichen? Kann ich die richtigen Unterschritte erkennen und planen? Kenne ich Hilfsmittel, Hilfspersonen und Hilfeaktivierungsabläufe? Verfüge ich über Möglichkeiten, Verläufe zu überprüfen? Kann ich mir Feedback einholen? Kann ich Fehler korrigieren?
- Fähigkeit zur Impulshemmung: Kann ich Affektregulationsskills (s.o.) konkret zur Impulshemmung einsetzen? Erkenne ich den auftauchenden Impuls und kann ihn in seiner Intensität einschätzen? Kann ich in Situationen mit auftauchenden „heißen" Reaktionen eine zeitliche Verzögerung herstellen? Kann ich meine

Concluding considerations

My observations show that the process of developing the will is one of the processes that take place over the entire lifespan.

We are in the process - perhaps each at a different point - of learning, practising and experiencing successes and failures together.
Furthermore, in my experience, the question arises not only of how a healthy will function develops, but also of where the will should ultimately be involved.

Should we only use our will for what is individually right and important or should we also orientate ourselves towards the greater good of all people?
In the chapter on moral development, we read that Kohlberg assumes that only a minority of adults reach the post-conventional level at which they are capable of making overarching moral decisions. And for these people, too, some decisions will certainly prove difficult due to an ethical universal principle.

The biblical Christian view is reflected in Paul's response to an accusation before the high council in Jerusalem (Acts 5:29): 'We must obey God rather than men.'

This appeal can be found in many places in the Bible: we are asked not only to make morally sound decisions, but rather to submit our entire will to God. This is a fundamental movement of faith. We may and should choose under 'whose flag' our will organises its processes.

Of course, this decision is a deeply individual one: each person is allowed to decide what should inform his or her will. However, experience shows that we cannot *not* choose. Every person's will receives influence from some source, even if it is their own ego...
Pastoral care, counselling and therapy are certainly places where this position of the individual in a framework of meaning becomes visible. For us psycho-social helpers, this results in the difficulty of repeatedly developing great awareness of the tension between individual choice and the joint work on the ability to mentalise the effects of the choice in question.

Impulshemmung auf meine Zielsetzung und meine Planung/Umsetzung ausrichten?
- Fähigkeiten zur Selbstmotivation und Selbstbelohnung: Womit unterstütze ich selbst meinen Prozess? Welche unterstützenden Impulse kann ich mir organisieren? Bekomme ich mit, wenn ein Ziel erreicht ist? Kann ich meine Anstrengung würdigen? Kann ich Pausen einplanen und Übergänge erkennen und würdigen?

In der kurzen Beschreibung wird ersichtlich, dass die EF auf viele der Themen und Bereiche, die ich vorher beschrieben habe, zurückgreifen. Trotzdem handelt es sich um Fähigkeiten, die neben ihren jeweiligen Grundthemen erlernt und geübt werden müssen, weil ein Mensch nicht von sich aus darüber verfügt.
Aufgabe in Beratung und Therapie könnte es also sein, immer wieder neu mit Klienten zu überlegen, wie die Struktur der Willensausübung aussieht und welche didaktischen Schritte neu hilfreich wären.
Und es braucht die Geduld, das Wissen einzubeziehen, dass sich auch dieses Lernen über Prozesszeiträume hinweg zieht.

Abschließende Betrachtungen
Meine Ausführungen zeigen: Der Prozess, den Willen zu entwickeln, gehört zu den Prozessen, die sich über die ganze Lebensspanne hinweg ziehen. Wir sind darin – vielleicht an unterschiedlichen Stellen – miteinander dabei, zu lernen, zu üben und Erfolge und Misserfolge zu erleben.
Darüber hinaus stellt sich meiner Erfahrung nach nicht nur die Frage, wie sich eine gesunde Willensfunktion entwickelt, sondern auch die, worin der Wille letztlich eingebunden sein soll.
Sollen wir unseren Willen nur für das individuell Richtige und Wichtige einsetzen oder uns auch an einem übergeordneten Wohl aller Menschen orientieren?
Im Kapitel zur Moralentwicklung hieß es, dass Kohlberg nur für eine Minderheit von Erwachsenen annimmt, dass sie die postkonventionelle Ebene erreichen, auf der sie zu übergeordneten moralischen Entscheidungen fähig werden. Und sicherlich werden auch für diese Menschen manche Entscheidungen aufgrund eines ethischen Universalprinzips durchaus schwierig werden.
Die biblisch-christliche Anschauung spiegelt sich in der Antwort Paulus auf eine Anklage vor dem Hohen Rat in Jerusalem (Apg. 5,29): „Man muss Gott

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mehr gehorchen als den Menschen."

Diese Aussage findet sich im biblischen Befund an vielen Stellen: Wir werden aufgefordert, nicht nur moralisch sinnvolle Entscheidungen zu treffen, sondern vielmehr unseren ganzen Willen Gott zu unterstellen. Das ist eine grundlegende Glaubensbewegung. Wir dürfen und sollen wählen, unter „wessen Flagge" unser Wille seine Prozesse gestaltet.

Natürlich ist diese Entscheidung eine zutiefst individuelle: Jeder Mensch darf entscheiden, was seinen Willen prägen soll. Allerdings zeigt die Erfahrung, dass wir nicht *nicht* wählen können. Der Wille jedes Menschen ist von irgendeiner Quelle mitbeeinflusst und sei es vom eigenen Ego...

Seelsorge, Beratung und Therapie sind sicher Orte, wo diese Einordnung des Menschen in einen Bedeutungsrahmen sichtbar wird. Daraus ergibt sich für uns psychosoziale Helfer die Schwierigkeit, immer wieder große Achtsamkeit zu entwickeln für die Spannung zwischen individueller Wahl und dem gemeinsamen Erarbeiten der Fähigkeit, die Auswirkungen der jeweiligen Wahl mentalisieren zu können.

The grave is empty

comment

The Will to Flourish: Reframing Suffering and Volition in Missional Therapy

Abstract

Building on and extending Kroll's framework of the will, I highlight how volitional capacity enables and sustains the will to flourish through meeting the inherent psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. While commending Kroll's framing of will and moral imagination, I also critique the limitations of traditional models like Kohlberg's moral stages and propose a more theologically grounded alternative: missional psychotherapy. I drew from Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' (2 Cor 12) and Kroll's case study (Ms. M.) to theorize how missional therapy reframes suffering as a site of volitional growth and missional alignment. The proposed PLEA model of missional therapy—Personalize, Locate, Engage, Apply—offers a therapeutic arc for clients to reengage their will within the redemptive mission of God. Ultimately, I argue in this paper that flourishing is not the absence of struggle, but the activation of will in service of transcendent purpose, even amid the crushing thorns of life.

Introduction

The will stands as one of the most enigmatic and yet indispensable constructs in understanding human behavior and flourishing. At its core, the volition or power to choose reflects an individual's capacity to initiate and direct action toward meaningful ends (Haggard, 2008). In fact, the foundation of modern motivation science rests on the distinction between "why" people act (their motives and goals) and "how" they convert those motives into sustained action (their volitional capacities).

One of the most influential psychological science theories used to understand human motivation and will is self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT posits that human flourishing and motivation depends on the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to experiencing oneself as the initiator of one's actions; competence involves a sense of mastery and efficacy; relatedness reflects the need for meaningful connection with others. Within this framework, will (the power to choose) and volition (the act of making choices) are expressions of autonomous motivation. In other words, when individuals act in ways that are congruent with their deeply held values or needs, they exhibit integrated forms of self-regulation that align with their flourishing. In contrast, when action is controlled by external pressures or internal coercions, volitional capacities may become fragile or fragmented. From the SDT framework, then, we can conceptualize the will as the faculty or power to choose or make conscious choices that align with our psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

One of the most valuable contributions of Kroll's (2025) article is its holistic treatment of the will as both a developmental and relational construct. Kroll resists the tendency to treat volition as a purely cognitive skill or biological trait. Instead, she traces its emergence from early attachment relationships,

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emotional regulation capacities, and moral development. This systems-oriented view echoes contemporary developmental science, where volition is understood as shaped by an interaction between person and context over time. The emphasis on the developmental and relational formation of will does, to some degree, also aligns with SDT's claim that supportive interpersonal environments foster autonomous functioning. For example, her discussion of self-love and Kolberg's moral scaffolding provided by caregivers parallels SDT's recognition that early caregiving shapes one's motivational orientation, preparing one for a lifetime of relationships. Autonomy-supportive parenting is shown to associate with stronger volitional regulation (Benito-Gomez et al. 2020)), while controlling environments impair the internalization of self-endorsed values (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989).

While SDT emphasizes psychological needs and the quality of motivation, other theories such as Expectancy-Value Theories (Eccles & Wigfield, 2000, 2002) focus on the cognitive evaluations individuals make when deciding whether to pursue a goal. Two key appraisals drive motivated behavior here: (1) expectancy beliefs (i.e., confidence in one's ability to succeed), and (2) subjective task values (i.e., how important, interesting, or useful the task appears). In other words, these judgments inform whether a person will mobilize their will to engage in action. Kroll's notion of volitional paralysis, as exemplified in her case study of Ms. M., illustrates how impaired expectancy and devalued goals can undermine the exercise of will. Ms. M.'s anxiety, avoidance, and immobilization reflect diminished efficacy beliefs and possibly low valuation of the tasks at hand. Expectancy-Value Theory suggests that interventions to rebuild Ms. M.'s will would require recalibrating both her self-efficacy and the perceived value of the life transitions confronting her. Importantly, Expectancy-Value frameworks highlight that volition is rarely independent of context. Structural opportunities, social norms, and cultural expectations directly influence how individuals evaluate their capabilities and life options. Kroll gestures toward these realities by emphasizing how early experiences, cultural-religious narratives, and family systems create the 'experiential space' within which will develop.

Nonetheless, the treatment of moral development in Kroll's paper, while useful, is overly dependent on Kohlberg's stage model without engaging more contemporary or culturally sensitive accounts of moral formation. Kohlberg's theory, though foundational, has been critiqued for privileging Western, individualist conceptions of morality and for underemphasizing relational, justice, and virtue dimensions of ethical development (Crittenden, 2005; Locle, 1979; Snarey, 1985). While the overemphasis on Kohlberg's framework may be positioning the paper for a Western audience, Kroll did a good job in situating the will within a distinctively Christian anthropology, which emphasizes the imago Dei and the intrinsic dignity of persons. Given the positioning of Kroll's paper, I seek to answer the following two questions in response to Kroll's paper:

1. What happens when our will does not reflect the *Missio Dei* promise as the people sent by God in the world?
2. How does Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' in 2 Corinthians 12 enrich and inform our understanding of the tension between one's will and the mission of God?
3. How can we regulate our action to participate in the mission of God despite our life's challenging stories?

This is pertinent especially given that volition, in control theory (see Carver & Scheier, 2001), involves sustained self-regulation across time and changing circumstances. Thus, can life span changes challenge the inherent nature of one's sense of autonomy, competence or mastery, and relationships? When these psychological needs, fundamental for powering their will, are disrupted due to life's circumstances, what is the missional hope thereof for such individuals?

The Bridge Between Motivation and Missional Action: A Case of Paul's Thorn as Volitional Homeostasis

In the psychology of action literature, the Rubicon model draws a line between motivation and volition, and between contemplating a goal and committing to act (Heckhausen, 2007). While motivation concerns deliberation, volition entails the gritty, ongoing regulation of behavior through fluctuating circumstances. Gollwitzer (1999) and subsequent research (see Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006) demonstrate that action planning and implementation intentions serve as psychological scaffolding that transforms good intentions into sustained action. Theologically, this distinction between motivation and volition echoes Kroll's 'didactics of the will,' which roots volitional development within a Christian anthropology of the imago Dei, which is the belief that humans are image-bearers of a volitional God. Still a critical question persists: What happens when our will no longer aligns with the *missio Dei* (our participation in the redemptive work of God in the world; Counted et al., 2024), especially when life's pain and struggles threaten to derail our sense of purpose?

To explore this tension, I turn to Paul's testimony in 2 Corinthians 12, where he speaks of a 'thorn in the flesh,' which, according to Paul, was a persistent affliction allowed by God. While Paul pleads for relief, God's answer is paradoxical: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9, NIV). Paul interprets the thorn not as a punishment, but as a divine provision with three functional purposes. First, it was to retain his humility and keep him grounded despite his revelations. Paul opens this passage with a reference to "surpassingly great revelations" (2 Cor 12:7), likely alluding to his mystical experiences; perhaps even the third-heaven encounter described earlier in the chapter. Such spiritual elevation could easily have bred arrogance or a sense of superiority. Instead, Paul says, "Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn." The thorn served as a counterweight to spiritual pride. One could say that it was a regulatory measure against ego inflation. In psychological terms, such 'weight' functions like a corrective feedback loop in control theory (Carver & Scheier, 2001), recalibrating Paul's self-perception whenever his spiritual status might tempt him toward self-exaltation. God placed within Paul's life a boundary—an unresolved tension—precisely so that his giftedness would not devour his groundedness.

Second, the thorn was to remind Paul of his fragile humanity. His letters often reveal his dual identity: strong apostle, yet very human. He speaks of despairing "even of life itself" (2 Cor 1:8), of being "persecuted, but not abandoned" (2 Cor 4:9). The thorn, then, was not simply about humbling Paul, but also about reminding him he was human—mortal, vulnerable, finite. He could heal others, yet not himself. He could cast out demons, but not

this one. The thorn embodied that theological paradox: a man with divine power still needing divine mercy. In doing so, it helped Paul form a sense of humanity, which anchored his authority in weakness rather than dominance. Lastly, the thorn was 'given' to Paul to restore his homeostasis and maintain his spiritual and psychological equilibrium amid the extremes of success, pain, and calling. The most fundamental function of the thorn, arguably, is homeostatic. Homeostasis in drive reduction theory is the body's ability to maintain internal stability amid external change (Goldstein, 2019; Stagner, 1961). Paul was a man in motion; he was planting churches, enduring persecution, writing epistles to the church, undergoing imprisonments, and navigating both divine ecstasy and social rejection. In such extremes (e.g., visions and beatings, miracles and sleepless nights) Paul could have become psychologically imbalanced, swinging between euphoria and despair. The thorn became God's tool for calibrating Paul's soul and motivation, keeping him from spiritual and emotional burnout.

Therefore, the thorn functions as a form of divine regulation, a way to anchor Paul's will to God's mission through his struggles, not despite it. Rather than disengage, Paul reframes the thorn as a portal for God's power to be revealed through him. We see here a volitional homeostasis at work. In other words, there was a spiritual regulation that not only motivates Paul to focus on God but allows him to persist in his mission even when personal strength is depleted.

This vision is foundational for missional psychotherapy (Counted et al. 2024), which seeks to integrate the challenges of personal history into the greater arc of God's redemptive story. I have proposed a framework of missional therapy, which unfolds within a fourfold process that mirrors this transformation: Personalize, Locate, Engage, Apply (PLEA). This process starts with personalizing the story of God. With the help of the Christian mental health professional, clients begin by naming their experiences, including wounds and 'thorns,' while recognizing that these are not outside the scope of divine attention. And like Paul, they are invited to see their struggles not as disqualifications but as doorways into greater divine missional purpose. Second is to locate ourselves in God's grand narrative. At this task, clients explore where their story intersects with the larger *missio Dei*. The thorn, rather than being erased, becomes a theological and existential coordinate that locates them within the divine narrative of grace. At the third task, the client is encouraged to engage their struggles through the missional story of God. This starts ultimately by engaging the Will of God. With this engagement phase, clients are guided into volitional activation. At this phase, they can develop spiritual practices, goal-setting habits, and psychological flexibility to enact God's call through suffering, not in spite of it. At the final task, the clients are invited to apply the missional story of God to their story by living out their faith by turning outward, e.g. through serving, leading, witnessing. Their pain becomes testimony, their weakness becomes strength, and their story becomes part of the redemptive healing work of God in the world.

In this light, Paul's thorn became more than a metaphor. It was actually a model for how God uses affliction not to silence our calling but to regulate it and shape us into instruments of grace. Missional psychotherapy echoes

this very vision and offers a therapeutic framework that honors both the psychological complexity of volitional struggle and the theological promise that God's power is made perfect in our weakness (Counted et al., 2024). Flourishing, then, is not the absence of struggle, but the presence of divine purpose within it.

Towards Flourishing and Will in Missional Therapy

Kroll's framework presupposes a developmental arc that may not account for discontinuities or nonlinear growth. People do not always progress steadily toward maturity. Life's thorns such as setbacks, trauma, and health disruptions can destabilize volitional functioning and psychological needs even in highly competent individuals. Flourishing, then, requires not only learning to exert will but also learning to re-engage it after failure. The formation and exercise of the will are not simply technical skills that allow individuals to complete tasks. They are central to what it means to flourish as a person. To understand this link, we must then connect Kroll's emphasis on volitional development with broader frameworks of human flourishing. Both theology and motivation science offer overlapping insights that help explain how the ability to exert will support a full, meaningful, and flourishing life.

At its most basic, Christian flourishing involves living well across multiple dimensions of abundant life—happiness/contentment, meaning, health, character, relationships, stewardship (Counted et al., 2025). It is not simply about feeling good or achieving success but becoming fully alive, realizing one's potential in alignment with both individual values and the common good (Counted, 2025; Long et al., 2025). Volition plays an important role in each of these dimensions of a flourishing Christian life. However, the first and most obvious connection between volition and Christian flourishing lies in agency. Human beings need to experience themselves as capable actors who can make choices, set goals, pursue values, and adjust to changing circumstances. Without a functioning will, individuals struggle to move toward valued ends. Kroll's framework helps make this visible. Ms. M's stagnation is not due to a lack of desire but to a breakdown in her ability to translate desire into action whereas for Paul, his thorn led to finding a missional purpose that strengthens his resolve to transform his story of thorn to a story of grace. Ms. M's paralyzing anxiety reflects a collapse of agency and misalignment with God's missional purpose, a common experience for those facing overwhelming transitions or major life disruptions.

From the perspective of motivation science, agency, and by extension, the will, is closely tied to the satisfaction of psychological needs. According to Self-Determination Theory, people thrive when they experience autonomy (i.e., able to make choices aligned with their values), competence (i.e., able to effectively act), and relatedness (i.e., feeling connected to others). But will is more than a psychological mechanism. It has a missional dimension that is rarely talked about. Within the framework of missional psychotherapy (Counted et al., 2024), the will is shaped and summoned through a four-fold process: Personalize, Locate, Engage, Apply (PLEA). This model provides a redemptive path that reframes volition as not just self-directed but aligned with the redemptive mission of God.

For individuals like Ms. M, early life experiences often fracture the foundations of healthy volition. In the *Personalize* task of missional therapy, the process begins with naming these disruptions—not to pathologize them but to draw them into the light of divine concern. Wounds, weaknesses, and what

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Paul called "thorns" are not outside God's awareness (2 Cor 12:7–10). Rather than treating them as deficiencies to be overcome, this stage invites clients to see their histories as the raw material of divine transformation. The will, in this stage, is not yet fully formed, but tentative, fragile, and searching. But by locating personal pain within God's story, even brokenness begins to hint at purpose.

The second take is to *Locate*, which repositions the individual within the grand narrative of the *missio Dei* (Counted et al., 2024). In this task, we begin to reinterpret our lives not as random or wasted but as situated within a broader spiritual arc (Bosch, 2011). Volition becomes rooted not just in psychological resources but in theological orientation. The thorn becomes a marker of where one's story intersects with God's redemptive mission. This reframing fosters meaning-making, especially in the face of suffering because when people are able to locate their pain within a sacred framework, their capacity for volitional action increases (Pargament, 2013). They no longer strive alone but with the knowledge that their striving is tethered to something eternal.

The third task is to *Engage*. This is where the will comes alive. Engagement is not just about behavioral activation. It is the spiritual and volitional practice of saying 'yes' to God in the face of hardship. Kroll's (2025) emphasis on self-regulation is vital here, but missional therapy goes even further. Engagement means discerning and enacting God's will, even when the personal cost is high. It is where the will matures through practice: setting goals, delaying gratification, resisting despair, and remaining faithful in adversity (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). The will, then, is not formed in the absence of suffering but through engagement with it. Missional engagement teaches that it is not in spite of our thorns but through them that we embody the call of God (Counted et al., 2024).

The final task is *Apply*—the outward expression of inward transformation. This is where flourishing manifests not as a static trait but as a lived testimony. In other words, will, at this phase, becomes witness. Individuals are invited to turn their healed pain into redemptive stories of purpose, serving others, leading from weakness, and living out their faith with integrity (Counted et al., 2024). In this phase, the will becomes embodied, not abstract; it is no longer a theoretical strength but a lived capacity to enact God's mission in daily life. This is the essence of self-transcendent motivation, with the primary goal of living as a vessel of divine love and justice and not for oneself (Koltko-Rivera, 2006).

From the missional perspective, volition is central to the abundant life and Christian flourishing because it connects meaning with movement. It bridges the gap between belief and behavior, values and action, theology and therapy. Missional therapy teaches that people flourish when their will is aligned not merely with personal goals but with transcendent missional purpose. And this purpose is not just any higher aim, but rather is participation in the healing, reconciling work of God in the world (Counted et al., 2024).

Nonetheless, flourishing requires the ability to navigate moral complexity. The will is not only about choosing goals but about choosing rightly. As Kroll emphasized, volitional maturity includes the courage to act with moral integrity, even when values conflict or consequences are uncertain. Missional therapy echoes this very moral imperative, inviting individuals to cultivate the kind of missional wisdom that can discern and do the good, even when

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it is costly. Perhaps this is where missional discernment and volitional strength converge to form moral agency.

Therefore, volition and flourishing must be seen as developmental, not static. The will grows through stages, whether through hardship, failure, support, or grace. It is a muscle trained over time, and a *missio Dei* framework honors this journey by offering a redemptive arc rather than a prescriptive checklist. As proposed in earlier pages, missional therapy invites individuals to have volitional motivation that is not forged in ease but in the crucible of missional purpose. In this sense, will becomes both the pathway to missional flourishing and the fruit of a flourishing abundant life.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the exercise of will is a central driver of human flourishing. It empowers individuals to pursue meaningful goals, adapt to adversity, regulate emotions, act with moral integrity, and align their lives with transcendent purposes. Kroll's framework, though it can be enriched by additional theoretical and empirical insights, rightly places volition at the heart of both psychological health and spiritual maturity. Therefore, Christian flourishing is not the absence of struggle but the presence of willful, purposeful engagement with life under God. Through the framework of missional therapy, the will is dignified, restored, and aligned with God's missional mandate. It becomes a way of participating in God's healing mission in the world by starting with one's own story, one person at a time.

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http://www.heilsamebeziehungen.com/

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Luca Hersberger (Switzerland/Schweiz):

Hope for change

Strengthening and resilience with a growth mindset
Change and growth are possible when people believe that they can develop skills, learn from mistakes and start afresh amidst doubts. A dynamic self-image is an important resource, particularly in education, but also in therapy and counselling.

What is a growth mindset, how does it influence our thoughts and actions and can this attitude be learnt? And is this concept also helpful for therapists and counsellors in promoting personal growth, resilience and spiritual life? Growth mindset is one of the most influential psychological concepts of recent decades in the fields of education, psychotherapy and personal development. It was significantly shaped and researched by the American psychologist Carol Dweck. In the 1980s, she examined the research question of why some students with comparable prerequisites are more concerned with proving their abilities, while others are more concerned with improving them. This led Dweck to describe different ways of thinking about our abilities, which she later named the 'fixed mindset' and the 'growth mindset'.

What is a growth mindset?
Dweck's work makes it clear that people are able to change their intelligence, abilities and even personality through their attitudes and beliefs. Growth

Hoffnung auf Veränderung

Mit Growth Mindset zu Wachstum und Resilienz
Veränderung und Wachstum sind möglich, wenn Menschen daran glauben, dass sie Fähigkeiten entwickeln, aus Fehlern lernen und im Zweifel ganz neu anfangen können. Besonders in der Erziehung, aber auch in Therapie und Seelsorge ist das dynamische Selbstbild eine wichtige Ressource.

Was ist ein Growth Mindset, wie beeinflusst es unser Denken und Handeln und kann man diese Haltung erlernen? Und ist dieses Konzept auch für Therapeuten und Seelsorger hilfreich, um persönliches Wachstum, Resilienz und geistliches Leben zu fördern? Wachstumsdenken oder Growth Mindset[1] ist eines der einflussreichsten psychologischen Konzepte der letzten Jahrzehnte in den Bereichen Bildung, Psychotherapie und persönlicher Entwicklung. Es wurde maßgeblich von der amerikanischen Psychologin Carol Dweck geprägt und erforscht. Sie setzte sich in den 1980er Jahren mit der Forschungsfrage auseinander, warum es manchen Studierenden mit vergleichbaren Voraussetzungen mehr darum geht, ihre Fähigkeiten zu beweisen, während es anderen wich-

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[1] In der Deutschen Fachliteratur wird „Growth Mindset" oft auch mit „dynamisches Selbstbild" übersetzt. „Fixed Mindset" wird als „statisches Selbstbild" ins Deutsche übertragen. Im vorliegenden Artikel werden meist die englischen Begriffe genutzt.

mindset describes a way of thinking in which people believe that they can develop their basic skills through hard work, targeted learning and perseverance. A person with this mindset is convinced that failures and setbacks are not final judgements on their abilities, but opportunities to learn and grow. This leads to a greater willingness to accept challenges and learn from mistakes. Ultimately, this attitude contributes to becoming more resilient in stressful or difficult situations. This contrasts with the fixed mindset. People with a static self-image see their intelligence and talents as fixed and assume that these abilities cannot be changed significantly. As a result, such people tend to avoid challenges, are afraid of mistakes and failures and are less likely to develop further.

Even if the descriptions of the two basic attitudes sound rather generalised, we can have different mindsets in different areas of our lives - for example, a growth mindset in relation to our ability to learn in a professional context and a fixed mindset in relation to our relationship skills. A growth mindset can be learnt - and it pays off when people move into the growth zone in different areas of their lives.

Research results regarding the growth mindset
The concept of the growth mindset has far-reaching implications in areas such as education, working life, sport and psychotherapy. One of the best-known studies by Dweck and Mueller investigated how different types of praise affect children's behaviour. Children who were praised for their efforts were more likely to show a growth mindset, while those who were praised for their intelligence tended to develop a fixed mindset. The children with a growth mindset enjoyed learning more, were willing to take on more difficult tasks and regarded failure as part of the learning process. Another important experiment by Blackwell, Trzesniewski and Dweck showed that students who learnt the concept of a growth mindset in a workshop experienced a significant improvement in their academic performance over time. These studies show that the assumption that one can expand one's skills and knowledge leads to higher motivation, increased effort and better results.
Further research confirmed that people with a growth mindset take on more challenges, are more resilient in difficult situations and use other people

tiger ist, sie zu verbessern[2]. Dies führte Dweck zur Beschreibung von unterschiedlichen Denkweisen über unsere Fähigkeiten, welche später von ihr als „Fixed Mindset" und „Growth Mindset" benannt wurden[3].

Was ist ein Growth Mindset?
Dwecks Arbeiten verdeutlichen, dass Menschen durch ihre Einstellungen und Überzeugungen in der Lage sind, ihre Intelligenz, Fähigkeiten und sogar Persönlichkeit zu verändern. Growth Mindset beschreibt eine Denkweise, bei der Menschen daran glauben, dass sie ihre grundlegenden Fähigkeiten durch harte Arbeit, gezieltes Lernen und Ausdauer entwickeln können. Eine Person mit dieser Grundhaltung ist überzeugt davon, dass Misserfolge und Rückschläge keine endgültigen Urteile über ihre Fähigkeiten darstellen, sondern Chancen zum Lernen und Wachsen sind. Das führt zu einer größeren Bereitschaft, Herausforderungen anzunehmen und aus Fehlern zu lernen. Letztlich trägt diese Haltung dazu bei, in stressigen oder schwierigen Situationen widerstandsfähiger zu werden.
Im Gegensatz dazu steht das Fixed Mindset. Menschen mit einem statischen Selbstbild betrachten ihre Intelligenz und Talente als festgelegt und gehen davon aus, dass diese Fähigkeiten nicht wesentlich verändert werden können. Das kann dazu führen, dass solche Menschen Herausforderungen eher vermeiden, Angst vor Fehlern und Misserfolgen haben und sich weniger stark weiterentwickeln.
Auch wenn die Beschreibungen der zwei Grundhaltungen recht pauschal klingen, können wir in unterschiedlichen Bereichen unseres Lebens verschiedene Mindsets – etwa ein Growth Mindset im Bezug auf unsere Lernfähigkeit im beruflichen Kontext und ein Fixed Mindset im Bezug auf unsere Beziehungsfähigkeiten – haben. Ein Growth Mindset ist erlernbar – und es lohnt sich, wenn sich Menschen in den verschiedenen Lebensbereichen in die Wachstumszone begeben.

Forschungsergebnisse zum Growth Mindset
Das Konzept des Growth Mindsets hat weitreichende

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[2] Schön beschrieben im Artikel von Carol Dweck und David Yaeger: „Among students with roughly equal ability, why might some care more about proving their ability and others more about improving it?" Dweck, C. S., & Yeager, D. S. (2019). Mindsets: A View From Two Eras. Perspectives on Psychological Science, 14(3), 481-496.
[3] Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset: The new psychology of success. Random House.

as mentors and resources to develop their skills and attributes.[1] They also experience less stress.[2] A study with adolescents showed that a growth mindset is associated with significantly better mental health.[3]

People with a fixed mindset, on the other hand, tend to rely on their status quo and avoid challenges. When they fail, they often interpret this as evidence of their fixed inability. This not only leads to a reduced willingness to learn, but also to emotional setbacks. The fear of being incapable often prevents them from learning from their mistakes. Ultimately, this can lead to a kind of self-sabotage.[4]

Growth in faith

The principles of the growth mindset can be linked to biblical statements and the Christian faith in general, as spiritual and personal growth also play an important role there. This growth is not seen as something static, but as a continuous process of drawing closer to Christ. In this context, the challenges and trials in life can be seen as opportunities for further development in order to promote a deeper, more intensive relationship with God. Peter, for example, writes of trials that lead to a proven faith that pays off.[5] The Bible offers a wealth of concrete and symbolic images that describe a growth-orientated and fruitful life of faith. We read about growth in the love that should overflow in us,[6] about wise people who are willing to learn[7] and about the wonderful virtues that mature in us as fruits of the spirit.[8]

We encounter images of fruit-bearing vines[9] and trees,[10] of the enlargement of our tent[11] and spiritual nourishment that corresponds to our level of growth in faith.[12]

Implikationen in Bereichen wie Bildung, Arbeitsleben, Sport und Psychotherapie. Eine der bekanntesten Studien von Dweck und Mueller[4] untersuchte, wie sich unterschiedliche Arten von Lob auf das Verhalten von Kindern auswirkt. Kinder, die für ihre *Anstrengungen* gelobt wurden, zeigten darauf häufiger ein Growth Mindset, während diejenigen, die für ihre *Intelligenz* gelobt wurden, tendenziell ein Fixed Mindset entwickelten. Die Kinder mit einem Growth Mindset zeigten mehr Freude am Lernen, waren bereit, sich schwierigeren Aufgaben zu stellen, und betrachteten Misserfolge als Teil des Lernprozesses. Ein weiteres wichtiges Experiment von Blackwell, Trzesniewski und Dweck[5] belegte, dass Schülerinnen und Schüler, die in einem Workshop das Konzept des Growth Mindsets erlernten, über die Zeit eine signifikante Verbesserung ihrer akademischen Leistungen erfuhren. Diese Studien zeigen, dass die Annahme, man könne seine Fähigkeiten und sein Wissen erweitern, zu höherer Motivation, gesteigerter Anstrengung und besseren Ergebnissen führt.

Weitere Forschungsergebnisse bestätigten, dass Menschen mit einem Growth Mindset mehr Herausforderungen annehmen, in schwierigen Situationen widerstandsfähiger sind und andere Menschen als Mentoren und Ressourcen nutzen, um ihre Fähigkeiten und Eigenschaften zu entwickeln[6]. Zudem erleben sie weniger Stress[7]. Eine Studie mit Adoleszenten zeigte, dass ein Growth Mindset mit signifikant besserer psychischer Gesundheit assoziiert ist[8].

Menschen mit einem Fixed Mindset hingegen neigen dazu, sich auf ihren Status quo zu verlassen und Herausforderungen eher aus dem Weg zu gehen. Wenn sie scheitern, interpretieren sie das oft als Beweis für ihre festgelegte Unfähigkeit. Dies führt nicht nur zu einer geringeren Lern-bereitschaft, sondern auch zu emotionalen Rück-schlägen. Die Angst, unfähig zu sein, hindert sie oft daran, aus

1 In: Elliott-Moskwa, Elaine (2022). The Growth Mindset Workbook. New Harbinger Publications.
2 Dweck, C. S., Yeager D. S. (2019). Mindsets: a view from two eras. Perspect. Psychol. Sci. 14, 481–496.
3 Tao, W., Zhao, D., Yue, H., Horton, I., tian, X., Xu, Z., & Sun, H. J. (2022). The Influence of Growth Mindset on the Mental Health and Life Events of College Students. Frontiers in psychology, 13, 821206.
4 Dweck, C. S., Yeager D. S., loc. cit.
5 1 Peter, 1:6-7
6 1 Thess 3:12-13
7 Prov 18:15; a fitting description of a fixed mindset is likewise found in Proverbs: A fool does not delight in learning, but only in revealing his own mind. (Prov 18:2)
8 Gal 5:22
9 Jn 15:5
10 Ps 1:3
11 Isa 54:2
12 1 Cor 3,1-3

4 Mueller, C. M., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75(1), 33–52.
5 Blackwell, L. S., Trzesniewski, K. H., & Dweck, C. S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. Child Development, 78(1), 246–263.
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7 Dweck, C. S., Yeager D. S. (2019). Mindsets: a view from two eras. Perspect. Psychol. Sci. 14, 481–496.
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Everything is aimed at making us more and more like Jesus.[13] We see Noah, Gideon, Esther, Ruth and many other heroes of faith facing great challenges and tackling them with God's help. And sometimes we too face a 'giant', but we can trust that overcoming challenges will ultimately serve us for the best.[14] The growth mindset is in line with biblical principles and is also reflected in central Christian themes such as forgiveness, grace and redemption. We are called to learn from our mistakes (keyword: repentance) and to trust that God will help us to grow. Paul writes in Philippians that he is not yet perfect and that he is striving towards the goal of reaching his heavenly calling in Jesus.[15] The goal for him is not to be perfect, but to grow continually in faith.

The biblical statement that people are created in the image of God also links the growth mindset to faith.[16] This ascribes to people an immeasurable potential for transformation and renewal. A fixed mindset contradicts this idea, as it limits a person's development opportunities. The growth mindset, on the other hand, invites people to allow themselves to be continuously moulded according to God's plan and to become an ever more perfect expression of divine creation.

Growth mindset in the upbringing

Childhood and adolescence offer many opportunities to shape and cultivate a growth mindset. Studies show that the behaviour and language of parents and teachers play an important role in the development of a growth mindset. In 2013, Dweck and colleagues replicated the findings of previous studies that praise for effort - as opposed to praise for ability - encourages children to develop a growth mindset.[17] A child who is praised for effort develops greater perseverance and learns to view setbacks as opportunities for improvement. In contrast, when parents emphasise a child's talents and innate abilities, this often leads to a fixation on what the child can already do and they can develop a fear of failure.

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13 *1 Jn 3:2; 2 Cor 3:18; Eph 4:15*
14 *A perhaps slightly bold rendering of the conversation between David and Goliath before the combat began (1 Sam 17:9)*
15 *Phil 3:12-14*
16 *Gen 1:27*
17 *Gunderson, E. A., Gripshover, S. J., Romero, C., & Dweck, C. S. (2013). Parent praise to 1-to-3- year-olds predicts children's motivational framework 5 years later. Child Development, 84(5), 1526-1541.*

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ihren Fehlern zu lernen.
Letztlich kann das zu einer Art Selbstsabotage führen[9].

Wachstum im Glauben

Die Prinzipien des Growth Mindsets lassen sich mit biblischen Aussagen und dem christlichen Glauben im Allgemeinen verbinden, denn auch dort spielen geistliches und persönliches Wachstum eine wichtige Rolle. Dieses Wachstum wird nicht als etwas Statisches angesehen, sondern als kontinuierlicher Prozess der Annäherung an Christus. Die Herausforderungen und Prüfungen im Leben
können in diesem Zusammenhang als Gelegenheiten zur Weiterentwicklung betrachtet werden, um eine tiefere, intensivere Beziehung zu Gott zu fördern. So schreibt beispielsweise Petrus von Prüfungen, die zu einem bewährten Glauben führen, welcher sich auszahlt[10].

Die Bibel bietet eine Fülle an konkreten und symbolischen Bildern, die ein wachstumsorientiertes und fruchtbares Leben im Glauben beschreiben. Wir lesen von Wachstum in der Liebe, die in uns überfließen soll[11], von weisen, lernwilligen Menschen[12] und von den wunderbaren Tugenden, die als Früchte des Geistes in uns reifen[13]. Wir begegnen Bildern von fruchttragenden Reben[14] und Bäumen[15], von der Vergrößerung unseres Zeltes[16] und geistlicher Nahrung, die unserem Wachstumsstand im Glauben entspricht[17]. Alles zielt darauf ab, dass wir Jesus immer ähnlicher werden[18]. Wir sehen Noah, Gideon, Esther, Ruth und viele andere Glaubensheldinnen und -helden, wie sie vor großen Herausforderungen stehen und diese mit Gottes Hilfe anpacken. Und manchmal stehen auch wir vor einem „Riesen", doch wir können darauf vertrauen, dass überwundene Herausforderungen uns letztlich zum Besten dienen[19]. Das Growth Mindset ist im Einklang mit biblischen Prinzipien und findet sich auch in zentralen christlichen Themen wie Vergebung, Gnade und Erlösung wieder. Wir sind dazu aufgerufen, aus Fehlern zu lernen

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9 *Dweck, C. S., Yeager D. S., a.o.O.* 10 *1. Petr 1,6-7*
11 1. Thess 3,12-13
12 Spr 18,15; Eine treffende Beschreibung für ein Fixed Mindset ist ebenfalls in den Sprüchen zu finden: Einem Toren ist es nicht ums Lernen zu tun, sondern darum, zu enthüllen, was er weiß. (Spr 18,2)
13 Gal 5,22
14 Joh 15,5
15 Ps 1,3
16 Jes 54,2
17 1. Kor 3,1-3
18 1. Joh 3,2; 2. Kor 3,18; Eph 4,15
19 Eine vielleicht etwas gewagte Übertragung der Konversation zwischen David und Goliath, bevor es zum Kampf kam (1.Sam 17,9)

Carol Dweck writes about education in her book: 'The best thing parents can do is to teach their children to love challenges, to be fascinated by mistakes, to enjoy striving and to keep learning.'[18]
In schools where a growth mindset is consciously encouraged, students develop a greater curiosity for learning and are more willing to take on challenges. Practices such as metacognitive learning strategies and fostering the realisation that mistakes are valuable learning opportunities promote this mindset in young people. This is a valuable long-term investment, as a growth mindset promotes not only academic success, but also emotional and social maturation.

Growth mindset in psychotherapy and counselling
A growth mindset can also be applied in therapeutic and counselling settings, as it inspires hope that growth and change are possible even in the face of major challenges. The principles of the growth mindset are even fundamental if we are to be able to assume that psychotherapeutic treatment is beneficial at all. If growth and change were not possible and could not be promoted, psychotherapy and counselling would be largely useless.
Nevertheless, it is always helpful, even for experienced therapists, to realise that people are capable of learning, developing and changing and therefore do not have to remain fixated on their weaknesses, diagnoses and setbacks. The findings of mindset research are particularly hopeful in this context, as even deeply rooted, unhelpful life patterns (e.g. through schema therapy[19]) can be changed and people can learn to courageously face their fears and challenges and learn new constructive strategies. Research shows that people can experience growth and a more conscious approach to their own values, strengths and limits even after very stressful life events - if they actively deal with them. This is described as 'post-traumatic growth'.[20]

(Stichwort Umkehr/Buße) und darauf zu vertrauen, dass Gott uns hilft, zu wachsen. Paulus schreibt im Philipperbrief, dass er noch nicht vollkommen ist und sich nach dem Ziel ausstreckt, seine himmlische Berufung in Jesus zu erreichen[20]. Das Ziel liegt für ihn nicht darin, perfekt zu sein, sondern fortwährend im Glauben zu wachsen.
Die biblische Aussage, dass Menschen nach dem Bilde Gottes geschaffen sind, verbindet ebenfalls das Growth Mindset und den Glauben[21]. Damit wird dem Menschen ein unermessliches Potenzial zur Transformation und Erneuerung zugeschrieben. Ein Fixed Mindset widerspricht dieser Vorstellung, da es die Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten eines Menschen limitiert. Das Growth Mindset hingegen lädt dazu ein, sich kontinuierlich nach Gottes Plan formen zu lassen und zu einem immer vollkommeneren Ausdruck der göttlichen Schöpfung zu werden.

Growth Mindset in der Erziehung
Die Kindheit und Jugend bietet viele Chancen, um ein Growth Mindset zu prägen und zu kultivieren. Studien zeigen, dass das Verhalten und die Sprache von Eltern und Lehrkräften eine wichtige Rolle bei der Entwicklung eines Growth Mindsets spielen. Dweck und Kollegen replizierten 2013 die Ergebnisse früherer Studien, dass Lob für Anstrengung – im Gegensatz zu Lob für Fähigkeiten – Kinder dazu ermutigt, ein wachstumsorientiertes Denken zu entwickeln[22]. Ein Kind, das für seine Anstrengung gelobt wird, entwickelt eine größere Ausdauer und lernt, Rückschläge als Chance zur Verbesserung zu betrachten.
Wenn Eltern hingegen die Talente und angeborenen Fähigkeiten eines Kindes in den Vordergrund stellen, führt dies oft zu einer Fixierung auf das, was das Kind bereits kann, und es kann eine Angst vor dem Scheitern entwickeln.
Carol Dweck schreibt über Erziehung in ihrem Buch: „Das Beste, was Eltern tun können, ist, ihren Kindern beizubringen, Herausforderungen zu lieben, sich von Fehlern faszinieren zu lassen, Freude an Anstrengungen zu haben und weiterhin zu lernen."[23]
In Schulen, in denen ein Growth Mindset bewusst gefördert wird, entwickeln die Schülerinnen und

18 *Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset: The new psychology of success. Random House.*
19 *More on this in my book: Hersberger, L. (2016, revised new impression 2022). Heilsame Beziehungen: wenn christlicher Glaube und Schematherapie sich ergänzen. ArteMedia. www.heilsamebeziehungen.com*
20 *A book on this with insights from research and including practical suggestions: Joseph, S. (2015). What Doesn't Kill Us: The New Psychology of Posttraumatic Growth; The military chaplain Thomas Thiel has written about post-traumatic growth in P&S 3-24 (from p. 22).*

20 Phil 3,12-14
21 1. Mos 1,27
22 Gunderson, E. A., Gripshover, S. J., Romero, C., & Dweck, C. S. (2013). Parent praise to 1-to-3-year-olds predicts children's motivational framework 5 years later. Child Development, 84(5), 1526-1541.
23 Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset: The new psychology of success. Random House.

Patients who believe in the success of their efforts in therapy processes and expect improvement often develop more resilience and perseverance in dealing with their problems. Dweck's findings suggest that people who are convinced that they can change their thought patterns and behaviours engage more easily in therapeutic processes and achieve longer-term improvements. A person with a static self-image can end up in a blind alley if they believe that deep-rooted issues such as anxiety, depression or relationship problems cannot be changed. This can encourage feelings of helplessness and stagnation and suggest the unhelpful conclusion that someone is 'a lost cause'. A therapeutic professional can help to teach the concept of growth mindset in order to strengthen self-efficacy and the willingness to change. It is helpful if the professional is familiar with the growth mindset and the power of growth and change. A growth mindset can then promote hope and a perspective for change in both those affected and professionals.

Practical steps to promote a growth mindset
A growth mindset can be trained in many different ways. Here are some practical approaches that can help to promote this frame of mind:
> It is worth seeking out challenges and confronting your current skills with the question 'How can I improve?' Phrases such as 'I can't do this yet' instead of 'I'm not good at this' can change our attitude.

- Appreciate your own efforts when a task is difficult. 'The harder I have to work, the more chances I have to improve.'
- 'Every per cent is something' as an attitude when evaluating progress.
- Mistakes are to be expected and are opportunities to learn. 'If I don't make mistakes, I haven't challenged myself enough.'
- Other people are valuable resources. Constructive comparison with them. 'How can I learn from other people, their experiences and their feedback?' 'How did they manage that?'
- It's all about the fundamental willingness to continuously develop, learn new skills and grow.

Schüler eine größere Neugierde am Lernen und zeigen mehr Bereitschaft, sich Herausforderungen zu stellen. Praktiken wie metakognitive Lernstrategien und das gezielte Fördern der Einsicht, dass Fehler wertvolle Lernmöglichkeiten darstellen, fördern dieses Mindset bei jungen Menschen. Dies ist eine wertvolle langfristige Investition, da ein Growth Mindset nicht nur akademischen Erfolg, sondern auch emotionale und soziale Reifung fördert.

Growth Mindset in Psychotherapie und Seelsorge
Ein Growth Mindset kann auch im therapeutischen und seelsorgerlichen Bereich angewendet werden, da es Hoffnung weckt, dass auch bei großen Herausforderungen Wachstum und Veränderung möglich sind. Die Prinzipien des Growth Mindset sind sogar grundlegend, um überhaupt von einem Nutzen einer psychotherapeutischen Behandlung ausgehen zu können. Wenn Wachstum und Veränderung nicht möglich und förderbar wären, wäre Psychotherapie und Seelsorge mehrheitlich nutzlos. Dennoch ist es auch für erfahrene Therapeutinnen und Therapeuten immer wieder hilfreich, sich bewusst zu machen, dass Menschen lernfähig sind, sich entwickeln und verändern können und so nicht auf ihre Schwächen, Diagnosen und Rückschläge fixiert bleiben müssen. Die Erkenntnisse der Mindsetforschung sind in diesem Kontext besonders hoffnungsvoll, da auch tief verwurzelte, nicht hilfreiche Lebensmuster (z. B. durch Schematherapie[24]) verändert werden und Menschen lernen können, sich mutig ihren Ängsten und Herausforderungen zu stellen und neue konstruktive Strategien zu erlernen. Die Forschung zeigt, dass Menschen auch nach sehr belastenden Lebensereignissen – bei aktiver Auseinandersetzung damit – Wachstum und einen bewussteren Umgang mit eigenen Werten, Stärken und Grenzen erfahren können. Dies wird als „Posttraumatisches Wachstum" beschrieben[25].
Patientinnen und Patienten, die in Therapieprozessen an den Erfolg ihrer Bemühungen glauben und eine Verbesserung erwarten, entwickeln häufig mehr Resilienz und Durchhaltevermögen bei der Bearbeitung ihrer

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[24] Mehr dazu in meinem Buch: Hersberger, L. (2016, revidierte Neuauflage 2022). Heilsame Beziehungen: wenn christlicher Glaube und Schematherapie sich ergänzen. ArteMedia. www.heilsamebeziehungen.com
[25] Ein Buch dazu mit Erkenntnissen aus der Forschung und auch praktischen Empfehlungen: Joseph, S. (2015). Was uns nicht umbringt: Wie es Menschen gelingt, aus Schicksalsschlägen und traumatischen Erfahrungen gestärkt hervorzugehen. Springer Berlin Heidelberg. Der Militärpfarrer Thomas Thiel hat über posttraumatisches Wachstum in P&S 3-24 (ab S. 22) geschrieben.

Conclusion

A growth mindset offers a transformative view of personal growth and development that goes far beyond academic achievement. It creates a foundation on which people can see their abilities, self-image and even their relationships in a dynamic process of constant change and improvement. This way of thinking not only runs counter to the fixed mindset, but opens doors to resilience, perseverance and a more sustainable way of learning.

In education, psychotherapy and personal life, the growth mindset opens up opportunities to bring about long-term and profound positive change. By encouraging people to see their mistakes and challenges as opportunities for learning and growth, they not only develop greater resilience in the face of setbacks, but also the ability to continuously develop and utilise their potential, gifts, strengths and talents more fully. A growth mindset is also valuable and relevant for Christians. If we learn to courageously accept personal challenges with God's help and in relationship with God and other people, this can lead to sustainable personal and spiritual growth.

To summarise, a growth mindset not only leads to better performance, but also to a more sustainable and fulfilling way of life. It enables us to recognise and utilise the potential for change and improvement in all areas of life - be it work, school, relationships or faith. It invites us to view life as a continuous journey of learning, growing and healing.

Probleme. Dwecks Erkenntnisse legen nahe, dass Menschen, die überzeugt sind, ihre Denkmuster und Verhaltensweisen ändern zu können, sich leichter auf therapeutische Prozesse einlassen und längerfristige Verbesserungen erzielen.

Eine Person mit einem statischen Selbstbild kann in einer Sackgasse landen, wenn sie glaubt, dass tief verwurzelte Probleme wie Angst, Depression oder Beziehungsprobleme nicht verändert werden können. Dies kann Gefühle der Hilflosigkeit und des Stillstands fördern und den nicht hilfreichen Schluss nahelegen, dass jemand „ein hoffnungsloser Fall" ist. Eine therapeutische Fachperson kann dabei helfen, das Konzept des Wachstumsdenkens zu vermitteln, um die Selbstwirksamkeit und die Bereitschaft zur Veränderung zu stärken. Es ist hilfreich, wenn die Fachperson mit dem Growth Mindset und der Kraft von Wachstum und Veränderung vertraut ist. Dann kann ein Wachstums-Mindset sowohl bei Betroffenen als auch bei Fachpersonen Hoffnung und Veränderungsperspektive fördern.

Praktische Schritte zur Förderung eines Growth Mindsets

Ein Growth Mindset kann auf vielfältige Weise trainiert werden. Hier sind einige praktische Ansätze, die helfen können, diese Denkweise zu fördern:

- Es lohnt sich, Herausforderungen zu suchen und den eigenen aktuellen Fähigkeiten mit der Frage „Wie kann ich mich verbessern?" zu begegnen. Sätze wie „Ich kann das noch nicht" anstelle von „Ich bin nicht gut darin" können unsere Haltung verändern.[26]
- Eigene Bemühungen würdigen, wenn eine Aufgabe schwierig ist. „Je mehr ich mich anstrengen muss, umso mehr Chancen auf Verbesserung habe ich."
- „Jedes-Prozent-ist-etwas" als Haltung bei der Bewertung eines Fortschritts.
- Fehler sind zu erwarten und Möglichkeiten zu lernen. „Wenn ich keine Fehler mache, habe ich mich zu wenig herausgefordert."
- Andere Menschen sind wertvolle Ressourcen. Konstruktives Vergleichen mit ihnen. „Wie kann ich von anderen Menschen, ihren Erfahrungen und ihrem Feedback lernen?" „Wie haben sie

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[26] Carol Dweck redet in ihrem TED-Talk eindrücklich über die Kraft des „noch": Dweck, C. (2014). The power of believing you can improve [TED Talk]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_belie-ving_that_you_can_improve

das geschafft?" [27] Es geht in allem um die grundlegende Bereitschaft, sich kontinuierlich weiterzuentwickeln, neue Fähigkeiten zu erlernen und zu wachsen.

Schlussfolgerung

Ein Growth Mindset bietet eine verändernde Sichtweise auf persönliches Wachstum und Entwicklung, die weit über akademische Leistungen hinausgeht. Es schafft eine Grundlage, auf der Menschen ihre Fähigkeiten, ihr Selbstverständnis und sogar ihre Beziehungen in einem dynamischen Prozess stetiger Veränderung und Verbesserung sehen können. Diese Denkweise stellt nicht nur einen Gegenentwurf zum Fixed Mindset dar, sondern öffnet Türen zu Resilienz, Durchhaltevermögen und einer nachhaltigeren Art des Lernens.

In der Erziehung, Psychotherapie und im persönlichen Leben eröffnet das Growth Mindset Chancen, um langfristig und tiefgreifend positive Veränderungen zu bewirken. Indem Menschen ermutigt werden, ihre Fehler und Herausforderungen als Lern- und Wachstumsmöglichkeiten zu sehen, entwickeln sie nicht nur eine größere Widerstandskraft bei Rückschlägen, sondern auch die Fähigkeit, sich kontinuierlich weiterzuentwickeln und ihr Potenzial, ihre Gaben, Stärken und Begabungen mehr zu nutzen. Auch für Christen ist ein Growth Mindset wertvoll und anschlussfähig. Wenn wir lernen, persönliche Herausforderungen mit Gottes Hilfe und in Beziehung mit Gott und anderen Menschen mutig anzunehmen, kann daraus nachhaltiges persönliches und geistliches Wachstum entstehen.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass ein Growth Mindset nicht nur zu einer besseren Leistungsfähigkeit führt, sondern auch zu einer nachhaltigeren und erfüllenderen Lebensweise. Es ermöglicht uns, in allen Lebensbereichen – sei es in der Arbeit, der Schule, in Beziehungen oder im Glauben – das Potenzial für Veränderung und Verbesserung zu erkennen und zu nutzen. Es lädt uns ein, das Leben als eine kontinuierliche Reise des Lernens, Wachsens und Heilens zu betrachten.

[27] Aus: Elliott-Moskwa, Elaine (2022). The Growth Mindset Workbook. New Harbinger Publications.

comment

In his article, Hope for Change: Implications of a Growth Mindset on Learning, Psychotherapy and Spiritual Development, Luca Hersberger describes the difference between a 'growth mindset' and a 'fixed mindset,' a concept originally proposed by Carol Dweck in the 1980's. The former is a fluid state where a person takes situations as opportunities for improvement, for example, learning from past mistakes. The latter reflects a more rigid mindset where a person believes they are set in their personhood and have little expectation for change. Hersberger presents the case that a growth mindset has broad applications across our lives.

He chooses three important focus areas: Learning, psychotherapy, and spiritual development, to argue the case that a growth mindset offers significant potential for improvement compared to a fixed mindset. Hersberger describes subtle differences as carrying significant weight when looked at from this Fixed versus Growth approach. For example, in child raising, providing feedback to a child in terms of effort fosters a growth mindset, whereas providing feedback in terms of intelligence fosters a fixed mindset. These mindsets in turn provide opportunity for growth or limit the scope of growth a child will seek.

Hersberger also discusses the implications of a growth versus fixed mindset on the practice of psychotherapy. He argues that working from a growth mindset allows for even deep-seated fears to be moderated if the person chooses to actively deal with them with the help of their therapist. Finally, Hersberger discusses the implications of a growth mindset on Spiritual development. He argues that the biblical understanding of spiritual development is that we are all works in progress, with "immeasurable potential for transformation and renewal" as we are led by the Holy Spirit. This reflects a growth mindset.

In all, Hersberger presents a clear case that operating from a growth versus fixed mindset has broad and deep implications for human development and flourishing. He is right to challenge traditional State versus Trait theorizing where concepts such as personality and intelligence have been described as fixed, thus limiting potential growth in these important aspects of our personhood. His advocacy in prioritizing further research and application on Dweck's "Growth Mindset" presents a hopeful outlook across many important domains of psychology. It would be a sad irony if psychologists and therapists found the implications hard to grasp given their own fixed ideas regarding the fluidity of mindsets.

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Cloakroom. He's there too.

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Doctor en Psicología por la Universidad Abat Oliba de Barcelona. Psicólogo general sanitario, profesor y terapeuta. Esposo y padre de cinco hijos, y se dedica a la docencia en el área de psicología básica en la Universitat Abat Oliba CEU de Barcelona. Discípulo de Martín F. Echavarría y filósofo tomista, sus intereses se centran en la psicología tomista y los fundamentos filosóficos de la psicología, así como en la integración entre la psicología y la teología cristiana. Actualmente participa en un proyecto de investigación de la Universidad Abat Oliba CEU para investigar la integración de la antropología cristiana en los estudios de psicología y también participa en un proyecto financiado por Templeton sobre el papel del perdón en la salud mental a través del sacramento de la confesión. Joan es miembro de la junta directiva de **www.emcapp.eu**

Joan D.A. Juanola (Spain/España):
Religious Freedom in Psychotherapy

La libertad religiosa en la práctica psicoterapéutica

Religiosity is a dimension of human beings, as individuals as well as societies, that has been present from the beginning of the history of human civilisation. It can be generally understood as a human dimension related with the way an individual or a society judge and understands themselves, its present, past, and future, from someone or something that transcends them. The reference to transcendence generates an awareness that has specific influences at an intrapersonal and interpersonal level, in terms of moral consciousness and psychological health.

In a society where religious freedom exists, the way religiosity is lived is less homogeneous because different configurations are permitted and respected. Also, because religiosity gives answer to human existence and suffering, different attitudes towards life circumstances can be encountered in this respectful society.

Religiosity must be considered in psychotherapy as a factor that, implicitly or explicitly, can influence

La religiosidad es una dimensión del ser humano, tanto a nivel individual como social, que ha estado presente desde los inicios de la historia de la civilización humana. Puede entenderse, en términos generales, como una dimensión humana relacionada con la manera en que un individuo o una sociedad se juzgan y comprenden a sí mismos, su presente, pasado y futuro, desde la referencia a alguien o algo que los trasciende. La referencia a la trascendencia genera una conciencia que tiene influencias específicas a nivel intrapersonal e interpersonal, en términos de conciencia moral y salud psicológica.

En una sociedad donde existe libertad religiosa, la manera en que se vive la religiosidad es menos homogénea, ya que se permiten y respetan diferentes configuraciones. Además, dado que la religiosidad da respuesta a la existencia humana y al sufrimiento, en esta sociedad respetuosa pueden encontrarse distintas actitudes frente a las circunstancias de la vida.

La religiosidad debe ser tenida en cuenta en la psicoterapia como un factor que, de manera implícita o

mental health. It is highly convenient, then, for professionals working on mental health, to deepen into the anthropological and psychological aspects related with religious freedom. If therapists are to honestly respect religious freedom, they need to understand that religiosity appears naturally in human beings and society. Therefore, a direct rejection of religious beliefs and practices backed up by therapeutic reasons should be revised. If religious freedom is to be respected, religious beliefs and practices should not be rejected as a noxious per se factor. Also, when the matter in psychotherapy concerns client's religious beliefs, the therapists should be aware of their competence limits and may need to work with priests to better help the client.

Keywords: Religious freedom, Religion, Psychology, Psychotherapy, Mental health

Introduction

Freedom is thought to be one of the main aims of human beings. However, it can be claimed to defend many different purposes, even opposite to each other. In addition, there may not be a common agreement in how the concept is understood. It seems, though, that when one's point of view is linked with freedom, it generates an involuntary adhesion to the cause that is being defended. It generates automatically a pre-rational sympathy. However, to be rationally convinced in defending a cause, it is necessary to discuss one's point of view, beyond the spontaneous agreement with anything that claims to be in de side on freedom. To discern how freedom is gained by one's purpose, the word itself needs to be put into context and defined.

There are many human contexts where religious freedom is significant and can be reduced to intrapersonal and interpersonal or social. In the social context, religious freedom can be understood as the respect for each other's religious beliefs and their consequent practices; in the individual context, it can be understood as the possibility to freely join or abandon some religious beliefs and its consequent practices. From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in1948, these two contexts are stated as follows:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance. (Art. 18).

explícita, puede influir en la salud mental. Es altamente conveniente, entonces, que los profesionales que trabajan en el ámbito de la salud mental profundicen en los aspectos antropológicos y psicológicos relacionados con la libertad religiosa. Si los terapeutas desean respetar honestamente la libertad religiosa, deben entender que la religiosidad aparece de manera natural en el ser humano y en la sociedad. Por lo tanto, un rechazo directo de las creencias y prácticas religiosas, respaldado por razones terapéuticas, debería ser revisado. Si se desea respetar la libertad religiosa, las creencias y prácticas religiosas no deben ser rechazadas como un factor nocivo per se. Asimismo, cuando el tema en la psicoterapia concierne a las creencias religiosas del paciente, los terapeutas deben ser conscientes de los límites de su competencia y, en ocasiones, podrían necesitar trabajar en colaboración con sacerdotes para ayudar mejor al paciente.

Palabras clave: Libertad religiosa, Religión, Psicología, Psicoterapia, Salud mental

Introducción

La libertad es considerada como uno de los principales objetivos del ser humano. Sin embargo, se puede afirmar que se utiliza para defender propósitos muy distintos, e incluso opuestos entre sí. Además, puede no haber un acuerdo común sobre cómo se entiende el concepto. Sin embargo, parece que cuando un punto de vista se vincula con la libertad, se genera una adhesión involuntaria a la causa que se defiende. Se produce automáticamente una simpatía pre-racional. No obstante, para estar racionalmente convencido en la defensa de una causa, es necesario discutir el propio punto de vista, más allá del acuerdo espontáneo con cualquier cosa que afirme estar del lado de la libertad. Para discernir cómo la libertad es ganada por un propósito, es necesario contextualizar y definir la propia palabra.

Existen muchos contextos humanos en los que la libertad religiosa es significativa y puede reducirse a dos ámbitos: el intrapersonal y el interpersonal o social. En el contexto social, la libertad religiosa puede entenderse como el respeto por las creencias religiosas de los demás y las prácticas que de ellas se derivan; en el contexto individual, puede entenderse como la posibilidad de adherirse libremente o abandonar determinadas creencias religiosas y sus prácticas consecuentes. Desde la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos, en 1948, estos dos contextos se expresan de la siguiente manera:

This article of the declaration states the right to be respected in one's religious beliefs and any changes on one's convictions about them. There are many fields from where to discuss about this right, from law as well as from sociology, among others. However, the present explanation will discuss about it from a psychological point of view, aiming to assess if therapists are committed enough with respecting religious freedom in their job. It is important to confront religious beliefs and practices with mental health, because therapy usually deals with moral worries related with them. So, therapists must be aware of their duty towards human rights, as well as experts in helping their clients with their worries, that may be religious.

The discussion of religious freedom in terms of mental health is important for psychotherapists, as they may have to help in managing clients' inner conflicts referred to this matter. Therefore, therapists should be respectful with their clients' beliefs, and, at the same time, they must help them in relieving their psychologic sufferings, to succeed in their practice.

Implicit to the above-mentioned situation and convenient to understand the two main contingencies that modulate psychotherapeutic practice in it, it seems necessary to define mental health, too. It is a core concept in psychology and in psychiatry, as psychopathology exists when there is a significant distance from what is considered healthy.

It is quite common to define mental health in terms of (emotional) wellbeing, or this should be its immediate consequence. Nevertheless, this conception would not be perfectly achievable when a person is engaged with religious practices, because they usually carry certain degree of uneasiness, at least till he or she is not perfectly moulded by his or her beliefs. Sabbath mobility restrictions, fasting during Ramadan or Christian Lend could be examples of religious practices that may generate discomfort in believers, lessening their wellbeing, but it would seem inappropriate to consider them incompatible with mental health. Jews, Christians, and Muslims assume certain loss of wellbeing in their religious practices, but they accept them as the way to approach themselves to God, through these ascetic practices.

Whether psychotherapy is to respect religious freedom without losing mental health as their main goal, it needs to conceive mental health, for example, in terms of life-integrity, not just an emotional

"Toda persona tiene derecho a la libertad de pensamiento, de conciencia y de religión; este derecho incluye la libertad de cambiar de religión o de creencia, así como la libertad de manifestar su religión o su creencia, individual y colectivamente, tanto en público como en privado, por la enseñanza, la práctica, el culto y la observancia." (Art. 18).

Este artículo de la declaración establece el derecho a ser respetado en las propias creencias religiosas y en cualquier cambio de convicciones respecto a ellas. Hay muchos campos desde los cuales se puede discutir este derecho, desde el ámbito jurídico hasta el sociológico, entre otros. Sin embargo, la presente explicación lo abordará desde un punto de vista psicológico, con el objetivo de valorar si los terapeutas están lo suficientemente comprometidos con el respeto a la libertad religiosa en el ejercicio de su profesión. Es importante confrontar las creencias y prácticas religiosas con la salud mental, ya que la terapia habitualmente aborda preocupaciones morales relacionadas con ellas. Por lo tanto, los terapeutas deben ser conscientes de su deber hacia los derechos humanos, además de ser expertos en ayudar a sus clientes con sus inquietudes, que pueden ser de índole religiosa.

La discusión sobre la libertad religiosa en términos de salud mental es importante para los psicoterapeutas, ya que pueden tener que ayudar a gestionar los conflictos internos de sus clientes en relación con este tema. Por ello, los terapeutas deben ser respetuosos con las creencias de sus clientes y, al mismo tiempo, deben ayudarlos a aliviar sus sufrimientos psicológicos para tener éxito en su práctica.

Implícito en la situación anteriormente mencionada, y conveniente para comprender las dos principales contingencias que modulan la práctica psicoterapéutica en este contexto, parece necesario definir también la salud mental. Es un concepto fundamental en la psicología y en la psiquiatría, ya que la psicopatología existe cuando hay una distancia significativa respecto a lo que se considera saludable.

Es bastante común definir la salud mental en términos de bienestar (emocional), o al menos considerar que este debería ser su consecuencia inmediata. Sin embargo, esta concepción no siempre sería perfectamente aplicable cuando una persona está comprometida con prácticas religiosas, porque estas suelen conllevar cierto grado de incomodidad, al menos hasta que el creyente no esté plenamente moldeado por sus creencias. Las restricciones de movilidad durante el Sabbat, el ayuno durante el Ramadán

yes and no

wellbeing in its straight sense. The only way to respect the right for religious freedom in psychotherapy requires a deeper conception of mental health. Human flourishing is not possible without effort, and wellbeing should be subordinated to 'wellmeaning', that is, pursuing a meaningful life. Again, emotional comfort is neither the primary goal nor guaranteed in this life- long development. Psychotherapists should carefully reflect upon how they conceive mental health and, also, how they usually manage religious or moral worries in clients. They do not hesitate to work together with a psychiatrist when some medication could benefit the therapy; they should also consider working together with a priest, when there are religious matters implied in clients' psychological issues. If they directly underestimate priests help, they may be not taking enough seriously their clients' right for religious freedom and they might be treating matters out of their competence.

Social ethics and moral consciousness

Religiosity is a natural dimension of humankind, as it has already been observed in archaeological discoveries of burial rituals. Also, ancient ruins are evidence of the fact that religious cults have been practiced since the beginnings of human civilization. The thoughts on the after-death have given to different cultures a standpoint of view from where they generated explanatory frameworks from where human life was understood. In other words, a sense for their existence. These explanations, based on thinking far beyond human beings, have shaped cultures.

It could seem that the denial of transcendence is quite recent in the history of humanity. However, immanentism is not quite new, and, yet it could be considered a transcendent explanation in certain sense or, at least, religious-like. Pantheism, for instance, is a religious-like explanation that aims to avoid any reference to transcendent beings, but needs to transcend, inevitably, the boundaries of (modern) science and develop its explanation in philosophical terms.

Religions as such give different explanations on transcendence referring to divinities, based on sacred texts. They engage their followers with a moral code, which they should follow to fit rightly into the religious explanatory framework contained in these texts. So, honest followers should aim to live according to this proposal, which is much easier

o la Cuaresma cristiana podrían ser ejemplos de prácticas religiosas que generan cierta incomodidad en los creyentes, disminuyendo su bienestar, pero parecería inapropiado considerarlas incompatibles con la salud mental. Judíos, cristianos y musulmanes asumen cierta pérdida de bienestar en sus prácticas religiosas, pero las aceptan como el camino para acercarse a Dios, a través de dichas prácticas ascéticas.

Si la psicoterapia ha de respetar la libertad religiosa sin perder de vista la salud mental como su objetivo principal, es necesario concebir la salud mental, por ejemplo, en términos de integridad vital, y no solo como bienestar emocional en sentido estricto. La única manera de respetar el derecho a la libertad religiosa en la psicoterapia requiere una concepción más profunda de la salud mental. El florecimiento humano no es posible sin esfuerzo, y el bienestar debería subordinarse al 'bien-ser', es decir, a la búsqueda de una vida con sentido. Nuevamente, el confort emocional no es el objetivo primario ni algo garantizado en este desarrollo a lo largo de la vida.

Los psicoterapeutas deberían reflexionar cuidadosamente sobre cómo conciben la salud mental y también cómo suelen gestionar las inquietudes religiosas o morales en sus pacientes. No dudan en trabajar juntamente con un psiquiatra cuando algún medicamento podría beneficiar el tratamiento; de igual manera, deberían considerar colaborar con un sacerdote cuando hay cuestiones religiosas implicadas en los problemas psicológicos de sus pacientes. Si subestiman directamente la ayuda de los sacerdotes, puede que no estén tomando lo suficientemente en serio el derecho de sus pacientes a la libertad religiosa y podrían estar abordando cuestiones que escapan a su competencia.

Ética social y conciencia moral

La religiosidad es una dimensión natural de la humanidad, como ya se ha observado en descubrimientos arqueológicos de rituales funerarios. Además, las ruinas antiguas son evidencia del hecho de que los cultos religiosos se han practicado desde los inicios de la civilización humana. Las reflexiones sobre la vida después de la muerte han proporcionado a distintas culturas un punto de vista desde el cual generaron marcos explicativos para entender la vida humana. En otras palabras, un sentido para su existencia. Estas explicaciones, basadas en un pensamiento que va mucho más allá del ser humano, han moldeado las culturas.

when they are surrounded by people with the same aim than when they are alone.

When most of the individuals of a society belong to the same religion, it becomes the base of the society ethics easily and, consequently, ends to be taken as a basis to configure its law system. Religion influences society in the way people judge what is right or wrong, and these ethics penetrate all social structures. It can be considered that the independence between the law system and religion commands are unclear in this society, even though it seems a natural evolution, where common beliefs crystallize in legal regulations. It could happen vice versa; that legal regulations end up constituting social ethics. As Aristotle stated, good laws make good citizens (Aristotle, 2010: VI, 6). Social ethics, then, can be influenced either by a common religious belief or by a stablished law system.

Moral consciousness could be defined as the individual' criterium on what is right or wrong. Its independence from social ethics is not easily stated, because individuals are grown and educated in a society impregnated with certain ethic values. So, social ethics have an influence in the formation of individuals' moral consciousness; despite they can develop their own opinions on moral matters, diverse from those he or she was taught.

There seems to be a difference in the aims of law systems and religions, in terms of morality. Law systems stablish some behaviour regulations to organise social life and do not oblige morally, but legally. Religions, on the contrary, stablish certain rules which are morally mandatory to those who want to persevere in their creed. Both instances have rules concerning individual and social behaviour, but law systems are primarily for the sake of the common good, to make living in society possible; otherwise, religions are primarily for the sake of individuals' approach to God and, extensively, of the entire society. So, even though both instances regulate over the individuals from a transcendent point of view, religions go far beyond common good, or, it could be said that it is considered in the most transcendent manner.

Most western law systems respect the right for religious freedom, and this permeates western social ethics, as well as their moral consciousness. Stating religious freedom as a right is a form of acknowledging religiosity as genuinely human. Consequently, religious practices should not be incompatible with legal regulations regarding common good in a society.

Podría parecer que la negación de la trascendencia es algo bastante reciente en la historia de la humanidad. Sin embargo, el inmanentismo no es del todo nuevo y, aun así, podría considerarse una explicación trascendente en cierto sentido o, al menos, similar a una religión. El panteísmo, por ejemplo, es una explicación de tipo religioso que intenta evitar toda referencia a seres trascendentes, pero que inevitablemente necesita trascender los límites de la ciencia (moderna) y desarrollar su explicación en términos filosóficos.

Las religiones, como tales, ofrecen diferentes explicaciones sobre la trascendencia haciendo referencia a divinidades, basadas en textos sagrados. Comprometen a sus seguidores con un código moral que deben seguir para integrarse adecuadamente en el marco explicativo religioso contenido en dichos textos. Por lo tanto, los seguidores honestos deberían aspirar a vivir de acuerdo con esta propuesta, lo cual es mucho más sencillo cuando están rodeados de personas que persiguen el mismo objetivo que cuando se encuentran solos.

Cuando la mayoría de los individuos de una sociedad pertenecen a la misma religión, esta se convierte fácilmente en la base de la ética social y, en consecuencia, termina por ser tomada como fundamento para configurar el sistema legal. La religión influye en la sociedad en la manera en que las personas juzgan lo que es correcto o incorrecto, y esa ética penetra en todas las estructuras sociales. Puede considerarse que la independencia entre el sistema legal y los mandatos religiosos es poco clara en una sociedad así, aunque parezca una evolución natural, donde las creencias comunes se cristalizan en normas legales. También podría suceder lo contrario: que las regulaciones legales acaben constituyendo la ética social. Como afirmó Aristóteles, las buenas leyes hacen buenos ciudadanos (Aristóteles, 2010: VI, 6). La ética social, entonces, puede ser influenciada tanto por una creencia religiosa común como por un sistema legal establecido.

La conciencia moral podría definirse como el criterio individual sobre lo que es correcto o incorrecto. Su independencia respecto a la ética social no es fácil de determinar, ya que los individuos crecen y se educan en una sociedad impregnada de ciertos valores éticos. Así, la ética social influye en la formación de la conciencia moral de los individuos; aunque estos puedan desarrollar opiniones propias en cuestiones morales, distintas de aquellas que les fueron enseñadas.

Throughout history, religions and law systems have been related differently: confused or in a relation of prevalence of one over the other. Sometimes, law systems and religions are not capable of a pacific coexistence in a society. Non-intrusive coexistence of law and religion seems to be the ideal case, as Locke suggested in terms of tolerance (Locke, 2010).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights seems to have made this possible. Nevertheless, further considerations may be done at what has been achieved. The quid is to consider at which point the acceptance of the Declaration is a subordination to a third instance. The problem may come from religions concern in the truth of their proposal. Law systems would not lose effectiveness in being submitted to a higher law, as happens when the Universal Declaration is accepted. Religions, on the contrary, may experience some loss of consistence when they must fit into a non-religious law system. However, this should not suppose any violence to those religions that share the same anthropological basis as the Human Rights Declaration. Religious freedom as a right is perfectly compatible with anthropological conceptions that affirm human freewill.

Freewill is an essential trait of human condition. Self-awareness, consciousness, is related to it and the classics referred to them globally as rationality (Aristotle, 2005: I). They understood it as the capacity to know or to choose things beyond its appearances and deliberately opt for them. So, despite perceiving and desiring things, human beings would be different from the rest of animals in being capable of further knowledge and inclination toward things. This was called rationality, which involved conceptual understanding and will.

Classics relied in rationality to understand human freedom, as it was from it they could explain that human beings know things from what they are, their essence, and consequently incline towards or against them deliberately, not simply dragged by their instincts.

Intelligence enables human being to an existential consciousness, as self-awareness is intrinsic to its act (Canals, 1987). By the act of the intellect, human being knows things beyond its perceptual qualities and can make a moral judgement beyond their instinctive reactions towards them. However, the rational criterium may not be always clear and can easily serve to justify one's choice for instinctu-

Parece haber una diferencia en los fines de los sistemas legales y las religiones, en términos de moralidad. Los sistemas legales establecen normas de comportamiento para organizar la vida social y no obligan moralmente, sino legalmente. Las religiones, en cambio, establecen ciertas reglas que son moralmente obligatorias para quienes desean perseverar en su credo. Ambas instancias tienen normas sobre el comportamiento individual y social, pero los sistemas legales se orientan principalmente al bien común, para hacer posible la convivencia; mientras que las religiones tienen como fin primordial el acercamiento del individuo a Dios y, de manera extensiva, el de toda la sociedad. Por lo tanto, aunque ambas instancias regulan a los individuos desde un punto de vista trascendente, las religiones van mucho más allá del bien común o, dicho de otro modo, lo consideran de la manera más trascendente posible. La mayoría de los sistemas legales occidentales respetan el derecho a la libertad religiosa, y esto impregna tanto la ética social como la conciencia moral en Occidente. Reconocer la libertad religiosa como un derecho es una forma de reconocer la religiosidad como algo genuinamente humano. En consecuencia, las prácticas religiosas no deberían ser incompatibles con las normativas legales relativas al bien común en una sociedad.

A lo largo de la historia, las religiones y los sistemas legales se han relacionado de diferentes maneras: confundidos entre sí o en una relación de predominio de uno sobre el otro. En ocasiones, los sistemas legales y las religiones no son capaces de coexistir pacíficamente en una sociedad. La coexistencia no intrusiva entre la ley y la religión parece ser el caso ideal, como sugirió Locke en términos de tolerancia (Locke, 2010).

La Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos parece haber hecho esto posible. Sin embargo, podrían hacerse consideraciones adicionales sobre lo que realmente se ha logrado. La cuestión radica en considerar hasta qué punto la aceptación de la Declaración implica una subordinación a una tercera instancia. El problema podría surgir de la preocupación de las religiones por la verdad de su propuesta. Los sistemas legales no perderían eficacia al estar sometidos a una ley superior, como ocurre cuando se acepta la Declaración Universal. Las religiones, en cambio, podrían experimentar cierta pérdida de coherencia cuando deben encajar dentro de un sistema legal no religioso. No obstante, esto no debería suponer ninguna violencia para aquellas religiones

al drives. At this point, religious moral codes could be considered. However, it could be felt as a loss of freedom.

It seems clear that both law systems and religions are beneficial to human beings. To make social life possible and to give him an existential explanatory framework. Thus, it is necessary to deepen into what human nature consists of, to acknowledge how these benefits are realised by law systems and religions.

Western societies have already assumed religious freedom of individuals in their social ethics because of the anthropological and theological legacy they have received. God respects human freedom, so, why should humans not do the same? In that sense, religious freedom would be legally and religiously considered beneficial for society. However, nowadays secularization has led to alternative reasonings where God is not included. Alternatively, some scientific postulates, as well as some misunderstandings concerning religious beliefs, may have favoured sceptical opinions over the benefits of religion. Following positivism's postulates, religions would not be necessary anymore, as science has better answers to people's ignorance and fears. Following naturalism, religion has not only been overcome by science but incompatible with mental health.

In the field of psychology, this is an issue that challenges the honest respect for religious freedom. Different anthropological opinions concerning religiosity change completely the psychological assessment of the situation and the orientation of their therapy. Depending on therapists' thoughts on religiosity or certain religion, psychotherapy could have different orientations.

If religious freedom is to be considered, religion cannot be thought to be irrational or harmful per se. Thus, therapists should consider religion out of the equation of the diagnose. If therapists put religion straight against mental health, they may be attacking a fundamental right. The dilemma for the therapist may appear when certain religious practices correlate with anxiety, depression, or psychologically harmful thoughts, because trying to alleviate the symptoms respecting patients' religious beliefs may incur into an interpretation of how the patient should understand their beliefs. This kind of judgment, if religious freedom is to be respected, requires a deep knowledge of the specific religious matter. Maybe only a religious expert could have a competent opinion in the matter.

que comparten la misma base antropológica que la Declaración de los Derechos Humanos. La libertad religiosa, como derecho, es perfectamente compatible con las concepciones antropológicas que afirman el libre albedrío humano.

El libre albedrío es un rasgo esencial de la condición humana. La autoconciencia o conciencia de sí mismo está relacionada con él, y los clásicos se referían a ambos de manera global como la racionalidad (Aristóteles, 2005: I). La entendían como la capacidad de conocer o elegir cosas más allá de sus apariencias y optar deliberadamente por ellas. Así, a pesar de percibir y desear cosas, el ser humano se diferenciaría del resto de los animales por ser capaz de un conocimiento más profundo y de una inclinación hacia las cosas. Esto se denominaba racionalidad, la cual implicaba comprensión conceptual y voluntad.

Los clásicos confiaban en la racionalidad para entender la libertad humana, ya que era a partir de ella que podían explicar que el ser humano conoce las cosas por lo que son, su esencia y, en consecuencia, se inclina a favor o en contra de ellas de manera deliberada, no simplemente arrastrado por sus instintos.

La inteligencia habilita al ser humano a una conciencia existencial, ya que la autoconciencia es intrínseca a su acto (Canals, 1987). Por el acto del intelecto, el ser humano conoce las cosas más allá de sus cualidades perceptuales y puede emitir un juicio moral más allá de sus reacciones instintivas hacia ellas. Sin embargo, el criterio racional no siempre es claro y fácilmente puede ser usado para justificar elecciones impulsadas por instintos. En este punto, los códigos morales religiosos podrían ser tenidos en cuenta. No obstante, esto podría sentirse como una pérdida de libertad.

Parece claro que tanto los sistemas legales como las religiones son beneficiosos para el ser humano: para hacer posible la vida social y para darle un marco explicativo existencial. Por tanto, es necesario profundizar en qué consiste la naturaleza humana para comprender cómo estos beneficios son realizados por los sistemas legales y las religiones.

Las sociedades occidentales ya han asumido la libertad religiosa de los individuos dentro de su ética social gracias al legado antropológico y teológico que han recibido. Dios respeta la libertad humana, entonces, ¿por qué los humanos no habrían de hacer lo mismo? En ese sentido, la libertad religiosa sería considerada legal y religiosamente como un bien para la sociedad. Sin embargo, la secularización

This issue puts on the table a core discussion about the frontiers of psychotherapy and its boundaries with spiritual guidance (West, 2000). Psychology relies on its scientific knowledge in the so-called psychology based on the evidence which, often is confronted to religious beliefs. Therefore, a careful analysis is necessary to clarify if there is an unsolvable opposition between both.

Religious freedom and mental health

The main authors in the history of psychology have had different opinions about religion, in terms of its consequences on mental health. Their different frameworks determine how they consider religious beliefs and the way to relieve from psychological suffering. Therapists' premises have not usually been aseptic concerning their patients' religious beliefs and, sometimes, they have pointed at them as the main cause of their patients' psychological sufferings.

Sigmund Freud, inspired by Friedrich Nietzsche, pointed at Christianism and its morality as a cause of neurosis (Echavarría, 2005:51). Religion, for him, would be harmful per se, and a torture to the person in terms of guilt and repression of their libido. However, he recognises some value in repression as enables the sublimation of this energy, responsible for the most valuable cultural products (Freud, 1910). Although Freud's critique was directed towards Christian morals, it could be congruent to think that religious freedom would not mean any vantage from his point of view, unless if by it was meant less commitment with accomplishing moral duties.

Carl Rogers would not either have a better opinion about Christian morals. His veneration for body's spontaneity, which he referred as organism's wisdom, could not fit with the Christian moral code, he perceived as extraneous and limiting to human natural potential development (Rogers, 2004). Thus, religious freedom would not seem to play an important role in his client centred therapy. Integrating religiosity to life would not help in client's psychological recovery within this psychotherapist's anthropological framework; unless this meant adopting entirely subjective moral, guided by ones' feelings.

These two psychotherapists are two main representatives of Psychoanalysis and Humanistic Psychology, respectively. Both were concerned with mental health and had a negative opinion of reli-

actual ha llevado a razonamientos alternativos donde Dios no está incluido. Alternativamente, algunos postulados científicos, así como ciertos malentendidos respecto a las creencias religiosas, pueden haber favorecido opiniones escépticas sobre los beneficios de la religión. Siguiendo los postulados del positivismo, las religiones ya no serían necesarias, dado que la ciencia ofrece mejores respuestas a la ignorancia y a los miedos de las personas. Según el naturalismo, la religión no solo ha sido superada por la ciencia, sino que es incompatible con la salud mental.

En el campo de la psicología, este es un tema que desafía el respeto honesto por la libertad religiosa. Las distintas opiniones antropológicas sobre la religiosidad cambian por completo la evaluación psicológica de la situación y la orientación de la terapia. Dependiendo de la visión que los terapeutas tengan sobre la religiosidad o sobre una religión concreta, la psicoterapia podría tomar diferentes orientaciones. Si se ha de considerar la libertad religiosa, la religión no puede ser pensada como algo irracional o dañino per se. Por lo tanto, los terapeutas deberían considerar la religión fuera de la ecuación diagnóstica. Si los terapeutas colocan a la religión directamente en oposición a la salud mental, podrían estar atentando contra un derecho fundamental. El dilema para el terapeuta puede aparecer cuando ciertas prácticas religiosas se correlacionan con la ansiedad, la depresión o pensamientos psicológicamente dañinos, ya que intentar aliviar estos síntomas respetando las creencias religiosas del paciente puede implicar interpretar cómo el paciente debería entender dichas creencias. Este tipo de juicio, si se quiere respetar la libertad religiosa, requiere un conocimiento profundo del tema religioso específico. Tal vez solo un experto religioso podría tener una opinión competente al respecto.

Este tema pone sobre la mesa una discusión fundamental acerca de las fronteras de la psicoterapia y sus límites respecto a la dirección espiritual (West, 2000). La psicología se basa en su conocimiento científico, en la llamada psicología basada en la evidencia, que a menudo se enfrenta a las creencias religiosas. Por tanto, es necesario un análisis cuidadoso para aclarar si existe una oposición insalvable entre ambas.

Libertad religiosa y salud mental

Los principales autores en la historia de la psicología han tenido diferentes opiniones sobre la religión, en

gious morals, too. However, before Freud and Rogers, there was William James, who did not have such a negative opinion about religion. He was a pioneer in the history of psychology and considered religion or, more precisely, religious experience, as a human dimension that needed to be respected.

In The Varieties of Religious Experience, William James (2014) did not blame religiosity to be the cause of mental illness but a fulfilling dimension for the human being. At first sight this could be considered the opposite of what Freud and Rogers thought. However, it should be noticed that he was not thinking of religion from an orthodox point of view. In his conception of religious experience, he considered that many syncretic practices, even spiritism, could be included.

In the end, James' spiritualistic considerations were not as different as those of Sigmund Freud, who also had some familiarity with spiritism, much more evident in Carl Jung (2015). William James was not engaged with any religion, though, but he saw a possibility to develop human potential in spiritual practices of any kind. Surely, Carl Rogers would encourage him if it were felt as genuine, authentic. So, despite the general reject of official religious practices, these authors seem quite sympathetic with spiritism. In that sense, they would surely favour religious freedom.

To complete the screening of main psychotherapies founders, Burrhus Skinner (2005), representative of Behaviourism, should also be mentioned. Despite he was focused in finding what increases behaviours more effectively, he could comprehend the success of religions as systems of long-term reinforcements. However, his pragmatism leaded him to study more immediate and empiric reinforcers of behaviour.

These main authors in the history of psychology might have some reserve concerning religious freedom, from their personal beliefs of what was noxious for mental health. It seems common to their thoughts to understand religion as an extrinsic burden than makes people suffer. Therefore, it could not be integrated to human life wellbeing but should be relativised and adapted to one's needs if it were to benefit mental health. This may be the way religious freedom is becoming understood and, surely, not what religions aim.

It could not be conceivable that human plenitude, holiness, was psychopathologic. So, religious practices must be accurately understood. Also, a realistic

cuanto a sus consecuencias para la salud mental. Sus diferentes marcos conceptuales determinan cómo consideran las creencias religiosas y el modo de aliviar el sufrimiento psicológico. Las premisas de los terapeutas no han sido habitualmente asépticas en lo que respecta a las creencias religiosas de sus pacientes y, en ocasiones, han señalado a estas como la causa principal de los padecimientos psicológicos de sus pacientes.

Sigmund Freud, inspirado por Friedrich Nietzsche, señaló al cristianismo y a su moral como causa de neurosis (Echavarría, 2005:51). La religión, para él, sería dañina en sí misma y una tortura para la persona, en términos de culpa y represión de la libido. Sin embargo, reconoce algún valor en la represión, ya que permite la sublimación de esta energía, responsable de los productos culturales más valiosos (Freud, 1910). Aunque la crítica de Freud se dirigía específicamente a la moral cristiana, sería congruente pensar que la libertad religiosa no representaría ninguna ventaja desde su punto de vista, a menos que implicara un menor compromiso con el cumplimiento de los deberes morales.

Carl Rogers tampoco tendría una mejor opinión sobre la moral cristiana. Su veneración por la espontaneidad del cuerpo, a la que se refería como la sabiduría del organismo, no encajaba con el código moral cristiano, que percibía como ajeno y limitante para el desarrollo del potencial natural humano (Rogers, 2004). Por lo tanto, la libertad religiosa no parecería desempeñar un papel importante en su terapia centrada en el cliente. Integrar la religiosidad a la vida no ayudaría en la recuperación psicológica del cliente dentro del marco antropológico de este psicoterapeuta; a menos que ello implicara adoptar una moral enteramente subjetiva, guiada por los propios sentimientos.

Estos dos psicoterapeutas son los principales representantes del Psicoanálisis y la Psicología Humanista, respectivamente. Ambos se ocuparon de la salud mental y tuvieron también una opinión negativa sobre la moral religiosa. Sin embargo, antes que Freud y Rogers, estuvo William James, quien no tuvo una visión tan negativa sobre la religión. Fue un pionero en la historia de la psicología y consideró la religión, o más precisamente la experiencia religiosa, como una dimensión humana que debía ser respetada.

En *Las variedades de la experiencia religiosa*, William James (2014) no culpaba a la religiosidad de ser la causa de enfermedades mentales, sino que la veía como una dimensión que podía dar plenitud al ser

conception of mental health must consider human condition honestly. Neither overvaluing emotional comfort nor suffering per se. Psychological sciences may help in finding the best therapies, but anthropology and theology gives an insightful framework from where to understand psyche dynamics. Therefore, like happens with psychiatrists, close collaboration with priests must be considered in psychotherapy.

Religious dialogue in psychotherapy

The main human question is about the meaning of their existence, especially if the living conditions are not kind. The awareness of one's own existence activates the search for answers and projects the person beyond immediacy, towards the transcendence of their being and their circumstances.

Some psychotherapeutic approaches aim to improve the person's adaptation to their circumstances without wanting to engage in dialogue with the patient about possible answers to their existential question. However, it is worth noting that this attitude is reductionist, insofar as it does not include the meaning of life in the therapeutic proposal. In this sense, Viktor Frankl does propose an approach that is configured from the meaning of life as its cornerstone.

The meaning of life is the answer to the existential question and becomes something sacred, transcendent, that is, of maximum value and beyond capricious desires. In this approach, one could speak of spirituality in a generic sense and of religion when the conception of the sacred and the relationship with it is specified in a series of pre-established and shared practices.

Historically, spiritual and religious guides have carried out the work of accompanying people who were looking for an answer to the meaning of life and the suffering they might be experiencing at a given moment in their lives. It was from the 20th century that, with the emergence of psychotherapy currents, a secular figure professionally prepared to carry out this work from non-religious and, at times, openly anti-religious parameters were established.

The compatibility between religious practice and mental health was a particularly controversial issue in the early days of psychotherapy. However, it now seems to have been assumed that they must co-exist, since the question about the meaning of life cannot be disengaged from the religious option, and the recognition of the right to religious freedom

humano. A primera vista, esto podría considerarse lo opuesto a lo que pensaban Freud y Rogers. No obstante, debe señalarse que James no pensaba la religión desde un punto de vista ortodoxo. En su concepción de la experiencia religiosa, consideraba que muchas prácticas sincréticas, incluso el espiritismo, podían incluirse.

Al final, las consideraciones espiritualistas de James no eran tan distintas de las de Sigmund Freud, quien también tuvo cierta familiaridad con el espiritismo, mucho más evidente en Carl Jung (2015). Sin embargo, William James no estaba comprometido con ninguna religión, aunque veía en las prácticas espirituales de cualquier tipo una posibilidad de desarrollar el potencial humano. Seguramente Carl Rogers lo habría alentado si se hubiera percibido como algo genuino y auténtico. Así que, a pesar del rechazo general a las prácticas religiosas oficiales, estos autores parecen simpatizar con el espiritismo. En ese sentido, seguramente habrían favorecido la libertad religiosa.

Para completar el panorama de los principales fundadores de la psicoterapia, también debe mencionarse a Burrhus F. Skinner (2005), representante del Conductismo. Aunque se centró en encontrar qué es lo que incrementa los comportamientos de manera más efectiva, pudo comprender el éxito de las religiones como sistemas de refuerzo a largo plazo. Sin embargo, su pragmatismo lo llevó a estudiar reforzadores de conducta más inmediatos y empíricos. Estos principales autores en la historia de la psicología podrían tener ciertas reservas respecto a la libertad religiosa, desde sus creencias personales sobre lo que era nocivo para la salud mental. Parece común en sus pensamientos entender la religión como una carga extrínseca que hace sufrir a las personas. Por lo tanto, no podría integrarse al bienestar de la vida humana, sino que debería relativizarse y adaptarse a las necesidades de cada uno, si es que se buscara beneficiar la salud mental. Esta puede ser la manera en la que la libertad religiosa se está empezando a entender, y, seguramente, no es lo que las religiones pretenden.

No sería concebible que la plenitud humana, la santidad, fuese psicopatológica. Por eso, las prácticas religiosas deben ser comprendidas con precisión. Además, una concepción realista de la salud mental debe considerar honestamente la condición humana. Ni sobrevalorando el confort emocional, ni el sufrimiento por sí mismo. Las ciencias psicológicas pueden ayudar a encontrar las mejores terapias,

protects individuals who take this option, while framing psychotherapists in a context of, at a minimum, respect for the client's beliefs and practices. Currently, there are third-generation therapies that incorporate elements from Eastern religious practices, such as Mindfulness, which is widely used in psychotherapy. Moreover, the psychotherapist's competence in spiritual and religious aspects is being proposed by some professionals as a necessary area of training to adequately carry out psychotherapeutic work (Pearce, 2015; Pearce, Haines, Wade and Koenig, 2018).

The meaning of life, feelings of guilt, the relationship with the divine, and religious practice are aspects that can be better addressed if the psychotherapist has the competence to provide psychological counselling on these issues, considering the specific case. They cannot disregard this dimension of the human person in their psychotherapeutic work. Obviously, it is important not to confuse psychotherapeutic accompaniment with spiritual guidance, but rather to understand that it is a multidisciplinary intervention in which each figure has its function, including the spiritual guide, as the psychiatrist may have.

Spiritual competence requires, on the part of the psychotherapist, knowledge about the religious practices linked to each religion framed in a respectful attitude towards spirituality, to be able to skilfully apply their dialogical skills to accompany their patient in the best possible way.

Conclusion

Religious freedom is an issue of great importance in psychotherapy, as some of the reasons that leads people to seek for psychological help may be related with religious issues. Therapists may have their own opinions about religion based on their clinical experience, that lead them to treat them from a certain point of view. This might interfere with an entire respect of client's religious fundamental right.

Religiosity and religions are part of human civilization and, presumably, essential to human being. Transcendence has been thought differently along the different cultures, but common to all of them. Its permanence has been explained as a natural dimension of human rationality, that has led human societies to engage with different religious systems, based on sacred texts.

pero la antropología y la teología ofrecen un marco de comprensión profundo desde el cual entender la dinámica de la psique. Por lo tanto, como sucede con los psiquiatras, debe considerarse una estrecha colaboración con los sacerdotes dentro de la psicoterapia.

Diálogo religioso en psicoterapia

La principal pregunta humana es acerca del sentido de su existencia, especialmente si las condiciones de vida no le son amables. La conciencia acerca de la propia existencia activa la búsqueda de respuestas y proyectan a la persona más allá de la inmediatez, hacia la trascendencia de su ser y su circunstancia.

Algunos enfoques psicoterapéuticos pretenden mejorar la adaptación de la persona a su circunstancia sin querer entrar en diálogo con el paciente acerca de las posibles respuestas a su pregunta existencial, sin embargo, cabe plantear que esta actitud es reduccionista, en tanto que no incluye el sentido de la vida en la propuesta terapéutica. En este sentido, Viktor Frankl sí plantea una propuesta que se configura a partir del sentido de la vida como piedra angular.

El sentido de la vida es la respuesta a la pregunta existencial y deviene algo sagrado, trascendente, es decir, de valor máximo y que está más allá de los deseos caprichosos. En este planteamiento, cabría hablar de la espiritualidad en un sentido genérico y de la religión cuando la concepción de lo sagrado y la relación con ello se concreta en una serie de prácticas prestablecidas y compartidas.

Históricamente, los guías espirituales y religiosos han ejercido la labor de acompañamiento de las personas que buscaban una respuesta al sentido de la vida y del sufrimiento que pudiesen estar experimentando en un momento dado de su vida. Ha sido a partir del s. XX que, con la emergencia de las corrientes de psicoterapia, se ha instaurado una figura secular profesionalmente preparada para ejercer esta labor desde parámetros no religiosos y, a veces, abiertamente antirreligiosos.

La compatibilidad entre la práctica religiosa y la salud mental fue un tema especialmente polémico en los inicios de la psicoterapia y, sin embargo, actualmente parece haberse asumido que deberán convivir, pues la pregunta por el sentido de la vida no puede desembarazarse de la opción religiosa y el reconocimiento del derecho a la libertad religiosa ampara a los individuos que toman esta opción, a la vez que enmarca a los psicoterapeutas en un contexto

Religious practices become part of cultures and mould their social ethics, law systems do alike. Then, there has been various manners in which law and religions have been related to each other and have influenced social ethics, as well as individual's moral consciousness.

The emergence of positivism, naturalism, and modern science has favoured social secularism, reducing the relevance of religious creeds in law systems and societies. However, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated the right to be respected for one's religious practices and beliefs, which meant legal protection for all the people who could have been persecuted for that reason.

In psychotherapy, there has been many therapists with negative judgments towards religions because of their moral commandments. They saw confrontation between following certain moral rules and mental health, as anxiety or depression symptoms would appear correlated with clients' success in following these rules. Therefore, they thought religion as the cause of mental illness. However, there are some considerations that should be made at this respect.

Religious creeds aim to bring human being to their holiness, their full humankind expression, so they could not be neither limiting human nature nor harming it on purpose. Therefore, a discussion in anthropological terms should take place between religion and psychology, to justify the means used to achieve better mental health or human holiness. Psychology needs to anthropologically justify its conception of mental health, as well as religion should develop a consistent reasoning to justify the moral principles and practices proposed.

Therapists need to discern the psychological pathologies of their clients from their religious beliefs and practices if they are to respect their clients' right for religious freedom. For better discerning this matter, professional collaboration with a religious guide, a priest, would be convenient. Like the therapist do not hesitate to collaborate with a psychiatrist when there is a significant biological component in client's pathology, he or she should not have any inconvenient to collaborate with a priest who could help the client in rightly comprehending the specific religious matter.

de, como mínimo, respeto a las creencias y prácticas del cliente.

Existen, actualmente, terapias de tercera generación que incorporan elementos provenientes de las prácticas religiosas orientales, como es el Mindfulness, de uso generalizado en psicoterapia. Es más, la competencia del psicoterapeuta en aspectos espirituales y religiosos está siendo planteado por algunos profesionales como un ámbito de formación necesario para ejercer adecuadamente la labor psicoterapéutica (Pearce, 2015; Pearce, Haines, Wade and Koenig, 2018).

El sentido de la vida, los sentimientos de culpa, la relación con lo divino y la práctica religiosa son aspectos que se podrán tratar mejor si el psicoterapeuta tiene competencia para asesorar psicológicamente sobre estas cuestiones, atendiendo el caso concreto. No puede desentenderse de esta dimensión de la persona humana en su labor psicoterapéutica. Evidentemente, cabe no confundir el acompañamiento psicoterapéutico con la guía espiritual, sino más bien entender que se trata de una intervención multidisciplinar en la cual cada figura tiene su función, también el guía espiritual, como puede tenerla el psiquiatra.

La competencia espiritual exige, por parte del psicoterapeuta unos conocimentos acerca de las prácticas religiosas vinculadas con cada religión enmarcadas en una actitud respetuosa hacia la espiritualidad, para poder aplicar con habilidad sus competencias dialógicas para acompañar de la mejor manera posible a su paciente.

Conclusión

La libertad religiosa es un tema de gran importancia en la psicoterapia, ya que algunas de las razones que llevan a las personas a buscar ayuda psicológica pueden estar relacionadas con cuestiones religiosas. Los terapeutas pueden tener sus propias opiniones acerca de la religión, basadas en su experiencia clínica, lo que puede llevarlos a tratar estos temas desde un punto de vista particular. Esto podría interferir con el respeto pleno del derecho fundamental del cliente a la libertad religiosa.

La religiosidad y las religiones son parte de la civilización humana y, presumiblemente, esenciales para el ser humano. La trascendencia ha sido concebida de distintas maneras a lo largo de las diferentes culturas, pero es común a todas ellas. Su permanencia ha sido explicada como una dimensión natural de la racionalidad humana, que ha llevado a las sociedades a vincu-

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larse con diferentes sistemas religiosos, basados en textos sagrados.

Las prácticas religiosas pasan a formar parte de las culturas y moldean su ética social; los sistemas legales hacen lo propio. Así, ha habido diversas maneras en que las leyes y las religiones se han relacionado entre sí y han influido tanto en la ética social como en la conciencia moral de los individuos.

El surgimiento del positivismo, el naturalismo y la ciencia moderna ha favorecido el laicismo social, reduciendo la relevancia de las creencias religiosas en los sistemas legales y en las sociedades. Sin embargo, la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos reconoció el derecho a que las prácticas y creencias religiosas de cada persona sean respetadas, lo cual significó una protección legal para todas aquellas personas que podrían haber sido perseguidas por ese motivo.

En el ámbito de la psicoterapia, ha habido muchos terapeutas con juicios negativos hacia las religiones debido a sus mandatos morales. Ellos percibían una confrontación entre el seguimiento de ciertas normas morales y la salud mental, ya que los síntomas de ansiedad o depresión solían correlacionarse con el grado de éxito de los clientes en el cumplimiento de esas normas. Por ello, consideraban la religión como la causa de la enfermedad mental. No obstante, hay algunas consideraciones que deberían hacerse al respecto.

Las creencias religiosas tienen como objetivo llevar al ser humano hacia su santidad, a la plena expresión de su humanidad, por lo que no podrían estar ni limitando la naturaleza humana ni dañándola intencionadamente. Por lo tanto, debería darse un debate en términos antropológicos entre la religión y la psicología, con el fin de justificar los medios utilizados para alcanzar una mejor salud mental o la santidad del ser humano. La psicología necesita justificar antropológicamente su concepto de salud mental, así como la religión debe desarrollar un razonamiento consistente que justifique los principios morales y las prácticas que propone. Los terapeutas necesitan discernir entre las patologías psicológicas de sus pacientes y sus creencias y prácticas religiosas, si es que desean respetar el derecho de sus clientes a la libertad religiosa. Para poder discernir mejor esta cuestión, sería conveniente la colaboración profesional con un guía religioso, un sacerdote. Así como el terapeuta no duda en colaborar con un psiquiatra cuando hay un componente biológico significativo en la patología del paciente, tampoco debería tener inconveniente en colaborar con un sacerdote que pueda ayudar al cliente a comprender adecuadamente el asunto religioso específico.

Last Supper

Valerie's life work is focused on the encouragement of movement of those she serves in the holistic loving of God with all one's heart, mind, soul and strength, and the loving of others and self as Christ loved us. This work is founded on a Genesis-based worldview delineating the broken patterns that draw us toward the world and then offering the redemptive patterns that lead us back to our true identity in Christ. Valerie is an avid reader of the Word and has read the entire Bible 25+ times and believes that this is the source of any blessing of Biblical understanding offered.

Valerie is a professionally licensed counselor with an MA in Clinical Psychology from Wheaton College and is a certified spiritual director. She also has an MDiv equivalency from Northern Seminary. She is a member and been a presenter for the American Association of Christian Counselors under the Society for Christian Psychology (SCP). She also co-presented with her husband Michael, as well as having been a member, writer and spiritual devotional leader on the Spirituality Committee for the latter. She was a mentor of professionals at the European Leadership Forum (ELF) for two consecutive years. She is a co-founder of Community Care Center for an underserved population and founder of Foundation Counseling and Training where Christian counseling services were offered. She currently teaches Psychology courses from a Christian worldview at Liberty University Online.

Valerie Murphy (USA):
Motivation and Emotion Fluency Education in Psychology Curriculum

An emphasis on the motivation and emotion aspects of what it means to be human (as part of the whole), leads to a more robust definition in the ongoing conversation discussing human expression and mental health. The Biblical mandate to love God, self, and others holistically and through the expression of the fruits of the Spirit; add congruence to this train of thought. Biblical and academic research findings validate the importance of continued education of psychology and counseling students, not only in critical thinking skills and thought processing, yet also in motivation and emotion fluency. Emotion skill building, awareness, and increased regulation competence may then be passed on to those served. First, consideration is given to a Genesis-based foundation of motivation factors. Second, an emotion list by category is given to aid in emotion awareness and fluency. Finally, an example of a scripture-based beneficial emotion expression is given, as a pattern to build upon.

Motivation and Emotion Fluency Education in Psychology Curriculum

This paper is presented to add to the conversation already going on in building understanding of human motivation and emotion. The hope is that it might enhance learning and curriculum development already taking place. This paper examines the importance of motivation and emotion awareness, builds fluency and skill building through a scriptural-practical model and motivation and emotion listings; thus encouraging movement toward self-regulation and movement from behaviors of vice toward those of virtue. As is evident, motivation and emotion fluency and its application to mental health has gained great momentum in research literature and in the field of psychology over the past 25 years (Littrell, 2022). Current interest in the field is extensive.

The field of affective science encompasses a broad range of affective processes, which includes emotions, moods, preferences, attitudes, value-based decisions, and stress responses. ... Affect determines what we attend to and remember, what we decide to do and what we decide not to do, who we are drawn to and who we avoid, how we are similar to and different from other people, and how we interact productively and unproductively with

others...Affective dysfunction is at the root of the majority of mental disorders and predisposes people to and alters the course of many physical disorders (Gross et al., 2020, p. 1).

Conversations about the need for emotional regulation have existed throughout human history, with much focus on controlling or taming of emotion. Two authors of mention are Augustine and Kierkegaard. At the end of the fourth century, Augustine, with some basis in Platonic and stoic thought, "defined emotion 'as that which leads one's condition to become so transformed that his judgment is affected, and which is accompanied by pleasure and pain'" (as cited in Lewis, et al., 2008, p. 5). Kierkegaard's writings emphasized his own emotional experience; and he recorded a Christian Psychological Exposition in 1849 addressing deep despair and its connection to sin (Kierkegaard, 1980).

To narrow this conversation down to the focus of this paper, "psychopathology involves problems with emotion and emotion regulation" (Gross & Jazaieri, 2014, July). In view of the current evidence that motivation and emotive awareness and fluency aid in promotion of emotion regulation (Barrett, 2006; DeSteno et al., 2013; Gross et al., 2014; Johnson, 2017; Leahy et al, 2011; Moyal et al., 2014), this paper gives Biblical- and research-based validation for ongoing education and curriculum development to encourage our students in measurable learning outcomes and increased competence in applying motivation and emotion fluency skills to build awareness and regulating capacity.

This writing is divided into four sections. The first is a summary of a Biblical perspective of our work as clinical psychology professors, instructors, clinicians, and as encouragers of our students and their efforts. This includes review of a Genesis-based factor list of human motivation and desire (Appendix A). The second section addresses the Biblical evidence to support a robust emotional psychology curriculum. The third section is conversation on the value of emotional understanding for human being, centered on specific research in the affective sciences field. The final section includes an emotion fluency and categorization chart (Appendix B) from a Biblically-based perspective, and a scripture-based pattern which acts as a guideline in emotion processing.

Emotion awareness and expression are not only intrinsically valuable for one as an individual, yet also key in educating students in preparation for their work in serving others. To begin this conversation, emphasis is placed on the contribution emotion fluency brings to the full integration or wholeness of the human heart, mind, body, and soul before the Lord.

The Importance of Emotion Fluency from a Christian Psychology Perspective

As professionals working with students from a Christian psychological perspective, educational pursuits emphasize four key areas; psychosocial, in emotional relationship to God, self and others; cognitive in logic and thought life; environmental, in biological and socio- cultural makeup and history; and spiritual, in ascertaining faith walk or the lack thereof.

This journey as educators to our students, might be conceptualized as the journey of encouraging people in loving God with their heart, mind, soul and strength and loving others as they love themselves (Matthew 22:37-40). This is expanded further in John 13:34 inviting expression of the greatest form of love, as Christ Himself loved us, through sacrifice. It is essential to place this in perspective of the holistic view of human existence as was mentioned, to assist future psychologists in finding their way from living life from the fallen perspective into the greater fullness of life as the redeemed.

In attending to the emotion aspect of human living, it is vital to recognize the strong connection that exists between the Biblical concept of the heart and our emotional lives. Though the scriptural referral to the heart is not totally limited to this viewpoint, one needs only to examine the many cases where Biblical mention of "heart" contains rich feeling content to note that there is a connection. Later this paper delves further into the Biblical evidence to support the value of human emotion.

A Genesis-Based Worldview for a Practical Christian Emotion Psychology

The Genesis-based, fall-redemption perspective lays the foundation for a practical Christian Emotional psychology.

Pre-Fall Context

At creation, all that mankind knew and experienced was the goodness of God and his kingdom of peace. God had prepared everything for mankind that they would need to exist in the perfect harmony of His creation.

Motivation Awareness and Fluency Building: The Motivation Factor Listing

Genesis, Chapters 1 and 2 express the various needs and desires that had fulfillment in the pre-fall creation. An initial compilation of motivation factors from these chapters, is listed verse by verse in Appendix A (Also see Murphy, 2009) and is based on all that God had provided for man at the creation.

The question one might ask then is, "Do these factors undergird/motivate heart-felt emotional content post fall?" This factor listing gives definition to desires, longings and yearnings built into humanity at creation and aids in Christian psychoeducation through motivation awareness and fluency building. These might be considered a basis for what drives our motivation and emotion to the present day.

Current definition from George et al. (2020) states, "emotions are closely linked with motivation" and goes on to say, "motivation is typically the requirement or wish to achieve "satisfaction of [a] need [or desire]" (pp. 112, 208).

The Fallen Nature

As the enemy offered false logic, false desire and false identity with the fall; mankind experienced additional emotional content. Satan deceptively twisted Eden's fulfillment and the eternal written into the hearts of man into broken and sorrow-driven ways for reaching self- kingdom goals that could no longer be perfectly possessed and only painfully and partially arrived at (Genesis 1-3).

Researchers such as Lazarus (1991) indicate that emotion patterns result from "a still larger process domain: that of 'appraisal.' Appraisal processes are defined as intrasubjective processes that turn incoming stimulus events into ones with affective value and further meaning for well-being and motive satisfaction" (as cited in Lewis et al, 2008, p. 71).

Throughout the ages, there has been an undermining of the emotional desirous mind in view of the value of the logical mind. The shame, sorrow, and pain of all that Adam and Eve faced and the generational residue passed down; often continues to be covered over and hidden from, since the days of the fallenness. Our world has placed much effort in gaining control of, devaluing, and stifling or numbing emotion (Leahy et al., 2011; Lewis et al., 2008) through logic, fear, desire to escape, and the human will.

A four-quadrant model that fleshes out a Genesis 3:16 approach gives definition to these post-fall coping strategies (Murphy & Murphy, 2007 & 2008). Building psychological understanding through competence building, is shown to have a positive impact on regulating emotion within the coping experience (Gross & Jazaieri, 2014; Lewis et al, 2013, 2016; Moyal et al., 2014).

Redemptive Direction

From a Biblical worldview, our emotions are based on either the fallen view of the experience of our lives or the redemptive experience of life in Christ and our emotional interpretations of these experiences. Robert Roberts (2013) defines emotion as "concern-based construals" (p. i) and indicates that they are of an "interpretive, motivational and moral nature based on desire, attachment or concern" (p. 46).

The Bible presents a balanced approach of living out life as emotional and thoughtful human beings. When we think of the fruits of the Spirit or grace given daily through the cross,these are emotion-generating experiences that do not necessarily line up with cognitive human thinking. They are beyond our understanding, yet we experience it every day as the children of God. We are also called to "lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge him..." (New International Version, 1978/2011, Proverbs 3:5-6).

As one considers these aspects of what it means to be fully human in God's eyes, one of our roles as Christian psychology educators is assisting our students and their future clients in making room for the beloved other to process life emotion, life perspective and life meaning; from the past, in the present and for the future. This is directed through the fall and redemption worldview that we share as believers.

Emotion Fluency as Expressed in Scripture

What is the biblical evidence for insight into the value that God has given emotional life for human reality and for our work in Christian education and teaching? The psychological realm has had many years of exposure to the value of the cognitive and behavioral work of psychology. Logic is necessary in this world, yet we are also reminded that it was impetus for the fall of the first man and woman.

What are some of the facets that come together through our Biblical worldview to form our basis of

an understanding of emotion? Is there an emphasis on the value of emotional understanding? In seeking God's kingdom first in this question: Does God express His emotions in scripture? And is there indication that he finds value in his emotions and the human expression of emotions in the scriptures?

God-expressed Emotion Fluency

As represented in the divine Godhead and throughout His Word, we clearly see the emotional expression of God as follows. The verse references listed below clearly reveal God's intentionality in the revealing of His emotions as well as a valuing of this form of expression. This list is not comprehensive, it simply illustrates that God expresses a range of emotions throughout:

- Grief (Genesis 6:6, Jeremiah 42:10)
- Anger (Exodus 4:14, Judges 3:8, Psalm 30:5)
- Jealousy (Deuteronomy 6:14-15)
- Pleasure (1 Chronicles 29:17, Luke 10:21)
- Pity (2 Chronicles 36:15)
- Love (Psalm 78:68, Jeremiah 2:38, 41)
- Longing (Jeremiah 32:37-41)
- "Compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love..." (NIV, 1978/2011, Psalm 86:15).
- Hate (Zechariah 8:17, Malachi 2:16)
- Joy (Zephaniah 3:17)
- "...the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" (NIV, 1978/2011, 2 Corinthians 1:3).

Christ-expressed Emotion Fluency

What about Christ as representative not only of the divine, but also the human?

Below is a listing of a few of the verses which contain the expressions of Christ's emotional experience:
"He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain." (NIV, 1978/2011, Isaiah 53:3)
- "'...for I am gentle and humble in heart...'" (NIV, 1978/2011, Matthew 11:29)
- Compassion (Matthew 20:34)
- Sorrow (Matthew 26:38-39)
- Anger and Grief (Mark 3:4-5)
- Weariness (John 4:6)
- Love (John 13:34)
- Joy (John 15:11)
- Fervency, Tears, and Reverence (Hebrews 5:7)

- " "... For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame..." (NIV, 1978/2011, Hebrews 12:2)

Holy Spirit-expressed Emotion Fluency

Although, not as clearly stated in the scriptures; it appears that the Holy Spirit, as the Great Counselor, is a minister to our emotional states and to our understanding in this fallen- broken world:

- "... Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit..." (NIV, 1978/2011, Luke 10:21)
- "And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit..." (NIV, 1978/2011, Romans 5:5)
- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control..." (NIV, 1978/2011, Galatians 5:22-23)
- "... he cares for you" (NIV, 1978/2011, 1 Peter 5:7)

Each of these examples demonstrate that the Godhead leads us in placing value and importance on emotional life, and thus the emotional life of humanity, as well.

Narrative-based Emotion Fluency

Another question to ask is: Are there direct or indirect references to words of emotional meaning for mankind in the scriptures? Specifically, there is a reference to men that were "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19) having a negative connotation in their callousness towards pain. In the Old Testament, Psalm 119:70 contrasts David's heart with the hearts of the arrogant:
"Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law" (NIV, 1978/2011). Also, there are an abundance of instances of human emotion expression throughout the scriptures.
Indirectly, the story form of the Bible testimony has clearly touched the emotional hearts of people throughout all generations.
There is no shortage of rich emotion content as we read through the Biblical narrative beginning with Genesis. We go on to read in the scriptures of Moses feelings of inadequacy as he was chosen to lead the Exodus (Exodus 4:10-17) and of his later confidence that turned to frustration (Numbers 20-10-12); of Job and the depth of his depression and despair with later satisfactions (Job); of Naomi

Hosanna, cheers, applause

in the breadth of her bitterness with her many losses then being filled with the joy of new life through a grandchild (Ruth); and of Hannah crying out to God for a son, receiving relief in her pain and then being blessed with the fulfillment of her request (1 Samuel 1:2–2:21).

David, the man after God's own heart, cried out to the Lord from the depth of his soul in the majority of the songs he wrote, as he journeyed in the desert and on the throne (Psalms). His writings also highlighted his ability to dance and celebrate from his heart. Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet (Lamentations), while Isaiah brought hope through identifying the neediness of the human race and in highlighting the longing for the promise of the coming Savior (Isaiah).

Throughout the Old Testament, humanity was brought face to face with the angst of their situation. There had been no pathway to success that mankind could fulfill independently. time after time, man's attempts to secure success met with lack of satisfaction and tragedy. The exceptions were the times that contained the presence and the grace of God.

Sit with the emotional impact of this: Mankind could not establish an independent kingdom with anything that approached the greatness of God; though they attempted and were given opportunity after opportunity to accomplish this. In spite of this, God's emotional message of love, peace and hope run throughout scripture. The greatest fulfillment is manifest in the human birth of the Son of God.

In the New Testament, we find faithful Elizabeth and Zechariah in disbelief about the possibility of bearing a son in their old age yet experiencing just that (Luke 1:5-25). There is also the passage of Mary storing and treasuring her emotional memories of God's blessing to her in her heart (Luke 2:19), not to mention the living out of the wonder and angst of being the mother of Jesus the Christ. The Gospels share Christ's emotional story in depth; including frustration with his family on several occasions, celebration at the wedding in Cana, grief at the loss of John and Lazarus, joy at the disciples return from evangelizing, weeping and longing over Jerusalem, and his unbearable anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane (see above citations). Christ's prayers for Himself, His disciples and the believers in John 17 express his love in the Trinity and this love outspread to humanity. Finally, the depth of Christ's emotion is displayed on the cross

in the complete fullness of love that is totally beyond human contemplation (see above citations).

It did not stop there. Throughout the Bible, we see the emotional stories of the impact of the fall; and we see the human story intertwined with the redemptive story of God our Savior who delivers us from all our fears (Psalm 34:4) God brings His peace to the heart of man, the peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:6).

The Emotional Impact of the Fall and Redemption
How can the broken fears and anxieties of this world be brought before the redemptive presence of the Lord so that there is participation in God's peace and the fruitfulness of the Holy Spirit? How do we stand upright in the fullness of our identity in Christ and live out the image of God from our hearts? At the end of his life, King David spoke of the Lord having delivered him from all his troubles (1 Kings 1:29) and Paul encouraged having peace in all situations (2 Thessalonians 3:16). Jesus encouraged his disciples with these words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let not your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (NIV, 1978/2011, John 14:27).

Consider that the aspect of Biblical revelation that lends clarity to understanding the importance of emotion expression and fluency, are most often the passages speaking of loving God with our hearts (Luke 22:37). This is based on heart-felt movements and motivations (Johnson, 2017). Scriptures share the rich emotion content of the heart, including love, gladness, delight, grief, affliction, stubbornness, contrition, anguish and deception as well as underlying passions, intentions, understandings and wisdom that come through the heart. In complementing Eric Johnson (2017), who closely connects motivation and emotion to the scriptural concept of the heart; and Robert Roberts (2013)' definition of emotion presented earlier, another way of defining motivation/emotion here might be "heart-based construals".

David, as "the man after God's own heart" (NIV, 1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22), cries out and writes down his emotions in song after song before the Lord. David invites humanity to "pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge." (NIV, 1978/2011, Psalm 62:8). What does it look like to

follow the example of David in pouring out our hearts, or encouraging our clients and students to pour out their hearts before God? We know that the Lord emphasizes a heart-based view of humanity (1 Samuel 16:7, Psalm 37:4, Romans 8:27). What does it look like to assure uprightness and faithfulness in emotion life before Him?

A Psalm 73-based intervention model to strengthen student emotion fluency competence is offered later in this writing. This is a pattern to build on in examining and pouring out the motivation and emotion of our hearts before the Lord, in encouraging our students, and in empowering clients to do the same. Yet before looking at this model, this paper reviews some of the research and trends in the affective sciences field and provides a resource that will assist in categorizing and defining emotional experience.

The Importance of Emotion Fluency according to Affective Science Research

DeSteno et al. (2013) defines emotion as, "sets of goal-oriented physiological and cognitive changes meant to lead to adaptive responding" ...Thus, appropriate interventions should be targeted to use affect, whether it is the emotion that is prototypical of individuals confronting a specific situation or one evoked as part of the intervention itself, to shift the underlying risk estimates in a manner that supports and motivates the desired health-relevant decisions and behaviors" (pp. 475, 479).

Dysfunction in affective processes has been found to be central to much of psychopathology, and individual differences in various affective functioning influence various pathologies. "Many psychiatric disorders are said to be characterized by problems with emotion and emotion regulation (estimates range from 40% to more than 75%...," (Gross & Jazaieri, 2014, p. 387). According to Moyal et. al (2014), "Emotions become dysfunctional when they interfere with one's ability to behave adaptively, and therefore successful emotion regulation (ER), when necessary, is crucial for psychological health. Difficulties in adaptive ER are related to different psychopathologies" (p. 1).

In addition, "influential research on emotion highlights both (1) the essential functions served by emotions in coordinating cognitions and behavior and (2) the detrimental consequences associated with ignoring emotions" (Goleman, 1995).

Barrett (2006) states that there is " ... accumulating evidence that the experience of emotion can have great consequence for subsequent thoughts, decisions, and behaviors... People use knowledge to parse and conceptualize the bottom-up information that is sensorially given" (p. 20). She also states that, "it becomes clear that some people make categorical distinctions, characterizing their experiences in discrete emotion terms, whereas others characterize their experiences in broad, global terms". She labels this "emotional differentiation" and "emotional granularity" (p.24-25). According to Barrett, "Clearly defining emotion states and giving specific labels to feelings (categorization), gives the individual greater capacity to become aware of attitudes and possible misperceived meanings that may affect their view of the world" (p. 21).

Clinton et al. (2005) have focus on the importance of emotion awareness in chapters dedicated to the topics of anger, forgiveness, trauma, and grief. This work also emphasizes the importance of developing skill in validating and encouraging emotion expression in counseling).

Emotion Awareness and Fluency Building Emotion List by Category Table

What might greater emotion awareness and fluency bring to life day to day, even to the level of affecting our worldview? In the Emotion List by Category Table (see Appendix B), the Self-Interest and Shame columns list the emotions that God clearly invites us to turn over to him. These categories are both pride-based emotion listings as they are different than what God calls us to experience in His redemptive kingdom living. Under the other categories, the direction of pride or lack of pride can be determined by the internal understanding of the application of each emotion per the individual, through interpretive and motivational framework of their experience in view of God's perspective in the Bible.

Furthermore, the emotional defining process upbuilds emotion fluency and allows a reframing of these heart concepts to validate and/or release them into the deeper understanding of God's perspective. This includes understanding of self and/or other. Augustine's focus on "the Lord's Prayer" in directing emotional life to "a vision of true Christian desire" lays an excellent groundwork for this work (Fogleman, 2022, p. 238-244).

Considering the research; the value of continuing to build a robust Christian psychology of motivation and emotion fluency into course curriculum, class conversations and into clinical psychology settings is vital to upbuild human heart and emotional well-being. Here is a model to assist with that.

Psalm 73 Model
How might emotion fluency draw us more deeply into God's redeemed perspective of our emotion and motivation experiences? George et al. (2023) emphasizes the importance of this passage in Psalms for increasing emotion competence in their book, Introduction to Psychology from a Christian Worldview. The Psalm 73 Model of emotion expression encourages students and clients in seeking greater emotional awareness and understanding from a God-centered and psychological perspective:

- Reverence for God and His Truth (Psalm 73:1)
- Respect For Purity in Emotional Life (Psalm 73:1)
- Reflection on Self (Psalm 73:2)
- Realization of Emotion, Perspective or Belief (Psalm 73:3-14)
- Review of Meaning in Light of Truth of God (Psalm 73:15-16)
- Recognition of Sin and Need for God (Psalm 73:16)
- Reframing in God (Psalm 73:17-20)
- Repentance of Prideful Emotion, Perspective or Belief (Psalm 73:21-22)
- Restoration by God (Psalm 73:23)
- Reliance on God (Psalm 73:24-26)
- Refuge in God (Psalm 73:27-28)
- Remembrance and Desiring of God (Psalm 73:28)

In view of the Psalm 73 pattern, God's desire is for us to love Him by pouring out our hearts to him as Asaph did, and as David lives out. This leads to the encouragement of students by inviting honest clarification of their emotional states for themselves, with God, and in transferring this learning to those they will serve. This includes awareness and sharing of the emotional impact of the hurts and wounds of life, as well as its joys. (For further commentary on Psalm 73, see Murphy & Murphy, 2020) These steps move one toward redemptive emoting through the scripture-based filter and in seeking the presence of God. This leads towards the relief from every distress that David spoke of at the end of his earthly life and the peace in all circumstances that Paul experienced. This also includes the reception of and thankfulness for the fruitful experience of Spirit-led emotions that come with this peace in God.

Conclusion
In conclusion, full expression of human being includes the heart, mind, soul and strength. Building understanding and beneficial ways of expression of all aspects are necessary to teach a fully developed Christian psychology. This includes the importance of a robust motivation and emotion curriculum. C. S. Lewis (1947) in discussing the educational premise in "The Abolition of Man", states "Without the aid of trained emotions the intellect is powerless against the animal

organism" (p. 15). He indicates that the danger here is the "abolition of man," or one might say the Biblical sense of what makes one fully human.
The focus of this paper is on the importance of expressing, teaching, and continuing to build curriculum with motivation and emotion fluency in mind. The goal is to increase student ability to discern and identify broken and beneficial patterns of emoting by 1) skill building in defining motivation that undergird emotion life and 2) by defining emotional impact of life circumstances and experience on the individual. Greater clarity of motivation and emotion can come from identifying drives and desires and then in acknowledging and defining emotion status and reflecting on this in view of biblical truth. In this way, any confirmation or misunderstanding of the nature of relationship with God, self and others and the physical world is brought to light. This is exemplified in the Psalm 73 passage.
Emotional truth comes as our souls cry out before God like David in his 73rd song, as Hannah did in the book of Samuel, or in the example of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46). This is where broken understandings and experiences of emotion are surrendered to the truth of God's promises. Emotional peace comes as stress is lifted through relationship with Jesus our Savior and in the blessing of the Holy Spirit's indwelling our humanity more deeply. Our life journey gives us the opportunity to gain God's eternal perspective and to thankfully acknowledge Him for His immeasurable goodness in all circumstances (Romans 8:28, Psalm 27:13).
May our hearts and those of our students and clients, be built more and more upright in true emotional identity in Christ Jesus.

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Appendix A Motivation Factor Listing

God Provided all Mankind could Desire (Genesis 1 and 2)

- Presence of the Creator (1:26)
- Purpose (1:26)
- Prestige (1:27)
- Patronage/Prized (1:28)
- to Participate (1:28)
- Procreativity (1:28)
- set Priorities (1:28)
- to exPlore (1:28)
- Power (1:28, 2:19)
- Provision (1:29-30, 2:8, 10, 16)
- Permanence (1:30)
- Praise (1:31, 2:12)
- Peace (2:2-3)
- Personal touch (2:7, 2:21)
- Personal God (2:7)
- Perspective of God's glory (2:8)
- Place (2:8)
- Pleasure (2:9)
- Prerogative (2:9, 16-17)
- Productivity (2:15)
- Protection (2:17)
- Potential promise (2:18, 20)
- Presence of other (1:27, 2:22)
- Promise fulfilled (2:23)
- Passion (2:24)
- Purity (2:24)

Appendix B - Emotion List by Category

KIND/ LOVING	LONELY/ HATED	LOVED	PEACEFUL/ FALSE PEACE	SELF- INTERESTED	SHAME/ LIMITED (BAD)	TIRED/ LIVELY
MILD	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**
Appreciative	Singled out	Accepted	Calm	Deserving	Compared	Sleepy
Soft	Withdrawn	Warm	Sedate	Better than	Sheepish	Weary
Caring	Distant	Close	Quiet	Self-centered	Embarrassed	Drained
Patient	Awkward	Appreciated	At ease	Protective	Needy	Bushed
Sympathetic	Put on the spot	Regarded	Comfortable	Disdainful	Lacking	Beat
Concerned	Picked on	Approved	Contented	Unappreciative	Foolish	Pooped
Consoling	Unaccepted	Cared about	Nothing	Idealistic	Put down	Alive
Pleased	Left out	Reassured	Indifferent	Self-Protective	Stupid	Alert
Personable	Different	Included	Bored	Inconvenienced	Inferior	Aware
MODERATE	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**
Sensitive	Avoided	Encouraged	Accepting	Self-absorbed	Not good enough	Drug out
Attached to	Neglected	Cared for	Stable	Entitled	Demeaned	Fed up
Respectful	Ignored	Needed	Relaxed	Guarded	Criticized	Fatigued
Submissive	Distanced	Special	Serene	Stubborn	Humbled	Depleted
Tender hearted	Forlorn	Valued	Untroubled	Self-righteous	Trapped	Tired out
Affection for	Disdained	Blessed	Pacified	Competitive	Incapable	Worn down
Empathetic	Lost	Attractive	Filled	Perfectionistic	Inadequate	Frisky
Encouraging	Left behind	Wanted	In Comfort zone	Prideful	Pathetic	Curious
Assuring	Misfit	Popular	Sleeping	Envious	Guilty	Wide awake
STRONG	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**
In love	All alone	Assured	Placated	Greedy	Negated	Energy less
Admiring	Rejected	Beautiful	Satisfied	Demanding	Worthless	Like giving up
Passionate	Unwanted	Uplifted	Fulfilled	Owed	Subjugated	Worn out
Uplifting	Deserted	Respected	Tranquil	Domineering	Damaged	Run ragged
Benevolent	Separated	Adored	Relieved	Jealous	In bondage	Done in
Turned on	Discarded	Cherished	Stagnant	Powerful	Disgraced	Dog-tired
Idealistic	Estranged	Secure	Gratified	Self-made	Piteous	Vibrant
Generous	Loathed	Admired	Peaceable	Arrogant	Like a Failure	Energized
Ardent	Desolate	Desirable	Appeased	Judgmental	Useless	Intrigued
INTENSE	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**
Full of Grace	Abandoned	Captivating	Rapturous	Lustful	Humiliated	Exhausted
Adoring	Isolated	Esteemed	Transported	Dominant	Condemned	Consumed
Compassionate	Unloved	Idolized	In Nirvana	All knowing	Hopeless	Wasted
Idolotrous	Cut off	Worshipped	Blissful	Superior	Tainted	Finished
Infatuated	Abhorred	Smothered	Total peace	Self-idolizing	Enslaved	Dead
Worshipful	Forsaken	Relished	Satiated	Prestigious	Emasculated	Invigorated
Enamored by	Alienated	Ravished	Reconciled	Self-empowered	Violated	Inquisitive
Cherishing	Detested	Put on a Pedestal	Heavenly	Obsessed	Impotent	Fascinated

KIND/ LOVING	LONELY/ HATED	LOVED	PEACEFUL/ FALSE PEACE	SELF-INTERESTED	SHAME/ LIMITED (BAD)	TIRED/ LIVELY
MILD	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**	**MILD**
Appreciative	Singled out	Accepted	Calm	Deserving	Compared	Sleepy
Soft	Withdrawn	Warm	Sedate	Better than	Sheepish	Weary
Caring	Distant	Close	Quiet	Self-centered	Embarrassed	Drained
Patient	Awkward	Appreciated	At ease	Protective	Needy	Bushed
Sympathetic	Put on the spot	Regarded	Comfortable	Disdainful	Lacking	Beat
Concerned	Picked on	Approved	Contented	Unappreciative	Foolish	Pooped
Consoling	Unaccepted	Cared about	Nothing	Idealistic	Put down	Alive
Pleased	Left out	Reassured	Indifferent	Self-Protective	Stupid	Alert
Personable	Different	Included	Bored	Inconvenienced	Inferior	Aware
MODERATE	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**	**MODERATE**
Sensitive	Avoided	Encouraged	Accepting	Self-absorbed	Not good enough	Drug out
Attached to	Neglected	Cared for	Stable	Entitled	Demeaned	Fed up
Respectful	Ignored	Needed	Relaxed	Guarded	Criticized	Fatigued
Submissive	Distanced	Special	Serene	Stubborn	Humbled	Depleted
Tender hearted	Forlorn	Valued	Untroubled	Self-righteous	Trapped	Tired out
Affection for	Disdained	Blessed	Pacified	Competitive	Incapable	Worn down
Empathetic	Lost	Attractive	Filled	Perfectionistic	Inadequate	Frisky
Encouraging	Left behind	Wanted	In Comfort zone	Prideful	Pathetic	Curious
Assuring	Misfit	Popular	Sleeping	Envious	Guilty	Wide awake
STRONG	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**	**STRONG**
In love	All alone	Assured	Placated	Greedy	Negated	Energy less
Admiring	Rejected	Beautiful	Satisfied	Demanding	Worthless	Like giving up
Passionate	Unwanted	Uplifted	Fulfilled	Owed	Subjugated	Worn out
Uplifting	Deserted	Respected	Tranquil	Domineering	Damaged	Run ragged
Benevolent	Separated	Adored	Relieved	Jealous	In bondage	Done in
Turned on	Discarded	Cherished	Stagnant	Powerful	Disgraced	Dog-tired
Idealistic	Estranged	Secure	Gratified	Self-made	Piteous	Vibrant
Generous	Loathed	Admired	Peaceable	Arrogant	Like a Failure	Energized
Ardent	Desolate	Desirable	Appeased	Judgmental	Useless	Intrigued
INTENSE	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**	**INTENSE**
Full of Grace	Abandoned	Captivating	Rapturous	Lustful	Humiliated	Exhausted
Adoring	Isolated	Esteemed	Transported	Dominant	Condemned	Consumed
Compassionate	Unloved	Idolized	In Nirvana	All knowing	Hopeless	Wasted
Idolotrous	Cut off	Worshipped	Blissful	Superior	Tainted	Finished
Infatuated	Abhorred	Smothered	Total peace	Self-idolizing	Enslaved	Dead
Worshipful	Forsaken	Relished	Satiated	Prestigious	Emasculated	Invigorated
Enamored by	Alienated	Ravished	Reconciled	Self-empowered	Violated	Inquisitive
Cherishing	Detested	Put on a Pedestal	Heavenly	Obsessed	Impotent	Fascinated
Merciful	Despised	Glorified	Filled w/Holy Spirit	Narcissistic	Finished	Impassioned

What is the motivation underlying my feelings? Am I giving glory to God and who I am in Him?
Do I desire the perfect garden more than God's glory?

comment

Critical Commentary on Valerie Murphy's Article: "Motivation and Emotion Fluency Education in Psychology Curriculum"

Valerie Murphy's article proposes a profound dialogue between emotional understanding, psychological formation, and biblical foundations. The author structures her reflection on the conviction that the training of Christian psychologists cannot neglect emotional and motivational education. This proposal is anchored in a biblical view of the human being, guided by the narrative of creation, fall, and redemption, and aims to form professionals and students who serve others with emotional competence and spiritual discernment.

The text combines three approaches: the theological (especially with references to Genesis, the Psalms, and the life of Christ), the psychological (drawing on contemporary affective science), and the pedagogical (through tools such as the Emotion Category Table and the Psalm 73 Model). The author not only proposes a path for broadening students' emotional awareness but also develops resources that can be applied in clinical and educational practice.

1. The Main Contribution of the Article: A Heart-Centered Christian Psychology

The core of Murphy's contribution lies in the idea that psychological formation must include "emotional and motivational fluency" as an essential competence. This fluency is understood as the ability to name, understand, categorize, and regulate emotions, both intrapersonally and interpersonally. In this sense, the author supports her understanding of affective science by referencing authors such as Gross, Barrett, and Goleman. She acknowledges that emotional regulation is not limited to brain function or behavioral training, but is deeply related to spirituality and the relationship with God.

This point is especially valuable when considering the contribution of Christian psychology developed by Eric L. Johnson. Like Johnson, Valerie Murphy understands that the human being is relational, created in the image of God, and that emotions are expressions of the heart in response to reality; especially divine reality. Both authors agree in treating emotional life not as an obstacle to moral or spiritual life, but as an integral part of the soul's formation. The concept of the "heart" as the center of the human motivational and affective life is recurrent in Johnson and finds direct resonance in Murphy's text. She understands that Christian discipleship involves growing in the ability to recognize emotions, submit them to the light of Scripture, and transform them through the grace of God.

2. Biblical Foundation and Pastoral Structure

Another point of excellence in the article is the careful use of biblical foundations. The author dedicates a section to show how God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are portrayed in Scripture as beings who express emotions: an-

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ger, joy, compassion, sadness, pleasure, among others. The objective here is not merely to "anthropologize" the Trinity, but to affirm that, if we are created in the image of God, then there is theological legitimacy in recognizing the role of emotions in human formation.

By using figures such as David, Moses, Hannah, Naomi, and Mary, the author shows how emotional life is extensively portrayed in Scripture as part of the human relationship with God. Emotions are presented as a bridge to understanding meaning, pain, hope, and redemption.

3. Innovative Pedagogical Tools

From a didactic point of view, Valerie Murphy's proposal stands out by offering two valuable tools:

The Emotion Category Table (Appendix B): A classification that allows students and practitioners to name their emotions with greater precision and depth. This aligns with the concept of "emotional granularity" supported by Barrett and other researchers and is highly useful in clinical and formative contexts.

The Psalm 73 Model: A sequence of steps that guides the individual through their emotional experience before God. The model combines confession, reflection, repentance, reinterpretation in light of the truth, and spiritual restoration. It is an original and pastorally sensitive approach that can be applied both in academic training and in spiritual counseling.

4. Theological Limits and Considerations: The Use of Anthropopathism

Although the article presents a rich and inspiring biblical reading, it is important to offer a critical theological contribution, particularly regarding the use of anthropopathism; the language that attributes human emotions to God.

The use of anthropopathism has pedagogical and revelatory value: it communicates deep truths about God's relationship with creation in terms understandable to human beings. However, it is necessary to recognize that this language is analogical and has its limits. God is spirit (John 4:24), immutable, omniscient, and holy. His feelings are not reactive or changeable like ours. Attributing emotions to God in strictly human terms can lead to an anthropocentric and impoverished view of theology, as if God were merely an emotional projection of man. Therefore, while the depiction of divine emotions in Scripture should be respected and embraced, it is essential that texts aimed at theological and psychological formation clarify that this is figurative language, whose function is more relational than ontological.

5. Paths for Advancement and Possible Expansions

To strengthen Valerie Murphy's proposal even further, we suggest a few complementary directions:

Engagement with theological tradition: Including voices such as Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, or Thomas Aquinas could deepen the theological understanding of the affections and the inner life.

Empirical validation of the tools: Case studies, application reports, or qualitative evaluations of the use of the Psalm 73 Model and the Emotion Category Table would enrich the proposal.

Exploration of the limitations of secular approaches: A more direct critique of the shortcomings of secular psychology would help to highlight more clearly the gains from integrating faith and science.

Conclusion

Valerie Murphy's article represents a remarkable contribution to the development of Christian psychology rooted in Scripture, aligned with scientific understanding, and focused on the formation of the heart. Her sensitive, practical, and pastoral approach is valuable for all who wish to contribute to the formation of Christian psychologists, counselors, and educators. We hope her proposal will continue to grow and translate into practical applications in educational contexts and in personal and spiritual formation.

Soldier / Ear

Hello, I'm Malchus.

Malchus, ever heard of me? Do you know who I am? Yes, Malchus, the servant of the high priest Caiaphas, whose ear Simon Peter cut off when we arrested Jesus.

That's me. Or rather: that was me.

Perhaps you're asking how this could have happened to me?

Well, I wasn't just any servant, but the leader of the servants, and of course I walked in front, standing close to Jesus and his disciples.

Oh, that wasn't your question at all? You want to know why Peter had a sword with him? Whether sword or dagger, it was normal back then to have something like that with you, for survival, not just against humans or animals, but also to clear one's way through nature.

And I'm also sure that this Peter didn't specifically want to cut off my ear. Why would he do that? It would require a certain skill in striking. It was already dark, and he just started hitting me. It happened really fast. Suddenly, I felt a pain in my head. It hurt, but there are worse pains. I reached down, and my ear was gone. I bent down to search, and then I saw Jesus' hand searching for my head, felt something again, reached down again, and there it was again: my ear.

Unbelievable. It took my breath away. And believe me, I've never forgotten it. Almost every day, when I touch my ear in any way, I immediately think of it. And what did that do to me? I needed some distance from it at first because I "didn't understand the world anymore". And for the next few days, I "played absent", checking out of work.

By the way, the fact that centuries later, John Chrysostom equated me with the servant who punched Jesus in the face during his interrogation before Annas is a real shock. Is it supposed to have been me, the one Jesus healed?

Since that day, his love has touched me. For he not only healed my ear, but also looked into my eyes while doing so."

(Werner May)

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Former articles by Stefano available here:
https://emcapp.ignis.de/14/#p=56
https://emcapp.ignis.de/19/#p=69

Stefano Parenti (Italy/Italia):

Integral psychotherapy of the person, based on the anthropology of Thomas Aquinas

Psicoterapia integrale della persona: basata sull'antropologia di Tommaso d'Aquino

Ever since I was in college, I was tormented by a question, which can be formulated as follows: what anthropology underlies the various psychotherapy currents? In other words, what man's conception do the authors of the main schools of this discipline have? I nurtured this question because I was worried about "splitting", as we say among us in the Italian Association of Catholic Psychology, that is, dividing myself: on one hand the professional psychologist, who follows certain authors who has a certain man's conception, and on the other hand the Catholic person, who instead holds other beliefs. I soon discovered that my concern made sense: the main leaders of the various psychotherapy currents propose - often implicitly - a man's conception that is far from Christian anthropology: Freud was an evolutionary materialist, who belie-

Sin da quando frequentavo l'università ero tormentato da una domanda, che possiamo formulare così: quale antropologia è sottesa alle varie correnti della psicoterapia? Ovvero, quale concezione di uomo hanno gli autori delle principali scuole di questa disciplina? Nutrivo questo interrogativo poiché ero preoccupato di "scindermi", come diciamo tra noi dell'Associazione di Psicologia Cattolica, ovvero di dividermi: da una parte il professionista psicologo, che segue certi autori che hanno una certa concezione dell'uomo, dall'altra il cattolico, che invece nutre altri convincimenti. Ho scoperto ben presto che la mia preoccupazione era sensata: i principali capiscuola delle varie correnti di psicoterapia propongono – spesso in modo implicito – una concezione dell'uomo che è distante dall'antropologia cristiana: Freud era un materialista evoluzio-

ved that man's ultimate goal was pleasure; behaviorists were positivists for whom man is nothing more than a conditionable animal by external stimuli; for cognitivists a self-programmable and self-determining computer; for humanists like Carl Rogers an organism in search of satisfaction but trapped by repressive social rules (his position is not that far from Freud's!), for systemics an element lost in the circularity of communications...etc.

I then set out in search of authors who proposed a psychology based on and originated from Christian man's conception (and specifically Catholic) and discovered two things. First, that some of the traditional authors, great Christian theologians, had written extensively about psychology. Some, like Thomas Aquinas, had outlined a real psychology of human's soul, as we shall see. Second, that in different parts of the world other psychotherapists had also set out to study these authors and attempted to outline a clinical practice consistent with their anthropology. Such groups scattered around the world are mainly the following: the friends of Abat Oliba in Barcelona and in particular Martín Echavarría[1]; the North Americans with the Catholic Psychotherapy Association and the Divine Mercy University, whose catholic meta-model of the person has recently been set out in an extensive 700-page volume[2]; some Argentineans from the Catholic University of Buenos Aires, led by father Ignacio Andereggen (who organized the Days of Christian Psychology every year[3]); the Argentineans from Pharus and those from the Ecce Homo Association; the Brazilians from the Institute of Thomistic Psychotherapy[4]; and finally, the Chileans from the Association for the Integral Psychology of the Person, who, together with the school of psychology at Finis Terrae University, organize a graduate course built entirely around Thomas Aquinas' anthropology. Their clinic approach, described by Benjamin Suazo in an important summary article[5], is significantly called "integral psychology of the person", a current that complements the many proposals of contemporary psychotherapies.

nista che credeva che il fine ultimo dell'uomo fosse il piacere; i comportamentisti erano dei positivisti per cui l'uomo non è nient'altro che un animale condizionabile dagli stimoli esterni; per i cognitivisti un computer auto-programmabile e auto-determinabile; per gli umanisti come Carl Rogers un organismo in cerca di soddisfazione ma intrappolato da regole sociali repressive (la sua posizione non è poi così distante da quella di Freud!), per i sistemici un elemento che si perde nella circolarità delle comunicazioni...eccetera.

Mi sono allora messo alla ricerca di autori che proponessero una psicologia basata e originata dalla concezione cristiana dell'uomo (e quando dico cristiana intendo soprattutto cattolica) e ho scoperto due cose. Primo: che alcuni degli autori della tradizione, ovvero I grandi teologi cristiani, avevano scritto molto di psicologia. Alcuni, come Tommaso d'Aquino, avevano delineato una vera e propria psicologia dell'animo umano, come vedremo. Secondo: che in diverse parti del mondo anche altri psicoterapeuti si erano messi a studiare questi autori e tentavano di delineare una pratica clinica coerente con la loro antropologia. Tali gruppi sparsi nel mondo sono soprattutto i seguenti: gli amici dell'Abat Oliba di Barcellona e in particolare Martin Echavarria[1]; i nordamericani della Divine Mercy University, il cui catholic meta-model of the person è stato recentemente esposto in un ampio volume di 700 pagine[2]; alcuni argentini della Università Cattolica di Buenos Aires, capitanati da padre Ignacio Andereggen (che ogni anno organizzano le Giornate di Psicologia Cristiana)[3]; gli argentini di Pharus e quelli dell'Associazione Ecce Homo; i Brasiliani dell'istituto di psicoterapia tomista[4]; infine i cileni dell'Associazione di Psicologia Integrale della Persona che, assieme alla scuola di psicologia dell'Università Finis Terrae, organizzano un corso di laurea interamente costruito attorno all'antropologia di Tommaso d'Aquino. Il loro approccio alla clinica, descritto da Benjamin Suazo in un importante articolo riassuntivo[5], viene significativamente chiamato "psicologia integrale della persona", una corrente che va

1 Martín Echavarría, *La praxis de la psicología y sus niveles epistemológicos según Santo Tomás de Aquino*, Documenta Universitaria, Girona 2005.

2 Paul Vitz, William Nordling, Craig titus (a cura di), *A Catholic Christian Meta-Model of the Person: Integration of Psychology and Mental Health Practice*, Divine Mercy University Press, 2020 [translated in Espanol: *Un Meta-Modelo Cristiano Católico de la persona*, Editorial Ufv, 2021].

3 Ignacio Andereggen & Zelmira Seligmann (a cura di), *La psicologia ante la gracia*, Dyonisius 2022 [translated in Italian: *La psicologia di fronte alla grazia*, Dyonisius, 2020]; Ignacio Andereggen, Zelmira Seligmann & Patricia Schell, *Bases para una psicología cristiana*, Dyonisius 2022.

4 Rafael de Abreu, *Introdução à Psicoterapia Tomista*, Editora Domine 2022; *Práticas em Psicoterapia Tomista*, Editora Domine, 2024.

5 APSIP, Psicología integral de la persona. Bases para un meta-modelo de Psicología clínica, Studium, 2022, XXV, n° 49 (liberamente accessibile al sito: https://revistas.unsta.edu.ar/index.php/Studium/article/download/516/685/2630).

There are many aspects of novelty that this proposal offers. The most interesting, in my opinion, is the general and comprehensive description of human structure and dynamics. Contemporary approaches, which present many good insights and one-sided parts of truth about man, however, lack a unified design. The empirical method - the evidence-based model - proves inadequate to delineate a unified conception of human faculties. In contrast, traditional psychology originated from Aristotle and developed over the centuries up to Thomas Aquinas is markedly metaphysical. This allows a comprehensive view that starts from the totality and delves into individual partial aspects. Contemporary psychotherapy, especially the prevailing psychology today that comes from the United States, has rejected metaphysics; it has thus precluded a broader investigation of reality.

Let us see then what is the traditional psychology's conception of man. Ontologically speaking, man is a compound, that a mixture of two components: body and soul. When we say compound or impasto we mean a single reality in which the two components, one physical and the other spiritual, interpenetrate each other. Aristotle called it "the synol" and I am sure, many of you, have already heard the expression of ilemorphism: a word combining two Greek terms, ulé (matter) and morphé (form). Form and matter together: it is not possible for us to think of any created entity unless it is endowed with these two components. The classic example is that of the soccer ball: a soccer ball has a definite matter (it cannot be made of glass, nor of wood) and a definite shape (round-shaped). If it were oval it would not be a soccer ball but a rugby ball, and if it were square it would not be a ball at all. Matter and form, body and spiritual aspects totally interpenetrate the human being. This is the difference, for example, between Cartesian anthropology, in which the soul sits alongside the body (soul + body). My colleague Roberto Marchesini illustrates this with a very clear cake metaphor. Let's pretend we want to make a cake, so we go to the supermarket, buy flour, eggs, sugar, milk ... and put everything in the bag. On the way home, the bag breaks: flour, eggs and sugar fall on the ground and mix ...but do not interpenetrate. We recognize ingredients there fallen on the ground, we distinguish well the flour, eggs, sugar, etc. This is the union of soul and body according to Descartes, in which the components add up to each other without interpe-

ad affiancarsi alle numerose proposte delle psicoterapie contemporanee.

Sono molti gli aspetti di novità che questa proposta offre. Il più interessante, a mio avviso, è la descrizione generale e comprensiva della struttura e della dinamica umana. Gli approcci contemporanei, che presentano moltissime buone intuizioni e parti unilaterali di verità sull'uomo, mancano però di un disegno unitario. Il metodo empirico - il modello evidence-based - si rivela inadeguato a delineare una concezione unitaria delle facoltà umane. Al contrario, la psicologia tradizionale che origina da Aristotele e si sviluppa nei secoli fino a Tommaso d'Aquino è marcatamente metafisica. Questo permette uno sguardo complessivo, che parte dalla totalità e si addentra nei singoli aspetti parziali. La psicologia contemporanea, specialmente quella oggi imperante che proviene dagli Stati Uniti, ha rigettato la metafisica; si è così preclusa una indagine più ampia della realtà.

Vediamo allora qual è la concezione dell'uomo della psicologia tradizionale. Intanto l'uomo è ontologicamente un composto, è cioè un impasto di due componenti: l'anima e il corpo. Quando si dice composto o impasto si vuole intendere una realtà unica, in cui le due componenti, una fisica e l'altra spirituale, si compenetrano a vicenda. Aristotele lo chiamava "il sinolo" e tanti dei presenti, sono sicuro, hanno già sentito l'espressione di ilemorfismo: una parola che unisce due termini greci, ulé (la materia) e morphé (la forma). Forma e materia assieme: non ci è possibile pensare qualsiasi ente creato se non dotato di queste due componenti. Il classico esempio è quello della palla da calcio: una palla da calcio ha una precisa materia (non può essere di vetro, né di legno) e una determinata forma (a sfera). Se fosse ovale non sarebbe una palla da calcio ma da rugby, e se fosse quadrata non sarebbe proprio una palla. Materia e forma, aspetto corporeo e aspetto spirituale si compenetrano totalmente nell'essere umano. Questa è la differenza, ad esempio, tra l'antropologia cartesiana, in cui l'anima si affianca al corpo (anima + corpo). Il mio collega Roberto Marchesini lo illustra con una metafora chiarissima. Vogliamo fare una torta. Allora andiamo al supermercato. Comperiamo farina, uova, zucchero, latte...e mettiamo tutto nel sacchetto. Mentre torniamo a casa il sacchetto si rompe: farina, uova e zucchero cadono a terra e si mescolano...senza però compenetrarsi. Riconosciamo lì cadute a terra la farina, distinguiamo bene le uova, lo zucchero,

netrating. What if instead of breaking, the bag remained intact? What would happen is that when I got home, I would set out to bake the cake. I mix flour with water, add salt, stir in eggs and so on until I put the dough in the oven. After an hour or so I take the pan out of the oven and...the eggs, flour, sugar have disappeared. Or rather, they have not disappeared, they have interpenetrated each other so that it is almost impossible to tell them apart. This is the Aristotelian synol. Thomas Aquinas would specify: the soul is the form of the body, it constitutes its first act. There are many aspects like these on which much could be said, but I would like to move away from the mere exquisitely metaphysical arguments to the mere psychological ones, as we understand them nowadays.

The transition is easy because it is a metaphysics' consequence. This soul that interpenetrates with the body into a united composite (a psychosomatic or PsychoNeuroEndocrinoImmunology conception, 700 years before psychosomatics and PNEI) has parts, if we may say so, potentialities or faculties (these are all terms that have their own precise meaning, as we shall see). Depending on these faculties we distinguish three levels or souls' types. Does it all sound complex? Not at all! Because the intent of these ancient authors was to study and describe reality as it presents itself through perception senses. They are not intellectuals, in the modern sense of the word, which is, abstract and abstruse thinkers. Aristotle observed that a stone does not move by itself. To move it needs to be propelled by something else: the force of gravity, another stone. Consequently, it is not animated from within, but from without: it has no soul. Plants, on the other hand, have an intrinsic movement that enables them to grow, move and reproduce. Here we describe the three faculties of the vegetative soul, the first of the three soul types. If we bring our gaze to animals we find that, in addition to these faculties, they have other two particularly significant: first, they know the objects of the external world. They have external senses and also internal senses that enable them to formulate mental images (common sense and imagination) and to remember them (memory) and also to instinctively evaluate them as useful or harmful (vis estimativa, which corresponds to our concept of instinct; Aristotle called it "the naturalness"). For example: the sheep always runs away to escape from the wolf (this is an example from Aristotle and Thomas). The second

eccetera. Questa è l'unione di anima e corpo secondo Cartesio, in cui le componenti si sommano a vicenda senza compenetrarsi. Cosa succede se invece che rompersi il sacchetto rimanesse integro? Accadrebbe che, arrivato a casa, mi metterei a preparare la torta. Impasto la farina con l'acqua, aggiungo il sale, mescolo le uova e via così sino a mettere l'impasto in forno. Dopo un'ora circa tiro fuori la teglia dal forno e...le uova, la farina, lo zucchero sono scomparsi. O meglio, non sono scomparsi, si sono compenetrati l'un l'altro in modo che è quasi impossibile distinguerli. Questo è il sinolo aristotelico. Tommaso d'Aquino preciserà: l'anima è la forma del corpo, costituisce il suo atto primo. Aspetti questi su cui si potrebbe dire molto, ma io vorrei allontanarmi dagli argomenti più squisitamente metafisici per arrivare a quelli più psicologici, come li intendiamo oggigiorno.

Il passaggio è facile, perché è una conseguenza della metafisica. Questa anima che si compenetra col corpo in un composto unitario (una concezione psicosomatica o PNEI, 700 anni prima della psicosomatica e della PNEI) ha delle parti, se così possiamo dire, o delle potenzialità o delle facoltà (sono tutti termini che hanno un loro preciso significato, come vedremo). A seconda di queste facoltà distinguiamo tre livelli o tipologie di anime. Sembra tutto complesso? Non lo è per niente! Perché l'intento di questi autori antichi era di studiare e descrivere la realtà così come si presenta alla percezione dei sensi. Non sono intellettuali, nel senso moderno del termine, cioè pensatori astratti e astrusi. Aristotele osservava che un sasso non si muove da solo. Per spostarsi necessita di essere spinto da qualcosa d'altro: la forza di gravità, un altro sasso. Di conseguenza non è animato dall'interno, ma dall'esterno: non ha un'anima. Le piante, invece, hanno un movimento intrinseco che le permette di crescere, spostarsi e riprodursi. Ecco descritte le tre facoltà dell'anima vegetativa, la prima delle tre tipologie. Se portiamo il nostro sguardo sugli animali scopriamo che, oltre a queste potenzialità, ne hanno altre due particolarmente significative: innanzitutto conoscono gli oggetti del mondo esterno. Hanno i sensi esterni ed anche dei sensi interni che permettono loro di formulare delle immagini mentali (senso comune ed immaginazione) e di ricordarli (memoria) e anche di valutarli istintivamente come utili o dannosi (vis estimativa, che corrisponde al nostro concetto di istinto; Aristotele la chiamava "la naturalezza"). Ad esempio: la pecora scappa semp-
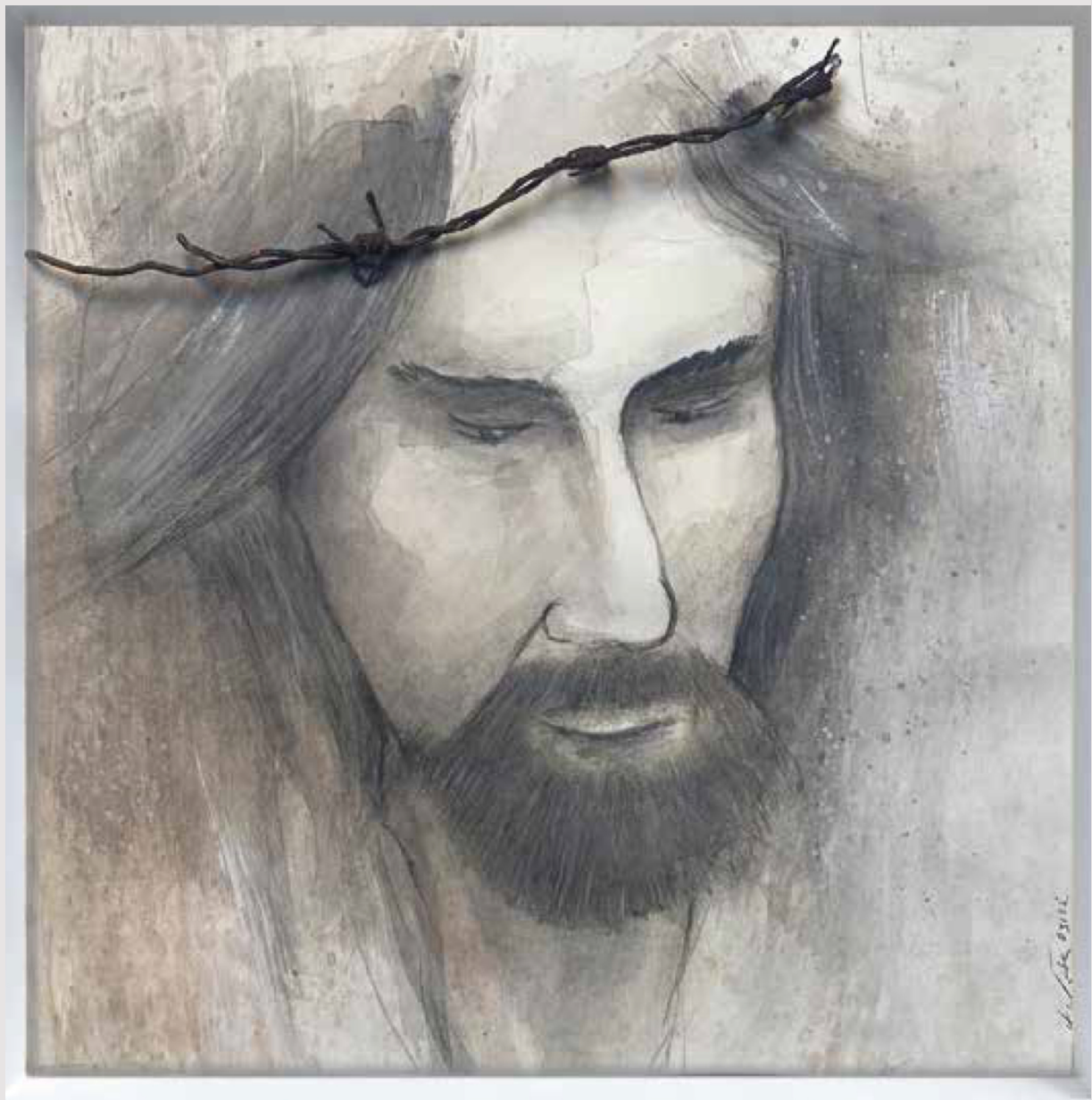
Crown of Thorns / Face of Jesus

very significant potentiality is the reaction to this knowledge: the sheep precisely runs away frightened when it perceives the presence of a wolf, that comes after the object evaluation (in this case the wolf), follows a reaction of approaching or moving away from it. Plants also move, one might argue: Yes, but plants move without knowing the object toward or away from which they tend, whereas the sheep knows the wolf from which it escapes or the grass to which it approaches to graze. This potentiality is called appetite and constitutes what we now call emotion: it is a tendency to act. Thomas Aquinas lists eleven basic emotions, depending on whether they relate to a good or an evil; whether this good or evil is present or absent; and whether it is easy to attain or arduous to avoid. Look at the detailed psychology we have in these authors! It is no coincidence that some big "biggies", such as Erich Fromm and Karl Jaspers, for example, have woven tremendous praise for the psychology of Thomas Aquinas!

So far, however, we have not yet described the "proprium" of the human. All these faculties are certainly present in us human beings, just as they are in plants and animals. But our specific is something else entirely different. And it is something that is hardly described by contemporary psychologies that very often reduce man precisely to an evolved animal. Man is not an evolved animal; he is something totally different. We can prove this by observing his typical acts, which are voluntary ones. The animal is more or less dependent on his instincts. We are not. We can be free from them and even counteract them, through acts that are reasoned and chosen. Man's proper level is that of rationality - which is why the human soul is also called rational or spiritual, in the Thomist lexicon - declined into two faculties, one cognitive (the intelligence) and the other appetitive (the will). To understand the gap between contemporary psychologies' intelligence concept and the much broader conception of Aristotelian-Thomistic psychology, it is enough to describe its dynamics: the intellect according to these authors abstracts the concept, that is, when I look at an apple, and form the mental image related to it in my mind (through the internal senses, meaning, common sense, imagination, memory and vis cogitativa, which replaces the vis estimativa of animals), intelligence grasps the universal, that is, the fact that a particular apple, maybe yellow, maybe a little bit rotten...is an apple.

re davanti al lupo (è un esempio di Aristotele e Tommaso). La seconda potenzialità molto significativa è la reazione a questa conoscenza: la pecora appunto scappa spaventata quando percepisce la presenza di un lupo, ovvero a seguito della valutazione dell'oggetto (in questo caso il lupo) segue una reazione di avvicinamento o allontanamento ad esso. Anche le piante si muovono, mi si potrebbe obiettare. Sì, ma le piante si muovono senza conoscere l'oggetto verso cui tendono o da cui si allontanano, mentre la pecora conosce il lupo da cui fugge o l'erba a cui si avvicina per brucare. Questa potenzialità si chiama appetizione e costituisce ciò che noi oggi chiamiamo emozione: è una tendenza all'azione. Tommaso d'Aquino elenca ben undici emozioni di base, a seconda che riguardino un bene o un male; se questo male è presente o assente e se è facile da raggiungersi o arduo da evitarsi. Guardate che psicologia dettagliata che abbiamo in questi autori! Non è un caso se alcuni grandi "big", come Erich Fromm e Karl Jaspers, ad esempio, hanno tessuto degli elogi grandissimi per la psicologia di Tommaso d'Aquino (salvo però disinteressarsene subito dopo)!

Sinora, però, non abbiamo descritto ancora il proprium dell'umano. Tutte queste facoltà certamente sono presenti in noi esseri umani, così come lo sono nelle piante e negli animali. Ma il nostro specifico è tutt'altro. Ed è qualcosa che difficilmente si trova descritto dalle psicologie contemporanee che spessissimo riducono l'uomo proprio ad un animale evoluto. L'uomo non è un animale evoluto, è qualcosa di totalmente diverso. Lo possiamo provare osservando i suoi atti tipici, che sono quelli volontari. L'animale è più o meno dipendente dai suoi istinti. Noi no. Noi possiamo esserne liberi e persino contrastarli, attraverso degli atti che sono ragionati e scelti. Il livello proprio dell'uomo è quello della razionalità – motivo per cui l'anima umana viene anche detta razionale o spirituale, nel lessico tomista – declinata in due facoltà, una conoscitiva (l'intelligenza) e l'altra appetitiva (la volontà). Per capire la distanza che c'è tra la concezione dell'intelligenza delle psicologie contemporanee e quella ben più ampia della psicologia aristotelico-tomista basta descriverne la dinamica: l'intelletto secondo questi autori astrae il concetto, ovvero quando guardo una mela, e formulo l'immagine mentale relativa ad essa nella mia mente (attraverso i sensi interni del senso comune, dell'immaginazione, della memoria e della vis cogitativa, che sostituisce la vis estimati-

It is a particular feature of the universal concept of apple. Here those who know Plato will remember his classic example of the horse and chivalry. But we can give other more modern examples, for example, the chair where probably you are sitting on. It is different, perhaps very different from other chairs you own (which perhaps have wheels, and spin on themselves). Yet you identify them as chairs. How so? Because they are physical examples of the immaterial (or spiritual) concept of a chair. Two concepts put in relation to each other form a judgment: the chair is brown. The table is wooden. This paper is spectacular (just kidding!). They are judgments. Multiple judgments linked together form reasoning, of which syllogism is the most luminous example (for various reasons we will not discuss now): All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Socrates is mortal. Let us now move from the cognitive to the appetitive. The rational faculty of the appetite is called the will, the main act of which is decision or choice. To will something is to desire rationally, that is, with adequate reasons, an object. Where intelligence recognizes truth, will seeks the good, in fact a recent way to call it is affection or attachment. True and good are two transcendentals, that is, two universal qualities of things.

Here we can see St. Thomas' "mind's model" as a whole, although to tell the truth he would be angry

va degli animali), l'intelligenza ne coglie l'universale, cioè il fatto che quella mela particolare lì, magari gialla, magari un po' bacata…è una mela. È un tipo particolare del concetto universale di mela. Qui chi conosce Platone si ricorderà il suo classico esempio del cavallo e della cavallinità. Ma possiamo fare altri esempi più moderni, ad esempio la sedia su cui vi sedete. È diversa, magari diversissima da altre sedie che possediamo (che magari hanno le rotelle, e girano su loro stesse). Eppure le identifichiamo come sedie. Come mai? Poiché sono esemplari fisici del concetto immateriale (o spirituale) di sedia. Due concetti messi in relazione tra loro formano un giudizio: la sedia è scura. Il tavolo è di legno. Sono giudizi. Più giudizi collegati assieme costituiscono un ragionamento, di cui il sillogismo è l'esempio più luminoso (per varie ragioni che ora non trattiamo): Tutti gli uomini sono mortali. Socrate è un uomo. Socrate è mortale. Spostiamoci ora dalla parte conoscitiva a quella appetitiva. La facoltà razionale dell'appetito si chiama volontà, il cui atto principale è la decisione o scelta. Volere qualcosa significa desiderare razionalmente, cioè con motivi adeguati, un oggetto. Laddove l'intelligenza riconosce la verità, la volontà ricerca il bene, difatti un modo recente per chiamarla è quello di affezione o attaccamento. Vero e bene sono due trascendentali ovvero due qualità universali delle cose.

S. Thomas' «mind's» model
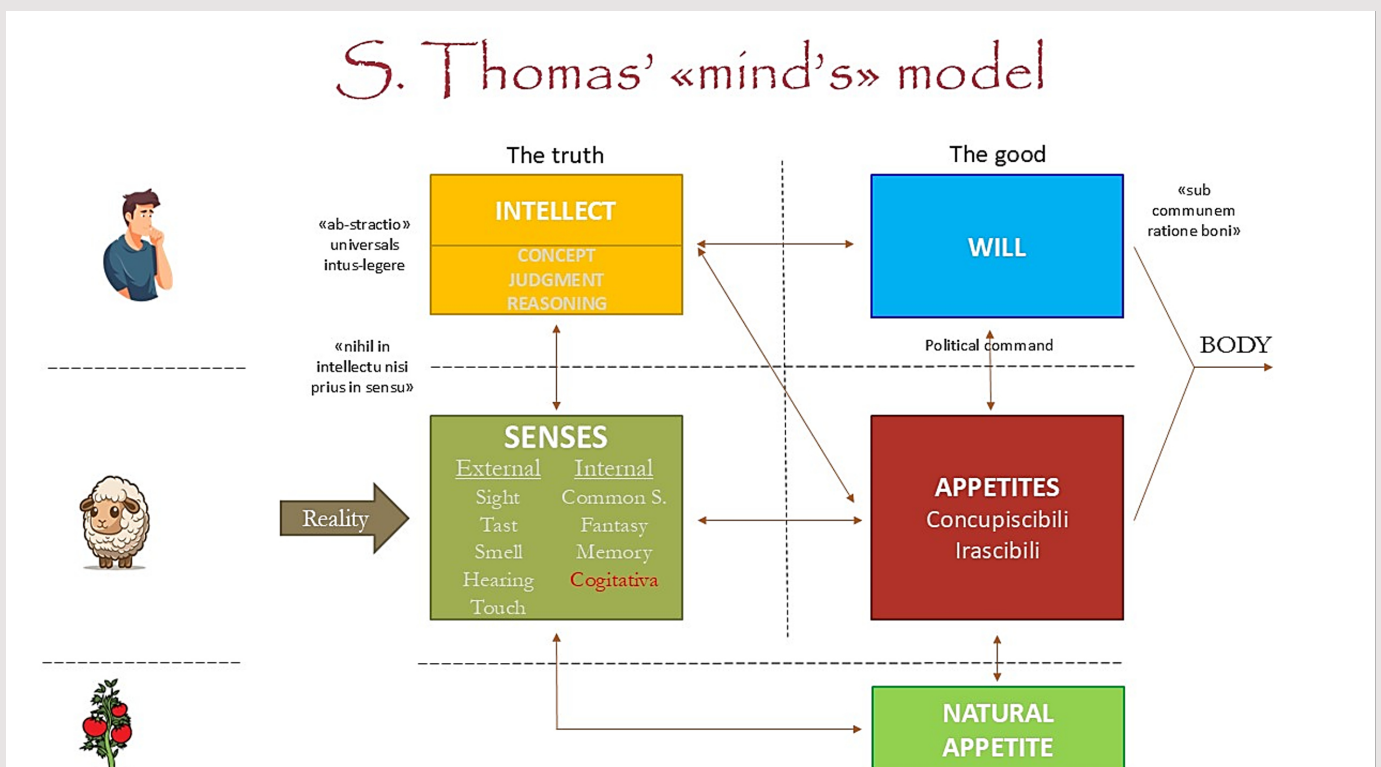
at this designation: he should say "the man's model" since, as we have seen, the person is an inseparable compound of body and soul. From this anthropology of faculties we can derive psychodynamics and even read the cause of mental disorders. Let us give three examples at once. The first is addiction. What happens to a person who becomes addicted to pornography, for example? It happens in most cases that the sensitive appetite dictates over the rational appetite. The passion of desire - which it would be better to be called attraction - and the immoderate pursuit of pleasure, which are two of the concupiscible appetites, the first - desire - for an object evaluated as useful but not yet present, the second - pleasure - for an object evaluated as useful is already present (think of a nice slice of chocolate cake: if I am looking at it, I desire it, if I am chewing it I enjoy it!) well these two emotions overpower the will, which chooses pornography even if it is judged as bad. It does not want it, but actually consents to its enjoyment. It wants and at the same time does not want it, it is divided and therefore weak, as one of the greatest Catholic psychologists of the 20th century, Rudolf Allers, well describes. So the problem is at the level of the relationship between the will and the passions. St. Thomas describes this relationship minutely; he says that the will does not have a despotic control over the passions, but a political one. This means that it is not enough to stop willing to avoid feeling excessive attachment, but it is necessary to educate the appetites, and this is the task of the virtues, as we shall see in a moment. The general principle that Thomas upholds is that of the "ordo rationis" (the order of reason): we have seen that human specificity is precisely that level of the soul which is called rational or spiritual. It is reason that dictates man's law, if we deviate it from the rational plane we do our own evil, as happens in addictions when the person chooses - always out of frailty as Thomas specifies - a pleasure at the expense of the good. We are obviously exemplifying for popularization purposes; the reality of our patients is often much more complex. A second example: neurosis. Here the problem is placed more deeply and in particular involves a little-studied faculty of the inner senses called the cogitative. How, in fact, to explain compulsion? That is, an act that is not "willed and intended" as in addictions, but which is totally thwarted by the will and yet which the person cannot help but enact (and the more he or she tries, the more it

Qui possiamo vedere il modello di "mente" di San Tommaso nel suo complesso, anche se a dire la verità lui si arrabbierebbe per questa denominazione, bisognerebbe dire il "modello di uomo" poiché, come abbiamo visto, la persona è un composto inscindibile di corpo ed anima. A partire da questa antropologia delle facoltà possiamo ricavarne una psicodinamica e persino leggere la causa dei disturbi psichici. Facciamo subito tre esempi. Il primo è quello della dipendenza. Cosa accade ad una persona che diventa dipendente dalla pornografia, ad esempio? Accade nella maggioranza dei casi che l'appetito sensitivo detta legge su quello razionale. La passione del desiderio – che sarebbe meglio chiamare attrazione – e la ricerca smodata del piacere, che sono due degli appetiti concupiscibili, il primo – il desiderio – per un oggetto valutato come utile ma ancora non presente, il secondo – il piacere – per un oggetto valutato come utile è già presente (pensiamo ad una bella fetta di torta al cioccolato: se la sto guardando la desidero, se la sto gustando me la godo!) ebbene queste due emozioni sovrastano la volontà, la quale sceglie la pornografia anche se viene giudicata come un male. Non la vuole, ma in realtà ne acconsente la fruizione. Vuole e allo stesso tempo non vuole, è divisa e quindi debole come ben descrive uno dei grandi psicologi cattolici del XX secolo, Rudolf Allers. Dunque il problema è a livello del rapporto tra la volontà e le passioni. San Tommaso descrive minuziosamente questo rapporto, dice che la volontà non ha un controllo dispotico sulle passioni, ma di tipo politico. Ciò significa che non basta non volere per evitare di provare un attaccamento eccessivo, ma è necessario educare gli appetiti e questo è il compito delle virtù, come vedremo tra poco. Il principio generale che Tommaso sostiene è quello dell'ordo rationis (l'ordine della ragione): abbiamo visto che lo specifico dell'umano è proprio quel livello dell'anima che si chiama razionale o spirituale. È la ragione a dettare la legge dell'uomo, se ci discostiamo dal piano razionale facciamo il nostro male, come accade nelle dipendenze quando la persona sceglie - per fragilità precisa sempre Tommaso - un piacere a discapito del bene. Stiamo ovviamente esemplificando a fini divulgativi, la realtà dei nostri pazienti è spesso molto più complessa. Un secondo esempio: la nevrosi. Qui il problema è collocato maggiormente in profondità e in particolare coinvolge una facoltà poco studiata dei sensi interni che si chiama cogitativa. Come spiegarci, infatti, la compulsione? Ovvero un agito

occurs). Think, for example, of panic attacks and phobias, the rituals of obsessive-compulsive disorder, paraphilias or perversions, and unwanted sexual attractions such as pedophilia. Let us take the latter case. Here the person values as useful an object that is not useful at all, such as the eroticization of a child's body. Why does this occur? Because the vis cogitativa develops a disposition to misvalue a specific object as a result of scarring life experiences, such as wounds or trauma. These dispositions are generally formed at a time when reason is unable to remedy them, as it normally would, that is, especially in childhood or developmental age. If older boys bully me and my peers despise me, but one girl - just one! - shows interest in me, she prefers me, even overdoes it by playing sex games with me, pleasant more affective than sexual, it is easy for her face to become so lifesaver, that it becomes imprinted in my mind (here epinephrine plays a certain role in the central nervous system) so much so that I then go on a lifelong quest for it. A characteristic indeed of the cogitative is to shape symbols (with the concurrence of reason, of course) by gluing together parts of different mental images. Third and last case: personality disorder understood as character neurosis or egosyntonia. In these cases, either the addiction or the neurosis (or both, as is often the case in the same subject) is so pervasive that even the faculties of reason are affected. This is the case of the intemperate person described by Thomas Aquinas or the narcissist as we call him today, who judges well the evil he does. Let us add a final step of complexity. Aristotelian-Thomistic psychology is truly elaborated! And it deserves to be known and studied. Every faculty we said is also called potency. Potency, in Aristotelian language, means a quality that has not yet come into action, is not actualized. The movement, which we talked about earlier, is the transition from potentiality to actualization: I am an adult in act, when I was a teenager I was an adult in potency, and now I am an elder in potency. Between potentiality and act there is the intermediate level of habitus. What is it? It is a facilitator or an obstacle to the attainment of actualization. Habitus perfects the faculties, facilitates their movement toward the good. But also it can, on the other hand, corrupt them, habituating them to acts contrary to reason and, therefore, to truth. In the first case we speak of virtues, in the second of vices. And-look how consistent and surprisingly unified Thomas' conception is:

che non viene "voluto e non voluto", come nelle dipendenze, ma che viene totalmente contrastato dalla volontà eppure che la persona non può non mettere in atto (e più ci prova e più si presenta). Pensiamo ad esempio agli attacchi di panico e alle fobie, ai rituali del disturbo ossessivo-compulsivo, alle parafilie o perversioni e alle attrazioni sessuali indesiderate come la pedofilia. Prendiamo quest'ultimo caso. Qui la persona valuta come utile un oggetto che non lo è per niente, come l'erotizzazione di un corpo infantile. Perché questo avviene? Perché la vis cogitativa sviluppa una disposizione a mal valutare un oggetto specifico a seguito di esperienze di vita segnanti, come le ferite o i traumi. Queste disposizioni si formano generalmente in un momento in cui la ragione non è in grado di porvi rimedio, come normalmente accadrebbe, cioè specialmente in età infantile o di sviluppo. Se dei ragazzi più grandi mi bullizzano e i miei coetanei mi disprezzano, ma una ragazza – una sola! – dimostra interesse per me, mi fa da crocerossina, persino esagera facendo giochi sessuali con me, piacevoli più affettivamente che sensivamente, è facile che il suo volto diventi così salvifico che mi si stampi in mente (qui l'epinefrina gioca un certo ruolo nel sistema nervoso centrale) tanto da andarne poi alla ricerca per tutta la vita. Una caratteristica difatti della cogitativa è quella di dar forma a simboli (col concorso della ragione, ovviamente) incollando assieme parti di immagini mentali diverse. Terzo ed ultimo caso: il disturbo di personalità inteso come nevrosi del carattere o egosintonia. In questi casi la dipendenza oppure la nevrosi (o tutte e due, come spesso accade nello stesso soggetto) sono così pervasive da intaccare anche le facoltà della ragione. È il caso dell'intemperante descritto da Tommaso d'Aquino o del narcisista come lo chiamiamo oggi, che giudica bene il male che compie.
Aggiungiamo un ultimo gradino di complessità. La psicologia aristotelico-tomista è veramente elaborata! E merita di essere conosciuta e studiata. Ogni facoltà abbiamo detto che si chiama anche potenza. La potenza, nel linguaggio aristotelico, significa una qualità che ancora non è entrata in azione, non è attuata. Il movimento, di cui abbiamo parlato prima, è il passaggio dalla potenzialità all'attuazione: io sono un adulto in atto, quando ero adolescente ero un adulto in potenza, e ora sono un anziano in potenza. A metà tra la potenzialità e l'atto c'è il livello intermedio dell'habitus. Che cos'è? È un facilitatore o un ostacolo al raggiungimento dell'attuazio-

for each faculty there are specific virtues. The refinement of intelligence is the task of prudence, the human virtues' queen. So-called practical wisdom, consists in eight parts (which Thomas describes in detail and to which I refer you for further study). The will's perfection depends on justice's the virtue: giving to everyone what is due to him. The one most studied by Thomas. The most psychological two virtues, that are, closest to our clinical work, are fortitude and temperance, guardians of sensory appetites or emotions. Fortitude perfects irascible appetites, through hope and its opposite despair, courage and its opposite fear, and anger, which has no opposites. To be strong is to possess steadfastness: not backing down out of fear but staying in place, standing firm. It consists of four parts: magnanimity (the pursuit of greatness), magnificence (doing great things even economically speaking, that is, being liberal, generous), patience (enduring the right pain without breaking down) and perseverance. Profound medieval psychology, isn't it? And finally there is the virtue of temperance, which allows one to really enjoy pleasures. It is responsible for the concupiscible appetites, emotions that have gratification as their object: desire and pleasure, as we have already mentioned, and their opposites, disgust and pain, as well as love and hate in general. To really enjoy food there is a need for temperance, otherwise I become glutton or greedy and, as all people with an eating disorder tell us, I no longer enjoy lunches and dinners, tastes and flavors. For each of these virtues there is a list of contrary vices, which we cannot talk about now. But by acting on these habitus, it is possible to educate the appetites - and also, to some extent, the internal senses, such as the cogitative - and thus help people get out of an addiction, a neurosis or, in the most difficult cases, a personality disorder. Conclusions. Among the more than three hundred models of psychotherapy there is a relatively new one, which retakes traditional psychology's legacy, marginalized and ignored by contemporary approaches. It is called integral psychotherapy of the person. It is integral because it integrates different aspects. It integrates the past with the present, recovering the great Greek lesson, well fixed by Aristotle in the first book of psychology in history, which is the Nicomachean Ethics, and the great medieval lesson, summarized by Thomas Aquinas. It integrates the faculties (today we call them cognitive functions) into a unified, coherent and compre-

ne. L'habitus perfeziona le facoltà, facilita il loro movimento verso il bene. Ma anche può, invece, corromperle, abituandole ad atti contrari alla ragione e, quindi, alla verità. Nel primo caso parliamo di virtù, nel secondo di vizi. E – guardate come la concezione di Tommaso è coerente e sorprendentemente unitaria – per ogni facoltà vi sono delle virtù specifiche. Il perfezionamento dell'intelligenza è compito della prudenza, regina delle virtù umane. La cosiddetta saggezza pratica, composta da ben otto parti (che Tommaso descrive minuziosamente e a cui vi rimando per approfondimenti). La perfezione della volontà dipende dalla virtù della giustizia: dare ad ognuno ciò che gli spetta. La più studiata da Tommaso. Le due virtù più psicologiche, cioè più vicine al nostro lavoro clinico, sono la fortezza e la temperanza, guardiane degli appetiti sensitivi o emozioni. La fortezza perfeziona gli appetiti irascibili, che sono la speranza e il suo opposto la disperazione, il coraggio e il suo opposto la paura, e la rabbia che non ha opposti. Essere forti significa possedere fermezza: non indietreggiare per paura ma stare al proprio posto, fermi. Si compone di quattro parti: la magnanimità (il cercare la grandezza), la magnificenza (fare cose grandi anche economicamente parlando, cioè essere liberali, generosi), la pazienza (sopportare il giusto dolore senza scomporsi) e la perseveranza. Profonda la psicologia medievale, vero? E infine c'è la virtù della temperanza, che permette di gustarsi davvero i piaceri. È la responsabile degli appetiti concupiscibili, le emozioni che hanno per oggetto la gratificazione: il desiderio e il piacere, come già abbiamo detto, e i loro opposti, il disgusto e il dolore, oltre all'amore e l'odio in generale. Per gustarsi davvero il cibo c'è bisogno di temperanza, altrimenti divento ingordo e, come raccontano tutte le persone con un disturbo dell'alimentazione, non mi godo più i pranzi e le cene, i gusti e i sapori. Per ognuna di queste virtù c'è un elenco di vizi contrari, di cui non possiamo parlare adesso. Però agendo su questi habitus è possibile educare gli appetiti – e anche, in parte, i sensi interni, come la cogitativa – e quindi aiutare le persone ad uscire da una dipendenza, da una nevrosi o, nei casi più difficili, da un disturbo di personalità. Conclusioni. Tra i più di trecento modelli di psicoterapia ce ne è uno relativamente nuovo, che recupera il lascito della psicologia tradizionale, emarginata e ignorata dagli approcci contemporanei. Si chiama psicoterapia integrale della persona. È integrale perché integra diversi aspetti. Integra il passato col

hensive anthropology that can also include spiritual aspects (as very few currents do). It integrates psychology with psychotherapy, anthropology with clinical practice (something that is sorely lacking today, as we see from a seemingly insuperable division between university research and professional field, a division that depends on a precise philosophy, such as that of Christian Wolff and Wilhelm Wundt, who clearly separated philosophy from empirical psychology). It finally integrates, and this is of special interest to me as a Catholic, faith's life with profession, thus avoiding dangerous splits such as those that occur when one thinks one way but acts using theories and tools from different conceptions. And it is an integral psychology *of the person* because it addresses man's totality: not just his behavior, his cognition, nor only his emotions or other parts, important as they certainly are. Since the person is the most perfect thing in all of nature, as Thomas Aquinas wrote, he is the "glory of God" (gloria dei vivens homo wrote St. Irenaeus of Lyon).

presente, recuperando la grande lezione greca, ben fissata da Aristotele nel primo libro di psicologia della storia, che è l'Etica Nicomachea, e la grande lezione medievale, riassunta da Tommaso d'Aquino. Integra le facoltà (oggi le chiamiamo funzioni cognitive) in un'antropologia unitaria, coerente e comprensiva, in grado di comprendere anche gli aspetti spirituali (come pochissime correnti fanno). Integra la psicologia con la psicoterapia, l'antropologia con la pratica clinica (cosa che oggi manca moltissimo, come vediamo da una divisione apparentemente insuperabile tra ricerca universitaria ed ambito professionale, una divisione che dipende da una precisa filosofia, come quella di Christian Wollf e Wilhelm Wundt, che separavano nettamente la filosofia dalla psicologia empirica). Integra infine, e questo interessa specialmente a me in quanto cattolico, la vita di fede con la professione, evitando quindi pericolose scissioni come quelle che si verificano quando si pensa in un modo ma si agisce utilizzando teorie e strumenti provenienti da concezioni differenti. Ed è una psicologia integrale della persona perché si rivolge alla totalità dell'uomo: non al suo comportamento, non alla sua cognizione, né solo alle emozioni o altre parti, per quanto certamente importanti. Poiché la persona è la cosa più perfetta in tutta la natura, come scriveva Tommaso d'Aquino, è la "gloria di Dio" (gloria dei vivens homo scriveva Sant'Ireneo di Lione).

Relic / Golgotha

comment

Parenti offers us a solid introduction to Thomistic philosophical anthropology. He does so in the service of developing his "integral psychology." For those familiar with the Angelic Doctor, there is nothing new here. Let me emphasize, this is in no way a negative take on the article. Quite the contrary! I was delighted to read an appreciative primer on scholastic thought tailored to the needs and interests of psychologists! Looking to Aquinas as the foundation for Christian psychology raises some questions for me.

Do we even need a "Christian" psychology?
What might St. Thomas, or at least a Thomist, say about developing a research method for a clinical system of psychology based on a Christian philosophical anthropology? Our answers are found in the scholastic distinction between form and matter that the author borrows for his argument.

The *material object* of a science tells us the broad area or subject studied. While the psychologist and the theologian can share an intellectual interest in the human person, this does not mean they have a shared material object.

The theologian studies the human person in light of divine revelation (e.g., the *imago dei*). The psychologist studies human behavior in light of specific *quantitative* and *qualitative* research methods. The difference between the two disciplines is not *what* they study (broadly, the human person) but the specific understanding of the person they bring to their work. The Thomist would go on to further qualify the study of the human in terms of different *formal objects*, which tells us the specific intuition scholars bring to their work.

For example, the formal object of the Christian ethicist is the moral life of the person. The liturgical theologian looks at the same person, but now at as a person at prayer in the midst of a community at prayer. Likewise, for the different systems within the broad category of psychology. The Freudian studies human behavior as the product of unconscious desires, while the behaviorist looks at the same behaviors in terms of stimulus and response.

The work of a psychologist who draws on a theologically inspired intuition (formal object) is inherently no less legitimate than the work done by secular colleagues assuming both adhere to the limits imposed by the material object. But neither the secular nor the Christian psychologist can claim any greater *scientific* or *moral* authority simply on the basis of the formal object of their study; the work done stands or falls on how well or poorly it deepens our quantitative or qualitative understanding of human behavior. And "Christian psychology," so-called?

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For a Thomist, Christian psychology is not defined by its material object (which it shares with all other psychological systems) but its unique formal *objects*. While all of these are theologically inspired, they give rise to different theoretical and applied interests based on the denominational commitments and personal idiosyncrasies of the individual psychologist or psychotherapist. For this reason, I would not look to Christian psychology to solve the diversity, much less disagreements, we find in secular models.

Returning to Parenti's article, I am not sure what to make of his "integral psychotherapy of the person." Psychology and psychotherapy—whether secular *or* Christian—will, on the level of formal object, always be partial and so in dialogue with each other, a confused and confusing mix of views. But how can it be otherwise?

At least within the sacramental Christian traditions, integration is found only in the source and summit of the Christian life, the Eucharist, and then only as a foretaste and promise. Until the Kingdom of God, this is our lot, and it is only in the Kingdom that the "glory of God, … man full alive" is realized. For Christians to hold otherwise is to immanentize the eschaton.

Finally, at the beginning of the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle tells us that a science is never more precise than its object. This means that philosophical and methodological disunity, clash, contradiction, and pointed disagreement are features, not bugs, of all human knowledge, including psychology.

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Andrey Lorgus (Bulgaria/Russia):

Self-realization or creativity and internal resources

A model of fundamental (basic) personal needs (aspirations) includes seven of them: the need of being, self-worth, self-realization, belonging, independence, security, spirituality (transcendence).

Part 1 Self-realization in the structure of personality
Self-realization is one of the basic personal needs, or aspirations. It shows itself in a deep-rooted need of self-manifesting in the world, doing something on one's own, expressingpersonal opinion, demonstrating one's will and realizing ideas. This is the pursuit of uniqueness (unique identity). It's the desire not only to be oneself, but also to be the cause of own actions, the intention for personal realizationand fulfillment in the world and in one's own eyes.

Самореализация или творчество и внутренние ресурсы

Модель фундаментальных (базовых) личностных потребностей[1] (стремлений) включает семь потребностей: потребность быть, самоценность, самореализация, принадлежность, самостоятельность, безопасность, духовность (трансцендентность).

Часть 1. Самореализация в структуре личности
Самореализация является одной из базовых личностных потребностей, или стремлений. Она проявляется в неискоренимой потребности проявить себя в мире, совершить что-то по собственному усмотрению, высказать своё мнение, проявить свою волю, реализовать свои представления. Это стремление к самобытности. Стремление не только

[1] Lorgus, Andrey. 2023. "A Model of Intrapersonal Conflict." In The Theory and Practice of Christian Psychology in Europe , edited by Nicoline L. Joubert, 125–141. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. p 129.

The desire for self-realization is manifested particularly in profession and in personalcalling. This is the commonunderstanding ofaspiration for self-realization or self-actualization according to Abraham Maslow.

In contrast to professional sphere, in everyday life a person realizes himself in the way of building his daily routine, in the way of creating his goals and implementingideas. Moreover, the very routine daily life of every human being reflects, in one way or another, the originality and uniqueness of each personal action and deed.

We can strengthen this position and assert that one does not do anything automatically or by pattern. Even if it happens mechanically and habitually, every act of will, every action has the feature of uniqueness, since every moment the conditions of actions and the circumstances of events are changing. A person cannot perform each of his actions accurately repeating the past, even if he wished so.Every morning and every evening he performs a lot of stereotyped repetitive actions: he gets out of bed, brushes his teeth, drinks tea, leaves the house, buys a ticket, gets on the train, opens the office doors or returns home by the same way. And yet, each of these actions or acts of life one commits in such a way that his personal identity and peculiarity are realized.

A man cannot follow the same path in the same way: his walking manner changes, as well as his mood, pace and so on.

It becomes even more significant in relation to emotionally charged problems or difficulties in relationship. This importance is the subject of work with a psychotherapist. The client comes with problems which may reflect his personal characteristics and limitations. In each case a person experiences feelings and emotions associated with problematic events. For example, when leaving home, a man returns (and sometimes more than once) to check whether he has turned off the gas or water .Or he is slow to get out of bed and then is late to go out on time. In some way, simple actions that make uppersonal daily life can be emotionally significant, and are realized, consciously or unconsciously, in different ways. And this is also the item of self-realization.

However, the opposite is also true: a man refuses to implement his ideas, is afraid to dream, avoids plans, and denies himself in self-actualization. And that is a subject for psychotherapeutic work.

быть собою, но и быть причиной своих поступков, реализовать, осуществить, себя в мире и перед самим собой.

В том числе, стремление к самореализации проявляется в профессии и в призвании. Так обычно и понимается стремление к самореализации, или как писал Абрахам Маслоу - самоактуализации.

В отличие от профессии, в повседневной жизни человек реализует себя в том, как он строит свой ежедневный обиход, как создает свои цели, каким путем осуществляет свои замыслы. Более того, самый повседневный быт каждого человека, так или иначе, отражает самобытность и уникальность каждого поступка и каждого действия.

Мы можем усилить это положение и утверждать, что человек ничего не делает автоматически или шаблонно. Даже если это происходит машинально и привычно, каждый акт воли, каждое действие носит характер уникальности, так как каждый раз меняются условия действий и обстоятельства происходящего. Человек не может совершить каждое своё действие точно повторяя прошедшее, даже если бы захотел каждое утро и каждый вечер он совершает массу шаблонных повторяющихся действий: встает с постели, чистит зубы, пьёт чай, выходит из дома, покупает билет, садится в поезд, открывает двери офиса или возвращается домой одной и той же дорогой. И тем не менее, каждое из этих действий или актов жизни, человек совершает так, что в них реализуется самобытность и особенность его личности. Человек не может пройти одной и той же дорогой одинаково: меняется его походка, его настроение, его темп и проч.

Тем более это значимо в отношении эмоционально заряженных проблем или в проблемах отношений. Эта значимость - предмет работы с психотерапевтом. Клиент приходит с проблемами, в которых могут проявляться особенности и ограничения свойственные личности. В каждом случае человек переживает чувства и эмоции, которые сопровождают проблемные события. Например, выходя из дома, человек возвращается (а иногда и не раз) чтобы проверить, выключил ли он газ или воду. Или медлит вставать с постели, а потом опаздывает выйти вовремя. Так или иначе простые действия, составляющие повседневную жизнь человека, могут иметь эмоциональное значение, и реализуются, сознательно или бессознательно, по разному. И это тоже предмет самореализации.

Однако верно и противоположное: человек отказывается от реализации своих замыслов, боится

The task of the psychotherapist is to identify, together with the client, which fundamental needs a person realizes in one case or another. Being late for work may conceal the realization of resistance. Anxiety or fear may hide the motivation for control or lack of it. What is important here is the way of personal self-actualization, its means and techniques.

Self-realization is being formed from motive through action to self-control, namely: motive, goal, means, process, action, analysis, control, verification, experience.

In psychotherapy we have to deal more often with pathologies of self-realization than with successful authentic behavior. Most common problems of the clients can be represented as five groups of "pathologies":

1. Ignorance of oneself. For example, "I really don't know what I want."

Before realizing his plans, one faceseasy but important questions: "What will my projects be based on? What do they consist of?" And here one simple but fatal reason is revealed — a person does not know what he wants. He has no clear ideas, no understanding of what he needs to do, what to build, what activities to engage in, what to learn, what to devote his life to.

This is common but extremely difficult situation: a person admits to himself that he does not know what he wants, does not realize his own interests. This phenomenon can have many reasons, whichare rooted both in childhood and adolescence. However, it can be manifested at any age and indicates the immaturity of personality.

Often in psychotherapy sessions clients say: "I don't know what I want. I don't know what I'm inclined to do, I don't know what I'm capable of." Such elementary unawareness of one's own characteristics, talents, limitations and weak points leaves a person in ignorance about his calling and abilities. Hence there is a stupor, a certain emptiness in the soul, when a person does not know where to direct his forces.

There is another important aspect: when one feels some inner strength, he can try himself in different fields, conditions, in various types of activities and thus discover his talents. But if a person is afraid to try, to do something or simply does not know what to do, he may find himself in a state of will paralysis. This is often observed in people who are prone to

мечтать, избегает планов, отказывается себе в самореализации. И это предмет для психотерапевтической работы.

Задача психотерапевта состоит в том, что вместе с клиентом, распознать какие фундаментальные потребности реализует человек в том или другом случае. В опоздании на работу, может скрываться реализация сопротивления. В тревоге или страхе может скрываться мотивация контроля или отсутствия его. Тут важно то, как человек реализует себя, какими средствами и какими техниками.

Самореализация формируется от мотива, через действие, к самоконтролю, а именно: мотив, цель, средства, процесс, действие, анализ, контроль, проверка, опыт.

В психотерапии приходится чаще сталкиваться с патологиями самореализациями, чем с успешным самобытным поведением. То, с чем чаще всего обращаются клиенты, можно представить как пять групп "патологий":

1. Незнание себя самого. Например, "А я не знаю, чего я хочу".

Прежде чем человек приступает к реализации своих планов, у него возникает простой, но важный вопрос: «На чём будут основываться мои замыслы? Из чего они состоят?» И здесь обнаруживается одна простая, но роковая причина — человек не знает, чего он хочет. У него нет чётких замыслов, нет представления о том, что ему нужно делать, что строить, в какую деятельность включиться, чему учиться, чему посвятить свою жизнь.

Это простая, но крайне трудная ситуация: человек признаётся себе, что не знает, чего хочет, не осознаёт своих интересов. У этого явления может быть множество причин, корни которых лежат как в детстве, так и в подростковом возрасте. Однако проявляться это может в любом возрасте, и свидетельствует о незрелости личности.

Часто на психотерапевтических сессиях клиенты говорят: «Я не знаю, чего хочу. Не знаю, к чему склонен, не знаю, к чему у меня есть способности». Такое элементарное незнание своих особенностей, талантов, ограничений и слабых сторон оставляет человека в неведении относительно своего призвания и способностей. Отсюда возникает ступор, некоторая пустота в душе, когда человек не знает, куда направить свои силы.

Есть ещё один важный аспект: когда человек ощущает в себе некие силы, он может пробовать себя в разных областях, в разных условиях, в разных видах

depression, and it is important to emphasize that this may be one of the causes of depression.

In therapy, the phenomenon of "unknowing" is revealed even by a superficial examination of the client. To the questions "What do you want? What are your desires? Such clientreplies, "I don't know." But sometimes even a person with deep self-knowledge, recognizes that he is not familiar with his true desires. He is following stereotypes. He lives with attitudes and patterns set by family and culture.

The process of unfolding an inner motivational picture is slow. It is not possible to expectfast results in psychotherapy. Nevertheless, the very first discovery of one's hidden until now desire causes an affect that generates strong motivational shifts. New goals appear, and there is a feeling of self-realization, which a person did not know at all or knew episodically.

2. The fear of realizing one's will and one's reasoning.

For example, a client says, "Who am I anyway?", "I don't trust my dreams."

Self-image and self-attitude largely determine one's ability for self-realization. If a person has been assured since childhood that "you're all thumbs", or that "your opinion is not important, first of all listen to your elders", then such a child and teenager develops self-distrust and negative attitude towards his own abilities.

Such wrong self-conception leads to the fact that a man perceives himself as weak, with poor knowledge and incapable of significant actions.This negative perception hinders the development of the most important skill —the ability for self-realization. One begins self-doubting and perceiving oneself as a person incapable of making important decisions.To make self-actualization possible, at least minimal self-affirmation is necessary, which is a key aspect of a mature personality development. Self-affirmation is the process of justifying one's existence, or it is also called the identity formation. Formation of the unique identity is the process of self-affirmation, which is completed in older adolescence and crystallizes in adulthood into a mature personality.

3. Fear of mistakes. "Most of all, I'm afraid of making mistakes."

People make mistakes — this is a well-known truth. We understand that errors are inevitable in any activity. However, many people are very afraid of making mistakes, because they are associated with

деятельности и таким образом открывать в себе таланты. Но если человек боится пробовать, боится что-то предпринять или просто не знает, что делать, он может оказаться в состоянии паралича воли. Это часто наблюдается у людей, склонных к депрессии, и важно подчеркнуть, что это может быть одной из причин депрессивного состояния.

В терапии явление "незнания" выявляется при поверхностном обследовании клиента. На вопрос "Что Вы хотите? Каковы Ваши желания? Такой человек отвечает - "Я не знаю". Но и при углубленном самопознании человек признается, что не знаком со своими истинными желаниями. Всё шаблонно. Он живет с установками и по шаблонам, заданными семьей и культурой.

Процесс развертывания внутренней мотивационной картины медленный. В терапии невозможно ожидать быстрых результатов. Тем не менее, уже самое первое открытие своего скрытого до поры до времени желания, вызывает аффект, порождающий сильные мотивационные сдвиги. Появляются новые цели, и появляется смысл самореализации, чего человек не знал совсем или знал эпизодично.

2. Страх реализации своей воли и своего рассуждения.

Например, человек говорит: "Да кто я такой?", "Не доверяю я своим мечтам."

Представление человека о себе и его отношение к самому себе во многом определяют его способность к самореализации. Если с детства человеку внушали, что «у тебя руки не из того места растут», или что «твое мнение не важно, слушай прежде всего старших», то у такого ребёнка и подростка формируется недоверие к себе и негативное отношение к собственным способностям. Такое ошибочное представление о себе приводит к тому, что человек воспринимает себя как слабого, недостаточно знающего и неспособного на значимые поступки.

Это негативное восприятие тормозит развитие важнейшего навыка — способности к самореализации. Человек начинает сомневаться в себе и не видит в себе личность, способную принимать важные решения. Для того чтобы самореализация стала возможной, необходимо хотя бы минимальное самоутверждение, которое является ключевым аспектом формирования зрелой личности. Самоутверждение — это процесс обоснования своего существования, или, как его ещё называют, формирование самобытности.

responsibility, criticism, shame and guilt. It is important to note that willingness to make mistakes is one of the characteristics of mature personality. We cannot act and self-realize without mistakes — only those who do nothing are not mistaken.

One of the most important attitudes of a mature and self-assertive personality is to act boldly and decisively, despite possible mistakes. Such courage and willingness to take risks largely determine our ability to self-actualization. The main quality of mature personality is to afford to be wrong, to admit that errors can be part of the path, and to continue acting despite it.

This does not mean that you need to make mistakes intentionally or ignore the correctness of your actions. It's about being ready to admit that our decisions can be wrong. It is impossible to make all your actions error-free in advance. Maturity and adulthood are manifested in understanding that mistakes are inevitable, and this should not become an obstacle to action. Imagine archery: Not all arrows will hit the bull's-eye. Some of them may fly by due to unforeseen circumstances. The probability that all arrows will reach the target is low. It's the same in life: not all decisions will be infallible. The problem is not that a person is mistaken but that he forbids himself to act fearing mistakes. Such a ban actually destroys his ability to self-actualization. A person may want to realize his plans, but he is self-abandoning actions due to the fear of mistakes.

Learning to work on one's mistakes and successes plays a significant role in therapy. It is important here to focus not only on step-by-step work, but also to discuss emotions. It is clear that emotions are changing from the beginning to the end of therapy, and in its stages, as a resultof working on mistakes. As a perspective in therapy, we see such an emotional attitude whena client readily discusses mistakes or successes, without falling into depression or euphoria.

4. **Inability (lack of skills) to build one's own activities.** This means immaturity and poor development of independent activity. It's inability to set goals and tasks, the failure to organize one's work, daily routine. Such people most often live by patterns or try to copy others.

Самобытность — это и есть процесс самоутверждения, который завершается в старшем подростковом возрасте и кристаллизуется во взрослой жизни в зрелую личность.

3. Страх ошибок. "Больше всего я боюсь ошибится". Человеку свойственно ошибаться — это общеизвестная истина. Мы понимаем, что ошибки неизбежны в любой деятельности. Однако многие люди сильно боятся ошибаться, потому что ошибки ассоциируются с ответственностью, критикой, стыдом и чувством вины. Важно отметить, что готовность к ошибкам является одной из характеристик зрелой личности. Мы не можем действовать и самореализовываться без ошибок — не ошибается только тот, кто ничего не делает.

Одна из важнейших установок зрелой и самоутверждённой личности заключается в том, чтобы действовать смело и решительно, несмотря на возможные ошибки. Такая смелость и готовность рисковать определяют в значительной степени нашу способность к самореализации. Главное качество зрелой личности — это позволить себе ошибаться, признавать, что ошибки могут быть частью пути, и продолжать действовать, несмотря на это.

Это не значит, что нужно намеренно совершать ошибки или игнорировать правильность своих поступков. Речь идёт о готовности признать, что наши решения могут быть ошибочными. Невозможно заранее сделать все свои действия безошибочными. Зрелость и взрослость человека проявляются в понимании, что ошибки неизбежны, и это не должно становиться препятствием для действия.

Представьте себе стрельбу из лука: не все стрелы попадут в яблочко. Некоторые из них могут пролететь мимо из-за непредвиденных обстоятельств. Вероятность того, что все стрелы достигнут цели, невелика. Так и в жизни: не все решения будут безошибочными. Проблема не в том, что человек совершает ошибки, а в том, что он запрещает себе действовать из-за страха перед ними. Такой запрет фактически разрушает его способность к самореализации. Человек может хотеть реализовать свои замыслы, но не позволяет себе действовать, потому что боится ошибок.

В терапии большую роль играет научение работе над своими ошибками и свои успехами. Здесь важно останавливаться не только на процедуре поэтапной работы, но и обговаривать чувства. Понятно, что чувства изменяются как от начала к концу терапии, так и поэтапно, в результате самой работы над

5. Fear of criticism.

This fear is related to socialization. Entering the human world, a person comes into the world of assessments and attention to his actions, words and deeds. It's impossible to avoid criticism in the society. People look at me and evaluate me. Unfortunately, our civilization is built on assessments and comparisons.

From early childhood, the child is being assessed, compared with other children, and he is required to be like everyone else or better than others. Since childhood, we have been used to self-assessment. This is the basis of our self-esteem.

The fear of evaluation and disapproval is the fear of humiliation and shame if criticism exposes my failure, misfortune, blunder, mistake. Criticism may cause feelings associated with intense stress and pain. The humiliation of being criticized - the feeling of pain and shame, guilt and disappointment - is familiar to everyone.

Of course, criticism can also be positive, i.e. laudatory. Criticism can be approval and praise. But the joy of it is not experienced as reliably as humiliation and shame. Unconsciously, praise can cause anxiety, as suspicion may arise: the one who praises me may criticize me. That is why praise can also be destructive.

6. Fear of responsibility.

The fear of responsibility is the fear of facing the consequences of your actions. It includes two aspects: the fear of making a decision and the fear of being responsible for its results. These two aspects are closely related and cause great anxiety, preventing a person from making decisions and realizing them in life. In fact, it is fear that slows down self-actualization, hinders courage, creative action and realization of one's plans.

Responsibility assumes careful consideration of the moments when a person is facing the consequences of his choices. Willingness to accept the consequences implies that we are thinking over possible scenarios and are planning our reactions to various results in advance. Fear of responsibility often compels a person to hide his decisions or imitate their realization. This leads to masking of real actions and to the activity imitation, which is not really a decisive action.

Fear of responsibility can manifest in poorly developed skills to work on mistakes and successes. Working on successes and mistakes is a creative process

ошибками. Перспективой в терапии мы видим такое эмоциональное отношение к своим ошибкам, при котором клиент с готовностью говорит об ошибках или успехах, не впадая при этом в депрессию или эйфорию.

4. Неумение (несформированность) построить свою деятельность.

Это означает незрелость и неразвитость самостоятельной деятельности. Неумение ставить перед собой цели и задачи. Неумение организовывать свою работу, ежедневное бытие. Такие люди чаще всего живут по шаблонам или пытаются повторять за другими.

5. Страх критики.

Этот страх связан с социализацией. Вступая в мир людей человек вступает в мир оценок и внимания к своим поступкам, словам и делам. Избежать критики в мире нельзя. На меня смотрят и меня оценивают. К несчастью, наша цивилизация построена на оценках и сравнениях.

С самого раннего детства ребенка оценивают, сравнивают с другими детьми, требуют, чтобы был как все или лучше других. Мы с детства привыкли и сами себя оценивать себя. На этом основана наша самооценка.

Страх оценки и критике себя - это страх унижения и стыда, если критика обличает мой неуспех, неудачу, промах, ошибку. Чувства, которые вызывает критика могут быть сильным стрессом и болью. Унижение быть раскритикованным - чувство боли и стыда, вины и разочарования - знакомы каждому.

Разумеется, критика может быть и позитивной, т.е. хвалебной. Критика может быть одобрением и похвалой. Но радость от этого переживается не так надежно, как унижение и стыд. Бессознательно, похвала может вызывать тревогу, так как может возникнуть подозрение: тот, кто меня хвалит, может меня и критиковать. Именно поэтому похвала может быть диструктивной.

6. Страх ответственности.

Страх ответственности — это боязнь столкнуться с последствиями своих решений. Он включает в себя два аспекта: страх принять решение и страх отвечать за его результаты. Эти два аспекта тесно связаны и вызывают сильную тревогу, мешая человеку принимать решения и воплощать их в жизнь. В действительности, это страх, который тормозит самореализацию, препятствует смелости,

that is necessary for the mature personality development and preparing for responsibility. Let's take a brief look what exactly this work is.

It is interesting to note that working on mistakes and successes is structurally similar and leads to the same result — accumulation of positive experience. Experience is always valuable because it provides new knowledge and skills. In one case, it teaches what should not be done, in the other, what should be done exactly this way. Thus, the skills of dealing with mistakes and successes are the most important factors in cultivating responsibility and are included into the activity itself.

It is important to emphasize that responsibility is considered not only as a feeling or attitude of a person towards his calling and activity, but also as a certain type of activity. This approach is typical for the Moscow school of activity psychology, its founder was Alexey Nikolaevich Leontiev[1].

Thus, fear of responsibility hinders a person's determination to act, causing anxiety and insecurity.

Part 2. Models of self-realization psychotherapy

Therapeutic models depend on the approaches and styles of work of the psychotherapist. But in a general sense, we distinguish structural models. The structure here refers to the activity framework of self-realization, outlined in this article: motive, purpose, means, process, action, analysis, control, verification, experience. In practice, this framework can be represented as knowledge of one's motives and desires (self-knowledge), awareness of one's powers and resources, invariance of goals and objectives, processional aspects of activity, control, work on mistakes and successes, and, finally, assimilation of experience. This structure also suggests the directions of therapy.

1) Know yourself (thyself)! Self-knowledge, namely ofone's potencies and desires, is the most difficult task of all times. Clients' difficulties inself-knowledgeoften come frommisunderstanding of what they really want. When we ask them: "What do you really want? What are your desires or intentions? What

творческому действию и реализации собственных замыслов.

Ответственность предполагает тщательное продумывание моментов, когда человек сталкивается с последствиями своих выборов. Готовность принять последствия подразумевает, что мы обдумываем возможные варианты развития событий и заранее планируем свои реакции на различные результаты. Страх ответственности часто вынуждает человека скрывать свои решения или имитировать их реализацию. Это приводит к маскировке настоящих действий и к имитации активности, которая на самом деле не является решительным действием.

Страх ответственности может проявляться в недостаточно развитых навыках работы над ошибками и успехами. Работа над успехами и ошибками — это творческий процесс, который необходим для формирования зрелой личности и подготовки её к ответственности. Давайте кратко рассмотрим, в чем заключается эта работа.

Интересно отметить, что работа над ошибками и успехами структурно схожа и ведет к одному и тому же результату — накоплению позитивного опыта. Опыт всегда ценен, поскольку он дает новые знания и навыки. В одном случае он учит, чего делать не следует, в другом — что делать необходимо именно так. Таким образом, навыки работы с ошибками и успехами являются важнейшими факторами в укреплении ответственности и включены в саму деятельность.

Важно подчеркнуть, что ответственность рассматривается не только как чувство или отношение человека к своему призванию и деятельности, но и как определенный вид деятельности. Этот подход характерен для московской школы деятельностной психологии, основоположником которой был Алексей Николаевич Леонтьев[1].

Таким образом, страх перед ответственностью препятствует решимости человека к действию, вызывая тревогу и неуверенность.

Часть 2. Модели психотерапии самореализации.

Терапевтические модели зависят от подходов и стилей работы психотерапевта. Но в общем смысле

[1]Doctor of Psychology, professor, Professor, Member of Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR; Soviet psychologist who dealt with the problems of consciousness and activity. Pupil Of L. S. Vygotsky. At the Psychological Institute worked from 1936 to 1956 as head of the Department of child psychology. Full member of the Academy of pedagogical Sciences of the USSR; In the years of the great Patriotic war — chief of the pilot hospital recovery movements near Sverdlovsk. Since 1941-Professor of Moscow state University, since 1950- head of the Department of psychology, since 1966-Dean of the faculty of psychology of Moscow state University., Moscow, USSR. Psychological publications portal PsyJournals.ru — https://psyjournals.ru/en/authors/1297 [Aleksey Nikolaevich Leontiev — Publications]

are your goals?", we often get incomprehensible answers, such as: "I don't know what I want." In such cases, we have to stop and work with the client to understand a large amount of emotional and mental content in order to determine what may be their true desire, intention or goal.

The knowledge of oneself and one's desires often comes through the background of memories from childhood or adolescence. Children, as a rule, are more open in expressing their desires, intentions and dreams, and actively try to realize them. We often find that clients have forgotten or repressed the desires, related to these childhood memories. For example, a person may realize that he wants to travel or explore exotic animals and plants, but at the same time feels the need to earn and provide for his family. Such situations lead to suppression of one's desires in favor of an unloved but profitable job.

Self-exploration can be a long and complex process. It happens not only in the therapeutic sessions, but also outside of them. Therefore, it is important to discuss with the client what he was thinking and feeling between the sessions. This makes possible for a person to realize and formulate his desires.

The process ends with the formulation of these desires and construction of motivation; as a result new goals are created. We can consider the process completed when at least one conscious goal arises.It does not mean that it will be implemented immediately, but if the client realizes it and declares: "Yes, I want to do something that will bring me closer to the study, for example, of ocean or space", and takes appropriate actions— this can be considered the first result of our process.

2) What can I do? Revision of one'spowers and resources.

The second task that arises in the therapeutic process turns out to be more difficult — it is the task of identifying one's own powers and potential. Often a person stops before realizing his desires, because he is convinced that it is impossible to move from thespot, start a new business or even get closer to fulfillment of his dreams. Indeed,It can be very difficult. This is the threshold of determination. And we find ourselves at an important threshold when a person feels for the first time: "I can." This is a return to self-knowledge - the realization that I am able to study, understand complex things and try to acquire a new skill.

мы выделяем структурные модели. Под структурой здесь понимается деятельностная структура самореализации, которая намечена в данной статье: мотив, цель, средства, процесс, действие, анализ, контроль, проверка, опыт. Применительно к практике эту структуру можно представить как познание своих мотивов и желаний (знание себя), осознанность своих сил и средств, инвариантность целей и задач, процессуальные аспекты деятельности, контроль, работу над ошибками и удачами, и, наконец, ассимиляция опыта. Такая структура подсказывает нам и направления терапии.

1) Познай себя! Познание себя самого, а именно своих потенций и желаний, труднейшая задача всех времен. Трудности познания себя у клиентов часто заключаются в непонимании того, чего они действительно хотят. Когда мы ставим перед ними вопрос: «А чего же вы хотите на самом деле? Какие у вас есть желания или намерения? Какие цели вы перед собой ставите?», часто получаем невразумительные ответы, типа: «Я не знаю, чего я хочу». В таких случаях нам приходится останавливаться и вместе с клиентом разбираться в большом объёме эмоционального и ментального содержания, чтобы определить, что может быть их истинным желанием, намерением или целью.

Познание себя и своих желаний зачастую происходит на фоне воспоминаний из детства или отрочества. Дети, как правило, более открыты в выражении своих желаний, намерений и мечтаний, и активно пытаются их реализовать. Мы часто находим, что у клиентов есть забытые или подавленные желания, связанные с этими воспоминаниями. Например, человек может осознавать, что хочет путешествовать или заниматься исследованием диковинных животных и растений, но при этом чувствует необходимость зарабатывать и обеспечивать семью. Подобные ситуации ведут к подавлению своих желаний в пользу нелюбимой, но доходной работы.

Исследование себя может быть длительным и комплексным процессом. Оно происходит не только на терапевтических сессиях, но и вне их. Поэтому важно обсуждать с клиентом, о чём он думал и что чувствовал в промежутках между сессиями. Это даёт возможность человеку осознать и сформулировать появляются у него желания.

Процесс завершается формулированием этих желаний и конструкцией мотивации, в результате чего выстраиваются новые цели. Мы можем считать процесс завершённым, когда возникает хотя бы одна

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For example, one of my clients have been dreaming of driving a car for a long time, and this image sometimes appeared even in her dreams at night. However, she was sure that she would not succeed. The only way she found for herself when she came to psychotherapy, was to sign up for a driving course.She signed up twice, but each time she was scared, and had panic attacks before practicing. She was afraid to drive and left the course.

We discussed her experiences and compared driving to the art of cooking, which she loved very much. She successfully cooked complex dishes, used sharp knives and manipulated kitchen appliances without fear of injuring herself. It gave her confidence in her abilities. Comparing cooking and driving, we found metaphors that helped her cope with the fear of driving.

After that, she enrolled in the courses again and, having passed the theoretical exam, began to practice. Although there were still worries, she no longer suffered from panic attacks. Her great desire to drive helped her to study this skill diligently. A month later, she reached the driving level that allowed her to pass a practical exam.

In the sixth or seventh session, she enthusiastically talked about how much she enjoyed driving. For the first time, when she was driving in the city amid a busy stream, she noticed that there was no need to concentrate on her movements and that her skills were becoming automatic. This allowed to take her mind fromdriving and focus on the road and on her feelings, which brought her joy — exactly the joy she had been dreaming for a long time. She could overlook the necessary movements of her arms and legs. They acted correctly.

It is important to understand that a person always has some kind of experience in reserve, which can be relied on and used in therapy. Even if a child has not got such experience, an adult always possesses it, and we can rely on it. This can play a crucial role in the process of self-knowledge and overcoming fears.

3) What do I want and what do I avoid? What should I strive for?
The new task that arises at this stage is to determine for each one, what he can implement and what hecan't. For example, can a person without sufficient education engage in space exploration? It would seem that this is a complex, high-tech science that requires work in observatories and uni-

осознаваемая цель. Это не означает, что она сразу же будет реализована, но если клиент осознаёт и заявляет: «Да, я хочу сделать что-то, что приблизит меня к исследованию, например, океана или космоса», и предпринимает соответствующие действия — это можно считать первым результатом нашего процесса.

2) Что я могу? Ревизия своих сил и ресурсов.
Вторая задача, которая возникает в терапевтическом процессе, оказывается более сложной — это задача выявления собственных сил и возможностей. Часто человек останавливается перед реализацией своих желаний, так как убеждён в невозможности сдвинуться с места, начать новое дело или даже приблизиться к реализации своих мечтаний. Действительно, это может быть очень трудно. Это порог решимости. И мы оказываемся перед важным порогом, когда человек впервые ощущает: «Я могу». Это возвращение к познанию себя — осознанию, что я способен изучать, понимать сложные вещи и пробовать приобрести новый навык.

Например, одна из моих клиенток долго мечтала водить машину, и этот образ иногда появлялся даже в её снах. Однако она была уверена, что у неё это не получится. Единственным способом, который она увидела для себя, пришедши на психотерапию, было записаться на курсы вождения. Она дважды записывалась, но каждый раз испытывала страх, и перед практикой у неё случались панические атаки. Она боялась сесть за руль и уходила с курсов.

Мы обсуждали её переживания и сравнивали вождение автомобиля с кулинарным искусством, которое она очень любила. Она успешно готовила сложные блюда, использовала острые ножи и манипулировала кухонной техникой, не боясь себя поранить. Это дало ей уверенность в своих способностях. Сравнивая кулинарию и вождение, мы нашли метафоры, которые помогли ей справиться со страхом управлять автомобилем.

После этого она вновь записалась на курсы и, сдав теоретический экзамен, приступила к практике. Хотя волнения ещё были, панические атаки её уже не мучили. Её большое желание водить помогло ей усердно изучать этот навык. Через месяц она достигла уровня вождения, позволяющего сдать практический экзамен.

На шестой или седьмой сессии она с энтузиазмом рассказывала, насколько ей приятно стало водить. В первый раз, когда она ехала по городу среди оживлённого потока, и заметила, что она может не

versities with large teams and huge budgets. However, in the modern world of cosmology, there are single amateurs who feel themselves great in this area. They photograph space objects — planets,satellites, comets, asteroids, and so on. An army of such amateurs all over the world forms communities, but they work outside universities and academia, enjoying the process and exploring space within their capabilities. All things are possible to him who believes (Mark 9:23).

Imagine that you are photographing the full moon with your phone and are faced with various problems. It's almost impossible. However, if you have a good camera with different lenses, including telephoto lenses, you can create amazing images of our satellite, as well as even distant planets such as Saturn. This opens up new opportunities for amateurs. When a person begins to realize his real capacities, it does not require radical decisions or career changes from him, but opens the way to the realization of hisparticular dreams.

Many people who are interested in academic knowledge can assemble collections — for example, a collection of butterflies, minerals or moths, thus realizing their deep needs. I know people who, having reached the heights of their career, begin to practice the art of music, learn to sing or play the violin and piano, attending music schools where children mostly study. Adults can also start learning foreign languages or playing music, showing hidden potentials for self-realization.

However, it is important to outline another aspect of self-realization. This is not onlycreativity or hobby, but also everyday life. When a person begins to make decisions concerning his daily routine — how should he get to his work, how to solve production tasks — in that way he realizes his simple, but sometimes deep desires. We often discuss with clients what they can change in their lives, and here it is important to understand that changes must meet deep-rooted needs and not be radical just for the sake of change, as it often happens in adolescence. Fundamental human needs are grounded in genuine human requirements, not in illusory dreams. True self-realization — is the realization of that needsunderlying the basis of human personality.

4) Why am I afraid to make mistakes?
A serious obstacle to self-actualization is the fear of making mistakes. This fear stops many people from realizing their desires and dreams. The fear of mi-

следить за своими движениями, что навыки становятся автоматическими. Это позволило ей отвлекаться от управления и сосредоточиться на дороге и своих ощущениях, что принесло ей радость — именно той радости, о которой она долго мечтала. На необходимые движения рук и ног она могла не обращать внимание. Они действовали правильно.
 Важно понимать, что у человека всегда есть какой-то опыт в запасе, на который можно положиться и использовать в терапии. Даже если у ребёнка этого опыта нет, у взрослого человека он всегда присутствует, и на него можно опираться. Это может сыграть решающую роль в процессе самопознания и преодоления страхов.

3) Что я хочу и чего избегаю? Куда мне стремится?
Новая задача, которая возникает на этой стадии, заключается в том, чтобы каждому человеку определить, что он может реализовать, а что — нет. Например, может ли человек без достаточного образования заниматься исследованиями космоса? Казалось бы, это сложная, высокотехнологичная наука, требующая работы в обсерваториях и университетах с большими коллективами и колоссальными бюджетами. Однако в современном мире космологии существуют любители-одиночки, которые прекрасно ощущают себя в этой области. Они фотографируют космические объекты — планеты, спутники, кометы, астероиды и так далее. Армия таких любителей по всему миру образует сообщества, но работают они вне университетов и академической среды, наслаждаясь процессом и исследуя космос в рамках своих возможностей. *Всё возможно верующему (Евангелие от Марка 9:23).*
Представьте, что вы фотографируете полнолуние с помощью своего телефона и сталкиваетесь с разными проблемами. Это почти не возможно. Однако, если у вас есть хороший фотоаппарат с разными объективами, включая телеобъективы, вы можете создавать удивительные снимки нашего спутника, а также даже удалённых планет, таких как Сатурн. Это открывает новые возможности для любителей. Когда человек начинает осознавать свои реальные возможности, это не требует от него радикальных решений или перемен в карьере, но открывает путь к реализации тех самых мечтаний.
Многие, кто заинтересован в академических знаниях, могут заниматься сбором коллекций — например, коллекцией бабочек, минералов или ночных мотыльков, реализуя таким образом свои глубокие потребности. Я знаю людей, которые, достигнув

stake can manifest itself not only in the very fact of a possible mistake, but also in the fear of criticism, responsibility and humiliation associated with this mistake. Behind this fear may be a long history of humiliation and criticism experienced in childhood or adolescence. However, we can not delve into these stories, but use tools to overcome fear.

The first tool is working on mistakes. And the second, similar one, is working on successes. This process is divided into several stages, each does not pose great difficulties for an adult and healthy person.

0. We can consider the zero stage where a person admits that something went wrong. This is not yet called an error, but is designated as a certain obstacle. This stage involves self-analysis, which leads to the conclusion that a mistake was made.

1. At the first stage, the error analysis aims at recognizing responsibility. It is necessary to determine whether it happened as a result of my action, inaction, or it excluded my responsibility.

2. If responsibility is recognized, we proceed to the second stage, which includes finding one's decision that caused the mistake. The error would not occur without this particular decision.

3. At the third stage, it is important to distinguish whether the event that caused the mistake was forced or voluntary. This understanding helps a person to determine whether he is responsible for what has happened.

4. If the event was forced, the work on mistakesis paused, and the person skips a few steps. If the mistake was the result of conscious choice, we analyze why the wrong decision was made — based on what attitudes or knowledge. At the fourth stage, I admit that my choice was wrong, and I am moving towards understanding of the consequences of this decision. I am aware of my responsibility, I feel guilty if it is appropriate, and I repent for the wrong choice, realizing what information led to the error.

5. The next step is analyzing possible actions in the future. If my mistake caused damage, I also need to deal with the guilt feeling and the need for forgiveness, both from other people and self-forgiving. The issue of responsibility becomes important, especially if the mistake has serious consequences. If I just broke a cup or punctured a tire, my fault will be minimal, but I still have to compensate for the inconvenience caused.

6. The last stage is gaining experience. When analyzing my mistakes, I enrich myself with new know-

вершин своей карьеры, начинают заниматься музыкальным искусством, учатся петь или играть на скрипке и фортепиано, посещая музыкальные школы, где в основном учатся дети. Взрослые также могут начать изучать иностранные языки и заниматься музыкой, проявляя скрытые потенциалы самореализации.

Однако важно добавить ещё один аспект самореализации. Это не только творчество или хобби, но и повседневная жизнь. Когда человек начинает принимать решения относительно своей повседневности — как ему ездить на работу, как решать производственные задачи — он таким образом реализует свои простые, но иногда глубокие желания. Мы часто обсуждаем с клиентами, что они могут изменить в своей жизни, и здесь важно понимать, что изменения должны соответствовать глубинным потребностям, а не быть радикальными лишь ради изменений, как это часто бывает в подростковом возрасте.

Фундаментальные потребности человека ориентированы на подлинные человеческие нужды, а не на иллюзорные мечты. Подлинная самореализация — это осуществление тех самых потребностей, которые лежат в основе человеческой личности.

4) Почему я боюсь делать ошибки?
Серьёзным препятствием к самореализации является страх совершения ошибок. Этот страх останавливает многих людей от реализации своих желаний и мечтаний. Страх ошибки может проявляться не только в самом факте возможной ошибки, но и в страхе критики, ответственности и унижения, связанном с этой ошибкой. За этим страхом может стоять длительная история унижений и критики, пережитая в детстве или подростковом возрасте. Однако мы можем не углубляться в эти истории, а применять инструменты для преодоления страха.

Первый инструмент — работа над ошибками. А второй, аналогичный – работа над успехами. Этот процесс делится на несколько этапов, каждый из которых не представляет больших трудностей для взрослого и здорового человека.

0. Мы можем рассмотреть нулевой этап, на котором человек признаёт, что что-то произошло не так. Это ещё не называется ошибкой, но обозначается как определённое препятствие. Этот этап предполагает самоанализ, который приводит к выводу о том, что произошла ошибка.

1. На первом этапе анализ ошибок заключается в

ledge and learn lessons for the future. It is important to put this experience into the "piggy bank", thank yourself for the work done on the errors. Thus, even making mistakes and causing damage, we become more experienced. As the well-known proverb says: " Experience is worth it". (Or in Russian –One beaten is worth two unbeatenones.") This may sound a little clumsy, but it's my experience that I accept and use.

5) My experience, what does it mean?

My experience is the totality of what I have realized, learned and accepted, including unconscious skills and competencies. There are many unconscious skills that I don't pay much attention to, but nevertheless, I've acquired them. My experience shapes me as a mature adult person who is able to perform many different types of activities and has a variety of skills that allow me to feel comfortable among people and in different situations.

However, experience has one important feature: not all the results of my actions become experience, because experience needs to be accepted. There are actions that make us feel shame, which we would like to forget. Sometimes werepress painful memories, though we should not — as working on mistakes help us to overcome shame, regret and sadness, turning any mistake or accident into the experience. The more emotionally-chargedis the experience, the more useful it can be, it happens quite often, though that's not always the case. It is important for a human being to use the happeningevents as experience and investigateit. This means that experience needs, first of all, self-analysis, and, secondly, acceptance. My experience becomes really mine only when I admit: " Yes, it was my action. I've made a mistake and I am sorry, that I've caused damage or disaster to someone. But now I realize the way in life to avoid such mistakes."

It is important to understand that working on mistakes is only one part of reflecting on experience. The second part is working on success, which, to be honest, is more difficult, and there is more work here. We, adults and mature people, can notice that there aremuch more positive, success-related events in our lives than mistakes. This is a key thesis that we are exploring in therapy. We go through all the steps to come to awareness that there are always more positive experiences than negative ones. Otherwise, we would not be able to cope with life situations — good and bad. This confirms that the personality copes with being.

признании ответственности. Нужно определить, произошло ли это в результате моего действия, бездействия или это исключало мою ответственность.

2. Если ответственность признана, мы переходим ко второму этапу, который включает в себя поиск решения, ставшего причиной ошибки. Это решение должно быть таким, что без него ошибка бы не произошла.

3. На третьем этапе важно разграничить, было ли событие, ставшее причиной ошибки, вынужденным или произвольным. Это понимание помогает человеку определить, несёт ли он ответственность за произошедшее.

4. Если событие было вынужденным, работа над ошибками приостанавливается, и человек пропускает несколько шагов. Если же ошибка была результатом осознанного выбора, мы анализируем, почему было принято неправильное решение — на основании каких установок или знаний. На четвёртом этапе я признаю, что сделал неверный выбор, и двигаюсь к осознанию последствий этого решения. Я осознаю ответственность, ощущаю вину, если она уместна, и раскаиваюсь за неправильный выбор, понимая, какая информация привела к ошибке.

5. Следующий шаг — это анализ возможных действий в будущем. Если моя ошибка причинила ущерб, нужно также разобраться с чувством вины и необходимостью прощения, как от других людей, так и от себя. Вопрос ответственности становится важным, особенно если ошибка повлекла за собой серьёзные последствия. Если же я лишь разбил чашку или проколол колесо, моя вина будет минимальной, но я всё равно должен компенсировать причинённые неудобства.

6. Последний этап заключается в получении опыта. Анализируя свои ошибки, я обогащаюсь новыми знаниями и получаю уроки на будущее. Важно положить этот опыт в «копилку», поблагодарить себя за проделанную работу над ошибками. Таким образом, даже совершая ошибки и причиняя ущерб, мы становимся более опытными. Как говорит известная пословица: «Одного битого двух небитых дают». Это может звучать немного коряво, но это мой опыт, который я принимаю и использую.

5) Мой опыт, что он значит?

Мой опыт — это вся совокупность того, что я осознал, чему научился и что принял, включая бессознательные навыки и умения. Существуют множество неосознаваемых навыков, на которые я не обращал особого внимания, но тем не менее, я их приобрёл. Мой опыт формирует меня как зрелого

Thus, the experience includes all - mistakes, and successes. Working on successes goes through the same steps as working on mistakes, and it needs to be done. This can bring not only great satisfaction, but also a new experience, which, in turn, becomes an important result of our psychotherapy. At the end of the therapy, it is very important that the psychologist, together with the client, consider this experience as a gift, as God's gift.

взрослого человека, способного совершить множество различных видов деятельности и обладающего разнообразными навыками, которые позволяют мне комфортно чувствовать себя среди людей и в разных ситуациях.

Однако у опыта есть одна важная особенность: не все результаты моих поступков становятся опытом, поскольку опыт нужно принять. Есть поступки, которые вызывают у нас стыд, о которых мы хотели бы забыть. Мы иногда вытесняем болезненные воспоминания, и напрасно — работа над ошибками помогает нам преодолеть стыд, сожаление и печаль, превращая любую ошибку или несчастный случай в опыт. Чем более эмоционально насыщен опыт, тем полезнее он может быть, хотя это не происходит всегда, но довольно часто. Важно, чтобы человек использовал события как опыт и исследовал их. Значит, опыт нуждается, прежде всего, в самоанализе, и, во-вторых, в принятии. Свой опыт становится по-настоящему своим только тогда, когда я признаю: «Да, это был мой поступок. Я совершил ошибку, и мне жаль, что я причинил кому-то ущерб или несчастье. Но теперь я знаю, как нужно жить, чтобы избежать подобных ошибок».

Важно понимать, что работа над ошибками — это лишь одна часть подготовки опыта. Вторая часть — работа над успехами, которая, если быть честным, более сложная, но её тоже больше. Мы, взрослые и зрелые люди, можем заметить, что положительных событий в нашей жизни, связанных с успехами, гораздо больше, чем ошибок. Это ключевой тезис, который мы исследуем в терапии. Мы проходим все шаги, чтобы прийти к осознанию того, что позитивного опыта всегда больше, чем негативного. В противном случае, мы бы не смогли справляться с жизненными ситуациями — хорошими и плохими. Это подтверждает, что личность справляется с бытием.

Таким образом, опыт складывается из всего, из ошибок, и успехов. Работа над успехами проходит те же шаги, что и работа над ошибками, и её необходимо проделывать. Это может приносить не только большое удовлетворение, но и новый опыт, который, в свою очередь, становится важным результатом нашей психотерапии. В конце терапии очень важно, чтобы психолог, совместно с клиентом, воспринял этот опыт как подарок, как Божий дар.

comment

In Andrey Lorgus's very thoughtful essay, we read of some of the innate issues, needs and drives of the human person, and some processes, even requirements, which can therapeutically assist towards a human's inner growth and development towards maturity.

In psychology, we tend to bring our sense of who a human person is, and the concept of self as an indicator of the capacity of a person to reflect upon things, reflecting even upon one's own being, inner world and experiences. As Andrey Lorgus mentions, the sense of self is formed in relation to others; [other things, other beings,] other people in family, community, society – and also develops (or fails to develop), in the human's life.

We understandably emphasize and target the human self as the object and subject of psychological inquiry and of therapy. Yet, isn't curious that we so often *start* with the self?

When we think about it, we cannot hope to approach an understanding of the life of a fish which is out of its water, or a baby bird outside of its nest, and a pet dog cannot be best understood when isolated from its beloved family. Surely, so it is with the human being and the 'self'. And even more so in the case of the human being, because the entity and its context and connections involve – not just the visible, material ones, but also the spiritual ones, too, for an understanding of the nature of the human being; a being both made of 'the clay of the earth' as well as being 'in-breathed' by the Creator. That sense of self, a certain freedom with our choices, a sense of morality, of values and beliefs, of the worship giving impetus to our goals, of one's will in agency, a curious authority and capacity over things in the world... all point to a higher order 'creatureliness' in life, even higher than our dear fish, or bird, or pet, (or other things, such as sky or water or land...) for which we sense some responsibility.

We psychologists might ask: What can do more than the Biblical teaching for our understanding of the human being? What is more capable of supplying and deeply grounding our understanding of who the human being is, what we are here for ... and even why we have a sense of self, with its ramifications for meaning, purpose, direction, goals, and development along the journey of life ... what and how "self-realization" might look like – both generally for the human being, as well as specifically for each unique individual? (I ask these questions rhetorically, but they can be asked by anyone with a real sense of seeking, prepared to search deeply.)

Even more, we might ask, what can be more valuable for further explanations which make sense of what might actually be *wrong*, and/or make for obstacles in the life of the human being? (The biblical stories which give a sense of our *Vice Roi* place in the created world, along with the story of what we call "the fall" into sin, with its resultant disconnection from our Maker, and what follows, all provide explanatory content for our life and its context.)

In fact, surely, we psychologists *must* ask these questions in trying to make sense, by seeking truth, knowledge, understanding about human nature

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(the object and subject of our inquiry), *let alone* in order to gain sound therapeutic or counselling skills, and to dare to suppose that we can appropriately contribute to and properly assist other persons in their life's journey. (Psychology will do well to recognise that it has often arisen from – what would have to be called -religious views that are secularist, humanistic and self-worshipping. To some minds, at least, these views beg too many questions to be able to supplying satisfactory answers.)

And Andrey Lorgus's paper does indeed allude to an even more **relational context** than simply the other humans in the person's life, for work with the self, for the development of the human person relevant to therapeutic concerns. He uses the word 'calling' (p.5) – an interesting word, which is suggestive of something, even some authority, beyond the self.
A biblical text is also quoted, which, interestingly, requires special and spiritual understanding for   its interpretation.
And his article ends with nothing less than a few words, which point – as clearly as the star of Bethlehem! – to the need of the self to recognise what is required of and for a human life. For the human self can only really be understood and known in relation to his or her Creator.
What a person does (or does not do) in life follows from this.
A human being is of necessity dependent upon the Creator, who has invited him or her into relationship; having given all the needed solutions to the obstacles to this; forgiveness and reconciliation through Christ, and a change of heart to walk in newness of life, and offering this historically to all and individually to each person he has made.
A beautiful garment can be expertly made from the hands or according to the pattern of an excellent Designer.
A problem can be readily solved by the one who both fully understands the problem and also has the power to fix or solve it. And the loving desire to do so.
So, although we might begin therapy with the self, all the questions beg for answers. Who am I? What does it all mean? What weight do I give to my 'self' and its desires? What is to be my direction and purpose? How can self-realization occur - or, does it matter? Is the quest for my self-realization really the quest for fulfilment – of the design God has for me and my life under His loving direction?
If so, it is to be found **in relationship with God**. And that is necessarily a humble relationship, recognising that God is God, and I am not!
The irony is that fulfilment is a spin-off from our relationship with God **as God,** not primarily from self, or other people, or other things as gods instead.
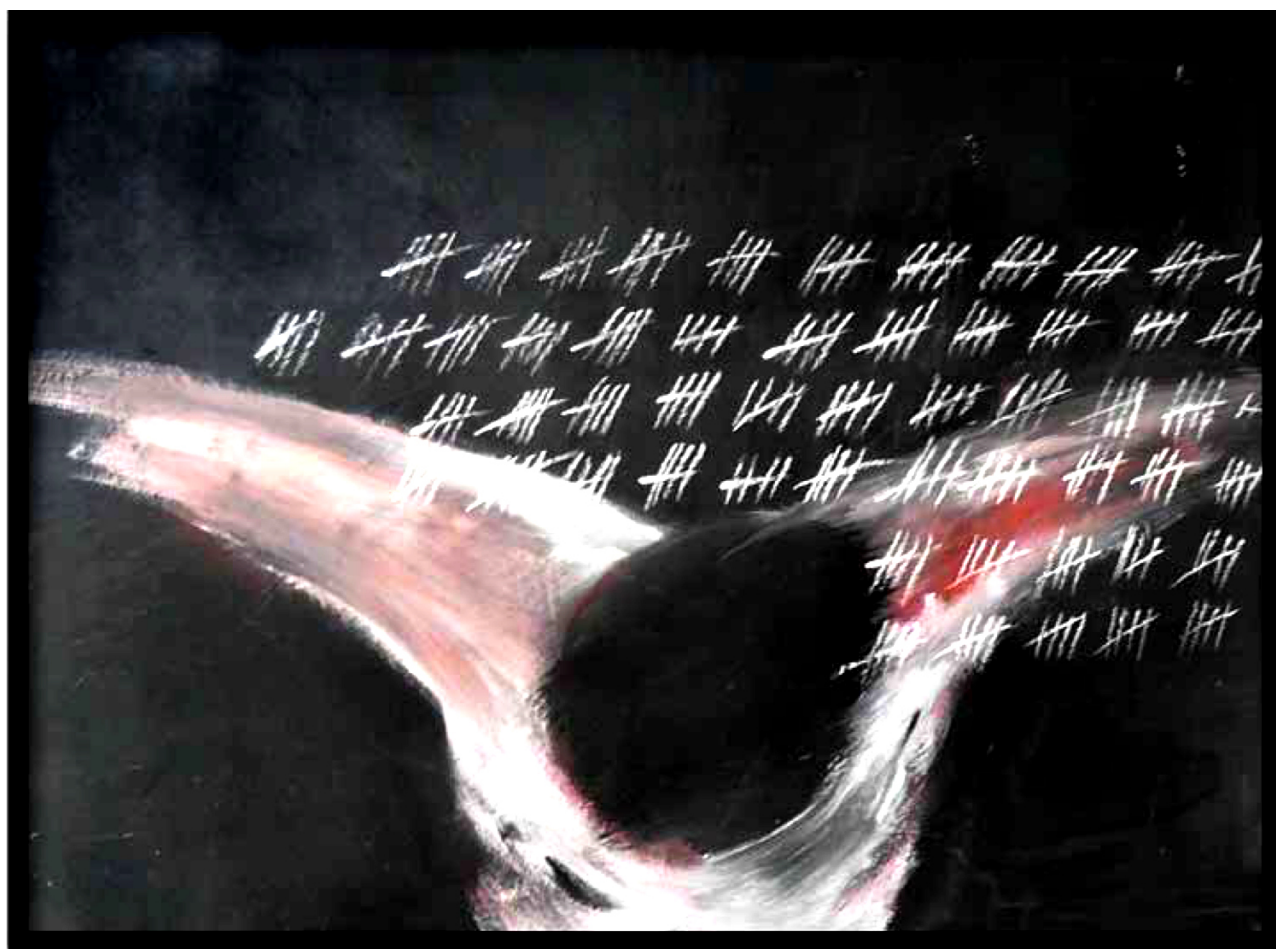
Beaten / How long?

more about
contemplative
and spirituality
aspects

Werner May (Germany) was the senior chairman of the IGNIS Instute for Christan Psychology in Kitzingen for more than 25 years (www.ignis.de). As a teacher his main interest was in basic questons of Christan Psychology and in counseling of foster families. He also helped to build up the Institute for Christan Psychology, Education and Therapy in Switzerland www.icp.ch. Now he is the chairman of the European Movement for Christan Anthropology, Psychology and Therapy www.emcapp.eu and publishes the free e-journal Christan Psychology Around The World https://emcapp.ignis.de/. Werner has been married to Agnes for now 50 years. They live in Würzburg, Germany, and have six adult children.

Werner May (Germany):

The Threefold Conversion

The idea of the three conversions is generally attributed to Zinzendorf (1700-1760), the founder of the Moravian Brethren in Herrnhut.
This refers to:

1. the conversion to Jesus Christ,
2. the conversion to fellowship, church or to the body of Christ, and finally
3. the conversion to the world, understood as solidarity with all humanity, whether Christian or non-Christian, and with the creation.

The time at which an individual may be ready for one or other of these conversions can vary greatly. After decades of Christian life, however, the requirement is to live out all three conversions consciously, with all their challenges, responsibilities and blessings.

The first conversion
When I was first converted to Jesus Christ almost 50 years ago, I realized that Jesus not only wanted to be the master of my house, that I had given him the front door key, so to speak, but that he also wanted to bring his breath of fresh air into every room of this house. So it was a matter of tidying up room by room.

Even today, I still want to discover new rooms where he is not yet master, or old ones where it might be good to go through them again with Jesus. There will always be smaller or larger conversion steps to follow, because we understand increasingly deeply what makes our heart tick and who God is.
In many areas of life, our first conversion leads to an ever deeper understanding of the freedom from the power of sin that God wants to give us and of how this freedom should be lived out. It is necessary to overcome one-sidedness not only in dealing with money, but also in all the other areas of our lives.

While the desire not to sin after our first conversion was primarily meant in the sense of sins of transgression, we now also desire not to sin in the sense of sins of omission, to love more, to give more.

I hope that doesn't sound arrogant, but the sins of transgression in words, thoughts and deeds, as Martin Luther put it, are no longer

the primary problem for me, although the Holy Spirit also repeatedly puts his finger on such sins. What really burdens me are the sins of omission.

If, for example, I am preparing a seminar – and my experiences here go back over 30 years – I still concentrate on good content and on methodical presentation, at the same time praying that the participants will be blessed. But the time I spend preparing "my" love for them is practically nil. Of course, even in this failure I know I am held by God's grace, but I experience this state as a catastrophe after having experienced God's love for so many years! At the same time, I am happy that God hears this cry of my heart. Something will change! I am certain of that.

But there will always be smaller or larger steps of conversion to follow, because we are designed for spiritual growth. Paul was not spared this either, as the following text makes clear:

The church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria was now experiencing a time of rest and peace. The Christians were strengthened in their faith and lived in awe of the Lord. And because the Holy Spirit was at their side, the church continued to grow. (Acts 9:31)

Here, the important thing for me is the tiny word "now". They were *now* experiencing a time... What had happened? Paul had been taken away to Caesarea, for his own safety, after he had delivered a fearless address. It is not possible to work out retrospectively when Paul returned to the "biblical stage", but even he had to grow and fewer.

Babies, children, young people and fathers

John speaks about the various stages of maturity:

I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. (1 John 2:12-14)

Since children are not explicitly addressed anywhere else in the New Testament, it can be assumed that it is not meant literally here either, but rather to refer to spiritual growth stages or phases. We find four terms in the basic Greek text: Babies, children, young men and fathers or parents. Before I describe their characteristics, four points are important to me:

- This is not about a judgment that one phase is "better" than the other.
- They are all present at the same time, but with different weightings.
- This division helps us to understand each other, especially where one stage dominates: I am a different Christian today than I was twenty-five years ago, I have different priorities today.
- Somehow time / age plays a role in this.

The following characteristics are mentioned:

Baby, toddler, infant (*paidion*): "because you know the Father".

Children, by descent (*teknion*): "because your sins are forgiven".

Young men (*neaniskos*): "because you have conquered the evil one", "because you are strong; the word of God is alive in you and abides in you".

Fathers, mothers, parents (*pateres*) "because you know Him who was there from the beginning".

I have the privilege of believing that God is a Father, of believing that my sins are forgiven, of believing that I am strong because the word of God remains in me and that I have defeated the evil one. I am enalbed to believe that I know the one who was there from the beginning. All of this already played a role at the beginning of my life of faith, all of it should remain alive and vital, but the focus has shifted.

Recognizing God as Father like the prodigal son and then finding inner peace and reconciled relationships through forgiveness were highlights of the first decade. Being strong in faith probably dominated my second decade of faith. As a mature Christian, my amazement at the greatness of God, who was from the beginning, the creator of the whole world, who sustains everything through his word, who is love, to whom my present and future belong above all. All of these are the great themes of faith in my life, which I want to and should put into practice every day.

From "believing in God" to "believing God"

Going deeper and deeper into trusting God, feeling at home there, also means that many small steps of conversion follow if we want to overcome the mistrust that the serpent sowed in the hearts of the first people. Many small steps of conversion not only open the doors of our lives to the will of God, but also to the trust that this will is good and true. Trusting God means believing him and not just believing in him.

Many small steps of conversion not only open the doors of our lives to the will of God, but also to trust that this will is good and true.

But what does it mean to "believe"? "Now faith is the firm assurance of things hoped for and not doubting things that are seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

Everything that we do not see in our reality, but are convinced of, i.e. where we do not doubt that it exists, we believe.

We do not see most things in our lives, we believe them. We believe everything that is not given to us directly through our senses, including memories of course, but also current certainties, that the car is still where you put it, that the euro is at this moment the currency in our country (even if you don't see anyone paying with it), that your television will come on when you switch it on ... Being able to believe is a basic ability of every human being.

If you have ever experienced your car being stolen, your television not working or someone paying with old Deutschmarks (which is still possible in some department stores), then your faith may have been weakened.

In areas where you have had no experience, your faith has no foundation. If a person says to you: "The chef in this restaurant cooks excellent food", the question of whether you believe it or whether you are unsure depends on how trustworthy the person is (in relation to this information). If you try the restaurant yourself, you can probably find out if the statement is true, but maybe the good chef is having his day off? You still can't be completely sure.

I believe where I no longer doubt, even though I cannot see. Faith has a transcendent effect, it "grasps God's hand". Here are a few examples from the Bible:

Jesus then turned to the centurion and said: "You can go home. What you have believed shall be done." And at the very moment the servant was healed."
Matthew 8:13

But the person concerned should make his request in an attitude of trust and not in an attitude of doubt; for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is whipped up by the wind and blown here and there. Such a person should not think that he will receive anything from the Lord.
James 1:6-7

And because of their unbelief, he (Jesus) performed only a few miracles there (in his hometown).
Matthew 13:58

"If it is possible for you, you say?" replied Jesus. "All things are possible to him who believes."

Mark 9:23 All these texts prove that whether I believe God specifically or not is not insignificant. This not only influences us and our experience and behavior, but also God.

Once we have gone from unbelief to faith, part of this first conversion is to ask ourselves whether we can trust God and his word in our lives so that we no longer doubt. (Always assuming that we interpret and understand his word correctly).

This is not easy, but it keeps our first conversion active for life: Can I trust God?

Can I trust that

... the one who gives will receive in return?

... marital fidelity is good and beautiful?

... I will one day live eternally redeemed?

... God answers my prayers?

... I will make a good impression at a job interview today because He is with me?

A seminar experience

The topic of faith as a basic human phenomenon was for years one of my regular lectures. After an introduction to the topic, I used to say to the participants: "I've put a bar of chocolate over in the next room. Whoever takes it now owns it." Of course, they understood what I was getting at: did they trust me that there really was a bar of chocolate there that they couldn't see?

Then the first one got up and left the room. I asked the others who believed that there was a bar of chocolate there and who didn't. Some doubted, others believed. Some doubted, others believed.

Then the person with the chocolate in their hand came back and there was a roar of applause.

Ten minutes later, I claimed: "I put two bars of chocolate on the cellar stairs, who ..." Now two or three of them stood up, one of them finally went off ... and came back successfully. Some confirmed that they still had doubts.

My question was then how often I would have to repeat the whole thing so that no-one would have any more doubts. We discussed the credibility of my person, the circumstances of this exercise, that there would be no high risk if there was no chocolate, that some people were more trusting and others more suspicious. We also discussed what this exercise meant for our trust in God.

Then I did the exercise again, this time with five bars. Some still doubted, the person who had fetched the five bars usually handed out plenty of chocolate to everyone else. It was always an "expensive" lecture for me. (One time - it just had to be done - I then increased it to twenty-five bars. Unfortunately, I forgot to ask who still had doubts).

But how do I go from doubt and unbelief to faith? Firstly, I have to move from unbelief and doubt towards faith and trust. Secondly, I am convinced that faith is a gift from God. I don't have to earn it, but I can ask for it.

For me, this is part of the first conversion: I desire a faith that honors God in the various areas of my life. oThe first step towards faith is to realize what you have believed so far. Everyone believes something, the only question is what. Then the question arises as to whether you want to stick with it. You have to realize that faith has an effect. As placebo research shows, even something that is not true has an effect if we believe it.

If I come to the conclusion that what I have believed so far is wrong, then I have to think about what I want to believe from now on. That the one who gives will be given back? That I will one day live eternally redeemed? That God will answer my prayers?

I admit to myself (possible) doubts about this, because lying to myself or positive thinking will not help. Then I ask in prayer that I be given concrete faith and put my doubts aside.

And now comes a difficult step: action. Do we act in line with our faith? Do we take an umbrella with us when we pray for rain after a prolonged dry spell? 'What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims: "I believe", but has no corresponding deeds to show for it? ... It was only through his (Abraham's) deeds that his faith was perfected.'
James 2:14.22
 If I believe, I myself have to be one of those who stand up and get the chocolate, and probably several times, until I believe without doubting.

As a young Christian, I would at this point have stopped this digression on the doctrine of faith. The most important thing for me would have been said: Let's throw ourselves into life! Let's learn to trust God more and more, even in the most mundane matters and even in our professional lives!

But we do not believe in our great faith, but in a great God. It is not our faith that moves mountains, but "only" reaches out to the God who can move mountains.

In my various areas of life, I desire a faith that honors God. Our faith reaches out to him for whom he is waiting, and then he acts as he sees fit in his greatness and love, and gives what is appropriate, perhaps differently than I imagine in my limitations, but he gives.

Our first conversion wants to lead us deeper and deeper into trust in God.

The second conversion
I was a little shocked to observe that some Christians skip the second conversion, the conversion to the fellowship, church or body of Christ, or leave it again. The experiences of the first decade of faith are usually very much associated with community experiences. For many, the encounter with brothers and sisters is a liberation from loneliness, a strong experience of belonging, and a source of diverse support and a shared journey.

This can obscure two things. Firstly, that in a certain sense we are naïve in not recognizing the limitations and faults, shortcomings and weaknesses of others. Recognizing these after a while leads us into a phase of disillusionment and this in turn tempts us to distance ourselves or withdraw because we do not want to give up the image of an ideal fellowship.

Secondly, we may not realize in the early days that we are measuring the value of the fellowship - obviously or unconsciously - against the value and benefits for ourselves. When we no longer feel that we are getting something, or no longer expect anything, fellowship loses its value for some. Then they withdraw or even leave congregations, even after many years of membership.

The second conversion involves the decision to see oneself fundamentally as a member of the body of Christ, the desire to be and remain in the church, and the deep conviction that being a Christian without the church is unimaginable. The church has two meanings and tasks: First and foremost, it is

the body of Christ with Jesus as its head, but then it is also a relational unit in love.

My personal second conversion followed immediately on the first. After I was converted in a prayer group in 1978, the following happened a few weeks later: During a time of worship, when we were all usually completely focused on God, I let my gaze wander through the group - and was startled. My impression was: "All old women." (Although there were also some younger ones and even the odd man).

My next thought was: "I must be in the wrong place." I began to compare the people present with the friends I had previously socialized with. But it wasn't long before I knew, deep down, that these "old" women were now allowed to be closer to me than all the other younger and more attractive people. They were my new siblings. Not because they shared my interests or had studied with me, but because, like me, they belonged to Jesus Christ.

Over the decades, I have reminded myself of this decision again and again when I was dissatisfied with how church felt and when everyday church life became tough. I belong, I want to belong, I am entitled to belong.

The Word of God reveals the church to us as something that points beyond us humans, into eternity, as an important building block of his kingdom. She is the bride of Christ! She gets her splendor mainly from the head, as which Jesus described himself. The presence of God is the decisive factor! Where two or three are gathered together, Jesus Christ is among us (Matthew 18:20), that is where we are the church.

But what about love, in concrete terms, love for everyone in my local church and from them to me? Another part of this second conversion is to recognize - by reversing our standards - how great every local church is! For it represents an incomparable collection of imperfect people.

Incomparable: I believe that there is no other organization like it, that is so open to everyone, whether rich or poor, from the most diverse educational and social backgrounds, healthy or sick, old or young, that there is no similar organization that would endure this without immediately excluding some (that we also do this is part of the pain).

Not perfect: what characterizes us is not performance, but grace, that everyone is accepted as they are. "Thank you, Lord, that I am accepted as I am, and thank you that you don't leave me as I am, but thank you also that I don't have to reach a state where I would finally deserve your acceptance."

Isn't that inspiring, isn't that the place where I too can be who I am?

I rejoice in being together with others, especially in the challenge of our weakness and diversity - even if this will always cause me difficulties individually - because it is something special, because it expresses grace for me that everyone, including me, has become a child of God.

The love between brothers and sisters is something very special and hopefully can be felt in every congregation. But what about unity?

Here, too, I have learned to rethink (= conversion). Whereas at the beginning unity meant uniformity for me, in the sense of thinking the same, believing the same, confessing the same, doing the same, I now tend more towards an understanding of unity in diversity: the church is a symphony of different instruments that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, manage to play a song together to the glory of God. The divisive factor has lost its terror, the other person becomes an interesting other that I first want to get to know and understand. That connects, that creates unity.

Since the second conversion always recognizes the "vertical" in this "horizontal" level of vision, that we are the body of Christ, that Jesus Christ is our head, He helps us to overcome what divides us.

Taking off one's own glasses of faith

Each of us wears worldview glasses, we have to admit that to ourselves at some point: the glasses of our culture, our generation, our education ... What I believe is also my subjective world of faith, shaped by my family, my community and my time. It is the same for everyone. I have to ask myself what tint my glasses of faith have.

Within my congregation, by and large, the shades match, so that the illusion could arise that the way we see our faith, God, the Bible and many other things is absolutely correct. But can we dismiss the faith of all Christians from other denominations or churches? Only a few sectarian groups do this officially, but the thought is there for others too. Cracks are running through the body of Christ.

We still differentiate between those close to us, other Christians and Christians with whom we have no contact and whose world is foreign to us, and about whom we would probably also criticize many things.

Here in Germany, too, there are not only the traditional denominations and free churches, but also African, Russian, Iranian and other congregations from other nations, not forgetting the Jewish Messianic congregations. We all belong together.

However, not only the comparison with other Christian groups, but also an insight into the diversity of church history makes it clear that each of us hides or overemphasizes some aspects of our faith. No-one sees the whole picture, no-one can grasp God.

At first, the foreign may seem threatening, but if we overcome our fears, we can enter a rich land. We "old" Christians then set out to discover the richness of our faith.

Learning from other confessions

The five dimensions of our faith mentioned in Chapter 1 - faith experiences, faith convictions, faith concepts, faith practice and faith consequences - also color our denominational perspective. "Foreign" Christians can open up many new areas for us.

For example, I wondered what use the sign of the cross or crossing oneself could have. I used to contrast the meaning of such gestures with Jesus' words that we should believe with our hearts, or his criticism of the superficial behavior of the scribes, right up to the provocative statements that there are even those who perform miracles in his name but do not know Jesus. On the other hand, I knew that actions can certainly move something inside, especially if the meaning is understood.

The following experience gave me a new approach: I taught at the Orthodox University in Moscow for a few years. The respect of my partners there for my faith and their willingness to make room for it in the community increased with growing mutual trust. For example, they asked me to pray out loud in person, which is not usual for them.

On my last visit, I decided to try out the sign of the cross as a gesture of respect towards them, which I had noticed them making in front of every icon, even on the streets, and which I knew from Catholic church services at home.

My Orthodox friends had explained to me that they cross themselves with three fingers to express and internalize the Trinity of God. First they touch the forehead, in the name of the Father, then the stomach, in the name of the Son, and then the left side of the chest, in the name of the Holy Spirit.

When I crossed myself for the first time in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, I felt a very deep connection with the Crucified and Risen One and this has lasted to this day.

So we gain something when we discover our near and distant brothers and sisters, not in a superficial spiritual flair, but as people, as real counterparts with their rainy and sunny days.

In pairs at the very least: using synergies

There is a very remarkable story in the Old Testament (Genesis 11:1-9): the Tower of Babel. God realizes - I emphasize it: he realizes - that the inhabitants of Babel are of one mind and therefore no-one can prevent them from doing anything. That is why he disrupts this unity by confusing the language.

Unity not only makes us strong, but together we achieve more than the sum of our individual achievements. A much-cited example is a team of oxen: if one ox can pull 300 kilograms, how much can two pull? The mathematician might answer 600 kilograms, but that's not true. If they pull in the same direction, they can pull about 700 kilograms. This principle is also used in construction. If one plank carries 80 kilograms across a stream, then two identical planks laid on top of each other will not only carry 160 kilograms, but probably 200 kilograms or more. This "extra gain" is called synergy, and synergy is considered a principle of creation. This synergy is certainly one reason why Jesus sent his disciples out two by two. Discovering the power of unity is part of the second conversion.

In a seminar where I taught about synergy, I claimed that wherever we are, in the workplace, in the neighborhood, there is always a "second" partner, a synergy partner. One participant came forward and said that he must be the only Christian in his large organization. He didn't know anyone else. I said that I was convinced that God had "hidden" a second one somewhere. At the next meeting he told me the following: At a senior staff conference, he wanted to make a new appointment with a colleague. They looked at their diaries together and what did he discover? She had entered a Christian conference on a weekend that he also wanted to attend.

The Bible contains examples of both in the Old Testament - Moses had his brother Aaron at his side, Joshua had Caleb, but Joseph was alone in Egypt.

But in the New Testament, the disciples and later the first missionaries traveled at least in pairs.

God does not see us as lone warriors and we should not see ourselves as lone warriors, not at work, not in our free time, not in the church.

The body of Christ includes not only the Christians in my congregation, but everyone. I am connected to all Christians worldwide. This also means that my small, modest contribution is complemented by other modest contributions from millions of Christians to the greatest project in the history of the world. I want to be part of it!

The third conversion

In addition to conversion to Jesus Christ and to the church, there is a third conversion, conversion to the world. For God's world encompasses everything, his whole creation and also those who are far from God. (And not all people living away from God are far from God.) "World" must not be confused here with worldly, in the sense of carnal, sinful or the desire to get along without God. The world is meant here as creation.

Like all conversion movements, i.e. steps "away from something, towards something new", conversion to the world is associated with fears that experience so far will be dismissed and that the new could lead me away from the path of faith.

Taking account of the conscience

How far does the freedom given to us in Christ extend when we turn our gaze to the whole of creation? Paul discusses this above all in his first letter to the Corinthians on the basis of the question of whether or not one may eat meat consecrated to idols. "Everything is permitted!" you say. Perhaps, but not everything is therefore helpful. - "Everything is permitted!" But not everything serves the community. Everyone should look out for the benefit of others, not their own. What does that mean in concrete terms? When meat is sold on the market, you don't need to check whether it has been sacrificed to an idol. You can eat everything without hesitation and with a clear conscience, because "the earth and everything that lives on it belongs to the Lord". The same applies if someone who does not believe in Christ invites you to eat and you accept the invitation: You can eat everything that is put in front of you without hesitation and with a clear conscience and do not need to inquire where the meat comes from. However, if someone explicitly says to you:

"This meat was offered as a sacrifice!", then do not eat it, and do so with consideration for the person who drew your attention to it - more precisely, with consideration for their conscience. Note that I am talking about the conscience of others. As far as my own conscience is concerned, I am free. But why should I behave in a way that violates the other person's conscience so that he condemns my freedom? I could participate in the meal with a prayer of thanksgiving. But should I be reproached for something for which I thank God? Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink or whatever - behave in such a way that God is honored and that you are not a hindrance to anyone's faith, neither to Jews nor to gentiles, nor to the church of God. I also act according to this principle: in everything I do, I take everyone into consideration. I am not looking out for my own advantage, but have the many other people in mind, because I want them to be saved.
1 Corinthians 10:23-33

I would like to take up Paul's radical conclusion for us here: At the heart of the third conversion is no longer the question "What is forbidden?", but "What builds up?", but not just myself, but "What builds up the other?", with the difficult challenge of respecting the conscience of the other in the process.

I would not recommend every movie I watch or every book I read to everyone else. I first examine myself to see what effect the movie or book has on me, whether I keep a clear conscience before God, and ultimately whether these media edify me, i.e. whether they are good for my relationship with God. I then check whether others can also be edified by it.

An example: Before I studied psychology, I studied German and History. Later, I hardly turned my attention to literature for over twenty years. Then I picked up an old "classic" again and read Sartre's "Nausea". I was fascinated by the concentrated language, its diction and message of disgust. I understood Sartre's world view, even though I don't share it. And in a sense, reading this book edified me by reinforcing the beauty of our faith in my eyes as a contrast. So for me it's not a problem to read atheistic existentialists, but I would not recommend it in general.

I would like to address another fear regarding the third conversion: the fear of pulling on a foreign yoke shared with unbelievers.

"Do not make common cause with people who do not believe in Christ and therefore pursue different goals from yours. Or do righteousness and lawlessness have anything to do with each other? Do light and darkness have anything in common?" (2 Corinthians 6:14). Luther translates more literally: "Do not pull loads under a foreign yoke with the unbelievers."

This advice from Paul is valid, but it should not be interpreted to mean that Christians should avoid all contact with unbelievers. I understand the verses to mean that in matters of faith, values and life goals, we should not allow ourselves to be harnessed to the same yoke in which the unbeliever takes the lead.

It is important to ask myself to what extent I am unsettled and influenced by someone else's world view and arguments. It is certainly good if we are prepared to questioned or challenged. But we must also not overestimate our resilience, even if we have found spiritual stability as long-standing Christians. Especially when the other person is a "missionary" for a different worldview, when they actively want to draw us into their worldview, we need to ask ourselves how close we want the relationship to be and how steadfast we are in this regard.

I will first discuss the third conversion in more detail in relation to relationships with other people and then illustrate how we should also seek the kingdom of God in our professional and social environment.

My relationship with all people

What image do I see when I hear the word "non-Christian"? Is it a black and white picture? I am on the side of light, the other person is on the side of darkness, I am on the side of life, the other is on the side of death, I am on the side of good, the other is on the side of evil?

In certain situations, such an image can certainly provide an accurate characterization, but as a rule it does not reflect reality. Since every person is first and foremost a creature of God - no one will question that - God has a relationship with every person. God is the reason why every person exists. God knows every person, he loves everyone. Just as he has me permanently before his loving eyes, he also sees all other people. The decisive factor in my life, as in the life of every person, is the fact of God's relationship with me.

The important difference between Christians and non-Christians is that we want to and are able to live a conscious, reconciled relationship with God and that he is very close to us through the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

It is also necessary to recognize that not all non-Christians are the same. Among people from our culture, we meet people who are disappointed in faith, Christianity or the church, or even people who have been hurt by Christians. We meet indifferent people, others who are undecided as to whether God exists or not, or "emergency atheists" who actually regard faith as nonsense but say yes to God in emergencies. There are also magically minded thinkers who believe in horoscopes, lucky charms or fate, bad luck and good fortune. Of course, there are also the anti-authoritarian atheists who associate God with negative authority, or intellectuals who regard faith as stupid or medieval, not forgetting the esoterics, who are strongly experience-oriented. Then there are the followers of other religions.

Years ago, I came across the Angel Scale, which is a good representation of my own path to and with God. At some point, we were all in the minus range, even if we don't necessarily start at -8. Conversion marks the zero hour. As long-time Christians, we are in the plus range, where all the "pluses" should play a role.

- 8) Rejection of everything supernatural: "I only believe what I can see."
- 7) Reckoning with the existence of a "higher being": "After all, somebody must've made all this."
- 6) A blurred picture of Christian faith: "A little morality can't do any harm."
- 5) Interest in Christian faith: "Everyone needs something firm to hold onto in life."
- 4) Understanding the Good News: "No-one has ever told me about it that way."
- 3) More detailed interest: "I would like to know more about that."
- 2) Being touched on a personal level: "This is about me."
- 1) Decision to commit one's life: "I want to become a Christian!"

Conversion / new birth / baptism: "Jesus, come into my life!"
+ 1) Prayer, Bible, fellowship.
+ 2) Discipleship, sanctification, good householding.
+ 3) Loving, serving, passing on faith.
+4ff.) Further spiritual growth...

And the other religions?

After decades of discipleship, not only can one begin a "worldview or interfaith" dialogue journey with every person, certainly that too, but above all I am discovering the adventure of the human being, because everyone is first and foremost a creature of God, beloved and a potentially redeemed.

It is now interesting to see which of the three possibilities that I have come to know as basic attitudes of interreligious dialogue which we adopt in our encounters with people:

- Everyone is right: all people, including us Christians, have limited knowledge. So no-one possesses the whole truth.
- The exclusionary position: Individual non-Christian worldviews are all wrong because they are based on rebellion against God, demonic activity, reliance on works righteousness or personal existential experiences from which people tailor their own worldviews.
- The so-called inclusive position: We find references to the triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in all personal worldviews due to the general blessing of God and his prevenient grace.

Choosing one of these three positions will also shape our everyday relationships with non-Christians. Personally, the third position seems to me to come closest to the truth. Why? Because God's goodness drives us to repentance and because I can therefore assume that this goodness has left tangible traces for every person, regardless of whether they grew up in a Christian culture or not. Long before I became a Christian, I prayed in times of need. Even as a non-Christian, I cared for disabled people, for example. I experienced God's intervention without recognizing it as such. I was also convinced that my life had a purpose. More than we think, everyone has had some kind of experience with God.

We can detect traces of God in every person.
We can simultaneously perceive three things in every person:
- each person's longing for God,
- the damage that sin has caused in and through their lives, and
- the infinite grace that is available for everyone in Jesus Christ and that is already making itself felt.

And so it is important to expect, discover (help) and give impulses for deeper repentance in the life of every person.

The time in which others are reduced to material for conversions is over. We want to build relationships with interest and respect for one another. In vibrant everyday life, we have learned to show ourselves with our strengths and weaknesses, with our victories and defeats. And we can say yes and no in relationships, which builds trust.

A provocative example

A relative married a Taiwanese woman a few years ago, he a Christian, she a Buddhist. We also got to know and appreciate her family. We visited her in her home country for the wedding celebration and experienced the following:

The bride and her family had made a life change a few years ago by turning seriously and deeply to their Buddhist faith. The parents testified that this had saved their marriage. They have learned to give up their possessions and are devoting their time to better understanding their faith.

The unity I could see in them and with their friends from the same Buddhist faith community reminded me a lot of the unity in our churches: They were happy to see each other, hugged each other and were joyful. And when some of them took out their instruments and sang songs, I could hear the same joy and enthusiasm in the songs as in our worship teams. If I had met them on the street, I might have greeted them as presumed fellow brothers and sisters, since I didn't understand the words.

In principle, they experienced and told me what I had also told them when I had found faith, only they had converted to the Buddhist faith. If you look more closely, they talked about doing many things to achieve better karma, whereas I had told them about grace because of Jesus. The good works are not done so that I can be saved, but because I am saved. That is a serious difference. But in principle they were talking about a conversion, the effects of which I noticed in them.

Was this the work of the Holy Spirit outside his church? Like the inclusive position in interfaith dialog? Was it an imitation originating in the Evil One, as the exclusionary position might suggest? Or is there another explanation?

I believe the explanation has to do with our image of man, which, understood biblically, is important to me in this context:

Sponge

The fall of man did not destroy everything, it left a longing for God in man, a deep memory of who man once was as the image of God. This also includes the human ability, through insight, to turn back from a lifestyle heading away from love and then to perceive this as life-changing. The experience of a personal conversion and its life-enhancing effects is not only reserved for us Christians. Others also have this experience.

All five dimensions are important
That is why we need to supplement experiences of faith, as one of the five dimensions of our faith, with the other dimensions. Experiences may support and strengthen our faith, but we should be more cautious about presenting "successes of faith" as evidence.

Our whole life is a testimony to our faith. Thanks to Jesus' redemption, we are able to accept life with its lack, its longing, its searching and its fulfilment. We must be aware that lack, as well as longing, the search for fulfilment and fulfilment itself, are all equally part of life, including that of a Christian. How can we see this?

- Every experience of deficiency can be a reminder of our own imperfection and need for completion and of God's offer of a relationship. It is a renewed invitation to turn to God, who alone can satisfy all needs.
- Every longing to be understood, for love, for meaning, testifies to the life present in us. We are not statues complete in ourselves and already containing everything, but rather we are on the move. Every longing can also increase our hope that God really does have much more in store for us than we have received so far.
- Every search can make us aware that we have an ability to search at all, i.e. to be active, to act, to shape our lives, to make a difference and to achieve something. It can open our eyes not only to the defects, but also to the richness of life, in which there is something to seek.
- Every fulfilment, closeness and unity, reconciliation and understanding, experience of meaning, can make us grateful and allow the desire to give and receive again to grow from the experience of being the recipient of gifts.

Lack, longing, searching and fulfilment are part of our lives and make sense. A success story from a different world of faith such as the one described above therefore does not contradict the Christian faith, but shows that these basic needs are present in every human being.

We must be aware that lack, as well as longing, the search for fulfilment and fulfilment itself, are all equally part of life.

When we talk about ourselves, we testify that we are convinced of something, that we have experienced it with God and that we are praying for it. With some testimonies, we risk that relationships will be challenged, but we trust that the other person will bear the fact that we are Christians, and that one thing will become tangible: "The kingdom of God consists not in words but in power" (1 Corinthians 4:20).

The love of God and his presence in us and his blessing on us is the power in which we trust. This is accompanied by the certainty that we are accepted, in our strengths and weaknesses, by ourselves and above all by God.

This gives us an incredible authority, so that streams of living water flow from us (John 7:38). Others can perceive this water, even if we ourselves do not. We can trust it. We can rely on it in relationships.

The challenge of the third conversion
There is one challenge I would not like to hide. Encounters with non-Christians can be attractive and interesting for us on various levels. We may meet people who are interested in the same things as we are and in which hardly anyone in the church is interested. We may meet people who tackle life in a way that we miss in the church. In such cases, a lack of second conversion can easily lead to us distancing ourselves from the church if we experience more appreciation and inspiration in these contacts with non-Christians and feel more and more at home there.

Nevertheless, we must not avoid this human adventure. It is part of our faith development that we discard images of others as enemies and learn to see this world through God's eyes. Ultimately, it is our decision whether or not we turn away from the church as a result.

Light of the world
One of my colleagues was a member of the parents' council at the local elementary school. Over time, he wondered whether there was any point in him

helping to make all these decisions, for example about break arrangements and room layouts. But once, when he was late for a meeting, he heard from outside the door how the others were making fun of certain people and unduly disparaging them. When he entered the room afterwards, the conversation died down and moved back to a more respectful tone. Apparently, his presence had so far prevented such derailments without him having intentionally outed himself as a Christian.

Jesus says that we are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14), that we carry his light within us and bring it into our relationships. The light of Christ that is in us shines, and we can be sure of this, whether we realize it ourselves or not, because he longs for others. Perhaps this is precisely why the third conversion does not lead us into actionism in the world, but into being there, being light, without having to do anything special.

So the adventure is "Closer. More Beautiful. Further": being present in the world, learning to see this world more and more through God's eyes and discovering (helping to discover) traces of God in every person's life.

The Kingdom of God in all relationships and roles

So far, the third conversion has been described in terms of relationships with individuals. However, all these relationships do not take place in a "vacuum", but in certain roles and structures, in the context of the family, the neighborhood, in leisure time, in social responsibility, in voluntary work and at work. It is important to enter these spaces of action, to allow yourself to be sent into them.

Everywhere there is the kingdom of God, there is space where God's will is done (because that is where he sustains being and life) and where we can actively strive for openness to God's work. We are the city on the hill, we are the salt and the light of the world. Supported by our relationship with God, supported as members of the body of Christ, we take our place in the various spaces of this world.

The fundamental question will be whether our understanding of this world is characterized by a "weak theism" or a "strong theism". In a weak theism, we believe in a Creator God, we believe in redemption through Jesus Christ, but we understand this world as being left to its own devices. Since creation, everything in it has run according to certain laws. Our task is simply to add to God in some way, through evangelization, through prayer,

through ethical behaviour and our practical commitment.

Strong theism, on the other hand, is convinced that everything up to the present day and as long as it exists is held by God and that there is nothing that would be without him and could be understood without him. God's activity is not limited to a specific time or space, but is fundamentally unlimited in space and time. God is not just an addition to the theory and practice of existing "neutral" explanations of the world. In everything we do, not just in "pious activities" such as prayer or reading the Bible, the work of God is assumed and expected.

Basically, this means for everyone, whether engineer, teacher, mail deliverer, lawyer, nurse, salesperson, etc.: I am not just a Christian in a neutral or even unchristian workplace, but my workplace and my actual task there are deeply influenced by God. Recognizing this and helping to shape it is a challenge of the third conversion. This also includes respecting and appreciating the work of God through non-Christian colleagues.

This change of perspective challenges everyone to search for what this means in concrete terms, not only alone, but also together with other Christians with the same jobs and areas of responsibility.

The challenge for the church

This challenge is linked to a call to churches, not only because the third conversion raises questions for the individual, but also requires support and usually a rethink within the congregation.

The increasingly outward orientation of the individual, which should not be prevented under any circumstances, is in danger of causing mistrust in the congregation - among individual members as well as the church leadership - or at least concern about the spiritual development of others. This can set a vicious circle in motion: The concern or mistrust leads to critical queries, which in turn lead to more withdrawal on the part of the congregation member, and so on.

Meeting the challenge in a supportive way first requires an understanding of this development of a long-time Christian and then spaces to send these church members. This may involve an appearance of letting go, but will ultimately open up spaces to make this person and their experiences fruitful for the congregation.

Smaller congregations in particular are pushed to the limits of their capacity and time if they really

want to make use of the different experiences. This is where it pays to work together across congregations, for example to network people who are active in different secular areas.

In one congregation, everyone who works in education was recently invited to a evening service of blessing I think that's good. And I would suggest other such evenings: for people who work in technology, who work in sales, who care for their parents or other relatives. The concern, which is not unfounded, that the individual may become isolated can then lead to genuine supportive fellowship.

The church is here, outside

"Sunday morning - an important appointment. No-one who wants to belong should miss it." This is how Klaus Maser begins his article "A Christian in the Fire Department" in the magazine *Aufatmen*. This special issue of 2011 is titled "Faith on Monday. Church is out here." and corresponds perfectly to the third conversion.

Klaus Maser continues: "I'm not talking about a church service, but about the regular drill of the volunteer fire department. It's difficult when you belong to both worlds, as I do."

He then talks about the challenges of integrating into the fire department - how much beer is he allowed to drink, which songs can he sing along with? To his surprise, he realized that God still wanted him in the fire department. And he began to develop a vision for his life in the fire department. "From then on, firefighting was a service for me ... It's amazing how differently you experience an environment and how creative you become when you have a determined heart and a clear vision. ... I was no less devout - but the others sensed that I had a heart for the fire department."

From then on, he was able to use his faith to help shape what happened in his fire department team. Because church is there too.

resurrection

response to: The Threefold Conversion

Like a map when you are lost, Werner's article on the threefold conversion helps you to locate yourself amidst life's complex experiences. Reorientation is usually a welcome experience in a human life. We could spend hours with the meat of this article, but I want to provide a few minutes of reflection that aims to tease out one thread—knowing God. Werner discusses ideas of trusting God personally, experiencing His Kingdom in the church, and partaking in the great story throughout all of life in a compelling manner. Throughout, I could not stop thinking about an idea Kapic discusses in his book on navigating suffering, the idea of 'hard thoughts about God'(Kelly Kapic, *Embodied Hope* (IVP Academic, 2017), 10.). These hard thoughts are the conclusions internalized about God and his world, perhaps fostered by "painful childhood experiences, heavy-handed preaching, or something else".(Kapic, *Embodied Hope*, 10.) These hard thoughts linger in the shadows of our awareness, driving our interpretations and actions in life. What are the hard thoughts you have held about God, or currently struggle with? Perhaps, "He isn't completely trustworthy", "He really isn't that interested in me", "He demands too much of me", "He can't really love me", "He isn't very fair, or kind, or…"

Regarding the first conversion (to Christ) Werner is clear that our faith and trust is in a great God, not a faith or set of rules. But how often do we struggle to trust that God really is who he says he is, and has done what he says he did, or really wants to care for us? Many times, we have divided hearts and experiences, both believing in a loving God but harboring great doubt that leads to subtle resistance or hesitation. How can I really give my life over to God and His plan? In response to this conundrum Werner calls us to faith, to boldly learning afresh who the true God is that we might trust him more fully. Because of complicated or 'hard thoughts' I think we do well to look to the other conversions for help as they are powerful means of grace in our lives.

Within the second conversion (to the Church) some people with 'hard thoughts' about God withdraw from the body and avoid actions that seem to aggravate their thoughts with conclusions such as, "I knew I could never fit into this oppressive faith". However, if as Werner names, the power of unity becomes present through the church to struggling believers then they might indeed find rest amidst the incomparable collection of imperfect people. People harm, and people heal. A functioning, accepting, loving body can experientially partake in the remedy for 'hard thoughts about God'. We learn in patient and humble community that we are in fact "lovable", or "God may be interested after all". Such community can hear, lament, struggle, accept, worship, love, tend, cherish, and invite, in a patient process together. These are the functions of a healthy church seeking after a God whom we need not have 'hard thoughts' about. How are we able to be a part of this body?

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The third conversion (to the world) speaks of loving the created world and its consistent signposts back towards God. Werner is clear that God made all of creation and therefore its design and purpose is perpetually tangible. Particularly, Werner urges four things. First, to notice how imperfections aren't pleasant and invoke our longing for satisfaction and beauty. Second, people's longing for inclusion, acceptance and love points to good creaturely need. Third, striving and searching demonstrates the rich purpose we were designed to fulfill. Fourth, gifts and fulfillment illuminate the goodness of what God is about and what he has prepared for us. Critically, through these four realities we can learn to accept the world as it is, naming the tensions, and learning what they expose about us, rather than just trying to intellectually wrestle ideas of God to the ground hoping they produce faith. It is the real world after all. God didn't make or put us in a 'spiritual only' world. Life with its longings is interwoven—they make sense. The question is, can our 'hard thoughts' about God that we learn from specific experiences and people still hold in the light of all of life's complexities? Often our thoughts are expanded or challenged if we dare look at life on its holistic terms. Life with others and engaged in new activity teaches us new things. Are we willing to explore it all?

When loving engagement and diverse earthly reality bumps into preconditioned 'hard thoughts about God', the hard thoughts may actually be challenged. Of course, hard thoughts can be ratified if the community or the life lived is bound in myopic or misguided narratives. Will we dare to hold truth next to community, community in the world, and the world against truth and notice how the three fold conversions might intertwine, and experientially and deeply teach us 'good thoughts about God'. Pray with me for a moment, "Father, show us yourself in your words, your people, and your world, that we might have 'good thoughts' about you that enliven us to invite 'good thoughts' in others. Amen."

Pentecost

Ewa Jakubek - psychotherapist in the process of certification. Works in the integration stream. Graduate of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the Collegium Medicum UMK. Completed postgraduate studies in family mediation. Completed a clinical internship at the Psychiatric Hospital in Toruń. Previous experience gained as a volunteer and leader of the Alpha Course for addicts in addiction treatment centres in Czerniewice and Toruń, as well as a volunteer at "Powrót z U" (Kujawsko-Pomorskie Society of Families and Friends of Addicted Children). She is an animator of the Ministry of People Helping Others at the Jesuit church in Toruń. On a daily basis, she works in a hospice, gaining experience in helping people in mourning and struggling with the effects of terminal illnesses. She is a member of the Association of Christian Psychologists.

"Why would you describe yourself as a Christan psychotherapist?"
Questions to Ewa Jakubek (Poland)

How did you end up studying psychology/psychotherapy?

Psychotherapy and psychology were not my first choice. First, I graduated from the Faculty of Health Sciences and worked in a hospice in the coma ward for two years. There was no contact with the people placed there. However, because I am a very relational person by nature, I did not feel at home there. I went to my director with a request to change the ward and I was transferred to work with people suffering from cancer, also in the hospice. Here, I very quickly felt like a fish in the water. I knew that this was my dream job. I cared not only for the bodies of my patients dying of cancer, but also talked a lot with them and their families. I was keenly interested in how to help them in such a critical situation and, apart from listening and exchanging thoughts, I began to draw extraordinary strength from my faith in the fact that in Jesus we have confident access to Heaven and do not have to fear death. Some of my clients started telling me that they got a lot out of talking to me and that I should do psycho-oncological therapy. That's when I started wondering if I should actually go in that direction and decided to do something about it.

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

It was important for me to combine psychotherapeutic knowledge with the resource of faith, so in order to continue developing and then effectively help people, I chose a psychotherapy course organized by the Association of Christian Psychologists. Thanks to this, when I started my practice, more and more people began to contact me for whom common values were important. Some of them said that they had previously had a dilemma whether, as believers, they should use psychotherapy - as if God himself were not able to help them. Sometimes you can still come across such an opinion among some pastors in the church. I am convinced that one does not exclude the other, but they rather complement each other. I experienced this myself during my psychotherapeutic process, in which every trainee in the psychotherapy course must complete at least 100 hours. For me, it was such a revealing, liberating and refreshing experience that although at first these hours seemed to be too many - after they were over, seeing the good fruits, I continued my own psychotherapy.

Why would you call yourself a Christian psychotherapist?

A very good question. I wondered about this myself years ago. Shouldn't science be fundamentally neutral in terms of worldview? There is no Christian

mathematics, history or geography. However, in the context of psychotherapy, the answer to this question was fully provided by my supervisor Anna Ostaszewska and her books: "Integrative psychotherapy in a Christian approach" and "Spiritual aspects in the background of psychotherapy". Today I know that combining the spheres of the psyche and the spirit is not only possible but also necessary in some cases. Some patients themselves ask not to ignore their relationship with God in the psychotherapeutic process. Therefore, when working with such people, I do not avoid this aspect.

What are your actual professional responsibilities? Can you tell us a little about your experience?

I work as a psychotherapist both in a psychotherapy centre and in a private practice. In addition, I provide help to terminally ill people in a hospice, who usually suffer from oncological disease. I am also a lecturer and I conduct classes for students in palliative medicine and rehabilitation. Once a month I lead Christian meetings of people helping others. These include people who are religious psychologists, psychotherapists and educators. Once a month we choose a problematic topic from the

field of psychology and spirituality that we would like to talk about. This is a time and space where we share our deepest dilemmas and try to help each other, searching for answers together.

I see that your life is full of interesting tasks. And you also have a private life. How stressful is this?

For as long as I can remember, I have been multitasking as a child and I am glad that I have managed to avoid monotony in my adult life as well. My loved ones understand this and I have their full support. In addition to my professional work, I am also active in the military as a territorial defense soldier, where I am training as a battlefield medic. I also read and travel a lot. I make sure to be rested every day and not overuse myself. I know that sooner or later this would affect the quality of my work.

And: Do you have any concerns you would like to share with your readers?

Recently, more and more teenagers have been coming to my office with the problem of gender dysphoria. I am saddened by how quickly, without a deeper investigation of the source of this state of affairs, they are given permission to begin the transition process. Meanwhile, I know of cases where, over time, a young person changes their mind after a few years. The current trend in Poland is already reversing in some countries, and in the West, we are increasingly hearing about cases of former clients suing sexologists years later because they were not stopped from making a hasty decision at a young age.

"Christian Anthropology and Psychology and Psychotherapy"
June 6–7, 2025, Warsaw
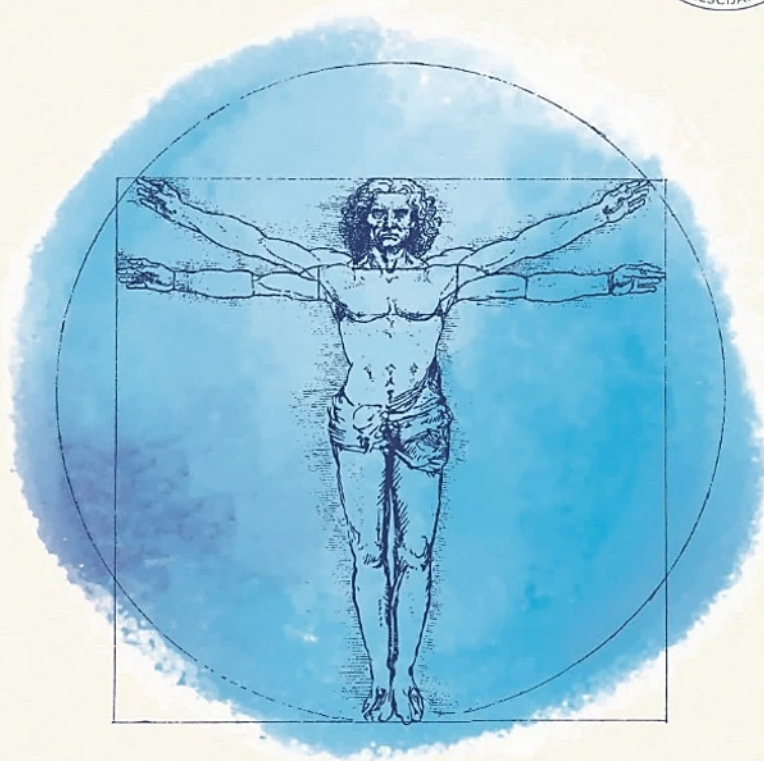
The Program

Agnieszka Wielgus – *Psychological Resources of Patients in the Psychotherapy Process from a Christian Anthropology Perspective*

Wiesława Sotwin – *The Concept of Will as a Relationship Between Mental Processes: From St. Augustine, Through the Founders of Psychology, to Complexity Theory*

Kinga Kwinta-Pietuszko – *The Philosophy of Joseph tischner – Inspirations for Psychotherapy*

Tomasz Gaj OP – *Traces of Christian Anthropology in Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) – An Attempt at Integration*

Roman Solecki – *Logotherapy – I Have a Body, I Have a Mind, but I Am a Spiritual Dimension*

Agata Rusak – *The Role of Psychotherapy in a Therapist's Life – Self-Care in Helping Professions*

Rev. Tomasz Stępień – *The Existence of the Soul and Free Will: Christian Anthropology in Psychotherapy*

Werner May – *A Short Journey into the Land of Christian Anthropology, Psychology, and Psychotherapy*

Ulla Dahlen – *House of the Heart – A Model of Christian Psychotherapy*

Krzysztof Pilarz – *Biblical Anthropological Inspirations in Psychotherapy*

Ewa Kiliszek – *The Role of Identity Throughout Human Life*

Agnieszka Marianowicz-Szczygieł – *"We Have Been Called by an Honorable Name and Royal Law" – Reflections on Christian Identity*

Monika & Marcin Gajda – *"The Sources of Living Water"*

Workshops

- **Iwona Czuma** – *A New Perspective on Disability – Spiritual Disability*

- **Sylwia Kaszuba, Hubert Ćwikliński, Kevin Tańcula** – *The Universal Dimension of Spiritual Disability – A Challenge for Everyone*

- **Anna Lendzion** – *Acceptance of Characterological Values and Personality Development Dimensions in the Prevention of Spiritual Disability*

- **Jacek Racięcki (Droga 12 Kroków Foundation)** – *Finally Alive: The 12 Steps to Wholeness as an Integral Development Method – History, Present, and Future Perspectives*

- **Dorota Wroczyńska OV** – *Flourishing in Your Own Company – How to Feel Good Alone? (Includes Biblical Visualizations and Movement-Based Meditation)*

- **Patrycja Ewa Longawa** – *Integrative ADHD Therapy – How to Recognize and Effectively Support Individuals with ADHD?*

- **Piotr Kuraś** – *Integrative Therapy for Hypersexuality*

- **Ewa Jakubek** – *Accompanying Terminally Ill and Dying Individuals – Psychological and Spiritual Aspects*

- **Tomasz Lipa** – *The Dynamics of Psycho-Spiritual Development: Key Stages and Challenges*

- **Agnieszka Kamińska** – *In the Kingdom of the Superego – From Survival to Abundant Life: An Attempt to Integrate the Christian Perspective with ISTDP*

Agata Rusak

was also one of the speakers. Already 2012 she contributed two articles to the first issue of the eJournal Christian Psychology Around The World, which was dedicated to authors from Poland:

- "Step by step we were lead, an interview with Agata Rusak about the beginnings of the Association of Christian Psychologists (ACP) in Poland." See here: https://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#p=19

- "About a good non-fulfillment." See here: https://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#p=24

Thanks to Agata for giving us a little personal insight into 30 years of SPCh:

30 years of SPCh history is a huge amount, in my life it is the majority of it. I came to Warsaw with one bag, without a place to stay, only with the address of my new job. I decided to make such a crazy move because I found out that a group of people had met who wanted to establish something that we had talked about many times during my studies with Fr. Prof. Romuald Jaworski. I bet then and won the incredible satisfaction with which I am here today. First of all, a group of people, imperfect but eager to seek God in their profession and build their profession based on faith in God. We created an environment of enthusiasts and that is why all these works could be created. And we never regretted wasting time, money, nerves. Today, as dinosaurs, we really know that it was worth it.

Personally, thanks to co-creating SPCh, I was able to develop, learn, work, earn a living by helping patients, training future therapists, and finally supervising. I don't know where I would be or what I would do without the association, but I am deeply grateful to God and to the many people who have shaped me with their presence.

Today, when I look at the profession of a psychotherapist, many reflections awaken in me, some of which I would like to share, inviting you to think about your path of helping others. I called this lecture the occupational health and safety of a therapist, but I do not intend to deal mainly with the or-

ganization of work, I want to treat this part marginally. Because the profession of a psychotherapist is not a technical profession, although it is sometimes taught and presented as such. I want to show a few aspects that today, in a situation in which I have already finished working as a psychotherapist, and therefore from a distance, seem important to me. There may be more questions than clear theses, but let this be an encouragement to meet with yourself.

1. I will start from the foundation, from identity, from the question: who am I? Who are you? Who are you above all, most, most truly? In your individuality, this unique one and only person? In your desires, ideals, values, and not only those declared but those realized every day. In your struggles, wounds and scars, fragility, weaknesses of all kinds, manners, patterns, mechanisms, but also in your strength, resources, talents, energy, creativity and courage. In searching for goodness, truth, beauty. How are you with yourself? Who are you in private meetings, who are you in the work of a psychotherapist or counselor? What does it mean to "be in a role", to have therapeutic power, to be transparent or like a blank sheet of paper, to keep a professional distance? When do we know that we can observe these different principles of conducting therapy without losing being ourselves, also towards the patient. Because who am I for the patient? Who do I want to be? Not who he wants to see, what he wants to get, we often deal with this during supervision. But I ask about my own attitude, about a certain personal decision about who to be towards a person who comes to me for help.

A lot depends on this (conscious or unconscious) attitude, it is really the foundation. If I feel like myself, internally consistent, reconciled with the truth about my life, I do not have to be afraid of another person, a patient, a client, nor do I have to pretend that I am better or wiser than I am. Two people meet. Two people who are on the paths of their own lives. The patient seeks help from me, not power over him or proving to him how wise I am. And I can perhaps offer him this help, this is what I have learned, this is my specialization. In this part I have something to give, such a not very big role. Often one hour in a week, which has 168 hours. And these 167 we live separately, so I do not have to give myself a key meaning in the patient's life,

although in a subjective sense for him, meeting me can be very healing during the therapy. I, on the other hand, have to defend myself against the temptation of messianism, against taking on the role of God, against pride. I have to do my part and leave. Both on a weekly basis and on a trial-wide basis.

2. We come to reflect on what this job is in my life, what it gives me and what I give back to it. When we entered this profession, we probably wondered where this choice came from, what motivated us, how our experiences of various fulfillments and dis-fulfillments contributed to this career path. But it is worth reflecting on an ongoing basis on what place this job specifically has in my life. Why, and also why I do this difficult profession. What does it give me, what needs does it satisfy, what ambitions does it fulfill, what gaps does it cover, what ideals and desires can I fulfill thanks to it. When does helping people fulfill me and what is the reason for this?

We also need to see what this profession requires of me, what do I have to give back, maybe even sacrifice to be an effective psychotherapist? It may turn out (and it often does) that work is my life, that it takes up a lot of space and time, effort and emotions and a large network of relationships. When you add training, readings, supervisions, conferences, it may turn out that from Monday to Sunday I use my energy on the professional sphere. You can settle into this profession. Is that bad? We often tell patients - it depends. But diagnosing yourself in these proportions of privacy and work is really worth it.

We can also add reflection on the division of responsibility in the therapy process, what I am responsible for and what the patient is responsible for. It is not only about activity and passivity during the session, but much more about who cares more about the patient's recovery, i.e. who bears greater responsibility for the effect of the therapy. We know from years of work how big a trap this is, not only for young therapists.

3. The third area to reflect on being a psychotherapist is relational issues. I mean primarily how I cope with being with a patient. Because this relationship is always there. We know that different modalities emphasize the therapeutic relationship in different places, assign it a different role, teach how to use it

in their own ways. Without delving into these differences, I want to ask a question about your relationality.

We know that a certain honesty in assessing your own feelings for individual patients is important, this should of course be an element of supervision. I like someone more, someone less, someone constantly bores or irritates me, someone is the object of my fascination.

But I wanted to ask a more general question - how is relationality woven into the technical and intellectual elements of therapy, into tasks, exercises, mentalization, interpretations, analyses or structure? What is the background and what is the figure in your office? Do you like being in a relationship with a patient or do you feel safer having a set of specific tools at hand? It is obvious that with time and age you can feel much more at ease in this profession and therefore also in the relationship with the patient. This is usually a noticeable process.

There is, however, another aspect of this matter, and it concerns trust, and it seems to me that this is a much more serious matter. When a patient comes to us, we count on them to trust us, to put themselves in our professional hands, to not check, question, or boycott too much. We know that we can help them more if they consider us to be the right person for the job. Of course, this is done on credit, because we are strangers and in our private lives we do not open up to such a level at the first meeting with someone we have just met. Our profession creates a situation in which a person overcomes their natural resistance to confide in their problems at the first meeting, often motivated by us with further interview questions. This can be more or less technical, more or less delicate. Let us ask ourselves how important and valuable it is for us that people confide in us? Does it move me, do I see it as a gift for me? How much do I work to make this value of a relationship based on trust really important for me and the patient.

The question is symmetrical and very necessary, although sometimes confronting and uncomfortable – who do I entrust myself to in my life, is it easy or difficult, how do I allow insight into my life, into my delicate areas? Do I have a mentor, a spiritual companion whom I can trust? And finally – how do I entrust myself to God, His guidance, His Word? In my relationship with the patient, is he really convinced that God is present, who is a Good Father? Ent-

rusting Him not only yourself but also patients and the process of psychotherapy is a safe humility.

4. The last point I wanted to draw attention to concerns occupational hygiene in the strict sense. This is a profession that is really demanding if you approach it with 100% commitment. This work is simply tiring. Over time, it threatens to unhealthy exceeding your own limits of emotional endurance, even intellectual but also physical. You can feel overwhelmed by human dramas or simply someone's way of being in your office, you can ponder or dream someone's stories at night after work, you can feel depressed by emotions that are not yours or your countertransference. You can feel like an empty shell after a day or a week or another year but still remain ready to help.

It is very dangerous when you do not respect your own capacity, your condition, your fragility, your illness, your aging. Neglecting physical, mental, relational, spiritual needs takes away our ability to be optimal in helping, to feel good in helping and to feel good after leaving work. The temptation of many a "helper", especially a Christian one, is precisely the unhealthy understanding of dedication in the service of the suffering. Of course, one can also overdo it and burn out for less spiritual reasons, simply for money. Both human reasons, both dangerous in the long run.

Do I know what in my work tires me the most, what element of it, whether it is technical, some bad organization of working time, circadian rhythm, commuting, or maybe the relationship with the patient or fear of my incompetence. Maybe I do not have enough supervision that would help me unburden myself or maybe I have too many difficult processes accumulated in one day? There can be many versions of my fatigue, hence it is so important to know what is happening in me in order to be able to remedy it.

Of course, the question immediately arises what helps me the most, what methods do I have that work for me? It is important to know both what can help me before a day of work or a specific session, as well as those that will help me recover after classes so that I can return home and be with my loved ones without reacting in these private relationships of my work. Every now and then I make such a visualization of my dream 24 hours. A wonderful time. But the most wonderful thing is that the content of this visualization easily shows me what I currently lack, what I need the most. I sincerely recommend it.

At the end of today's lecture, I want to say that I experience how much this work, this profession has developed me, how much it has sensitized me, how much existential reflection it has given me, how much it has helped me name and re-evaluate, arrange in my head and in my heart. How often I could see myself in the patients as in a mirror. And how much this work encourages gratitude. My favorite Saint Francis of Assisi " because by giving we receive.

book review

It's always a good day when I get a new book, and this is one that I've been waiting for. Available TODAY is the latest psychology offering from InterVarsity Press. The Unbiased Self is written by Dr. Erin Devers, a social psychologist who teaches at Indiana Wesleyan University. Professor Devers has a doctorate from Indiana University, and publishes research primarily in the psychology of education, using the tools of social psychology to improve student learning. In The Unbiased Self, the author's goal is to present an accessible introduction to topics within social psychology relating to the many ways that we are biased in our thinking, and offering suggestions for how we might become less biased. This book is written from an explicitly Christian perspective, and includes Christian-specific applications such as reducing bias in how we love our neighbor and reducing bias in the church.

How well did Dr. Devers succeed at her goal? Should you immediately click on one of the links above and get a copy? My review will be presented in three parts: The Good, The Bad, and The Amiable Professional Disagreements.

The Good

The author does an excellent job of introducing the reader to the idea of cognitive bias (short version: we tend to "spin" our interpretation of events, other people, and ourselves in ways that make the self look good). Social psychologists have spent decades looking into the many ways in which this egocentric tendency influences our lives, and Devers cites great academic sources in support of her claims. One minor thing: these citations are given to us in the form of footnotes, rather than endnotes. Thank you! Here's a tip everyone, if you're going to write a book, don't make me paw through the end pages to make sure that you relied on actual research rather than some dude's blog.

Since these biases are bound up with the desire to maintain high levels of self-esteem, Devers argues that a more secure self-concept will reduce the desire to falsely bolster the self. This claim is in line with research on secure versus fragile self-esteem, and I was also put in mind of certain similar ideas put forward by theologian Kevin Vanhoozer on "status anxiety." If my sense of self is grounded in the reality that I am a beloved child of God, a sinner saved by grace, then that is an identity that does not shift with my daily successes or failures. And the double-truth of this status (Bad: sinner; Good: beloved and saved) should mitigate both unrealistically positive and unrealistically negative self-assessments.

Several of the practical applications that the author presents are solidly backed up by relevant theory and research. Employing the "Thinking Fast vs Thinking Slow" two-system approach, she advocates for ways in which we can bring the power of slow thinking to bear on our automatic reactions, and how we can structure our environments and cultivate habits in such a way that our immediate "Thinking Fast" impulses are oriented toward love of God and of neighbor.

Another excellent practical tip involved urging readers to work against bias by being aware of our similarities. One source of bias is the human tendency to prefer in-groups (whatever group I belong to) over out-groups (any groups that I don't belong to), so noticing the ways in which we share one or more in-groups is a powerful way to use this bias for good rather than evil. For example, I (a White man) might find myself in a conversation with a Black woman, and think that she is Not My People (out-group) because of the social identities that we do not share. But if I find out that this hypothetical person reads Jim Butcher novels, does Judo, follows Jesus, and has strong opinions about Doctor Who, suddenly she is My People (in-group), and we're about to have a really fun conversation. Social psychologists have consistently found that conflict between groups is overcome by finding common ground: an identity that encompasses both of us, a common goal to be pursued, or a common enemy to be defeated. Focusing on what divides us keeps us divided.

The Bad
The topic of practical tips for overcoming bias flows into my criticisms of The Unbiased Self. One weak spot in the book involves Devers' handling of the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The IAT is a cognitive reaction-time measure that allows researchers to examine biases in the ways that we process social information. For example, Nosek and colleagues (2002) used to IAT to show that Black and White participants showed preference for faces within their own racial groups by being (on average) 158 milliseconds faster when those faces were paired with positive words such as "friend" and "love," and when other-race faces were paired with negative words such as "terrible" and "agony." Devers describes a set of studies using the IAT to show that implicit bias is a real thing. However, her practical advice in this section was only that we study IAT research and familiarize ourselves with the idea of implicit bias. There was no suggestion for what to do to counteract one's implicit biases. The IAT is in fact a source of controversy in social psychological circles, as IAT scores show little connection to real-world behavior, and interventions designed to reduce implicit biases only result in changing one's score in the laboratory tasks, not in any actual interpersonal interactions.

In addition to uncritically presenting the IAT, Devers makes the claim that we can make ourselves less biased by becoming more collectivistic. Cross-cultural researchers have a long-standing tradition of placing cultures on a collectivistic-individualistic spectrum, with more-collectivistic cultures emphasizing group membership and harmony, and more-individualistic cultures emphasizing independence and personal choice. Devers points to ways in which our culture (America is very individualistic) makes us biased in favor of self-enhancement, and proposes collectivism as an antidote. Indeed, people from collectivistic cultures do perform better at tasks such as taking others' perspectives. However, Devers completely misses the possibility that collectivism might also introduce its own set of biases. Lin and collea-

gues, for example, found evidence that members of collectivistic cultures are more likely to fall for pseudoscience and misinformation. Collectivism can also incline people toward more ethnocentrism, and greater vulnerability to social influence. So Devers' claim that collectivism equals accuracy is contradicted by research.

One final area of weakness in this project that I will discuss involves Devers' attempt to bring together psychological and Christian ideas on the topic of bias. While she quotes scripture on occasion, there is no substantive engagement with either the theological or biblical-studies scholarly literature on the topics covered in the book. This results in a lopsided presentation that is heavy on social psychology but not strongly Christian. I got the impression that it would be possible to copy and paste about 80% of the manuscript into a general-readership psychology book for secular audiences, with no need for more than cosmetic alterations. Christians have a rich and deep tradition of intellectual inquiry into almost all of the issues that Devers discusses, and had she mined those resources the result would have been much more impressive.

The Amiable Professional Disagreements

Here comes the "inside baseball," so those with only a passing interest in social psychology might want to skip to the end. On the other hand, noting these professional differences might clear up a few things for readers, so it might be worth your time to stick with us. Devers and I are both social psychologists. I did my dissertation on terror management theory, so Devers mentioning her enthusiasm for this theory brought a big smile to my face, and a big part of my enjoyment of her presentation of social-cognition research came from my own familiarity with these lines of inquiry.

What follows are ways in which I respectfully diverge from the author's perspective. I will focus on two such divergences.

First, Devers does not seem to be a fan of personality psychology. Given that my doctorate is actually a combined Social and Personality Psychology PhD, it is not surprising that I am a fan of it. Devers badmouths personality explanations for behavior as "fatalistic" and tied to a belief that traits are genetically locked-in absolutes (p. 113). She denies the validity of over a quarter-century of research on willpower as something that just "doesn't exist" (p. 115). Instead of individual differences being important, Devers presents instead a strong situationist argument: "behavior is determined by the environment" (p. 118). The idea that behaviors are driven by situation, and that personality traits are irrelevant, can be found among some social psychologists (Philip Zimbardo being one example), but this position is a throwback to a debate that we had in the 1970s and got over in the 1980s with the rise of empirically-rigorous and robust approaches such as the Five-Factor Model of Personality. The idea that traits are important for social functioning has also been given a substantial boost by work done in the positive psychology movement on character strengths and virtues. So while Devers is right

to point to the power of the situation, she should not be so quick to dismiss the importance of personality.

Second, while she is not a fan of personality, Devers is a fan of self-esteem. It might surprise some readers, but this is actually a topic of controversy among psychologists. Mainstream psychology was never really on board with the notion that raising self-esteem is a panacea (that was more the message from self-appointed education specialists and parenting gurus), but there are psychologists (Devers being one of them) who hold to the notion that self-esteem is something that humans need. As I mentioned earlier, Devers and I are both enthusiastic about terror management theory, which does hold that self-esteem is a vital part of our reaction to awareness of our mortality. Taylor & Brown famously argued that maintaining a positive self-concept, even when it is unrealistic, is necessary for proper psychological functioning.

However, not all psychologists are pro-self-esteem. Roy Baumeister argued that raising self-esteem does very little to help people, and we should instead look at self-esteem as an outcome rather than a need to be satisfied. Self-determination theorists argue that people whose actual psychological needs (competence, autonomy, relatedness) are met do not bother themselves with the question of how much they like themselves. While I still appreciate terror management theory, the more that I read in the scholarly literature on this topic, the more I find that self-esteem is overrated as a psychological variable. Maybe Christians, instead of grounding our positive self-evaluations on our relationship to God, should focus instead on cultivating a Christlike character and living rightly, and not worry about how much we admire ourselves.

The Bottom Line

This review is longer than I had anticipated, but is actually the short version of my thoughts on this book. The truth is that I could go on for hours about this stuff (as my students well know). In summary, while The Unbiased Self has its share of imperfections, I recommend that you get this book and read it. Devers provides an excellent introduction to the topic of cognitive biases, and many of her practical tips are worth incorporating into our lives. Christians revere the truth, because we revere the Author of truth. We should therefore strive to live truthful lives, fighting against those prideful parts of ourselves that distort our thought processes. Erin Devers' book contains a plethora of tools that readers will find helpful in this task.

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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.