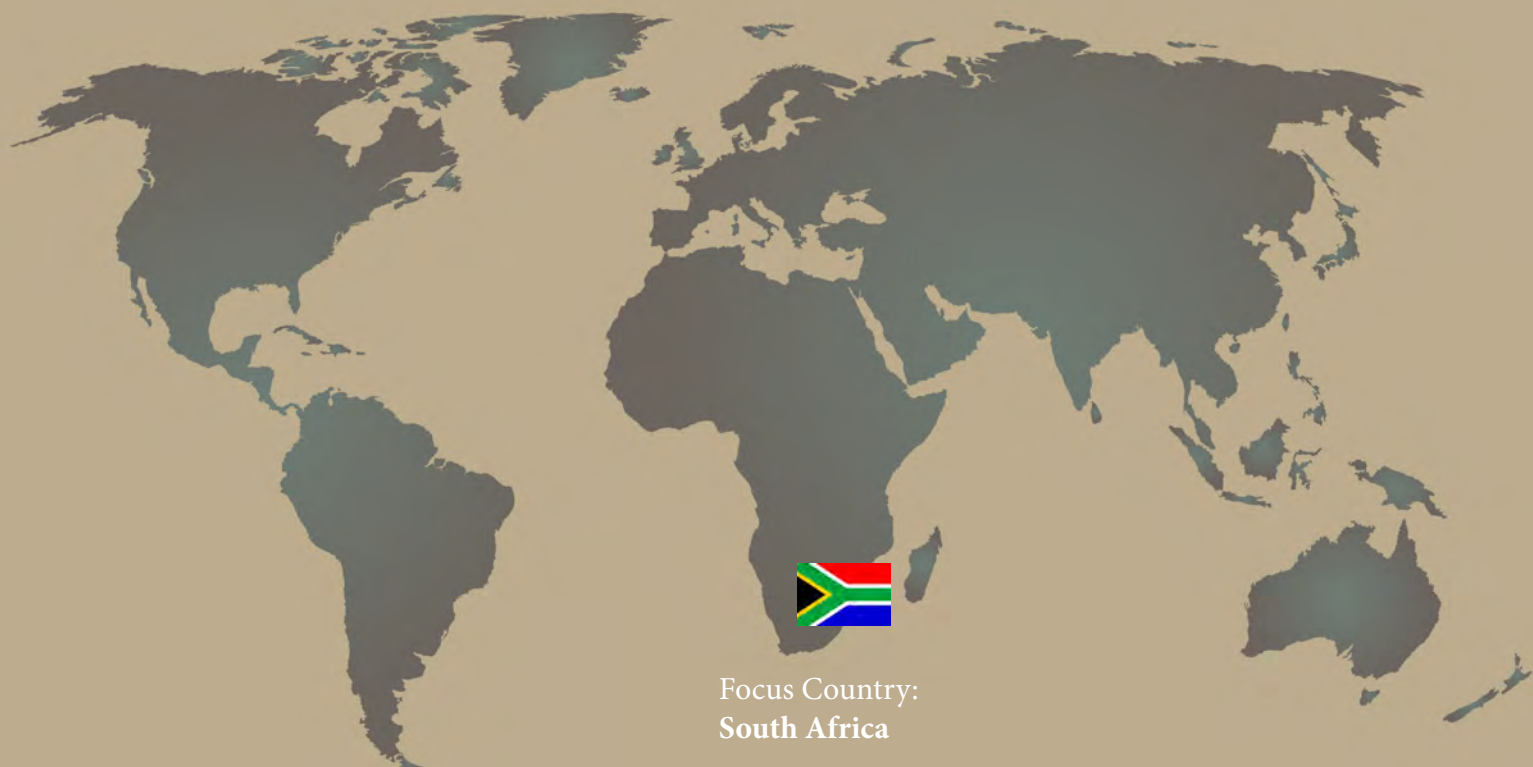


The EMCAPP Journal

Christian Psychology Around The World

Some of the Main Articles

- A Christian's Guide to Psychology
- About Christian Psychology in South Africa
- Christian Community Psychology
- Human Embodiment as Soulfulness. 'Anatomy of the Human Soul' in a Pastoral Anthropology and Theological Aesthetics



Focus Country:
South Africa

Editorial

As I was working on my book “Reif fürs Glück” [= “Ready for Happiness”] a few years ago, I reflected on when I had been truly happy up till then. I didn’t need to reflect very long: the Cape of Good Hope!

Back then – 1991 – I sat on a rock in the surf close to the meeting point of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and asked myself, while my entire previous life passed by before my eyes, how on earth I ever got here.

For me it was a miracle, in my heart I praised God for his love and guidance, for leading a little boy from a small village in Germany to South Africa, where I had to hold some seminars and was now enjoying a few days of leisure.

Several things came together in me at the same time: the astonishment about how God can make fertiliser out of dung (I mean making fruitful life out of a disturbed, insecure one), the satisfaction with the work done, the forces and beauties of nature, and the caring understanding of my host who allowed me to have my way and waited patiently on the beach for certainly more than an hour, yes, even encouraged me to stay longer because he detected what was going on in me.

At that time I was amazed to look back at my life up until then, yet ultimately did not have any idea at all of everything that the next 25 years would bring as signs of God’s love. The thought that I would sometime publish an English-language journal – an e-journal was still unknown at that point too – and then, on top of that, with the Focus Country South Africa: that was completely beyond my horizon.

I must admit that there is one question I cannot keep out of my mind now: What may be the surprises that coming decades will bring with them, surprises of which I have no idea today?

Perhaps this thought has now also formed in the mind of the reader.

But now, first of all, allow yourself to be surprised by this edition of Christian Psychology Around The World.

Thank you for your support in every way and thank you to all who have contributed.

Your

Werner May, Germany



werner.may@ignis.de



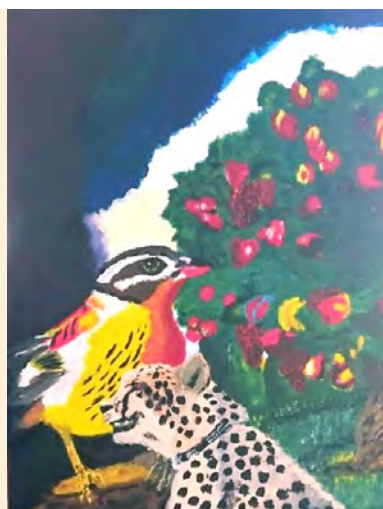
Bongiwe (16) and Nqobile Buthelezi (18) have sent photos of their art works.

They are living in Bedfordview, Johannesburg.

In the first part of the journal the works of Nqobile and his sister Bongiwe reflect their questions and hope.

The photo collages in the second part are from Beate Hill, Kleinmond, Cape Region.

Thank you to all!



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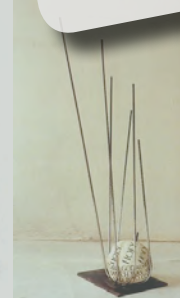
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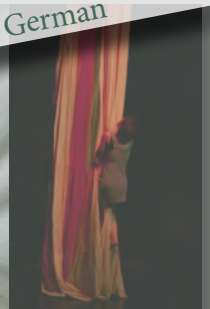
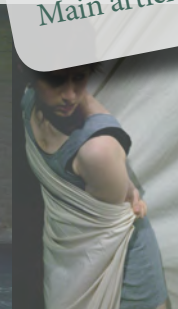
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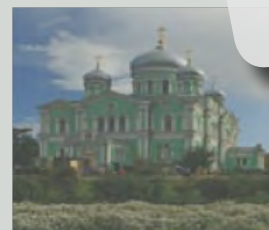
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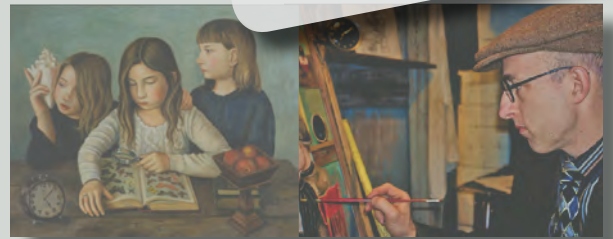
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C. Eric Jones & Eric L. Johnson A Christian's Guide to Psychology¹

Objective evidence and certitude are doubtless very fine ideals to play with, but where on this moonlit and dream-visited planet are they found?

William James

What is Psychology?

Human beings are the pinnacle of God's creation and the psychological study of people is arguably the most complex and fascinating discipline there is. However, different religious and philosophical assumptions seriously affect how we view human beings. Therefore, understanding the field of psychology is no simple task. Perhaps we should begin by defining the field: psychology is the science of the immaterial (invisible) aspect of individual human beings. It is the study of what Christians call the "soul" (the Greek word *psyche* means soul). The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of contemporary psychology, in light of its underlying assumptions, and a roadmap for understanding the field Christianly.

Psychology Before Modern Psychology

Herman Ebbinghaus, a pioneer in memory research, once quipped, "Psychology has a long past, but only a short history." Though the current approach to the field goes back just 150 years, systematic reflection and writing on the nature of human beings have been going on for more than two millennia. The ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, for example, carefully described many aspects of the soul, including its sensing, thinking, feeling, and remembering. Even the Bible makes reference to psychological topics, though less systematically. A few centuries later, great Christian thinkers began devoting their attention to a variety of psychological issues - Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, and Calvin - some more philosophically, some more theologically, and some more practically, but while influenced by ancient

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<http://emcapp.ignis.de/6/#/8>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/4>

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Article by Eric:

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/5/#/32>

Greek and Roman philosophers, their psychological reflections were based on a Christian worldview and influenced most by the Bible.

Modern Psychology

Impressed by the accomplishments of the natural sciences (astronomy, physics, and chemistry) and discouraged by the religious conflicts of the 1600's, Western intellectuals in the 17th and 18th centuries became increasingly convinced

¹ The following article was adapted from Jones, E., & Johnson, E. L. (2012). "Christian psychology," in *Omni-bus IV: The Modern World*. Lancaster, PA: Veritas Press.

that disagreements between people could not be resolved by appeal to Scripture and church teachings, but only by rational argument and empirical evidence gained through well-designed experiments and evaluated with careful measurement and mathematics. They sought a sure, objective foundation for universal knowledge which all people could use to settle intellectual disputes. Signifying this shift, philosophers like Descartes, Locke, and Kant wrote on psychological topics, but they only used philosophical arguments that appeared neutral with respect to religion, since they did not rely explicitly on their Christian beliefs. These thinkers paved the way for a new kind of psychology that was entirely secular.

Three other influences contributed to the birth of what came to be known as modern psychology: research on sensation and the brain, the theory of evolution, and the measurement of mental abilities. In the 1800's natural science methods came to be applied to human life and experience. Investigators began studying the human senses and their limits and how brain damage compromised language and thinking abilities. Darwin's *Origin of the Species* was published in 1859, and to intellectuals eager to leave behind Christian beliefs, it seemed to offer an intellectually satisfying account of human origins based on empirical evidence that required no appeal to the activity of a Creator God. Coming to believe that natural selection favored the fit, in the late 1800's interest grew in individual intellectual abilities, and researchers devised tests and statistics to measure the competitive differences between people. Such influences fit well with the growing allegiance to a purely naturalistic worldview that came to characterize modernism.

The first psychology laboratory was established by Wilhelm Wundt at the University of Leipzig in 1879. This is commonly seen as the birth of modern psychology, a secular version based exclusively on natural science methods which were believed to provide a sure foundation that would yield universal (that is, religiously neutral) psychological knowledge. One of the first Americans to travel to Europe to study this

psychology was William James. He published a definitive review of the field in 1890 called *The Principles of Psychology*, in which he declared that "psychology is a natural science" (Vol. I, p. 183). The American Psychological Association (APA) was formed two years later.

Modern psychology quickly became the only recognized approach for understanding individual human beings in American universities, a dominance that has continued to the present. Reflecting the norms of the natural sciences, the goal of modern psychology is the description, explanation, and prediction of human brain function, behavior, and thought, all from a secular standpoint. Over the past 100 years the field has flourished as investigators have used an ever-expanding set of experimental and statistical techniques to explore ever-expanding areas of human nature, including physiology, neuroscience, sensation and perception, cognition (memory, reasoning, problem-solving, and intelligence), human development, motivation, personality, psychopathology, psychotherapy, and social influence and relationships. More research than you care to read has been published on such diverse topics as color blindness, the importance of bonding relationships in infancy (called attachments), the role of the neurotransmitter serotonin in depression, the formation of long-term memories, the relation between violence in media and aggressive behavior, the best counseling skills, and the dysfunction of group dynamics. At this point the amount of information amassed in a single subdiscipline of the field is enormous, and the value of most of this research is self-evident.

Given the influence of postmodernism of late across the academy, one might expect contemporary psychology to be moving away from its modernist roots. However, the American Psychological Association is in some ways still strengthening them. In its recent blueprint for undergraduate education the APA (2010) makes the case that psychology programs should continue to emphasize empirical research since it considers psychology to be a STEM discipline (STEM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics).

Critical Issues

In spite of its amazing accomplishments in its short history, questions need to be raised about the limitations of modern psychology and its current dominance in the field. Postmodern and cross-cultural psychologists, for example, have questioned the possibility of developing a universal science of human beings that applies to all people for all time in all cultures and criticized most contemporary psychological research for being too westernized and focused on the individual.

But modern psychologists themselves acknowledge the challenges they face. Most of psychology is concerned with intangible aspects of human life that cannot be directly observed and measured. For example, a psychological researcher might collect observable, measurable data from the performance of 100 people on an intelligence test, but the real focus of interest is the people's intelligence, which is intangible. The observable data is necessarily one step removed from the actual intangible object of the research. Contemporary psychology research takes such matters into account mathematically and by replicating previous studies, but this "gap" between the data and the object of psychological interest keeps psychologists from claiming absolute certitude about their findings and the conclusions they can draw from them. Even more problematic, all psychological science involves making some assumptions that cannot be empirically proven (Koch, 1981). For instance, in order to investigate the process of becoming a mature person, one must have some understanding of what a mature human looks like, and different communities disagree about their maturity ideals.

Some contemporary psychologists have also criticized modern psychology's reliance on natural science methods (see Martin, Sugarman, & Thompson, 2003). They point out that some psychological features of human beings, such as human freedom, cannot properly be described just using the methods of the natural sciences. As a result, it is necessary to use human science methods as well, for example, narrative, ethnographic, and phenomenological (Creswell, 2007).

The Christian faith has its own set of concerns about modern psychology. To begin with, while Christians affirm that knowledge can be gained through the scientific method, there is a greater recognition that human finitude and fallenness impose restrictions on our pursuit for knowledge, regardless of our research methods. In fact, the human (or social) sciences are especially susceptible to what has been called the "noetic effects of sin" (that is, the distorting effects of sin on human understanding and research, see Moroney, 1999). Such assumptions should lead Christians to be humble about their own psychological claims, but also to develop a "hermeneutic of suspicion" regarding psychologies based on distorted worldviews, like naturalism, which allow for no reference to God or the supernatural. Religious neutrality is a modern myth (Clouser, 2005). From a Christian standpoint, one cannot exclude God in the study of the images of God. Modern psychology, therefore, dramatically misinterprets the transcendent, God-oriented nature of human beings and views human life solely instrumentally and adaptively. For instance, it has been common in modern psychology to see concepts such as agape-love, altruism, free will, and belief in God treated as illusions and considered to be merely chemical processes in the brain that are a function of social experiences (this is an example of reductionism, especially common among adherents of naturalism, a view that reduces all unique, higher-level human experience and activity to lower-level natural processes that humans have in common with the rest of the natural world).

To understand better the impact of worldview assumptions on one's psychology, let us consider the following interaction from the standpoint of naturalism and Christianity. During a conversation Jesse tells Jacob he doesn't have the money he needs to fix his car and get to work the following week. Jacob tells Jesse he would like to give him the money he needs, and he does not care if Jesse pays it back. Jesse expresses his gratitude repeatedly, takes the money, and they part ways. Believing that all human actions are fundamentally motivated by self-interest, an adherent of naturalism will interpret the inter-

action accordingly, for example, Jacob's action was an attempt to hold power over Jesse for a future favor, whereas Jesse's response was merely a kind of ingratiation, performed in the hope of gaining more resources from Jacob in the future. Because of the Christian doctrine of sin, a Christian might agree that motives of crass self-interest could be at work. However, believing also that humans are created in God's image, there is also the possibility that this interaction manifested human virtue, where Jacob's action was a sincere attempt to give sacrificially to another and Jesse's response was a grateful reaction to Jacob's altruism. Such interpretive differences will decidedly affect the kind of empirical investigation the respective psychologists conduct and what they look for.

Modern psychology has yielded great gains in our understanding of many aspects of human nature, but we know now that the quest for a sure foundation for universal human knowledge that led to the development of modern psychology was misguided. „Foundationalism has failed, but [this] does not lead to the opposite errors of relativism or skepticism. We must begin with faith.“ (MacIntyre, 1990, p. 42)

A Christian Response

All human knowledge is founded on basic beliefs that cannot be proven to the satisfaction of skeptics (Plantinga, 1983). Likewise, all psychological knowledge entails unproven assumptions and begins with faith. The Dutch theologian and prime minister Abraham Kuyper (1898) argued that the enlightening effects of regeneration on Christians ought to lead to two kinds of human science: one based on naturalism, that considers the way humans are now to be normal, and the other based on Christianity, that considers the way humans are now to be tragically compromised by human sin and alienation from God, and therefore needing regeneration.

How would a distinctly Christian psychology differ from modern psychology? It would flow from a Christian anthropology (model of humanity): all human beings are created in the image of God but they currently exist in a fallen condition, alienated from their Creator,

and their psychological capacities are accordingly compromised. However, through faith in Christ, humans become reconciled to their Creator, a triune God who has begun a partial restoration of their psychological capacities that is realized in Christian community and will be perfected in the age to come. The Christian Scriptures give us some divinely inspired psychological knowledge (but not all the psychological knowledge God has), so the Bible has a primary role to play in a Christian psychology, along with the work of Christian thinkers and ministers over the centuries.

The goal for the Christian psychologist is to think about humans like God does. Because God has not revealed everything he knows about humans in the Bible, Christian psychologists will need to do their own research and they will also want to learn all that they can from modern psychology. For example, they will use all valid methods to study human beings, and natural science methods have proven their worth. However, their knowledge of, consent to, and love-relationship with God will provide the ultimate context for their use of all psychological methods and practices (Coe & Hall, 2010). „Recognizing God is required for the most comprehensive psychology“ (Johnson, 1997, p. 16). In addition, believing that all humans are made in God's image and confident that God's creation grace is the source of all good in culture and science, Christians should expect that modern psychologists will discover plenty of psychological knowledge and contribute to many worthwhile activities (e.g., the mental health system). But their faith also leads them to expect that there will be distortions in their psychology, the closer the psychological topic is to the central issues of human life (Brunner, 1946). To site just one example, belief in God (or least the divine) is ubiquitous among humans, yet psychology of religion is marginalized in modern psychology, showing up in no introduction to psychology textbooks.

Christians in psychology therefore must work towards a psychology that is thoroughly Christian.

This means, first, creatively engaging in psycho-

logical theory-building that is foundationally and explicitly Christian. Not only will this honor God, but it will give us a more accurate and complete picture of human beings. For instance, classic social psychology studies on conformity and obedience have frequently focused on how these features of social life can lead to negative consequences such as aggression, also a concern to Christians. However, with Christian assumptions of human nature Christians may more readily recognize the positive role conformity and obedience can play in establishing and maintaining order in culture. Some Christian psychology theory-building has begun regarding the emotions (Elliott, 2006; Roberts, 2008), personality (Spiedell, 2002), Christian postformal cognitive development (Johnson, 1996), happiness (Charry, 2010), and Søren Kierkegaard's psychology (Evans, 1990).

Second, this means doing empirical research that is grounded in the Christian faith, for example, studying the attribution beliefs of Christians, indwelling sin, stages of spiritual development, the identity and self-representations (like old self/new self) of Christians, true shame and guilt, Christian perfectionism, same-sex attraction and gender disorders, and so on, all from a Christian perspective. So far Christian psychologists have begun to investigate just a few psychological topics like beliefs about sin (Watson, Morris, Loy, Hamrick, & Grizzle, 2007), beliefs about grace (Sisemore, et al, 2010; Watson, et al, 2010), Christian wisdom (Kwon, 2009), distinctly Christian therapy (Aten, Hook, Johnson, & Worthington, 2011), Christian postformal cognitive development (Johnson, 1998), and Christian self-representation (Johnson & Kim, unpublished manuscript).

Finally, this means developing distinctly Christian models of counseling and psychotherapy. More work has probably been done by Christians in this area of psychology than any. For example, there are models of transformational psychology (Coe & Hall, 2010), Catholic psychotherapy (Dilsaver, 2009; Zeiders, 2004), Orthodox psychotherapy (Chrysostomos, 2007), Reformed counseling and psychotherapy (Johnson, 2007), and many others.

Translation of Modern Psychology Truth into a Christian Psychology

Yet Christian psychology should not and need not do everything itself. So it is very interested in the work of modern psychology. Wherever modern psychologists have done good work (that is, work that is not very distorted by secularism), Christians should receive it with gratitude (1Tim. 4:4–6). As Kuyper (1898) has said, “What has been well done by one need not be done again by you” (p. 159). This probably applies to most of modern psychology.

At the same time, in another sense, what is left out is everything (the triune God and his salvation and a Christian anthropology)! So, just how much a modern, secular perspective is distorting the psychological topic in a text or lecture will have to be carefully evaluated every time. This requires reading, critiquing, and wrestling with secular theories, research, and clinical practice that may on the surface seem reasonable and appropriate, but analyzed in the light of the Christian faith are found to fall short of God's comprehensive understanding. Because of modern psychology's commitment to study empirical reality rigorously, combined with its secular orientation, there will generally be fewer sins of commission than of omission. That is, from a Christian standpoint, the primary problem of modern psychology is what is left out, because modern psychologists do not share the pretheoretical assumptions necessary to recognize features of human beings that Christians do, like the image of God, sin, and the activity of God.

To oversimplify, the Christian student of psychology will sometimes have to “translate” the understandings of modern psychology into a Christian psychology language-system. This requires a good understanding of Christian psychology, the modern psychology concept of interest, and practice in such translation work. Concepts that are little distorted (like “neuron”) should be simply brought over into a Christian psychology; whereas concepts that are antithetical to a Christian psychology should be rejected (like Maslow's notion of “self-actualization”). Most modern psychology understandings

will be somewhere in between, requiring some Christian modification before being brought in. Consider, for example, the concept of self-esteem. A Christian orientation will vary greatly from a modern approach, since Christians believe that value is ultimately established by God (and not the self). Nonetheless, there are many findings in the modern self-esteem literature that are helpful. Modern theorists, for example, have postulated that self-esteem is related to interpersonal dynamics. Such an insight is thoroughly compatible with Christian ideas of relationship, community, and interdependence.

Finally, a Christian psychology should also develop a literature that is constructively critical of the distortions evident in modern psychology (as well as in other psychologies, e.g., Buddhist psychology). Exemplary work with this agenda includes Vitz's critique of Freud (1988) and of humanism in personality and clinical psychology (1994), Adams' critique of Freudian and humanistic therapy, and deterministic psychiatry (1970), and various analyses of therapeutic and personality models (Jones & Butman, 1991; Roberts, 1994; Browning & Cooper, 2004).

Christian psychology might seem to be out of step with contemporary psychology. However, when the discussion broadens to include philosophy of science, it becomes apparent that modern psychology is out of step, for contemporary philosophy of science by and large rejected modernist assumptions decades ago (Ratzsch, 1986). Indeed, Christian psychology is simply taking its cue from Christian philosophy (see Plantinga, 2000), which has been paving the way for a renewal of radical Christian scholarship in all the disciplines for some time now.

Working with Modern Psychologists

Nonetheless, Christians should not hesitate to work with modern psychologists wherever they can. This will be easy in areas of psychology where worldview assumptions make little difference in understanding human nature (e.g., neuropsychology, animal learning, and basic psychological structures, like cognitive and emotion systems). Moreover, all members of a culture ought to participate in its university and

mental health systems. So Christians are free to wisely consider how and where they might participate as Christian minorities in fields that are currently dominated by a modern majority.

The Christians who have done the best at such participation tend to call themselves "integrationists," since they believe that Christians should integrate their faith with contemporary psychology. Though we are more critical of the secular worldview influences in contemporary psychology, we greatly appreciate their work. In some cases they have contributed to the shape of contemporary psychology, using modern rules with a Christian agenda (e.g., Everett Worthington on forgiveness and Robert Emmons on gratitude). Moreover, significant changes have been occurring in contemporary psychology over the past two decades that should excite all Christians (e.g., a growing openness to generic spirituality and religion and positive psychology's investigations of human virtue).

A Pluralist Set of Psychologies

In the future it seems likely that pluralist, democratic cultures like ours, helped by the post-modern critique of modernism, will no longer view the human sciences as universalizing disciplines based on a single worldview. Instead, it will be widely acknowledged that human sciences like psychology require that their scientists utilize their worldview assumptions in their work, so they should make explicit those assumptions. This is necessarily the case, because human beings are socioculturally-constituted, so, contrary to the "neutral" modernist agenda, it is impossible to remove one's worldview assumptions from one's human science work and duplicitous to try. This will result in a pluralist set of psychologies (modern, feminist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and so on), agreeing where they can (in many areas of psychology, see above), but articulating different approaches in those areas of psychology that are more worldview-dependent (e.g., personality, psychopathology, therapy, and social psychology).

This is not as controversial as it sounds, since even now modern psychology is not as unified as is commonly supposed. The field is com-

posed of many different subdisciplines, some of which vary tremendously in their orientation and some of their assumptions (e.g., neuropsychology, cognitive psychology, and clinical psychology). We are only pointing out that that worldview differences also affect one's view of human beings, so, if they are taken seriously, it will necessarily result in a single discipline that has a common core in some areas, but multiple psychologies in other areas, each based on a different worldview.

Conclusion

Contemporary psychology constitutes a vast, complex, and remarkable human science. However, it is currently dominated by a modern, secular orientation. Christian students of contemporary psychology will benefit from understanding well their Christian faith and their own worldview assumptions, particularly a Christian understanding of human beings and salvation in Christ. There is tremendous value in contemporary psychology, but Christians need to be wary of its secular distortions. As students move through their study of psychology, it is hoped that they will develop a sophisticated Christian understanding of the field and that some will feel called to contribute to a distinctly Christian version. While William James despaired of certainty on this planet, Christians can more confidently base their psychological knowledge and practice on the divine revelation found in Scripture, acknowledge the limits of human knowledge, and find the greatest kind of certitude and happiness through faith in Christ.

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Pablo López Silva (Chile)

Comment to “A Christian’s Guide to Psychology”

Why a Christian Psychology?

In his article, Eric Johnson thoughtfully comments on a number of issues surrounding the debate about the empirical, methodological, and conceptual foundations of the Christian psychology project. These problems can be grouped into two classes: On one side, relational problems or those concerning the issue about how to think about the empirical and theoretical corpus that contemporary – secular – psychology has built up over the years from a Christian point of view. On the other side, Eric’s examination focuses on internal problems, namely, those exclusively arising from the Christian project itself. An example of this class is the problem concerning the theological choices that Christian psychologists might need to make in developing the project and setting up a certain view of the person in order to develop further insights on it. Systematic work on these issues is extremely important as it allows Christian psychologists – as well as philosophers and social scientists – to guide clinical and research decisions in different contexts (professional practice, pastoral care, academia, and so on).

The discussion of both relational and internal problems relates to the key issue about what a Christian psychology project is and how this project should be developed. Eric Johnson has done a great job clarifying the what and the how of the Christian psychology project, a good example of this is his compilation ‘Psychology & Christianity: Five views’. Here I shall focus on a rather distinct – but still related – question, namely, why do we need a Christian psychology project? In fact, do we need a Christian psychology project at all? I think we do; let me here briefly comment on two of the many reasons I think so, one spiritual and one practical.



Pablo López-Silva, PhD,
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Chile

Certainly, modern physics and chemistry have been gradually walking away from the Christian worldview that motivated some of their most important discoveries. The example of contemporary biology and its emphasis on evolution is even clearer. In all these cases we see the development of a strong process of secularization from which psychology has not escaped. In this context the question about why a Christian psychology becomes clearer. Over the years, empirical and social sciences have been hijacked by those denying the existence of a loving God that designed and created the universe and the creatures that inhabit it. Little by little, such an ideology has been monopolizing and controlling the way in which the knowledge of God’s creation is eventually reached and taught. In this way, secularized science has tried to detach our knowledge of reality from the reality’s own creator, God, and this has many spiritual and practical consequence.

The first reason why need a Christian psychology is because we need to reconnect the domain of the human mind with its creator and, by doing so, to show people how everything, even our own minds, has a purpose in God. As such, this is a spiritual – or even evangelistic - reason, as it will allow Christian to show how the love of God permeates even the design of our minds and society. Study and doing research on

different disciplines is, basically, understanding God's creation and therefore, scientific research can be a way in which people can come to know to the saviour of their lives.

The second reason why we need a Christian psychology is rather practical. Any attempt to understanding reality and human mind without including their creator in the equation is an incomplete enterprise. In this sense, the Christian psychology project is called to complete and improve our understanding of human mind. By detaching the human mind from God, all

the transcendence of human existence is denied. Christian psychology do not only develop a more complete approach to human existence, but also, helps to re-establishes the connection between mind and God in a way that not many disciplines might be able to do. In this sense, when contrasted with secular psychology, Christian psychology is also able to offer a more complete – and therefore, better – understanding of the mind.

Why do we have a bilingual journal?

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

There is a common desire for the movement, but highly "multi-lingual" ideas of its realization!

Therefore, a bilingual journal is just a small reference to our multilingual voices to remind us:

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

In South Africa exist eleven official national languages. Not all of them are used for scientific contributions. Here in our issue 8 we can give only a small impression of this diversity.

Nicolene Joubert

Introduction to the South African Articles

It is a privilege for me to write the introduction to the South African articles, as I treasure the history of South Africa, full of struggles, courage and victories, deeply. The country is still faced with many socio-economic and political challenges that could compromise mental and spiritual wellbeing. I am therefore grateful for the rich contribution from the Christian community (as displayed in the articles) in order to find resolutions and render mental health services on all levels.

South Africa is known as the Rainbow Nation. This term was earned during and after a peaceful transition from a white dominated regime to democracy and full independence. The Rainbow serves as a metaphor for the rich diversity of cultural, language, religious, ethnic and race groups that mark the South African society. The diversity further entails unique histories, identities and forms of self-expression. The narratives of the different groups each hold their own moments of sorrow, loss, conflict, sin, struggle, redemption and glory.

The writers of the South African articles published in this journal open a window for readers to view and taste the richness of this diversity. The articles further serve to provide a slice of the Christian psychological and Christian pastoral research and practice to readers. The aim is to increase readers' understanding of how mental and spiritual health is approached by diverse Christian groups in South Africa. Furthermore, we trust that readers would be enriched and intrigued by the country's diversity on the one hand, and the unity in Christ on the other hand.

The articles further represent different focus areas. Some focus more on pastoral care, such as the article written by Professor Daniël Louw. In his first article he explores the interaction between Psychology and pastoral care and how the

Nicolene Joubert
(South Africa)

psychologist,
Founder and
head of the In-
stitute of Chri-
stian Psychology
(ICP) near by

Johannesburg, Counselling Psychologist in private practice, Ph.D. in Psychology from Northwest University ZA. Specialized in trauma therapy and the development of dissociative identity disorder. Prof Joubert is the founder and chairperson of the South African Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation.



term “soul” in pastoral care is confused with the term “psyche” in Psychology. Professor Louw postulates a potential solution for the conflict between an anthropology that is based in the doctrine of sin (Christian reformed tradition) and the over-optimistic anthropological stance adopted by Psychology, which claims that every person has internal psychic potential that could be actualized. Instead, he proposes a relational anthropology for pastoral care.

Other articles stem from research projects with the aim to gather important information with regards to the practice of Christian Psychology. Ms Ninky Shuenyane points out in her article how the church in South Africa perceives counselling and Psychology. She highlights that the church is a healing community but often lacks the necessary knowledge and skills to address the psychological issues of their congregation. Ms Dorcas Khomari's research project indicates her findings with regards to a Biblically based marriage enrichment programme that she has developed and implemented in a congregation.

Some of the articles are based in both theoretical developments and practical applications, such as the article on Christian Community Psychology. In this article the theoretical foundation for Community Psychology is discussed with an emphasis on how it fits in with our Christian faith. Also included in this article is the work and report of a Christian Community Psychology student that implemented these principles in a community in Namibia. The feedback received from this intervention indicates the need for and impact of Christian Community Psychology.

Applied Christian Psychology is also illustrated in the article written by Ms Wendy Greyvensteijn. Her programme involves adolescence and indicates how this vulnerable stage of development could be supported by a Christian psychological intervention. Ms Bèné Katabua further emphasised the importance of Christian based intervention for children and adolescence in her article about Missionary Kids. It is essential that we take note of the needs and issues of children in their different developmental phases and plan suitable Biblically based interventions to help these kids and their families.

The article written by Keith Michael, André and Annette de la Porte and Marieke Willers provide readers with insight into various non-profit organisations and ministries focusing on Chri-

stian pastoral care and counselling. These organisations display the depth of involvement and seriousness about promoting Christian mental health programmes and building up networks of support.

Lastly, I draw your attention to an article that highlights how every Christian, no matter what age group, could draw people to Christ on a daily basis. This is the article on Blessings, written by Willem Joubert. This article explores the Scriptural meaning of 'blessing' and how it could be applied by every person every day. The practical steps outlined in this article provide an easy to grasp and implement process to the readers. It further challenges all of us to be obedient to God's word and to start to bless people around us.

In conclusion, I am thrilled, and I hope you would be too, by the variety of topics and depth of dedication displayed by all these authors from diverse backgrounds, contributing to the field of Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy in the South African context.

I pray that you will not only enjoy reading these articles but benefit on a theoretical, spiritual and practical level. May you be enriched and touched by the ideas, experiences and dedication we have shared.

Agnes May (Germany)

Interview with Nicolene Joubert, founder and head of the Institute of Christian Psychology in South Africa since 2001

Prof dr Nicolene Joubert is a registered Counselling Psychologist in private practice as well as a teacher, who obtained her Master's degree from UNISA and later went on to obtain her Ph.D in Psychology from Northwest University. Prof dr Joubert is a well-known speaker on the effects of trauma and the development of Dissociative Identity Disorder, and on the impact of worldview/spirituality in a therapeutic process (i.e. at the 7th World Congress for Psychotherapy in Durban, South Africa, in August 2014). She is the President of the Association of Christian Counsellors in South Africa (ACC) and a lifelong honorary member of The Red Cross Society and the Women's Federation. She is also a member of organizations such as the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA), and the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD).

In 2001 she founded the Institute of Christian Psychology, a site of delivery of Die Afrikaanse Protestantse Akademie. The Institute aims to contribute post-matric education in the field of Christian Psychology and

offers an accredited three-year Bachelor degree and a four year Bachelor of Psychology degree as well as numerous short courses that include Christian Psychology and Christian Counselling subjects.

A. May: Nicolene, you have been working as a psychologist since 1983, being trained at a Christian and at a regular state university. Do you remember a certain moment, certain circumstances or questions, when the idea of a Christian psychology came to your mind for the first time? And can you describe a little bit what this "idea" was about?

N. Joubert: I had a few serious moments of contemplating the inclusion of Christian faith in psychotherapy (or lack thereof) during my training and as a novice psychotherapist. Thus, my thinking developed over a period of time.

The first time that I questioned the absence of any reference to religion or Christian beliefs in a constructive way (I studied at a Christian University for my Bachelor degree) was during

my first year psychology lectures. The emphasis was on the rejection of demonization as a cause of pathology, labelling it as primitive thinking. My thought was "Is the Bible really wrong about this?"



One of the first BA degree graduate groups (2005)

During my Masters degree training many of my lecturers openly belittled Christian faith, referring to it as hogwash, especially as an approach to counselling. I was offended by this but lacked knowledge and scientific evidence to

argue against their statements. However, their remarks stuck with me and later on when I started to practice I realized that I could not align myself with such a view point. My own journey with Jesus Christ led me to a profound experience and understanding of His Grace and I realized it would be impossible for me to practice if I do not acknowledge the calling of Christ in my work.

My thought and decision at this stage was to do a PhD research on the topic of the integration of Christian faith and psychotherapy to get a scientifically based voice that I could use to argue the importance of faith in a therapeutic process.

My development with regards to investigating the role of faith in a psychotherapeutic process was further impelled by early experiences with clients that wanted to talk about. Some of these questions were directed at my faith position and I shared my views carefully and cautiously. I soon realized that the deeper reason for these questions was existential in nature. These clients were trying to find meaning in life and meaning in suffering.

My increased awareness of clients' need for more meaningful process and deeper change, instead of only alleviating symptoms, prompted me to investigate the interface between Christian faith and psychotherapy.

The recent development in the field of psychology with regards to a holistic approach and the

inclusion of spirituality in psychotherapy supports the notion that there are potential healing qualities embedded in a person's spirituality.

I find this extremely encouraging and inspiring for my professional vision and mission to establish legitimate and valid integrative Christian faith approaches to psychotherapeutic processes.

A. May: Have you had particular persons from whom you could learn how to develop and/or practice a Christian psychology? What about the process of writing your PhD thesis?



Ms Dorcas Khomari and Prof Nicolene Joubert (2006), Ms Khomari received a certificate for Post-Graduate studies in Christian Psychology from the Institute of Christian Psychology.

Ms Khomari is a lecturer at MEDUNSA and an Advisory Board Member of the Institute of Christian Psychology.

N. Joubert: My PhD journey was challenged right from the start as I battled to find a university and promoter prepared to accept my idea for research. Finally, with the help of a theologian, the Potchefstroom University accepted me for a PhD in Psychology for Higher Education, in

South Africa. This university is now the North West University and no longer Christian. The theologian, Prof Cassie Venter, was a great help and support during the whole process of submitting a proposal, executing the empirical research and to write the PhD thesis. Prof Venter offered to act as co-promotor to ensure that the theological aspects of the thesis were sound.

My promotor from the Department of Psychology, Prof Chris Venter, did not know anything about the integration of Christian faith and psychology but was committed to oversee my

research and ensure that it was scientifically sound. I am still to this day extremely thankful to my two promoters for their patience and thorough work.

As the research of literature on integration was entirely my responsibility and nothing existed in South Africa along these lines, I turned to America and learned a great deal from the pioneers in this field. Worth mentioning is Dr Larry Crabb (I attended one of his lectures in 1988 and bought his publications at the time), Dr Siang-Yang Tan (I visited him at Fuller Theological Seminary and received some of his early papers on integration) and a visit to Westminster Theological Seminary where I learnt more about the Nouthetic approach of Jay E. Adams. I pursued the work of many pioneers and researchers in this field during the time that I worked on my PhD, which was mainly in the late eighties till middle nineties. I also attended the American Association of Christian Counsellors' conference in 1988 and found like-minded people in that group. All this enabled me to develop a Biblically based systemic therapy program for a congregation, which I implemented for the empirical part of my research.

The work of Prof Eric Johnson from the USA, further encouraged and inspired the development of an academic degree containing Christian Psychology modules that teach students how to relate Christian faith, psychology and psychotherapy. One specific article "Christ, The Lord of Psychology" published in 1997 in the Journal of Psychology and Theology is worth mentioning as it never has lost its relevance. I have prescribed this article to my first year students since 2001 to help them understand that as Christians, we pursue the knowledge and practice of psychology under the Lordship of Christ.

A. May: Christian psychology is informed by the bible and by psychological knowledge. Working for many years as a Christian psychologist, can you share one or two main perspectives from the bible that have become important to you as a professional psychologist? And can you do the same regarding psychological knowledge?

N. Joubert: The first Biblical perspective that struck me as of critical importance and spurred the decision to practice explicitly from a Biblically based approach was the Grace of God. My realization of the immense depth of God's grace, completely unfathomable, embodied in the ultimate expression of His Love for us, the sacrifice of His Son, changed my personal and professional life forever. I seize the power of His grace for every client I walk with, which I entrust to God's redeeming love. My hope is in God's grace when I pray for recovery, freedom, and healing for clients. I trust the omnipotence of God's Love more than anything else.

1 John 4:8

"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."



ICP staff 2007

The second principle that steers my Christian Psychology praxis is that Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega of our total existence, in this world and the world to come and without Him we are lost.

Revelation 22: 12 – 14: "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the

gates into the city.

He is the only path to eternal life as He states in John 14: 16: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

The psychological perspective that I have found extremely applicable and useful is the systemic approach. My psychological framework for my practice and teaching is systemic as it could explain interconnections and interdependence well across individuals and groups.

The psychodynamic approach, which acknowledges hidden motives and desires comprised in the unconscious mind, is another useful framework when it comes to dealing with intrapsychic processes, past events and trauma.

A. May: Can you probably name some "main insights", which widened your understanding on your way as a Christian psychologist?

N. Joubert: For me, there are three main insights.

1. Christ is truly the Lord of Psychology. One of my early insights stems from engaging clients with issues and questions that moved far beyond the psychological domain and relate strongly to their spiritual needs and issues. Psychological knowledge and answers could only partly address these questions. Addressing spiritual needs explicitly taught me to deeply depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to respect and honour the healing quality embedded in our relationship with God. Further to this, growing spiritually in one's profession requires brutal honesty about your own inner desires and allow the

Holy Spirit to search your heart and mind for weaknesses and hidden motivations.

2. Mental disorders are very complex and God is a sovereign God. Over the years the complexity of mental disorders has become more apparent and I realized that even when equipped with psychological knowledge, faith and years of experience, attempts to "help" a distressed person could fail. I am convinced that insight in and acknowledgment of our own limitations in conjunction with a true and deep acceptance of God's sovereignty pose one of the most important but difficult growth points for a Christian psychologist.



Ms Helen Gumbi and Prof Nicolene Joubert (2011)
Ms Gumbi is a teacher at a school in Soshanguve, a large town north of Pretoria, and a current B Psych degree internship student.

3. Determining the extent of my responsibility. Understanding where my responsibility for the psychological and spiritual growth of another person ends, often challenged my decisions about the termination of therapy. I perceive therapeutic success as more than

the alleviation of symptoms, which causes a reluctance to terminate therapy if I am not convinced a client could take responsibility for spiritual growth. The lesson I have learned is that over-responsibility places unnecessary burdens on me and robs the client of the opportunity to learn Godly designed and important lessons. I have learned that I am not responsible for clients' decisions but I am responsible before God for my input and influence over clients while I come along side them on their journey.

A. May: In 2001, you finally founded the Institute of Christian Psychology (ICP). How long had it taken to prepare this and what was your motivation to start?

N. Joubert: I started in 1999 with the development of Christian Psychology as a subject for a Bachelor degree. This development was on request of a church that planned to apply for accreditation and registration of their Bible School as a private higher education institute. At the time my idea was to develop Psychology as a major subject that includes modules on Christian Psychology.

My motivation to agree to this request stemmed from my PhD research and practice work. The literature study I undertook for my PhD highlighted the needs of clients to be able to discuss their spiritual issues in counseling. It also pointed to the lack of training in this area in the curriculum of Psychology learning programmes offered by most universities.

My vision was to legitimize and professionalize Christian Psychology by means of a well-developed accredited academic programme. In a pluralistic society where state universities are not allowed to include religion in their academic programmes, unless it is Theology, such an evolution was essential to meet the needs of Christians. I was thus passionate and highly motivated to embark on the development of an academic programme featuring Christian Psychology as a major subject. The idea of a registered Christian Higher Education Institution in South Africa where such a learning programme could be offered stroked me as a vision from God.

When the above-mentioned church decided to abort their plan for accreditation at the end of 2000, I proceeded with the establishment of the Institute of Christian Psychology in 2001.

At this stage I approached a registered Christian Private Higher Education Institution in South Africa, Die Afrikaanse Protestantse Akademie (APA), with the proposal to firstly, include the planned Christian Psychology curriculum in the 3 year Bachelor programme offered by the (APA) and secondly, to support my idea to apply for accreditation of a 4 year Bachelor in Psychology degree, which includes Christian Psychology modules.

This led to major curriculum developments during 2001 – 2003. The curriculum development was executed in conjunction with a development of a teaching and learning strategy, which comprises a combination of contact and distance modes of delivery. All distance learners receive DVD's of all lectures, which entail the video recording of all lectures. In 2008 a decision was made to develop a full online teaching and learning strategy and this process kicked

off in 2009. Last mentioned was only completed in its current format at the end of 2013.

This process taught me that the work is never done in Higher Education because one needs to stay abreast in a field where new developments are paramount.



From the last visit to Mongolia 2015:
the participants, Willem and Nicolene

As a result I now view my vision and mission of the professionalization and legitimization of Christian Psychology as a life-long mission, which could take many forms. Offering a formal academic program is one way of teaching and training prospective Christian psychologists, but informal learning and offering continuing professional development programs (CPD) are alternatives and could be equally effective.

A. May: Since 2001, you have certainly had quite a number of students. Can you tell us some often mentioned motivations and feedbacks to studying at the ICP?

N. Joubert: Students enroll with the ICP because they are seeking answers to both spiritual and psychological challenges. They are looking for knowledge from both fields and a balance in how to integrate input from both fields.

In order to answer this question thoroughly I am using the feedback from various students that studied at the ICP over the 15 years of its existence.

FH Havinga

FH joined the ICP in 2001 as one of the first students. He already had training in Theology and Christian Lay-counseling and worked as a youth pastor in a church. He describes his motivation to study at the ICP as follows:

“I realized that there was an area lacking in my counselling. Thus, I decided that in order to help people in a more balanced and professional manner I had to study psychology and did not want to study it purely from a secular or humanistic perspective but rather from a Christian worldview as people had a need to include their belief system during the counseling process.”

Estelle Ferreira

Estelle is currently in private practice and also runs a Live and Learn Centre working specifically with children with Autism and other learning disabilities.

She joined the ICP in 2001 and as a student in Theology with a great interest in Psychology. She is a mother of a severely handicapped child and faces MANY challenges on a psychological and spiritual level. She states the following:

“Christian Psychology helped me to overcome emotional challenges, as well as find a balance on a spiritual level.”

Pule Pule

Pule became aware of Christian Counselling in 1996 when he was working at the National Initiative for Reconciliation to inform people about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Despite coming from a disadvantage background and without money he enrolled at the ICP and graduated in 2006. He is now serving

his community as the manager of HIV/Aids Counselling Centre that he has founded.

Elize Visser

Elize Visser has a Master's degree in Policing but left the South African Police Force a few years ago. She was seeking a training institution to further her studies in counseling and enrolled with the ICP in 2014.

She reports the following:

“When I embarked on the quest to finding an institution of learning that presented Psychology from a Christian perspective I read an article about the Institute of Christian Psychology in the Joy magazine and immediately knew that this was the kind of approach towards Psychology that I have been looking for - and I have not been disappointed! The ICP provided the perfect opportunity to learn more about the unique scientific composition of the human brain and the behavior of mankind. But this was not all. It contributed much towards a deeper understanding and importance of the spiritual component in the mental healing process. In reflection after two years of study - it was a wise choice! “

A. May: Nicolene, congratulations for already fifteen years of teaching students in Christian psychology and many more years of supporting people by Christian counselling, and thank you very much for this interview! Maybe, you would like to share a last conclusion with the readers of “Psychology around the World”?

N. Joubert: Yes. I encourage every Christian to follow the path of integrating Christian faith explicitly with your psychological approach. Hone your spiritual ears to be able to hear the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit and you would experience recovery and change in clients that will be beyond scientific explanations. This decision might bring new challenges but do not fear, because God will never leave you nor forsake you.

My decision to follow an explicit Holy Spirit led integration approach in the face of many adversaries was not without challenges on a personal and professional level. I was challenged, ridiculed and rejected by other professionals because of my stance that the Holy Spirit

could enlighten a counselling session beyond scientific means. However, I learned to trust God regardless of opposition, disappointments and painful personal events.

I further suffered deep personal losses, which challenged my trust in God's goodness. Through this I have learned to trust in God's grace even more and to focus on His glory rather than my own success. It is more important to glorify Him regardless of my circumstances or the condition of my soul than to succeed in a worldly system.



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‘Psyche’ or ‘soul’?

Towards a Christian Approach to Anthropology in Pastoral Caregiving and Spiritual Healing

Binne die gebied en dissiplines van die helpende en helende professies, is differensiasie onontbeerlik ten einde ‘n multi-benadering ten opsigte van menslike welsyn en heelheid (integrale heling) te volg. Die kwaliteit van sorg word bepaal deur die spesifieke antropologie binne ‘n basisteorie. Die basiese argument is dat binne die wisselwerkende verband van psigologie en pastorale versorging, die terme ‘siel’ in ‘n Christelike antropologie dikwels verwar word met die term ‘psige’ in sielkunde. Uit die aard van die saak is daar raakpunte. Die tradisie van cura animarum moet egter verstaan word teen die agtergrond van die wysheidstadisie in Christelike spiritualiteit. In plaas van ‘n pessimistiese antropologie met die vertrekpunt in ‘n substansiële en ontologiese sondeleer en skuldbewussyn, of die eensydigheid van ‘n optimistiese oorspanning van innerlike psigiese potensiaal, word ‘n kwalitatiewe en relasionele benadering vir ‘n pastorale antropologie voorgestel. Vandaar die argument dat ‘siel’ (psuché, anima) ‘n aanduiding is van die dinamiese sentrum van menslike lewe (Hebreeus: nēphēsh) soos wat dit gerig is op die teenwoordigheid van God, en gemanifesteer in dinamiese verhoudingsisteme van agapē-liefde (siel as ‘n kwalitatiewe verhoudingsmatige konsep). ‘n Kwalitatiewe benadering tot heling in pastorale sorg, verbind hoop aan die sinvraagstuk en die soeke na menswaardigheid. Binne die parameters van die pastorale teologie, beliggaam sielsorg die parakletiese dimensie van die pastoraat. Pastorale sorg word kwalitatief bepaal deur die medelye en passie van God en verteenwoordig troos en erbarming wat meer impliseer as blote psigiese empatie (affek). Die hedendaagse aksent op ‘spiritualiteit’ in ‘n pluralistiese en gesekulariseerde samelewing

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was: Future between hope and anxiety: The influence of the ontology of the not yet on the philosophy of hope (E Bloch) and the theology of hope (J Moltmann). In 1983 he attained the D.Th.-degree at the University of Stellenbosch on the following topic: Hope in suffering: Pastoral care within an eschatological perspective.

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behels meer as die soeke na menswaardigheid, sin, kreatiwiteit, estetiese ervaringe, bevryding, algehele welsyn en universele kollektiwiteit. Dit word ten diepste gekwalifiseer deur die erbarming van ‘n lydende God.

Within the sphere of the helping and healing professions, differentiation is extremely important in order to develop a multi-disciplinary approach to human wellness and wholeness. The quality of care is determined by the basic anthropology applied in a very specific discipline. It is argued that in the cooperation between psychology and pastoral caregiving, the term 'soul' is often confused with 'psyche'. Despite necessary overlaps, it is important to understand the tradition of *cura animarum* against the background of the wisdom tradition in Christian spirituality. Instead of a pessimistic anthropology with its focal point on human sinfulness and guilt, or an optimistic life view that assesses human beings in terms of an inner goodness and basic need-fulfilment, a spiritual approach to anthropology understands 'soul' in terms of a relational and qualitative approach. Thus, the argument that 'soul' (*psuché*, *anima*) signifies the centre of human life (Hebrew: *nēphēsh*) as it is directed to God, and manifested in the dynamic, systemic relationships of *agapē*-love (soul as a relational concept referring to the quality and meaning of life). A qualitative approach to healing in soul care connects the hope-giving factor to issues of meaning (significance) and human dignity. Within the parameters of a pastoral theology, soul care exhibits and embodies the paracletic dimension in care. Pastoral care displays in comfort and compassion, the passion of a suffering God. The emphasis on meaning in spirituality and the dimension of 'spiritual' (the striving for freedom, dignity, creativity, aesthetics, well-being, universal interconnectedness) in an increasingly pluralistic and secularised society should be viewed as supplementary to the primary challenge in soul care namely to link human beings to the comforting compassion of God.

In general, the human soul in Christian anthropology is normally associated with issues like sin, repentance, conversion, change of heart, the focus on heaven, eternal life and the kingdom of God. 'Soul' is viewed as a spiritual organ; i.e. that our self-awareness and inner aptitude are connected through faith with the divine dimension and religious realm of life. 'Soul' is not in the first place viewed as a 'life issue'. To a large

extent 'soul' is not necessarily associated with the quality of human relationships, corporeal issues and the existential realm of life.

In many professional circles, due to the impact of the human sciences on anthropology, 'soul' has become merely a psychological entity. However, the question should be posed whether 'soul' is only a variant for 'psyche'.

With reference to a Christian understanding of our being human, does 'soul' point to 'more' than merely developments in personality theories, psycho-social dynamics and neurological systems as connected to different functions of the brain?

Is the 'human soul' in Christian anthropology a category *sui generis*?

With reference to the very old tradition of *cura animarum*, what is the unique meaning of 'soul' in pastoral caregiving? Despite many correspondences, what is unique in a Christian understanding of 'soul care'? How should one differentiate between 'psyche' and 'soul'?

Towards the essence of the Christian, spiritual tradition

I was utterly surprised to discover in Ludwig Feuerbach's book on the essence of the Christian faith: *Das Wesen des Christentums* (1904), a struggle to free traditional, and therefore 'orthodox theology', from its abstract God-ideology and to turn theological reflection to the praxis issues of life. The essence of Christianity should be focused on human suffering and our basic quest for meaning within the realm of social contexts and tragic life events. He sees the focal point and essence of the Christian faith, the well-being (*heil*) of humans (Feuerbach 1904:283). His intension was to challenge Christian faith and theology to bring hope to human beings and heal the pain of a human soul within the transience of life. Faith should deal with our human exposure to anguish and hopelessness. Christians should therefore be agents of hope and promote the quality of human life. Thus, his proposal to shift an abstract understanding of an immutable and impassable God-image, to a

more passionate understanding of God. God is a God with a heart full of passion; God as pure passion, the God of pure suffering (die Passion pura, das reine Leiden) (Feuerbach 1904:127).

The implication of Feuerbach's view on the essence of Christianity is that 'soul care' should essentially become 'life care'. The very special field of the discipline of soul care should thus be the existential realm of life and engagements with the existential reality of tragedy and suffering.

In Greek tragedy, the human hubris (the illusion that self-confidence and pride can cope on its own with the demands of life) is frequently exposed to disaster through the combination of a personal failing and circumstances with which humankind cannot deal or cope. Within paradox and ambivalence tragedy is about the conflict of pity and fear (Aristotle). Meditation on loss, death and suffering inevitably leads to the puzzle of fate and tragedy with the burning question: How is it possible to help the human soul to cope in a meaningful way with loss, dying and death?

As mortal human beings, we cannot escape transience. Caregivers should therefore become agents of hope if they want to do what Socrates had in mind: To be a healer of the 'soul' (iatros tés psuchés) (in Oden 1983:187). In order to penetrate the mysterious inner realm of our being human and detect the meaning of 'spiritual healing', we need to reflect on the interplay between 'soul' and the existential realm of our being human; on our quest for dignity, acknowledgement, meaning and hope. What then is meant by 'soul care' within the connection 'God' and 'human soul' (Christian anthropology)?

Back to the ABC of cura animarum¹

In Word and World, Herbert Anderson (2001:32) poses the question: Whatever happened to pastoral care and to the tradition of soul care (Seelsorge)? According to Anderson (2001:32), this question has gained new significance as

'spiritual care' has replaced 'pastoral care' as the descriptive work of hospital chaplains. At stake is the question what is meant by the ancient tradition of cura animarum and 'Seelsorge' (the care or cure of souls).

Despite many variations within different cultural contexts, one can say that the aim of the care or cure of souls is to respond to human pain with compassion and to human guilt with forgiveness and grace (Anderson 2001:33). Caregiving is about comfort (parakalein): to console human souls by means of the biblical text, prayers and sacrament.

A very famous formulation is the following definition by William Clebsch and Charles Jaekle (1964:4): "The ministry of the cure of souls, or pastoral care, consists of helping acts, done by representative Christian persons, directed toward the healing, guiding, sustaining, and reconciling of troubled persons whose troubles arise in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns." In a nutshell, pastoral care is the attempt to link our human struggle to come to terms with the human quest for hope and meaning in suffering.

While he was on holiday in Switzerland, Moltmann read Ernst Bloch's Principle of Hope and was fascinated. "I wondered why theology had let hope, its very own theme, slip through its fingers" (Moltmann 2002:90). According to Moltmann, hope is the core-driving factor in the connection spirituality, future and life.

Very surprisingly, the question regarding the validity and credibility of pastoral caregiving has been posed quite recently in a European publication. In her book Seelsorge, Doris Nauer (2010:70) puts the question of the reliability of soul care (Glaubwürdige Seelsorge) anew on the academic agenda of theological education, as well as on the calendar of communities of faith. A credible, reliable and sustainable understanding of pastoral caregiving is possible only with the emphasis on quality (Nauer 2010:105-109) and the understanding of the Christian tradition of wisdom and faith.

The challenge is quite clear: in order to convince a secularised society of the place of cura animarum (cure and care of human souls) within the field of caregiving and healing, the church should revisit its theological paradigms and their connection to God-images as shaped by

¹ "Early church practice of pastoral care was called cura animarum, the cure of anima which was the Latin for the Hebrew nephesh and the Greek psyche" (Anderson 2001:33).

doctrine and confessions. It should perhaps re-frame its traditional convictions regarding the mystery of God's presence and actions in this world of suffering and hopelessness; it should perhaps reformulate its understanding of power (omnipotence, threat power), thus, the endeavour to move from a paternalistic and exclusive model, to a more vulnerable model which is inclusive, interdisciplinary, systemic and inter-faith-based.

What is most needed in the profession of caregiving is that caregivers should turn back to the ABC of *cura animarum*, namely to rediscover the connection between passion, compassion and hope and its connection to its theological roots within the wisdom tradition of the Christian faith. The implication will be to rediscover the eschatological character (the dynamics between a messianic spirit of future expectations and the mystery of the presence of God in suffering) of cure and hope, and to free 'soul care' from a pietistic concentration on the reductionism of a soul-sin-penitence-conversion approach. Christian spiritual healing is about the endeavour to carry 'God's healing' and 'life-giving balm'.

Over the centuries, 'soul care' has developed a variety of nuances. The more orthodox approach, with the accent on the church and its offices, regarded 'soul care' or 'pastoral care' as a learning process that aimed at better knowledge and insight into ecclesiastical doctrine and the admonition-practices of denominations. The reformed tradition concentrated predominantly on salvation and redemption: souls must be saved (redemption perspective).

J. Adams in his book *More than Redemption* (1979), made it clear that the 'more' in redemption points to salvation and the realm of sin. The focus therefore in nouthetic counselling should be on discipline and admonition (Adams 1970).

In many pious circles, the focus was on the purification and sanctification of human life because of following Christ and the personal internalisation of justification. In this approach, discipline played an important role in caring. Pietism put the emphasis once again on individual conversion with the danger of an exclusive

approach that does not take into consideration the whole spectrum of life.

Meiburgh (1990:122), in his article on *cura animarum* in the Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling, pointed out how pietism's preoccupation with the welfare of the individual soul became the seedbed for the growth of popular psychology. Due to the influence of psychology pastoral care moved from salvation to self-realization under God.

The influence of the Enlightenment can be discerned in those approaches that viewed pastoral care as the development of virtue and the promotion of human autonomy. Under the influence of psychology, 'soul care' is often understood as the transformation of human beings through psychoanalysis or other psychotherapeutic techniques in order to encourage self-realization. This emphasis runs the danger of exclusivism: The negation of the importance of the role of spirituality in processes of healing and self-realisation.

It seems that without the emphasis on the spiritual dimension of life, faith and the religious realm of transcendence, suffering and the challenge of meaning-giving, the inevitable reality of tragedy, the existential realm of transience, the human predicament of helplessness and the quest for hope, the tradition of *cura animarum* is in the danger of deserting its unique features and starts to embark on avenues that have already been occupied by the other helping professions. The real danger lurks that caregivers could become merely quasi-psychologists or artificial sociologists.

According to Davies (2001: xvi), one can render absorption of the self in an egoistic culture of consumption as "the death of the soul". How then can we reintroduce talking about the 'human soul' and the compassionate culture of *cura animarum* and hope care in such a culture of self-assurance and super-saturation?

Are we merely dealing with the human self in soul care or with the factor of transcendence, meaning-giving, anticipation, hope in a spirituality of caregiving?



Sacred Societies
By Bongiwe Buthelezi

‘Soul care’: the psychological reduction of shepherding?

It seems indeed as if the tradition of *cura animarum* with its emphasis on the Christian God with the message of hope is in retreat. The paradigm shift is from a metaphysics of beyond to the psychoanalysis of a subjective ‘within’. “In the modern world of our encounter with the otherness, with the alien or strange, begins not at the borders of the self, but rather within the self, at the very core of our identity, and in a way that challenges the self-possession of the subject” (Davies 2001:xvi). This egoistic self-concentrating reduces hope to merely a self-awareness of consumption: “...we exist unequivocally as consumers. The culture of the self is less interested and in need of compassion. Our appetite for goods defines our existence, and is reflected in the enticements of the commercial cosmos of advertising and sales” (Davies 2001: xvi).

Anderson (2001:320) expresses his concern about the unique contribution of caregiving to the helping and healing professions as follows: “Although Seelsorge has a long and rich history in the Christian tradition, pastoral care has been dominated for decades by psychologies of the self that paralleled the movement away from ‘soul’ in theological discourse.”

The Enlightenment’s focus on human dignity, independence and the ability for self-actualization through reason, made concepts like sin, penance and remorse unpopular in many pastoral circles that embraced the *cogito ergo sum*-principle of R. Descartes (I think, therefore I am). The paradigm switch was to move from ‘human sin’ to ‘human dignity’.

“The more uninhibited and optimistic the talk was regarding the dignity and abilities of humans, the greater was the need to relativize and secularize the doctrine of original sin. The doctrine appears – in the form of insight into the finiteness and fallibility of humans – merely as a limiting condition of human self-realization, no longer a description of the very essence of humans” (Huber 1996:120).

The influence of the Enlightenment on ‘soul care’ can be traced back in its increased emphasis on the human mind and self (the individualistic self-culture with the emphasis on me and personal need-fulfilment). The general counselling goal in psychology, namely that people should be led to assertiveness so that they may reach self-actualization in terms of their moral and reasoning capacity became the goal in many pastoral care models in specifically the Northern Americas.

In his reflection on the different cultural settings of the Latin Americas, Ronaldo Sathler-Rosa (2012) points to the fact that in many mainline theories and practices of pastoral care and counselling, a kind of psychological reductionism took over. It seems as if caregivers are busy to forsake the parameters of their discipline. Sathler-Rosa refers to the fact that “the so-called modern movement of pastoral care and counselling was heavily based on the psychological science” (Sathler-Rosa 2012:131); pastoral care is busy to forsake its own spiritual tradition and its challenge to connect life issues to the spiritual realm of life.

The starting point of ‘soul care’ became the inner human potential (psychologization of spirituality) (Sperry 2002:3) with an appeal to human self-determination. Sperry refers to Downey (in Sperry 2002:3) who timely voiced the concern that a psychologized spirituality appears to have eclipsed the salvific as the governing category in spirituality. With reference to the North American context, it was accepted that a person has the inner potential to develop self-healing and attain wholeness. Self-help presupposes a kind of democratic independence: the principle of the autonomous self has become the ABC for spirituality in caregiving. Spirituality has become a mode of ‘self-fixation’ running the danger to reduce spirituality to merely psychological constructs. “Psychological reductionism is an over-reliance on and uncritical adoption of psychological constructs, such as self-fulfilment and self-realization. Intentionally or unintentionally such theories may actually promote and reinforce individualism and spiritual narcissism” (Sperry 2002:30). The psychologizati-

on of spirituality also exemplified reductionism, in that spirituality is essentially “reduced” to “psychological constructs”. The challenge is to balance moral guidance and a Christian understanding of comfort with compassion and empathy (Sperry 2002:8-10).

The care of souls which developed from this perspective was based on the theological notion that grace was already incarnated in the human person, and, due to the fact that all human beings are created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), human beings participate in a kind of divine autonomy and dignity. Grace, already present in the human heart, should be cultivated so that the individual could attain a self-produced form of psychoanalytical ‘wholeness’.

It seems as if the rise of psychology in the Northern hemisphere changed the scenario of pastoral care forever. Hope shifted from the notion of salvation to the notion of self-actualisation. Due to processes of secularisation and democratisation, a paradigm shift developed from ‘God’ to the human person as an individual with the emphasis on the claim for human rights. The source for hope does not reside necessarily in an outer, transcendent horizon of religious spirituality, but in an inward potential of psychological energy and social-contextual resources. What even can be called the American model of inner resources has put pressure on the tradition of *cura animarum* in pastoral theology. In order to adhere to the criteria of ‘scientific’, ‘psycho-therapeutic’ and ‘professionalism’ the pressure became to renounce the methodology of a deductive approach and to revert to an inductive (client-centred) approach. This approach to pastoral care insists that the dominant emphasis should not be the Word, but the need of the person.

But what is meant by ‘soul’? Is soul merely a Christian variant for the psyche and the individuality of personhood, and pastoral care a kind of spiritual translation for psychotherapy?

The connection ‘soul care’ - ‘pastoral care’

The term ‘soul care’ is not merely a ‘Christian’ concept, (Greeves 1960:4-7) but stems from an-

cient tradition. In the Greek world, ‘soul care’ was concerned with the development of those ideological elements and ideas that could influence people’s attitudes and enable them to deal with life more effectively. Within the Christian tradition, the term ‘pastoral care’ has gained acceptance. ‘Pastoral’ gradually starts to point to what can be called the shepherding perspective (Hiltner 1958) (Hirtendienst - Kiesow 1978:151) in caregiving.

Hiltner (1959:20), writing from an American perspective, provides a broader basis for the term ‘pastoral care.’ He connects the Biblical metaphor of the shepherd (with its connotations of the solicitous, tender and individualized care of the sheep) to the more general term, ‘healing.’ For him, the whole purpose of pastoral care is to bring the person and the congregation to optimal healing. Thus, the connection to ‘wholeness’; i.e. to use the term ‘healing’ in its general and comprehensive sense, involving the restoration of functional wholeness that has been impaired (Hiltner 1959:19).

The shepherd/flock metaphor (*cura pastoralis*) (Nauer 2010:56) has traditionally been viewed as an expression of God’s loving care for human beings in need. During the 19th century, this shepherd-dimension of pastoral care attained a more exact meaning and resulted in the term ‘poimenetics.’ Due to the emphasis on the clerical and ecclesial dimension of shepherding, it attained the meaning of the work of clergy towards lay people (Nauer 201:61).

‘Pastoral’ is derived from the Latin term *pasce-re* (Waruta & Kinoti 2000:5), which means ‘to feed’. “In view of this Latin root, the adjective ‘pastoral’ suggests the art and skill of feeding or caring for the well of others, especially those who need help most (Waruta & Kinoti 2000:6). In connection to cure or care, pastoral care refers to both healing (Greeves 1960) and compassionate helping, thus the emphasis on becoming ‘whole’.

The Dutch pastoral theologian Heitink (1977:68) points out that in the literature, the terms ‘soul care’ and ‘pastorate’ are often used

synonymously. He makes a distinction between the two. The ‚pastorate‘ describes the pastoral policy of ministry. ‚Soul care‘ refers to the event itself: the effect which ministry has on people’s experiences within a pastoral relationship. However, it is extremely difficult to differentiate between policy and effect.

Traditionally, the focal point of pastoral ministry has always been people in the totality of their existence. Most would agree with the notion that pastoral care concerns the total human being within a specific relationship: a faith relationship with God. It also concerns the connections/fellowship (*koinōnia*) between fellow beings created in the image of God.

The term *cura animarum* describes care for the whole person, from a specifically Christian spiritual perspective. Soul care is about people and the centre of their existence, their focus on God and dependence upon him due to a faith shaped by the salvific events of cross and resurrection. *Cura animarum*, therefore, describes a very special process of caring: caring for human life because God creates it, life belongs to God and is saved by God in Christ.

The essence of what it means to be human is linked inextricably to a life of faith lived in the presence of a living God and in the light of a faithful understanding of the will of God. Soul care therefore cannot claim its unique position within an interdisciplinary approach without taking the spiritual realm of life seriously

‘Psuché’ in soul care

The question about the nature of the human person, whether approached from the perspective of psychology in terms of personhood or behaviour, or from the perspective of theology in terms of sin, creation or recreation/salvation, makes it very difficult for any model on care and counselling to avoid the question about the nature of ‘soul’ or ‘self’. Some scholars in anthropology and psychology will accept without question that we are merely what can be seen and touched, perceived, weighed and measured (the phenomenological approach). Others will insist that we are more than our bodies and assert

that this “more” is spirit or soul. How valid these approaches might be, the two classical models: namely, ‘soul’ as an inner substantial entity (metaphysical substantialism) and the schism between ‘soul’ and ‘body’ (Platonic dualism) do not suffice and open the scientific debate and discussion about an adequate understanding of the doctrine of the human being or self. (See McKeithen Jr. 2004:98).

At stake, is the question: Is the human soul merely about psychic energy produced by the inner potential of the human ‘self’ so that ‘soul care’ is about personal need-satisfaction, the overcoming of failure and the maintenance of a positive self-image?

The practical theologian Don Browning (1979:149) points out that critical philosophical analysis regarding the meaning of ‘soul’ as self-maintenance reveals a kind of eudemon and teleological assumption behind self-actualization theories. “All such theories assume that there exists an underlying harmony which unifies and adjusts each person’s thrust toward self-actualization. According to this view, primarily Greek in origin, humans do not find community through self-sacrifice and self-transcendence. They find it through specializing in their own self-actualization in the assumption that if every person is true to their own potential – their own complementary capacities will be the result” (Browning 1979:149).

Schleiermacher may be regarded as the leading exponent of those who made human potential and the human field of experience the focal point of their approach (Schütz 1977:51). In this approach, the emphasis shifts from deliverance care to self-care. Schleiermacher’s statement that each Christian is his own priest, is classic. Pastoral care is aimed at self-help and independence.

The American pastoral movement must be understood against this background. In a certain sense, clinical pastoral care in America is a reaction against the unilateralism of the kerygmatic model. Richard Baxter’s classic approach in his book, *The Reformed Pastor*, published in 1656 (McNeill 1951:260) still acknowledged the im-

portance of the sermon and verbal instruction in 'soul care'. Nevertheless, he already shifts the focus to people, their needs and their potential.

Very much influenced by Paul Tillich's ontology of acceptance (1965), a certain preconditioned ontological relationship between God and reality was presumed and presupposed. In the light of Christ's incarnation, human relationships are then viewed as a type of on-going or indirect incarnation. In other words, the nature and quality of human relations are thought to be an indirect medium through which God's redeeming involvement is revealed, disconnected from its kerygmatic tradition (Oden 1966). As a result, it is not so much the testimony of God's Word that brings about human healing through forgiveness; and conversion, rather the process of communication and counselling.

Stollberg (1969) in his *Therapeutische Seelsorge*, criticizes the overemphasis of the human element in the American pastoral approach. He points out that the kerygmatic character of pastoral care was replaced by an overemphasis on non-verbal communication.

The danger of such an emphasis is that empirical events and immanent components receive so much attention that pastoral care loses its theological character (Stollberg 1969:135-139). Amongst others, Stollberg blamed H. J. Clinebell for a lack of insight into the eschatological dimension of pastoral healing and hope. In a later publication, Wenn Gott menschlich wäre, Stollberg (1978: 231) modified his criticism that the American approach was too one-sided, and acknowledged that pastoral actions could be a stronger medium for theological revelation than he had initially presumed.

Criticism from reformed circles towards a more empirical approach in pastoral care was based on the following concerns: that the shift from justifying the godless (sinners under judgement and guilty people due to transgressions) to justifying the hopeless (those feeling anxiety, despair and meaninglessness) would result in faith-realization being replaced by self-actuali-

zation and human need-fulfilment. Soteriology would then be replaced by existential and empirical analyses. The focus of pastoral care would no longer be the godless with their sin and guilt, but desperate human beings in their anxiety and meaninglessness. Trimp (1981:36-39) is one of the sharpest critics of this shift in focus. According to him, modern pastoral theology places all its emphasis on the incarnation of Christ as a human being. In so doing, pastoral theology; becomes nothing more than a humanistic plea for self-fulfilment (the humanistic reduction of pastoral care).

What exactly does 'soul care' mean today, especially within the context of pastoral ministry?

Cura animarum implies a ministry that is directed not merely to a human being's inner life, but also to the spiritual care of the total person in all the psychophysical and psychosocial dimensions (spiritual wholeness). 'Spiritual' thus encompasses more than a person's innermost ego or personality. Soul (psuché, anima) signifies the centre of human life (Hebrew: nēphēsh) as it is directed to God, and as it manifests itself in dynamic relationships of agapē-love (soul as a relational concept referring to the quality and meaning of life).

When nēphēsh is translated as psuché, it signifies that which is vital in a human being in the broader sense. In combination with heart (kardia) and mind (nous), soul in the New Testament describes the seat of life or even life itself. Within the framework of Scripture, the 'soul' thus comprises much more than the 'innermost' person, or the person's consciousness or psychic functioning, or a substance located elsewhere in the human body. 'Soul' in Christian spirituality describes thus the essence of human existence: our attitude (habitus) towards God and fellow human beings. It should be rendered as a qualitative term: it describes a conduct and human disposition within the presence of God.

As a relational term, a pastoral hermeneutics of the human soul is connected to the notion of



Moroccan Water Reflection
By Nqobile Buthelezi

the presence of God in life; it addresses the notion of meaning and the value or dignity of our being human.

As qualitative term, soul should be interpreted within the framework of covenantal thinking. With reference to the Torah in Jewish thinking and wisdom thinking, the quality of one's soul is determined by the commandants and will of God as related to daily issues within the social and public sphere of life. The indicators for a 'qualitative soul' are to love God as well as to love the neighbour, even the enemy. Hatred destroys one's soul. Thus the following statement: one does not have a soul; one is one's soul within the networking dynamics of life.

In order to conclude:

Human soul in *cura animarum* refers to the quality of life as determined by the normative dimension in the wisdom tradition, namely the ethos of love and grace. A human soul reflects the will of God as defined by the Torah (the law as the source of life) in wisdom thinking; the human soul can be called the enfacement of God within the realm of human relationships. *Psuché* implies more than 'inner spirit'; it refers to human conduct and disposition (qualitative concept) as determined by an awareness of God's presence and as qualified by the covenantal love-principle of a sacrificial ethos of devotion and obedience to the Torah (exposition of God's will for meaningful living).

What is then meant by 'soul care'?

'Soul care' within the realm of pastoral theology

D. Nauer (2010) emphasizes the plight for a clear and distinctive understanding of pastoral care within the field of the helping and healing professions with reference to the European context of a much-secularised society. Nauer (2010: 65-66) argues that even the current tendency to exchange the notion of pastoral care with the moral neutral and general notion of spiritual care, can rob caregiving of its unique connection with *cura animarum*. To merely refer to spiritual healing within processes of professionalization, is to run the danger of making

the ministry of pastoral care superfluous. It is thus of paramount importance in theory formation to stick to the notion of pastoral care as 'soul care' (German: Seelsorge; Afrikaans: siel-sorg). The combination between 'soul' (Hebrew *nēphēsh*; Septuagint: *psuchē*; Latin: *anima*), care and cure, captures the core identity of caregiving and can be rendered as the basic proposition for a Christian approach to caregiving (Nauer 2010: 66-69); it keeps Christian identity clear (H. Anderson in Nauer 2010:66).

With this emphasis on the helping and saving actions of God, and the focus on 'spirituality' and 'wholeness' in pastoral caregiving, one can propose that 'soul care' implies much more than care for an 'inner substance'. 'Soul care' refers to care for the systemic dynamics of life; it cares for the whole of our being human within the awareness of the value of human beings within the presence of a living God; it wants to promote human dignity in all spheres of life.

A 'good soul' in this respect is then a wise human being who acts according to his/her divine 'design' or calling (sense of vocation). Design does not mean a fixed plan but a vocation that brings about change wherein one acts as witness of God's presence. Good refers to soulfulness and an ethos of responsibility. In this respect, it reflects the 'spirit of life – the meaning and destiny of life determined by wisdom thinking. Good can be translated in New Testament terminology as 'spiritual beauty'; a beauty that reflects peace (*shalom*), harmony and integration. Within the heritage of the Christian tradition of hope, the spirituality of hope is connected to what one can call the aesthetics of a human spirit: "the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit" (I Peter 3: 4). Spiritual aesthetics and the beauty of a human soul can be rendered as an exemplification of the spirit of Christ. A Christian spirit of beauty is about gentleness. It display is a kind of sanctification, emanating from justification (the indicative of salvation) due to the following imperative: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason (*apologia*) for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3: 15).

This spirit of hope is connected to an ethos which represents, according to I Peter 3: 16,

a “good conscience” so that those who “revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed” (I Peter 3: 16). This conduct of hope within the framework of the “will of God” in suffering (verse 17, constitutes a Christian and spiritual praxis of hope. Praxis is then an indication of how the principle of wisdom (sapientia) is enfolded in a new mode of being; hope then functions as a motivating factor for people to carry on with life in a meaningful way.

In order to conclude one can say that all the different references in scripture to soul (nēphēsh, kardia, nous) refer to good and wise conduct/habitus as existential modes of being and exemplification of spiritual aesthetics. Furthermore, different categories should be accessed as different perspectives on the integrated whole of our being human. “In what concerns the Old Testament, irrespective of all methodological problems inherent in the so-called stereometric approach, that approach firmly opposes any disregard of the embodied dimension of man’s special status. Wherever any specific aspect of human existence is considered, whether it is nēphēsh (soul), ruach (spirit), lev (heart), or basar (flesh), it is always intrinsically linked with the whole of our being human: One does not have a soul; in a very specific way whole being in all the existential dimensions in life, is soul, desire, finitude, etc.” (Dabrock 2010)² In each case the whole of man is addressed. They should all be interpreted in the light of the fact that a human being in Scripture is determined by two factors: the transcendental framework of creation and the eschatological qualification of life. For example, reason is not the same as rationality in terms of a pure cognitive dimension. “... reason must be linked with the more encompassing theological concept of man’s transcendently relational vocation. This requires two tasks. On the one hand, reason’s exposure to empirical evidence concerning its presence or absence in any particular human being must not be allowed to undermine theology’s pointedly univer-

sal thrust of emphasizing God’s loving turn to man, regardless of intellectual capacities. On the other hand, that same theological universality must not repudiate the relevance of reason as man’s distinguishing feature.” (Dabrock 2010).

“Stereometry” is the overlay of images and motives that not only enhance the concreteness of special statements but also subject them to a multiplicity of perspectives (thus, as it were, “exploding” their meaning). Words and texts are thus rendered semiotically transparent to one another, thus disclosing one another’s meaning (by opening up semantic spaces). Applied to Old Testament anthropology this implies such stereometric thinking “defines man’s area of life in terms of characteristic organs, thus describing man as a whole.” On a conceptual level, this wholeness also envisages talk about the complex and differentiated unity of persons for whom, since “the body ... anchors us in the world” “not only the sphere of life but also the sphere of social relationships is constitutive”. Applied to Old Testament or sapientia thinking, stereometric thinking “pegs out the sphere of man’s existence by enumerating his characteristic organs, thus circumscribing man as a whole” (Janowski 2013: 18). Concepts like heart, soul and spirit are often used alternately in Hebrew poetry to reveal certain aspects of the human being. One component of our being human, for example the ‘heart’ or ‘mind’, represents the whole of life. Stereometric reasoning allows for the Semitic view of a person as an integrated unit within the whole of the cosmos. The Greek dualism of body and soul is foreign to a Semitic approach. Stereometric reasoning is relational and systemic. It does not view a person in terms of isolated, different parts, but as a functional unit (whole) within a network of relationships. The subject-object split of rational scrutiny is far removed from the relational dynamics of Semitic communalism.

In order to conclude, one can say that the basic research assumptions for the science of ‘soul care’ in pastoral theology are:

- ‘Soul care’ is not merely psychology within a Christian framework. ‘Soul care’ is a theo-

2 P. Dabrock. 2010. Drawing Distinctions Responsibly and Concretely: A European Protestant Perspective on Foundational Theological Bioethics. First published: 07/09/2010. Online: <http://cb.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2010/08/16/cb.cbq015.full#fn-20>. Accessed: 27/04/2014.

logical discipline and connected to a unique source. At stake is the realm of Christian faith and the interplay between life views and the perspective of the Bible on spiritual wholeness.

- 'Soul care' implies more than merely counselling techniques, communication and listening skills. The pastoral praxis refers to the realm of intentionality, meaning and normative life values and worldviews within human actions; the pastoral praxis is about a very specific embodiment and enactment of the compassionate praxis of God's presence and intervention in the suffering of humankind. Behind pastoral interventions and actions lurk paradigmatic issues as related to different God-images. Pastoral theory should therefore be connected to a theology of caregiving. Excellent theory prevents praxis from being merely a reflection on daily practicalities; it safeguards pastoral caregiving from becoming a manual for ministry with prescriptive guidelines for action, thus the need for clarity on the notion of 'pastoral theology' and its connection to 'soul care'.
- 'Soul care' in the Christian and shepherding tradition is closely connected to the notion of paraklesis and compassion; it represents a kind of comforting hope that deals with a theopaschitic interpretation of the engagement of God (praxis of God) with the misery, dread, despair and anguish of human suffering. At stake in pastoral theology is then the notion of a co-suffering and compassionate God. The core theological and theoretical problem in 'soul care' is the traditional philosophical problem of theodicy; i.e. how to merge the love, grace, mercy and power of God with the experience of evil and destruction, and how to articulate the presence of God in the misery of human transience.
- 'Soul care' in a pastoral hermeneutics is about the science and art of interpretation; it deals with the question of meaning and the quality of our being functions (habitus) as connected to the encounter with God within a covenantal embrace. In a pastoral hermeneutics, the quest for meaning

in life and human dignity become core focal issues in a spirituality of healing and caregiving.

The dimension of 'spirituality' in soul care

Within European circles, secularization brought about a radical change within the traditional paradigms of care and counselling. The Dutch, pastoral theologian, D. Tieleman, wrote in 1992 a book about the crisis in pastoral care. He advocated for a new rediscovery of spirituality. This emphasis on spirituality implied that care should be more than the sum total of psychological functions. Care should rather focus on issues of human dignity as related to our quest for meaning and the awareness of the ultimate within daily life (Tieleman 1992:124). With a growing awareness of the importance of spirituality in processes of healing, the focus became life. According to Richards (1987:50), "Christian spirituality is living a human life in this world in union with God."

In more evangelical circles, a consensus gradually developed namely that Christian spirituality should be rediscovered and introduced in pastoral counselling. In the USA, there was a growing consensus that evangelicals failed to take the pressures and realities of Christian living in the modern period seriously enough to devise spiritual strategies to allow new and struggling Christians to cope with them (McGrath 1994:13).

At the end of the twentieth century, pastoral care became more exposed to the concept of spirituality. *Cura animarum* was more and more interpreted and understood as spiritual care and spiritual direction. Already in the eighties K Leech emphasised the importance of spirituality for pastoral care. In his book *Spirituality and Pastoral Care* (1986a) he advocated for both a Christian spirituality with the emphasis on maturity (Leech 1986a:6), as well as a social spirituality (see also Leech 1986(b):9). The focus fell on transcendence and the mystical component of our being human. It was argued that all human existence has a spiritual aspect. (Leech 1986(a): xxvi). In this regard, spiritual care linked with a very old tradition in

Christianity – the so-called desert fathers and their quest for God (Leech 1985:130). This rediscovery of the realm of interiority and transcendence (Thayer 1985:25) coincides with a discovery of the value of symbolic structures and religious experience (Thayer 1985:29).³ Due to the notion of spirituality the emphasis is less on self – actualization, behaviouristic theories and the classical psychoanalytic theories of humanistic psychology (Thayer 1985:41-42), and more on the interconnectedness between life and transcendence, human existence and God. Spirituality became a search for ‘meta – egoic’ experience (Leech 19878).

Instead of the Western dualism and distinction between spirit and matter, spirituality became since the nineties and the beginning of the 21st century, the standard formula for the theory and practice of “life in the Spirit” and discipleship (Sheldrake 1995: 514). According to Sheldrake (2007: 1-5) there is a lot of ‘fuzziness’ about the meaning of ‘spirituality’ in many professional circles. Nevertheless, he suggests that the word ‘spirituality’ refers to the deepest values and meanings by which people seek to live. The concept therefore implies some kind of vision of the human spirit and of what will assist it to achieve full potential.

Spirituality started to emphasize emotive expressions of intimacy with God within many acts of public worship and service (Drishill 1999:8).

Due to globalization and technology with its ‘compression of time’, a need for spiritual leadership developed. Secularization created a spiritual vacuum (Blackaby 2001:5-11). It is therefore no surprise why H Cox, the author of the *Secular City* (1965), revised his own theory on secularism. In his book, *Fire from Heaven* (1995), he acknowledged that his projection in the sixties proofed to be wrong. Instead of secularism that is endangering spirituality, it is rather spirituality that is destroying secularism. “Today it is a secularity, not spirituality that

may be headed for extinction” (Cox 1995: xv).

As pointed out by Davie et al. (2002:23):

“The story of secularization is primarily a story of the tensions, conflicts and patterns of differentiation between religious and worldly regimes. The European concept of secularization refers to a particular historical process of transformation of Western Christendom and might not be directly applicable to other world religions with very different modes of structuration of the sacred and profane realms. It could hardly be applicable, for instance, to such ‘religions’ as Confucianism or Taoism, insofar as they are not characterized by high tension with ‘the world’ and have no ecclesiastical organization.”

To my mind, Waaijman (2004) has done the most extensive research on spirituality. He explains the complexity of the concept in its relationship to nous and pneuma, as well as to the biblical concepts of devotion (eusebeia), holiness, mercy/charity, and perfection (2003:314 – 332). (See also Endres 2002:143 – 155). According to Waaijman, spirituality is an exponent of the French spiritualite (Latin: spiritualitas) with roots in the Biblical field of meaning: ruach/pneuma (2004:359). Spirituality represents both the divine perspective as well as the human spirit. It includes ascetic and mystical experiences as related to both the Biblical tradition (ruach) and Hellenistic intuition and knowledge (nous). At stake is the relationship between the divine Spirit/Pneuma and the human spirit/soul within the reality of life.

The rediscovery of the value of spirituality within therapy and counselling helped pastoral care to get rid of the domination of psychotherapy. Depending on different schools of interpretation, pastoral care was either merely a variant of proclamation (a sort of homiletic procedure or liturgical gesture/prayer) or a variant of the culture of self-actualization or self – maintenance (Gerkin 1997:49).

However, the notion of spirituality opens up new avenues for soul care. It challenges pastoral care to reframe its view on soul as a substantial entity separated from body and life to soul as a vital ingredient of all of human, social and en-

3 About the interplay between faith and experience within a theology of spirituality, see Ruhbach 1987:23-25; sola experientia facit theologum.



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vironmental relationships.⁴ Spirituality underlines anew the interrelatedness between faith and life, care and communal and social issues.

The plight for spirituality in care and healing is also becoming more and more prevalent in the other human sciences. In the Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare (2012: vii) the editors (Cobb, Puchalski, Rumbold) pointed out that the notion of spirituality in healthcare is closely connected to the realm of human suffering. It is argued that if healthcare has any regard for the humanity of those it serves, it is faced with spirituality in its experienced and expressed forms. "Spirituality is for many people a way of engaging with the purpose and meaning of human existence and provides a reliable perspective on their lived experience and an orientation to the world" (Cobb, Puchalski, Rumbold 2012: vii). Thus the conviction of Pellegrino (2012: vi) that healing of the psychosocial-biological is of itself insufficient to repair the existential disarray of the patient's life without recognition of the spiritual origins of that disarray.

"Research in palliative care has demonstrated the impact of religious and spiritual beliefs on people's moral decision making, way of life, interaction with others, life choices and ability to transcend suffering and to deal with life's challenges" (Puchalski & Ferrell 2010:4;14). Besides the dimension of significance and purpose, "spirituality can be understood as one's relationship to a transcendence that for some people might be God and for others might be different concepts of how they see themselves" (Puchalski & Ferrell 2010:1-21). Often the term "spirituality" is used synonymously with "religion" and has a binding and stabilising impact on people's attitude towards illness and suffering. "The word 'religion' comes from the Latin term *religare* from *re* – again and *ligare* – to bind. Thus, religions talk of spiritual experiences as the re-binding to God" (Puchalski & Ferrell 2010:22).

⁴ For the emphasis on human relationships, the social as well as the political dimensions in Catholic spirituality, see Costello 2002:1-31. Nowadays within protestant circles, there is even a reference to spiritual caregiving as a secular sacrament. Anderson 2003:11-25.

At a conference of clinicians, medical educators, and chaplains for medical school courses on spirituality and health in 1999, the following clinical definition of spirituality had been agreed upon: "Spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose, and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to nature and to the significant or sacred" (Puchalski & Ferrell 2010:25). The plea was that this definition should be applied to spiritual care in palliative care and care in general. The suggestion was also that this definition should be universally adopted for research in spiritual care in palliative care and in health care in general to help standardize the research and literature in this field.

In the publication *Making Health Care Whole*, Puchalski and Ferrell (2010:4) refer to the fact that spiritual practices can foster coping resources; promote health-related behaviour; enhance a sense of well-being and improve quality of life; provide social support and generate feelings of love and forgiveness. "The notion that spirituality is central to the dying person is well recognized by many experts, the most being those patients who are seriously ill" (Puchalski & Ferrell 2010:4). Spirituality is then broadly defined as that which gives meaning and purpose to life (Puchalski and Ferrell 2010:4).

In Christian spirituality, the encounter between caregivers and people in need should open up a new vista of hope and healing. This new vista cannot be exclusive focused to a 'hidden soul' but should encompass the whole of our being human. Soul care should dignify human beings and reflect the human face of God in order to establish a kind of 'spiritual humanism'.

To conclude one could say:

- Spirituality is a many-layered concept and is used differently in the many healing and helping professions.
- In general, there is a kind of consensus in literature that 'spirituality' refers to the integration between belief systems and concrete, existential life events. Spirituality refers to a way of life determined by norms,

values and convictions that give meaning to life, motivates people to endure in suffering and help to display a kind of resilience and hopeful anticipation. In this regard, it is emphasised that spirituality is closely related to the capacity of the human spirit to discover purposefulness in life and to deal with ultimate values regarding destiny and fate.

- Spirituality is used to describe a kind of interplay between schemata of interpretation (a hermeneutics of life) and a sense of calling and vocation wherein the realm of the beyond play a decisive role. Spirituality emphasises that there is more in life that can be seen and observed on a phenomenological level by means of sheer observation and sensual awareness. In this sense, spirituality is used to describe an affiliation between meaningful living, a purposed driven life and the realm of transcendence.
- Spirituality refers to the meta-realm of life. Even in physics, one has to reckon with unexpected events or issues that transcend a causative approach (see quantum physics).
- Spirituality links worldviews to basic principles, convictions and assumptions that can help people to cope with fate and tragedy. It refers to mystery in life and recognises the sublime within the ridiculous.
- Spirituality is used to describe the interplay between a divine factor and religious experiences within devotional practices, rituals of worship and attempts to be connected to a deity or 'god'.
- Spirituality refers to the psychic capacity in the human spirit to transcend the limitations of the human ego and personal capacities of self-understanding in the direction of a moral awareness and a conscientious sensitivity for a normative framework. Spirituality links ethos to ethics and creates a sense of congruency and integrity in the ego-structure of personal orientation and direction.
- Spirituality represents a sacramental understanding of life. Life as a whole is therefore sacred and should be treated with respect, simplicity and a kind of awe. In this regard, spirituality draws on sacred texts, written documents and oral traditions as embedded

in cultural convictions and taboos.

- Spirituality acknowledges the fact that in all models and approaches to life one should try to foster human dignity, to promote sound values for the preservation and conservation of life and to empower humans to live to the full capacity of their lives by means of justice and a non-discriminatory understanding of equality. It tries to nurture and cultivate a reconciliatory spirit that focuses on harmony and peace.
- As an exponent of spiritual healing, soul in soul care refers to the whole of our human being. It is more comprehensive than merely spirit, ego, self-awareness, cognitive structuring, psychic coherence, and identity. It describes the quality of human relationships in terms of ultimate values and an integral sense of wholeness, peace and constructive anticipatory modes of hoping. Soul care, thus, wants to promote human wholeness and dignity within the dynamics and healing of life (*cura vitae*) (Louw 2008). One can thus argue that the plight for human rights and the advocacy for human dignity can indeed be viewed as important issues on the agenda of pastoral caregiving and theology⁵. *Humanitas* and *dignitas* are becoming important topics in a pastoral and spiritual reflection on the praxis of caregiving. „*Dignitas* became closely associated with *humanitas* as to be construed as a synonym. To be able to say what dignity is would be to describe the fundamental meaning of being human' (Meeks 1984: ix). Dignity means to be human. 'For this reason, dignity has become the key concept in the worldwide struggle for human rights' (Meeks 1984: ix). For Rombach (1987:379), dignity then describes the humane human being (*Der menschliche Mensch*); the human being shaped by the social processes of identity and meaningful space (*Identität* = a spiritual networking of meaning as

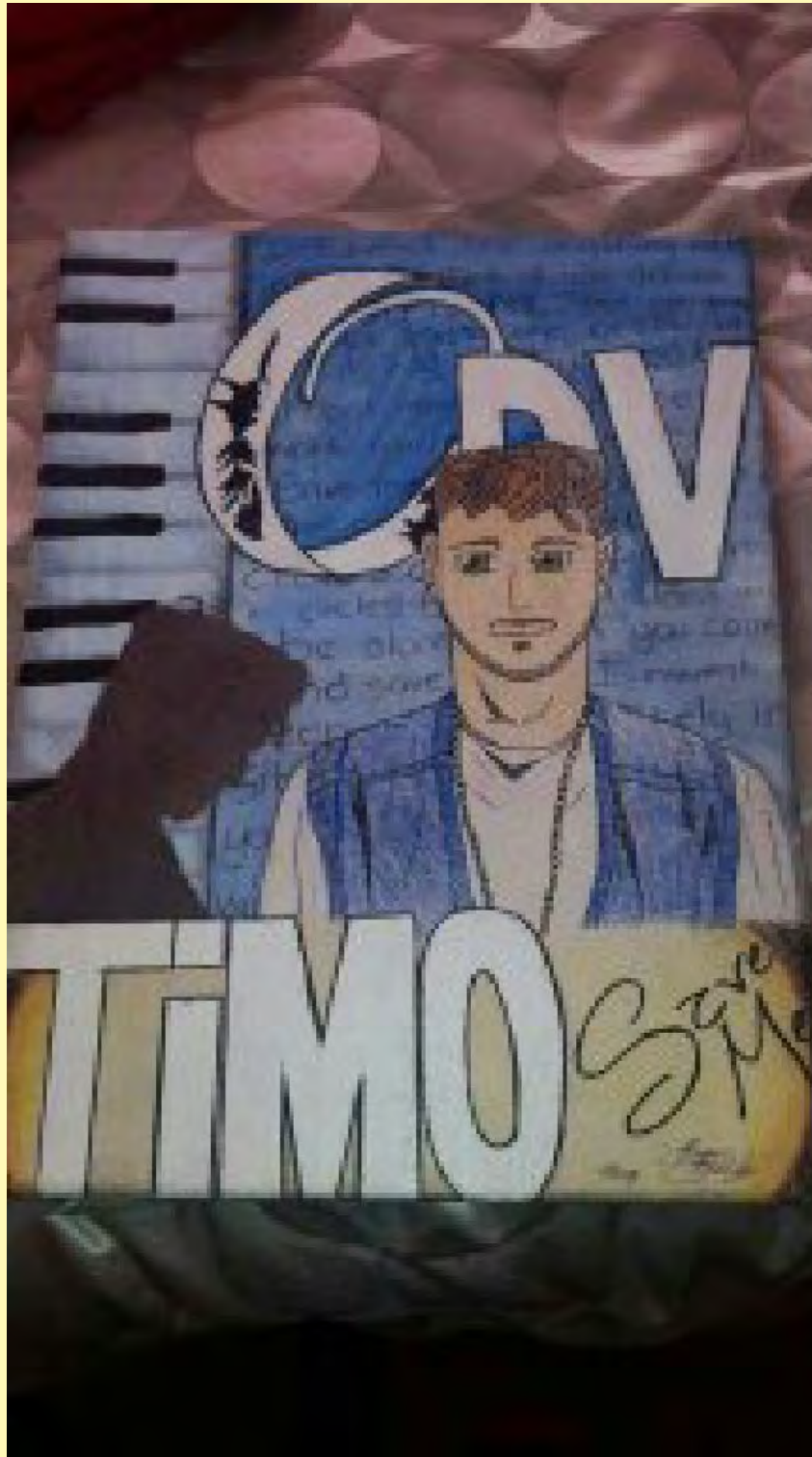
5 According to Huber (1996:115), the concept dignity (*dignitas*) as a social category is primarily related to that of honour (*honor*). As a theological category, it is traditionally associated with the notion of the *imago dei* (created in the image of God) (Huber 1996:115). *Humanitas* and *dignitas* are currently dictating the agenda of public theology.

the whole which gives significance to every particular part). Thus, the hypothesis of Ackermann (2013:85): dignity connects with concepts such as equality and non-discrimination. In this regard, human worth (dignity) becomes a kind of criterion in order to understand the spiritual dimension of life. At stake in soul care is how to promote the value of life so that human beings are aware of the significance and the dignity of their being.

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Portrait of Time Odv
By Bongwiwe Buthelezi

Roland Mahler

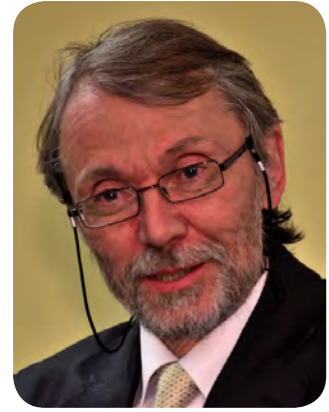
Comment to “Psyche’ or ‘soul’? Towards a Christian Approach to Anthropology in Pastoral Caregiving and Spiritual Healing”

Louw presents an anthropological study on the meaning of terms like “soul” and “psyche” within the realm of “spiritual care” and with regard to a wide Christian tradition of these terms.

Feuerbach in his “Das Wesen des Christentums” emphasizes God’s passion as projective result of human experience of suffering in order to produce something like Christian religion (the general critical intention of Feuerbach’s work is not reflected in Louw’s perception!). Louw’s perspective seems to be quite a psychological understanding of Feuerbach’s theology: Transcendence as an unescapable reality of man’s existence is a psychic reality and is encountered by hope and belief – as psychic states of human consciousness.

There is a basic problem in the Christian concept of “pastoral care” or “soul care” (Seelsorge): The dynamic relation between soul and God is generally not clearly enough considered neither by Christian anthropology nor by (systematic) theology itself. The question is: based on which conception of God’s presence in human soul and therefore for what reason and by what means will a Christian counsellor induce God as a psychic factor? Louw mentions different conceptions, i.e. Moltmann’s theology of hope. Hope is indeed a strong psychic energy in order to motivate man’s action. Hope as a matter of Faith has therefore always been one of the main issues in “pastoral care” or (as Louw writes) “cura animarum”, the programmatic statement of Gregor the Great in the 6th century. Other explanations of “soul care” or “cura animarum” (Anderson, Clebsch, Jaekle, Nauer and even-

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Article by Roland:

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/116>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/4/#/52>

tually Adams and Davies) try to provide their own solutions to the problem (from wisdom-based conceptions to redemptory and sin forgiving procedures) – but obviously fail! None of these, including Moltmann, really succeeds in giving a sufficient anthropological and theological answer to the problem above – though Louw doesn’t seem to pay much attention to this fact at this point of the essay. He rather focusses on the problem of role and significance of “cura animarum” among other caring professions or facilities in the church as well as on the question what contribution to human wellbeing a “cura animarum” could provide in our egoist culture.

“Pastoral care” seems not to be quite the same as “shepherding” and it is not quite the same as general psychological counselling either. In my opinion it is mainly the acting position of the pastor / priest which makes the difference – not so much the contents and issues of the care process. It is the very position in between God and man endowed with a singular mandat and characterised by the intention of reconciliation (2 Cor 5,20) that gives this role an unique shape. In this vicarious role (representing the church and representing Christ) “pastoral care” fills in a very different gap than psychotherapy

does. It is this priestly “*proprium*” that makes it a part of the greater task of “*shepherding*” and it’s the focus on the “*soul*” or the psychic condition of the individual that makes it different from other issues a parochial shepherd has to deal with. Of course at this point we get stuck again with the problem mentioned above: the accurate anthropological and theological understanding of the interaction between God and “*soul*”! Once again: here lies the very problem of a seriously considered “*pastoral care*” or “*soul care*” – not so much in the methodical reductionism as Sathler-Rosa points out. The methodical problem is a secondary one compared to the inner-christian or inner-theological challenge to give explanations for God’s interaction with the human “*soul*” or “*psyche*” (terms with no proper biblical foundation and with diverse meanings). Louw refers to this very problem in his discussion on the meaning of “*psyche*” in Christian (biblical?) tradition of “*soul care*”. He comes to the conclusion that “*psyche*” in this tradition refers to the “*quality of life as determined by the normative dimension in the wisdom tradition, namely the ethos of love and grace*”. “*Psyche*” as a quality of life is presented as an anthropological topos of moral conduct as well as of acceptance (regarding Tillich). In this finally relational understanding of “*psyche*” God appears as the counterpart and origin of man’s Life in mutual consense and cooperation. The interaction between God and man which is called “*psyche*” has the quality of awareness and presence. These anthropological propositions essentially bring forth the dynamics of emotional, cognitive and intentional self-organisation of man’s transcendental consciousness creating faith, hope and love. Louw makes it clear, that this dynamics refer to what theology calls the covenantal interaction between God and man. Only in this clearly confined (i.e. by the will of God or by commandments) relationship there is such a life-changing presence and awareness of God in man’s everyday reality.

When it comes to the meaning of “*soul care*” in pastoral theology Louw refers to the combination of “*soul*”, “*care*” and “*cure*” as the “*core identity of caregiving*”. What contents essentially constitute this combination? What is the “*inner sub-*

stance” that stands for the “*wholeness*” of “*soul care*” in the pastoral work. Is it a consciousness of meaning and value of life? Is it the faithful hope for redemption and eternal consistency of the personal unit? Louw speaks of a “*stereometric*” correlation of the different dimensions of a Christian or biblical understanding of “*psyche*”, “*soul*” etc. By this he illustrates an overlaying interaction of different connotations and meanings. In other words: the different expressions form a multidimensional unit in which every aspect helps to disclose the other.

Surprisingly to me Louw chooses the term “*spirituality*” as an access to distinguish the very characteristics of “*soul care*”? Without any defining explanation of the term “*spirit*” he considers “*spirituality*” as a quality of “*soul care*” in tradition (Leech). Obviously the term is used by many authors and with different connotations. Is spirituality an opposite to secularity (Cox) or is it a way to develop personal maturity? Louw quotes Cobb et al.: “*Spirituality is for many people a way of engaging with the purpose and meaning of human existence and provides a reliable perspective on their lived experience and an orientation to the world*”. This very common understanding expresses a basic need for meaning and value of human life in its daily experiences. According to this approach “*soul care*” as spiritual help is one among many contributes to human wholeness of personality.

Whether this is what we would expect from the header of this essay can be discussed contradictory. A couple of theses about spirituality is maybe helpful to launch further discussions, but it is a thin contribution to an adequate understanding of God’s part in “*soul care*” or the psychic response to God’s presence in his word, in his spirit, in his church.

Conclusion: there is much to learn from Louw’s exposition of semantic or etymological backgrounds and of the thus revealed perspectives on “*pastoral care*” and “*soul care*”. The basic anthropological problems are only partly dealt with and the theological problem of God’s revelation in the human “*psyche*” has – as far as I can see – merely been touched. Spiritual guidance

as a main issue of “soul care” needs not only an understanding of spirituality, which is presented by Louw, but a comprehensive theory of man as God’s creation and an adequate theory of interaction between “soul”, “spirit” and God. Nevertheless the essay shows not only the rich Christian background of “soul care” in the

realm of “pastoral care” but leads to an understanding of what this could practically mean in today’s supportive practice considering the hopeful need for spiritual guidance above all denominational differences.



Portrait of Jaun Alves
By Bongiwe Buthelezi

Nicolene Joubert

Christian Community Psychology

‘n Christelike benadering tot Gemeenskapsielkunde

Gemeenskapsielkunde is ‘n relatiewe, nuwe toepassingsdissipline in die veld van Sielkunde, toegespits op die welsyn van die individu, gemeenskappe, kultuurgroepe en die breë samelewing. Dit verskil radikaal van die individueelgerigte Sielkundige benaderings in verskeie opsigte, inter alia, die onderliggende filosofiese aanname wat postuleer dat gedrag en geestesgesondheid ‘n uitdrukking van ‘n kontekstuele probleem is, eerder as bloot ‘n intra-psigiese worsteling. Intervensies moet gevolglik die konteks (gemeenskap) se behoeftes en dinamika betrek ten einde waarlik effektief te wees. Die doelstelling van intervensies is op voorkoming gerig, eerder as behandeling.

Hierdie konseptualisering van geestesgesondheid sluit goed aan by ‘n Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing, waarin liefde teenoor die naaste deur Christus self as ‘n opdrag beklemtoon word. Sosiale aktiewe optrede word van Christene vereis om verligting te bring aan diegene wat in nood verkeer, as gevolg van sosiale, politieke en kulturele omgewings wat ‘n destruktiewe uitwerking op geestesgesondheid het.

Hierdie artikel brei uit op die wyse waarop Gemeenskapsielkunde vanuit ‘n Bybelsgefundeerde perspektief beoefen kan word, om sodoende Christus se opdrag tot naasteliefde uit te leef.

Introduction

Community Psychology is a relatively new branch of psychology that is concerned with the wellbeing of the individual, societies and communities. This is significantly different from mainstream psychology, where the emphasis is on understanding and treating mental health issues as experienced and expressed by the individual.

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In contrast to this view, Community Psychology upholds the perspective that personal issues are best understood as part of a shared problem within a certain context, and therefore interventions are created to align with the needs of the community at stake.

Community Psychology developed in the USA during the 1960 when civil rights were fought and a realisation for the social needs of marginalised and under-privileged groups became apparent. This development led to social action and social change agendas. In South Africa the same concerns for expanding access to social and health care services and the need for social action emerged. This led to the development of Community Psychology as a practice of Psychology.

Community Psychology is now being taught at all major universities in South Africa with the aim to equip learners with the perspective and skills necessary to work with personal difficulties as an expression of community difficulties.

Philosophical underpinnings and Worldview

Community is a political term that is and has been popular in South Africa. It entails far more than people living in the same geographical area. The current use of the term refers to groups that are socially and culturally constructed and include people with similar views and interests. Communities are formed in various settings, for instance on Facebook, at sport clubs, in congregations, through non-profit organisations and in the workplace. Careful consideration to the current use of the term in Community Psychology is imperative as historically it was associated with the separation of race and ethnic groups in South Africa.

Community psychology in South Africa flows from an attempt to address social psychological problems in South Africa largely associated with the apartheid society. This development drew attention to the privileged position of psychologists as professionals and the needs of the disadvantaged communities they were trying to reach. The increased awareness of this divide as well as a shift in inspired active engagement with communities to build bridges between the professionals and those they want to serve.

Duncan, Bowman, Naidoo, Pillay, and Roos (2007) formulate a working definition for community psychology that depicts the importance of engaging with communities to promote mental health as follows:

“understanding people in the context of their communities, using a variety of applied psychology concerned with understanding people in the context of their communities, using a variety of interventions (including prevention, health promotion and social action), to facilitate change and improved mental health and social conditions for individuals, groups, organisations and communities.”

Community psychology has gained popularity in South Africa as it provides not only an approach that could close the gap between professionals and communities and overcome the shortage of psychologists in South Africa, but it harmonises well with the African Worldview that emphasises the collective self rather than an individual self.

The collective self reflects identification with a valued cultural group. In this sense existence is defined in terms of interrelatedness rather than individuality. This view forms a central idea in indigenous African Anthropology as noted by John Mbiti (cited in Menkiti, n/a), “The African view of the person can be summed up in this statement “I am because we are, and since we are, therefor I am.” Personhood is thus part and parcel of belonging to and actively participating in a community.

This view of personhood also emerges in post-modern participatory worldviews that state that the world does not consist of separate elements, but of relationships, which exist between all things and shape and affirm communities. This view of the world is systemic and holistic.

This view further aligns with the root of African philosophy, ubuntu as postulated by Ramose (2002, cited in Duncan et al. 2007). Ramose (2002, pp. 40 – 42) construes ubuntu to mean “...that to be a human be-ing is to affirm one’s humanity by recognising the humanity in the others and, on that basis, establish human relations with them.”

The view of people as relationally defined, which implies the duty to give the same respect, dignity, value and acceptance to each member of the community, underpins one of the most prominent meta-theoretical perspectives on community psychology, id est. the eco-systemic approach. This approach has been adopted globally and in South Africa. Other meta-theoretical perspectives include, public and mental health frameworks, critical social theories (neo—Marxist theories) and behavioural approaches (Duncan, et al. 2007).

Assumptions and Values of Community Psychology

According to Duncan et al. (2007) the dynamics of oppression serves as a central focus of Community Psychology. These dynamics include any “power” relation be it related to gender, race, language, religion, socio-economic status or sexual preference. Addressing these dynamics entail empowerment strategies with the

aim to modify social processes and eradicate oppression.

Thus, empowerment forms a central value of Community Psychology and entails "...a personal sense of control over one's life as well as the political control of factors that influence one's life" (Duncan et al., 2007, p.69). The principle of community participation is further central to this concept.

Furthermore, risk prevention and health promotion and valuing the differences among cultures and communities are upheld as important values. Risk prevention refers to the identification of communities at risk and developing interventions to prevent the development of potential mental health issues. For example, identification of risks to the health of pregnant mothers and unborn babies due to the lack of proper nutrition would lead to a psycho-educational programme to inform pregnant women of the importance of diet, and to set up housing and care for women at risk.

Prevention interventions aim at building resilience, creating supportive environments and spurring collaboration amongst all members of the community.

Cultural diversity is valued as respect for all people is emphasised and the commitment to make societal resources available to all communities treasured.

Thus, the practice of Community Psychology entails community engagement, social change agendas to modify social processes and social action to reach these goals.

Community Psychology Praxis

Community Psychology praxis entails engagement with communities and to train students in this regard service learning, group supervision and self-reflexive report writing is implemented at the ICP. Students are expected to choose a community to engage with by means of (a) an appreciative inquiry in a community of their choice; and, (b) a community intervention project.

The methodology employed for the project entails Action Research and Participatory Action Research, which are based on the same philosophical assumptions and includes Action Learning. Action research implies that systems are studied through changing them and seeing the effects and new dynamics this brings about. Action learning is participatory and this aligns well with the new emerging participatory worldviews.

Action research method starts with a description of a challenge or concern or problem. The steps to be followed are: (1) Identification of a concern and illustration of this with problematic cases and problem solving attempts. (2) An analysis of the assumptions that the community associates with their problematic situation - focusing particularly on the assumptions underlying the explanations of their problem situation and the values and inferences on which problem-solving attempts are based. This could be facilitated through group discussion, and looking at how personal and community history is linked with the identified concern. This analysis could aid to make action learners aware of "theory-in-use" and put them in a position to make it explicit. (3) The next step in action learning entails having to reformulate initial problem definitions and solutions. (4) Thereafter follows an exploration of alternative strategies for dealing with the problem, and new ways of viewing it. Action researchers are encouraged to do this through discussion with their supervisor, group members and others in this field of practice. (5) The above steps are meant to place action researchers in a better position to make an educated decision about how to proceed. Informed action is likely to follow when the action researchers are able to account for the choices they made and the values they based them on. (6) The research process thus entails trial and error, engaging in the spirals of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning (Pistorius and Katabua, 2015).

Both careful observation and verification are fundamental to any action-learning project. It is futile to base one's observations on faulty assumptions and false reasoning. One also should not base one's verification on a limited set of in-



The Window of Nature's Daughter
By Bongiwe Buthelezi

formation and narrow definitions. Action learners are therefore advised to observe by different means – personal experience, dialogue and face-to-face discussion, and using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Focusing on communities instead of the individual drives active participatory engagement with communities in order to gauge their needs, dynamics and hierarchies. Active engagement and action research form the first step for psychologists embarking on the path of becoming community psychologists.

The benefits from this approach for mental health professionals are numerous, ranging from gaining a deeper understanding of community dynamics and how it affects individual behaviour to empowering communities and prevent pathology. This, in turn leads to reaching more people with psychological knowledge and services and psycho-educational interventions aiming at prevention rather than cure. It further implies the expansion of the mental health model to counter the individual psychopathology paradigm, encompass systemic understanding of risks and mental health threats and develop a social justice and social action framework to address specific contextual issues.

Some pertinent contextual issues that pertain to South Africa were identified, inter alia poverty, unemployment, gender inequalities, historically shaped racial structures and lack of basic education and life skills. Poverty implies that a large number of people are exposed to significantly inferior circumstances suffering from the consequences of NOT getting their primal physiological needs met. According to Maslow's theory this has a ripple effect, meaning that this would probably result in low self-esteem, the overall experience of insecurity (emotional and physical) and low self-actualisation.

Poverty results in a lack of access to proper nutrition, education and health care services. It further leads to the development of social and mental health problems, such as a lack of education and life skills, substance abuse, theft and other criminal activities, violence and

sex work. This pose a challenge to the mental health services of South Africa that could be best addressed by community psychological practice and interventions designed to provide input to a whole community.

Racial structures shaped by the apartheid's regime created a divide between racial groups in the past. Despite numerous efforts and a lot of progress regarding breaking down historically shaped racial structures, the effects of a racialized society are not totally eradicated. These effects contribute to the challenge to make mental health services equally accessible to all South Africans and again the practice of Community Psychology provides a workable solution.

Sex work is often the only way women can find food or shelter or migrants could travel from other African countries to South Africa. This desperate measure leads to the spread of HIV/Aids, now a pandemic in South Africa. The consequence of this pandemic is a loss of adults in all roles of society, including parents and teachers. One of the far-reaching consequences of this is child-headed households and a potential crisis regarding a lack of teachers in a few years time. Violence, on the other hand is a direct action against another person or property to bring harm. Although different communities might interpret violence differently, it still poses a huge mental health crises as the vast majority of South African are subjected to some or other traumatic experience. Only by addressing these issues collectively could a solution be found.

Based on the above it seems that Community Psychology provides a potential effective approach to address the needs of underprivileged and marginalised communities, as the central focus is social justice, social action and the wellbeing of all people.

Christian Community Psychology

The Institute of Christian Psychology (ICP) faced the challenge to develop Christian Community Psychology when it was phased in as a 4th year subject of the Bachelor of Psychology (B Psych) degree in 2007. In order to develop this perspective a three pronged approach was

followed, id est

- A critical evaluation of the meta-theoretical perspectives underpinning Community Psychology from a Biblical Worldview perspective;
- The application of a Biblically based systemic approach to Community Psychology;
- The execution of a practicum that focuses on the application and practice of the theoretical grounding of Community Psychology including a Biblically based systemic approach. This component of the course entails that students engage in community service learning or project work, group supervision and self-reflexive report writing that is relevant to the South African context. Students were expected to engage in and write about: (a) an appreciative inquiry regarding HIV/AIDS community resources and needs or any other community of their choice; and, (b) a community intervention project with a Christian social activist approach.

As a result of the abovementioned process a Christian Community Psychology approach was developed to compliment the eco-systemic perspective.

Eco-systemic Perspective

According to Kirsten, Van der Walt and Viljoen (2009) eco-systemic anthropology elicits a paradigm shift towards health, wellbeing and wellness. The assumption underlying this approach states the the human being is a whole person and dispute the dichotomy of body and mind. Health, including mental health, should be approach from a multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary position.

Health and wellbeing is further viewed in the context of resilience, strengths and fulfillment, rather than the absence of pathology. It is based on an interplay of biological, social, psychological and spiritual factors. Thus, a biopsychosocio/spiritual systemic approach is followed to describe and interpret illness, identify salutogenic factors, discover resilience embedded in communities and design preventative measures and other interventions to promote physical and mental health.

Bronfenbrenner (1999) distinguishes between five different environmental systems that in-

fluence development throughout our lifespan. These systems are the micro-system (the direct environment such as the family system), the meso-system (the social environment, such as the school or church), the exosystem (systems influencing the child environment indirectly, such as a father that works abroad), the macrosystem (socio-economic status and cultural contexts) and the chronosystem (transitions during the lifespan).

Von Bertalanffy (1962) describes a system as a complex of components in reciprocal interaction. This implies that all systems are interrelated and a change on one level or in one part would have an effect on all other systems. The whole is considered to be greater than the sum of its parts and any phenomenon should be considered the result of a circular dynamic process rather than a linear process of cause and effect.

The circular dynamic process emerges from feedback loops that exist between the different systems and subsystems and describe patterns of interaction. When these patterns of interaction facilitate movement towards stability (morphostasis) it is called negative feedback loops and when it facilitate movement towards change (morphogenesis) it is called positive feedback loops. (The terms negative and positive do not refer to any judgement of good or bad.) The patterns of communication pertain to information about events in the system or new information entering from an external source, which is again part of a wider system. Both types of feedback loops are required for growth in a system and the achievement of goals.

A Biblical perspective on systems theory supports many of these assumptions but careful consideration, evaluation and reconstruction is required to place this approach on a truly Biblical foundation.

A Biblically Based Systemic Perspective

The development of Christian Community Psychology, which reflects a Biblically based understanding of the human psyche and communities with their strengths and weaknesses was based on Biblical worldview statements as

opposed to the emerging participatory world-views.

The core worldview statements that are viewed as pertinent to Community Psychology praxis and thus considered include ontology, anthropology, epistemology and ecclesiology.

The scope of this article does not allow for a full discussion of these worldview statements, but some of the core statements are presented.

Ontology highlights that God exists as a personal God and Creator and that humans are created in the image of God as conscious and self-conscious beings. It is further stated that angels are created heavenly beings and that fallen angels exist in the invisible realm.

These belief statements acknowledge the spiritual dimension of existence, a supra-system that all people exist in but can not observe with our natural senses. In this regard there is an agreement with African worldview statements although the description of specific spiritual entities and their functions differ.

Anthropology states that human beings are created in God's image as body and soul/spirit and possess moral, social and mental capacities. These capacities reflect the image of God in humans. Human beings are sinful and in need of salvation. Salvation is based on God's love for his creation. True self-knowledge could only be gained through Christ. The belief in the fall of humankind and the need for salvation and a Saviour, who is the only Mediator between God and man, separate the Christian belief system from other worldviews. The traditional African worldview claims that ancestors exist on a me-so-cosmic level and act as mediators between the Supreme being (God) and humans.

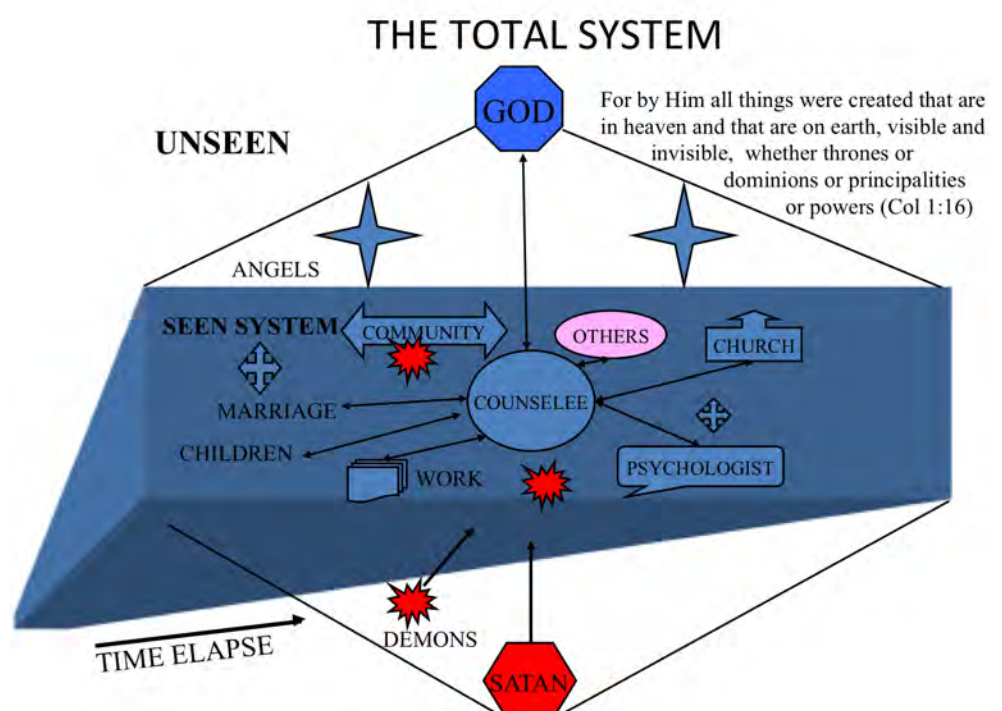
Epistemology claims the foundation of knowledge comes from God. It further states that we could gain knowledge through senses as well

as from mystical encounters (invisible realm). This statement aligns to some degree with an African epistemology emphasising that knowledge could be derived from spiritual and mystical encounters.

Ecclesiology refers to the church as a community of believers and how it functions in terms of hierarchical structures and calling. The church provides as with an example of a healing community as one of the functions is to care for its members and to reach out to those in need. In this sense the church is called to participatory action in the world.

A Biblically based systemic perspective allows a Christian Community Psychology to emerge that adheres to the principles and values of Community Psychology (active participation in communities, respect for all people and a focus on social action and change to improve all societies). It further allows the acknowledgment of a spiritual dimension as the supra-system, Trans-human in nature, that steers, empowers and sustains all things. From a Biblical perspective the Trans-human system is believed to be the Tri-une God who encompasses and sustains all of creation forever, which include micro-systems, meso-systems, mexo-system, macro-systems and the chronosystem.

The following diagram illustrates the Biblical-based systemic approach.



Christian Community Psychology Praxis

As mentioned before, social action and social change processes to achieve social justice are emphasised in Community Psychology. Thus, careful consideration of a Biblical approach to social action and social justice is warranted.

Social activism is often the approach taken to achieve social justice. Activism refers to the practice of vigorous action or involvement to achieve political or other goals. It embodies intentional action aimed at social justice and accentuates the imperativeness of intentional and prolonged action to bring about social transformation.

Social transformation rooted in social justice aligns with the Biblical imperative for equity and compassion among all people. Various passages in the Bible refer to justice and peace in all human relationships and social structures. This leads to the concept of Christian social activism that embodies intentional action and social justice according to Biblical principles, transcending humanism and elevates Christ.

In Christian social activism intentional action is based on Matth 22:37-39

*“And He replied to him, You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, and with all your soul
and with all your
mind (intellect).
This is the great (most important) and first
commandment.
And the second is like it, You shall love your
neighbour like
(you do) yourself.”*

Christian social activism stems from compassion and is aimed at social justice according to Isaiah 58.6-7

- “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every enslaving yoke?”

It further seeks social transformation as described in Isaiah 58:7

“Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house? When you see the naked that you cover him,

and that you hide not yourself from the needs of your own flesh and blood?”

Jesus Christ acts as a social activist in his confrontation of hypocrisy when he states in Matthew 23:23:

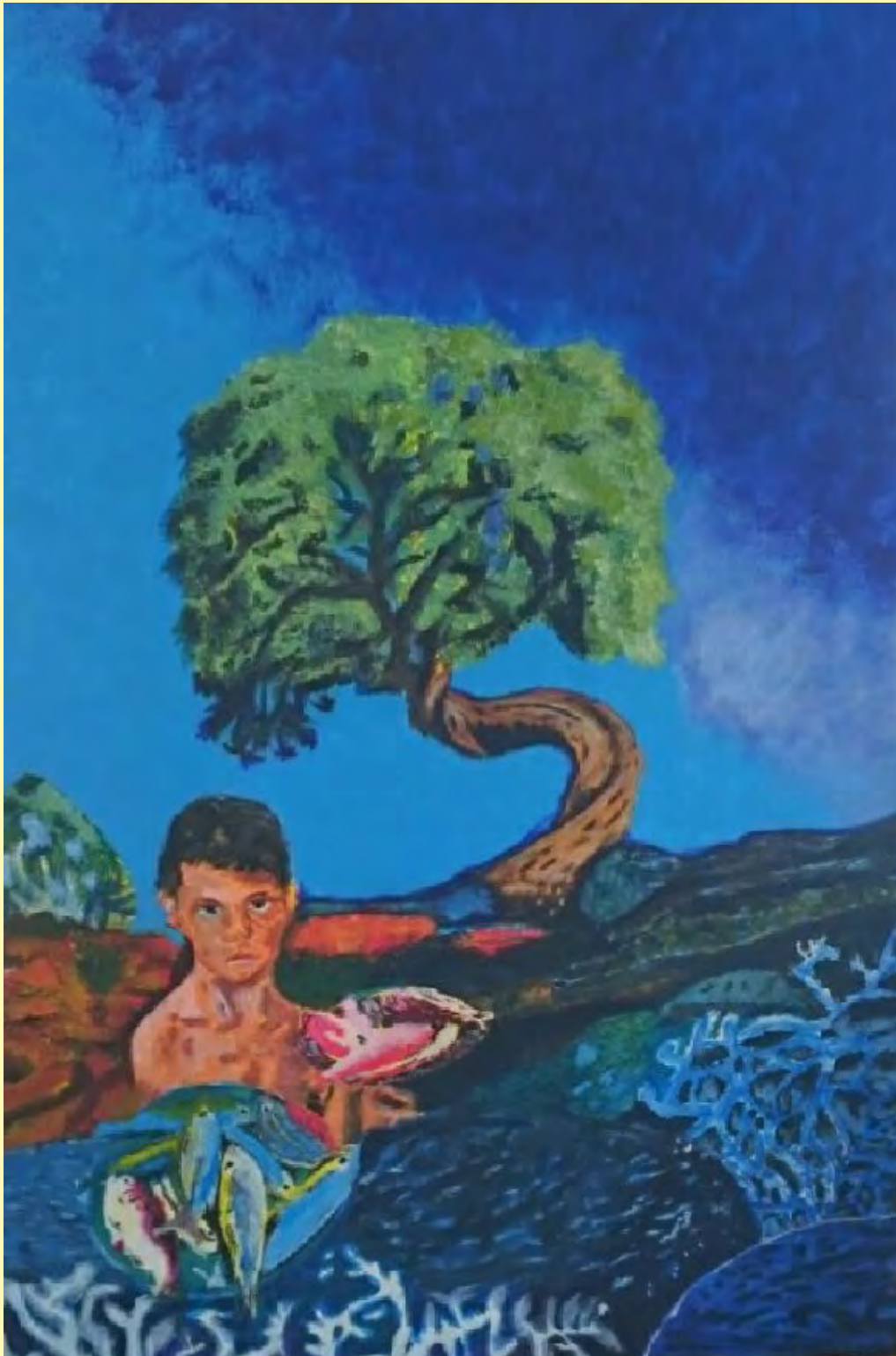
„Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

Context and community could make all the difference to healing processes as displayed in Biblical healing stories, which indicate that the healing took place in some corporate context. For example, the story of the sick man who had to be let down through the roof into the room where Jesus was because the door was blocked by a large number of people (Mark 2:1-5) shows how the importance of community. The early church operated strongly on principles of compassion and sharing and is associated with spiritual life and healing. Thus, it transpires that a community could elicit healing processes by collective participation in social processes aimed at social transformation.

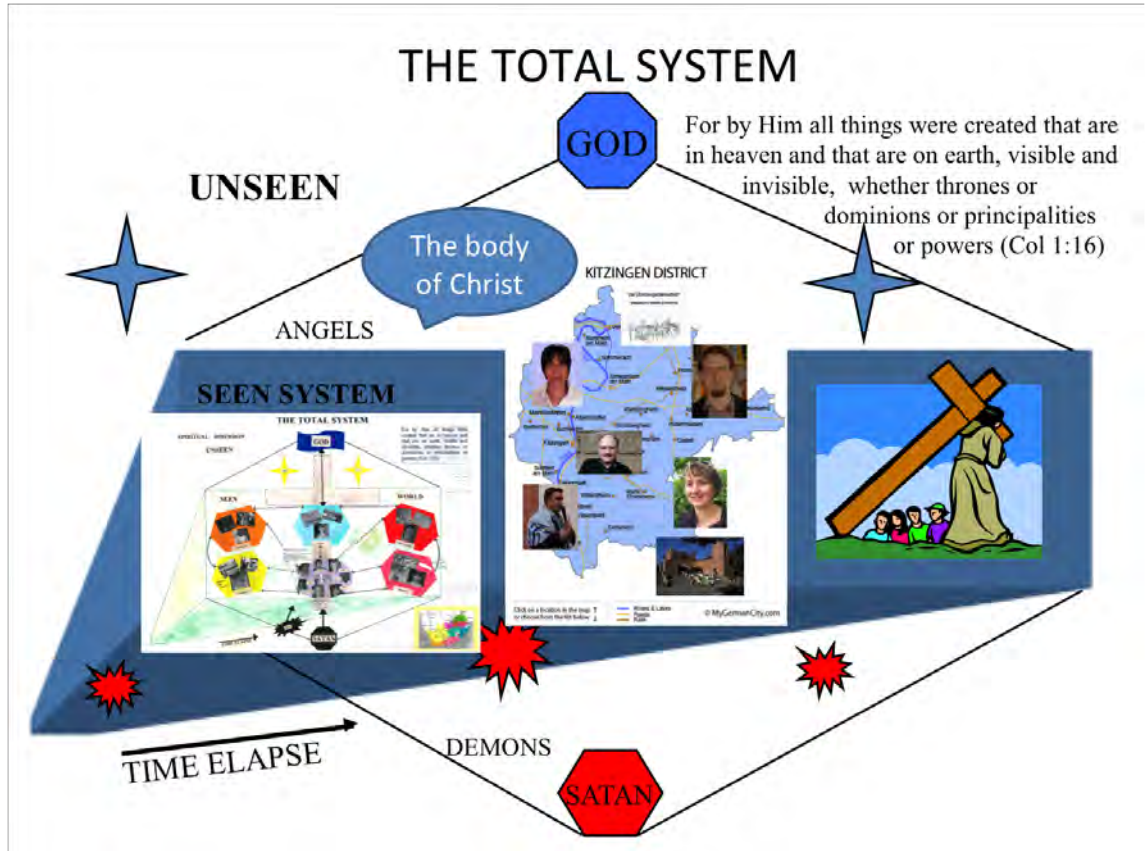
Community projects

The ICP engaged in community projects as a non-profit organisation and by means of the Community Projects executed by B 4th year B Psych students. As mentioned above the execution of a Community Project was compulsory for all B Psych students of the ICP. Important methodology for the project include appreciative inquiry, action learning, action research and participatory research principles, which students are expected to use in their approach to their community project and service learning. Students are encouraged to engage in a holistic and systemic social activist approach that includes all aspects of a community existence and allows for Biblically based interventions, such as assessment of historical social destructive patterns, spiritual beliefs, generational spiritual inheritance and prayer.

Community projects are executed in various communities all over South Africa as students live in different geographical areas. The 4th year



Surplus and Scarcity
By Nqobile Buthelezi



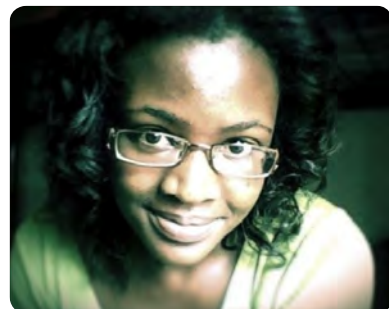
B Psych students from IITC also participated in community projects and the concept of systems theory indicate that the participation in one community (a sub-system) from one student (a subsystem of the ICP) influenced all other 4th year B Psych students (a subsystem, consisting of 4th year B Psych students) as all the projects were discussed and collective prayers were offered for all the communities involved. The same principle is valid for interlinks formed between the ICP students and the German students. Thus, the South African communities and German communities were linked by means of the involvement of ICP and IITC students in community projects.

Based on Biblically based systemic perspective it implies interconnection between the ICP and all the communities represented by the Community Psychology students and their systems (visible realm). It further implies an interconnection with the invisible realm (God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, angels, fallen angels, satan) and a method to bring the Kingdom of God to communities across the world.

Community links between South Africa and Germany (visible realm) as well as the invisible realm illustrated in the diagram.

South Africa and Namibia Community project report

Gloria Shileka, one of our current 4th final year B Psych student from Namibia, engaged in and completed a community project for pregnant adolescents in Windhoek (the capital city of Namibia).



Gloria report as follows on the project:

1. Abstract

Background. The non-profit organisation, Beautiful Kidz started a new, "Young and Pregnant". It is an 8-week program for pregnant adolescents and young adults age 15-25 that is pregnant for the first time. The program consisted of 9 girls and was conducted at the Beautiful Kidz centre with four program coordinators from June 15 to August 5. The primary objective of the pro-

gram was to provide prenatal education care, and to determine effectiveness of program on the lifestyle, and improved psychological, spiritual and prenatal outcomes. Methods. The girls were presented with two classes a week, a theoretical class on Mondays and a practical class on Wednesdays for two hours. Results. The program was successful in creating a supportive environment and fostering a sense of 'we-ness' between the girls, all the girls tended to breastfeed, and all the babies were born healthy. However, the spiritual aspect of the program could not be implemented due to a low attendance at the end. Conclusions. The program was a success; however, there were various administrative, logistical and cultural aspects to the program that could be better managed in the future.

2. Introduction

In view of the increase of pregnant young girls within the Katutura community, Beautiful Kidz decided to design a new project called Young and Pregnant. One of the interests of Beautiful Kidz was to provide a support group for young and pregnant girls. It was the experience of one of the staff members at Beautiful Kidz, Nicol, that if one of the young people who regularly come to the centre became pregnant, they would avoid coming to the centre altogether. In response to this and to reduce the stress and isolation faced by pregnant adolescents, the program young and pregnant was developed to provide a warm and non-judgemental atmosphere where pregnant adolescent girls could learn more about pregnancy and share their prenatal experiences.

Prenatal care was initially developed as a preventive health initiative to lessen ill health and mortality among pregnant women (Ruiz-Mirazo, Lopez-Yarto, McDonald, 2012). Early prenatal care is essential to mothers and babies. Doctors preferably see their pregnant patients around 8 weeks of pregnancy in which an initial evaluation is conducted which includes checking for sexually transmitted infections, they screen for gestational diabetes, and to find out when the due date is. When a woman comes in during the third trimester for an initial check-up, the due date is typically not accurate; which

could result in preterm labour. Being born pre-term has severe consequences; such babies are more at risk for respiratory distress syndrome, and later on in life diabetes, heart disease and obesity. Among the benefits of prenatal care is the ability to anticipate future or current problems; hence, it is essential to the health of both mother and child. Prenatal care allows health care providers to take timely measures to ensure the wellbeing of the mother and child.

An essential part about prenatal care is educating pregnant on how to best care for themselves and their growing baby. There are two kinds of prenatal care; individual prenatal care and another group prenatal care. Traditional individual prenatal care (which occurs when women are seen one-on-one in an exam room) is preferably complemented by group prenatal classes, which facilitate support networks, social interaction, and additional education (Ruiz-Mirazo, Lopez-Yarto, McDonald, 2012). The model of group care was created in 1974 and offered pregnant women a new mode of interacting (Walker & Worrell, 2008). Group care improved pregnancy outcomes, motivated behaviour change, as well as increased patient satisfaction (Beck, Scott, Williams, Robertson, Jackson, Gade, 1997). A model of group care that is often used today, Centering Pregnancy was developed in 1994 (Rising, 1998). Participants of Centering Pregnancy are said to be less likely to develop postpartum depression and have preterm births.

3. Literature Overview

3.1 Centering Pregnancy Group Program

Given how short prenatal visits are with a health care provider, it is often the case that pregnant women left want to get more information about pregnancy. It is impossible to give women expertise and ample information during their short visit with the doctor at a hospital or clinic. Centering Pregnancy is a prenatal care model where the pregnant women will come to a prenatal visit in a group setting with other women who are due around the same month (Rising, 1998). Centering combines patient health assessment, with interactive learning, and community building with time allotted for one-on-

one interaction as needed. When an organisation offers Centering Pregnancy, the women have access to their chart; they take their own blood pressure and do their own urine tests with the guidance of a midwife (Rising, 1998). Women take an active role in their prenatal care, that is, Centering is a very empowering role during the pregnancy.

3.2 Low socio-economic factors and teenage pregnancy

Socio-economic circumstances play a key role in the numbers of teen pregnancy. Young women from low-income families are getting pregnant in higher numbers than those from middle and upper income families. Literature shows that young girls living in poverty have a teen pregnancy rate, which is five times the average (Hunt, 2004). Children of teenage parents are more likely to have problems and to eventually become teenage parents themselves, thus preserving the cycle of poverty initiated by a teenage birth (Pro-Action, Postponement, and Preparation/Support). Adolescents tend to be self-focused, and most believe that no one understands them or their situation (Gullota et al., 1999). Pregnant adolescents from low-socioeconomic circumstances need unique assistance to cope and make well-informed choices in the future.

3.3 Centering Pregnancy and adolescents

The model is based on a premise that both adult and teen women benefit from. The unique developmental needs of the pregnant adolescent require attention when designing prenatal care services. Many adolescents enter pregnancy with poor health habits, and many do not make the necessary adjustments in lifestyle that are necessary to promote a healthy pregnancy (Grady & Bloom, 2004). Teens often receive limited or no prenatal care. The Centering Pregnancy model of group prenatal care provides education and support for young women in an active and developmentally appropriate environment. Research shows that the Centering Pregnancy model works well for adolescents (Grady & Bloom, 2004). Centering Pregnancy allows adolescents to explore their feelings and concerns about pregnancy and parenting in a

safe and supportive environment. Adolescents realize that they can change health behaviours and gain support from other young women in the group (Grady & Bloom, 2004).

3.4 Centering pregnancy incorporates cultural perspectives

Centering Pregnancy is considerate of the cultural backgrounds of participants and encourages discussion. Centering pregnancy is a program that's quite popular in California public hospitals where most of the participants are of Latin-American descent. During the group discussions the Latin-American women would talk in Spanish about a whole range of topics from eating healthy to dealing with problems at home.

Women of lower socioeconomic status, of racial minorities, and adolescent women often have lower attendance at prenatal education classes (Carrol et al., 2001). Challenges to retention in prenatal care are common. In a prenatal care randomized controlled trial which sought to find the determining characteristics of women who drop out of prenatal care found that women who live under challenging circumstances were difficult to retain in a prenatal care, regardless of the intervention (Tough, Siever & Johnston, 2007). For women with difficult health, lifestyle and social issues, lack of retention may be due to incongruence between their needs and the program (Tough, Siever & Johnston, 2007). To help retain women and ensure that they receive sufficient prenatal care, prenatal programs need to consider assessing how well their programs are meeting the needs of their clientele, including consideration of cultural traditions, psychosocial variables, and lifestyle factors (Tough, Siever & Johnston, 2007). Prior to the development of new program, input from women less likely to complete prenatal programs may be valuable to identify barriers to service, which could be addressed in the design phase (Bedics, 1994). Incentives for participation in prenatal care may also help retain women in prenatal care programs. Tough, Siever & Johnston, (2007) conclude that, "even under a universal system of care and with supplementary prenatal support, optimal birth and early childhood out-

comes will not be achieved until programs and resources are implemented which better meet the needs and preferences of all women”.

4. Setting and context

4.1 Beautiful Kidz and 3measures

The Young and Pregnant program is a partnership between 3Measures and beautiful kidz. 3Measures is a community development/church planting work in Katutura, Namibia (3Measures, 2015). Their aim is to impact all measures of community: physical, social and spiritual. Beautiful Kidz is a welfare organisation established by Brain and Pam Kinghorn; it is affiliated with Youth With A Mission (Beautiful Kidz, 2013). Essentially, Beautiful Kidz Namibia is an international interdenominational Christian organisation, providing support and care for needy children and their families (Beautiful Kidz, 2013). Beautiful Kidz aims to provide medical, emotional, spiritual, physical and educational care to children in need.

4.2 Katutura

Beautiful Kidz is located in Katutura is a township in Windhoek. More specifically it is located in the area called Damara location. Katutura is one of Namibia's biggest townships (Pendleton, 2002). Katutura has a population of 43,109 in the 2011 census. In 1913 blacks living in various parts of the Windhoek area were relocated to new areas, which was based on a division of ethnic groups (Pendleton, 2002). The Damara people were assigned their own location, which has since kept its name. The name Katutura means, 'We do not have a permanent habitation.' This name derives from the fact that since white immigrants come to the city centres, Katutura was the fifth location the blacks had lived in Windhoek (Pendleton, 2002). Today, Katutura is a vibrant city, which makes up 60% of Windhoek's population. Generations of oppression have resulted in the never-ending cycle of poverty, unemployment, alcoholism and HIV (3measures, 2015). These are a few of the difficulties that are faced by the residents in Katutura. Katutura is a place where people have little hope for brighter days, yet is filled with immeasurable opportunity (3measures, 2015). On other problem of concern in the township is that of teenage pregnancy.

4.3 Damara culture and beliefs

All the girls are of Damara descent, which is an ethnic group that makes up 8.5% of Namibia's population (Pendleton, 2002). Along with Bushmen, Damara people belong to the oldest tribes in Namibia. The Damara people native language is Khoekhoe language. The Damara are divided into various clans, each consisting of a chief under the Kingship of Justus Garoeb. Traditionally, they were a combination of hunter-gatherer culture and herders of cattle, goats and sheep (Pendleton, 2002). What we found with the girls is that they held on the traditional beliefs and were urged to abide by them during their time of pregnancy, even though when asked why they believed what they did, they could never say why. Even when the middle aged members or parents of the girls where asked how the cultural belief came about, the answer was often that, that is how their parents did it, so that is why they do it as well. Some of the traditions that the girls held about pregnancy include; she would have to have her hair braided and wrapped in scarf when she gives birth, she is to wear that scarf for three months after the child is born, after the child is born she and the baby are to remain in the home for three months, and for those three months she is not allowed to eat anything other than porridge and meat with no seasoning.

There are also various myths and beliefs in the community about pregnancy and breastfeeding. It is believed that if the mother is struggling to breastfeed her child she has to put a hot teabag on her breast to get the milk flowing, also if the child does not want to drink from the breast, than the mother should give them diluted porridge or tea in a feeding bottle. This is done because formula is too expensive for the mothers. In spite of all the basic information about pregnancy was provided especially regarding nutrition during pregnancy, a lot of the advice will most likely not be taken into consideration, which may negatively affect the child's development. All of the girls were unemployed; some were still in school, while others had dropped out. They tended to live with parents, grandparents or other relatives, who either have a low status job or were unemployed.

5. Method and Approach



Abundance of Nature
By Nqobile Buthelezi

5.1 Coordinators

For my community intervention project, I collaborated with a three other women to carry out the young and pregnant program. The three other members were Nicol, Sandy, and Jennieke. Nicol, the brain behind the project is a permanent employee at Beautiful Kidz; she is involved with the youth and is a dance teacher at the centre. At the time of the program, she was also pregnant. Sandy, is part of a sister program of Beautiful Kidz called 3measures which is a community development program. She is a wife and a mother of two boys. Jennieke is the Manager of Nakusa, which is a needlework project for women in the community at the Beautiful Kidz centre. Like Nicol she too was pregnant during the program.

5.2 Recruiting the participants

Nicol gathered most of the information for the program. She travelled to Durban to see a lady who is conducting a similar program for pregnant adolescents. On one occasion, during the planning phase, Nicol, Jennieke and I went to Acacia High School to talk to the guidance teacher as well as some of the girls that are pregnant at the school. During the interview with the girls, we asked her whether she would like to join the program as well as, what her home situation is like. Unfortunately, none girls from the school joined the program.

The largest pool of the girls resulted when Nicol and Jennieke went into the community asking if there were any pregnant girls that the community members knew of. Other methods of recruitment included putting up posters around the area as well as leaving applications for to join the program at the Katutura antenatal clinic. There was a large pool of interested girls at the antenatal clinic, however very few could make it to the centre to take part in the program. All the girls that attended the program were from around the Damara Location area, which is where the Beautiful Kidz centre is situated. A basic demographic form was given to the girls in order to collect information such as their age, contact details and what they would like from such a program. Most of the girls left the last part blank.

5.3 Eight Week Programme

The program was for 8 weeks from the 15th of June to the 5th of August. The classes were on Monday's and Wednesday's and during each day the girls were given a snack. June 15th was the introductory class; during this class the girls did an icebreaker, and went through the scripture Psalm 139:13-16, the lecture topic focused on the value of a child, and what not to do during pregnancy. Also the girls were shown a short video clip about the growth of a baby. On June 17th the subject was going deeper, the girls had to do an activity called 'cross the line if...' and the girls had an opportunity to tell their story. On June 22nd, the girls were taught the various symptoms they will experience throughout their pregnancy and the warning signs they should watch out for. The activity at the end of the lecture was a quiz about general pregnancy facts. On June 24th the girls had a photo-shoot where the girls spent the day at Parliament Gardens taking photos as a group. On June 29th a Doctor from the State Hospital gave a talk to the girls about the importance of antenatal check-ups. At the end the girls had to fill in a birth plan form. July 1st was a baby shower for the girls who were due to give birth in the month of July. July 6th Jennieke gave a lecture about the first 1000 days of a baby's life that is the first 3 years including the gestation period. July 8th the girls did a crafts activity where they painted a profile of their belly.

July 13th Sandy taught the girls about breast-feeding and bottle-feeding; she explained why breast-feeding is the best alternative to feeding your newborn baby. July 15th the girls watched a movie, 'What to expect when you are expecting'. July 20th the girls were taught about recognizing labour signs, labour positions, procedures and what to expect. July 22nd the subject was family time, the girls wrote letters to their baby. July 27th consisted of doing house visits and doing a follow up on the girls who had given birth. July 29th and August 3rd were cancelled because the girls didn't show up. August 5th was the finally baby shower for one of the girls. August 12th was the day of the evaluation where the coordinators discussed the evaluation forms of the girls as well as the answers to

their own evaluation forms and made recommendations for the next young and pregnant project, which will most likely be in 2016.

6. Process

The evaluation was conducted by assigning a questionnaire to both the girls and to the program coordinators. The questionnaire was given to the girls during home visits and left for the girls to fill in to be collected on a subsequent day

The overall feedback gathered from the girls was positive and the reflections of the coordinators indicate how they were impacted by the project. However, it confirms the importance of community participation in the design and execution of a community project, rather than a top-down process.

7. Reflections of the coordinators

Nicol - The program impacted me in many ways. Seeing the girls facing so many challenges made me realize how thankful I should be. Darleen losing her baby impacted me in a very personal way. It challenged me about who God is. His understanding is so much above mine.

Jennieke- It was fulfilling to reach out to the girls. As I am pregnant myself it was interesting to take part in the program and also learn more about pregnancy. The program provided a unique insight into what would be an appropriate program for young Damara girls.

Gloria – The program impacted me immensely, I've learned so much about pregnancy that I did not know before the program. Some things intrigued me and other things just outright terrified me. I've seen how girls from impoverished homes cope with being young and pregnant and I've also seen the darker side of pregnancy, which is losing a child only days after labour.

At the end of the project was that sobering realization that no matter what organisation plans a project, projects are often not perfect. One reason for this was the project was planned and executed top-down among disregard for of the real-life conditions of the people affected. The results: the target groups cooperate only haltingly and demonstrate at times a great degree of apathy. Adolescents are not going to change their lifestyle habits overnight just because they are told to do so. In order to bring about change, the health care provider should work within the context of the pregnant adolescent's current habits, considering the context of family and cultural beliefs.

Written by Gloria Shileka

This report illustrates how the principles of community psychology and action research methodology were put into practice by one of the ICP students.

Conclusion

Community psychology provides an approach that psychology practice that could benefit whole societies and lead to social transformation by means of psychological interventions that are preventative in nature and systemically oriented. The participatory philosophy underlying community psychology ensures that psychologists gain deeper understanding of the cultural diverse communities they serve. Christian Community Psychology gives expression to divine Grace by means of social activism and social justice that embodies the character of Christ. It encompasses the Trans-human and spiritual dimension of existence and anchors theory and practice in God the Creator, God the Father and God, the Son.

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Wolfram Soldan (Germany)

Comment to „Christian Community Psychology“

When our new ICP studies with Nicolene began in 2010, it was the first time that I had heard of “Community Psychology”. And it was the same for my psychologist colleagues. We did not even know how we should translate this term into German and initially called it “Gemeinschaftsbezogene Psychologie” [“community or communion related psychology”] before we discovered that Community Psychology also exists in German under the slightly misleading name “Gemeindepsychologie”. Translating “Gemeinde” back into English with a dictionary leads first of all to “municipality” and then soon to “parish”, which quickly shows what misleading or, more precisely, restrictive associations the term brings with it in German. Since “community” is understood very broadly as used in Gemeindepsychologie – usually expressed in German, therefore, by the term “Lebenswelt” [“sphere of living”, “life environment”] – it is therefore of course possible, in principle, for a church congregation, too, to be a “subject” in Gemeindepsychologie, although this was untypical in the short tradition of Gemeindepsychologie, usually bearing a strong “progressive left wing” imprint. Because of different circumstances and special differences between the South African and German concepts of “social ecology”, our students did nevertheless actually carry out their projects in Gemeindepsychologie in (Christian) congregations (Gemeinden), more precisely in congregations with which they had no personal familiarity.

As the responsible tutor, it was my duty and privilege to refresh completely my ideas about this exciting field of psychology. Particularly interesting to me was the principle of the openly-discussed value-oriented basis of Community Psychology, which it shares with Christian Psychology. In this respect, the value definitions, as the middle part of Nicolene’s article shows,

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His main topics include forgiveness processes, dealing with the Bible in counselling and sexuality.



Articles by Wolfram:

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/48>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/76>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/4/#/6>

differ strongly in some cases, but also show a substantial overlapping between Community Psychology and Christian Psychology.

For me it was both surprising and gladdening to see how openly Nicolene discussed such paradigms of Christian-influenced Community Psychology as a Trinitarian personal God, angels, demons and psychology to exalt Christ. It struck me that this is easier to do in an African culture in which transcendent themes have a recognised place anyway – and are thus already respected in accordance with the principles of Community Psychology. In our European tradition, more marked by agnostic, atheistic or materialistic thinking, one would express oneself rather more „indirectly“ and „philosophically“ in order to be taken seriously at all.

In her graphic of „the entire system“, in which this comprehensive perspective is represented following Bronfenbrenner and depicted in concentrated form, it struck me that the representation could be misunderstood as being duali-

stic, which was certainly not intended: God and Satan appear optically as symmetrical, which in Christian cosmology they never are, of course (in contrast e.g. to Zoroastrianism). There I would have wished for a representation which also made it clear optically that Satan and demons are still creatures which have their place in God's plans and must obey him (against their wills).

In the project in question, it struck me that there is an analogy between the German and African experiences of involvement with new communities, which, typically for Community Psychology, are dynamically unpredictable and personally challenging for the students (and supervisors). At the same time, I was also moved to see how different the challenges are: in Germany the prime concern was the overcoming of

barriers in the minds of those involved, whereas the African project described concerned, besides the barriers in the minds which obviously also played a role, much more basal, more existential needs.

My own experience of being moved will in turn affect my interactions with my students in what is now unfortunately the last class I will teach. A good example of a fruitful interaction, by means of Nicolene's article, of the „subsystems“ of the „system“ ICP in South Africa, Namibia and Germany. Part of this systemic interaction is of course the fact that I, as a newcomer to the Community Psychology inspired by the ICP, am writing this article at all and that I have already had the privilege of teaching (on another topic) at the ICP in Germiston.



Distortion Masked
By Nqobile Buthelezi

Bèné Katabua

Treating Missionary Kids with Psychological Challenges

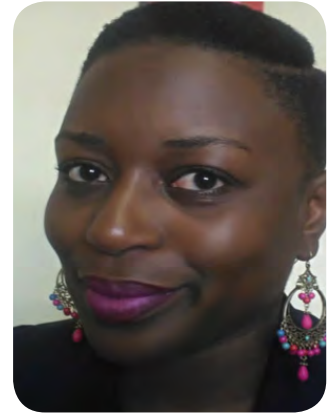
La pratique de la psychothérapie reste intéressante en raison de la diversité des phénomènes qui nous sommes exposés, compte tenu du caractère évolutif de l'homme.

Cela signifie que, comme la pratique des psychologues, nous pouvons traiter les gens avec les mêmes Diagnostics, mais avoir adapté nos approches basées sur le contexte particulier. Une fois que l'aspect de la foi est inclus, il ouvre d'avantage les possibilités de la façon d'adapter notre traitement. Il ajoute également des détails entourant le genre de personnes des difficultés qui peuvent être recouvertes. Cet article est à traiter les enfants des missionnaires ayant des difficultés psychologiques et implique aussi bien les professionnels et les parents, tel qu'il a appliqué une approche holistique. L'auteur commence être donnant un bref aperçu dans les phénomènes d'enfants de troisième culture ; qui comprend les enfants missionnaires.

Certains problèmes communs au sein de ce groupe sont ensuite discutés, avant d'énumérer les moyens dans lesquels les professionnels et les parents peuvent intervenir. L'article conclut en illustrant les défis communs auxquels font face les enfants missionnaires, comme cela a été remarqué dans la pratique.

Missionary Kids form part of a broader group of internationally mobile children, who commonly go by the term "Third Culture Kids". A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a child who has spent the majority of their developmental years in a culture outside of their parents'. This group comprises of a) children of international business people, b) children of diplomats, c) children of military personnel, and d) children of missionaries (Hervey, 2009). What distinguishes MKs from the other sub-group denominations is how much they immerse themselves into their environments, given the nature of their parents' work (Kimber, 2012). Whereas, the other groups are more likely to attend international

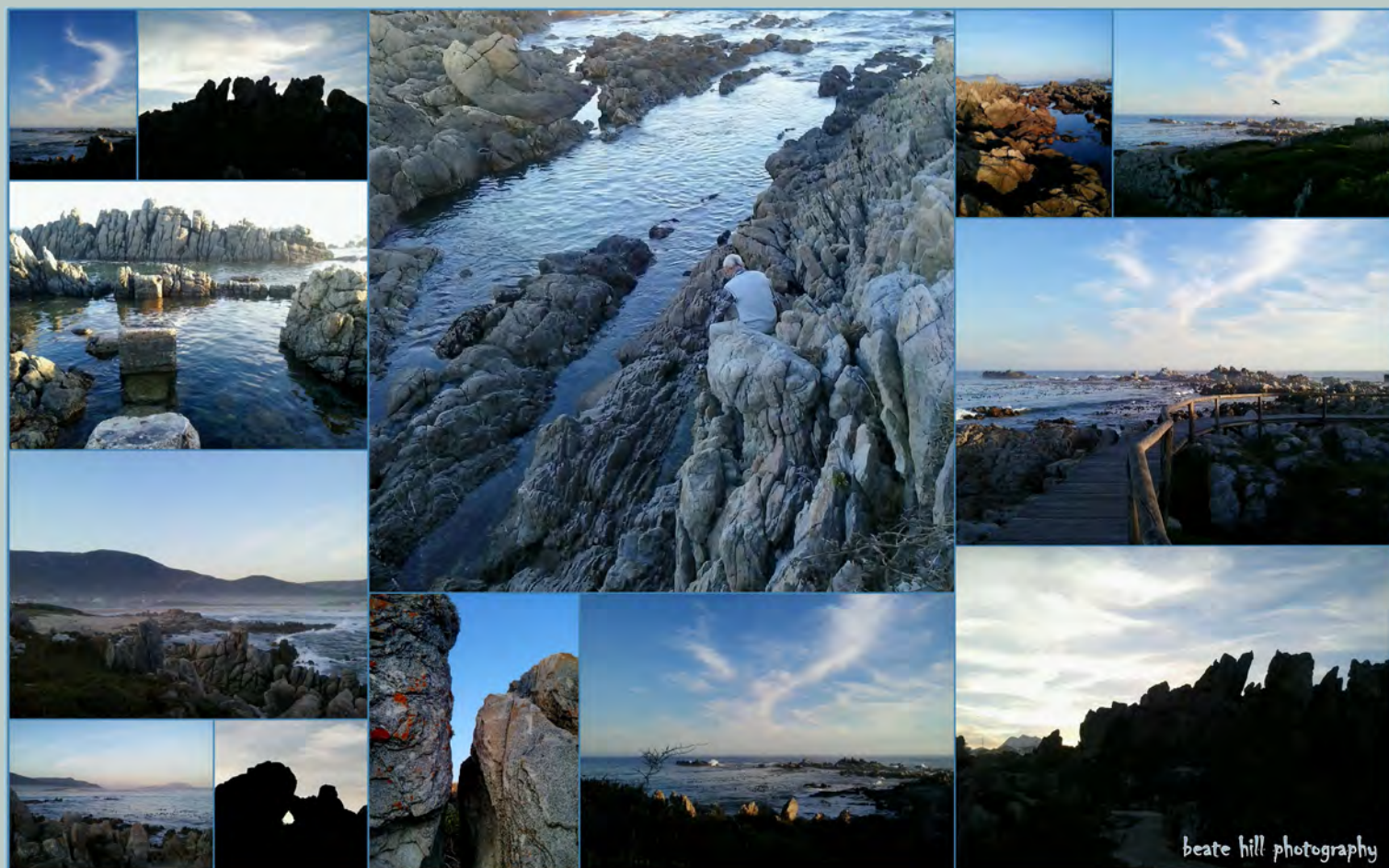
Bèné Katabua is an Educational Psychologist and Lecturer in Johannesburg. She is passionate about mental-health service delivery, and is currently in a space where she can align her faith with her practice at the Institute of Christian Psychology. Practicing within a Christian Psychology framework, she is able to work with people past the point of their psyche and also explore spiritual challenges where necessary. She has several years' experience working with children from a variety of backgrounds, given the diverse nature of South Africa. This is something, which intrigues her, as it permits her to find creative ways to help those in need. Bene is from the Democratic Republic of Congo and her home language is French.



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schools, and spend time on military camps, etc. as opposed to participating in the cultural lifestyle of the natives. One would think that this would give the MK an edge above the rest, as s/he should have an affinity for languages and an ability to adjust easily to a new situation. Interestingly, this is not a universal truth (Davis, Suarez, Crawford, & Reh fuss, 2013).

There has been a surge of interest into MKs and the complexities they face, due to their constant geographical displacements. This attention calls for interventions to be put in place for their reentry into their parents' home country, as well as for their psychological well-being (Adams, Shaver, & White, 2003; Bikos, et al., 2009; Davis, et al., 2010; Kimber, 2012; Klemens & Bikos, 2009). Davis et al. (2013) explain that this mobility is not only followed by the ability to easily make friends and adapt socially. It also leads the



The photo collages are created by Beate Hill (72). Beate is mother of 6 and grandmother of 12, lives in SA since 1968 and used to be a music teacher. Her hobbies are painting and photography. Kleinmond, Cape Region

MK to constantly lose their close relationships, their possessions, and what they knew as 'normal' for that time. The grief experienced from these losses therefore can occur regularly. However, as this grief is not associated with loss due to death, it is not often acknowledged correctly. Another effect of this lifestyle is the sense of rootlessness, and lack of identity. Their idea of home is often a complex and confusing one, due to their mobile lifestyle (Bikos, et al., 2009; Gerner & Perry, 2000; Hervey, 2009). They spent little time in the country, which issued their passport, and they are still outsiders in the countries they move to. This makes it difficult to form a sense of belonging, and therefore an identity (Dixon & Hayden, 2008). One therefore understands the loss of control that some MKs feel. They don't often have a say in the decision-making process of moving, and these significant changes happen in their lives without their control (Limberg & Lambie, 2011). This could lead to a desire to seek control, which can manifest into pathology (Hogendoorn, et al., 2014).

From a young age, the MK goes through a process of transitioning, entering, and leaving; every time they join a school or are immersed into a new culture (Limberg & Lambie, 2011). Unlike other TCKs, MKs do not often go to international schools with ample psycho-social resources available to them (Adams, Shaver, & White, 2003). Instead, they join local schools as their families become a part of the community. Many of these schools do not have the social support to help MKs through their transitions, which may leave them with unresolved issues. These difficulties may later develop into anxiety and depression, due to the lack of stability and predictability (Davis, et al., 2010; Davis, et al., 2013).

The author has worked with home-schooled MKs and their families, due to the MK struggling with childhood anxiety, as well as obsessive-compulsive tendencies. These MKs were all young boys of primary-schooling age, who are being home-schooled in third-world countries. English was spoken within the home, but was not the main language where they lived. This caused a division between themselves and the

locals they play with, or interact with in various settings. It would appear that the parents learned the languages spoken in these places, but this wasn't passed down to the children. It was also evident that there was a sense of 'othering'. MKs saw themselves as quite different from locals, and would at times worry about their safety around the locals. This goes to show the image that they had formed, which would further make it difficult to identify with the locals. It was evident that they related easier to other MKs, who share the same sense of liminality than they did with local children, or even children from the countries which issued their passports. Change, being the only constant in their lives, made it difficult for them to form strong interpersonal relationships with others (Hervey, 2009). It also made it difficult for them to find stability, which caused several difficulties, manifesting through anxiety and obsessive-compulsive tendencies.

Working professionally with the anxious MK

The MKs had an understanding and appreciation of the work their families were doing, but were also able to express how hard it is for them at times. Parents were seen separately from the MK, to have a space in which to adequately give a detailed background and express their main concerns. After which, the MK was seen for an assessment or for therapy, depending on the discussion with the parent. The psychologist approached these situations using the following principles:

1. Working with the anxious child requires the therapist to be explicit and transparent at every point of the treatment, for a sense of stability and safety to be established, along with predictability.
2. Given their anxiety, and apprehension to new situations, the MKs were slow to warm up. This was expected, and therefore it is necessary to be consistently warm and inviting in spite of what they brought to the session. This was done to reassure them of the safe space, and also that their withdrawal won't cause a lack of connection.
3. Finding out their interests early on in the session helped, as those were used as ways to introduce certain topics.

4. Once rapport was built, cognitive-behavioral techniques were used, along with more directive techniques. The goal was to identify their feelings, and also to challenge negative thinking and replace them with more positive thoughts.
5. Feeling-identification was done through images, as well as personal stories sharing their feelings in order for the identification to be more experiential and personal.
6. This creates a platform for exploring situations which cause anxiety, and the thoughts which follow. After which, CBT techniques can be used to challenge these thoughts and create alternative ways of thinking.
7. This worked well with the MKs, as their critical thinking skills were in place and they were open to various interpretations, as well as creating ideas on their own. These were practiced over several sessions in various ways, encouraging it to become habitual.
8. Spiritual concerns came up, and issues regarding control were explored. This was mainly about surrendering and trusting that God is in control, and that even when the MK is unsure, God is sure and we can find comfort in that thought.
9. During termination, the therapist and the MK discussed the process and the changes which were made. Strengths and progress were amplified, as to encourage this way of thinking. Parents were then met with, in order to give feedback and recommendations going forward.
10. It was evident that parents were in need of support, so as to know how to promote positive thinking and what to change in their lifestyle in order to lessen anxiety.

Working personally with the anxious MK

There are several programs available in the United States of America, which aid reentry of MK's into American society (Adams, Shaver, & White, 2003; Davis, et al., 2010; Davis, et al., 2013; Limberg & Lambie, 2011). These programs consist of several weeks of psycho-social support which aid the transition. As these MKs are not yet at the point of reentry, some of these can be altered appropriately to aid them. Parents should be made aware of their child's diagnosis

and prognosis in order for them to facilitate the process. Parents are then encouraged to explore the following:

1. The child's feelings should be respected and validated at all times.
2. Missionaries tend to spend a large portion of their time serving the church, which at times leads to their children feeling neglected (Bikos, et al., 2009). It is therefore important for quality family time to be put in place. This should help the MK form strong interpersonal relationships.
3. Routine and structure should be exercised whenever possible. This may be difficult outside of the home, and within large groups. However, within the home, this can be implemented. This gives the MK a sense of safety and predictability, as well as stability. In large and rowdier groups, the MK can be prepared for what to expect. They should also be encouraged to take part, in spite of the lack of order.
4. Playing games, such as the UNGAME is useful not only for family time but also as a way of exploring feelings.
5. Playing with clay or kinetic sand is encouraged. This may help the child develop flexibility and let go of control in some ways.
6. Exploring different interpretations to situations would help the MK continuously develop new ways of thinking which may reduce the feelings of anxiety. Brainstorming together may give the child a sense of accomplishment and mastery.
7. In moments of anxiety, ask the child what is concerning them. This will give light into some of the scary thoughts. Prayer can then follow this, asking God to carry those concerns for the child.
8. Practicing slow, deep breathing is also useful in times of anxiety. This would help them focus on bodily sensations and how to control that, while lessening the overwhelming feeling of anxiety.
9. Encouraging and praising bravery would be beneficial. Situations could even be invented for this to occur, however small, for the child to step out of their comfort zone and attempt bravery.

10. It has been noted that including MKs in their parents' ministry increased their well-being. This sense of inclusion may also help them form an identity and a sense of belonging (Klemens & Bikos, 2009). This should be done within safe and appropriate boundaries, however.

The author's professional work with MKs supports findings which indicate high levels of anxiety within this group. Cognitive-behavioral therapy is a popular technique used to treat anxiety, and this was implemented in therapy (Hogendoorn, et al., 2014). Involving family members is necessary, so as to ensure that treatment is holistic and can be carried on when the family returns to the country where the parents work as missionaries.

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Lois J. Bushong (USA)

Comment to “Treating Missionary Kids with Psychological Challenges”

I read Dr. Katabua’s article with strong interest, as I counsel TCKs, MKs and expatriates on a regular basis in my private practice. I am also an adult missionary kid. I applaud the good work of therapists, such as Dr. Katabua, for their look at the differences between counseling those who have lived most of their years in other countries with those who have not lived for a significant amount of time abroad. To look at the systems in which the client was raised or currently lives is such an important part of our counseling and our diagnosis. I have frequently heard stories of TCKs who were misdiagnosed with heavy labels such as schizophrenia, personality disorders, or abuse because their history or system was not taken into account. I commend Dr. Katabua on her fine article on how to look at the whole client and their family system. I would like to add my own reflective comments to her article.

- I would disagree with her statement that MKs move around more than the average TCK. I believe the average MK does not experience multiple losses or moves to a greater extent over other TCKs. Some sectors move more frequently than the typical MK. For example, most missionaries serve their entire career in just one country. Although they may move around within that country, they are often reassigned to the same country. In some sectors such as the diplomatic community, the policy is to move to a different country, which could be on the other side of the world, every two years. I recently worked with a young teen, whose father was in the diplomatic community. They moved every two years or less. They never lived long enough in one place to rent a home or an apartment. He was raised in hotel suites. He had few childhood

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friendships as other children were only in the hotel for a limited time. His only true friend in one country was their limousine driver. He did not make friends at school as he was home schooled due to their frequent moves.

- I agree that if the MK attends the local school, they will miss out on the programs offered by many international schools that prepare the child for re entry back to their parent’s community. This is one of the negative points resulting from attending a local school. It is a gap where the parents can step in and prepare the child for re entry. There are many excellent books on the market that help prepare children for transitions. Many of these books have good discussion questions for the parents or therapist to use with children. Even though the trend in some agencies and countries is to attend a local school, most MKs do not attend local schools. If they are not home schooled they attend excellent Christian or secular schools in country. There are day schools such as Christian Academy in Japan, International Christian School of Hong Kong, and Carachipampa in Bolivia which have excellent reentry programs for all grades. There are a number of boarding schools such as Rift Valley Academy in Kenya, Black Forest Academy in Germany, Morrison Academy in Taiwan that offer excellent reentry programs. I have become aware of the explosi-

on of reentry programs offered by mission agencies for their missionary kids. I would encourage the therapist to explore the various programs that are available and help the parents find the right program for their MK and their individual situation.

At times I have assigned a diagnosis too quickly on an MK because of their global lifestyle or what I may have experienced in my own life as an MK. Only to discover later in the therapy process, that I was wrong in my assessment. I believe a number of questions need to be asked by the therapist, which I am certain was the process that Dr. Katabua used, before making a diagnosis such as anxiety or obsessive compulsive disorder. "What is creating the anxiety within the child? What is happening within their environment and with their parents?" Yes, it could be rooted in their lifestyle of high mobility creating the need to say repeatedly goodbye to childhood friends, homes, schools, etc. Using the example given by the author, I would want to know what is the parent's attitude towards the child befriending the locals, learning the language, playing in the homes of the locals and launching out on their own in the community? Have the parents invited other local children into their home so their child can learn the language? Do the children go to the local church, or are they only having church in their home? Is the child isolated? If the parents are anxious about their children's involvement with the local community, then the child will pick up on this feeling and sense that it is unsafe to do so and not be able to verbalize why they feel that way. They just know that it is not safe. It is much easier to simply state, "They are anxious because they are an MK and the child makes negative self statements because they are angry about the move". I want to know why they are anxious. It is hard to change the behavior of the child if

the opposite is being re enforced in the home. Again, I would respond to the MK in the same way that I would with other types of TCKs. I would just as likely find this type of anxiety in the home of the TCK from other sectors as I would in the life of the MK.

So what is the main difference between working the TCK from other sectors and the MK? I believe it is the role of God in the life of the family of the MK, in most cases. God is central to everything in the life of the MK. This is why they are moving to a different country, why their parents have a job, who they talk to and about every day, who they try to model their lives after, who they ask for guidance regarding which school their children should attend, and who tells them what they should do. Their very being, career and worth is rooted in God. Then the question becomes, "Is it safe tell the therapist what I honestly think about God"? When the MK is a child, they are not emotionally ready to process these types of questions, but it is central to their psychological make up. It goes back to basic question of the impact of the system(s) in which the child is raised impacts the child. This is what is different with the MK over many TCKs from other sectors. Keeping in mind that other TCKs can also be raised in a Christian home where God is central in their home, but with the MK this is felt much stronger as it is in every part of their job, it is why they are missionaries.

I am so pleased to read articles such as this one where this topic is discussed. We need to recognize that when we get a TCK in our counseling office, they have been deeply impacted by their life of high mobility. And our counseling should explore the impact of that lifestyle on their life. Thank you, Dr. Katabua for your contribution to this discussion.

Ruth E. Van Reken (USA)

Comment to “Treating Missionary Kids with Psychological Challenges”

I read with interest both Dr. Katabua’s article on treating missionary kids (MKs) and Lois Bushong’s response. As a second generation adult MK (AMK), mother of 3 AMKs, and someone who has worked for over thirty years with all sectors of third culture kids (TCKs), countless AMKs have told me how the MK experience impacted their lives. I certainly concur that multiple cycles of separation and loss are real issues with which MKs and other TCKs must deal so they can also use the gifts of this experience.

I also agree with both writers that despite sharing many common characteristics with TCKs from all sectors, MKs do face some particular challenges/blessings as well. With Ms. Bushong, I believe the fact that God is the reason parents chose to be missionaries is what differentiates their experience from non-MK TCKs. While other TCKs can praise or blame the military, government or corporation for both the benefits and challenges of their upbringing, MKs basically have God to praise or blame. See <http://www.quietstreamscounseling.com/userfiles/1116860/file/The%20Powerful%20Impact%20of%20Systems.pdf> for more information on systems and TCKs.

Why is this important for therapist working with MKs or AMKS to know? Here are several reasons.

First, as with any system, a “God system” has its own invisible messages and pressures for MK that therapists need to consider as part of the whole picture. How many MKs and AMKS have told me they never dared tell anyone of their struggles because then the parents would have gone and they would have felt all the peop-

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le who went to hell because they never heard the gospel?

Second, while parents can understand the paradoxical nature of faith, for children these same things can be seen as either/or. A common obstacle to dealing with grief is to acknowledge it in the first place. Because MKs/AMKs understand ‘theologically’ why the separations come, often they interpret that understanding to mean “If you have enough faith, you shouldn’t feel the pain,” or, “If you feel the pain, you don’t have enough faith.” This can make therapy difficult. For some, the wall of “faith” feels like it will crumble if they acknowledge the grief of the past. For others, it feels as if they cannot acknowledge their losses if the therapist (or others) tries to quickly to assure them that “Jesus is the answer.” As one AMK wrote me, “Everyone kept telling me to trust in Jesus but the pain never went away and in the end, I realize even he didn’t work.”

Third, for many MKs, God and the system unknowingly become one. How MKs interpret the events of life through a child’s eyes is how they will interpret the character of God. Some AMKs tell me God seems like a big bully to

them. He has all the power so whatever he says goes, no matter what you may want. Others believe that God will always withhold or take away the person or thing they love to 'test' them and their love for him. Some have said they feel God loves others more than them. Often it is hard for MKs to match what they hear theologically about God with the reality of their lives for whatever reason.

If therapists can help MKs and their families separate the common TCK issues from those more directly connected to the religious aspect of their story, it is easier to move forward. God does not have to be defended (or attacked) to look at these things. And in the end, when the system and its unseen messages can be separated from who God is, MKs may reject parts of the system but still be able to seek comfort and healing from God. Thanks, Dr. Katabua, for beginning this important discussion.



**Dorcas Khomari &
Prof. Wilna J. Basson**

Experiences of Christian couples attending a Biblically-based marriage enrichment programme

Maitemogelo a banyalani ba bakeresete a lenaneo le o le ikaegileng mo motheong wa Beibele la go tiisa lenyalo.

Pegelo e e tlhagisa maitemogelo a banyalani ba le 31 ba o ba tsereng karolo go lenaneo la go tiisa mayalo a bareresete. Batsaya karolo ba tlhopilwe ka go nopola maina go tswa mo maineng otlhe a banyalani mo kerekeng ya Pentekoste, Pretoria North, South Africa.

Maitemogelo a banyalani a kokoantswe ka go botsa dipotso, go diriswa lenaneo la dipotso leo le akaretsang dipotso tseo di sa letleleleng tlhaloso le tseo di letlelelang tlhaloso. Dipotso di arabilwe kwa bofelong ba lenaneo.

Dipoelo tsa dipatlisiso di tlhagisitse fa banyalani ba itemogetse fa lenaneo la go tiisa lenyalo le nnile le mosola mo kamanong ya bona. Gape banyalani ba begile fa ba tlhoka mananeo a a ka amang matlhakore mangwe a a botlhokwa a lenyalo ao a sa akarediwang mo lenaneong le ba tsereng karolo mo go lona.

This study reports on the experiences of 31 Christian couples (n=62) who attended a marriage enrichment programme that explicitly incorporated the Christian teachings intended to strengthen marriage relationship of Christian couples. A randomly selected sample was obtained from couples attending a Pentecostal Church in Pretoria North, South Africa. Their experiences on the programme were captured using a closed and open-ended questionnaire that was completed at the end of the programme. Descriptive data analysis indicated that the couples experienced the programme as beneficial. The couples further expressed their need for other programmes that would address other areas of their marriage relationship which were not addressed in the present programme.

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Health Sciences University in Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria. In her search for effective therapeutic interventions, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, she discovered the power of the Word. Trained at the Institute for Christian Psychology and incorporates Christian approach to therapy. Her home language is Setswana.

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Introduction

Worthington, Buston and Hammonds (1989) define marriage enrichment programmes as programmes that help couples to enhance their relationships by developing their ability to initiate changes in their relationships. Marriage enrichment therefore refers to preventative measures aimed to support functional couples or non-distressed couples to improve or maintain their relationships (Blanchard, Hawkins, Baldwin & Fawcett, 2009). Bader (1984) further explains that unlike encounter programmes, marriage enrichment programmes are designed to enhance the positive aspects of the relationship without inducing emotional expression that are common in therapy or counselling.

Although marriage enrichment programmes have been scientifically proven to be effective in improving marital relationships (Alqashan, 2008; Jakubowski, Milne, Brunner, & Miller, 2004; Halford, Markman, Kling, & Stanley, 2003; Malcolm, 1992; Bader, 1984), couples attendance of the programmes is still a challenge to marriage and family therapists (Roberts & Morris, 1998). Andrews (1994) estimated that

for every ten couples who attended a pre-marital counselling, only one couple participated in an enrichment program. On the other hand Bader (1984) mentions that the programmes tend to mainly attract couples with twenty and more years of marriage and who want to improve the quality of their relationship and enjoy the years remaining in their relationship. The author accounts for the low couples' attendance of enrichment programmes as couples linking the programmes to encounter programmes which are known to evoke expression of emotions aimed to facilitate required change in the relationship.

Seemingly many couples perceive marriage enrichment programmes as marital therapy. This misconception is likely to defer couples from participation in enrichment programmes as they might not see themselves as in need of the therapy (van Acker, 2008). Simons, Harris and Willis (1994) identified several intrinsic factors that might influence couples' decision with regard to their need to attend a marriage enrichment programme. Firstly, the authors found that couples consider their relationship as private and thus would not accommodate outside relationship strategies such as skills training and completing questionnaires. Secondly, some couples consider enrichment programmes as irrelevant because of the program runners' association with church organizations. This later factor could be true for couples without religious orientation. Of interest is that Olson and Olson (in Larson and Olson 2005) found that for the religious couples, the indicator for happy or unhappy marital relationships was determined by the couples' satisfaction or agreement with how spiritual values and beliefs are expressed in the relationship. This is also supported by Giblin (2004) who concurs that a religious orientation is constantly recognized as a component of strong, healthy marriages. Literature has also provided assertion that Christian clients prefer and feel comfortable when their religious beliefs are considered in therapy (Tan, 1990; Worthington, 1993; Plante, 2008). Those that are committed to their religion also prefer that the religious approach be applied openly to address the problems they bring to the therapists. The present article came

out of an interest to determine how explicit incorporation of Biblical principles in a marriage enrichment programme would be perceived by Christian couples as this is not a common practice in Psychology. This article presents the experiences of Christian couples who took part in such a collaborative and Biblically-based marriage enrichment programme. The programme involved the teachings on the Biblical principles of love/respect by a Pastor followed by the facilitation process by Psychologists to engage the couples to negotiate how they will apply the taught principles in their relationship. The aim was to explore how the Christian couples will experience such a programme.

Overview of the Programme

The rationale for the enrichment programme is to encourage Christian couples to apply Biblical principles in their relationship through a guided communication process. The Biblical principles will be taught by a Pastor with a calling to support marriages. Guidance through facilitation will be provided by four (4) registered Psychologists trained in marital therapy and group therapy. Their role will be to support the couples to use effective communication strategies in order to facilitate the role negotiation process. The Psychologists were briefed and afforded a chance to practice their roles during a trail/pilot study.

The Intervention Process

The aim of the programme is firstly, to educate couples about the Biblical principles essential in marriage relationship. Secondly, to facilitate couples to define and agree on the roles to adopt in order to express the Biblical teachings in their relationship.

The teaching session

The programme intervention commences with the Pastor who will teach on the Biblical principles of love/respect and the roles of husband and wife in applying these principles in their relationship. The teaching will be based on a Scripture found in the book of Ephesians. Ephesians chapter five (5) verses 22-26 (Eph. 5:22-26) as follows:



22 "Wives, be subject (be submissive and adapt yourselves) to your own husbands as (a service) to the Lord".

23 "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church, Himself the Saviour of His body".

24 "As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands".

25 "Husband, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

26 "So that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word,

(The Amplified Bible)

After the teaching there is a 15 minutes break to allow the couples to reflect on the teachings and to refresh before the role negotiation session starts. The next session will begin with the briefing as to what is expected of them.

Role negotiation session

After the couples have declared commitment to the role negotiation process, they will then be separated and divided among the 4 facilitating Psychologists. Each facilitator will start the role negotiation with her group in the following manner:

"Now you are going to define the roles that will manifest love and submission in your relationship. Each of you will be given a chance to suggest the role your partner could play in order to show love/respect to you, but first each couple needs to decide who will start the negotiation process".

The following instructions are given to the spouse chosen to start the process: "Please write down a list of ways or suggestions that will make you feel respected as a (husband) or loved as a (wife) in your relationship with your spouse. Make your suggestions known to your spouse one by one and motivate why they are important to you as if you sell them to your spouse".

(To the listening spouse): "Whilst it is your spouse's chance to give suggestions, you are requested to listen to your spouse by: firstly allowing him/her a chance to speak without interruptions; summarizing his/her remarks before responding; and then responding in a sensitive

manner accepting the spouse's input and offering your view without attempting to evaluate him/her. Please give your feedback to your spouse on each suggestion stating what is possible and what is not possible according to what is practical in the relationship. Be careful not to just dismiss a suggestion without a convincing reason".

The process is thereafter repeated with the other spouse. At the end of the session each couple is requested to write down all the roles they have agreed upon.

Measuring instrument

The ENRICH Couple Evaluation questionnaire was completed by each participant who attended the programme. The enrich Couple Evaluation questionnaire was developed as part of the PREPARE/ENRICH programme. The programme was first developed in 1978 by David Olson for premarital and married couples. The inventories and programmes have high levels of reliability, validity and clinical utility (Olson, D.H., & Olson, A.K., 1997). The questionnaire contains eight questions of which three are closed-ended and five are open-ended. The three closed-ended questions measured the following: "the couples' rating of the programme on a five point Likert-like scale ranging from 1 as 'the worst' and 5 as 'the best'; whether the couples found the programme worthwhile or not and thirdly whether they would go for counselling in the future or not", whilst the five open-ended questions explored the couples' experiences of the programme. The probing questions included couples' expectations from the programme; whether these expectations were met; perceived benefits; and recommendations to improve the programme.

Sampling

A randomly selected sample (n=31) of couples was derived from a population of couples attending a Pentecostal church in Pretoria North, South Africa. The couples were then invited to take part in a one-day marriage enrichment programme arranged by the researcher. The participants were Africans of different language and ethnic groups in South Africa.

Fifty seven percent were of the Sesotho ethnic background. The ethnic composition of participants is reflected in table 1 below

The majority of the participants were 40 years old and above. Thirty six percent were married for sixteen 16 years and longer as illustrated in table 1 below.

Most participants had tertiary qualification and or training as reflected in table 1 below.

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Males	32	50
	Females	32	50
Ethnicity	Sotho	35	57
	Nguni	15	24
	Venda	8	13
	Other	4	6
Age	20-25	4	6
	26-30	8	13
	31-35	7	11
	36-40	10	16
	41 and above	33	53
Years in marriage	0-5	8	13
	6-10	6	10
	11-15	6	10
	16 and above	42	68
Level of education	High School	9	15
	Matric	11	18
	Tertiary education	22	35
	Graduate	20	32

n=62

Table 1: Sample characteristic profile

Data Collection

Permission to conduct research was obtained from the Research and Ethics Committee of the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and from the Head Pastor of the Church where the data was collected. Data was collected at the end of the one day marriage enrichment programme session, held at Bundu Inn in Pretoria North; South Africa. An informed consent was obtained from each individual who participated in the study. Spouses completed the question-

naire individually and were not allowed to sit together during the questionnaire completion to allow for independent experiences to be freely expressed. The questionnaire was completed anonymously and in English as the participants had a suitable proficiency in this language.

Data Analysis

The quantitative descriptive statistical analyses such as frequencies and cross tabulations were conducted and yielded sample characteristics, the occurrences of programme rating, programme value and position on future participation in a programme of similar nature. Qualitative data was thematically analysed and identified themes descriptively quantified using summary statistics. Thematic content analysis allows themes to rise naturally out of the data (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006)

Results

Figure 1 below indicates that all participants rated the programme as acceptable to best. The same figure further indicates a high level of agreement in the rating of the programme by male and female participants.

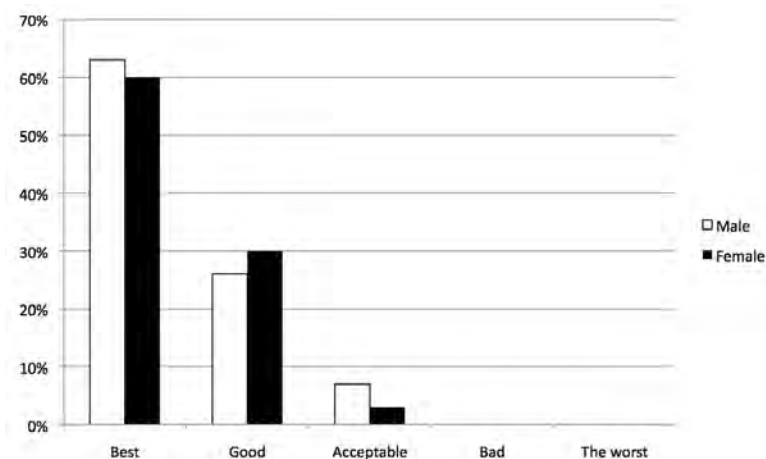


Figure 1: Programme rating by participants

Table 2 provides a summary of expectations expressed by the male and female participants. Such expectations included empowerment and enrichment (n=18), teaching and information (n=21), and advice and guidance (n=10).

Themes	Male participants	Females participants	Total
Empowerment and enrichment	10	8	18
Teaching and information	10	11	21
Advice and guidance	3	7	10
Improvement and self-understanding	2	1	3
Deliverance	1	1	3
Motivation or encouragement	1	0	1
Prayer	0	1	1
Excitement	1	0	1
No expectations	2	2	4

n=62

Table 2: Expressed expectations of the programme

Table 3 below indicates that the majority of the participants (87%) confirmed that the programme fully met their expectations while the minority (7%) felt that their expectations were partly met.

Level met	Frequency	Percentage
Highly	1	2
Fully	54	87
Partly	4	7
No response	3	4

n=62

Table 3: Expressed level of met expectations

The majority (93%) of the participants reported that the programme was beneficial to them and that they would not want anything excluded from it. Participants commented that they benefited in terms of teachings on the principles of love and respect, as well as communication and facilitation of roles. Regarding teachings on the principles of love and respect participants expressed that the programme taught them “on

how to address on another”, “open up to each other”, “openness and loving the wife”. In terms of communication and facilitation of roles, participants mentioned that the programme help them with “open communication” and “sharing God’s word”.

Slightly less than half (48%) felt that the programme should include additional aspects such as question-answer session, games as ice breakers, issues relating to the upbringing of children, finance issues and intimacy.

In response to whether the programme was worthwhile, participants mentioned that they found the programme “relevant and informative”, addressing “outstanding issues”, empowering to speak freely, “enriching”, “reviving and refreshing”.

Finally most (90%) of the participants indicated that they would attend similar programmes in the future. The few who were reserved about attending similar programmes in the future pointed out that they needed time to practice what they learnt first (7%), or they felt that counselling was not needed (3%).

Discussion and recommendations

The findings of the study indicated that the Biblically based marriage enrichment programme was experienced by the majority of the participants as the “best”. This is supported by Tan (1990); Worthington (1993); and Plante (2008) who reported that religious clients prefer and are comfortable when their religious beliefs are considered in therapy. Most of the couples further found the programme beneficial. As most of the participants were in the 16 and above years of marriage, this could be a confirmation of what Bader (1984) meant that the enrichment programmes tend to attract couples with twenty and more in marriage. At the same time the finding could indicate a need for Biblically-based programmes that could facilitate couples communication to decide on how love and respect could be expressed in their relationship. Only few couples felt that they will not attend similar programmes in the future. The finding could be due to the few couples considering the programme as therapeutic and therefore not relevant to them (van Acker,

2008). It is recommended that another study be done whereby couples of 10 years and less in marriage are targeted to determine how they would experience the programme.

Conclusion

From the results above, there seem to be a need by Christian couples for Biblically-based marriage enrichment programmes where Psychologists and Theologians collaborate to enhance relationships. The present study however does not claim to provide support for all of the relational needs of Christian couples. It is endorsed therefore, that the Biblically-based marriage enrichment programme be augmented with programmes that would focus on other areas related to marital relationship functioning.

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Saara Kinnunen (Finland)

Comment to “Experiences of Christian couples attending a Biblically-based marriage enrichment programme”

This little study shows how a small intervention can make a difference in relationships. Christian couples relied on the biblical marriage enrichment programme, and that is why they found it useful to themselves. Love and respect are both biblical and human bases of marital relationship. Christian couples loved to hear what the Bible teaches about the duties of marriage.

A top idea of this programme is that the spouses told each other in which way they wished to be loved and respected. According to my experience as a couple therapist people do not know what their spouse's love language is. I often ask my clients: "How can you know your husband/wife loves you? What could he/she do or what would he/she do before to make you feel loved and respected?" Sometimes I use a reflective question: "What would you guess that your spouse would answer if I asked him/her: 'When is it that you feel loved in your marital relationship?'" We all are astonished at how much their answers differ from their spouse's ideas.

The results of this study were exactly the same as my experience after marriage enrichment days. The feedback is 90% positive after the training. It would be interesting to measure the impact of the enrichment day after a month or half a year. According to my experience, about 30% would say that even then they can perceive the beneficial effect of the enrichment day.

An interesting detail is that many participants told that they wanted to go on and have another enrichment day. They had realised that they needed something that would remind them



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Articles by Saara:

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/6/#/14>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/6/#/140>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/6/#/194>

about the right track. They were afraid of forgetting what they had learned and of reverting to their previous behaviour. I encourage the couples to keep going!

It would be interesting to know who those who did not find the enrichment day very useful are. Do they have a traditional understanding about the roles of husband and wife, where spouses are not equal? Do the husbands think that they own their wives, who are supposed to fulfil their husbands' needs, but not vice versa.

It would also be interesting to compare the couples' answers with Gary Chapman's five love languages, which are the following: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. I wonder if the love languages in South Africa are the same as in the western world.



Ninky C. Shuenyane

An assessment of current counselling practices in churches in South Africa

Patlisiso eno, e ne senka go ka tlhaloganya mekgwa e diphuthego tsa seKereste ka go farologana ga tsone mono Afrika Borwa di dirang ka teng go thusa badumedi ka ditirelo tsa counselling. Maikaelelo a mangwe gape e ne e lo go itse le go tlhaloganya kitso ya diphuthego ka ga counselling ya seKereste (Christian counselling) le gore e farologana jang le counselling e e tlwaelegile. Baruti le bagolo ba diphuthego tsa sePentekoste di le 46 ba ne ba bodiwa dipotso malebana ke kgang eno. Dipholô di ne tsa bontsha gore diphuthego di le dintsi di na le ditirelo tsa counselling tse di neelwang ke baruti, bagolo, bagogi le baithaopi ba ba mo diphuthegong. Botlhe bano ba tlhotlhelediwa kitso ya counselling ke baruti le bangwe ba ba nang le kitso. Baruti le bagolo ba diphuthego ba sedimositse fa go le botlhokwa gore botlhe bao ba neelanang ka counselling ba bone tlhotlheletso e e maleba, gore ba neelane ka thuso e e manontlhontlho, e e agang le go thusa botlhe ba ba tlhokang counselling. Bontsi bo ne bo sa itse ka ga Christian psychology, mme ba ne ba simolola go ultwa ka ga yone. Mme go ntse jalo ba ne ba dumelana gore diphuthego di ka godisiwa thata ke go nna le psychologist ya moKereste (Christian psychologist) e e tataisiwang ke Mowa o o Boitshepo le dikwalo tsa Beibele.

The study sought to explore the current counselling practices within churches in South Africa. Also to establish awareness, thoughts feelings and perceptions toward Christian psychology as a field in psychology. Respondents comprised of church leaders from 46 churches of mainly Pentecostal denominations in South Africa. Findings indicate that most churches have counselling services provided by pastors, elders and volunteers. Counsellor training is inconsistently provided by church leaders themselves or experienced counsellors. A need is expressed by church leaders of formal counselling training as well as ongoing refresher courses.

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There is lack of awareness of Christian psychology a field of psychology and most church leaders had not heard of the discipline. An acknowledgement by respondents that a Christian psychologist led by the Holy Spirit and guided by Scripture can enhance the lives of counselees better.

Introduction

The church has always been the place where people went for solace and comfort and still is the place where people go in times of need or crisis. Whether it is to seek God, to get guidance to just fellowship with fellow believers, it has been a central part of the history of man. As history has progressed so have societies evolved into more complex systems that are impacted by their socio-economic, political and cultural environment. For a while there has been a debate regarding counselling in the church and whether or not to integrate secular counselling methods. On the one hand there are those who believe that it brings compromise to the Christian belief system. On the other hand, there are those who propagate the integration saying that it enhances Biblical counselling as it better equips counsellors to help their church members and communities.

As societies evolve, life challenges faced by people more complex than they were in the previous decades. Individuals, families and communities are faced with problems such as unemployment, poverty, substance abuse, domestic abuse, political unrest, technological advancement, climate change, chronic illnesses, and so on. These have led to the need for more specialised counselling skills and practices. Biblical counselling in churches has shown much benefit in helping people as it takes into account the person as a holistic being, including the spiritual aspect as well as body and mind. This is necessary to treat the whole person. In relation to the more complex problems people face, at times Biblical counselling could fall short in that people often not only need biblical guidance or deliverance in dealing with their problems, but also need practical steps to get them through their challenging life-situations.

“No pastor, regardless of training, can choose whether or not to counsel with people”...“people will bring their problems to the pastor whose choice is not between counselling and not counselling, but between counselling in a disciplined and skilled way and counselling in an undisciplined and unskilled way” (Collins, 2007, p.33). Collins (2007) adds to this by stating that it is still a difficult task to counsel in a disciplined and skilled way. Nyandoro (2010) further stated that “the problems we encounter appear to be more diverse, the culture is changing quickly, and the needs are unending” (p.73) and it is necessary to implement techniques that are going to be beneficial to the times. For a Christian community, spending time in the Bible and prayer is essential for encouragement and hope. Being taught and equipped spiritually by attending church meetings is also necessary. In this way knowledge and practical application of biblical principles are taught. To have the Holy Spirit as Counsellor and Comforter is also necessary. Often however, these essentials do not bring the relief that some may need, as they are just not at the place yet where they can make these practices part of their everyday lives, and use these to bring or facilitate wellbeing. The changing times usher in new sets of problems that often complicate the counselling process as

well as influence the wellbeing of the community.

Although members have faith in their church, it is possible that there are times when their situation is not dealt with correctly or the pastor/church counsellor feels unequipped to deal with the presenting issue. This can create the sense that maybe the church is not a safe haven for them and consequently this can affect their faith as well as the meaning they assign to life. Brenner (2003, p. 64) stated “struggles associated with the search for meaning in life or with the quest for identity, wholeness or even fulfilment, all contain spiritual elements”. This can also be detrimental to the community that the member is part of, especially if their faith determines their worldview as well as how they relate to the society they are in.

Resources used in Biblical counselling are mainly prayer, Scripture, the sacraments, anointing oil, the laying on of hands, the exercise of spiritual gifts and devotional/religious literature. There are limitations within the setting which must be recognized and addressed. For example if pastoral / biblical counsellors are confronted with mental and behavioural disorders, these should be referred to a psychologist or psychiatrist. Time constraints in biblical counselling setting are also a challenge as counselling often happens after a church service or depend on counsellor availability. Thus sessions are unstructured in terms of time and expectations. There are also challenges presented by biblical counsellors interacting with the counselee in a variety of places for example at church, home, place of business or leisure. Measures to assure confidentiality and privacy of counselee's information are usually not guaranteed. Counsellor can for example publicly do a prayer request for a counselee while divulging the nature of their problem (Bruni, 2015).

Brenner (2003) in his research found that only 13 percent of the pastors contacted reported that they felt adequately prepared for their counselling responsibilities and 87 percent reported a need for further training in pastoral counselling. The pastors further mentioned that they needed more specific help with what to do with

those they face in counselling sessions, also that general principles were not enough. Often, churches and pastors are unable to adequately and appropriately address the deepest hurts of modern man without the use of secular psychology techniques.

In South African study by Glanville and Dreyer (2013): "Spousal Rape: A Challenge for Pastoral Counsellors". These authors highlight the importance of the pastoral counsellor's unique skills in light of spiritual gifting and how these contribute toward wellbeing in victims. A number of women that were interviewed felt that the church played a positive role in their lives but did not feel that the church was effective in dealing with issues of violence against women. They expressed that pastoral counsellors sometimes perpetuate cultural attitudes that encourage shame and silence regarding rape. The researchers of this article found that victims of rape had negative perceptions of pastoral counsellors and reported that they received little assistance. Furthermore, pastoral counsellors do have a vital role to play in their healing process, however to be effective they should have a thorough knowledge of the dynamics of rape and spousal rape in particular.

An assessment of the attitudes and beliefs that mentally ill Christians encountered when they sought counselling from the church was done by Stanford (2007). It showed that 30 % reported a negative interactions including 'abandonment by the church, equating mental illness with the work of demons and suggesting that the mental disorder was a result of sin'. It also showed that women were more likely to have their mental illness dismissed by the church and/or be told not to take psychiatric medication. Stanford (2007, p. 445) maintains that the "religious support system can play a vital role in the recovery from serious mental disorders, these results suggest that continued education is needed to bring Christian and mental health communities together".

Galloway (2003, p.343-347) focuses on how the church can bridge gaps within the community to bring emotional, physical and spiritual

health. The problems addressed in this article focus on "little or no mental health care for the poor, disparities in health between African American and Whites, and the alarming rates of sexual assault" within the city. The discussion follows how the wealth of skills and knowledge that mental health practitioners have can be employed for the benefit of the local churches and the communities in which the churches serve. Looking at the problems addressed one can see the similarity to our situation in South Africa and the after effects of Apartheid still lingering as well as statistics relating to sexual assault and other prevailing issues.

Lyon (2010) discusses the effects of the abuse and how victims relate to the church in relation to their trauma. This trauma has physical and spiritual effects within the person. This type of abuse is often found in children and many adults have been victims of sexual abuse as children. Trauma and the effects of this are one of the areas that counselling within the church can benefit from more specific skills. Even in relation to South Africa and the many instances of violence and crime, many South Africans at some stage have suffered trauma and many have not dealt with this effectively. The article recommends programs to be implemented within the church setting where victims can heal relationally for example art projects, playing music together or singing as a group. They also suggest support groups for these victims to talk about their experiences with others who can relate. The church should create a "nurturing environment for the lost and suffering among us" just as Christ came to "heal these lost and forgotten persons, who have become the Body of Christ must carry on His work" (Lyon, 2010, p.246).

Bergin & Jensen (1990); Shafranske & Malony 1990 (cited in Tan, 1996,p.366) stated that "professional therapists, including clinical psychologists are more spiritually orientated today but religion did not factor as an important role for them as much as the general population". That 71% of the clinical psychologists indicated that they belonged to a religious group and 41 % attended services. However 85% had little or no training in the area of psychology and religion.



68% felt it was inappropriate for psychologists to pray with a client and 55% felt it was inappropriate to use Scripture in therapy". Counselling does take place in church settings and possibly at higher rates than at professional psychologists' offices. The purpose of the integration debate it thus to identify and introduce counselling skills in the pastoral setting and such skills are to be derived from models adapted from psychology. Collins (2010) cites several reasons for integration. Firstly is stated that Scripture does not address all problems and the Bible is not a manual of counselling. Further there are specific guidelines concerning issues relating to anger, forgiveness, marriage and so forth but does not say anything about issues relating to schizophrenia, manic disorder, conduct disorder and others. He adds that it is God who enabled scientists to study human behaviour and problems. Therefore human problems can be helped from a combination of psychology and other disciplines. Secondly, he says that psychology is not enough for doing Christian counselling and it is built on beliefs of "naturalism, determinism and others" therefore contradicting biblical truths. For integration to be effective psychological findings and knowledge must be examined from biblical truth.

The current study seeks to conduct an assessment of current counselling practices in churches in South Africa. Also examine the thoughts, perception and feelings towards Christian psychology.

Objectives of the study

- To understand church leadership's perceptions of the church as a healing community
- To assess current counselling practices in churches in South Africa
- To obtain church leadership's thoughts and perceptions on the integration of pastoral and secular counselling
- To gauge understanding of the concept of a Christian psychologist
- To investigate the utilization of social / community services outside of the church in helping people

Methodology

Qualitative data was collected from various churches of various denominations across the country. A total of 46 churches comprised the sample for the study. The sample was a convenience sample of churches to which the first year students in Psychology at the Institute of Christian Psychology (ICP) belonged. Churches in the study were mainly Pentecostal denominations. Membership of churches ranged from 170 to 16 000 congregants. The most predominant language used was English, with a few Afrikaans and IsiZulu language users. Churches were based in various parts of South Africa including: Johannesburg, Cape Town, East London, Pretoria, Benoni and Mzimkhulu (KwaZulu Natal).

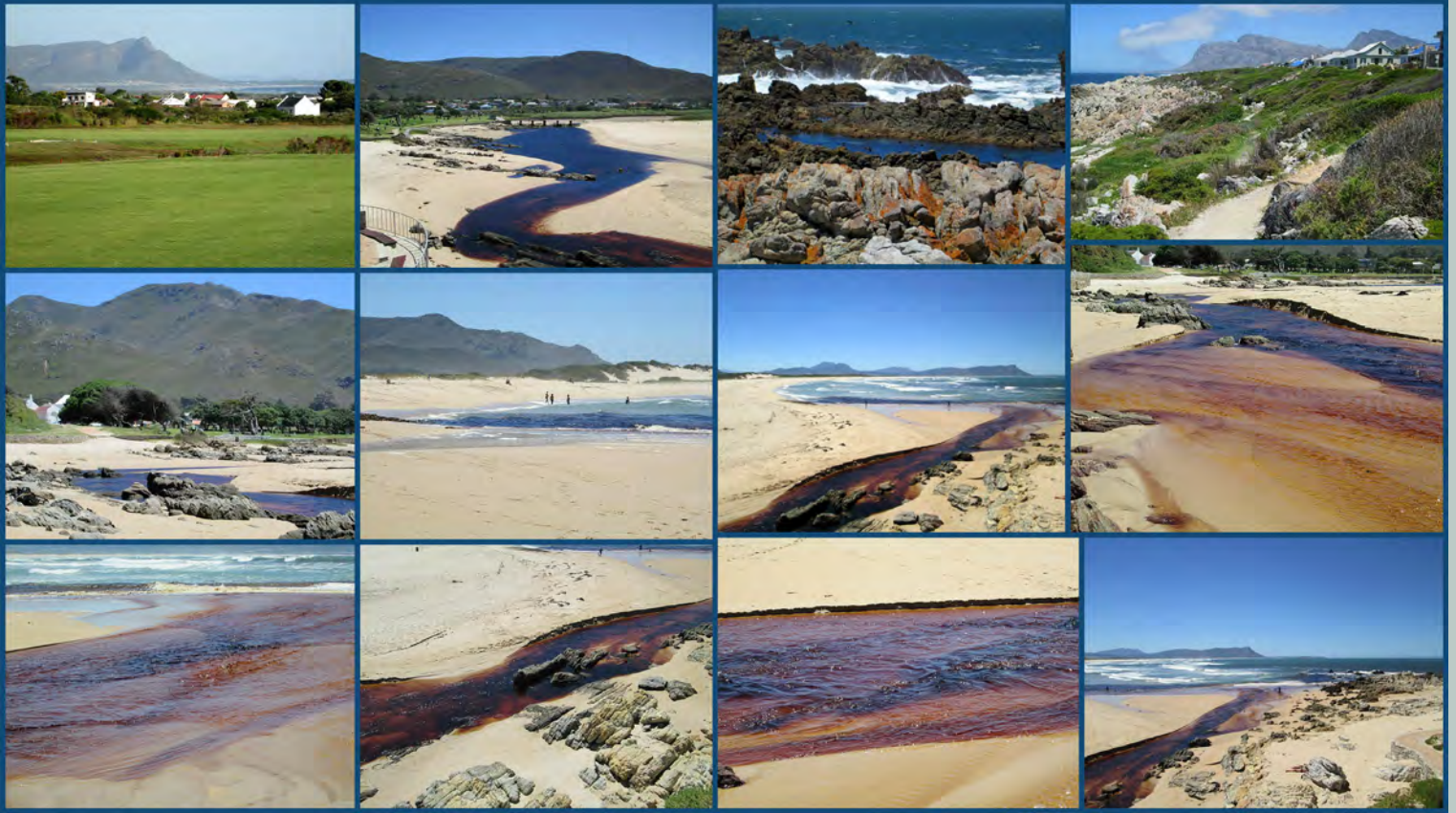
Face to face interviews were conducted with church leaders using an interview guide. Leaders interviewed included Pastors and Senior Pastors.

Data from the interviews was analysed qualitatively, drawing out emerging themes.

Findings

The church as a healing community

Most of the church leaders interviewed regarding the church as a place of healing for the believers and non-believers. It is regarded as a place where the body, soul and spirit are healed. That healing takes place through Jesus Christ who is the Great Healer; thought listening to the Word of God. Church is described as giving hope, demonstrating love by helping the sick, elderly, orphans and outcasts. "Jesus set the example for physical healing, emotional healing, deliverance from demons and He commanded the church to do the same"; said one respondent. The responsibility of the church was seen as going beyond its congregants to the community at large, where some leaders expressed that their churches have outreach programmes, evangelical missions, house to house visits where they also offer services e.g. counselling, laying of hands, etc. Non-church members who also come to the church are assisted in whichever possible manner to ease any discomforts.



Collins (2007, p45) mentioned that “caring communities are groups of people who have a strong commitment to the group and a common interest in giving encouragement, guidance, and healing when there are psychological, spiritual, and relational or other needs”. This confirms the value of the church in the community, also that, in all institutions of society the church has the greatest potential for being a caring and healing community and also has “a divine mandate to care and to heal”. For most people, the church is a safe place to go when they are hurting or going through adverse circumstances. Faith gives members hope and often it is expected that their church community gives them support. Chalfant et al. 1990 (as cited in Stanford, 2007, p.445) stated that “Individuals experiencing psychological distress are more likely to seek help from religious leaders than from any other professional”. In South Africa access to professional psychologist service is limited and out of reach for many a people, thus church is the first go-to-place to seek help with problems that are non-physical.

Counselling in the church

All respondents indicated that their churches do provide counselling services. Counselling is usually provided by pastors, church elders and volunteers with knowledge of counselling skills. Majority of the churches did not have dedicated counselling departments or units. Counselling services were provided by church leaders as part of their pastoral duties. The few who had specific counselling departments had lay counsellors (volunteers). Some were members who worked as counsellors in their day-jobs. One church with membership of over 16000 indicated that they have seven (7) full time counsellors and they had received training through the church's Bible School which provides counselling as a course in third the year of studies.

For pastors, they indicated receiving counselling training as part of their studies at Theological Colleges they studied at. All other lay counsellors were informally trained by other church members who had served as counsellors & acquired skills through practice or had obtained training elsewhere. Only one church

reported maintaining counselee records and providing supervision to counsellors. A concern was raised and need expressed that counsellors in churches have to receive training to be able to effectively help a counselee to avoid worsening their situation further. Church leaders expressed lacking adequate counselling skills to effectively help; given the ever evolving societies. Similar findings were confirmed by Nyandoro (2010) in his study relating to the assessment of counselling skills among the clergy, had an overwhelming positive response when asking if parishioners often approached the clergy with problems requiring counselling skills. Ninety eight percent of the clergy had not had any training in specific counselling skills and all of the respondents agreed that they saw a great need for counselling skills to counsel effectively. Benner (2003) also reported similar findings that 87% of the pastor respondents felt they were not adequately equipped to handle the counselling need of their congregants.

All the respondents indicated the desire to have dedicated counselling teams in their churches as they expressed that they see a lot of exasperation and great need from their fellow congregants. The nature of problems which counsellors have to deal with include challenges relating to: trauma, marriages, spouse & child abuse, financial distress, addictions (substance, pornography, and internet gambling), pregnancy & post abortion restoration, troubled teens and youth.

External networks were developed and utilized whenever there was a need. Social institutions / organizations close to the church were consulted and counselees referred to in the event the church services are inadequately equipped to deal with the problem situations. Local health clinics, police stations, Life Line, Life Choices, and Social Services were some of the centres where referrals were made to. Limited mention was made of referrals to psychologists.

Perceptions of psychology

Two clearly differing opinions were expressed towards psychology in general. The one camp had positive perceptions, expressing that it is a

distinct profession that has an important role in the healing process. That the church and psychologists can work together for common goal and is valuable in its own right. Humans are comprised of the body, soul and spirit. The role of the church is thus to nurture and grow the human spiritually more than psychology can; while not neglecting the healing of the body and the soul. God's sovereignty may use psychologists to bring healing and psychologists'/ scientific knowledge and wisdom is from God. The other camp strongly feels that psychology is scientific and does not acknowledge God and spirituality, thus offering temporary solutions to human suffering. A great distrust of psychology methods which are said to have little room for supernatural guidance and offer no lasting solutions. Sentiments expressed were: "Instead of going to God for answers, psychologists often play God themselves". "Psychologists push people down emotional routes they are not ready to travel and end up causing more pain". Problems were described as resulting from sin and only repentance leads to lasting change in people.

Christian psychology as a field in psychology was largely unknown among the respondents; however there were positive sentiments expressed that a psychology practitioner who is guided by the Holy Spirit and conforms to Scripture norms can ensure holistic healing of troubled human beings.

Conclusions

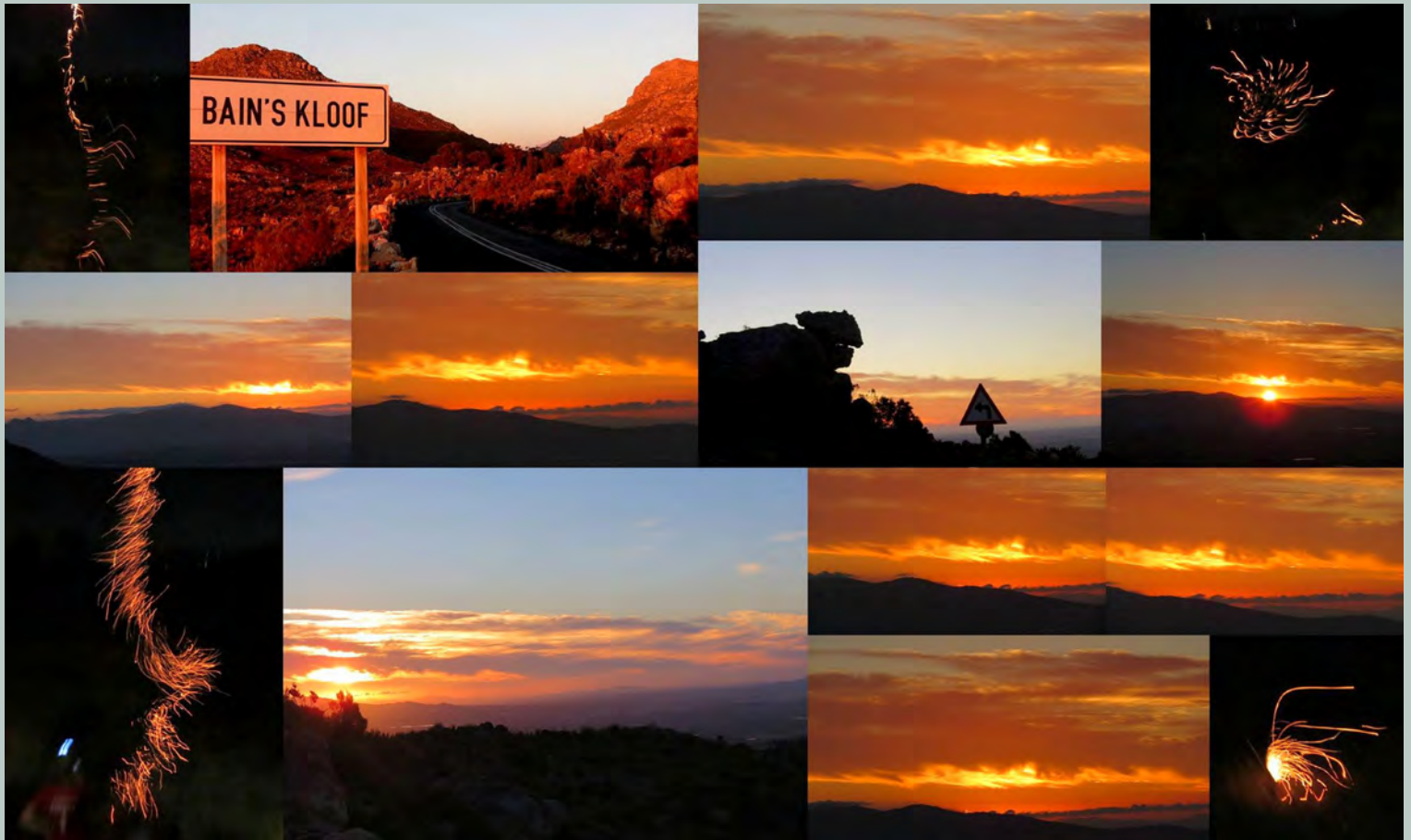
There is lack of awareness of Christian psychology as a field and most church leaders had not heard of the discipline. This then suggests the need for awareness raising of Christian psychology and its benefits. This also presents an opportunity to tertiary institutions that offer training in psychology to additionally offer Christian psychology as a qualification, noting that over 80% of South Africans are Christians and would find such a qualification and services useful.

Many churches provide counselling services to their parishioners in one way or another and there is an acknowledgment of the need to enhance the skills of those providing the service. Most of them do not know where / how such training can be accessed. Even at lay-counselors level a gap exists of providing training in counselling skills to church counsellors.

The study also revealed that there is very little interaction between the churches and thus there is no sharing of resources, knowledge and information. Each church seems to be struggling on their own to find solutions, train their counsellors, and implement counselling in whichever way they can. An opportunity also presents itself for churches to communicate with each other more and establish systems which they can jointly benefit from e.g. Bible school curricula, church member training across various areas including counselling.

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Marieke Willers

The Professionalisation of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling in South Africa

People in South Africa suffer from spiritual wounds and stress. The causes are many - the lack of reconciliation, poverty, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, on-going violence, crime and transformation in the workplace... Problems in the family, marriage and relationships are compounded by issues such as debt and work-related stress.

The overwhelmed society needs trained caregivers to actively become part of a healing process. There is clearly a need for a unified and consistent approach to pastoral and spiritual health care. Pastoral and spiritual caregivers, although they may be highly trained and competent, are not always recognised as professionals – in spite of their unique perspective on emotional problems.

Spirituality needs to be integrated into the practice of healthcare by realising the value of faith, hope and compassion in the healing process. Pastoral and spiritual caregiving by appropriately qualified practitioners utilises the dimensions of faith, spirituality and religion to guide and facilitate people towards the transformation of their life situations.

Both professional (e.g. ministers, pastors, and qualified pastoral and spiritual caregivers) and lay pastoral and spiritual caregivers, are utilised and work within contexts such as youth work, family and marriage counselling, church congregations, schools, the police service, the defence force, correctional services, crisis call centres, emergency services, hospitals and the wider community.



Marieke Willers completed a BSc degree at the University of Stellenbosch, majoring in Biochemistry and Microbiology. She started her career in an oral cancer research unit of the Medical Research Council for eight years and then joined the Atomic Energy Corporation, as well as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

Gradually she moved closer to the “people business” establishing, amongst others, a public relations office and a bookshop at the church she attended.

In November 2006 she became involved with the administration of the Southern African Association for Pastoral Work (SAAP) and worked alongside her brother, Prof Callie Hugo, who was the SAAP chairperson at that stage. Professor Callie had a vision and a passion for the professionalization of pastoral care and counselling in South Africa. He left no stone unturned to reach this goal, until his untimely and sudden passing in October 2010. Marieke, however, stayed with SAAP and still contributes in any possible way to keep her brother's dream alive. She enjoys building relationships with members of the organisation – Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling Practitioners.

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Why professionalise?

Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling should be clearly distinguished from the other helping disciplines through its deep understanding of the spiritual needs of people. This will enable Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling Practitioners to render recognised and professional services to their communities.

Proper oversight and regulation has become critical to align the profession with the dynamic and ever changing landscape of South African socio-political needs, as well as constant changes in the field of spiritual health and wellbeing. Since 1991 the Southern African Association for Pastoral Work (SAAP) envisaged a process of professionalising pastoral care and counselling practices in South Africa. Applications to register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and the South African Council for Social Services Professions (SACSSP), however, proved unsuccessful. In June 2012 an avenue opened with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)'s new policy¹ for the recognition of professional bodies.

After several workshops held to consult its membership, the SAAP Executive made a principle decision in 2013 to follow this route and apply with SAQA for recognition as a non-statutory professional body for Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling.

The rationale is to advance Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting spiritual health, education and human wellbeing. Through a consistent and detailed "scope of practice" it would help ensure the competence of practitioners and establish a pathway to learning for progress in the field of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling in South Africa.

Objectives

The objectives of the professional body have been stated as follows:

- To guide the profession and to protect the client.
- To assist in the promotion of spiritual health and wellness of the population of the Republic of South Africa.
- To control and exercise authority in respect of matters affecting training of persons in and the manner of the exercise of the practices pursued in connection with pastoral and spiritual care and counselling or prevention of spiritual health and wellness defects.
- To promote liaison for training in the field of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling, as well as standards of this training in the Republic of South Africa.
- To advise churches and other authorities on any matter falling within the scope of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling, in order to support universal norms and values, with greater emphasis on professional practice, democracy, transparency, equity, accessibility and community involvement.
- To communicate to churches and other authorities information of public importance, acquired by the professional body in the course of the performance of its functions.
- To maintain and enhance the dignity of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling and the integrity of the practitioners practicing the profession.

Criteria

- The professional body shall comply with the following criteria:
- Protect the interest and the professional status of its members.
- Protect the public interest in relation to services provided by the practitioners and the associated risks.
- Show evidence of inherent social responsibility and advancing the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- Be a legally constituted entity with the necessary human and financial resources to undertake its functions, governed by a constitution and compliant with good corporate governance practices.
- Represent, and where applicable, also regulate, a recognised community of expert pastoral and spiritual care and counselling practitioners.

¹ Policy & Criteria for Recognising a Professional Body and Registering a Professional Designation for the Purposes of the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act 67 of 2008

- Apply peer judgement in decision making.
- Manage the revocation of designations, as well as disciplinary matters, appeals and complaints in terms of its own rules and legislation.

Setting standards

Members will be awarded designations according to qualifications differing from NQF level 5 to NQF level 10. These unique designations will be registered on the NQF.

Members applying for registration will be assessed by considering qualifications awarded by nationally accredited training providers, together with appropriate supervision, prior learning, relevant experience and continued professional development.

Each designation will be governed according to its scope of practice and required competencies. These competencies are indicated by the level of expertise essential to assess, diagnose and treat spiritual dynamics of dysfunction or refer to other appropriate professionals.

The differing designations should not be considered as a hierarchy, as each practitioner will be valued for his or her contribution towards Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling in South Africa.

The professional body will not be accredited as a training provider. Prospective practitioners will

have to ensure that both the qualification and training institution selected for studies, comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Act².

Ethical values

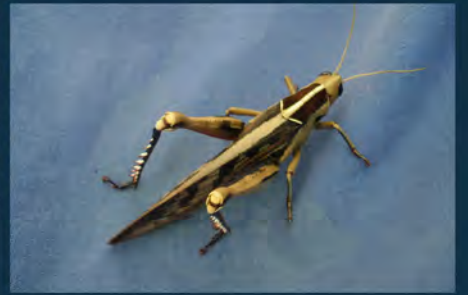
Being registered with the professional body will confer on practitioners the right and privilege to practice their professions. Correspondingly, practitioners will have moral or ethical duties to others and society. These duties will generally be in keeping with the principles of the South African Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996) and the obligations imposed by the Ethical Values and Standards, as well as the Rules of Conduct for Good Practice of the professional body. This will help ensure the integrity of practitioners for the protection of clients.

The commitment of practitioners to act professionally and to maintain trust in relation to their clients, will be vital.

Progress

The application for recognition by SAQA will be submitted as soon as the Non-Profit Company registration number for the professional body has been received from the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC). It is foreseen that, ultimately, the envisaged professional dispensation will allow for the recognition of all those passionate about pastoral and spiritual caregiving in South Africa.

² See <http://www.acts.co.za/higher-education-act-1997/index.ht>



Wendy Greyvensteyn

The integration of education, psychology and Christianity for a population of adolescent South Africans

This article serves to give a case report about the integration of Christianity, psychology, and education for a population of over 600 adolescent black South Africans scholars at Cornerstone College. This article is a case report and is by no means an academic discussion.

Cornerstone College is a high school in Pretoria, South Africa, and it caters for previously disadvantaged South African learners. The school was founded in 1992 in response to the national crisis, perpetuated through Apartheid, which forced learners of a certain race to be discriminated against by disallowing them access to certain white-dominated schools. This resulted in a massive disparity of equality of education for the youth of South Africa, with many of them either not being educated, or receiving education that was substandard. Cornerstone College was, therefore, established from the deep conviction that all pupils be treated with equality, and presented with a Godly platform from which to excel into the future. For the purpose of accessibility, the school is located on the outskirts of the less affluent suburbs of Pretoria in an effort to cater for these pupils. The school fees have been consistently substantially below the average for private schooling in South Africa. This has been a deliberate decision taken by the owners of the school due to the fact that the many parents are unable to afford the exorbitant fees traditionally charged for private education. Therefore, Cornerstone College creates the opportunity for learners across socio-economic divides to receive affordable quality education. In terms of the ethos of the school, Cornerstone College is an evangelical Christian school that emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to education. This holistic approach is

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characterised by academic excellence, spiritual growth, and biblical integrity. The school places much prominence on presenting the truth of the gospel to their learners in a way that equips them to apply it to the challenging realities that they are faced with on a daily basis. As mentioned, the school achieves this fine balance through the integration of Christianity, general academic education, and sound psychological research. Over the last five years, internal research within the school has shown that the parents of the learners often feel uninformed and ill-equipped in navigating their adolescents through the challenges that they are faced with. Many of the parents from the school are single parents for a myriad of reasons, including divorce, spousal death, extended family death through HIV/AIDS, spousal abandonment/neglect, and poor socio-economic circumstances. Many families are also cared for by a guardian (often another family member) due to the fact that the learner has been orphaned. It is often the case that learners live with their grandparents who raise them so that their parent/parents can travel more diversely in pursuing steady employment. The traditional westernised notion of family unit, therefore, is often vastly different to what we are seeing represented within the families at the school.

In 2015, Cornerstone College, originally a secondary school, founded the primary school division of the college by introducing Grade R – Grade 6. Therefore, the approach for achieving this integration of education, Christianity, and psychology has been more comprehensive in the sense that we have put programs in place for both parents, younger children, as well as adolescents. Although the focus of this case report is on the annual adolescent conference, it must be said that the parents are invited to a minimum of four seminars per annum at the school. The topics of the seminars that are presented to the parents correlate with the topics that are presented to the adolescents so that the family is united, educated and supported holistically. The parents have requested a few topics be covered for their own sake that the adolescents have not expressly requested, but this information from the parents has equipped us in knowing the challenges that the wider communities are facing. An example of one of these topics has been single-parented homes. This has given rise to an entirely new perspective on ways in which parents, learners, families, and communities are in pronounced need of an integrated model of Christianity, education, and psychology.

One of the ways in which this integration takes place is through the presentation of an annual life skills conference. This conference is presented by myself in my role as a Clinical Psychologist and Christian. I work within the sector of private practice, however, I also work as a consultant for various institutions that purport to integrate the fields of psychology and Christianity. Currently, in South Africa, it is not possible to register expressly as a Christian psychologist, there is no specific registration category for that subdivision. Therefore, psychologists who want to practise from a Christian perspective are required to do so under strict guidelines as provided by the statutory medical council – Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). Much effort is being dedicated to expanding and legitimising the field of Christian psychology, such as organisations like the Institute for Christian Psychology (ICP founded by Professor Nicolene Joubert), Association for Christian Counsellors in South Africa (ACC

in SA, headed by Professor Nicolene Joubert), Counselling@ (founded by Dr. Hanlie Meyer), and Focus on the Family Africa (CEO Graeme Schnell). Although much ground has been ploughed and won towards the purpose of legitimizing and researching the field of Christian psychology by these organisations, we remain united and focused on continued efforts to expand this progress. To make a contribution to this end, I am now a doctoral student with the University of South Africa (UNISA) with a thesis title in the broad subject area of integrating Christianity and psychology in various sectors. Therefore, to this end, the purpose of this adolescent conference is to provide Christo-centric and psychologically verified information about the typical adolescent type difficulties that learners face e.g. eating disorders, bullying, peer pressure, depression, suicide, drugs, alcohol, and sexual activity. During and after the conference, there are counsellors on staff to assist any learner who may need further counselling, or to follow-up on any issues raised that need further intervention e.g. social workers. A number of resources, NGO details, and handouts are given to the learners so that they are thoroughly supported should they require any further counselling. The parents of the learners also give written consent for their children to attend this conference, and are encouraged to notify the school should any additional assistance be required.

The conference is presented to learners from grade 6 (primarily 12 year olds) through to grade 11 (primarily 17 year olds). A few months before the conference is presented, I take a survey from the pupils to determine which psychological issues are most pressing for them. There is also opportunity for them to suggest certain topics that I may not be aware are areas that they are struggling with. Although the perception may exist that the topics that need to be covered most saliently will differ from grade to grade, it would appear from our internal research that this is not the case. Our surveys over the last two years have shown that this age group of grade 6 to grade 11 learners are all faced with similar challenges, regardless of their age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, or geographical location. The most commonly requested topics

to be covered for December 2015's conference were as follows:

- How to survive trauma, divorce, loss, and grief (Where is God when bad things happen?)
- The pressure to use drugs and alcohol
- Responsible sexual behaviour and the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- What emotions are, and how to deal with them
- Cyberbullying, and social media as a means of cyberbullying
- What depression and anxiety feel like, and how to deal with it in body, spirit, and soul.

During the presentation of this conference, we placed a 'post-box' at the front of the school hall and invited learners to anonymously write down any pressing questions that they had. This proved to be an enriching initiative with the learners asking over 100 questions within that three day period. The anonymity of being able to ask the questions that they're afraid to ask anyone else, or afraid to be heard asking anyone else, was the key to ensuring that this exercise was successful. Some interesting trends and themes could be seen throughout the questions. On the second day of the conference, I invited the learners themselves to participate in answering some of these anonymous questions. An inordinately high percentage of the learners at this school are born-again Christians who have a deep commitment to their faith, and centre their lives on making wise and biblical decisions. I am, as the process of ageing would impose, no longer in the prime of my own adolescence, and I recognise that while I may possess years of spiritual insight and professional training, my ability to fully relate to what these learners deal with is somewhat limited at times. Therefore, giving some of these adolescents the opportunity to merge their testimonies with the psychological education that they were receiving was a way in which the integration of these fields became far more accessible to the learners. When I came across a question that I deemed appropriate for the exercise, I asked if there were any learners who wanted to volunteer to share their thoughts on the question posed. There was no shortage of volunteers which indicated that

they were all invested in and actively listening to the material they were being presented with. The learners in the audience responded well to hearing their peers making links between their Christian beliefs and how this impacts on the challenges that they are faced with. Giving them this opportunity to be involved in the answering of questions added a realm to the conference that would not have been possible had I been the only person responding. Something shifts in adolescents when they can relate to one another on a revolutionised level.

Furthermore, due to the fact that I am a psychologist by profession, I am well aware of the fact that my own knowledge and expertise is limited. For this reason, I invited an educator as well as a pastor to join the conference so that they could give the professional counsel and information that was needed in this integration endeavour. The combination of these three fields ensured incredibly rich, inclusive, complementary, and comprehensive content for the duration of this conference. Questions were answered by all the professionals that presented material, with us often inviting commentary from one another. The questions posed showed clear themes that demonstrated just how complex it can be for adolescents to make sense of their faith in the midst of the pains, pressures, and expectations placed on them by others, especially their peers. Some of the themes that became obvious through the questioning were as follows:

1. There still seemed to be a confusion about whether or not Christians are 'allowed' to be depressed or anxious, and if this is not an indicator of weak faith. Many learners were not yet well versed in the psychological, social, neuropsychological, biochemical and spiritual explanations and aetiological research conclusions that address the questions surrounding mental health. Much of this presentation was shared by me and the pastor who was on the panel.
2. Many of the learners are being faced with the temptation to use drugs in order to gain peer acceptance, not as much amongst one another within the school setting, but definitely within their communities. Marijuana

is easily accessible and is often presented to them with falsely innocuous promises that it will not have any negative side-effects. The attraction to drugs and alcohol is also linked to status. It is assumed that those adolescents who can afford high quantities of those substances are of a higher socio-economic status than those who cannot. Thankfully, due to the ethos of the school and their substantial drive towards educating the learners holistically, these myths have been dispelled amongst them. However, the communities from which some of the learners come still attach status to substance use. There were many discussions around the body being the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) and how this translates into practice. The learners were also shown the neuropsychological effects of drug use on the brain as well as how this impacts their behaviour. The long term consequences of substance abuse were shown to them, but the emotional fall-out of substance addiction was just as important as the physical side effects in how we addressed this topic with the learners.

3. Another interesting theme was the observation of how some more postmodern type thinking has infiltrated the learners' perceptions of emotions. Many of them were confused about thoughts such as:
 - My decisions and my behaviour should always be guided primarily through my emotions
 - My life should be only about my own happiness
 - I am entitled to feel whatever I want to feel, whenever I want to feel it, and wherever I want to feel it.

Although an academic discussion is beyond the scope of this article, it is this above theme that perhaps highlights some of the differences that we see between some traditional westernised models of psychology, versus Christian psychology literature and research. Therefore, we took much time here to discuss the value and gift of understanding one's emotions, while seeing that emotions do not always have to be deterministic and enslaving.

4. Cyberbullying is becoming a definite threat to the psychological health of adolescents as technology advances and becomes more readily available. The nature of cyberbullying is often complicated because it can be performed in an anonymous fashion. The identity of the bully, unless you request a criminal investigation, is not easily uncovered or proven. The basic biblical foundation of how we treat one another is something that becomes blurred in some adolescents' minds when they are under the impression that their actions cannot be traced back to them. Much of the discussion around this theme centred on biblical exhortations to treat one another in a spirit of love, honour, respect, and humility. On a more practical level, however, there are many laws that exist in South Africa that provide protection for the victims of cyberbullying, as well as legal consequences for those that chose to victimise others. This section of the seminar was a more educational one where we presented the learners with a synopsis of the legal limitations of 'free speech'. This educational section of the seminar will actually be expanded on in the next few months as we host a social media attorney who will be presenting a seminar to educators, learners, and parents on social media and law.
5. Responsible sexual behaviour and sexually transmitted diseases is a pertinent theme for adolescents. Most national and international school curricula focus education on 'safe sex'. This would include birth control options, the risks around sexual promiscuity, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. However, Cornerstone College, as is the case with most church organisations and Christian schools, has added to this curriculum by emphasising the motto of 'safe sex is no sex'. This is an 'abstinence before marriage' teaching that uses the biblical explanation and model of sex to explain the sacred nature of sexual intercourse. Added to this, we showed the learners snippets from DVDs of respected Christian sexual education experts discussing STDs, and sexuality in general.

6. The last theme that I would like to discuss for the purposes of this case report is the discussion of the overriding theme of loss, trauma and grief. This theme was the most dominant of them all, and infiltrated quite a number of the conversations held. Many of the questions the learners posed were indicative of great pain and tumult e.g. 'how can I help my mom to deal with the loss of my dad?', 'what must I do if my friend is being targeted for sex while she is home alone? (parents only home late hours of the night)', 'what must I do if I cannot stop getting the images of what I saw and what happened out of my mind?'. The school has always been devoted to and active in their assistance of all learners who are experiencing some form of trauma. Social workers, pastors, counsellors, and a number of other professionals are involved on this level. There is also the continual organisation of seminars and workshops to be held at the school that address this type of pain. I was, however, profoundly touched by the bravery and maturity with which these adolescents have faced these traumas. For many of them, they testify of God's grace and healing power. Determined strength is often birthed through painful turmoil.

In conclusion, the last session of this conference was one in which we invited the learners to give feedback. They were asked to share what had been meaningful for them, what they would never forget, and what had challenged them. The best way in which to demonstrate the significance of what took place during this conference is to list some of the many answers that the learners gave:

- "I learned that my identity is in Christ, and not in what others tell me I am, or ask me to be"
- "I did not know that depression and anxiety could be caused by all those things that you spoke about" (physiological aetiology)
- "I was reminded today that even when I make a mistake, God forgives me and He loves me very, very much"
- "I understand more about God's grace"

- "I know now that I am not alone in this, because I heard from the other students about how they dealt with what I am going through right now"
- "I did not know that you can get that many STDs, and I had not thought much about sex in the way you explained" (pastoral and sexual education expert explanation on the biblical model of sex)
- "You have helped me to understand that it is ok to mourn for my father, and what grief is"
- "I don't want my emotions to be an excuse for how I treat others, like..... If I am really tired and irritable and then I shout at my mother for no reason"
- "I didn't think I was a bully. But now I see that I am. And I am sorry for anyone that I have hurt who is sitting in this room today" (learners responded by giving an encouraging and accepting round of applause)
- "I think I can see now that fear controls my life"

It is clear from the feedback received that the learners were significantly impacted by the content of this conference. As discussed at the beginning of this article, the intention of this initiative was to integrate education, psychology, and Christianity in a manner that was relevant and applicable for the learners at the school. One of the factors that contributed most to this success was the inclusion of professionals from all three fields. These speakers worked in tandem with one another by respecting and complementing one another's areas of expertise. The professionals had one uniting commonality which aided their cohesion, and that was their faith in the Lord. This provided the basis and foundation from which their academic knowledge was formulated and presented to the learners. Allowing the learners to be active participants in this conference through asking and answering questions aided our understanding of the challenges they are facing, as well as how best to assist them through these things. Finally, it would appear, from the feedback statements mentioned above, that the learners' experience of the conference was indeed one in which they felt educated and informed from a psychologi-

cal and spiritual perspective. We look forward to delivering another such conference at the end of this year and are full of hope that it will change the young and vulnerable lives of the learners who receive it.



The hall in which the conference was presented shown here in the second session of the third day



In this photo, a learner has asked me a question and I am having a discussion with him about it

Keith Michael

Christian Networking Alliance for Healthcare in South Africa

Background

The Christian Networking Alliance for Healthcare was formed after the historic Christian Healthcare Networking Conference, which was held in September 2008. The conference was attended by all the main Health Care Christian organisations in South Africa.

The theme of the conference was: Christ, our Hope in Healthcare.

This conference was held in response to a realization among Christians in the health fields that the Christian influence in health and healthcare in South Africa had significantly declined over the previous decade. This decline had contributed to the general decline in healthcare in the country with the resulting vicious cycle of patient dissatisfaction, negligence, lawsuits, staff demoralization and emigration. The decline was perceived to pertain to all aspects of healthcare, such as private and public care, university and college training, medicine and nursing aspects, as well as paramedical services. There was also a perception that there was no united Christian voice to be heard in a country, which is facing a heavy burden in lifestyle, moral and ethically related health issues and diseases.

This raised the concern, which is still a pertinent concern that healthcare in South Africa had lost its way and that caring, compassion and competence are deteriorating in all sectors of healthcare.

As a result, it was agreed by the leaders of the healthcare organizations present, that the Christian healthcare organizations in South Africa should amalgamate into one umbrella organization, the Christian Networking Alliance for Healthcare. The mission being to unite Christians in healthcare into a single voice, representing common concerns across all spectrums of healthcare.

Keith Michael,
Dr., Chairperson of Christian
Networking Alliance for
Healthcare



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For the first time in our country's history, Christian Health Organizations are now formally committed to collaborate with each other in providing a Biblically based voice to the nation on health issues as well as embarking on other joint processes to extend the Kingdom of God in the health environment and the broader Body of Christ.

A number of Christian organizations are currently involved in the Alliance, who has been meeting on a 2-3 monthly basis since its inauguration in 2008. The focus of the meetings is to discuss and pray about healthcare matters related to national interest.

The organisations comprise of Hospivision South Africa, represented by Rev dr. Andre de la Porte. This is an organisation working in hospitals serving terminal ill patients and provide bereavement and trauma counselling to patients and their families; Christian Medical Fellowship, represented by Drs M Sobekwa and M Bac; Healthcare Christian Fellowship, represented by Dr Keith Michael (medical doctor) and Erica Grunewald (a qualified nurse); The Institute of Christian Psychology (a training institutions providing short courses and degrees in Christian counselling and Christian psychotherapy), represented by Prof dr. Nicolene Joubert (a registered psychologist), Private Healthcare South Africa, represented by Dr Tommy Gray, a medical doctor that represent Private Hospitals, Community Health Evangelism (CHE), represented by Mr Kevin Pippet; the National

Department of Health, represented by Ms P Matsotse (Director General), and Unashamedly Ethical (this organisation promotes ethical and moral behaviour).

Objectives

The Alliance has established an executive committee, which meets on a quarterly basis to pursue the following key objectives:

- Be a Biblically based voice to Government and Civil Society on health issues.
- Promote and support the spreading of the Gospel in the Health fields of the country.
- Promote the practice of Christ-like medical care by Christian health workers in all spheres of healthcare and promote the teaching of this type of care for students in all categories of health professions.
- Provide a united leadership to Christians in Healthcare.
- Corporately embark on selected projects under God's guidance towards extending God's Kingdom in the Health Fields.
- Provide and participate in a strategy for improvement of Healthcare in the country.
- Recruit other Christian organizations and individuals into the Alliance

Liaison with Churches and other Christian Organisations

The key objectives mentioned above indicate the overall purpose of the Alliance and to achieve these goals the Alliance seeks to co-operate with Churches and other Christian organisations in the a number of ways, inter alia,

Healthcare Sunday

This is commemorated annually on the 2nd or 3rd Sunday in October (St. Luke's Day). Churches are encouraged to focus attention on the needs of the sick and suffering and healthcare workers via special services on this day. Theme for Healthcare Sunday in 2014 was "Prayer and repentance by healthcare workers and interested parties, for healthcare South Africa."

Adopt a Ward

The Alliance is able to facilitate a process whereby Churches can adopt a ward in a local hos-

pital. Church members can be trained in hospital visitation and evangelism, and so reach out to the local hospital as a mission field on their doorstep.

Mobilise Christian Health Professionals

All categories of healthcare workers who are Church members are encouraged to affiliate with one or more of the Alliance organizations through which they can receive training and support to be effective witnesses in their places of employment.

Networking

Actions to improve communication and networking between the various organisations represented in the Alliance.

Saline solution

Rolling out of the international "Saline solution", an internationally accredited course enabling healthcare workers to better apply and live out their Christian faith as they work in the healthcare field.

Prayer

Advisory capacity and prayer support for Ms. Matsotse on matters relating to ethics, spirituality in healthcare and government. Ms Matsotse attends the Alliance meetings as often as her schedule permits.

Introduction of prayer initiatives into the private healthcare sector, using Pretoria East as a model for introduction to other private hospitals.

Swaziland Christian University

The Alliance is supporting and advising on the establishment of a Christian Medical and Nursing College currently being established in Mbabane, Swaziland. Training at this college will be Biblically based and it seeks to produce healthcare and other graduates who have a holistic approach to their professional services.

Christian Nursing College

The Alliance believes that a Christian Nursing College could have a significant and positive influence on healthcare in South Africa. This is currently part of its vision only and no steps

have as yet been taken towards making this a reality. It does however seek partnerships in this regard which could share conceptual ideas around this and start moving towards reality.

Brief Description of Alliance Member Organisations

Healthcare Christian fellowship (HCF)

<http://www.hcfi.givengain.org>

Worldwide ministry supporting Christians in healthcare, founded by Rev Francis Grimm in the 1950's. Headquarters in Benoni, South African leader Dr Keith Michael.

Christian medical fellowship (CMF)

<http://www.cmf.org.za>

CMF exists with a view to helping Christian doctors, dentists and other health workers (pre- and post-graduate) to grow in their faith and witness, and to find Christian answers to the many ethical and other problems we face in the profession.

Community Health Evangelism (CHE – Southern Africa Network)

<http://www.360.org.za>

The CHE strategy seamlessly integrates evan-

gelism, discipleship, and church planting with community health and development. The ministry is holistic, seeking to obey everything that Jesus commanded and addressing the whole need of individuals and communities.

Hospivision South Africa:

hospivision.org.za

Hospivision is a non-profit (Reg. nr: 99 12761/08) Christian Faith-Based Organization (FBO) established in 1997 to provide psychosocial and spiritual care, counselling and training, as well as physical support in the health care environment.

Institute of Christian psychology:

<http://www.icp.org.za>

The vision of the Institute of Christian Psychology is to provide opportunities to access life-long post-school education and training that could improve quality of life and contribute towards a peaceful and God-honouring society.

Private Healthcare Prayer Initiative.

Prayer initiative commenced in Pretoria East Hospital +/- 2009. (Dr T Gray) Endeavouring to expand prayer initiatives to other private hospitals country wide.

Compiled by Dr Tommy Gray, Erica Grunewald and Kevin Pippert

Annette and Andre de la Porte Spirituality and Healthcare: A South African perspective

Healthcare in South Africa is in a crisis. Problems with infrastructure, management, human resources and the supply of essential medicines are at a critical level. This is compounded by a high burden of disease and disparity in levels of service delivery, particularly between public and private health. The government has put ambitious plans (which are part of the National Development Plan toward 2030) in place. In the midst of this we find the individual person and his/her family and community who are staggering under the suffering caused by disease, poverty, crime and violence. The chances are more than 70% that this person and his family and community are trying to make sense of this within a spiritual framework and that they belong to a faith-based community. This article explores the valuable contribution of spirituality, spiritual and pastoral work, the Faith-Based Community (FBC) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) to holistic people-centred healthcare in South Africa.

Gesondheidsorg in Suid Afrika is in 'n krisis. Daar is omvangryke probleme met infrastruktuur, menslike hulpbronne en die voorsiening van essensiële medikasie. Hiermee saam is die siekte las van die Suid Afrikaanse bevolking hoog en is daar wisselende diensvlakke met 'n groot gaping tussen openbare en private gesondheidsorg. Die regering het ambisieuse planne op die tafel gesit wat deel vorm van die Nasionale Ontwikkelingsplan vir 2030. Te midde van dit alles vind ons die individuele persoon en sy/haar familie en gemeenskap wat steier onder intense lyding as gevolg van siekte, armoede, misdaad en geweld. Die kans is meer as 70% dat hierdie persoon, sy/haar familie en gemeenskap probeer sin maak van hulle leiding vanuit 'n geestelike raamwerk en dat hulle aan 'n geloofsgemeenskap behoort. Hierdie artikel ondersoek die bydrae van spiritualiteit, pastora-



Annette and Andre de la Porte

HospiVision is a national South African Non-Profit Organization that provides spiritual care and counselling and physical support in Public Sector Hospitals. André de la Porte is the CEO of HospiVision and coordinates a research program on Spirituality and Healthcare at the University of Pretoria's Centre for Contextual Ministry. Annette de la Porte is a social worker and marketing and communication manager for HospiVision. Andre and Annette has been married for 32 years and have two married daughters Danica and Githa, both social workers!

Their home language is Afrikaans.

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le werk, die geloofsgemeenskap en Nie-Wingewende sektor tot holitiese persoon gesentreerde gesondheidsorg in Suid Adrika.

1. Introduction

Healthcare in South Africa is in a crisis. In the 2011 report on Reforming Healthcare in South Africa the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) states:

,A full-blown crisis of health outcomes developed in South Africa during the 1990s and the first decade of this century. This only received proper political recognition from about 2007, when increasingly frequent media exposure of the public health system's failings created an atmosphere of crisis and scandal. This, along with the brave efforts of health professionals and health NGOs, helped silence high-level denialism about HIV and AIDS in particular

and the poor condition of public healthcare in general. Since 2007 the government has been much franker in acknowledging shortcomings in both policy and delivery and has promised to tackle them with determination' (2011:3).

This situation should be of grave concern to practical theologians, FBOs and FBCs and its members. It is simultaneously a warning and a clarion call to action.

2. The South African healthcare situation

The public health sector is institutionally fragmented and characterized by the poor standard of infrastructure, skills shortages, poor staff attitudes, low levels of patient satisfaction, incompetent management, continuing human resources and financial crises, with starkly different health outcomes for different socio-economic groups. The Department of Health's Strategic Plan for 2010-2013 and 10 Point Plan for 2009-14 (n.d.) has been developed to address these challenges. In its August 2011 Green Paper on National Health Insurance the government set the ambitious goal of achieving universal access to quality healthcare over the next 14 years. Unfortunately there are also significant levels of incomprehension and mistrust between various role players, often as a result of ideological differences and resentment over the disparity in resource levels.

The CDE report further highlights the complexities of the South African Health sector: 'The coexistence between a failing public health sector and a private sector that serves a significant minority with high quality healthcare is the most contentious aspect of the health reform debate in South Africa. There is a widespread tendency in this debate to dismiss the contribution of the private sector to overall health outcomes, to be suspicious of the motives of private health sector players and to challenge the very legitimacy of private health provision' (CDE, 2011:15).

It should be emphasized that here are also many dedicated people working under exceptionally difficult conditions in public health services. Some notable successes have also been achieved.

This should be recognised, along with the failings of the public system. The CDE report (2011:50) also highlights the successful elements of existing public-private partnerships. Private service providers deliver care of consistently high quality to far more people than is usually acknowledged. The fact that it is private, and that some parts of it operate for profit, does not detract from this. The country should play to its strengths and turn a deteriorating situation through a collaborative national approach. The National Planning Commission has identified healthcare as one of 10 key strategic areas in the National Development Plan (n.d.).

A World Health Organisation report published in 1998 recognised that:

'Until recently the health professions have largely followed a medical model, which seeks to treat patients by focusing on medicines and surgery, and gives less importance to beliefs and to faith – in healing, in the physician and in the doctor-patient relationship. This reductionism or mechanistic view of patients as being only a material body is no longer satisfactory. Patients and physicians have begun to realise the value of elements such as faith, hope and compassion in the healing process. The value of such 'spiritual' elements in health and quality of life has led to research in this field in an attempt to move towards a more holistic view of health that includes a non-material dimension (emphasising the seamless connections between mind and body) .

In the same year the Duke University's Centre for Spirituality, Theology and Health (CSTH) was founded. The mission of the CSTH is to 'conduct research on the relationships between religion, spirituality, and health, train others to do so, interpret the research for clinical and societal applications, explore the meaning of the research findings within the context of theological positions, and discuss how those theological positions might inform the design of future research' (CSTH, n.d.). As part of the work of the Centre Koenig, McCullough & Larson published the Handbook of Religion and Health in 2001. Their research covers the whole of medicine and is based on 1200 research studies and 400 reviews. The second edition of the Hand-

book was published in 2012 and now includes a review of more than 3000 studies (Koenig, King & Carson, 2012). The handbook covers an overview on the effect of religion on health. It has a section on the relationship between religion and mental health covering subjects such as well-being, depression, suicide, anxiety disorders as well as alcohol and drug abuse. The discussion on the relationship between religion and physical health addresses heart disease, hypertension, Alzheimer's disease and dementia, immune functions, cancer and mortality. Health behaviours and disease prevention is also positively influenced by religion. In conclusion Koenig et al. state:

'What have all these studies found? While some report that Religion/Spirituality (R/S) people experience worse mental health (4%) and poorer physical health (8.5%) many more studies (over eighteen hundred) find significant positive relationships between R/S involvement and mental or physical health. Indeed, at least two-thirds of these studies report that R/S people experience more positive emotions (well-being, happiness, life satisfaction), fewer emotional disorders (depression, anxiety, suicide, substance abuse), more social connections (social support, marital stability, social capital) and live healthier lifestyles (more exercise, better diet, less risky sexual activity, less cigarette smoking, more diseases screening, better compliance with treatment)' (2012:600-601).

In South Africa there is no statutory requirement or official system in place for accreditation and certification of spiritual and pastoral workers in healthcare. Neetling (2003) has done a study regarding the relevance of pastoral work in South Africa with specific reference to the Southern African Association for Pastoral Work (SAAP; <http://www.saap.za.net/>). Neetling (2003:82) concluded that Pastoral Counselling is a possible national health resource for healthcare, cost effectiveness, spirituality, social change, reconciliation and multi-cultural application.

3. The Faith-Based community and Faith Based Organizations in healthcare

South Africa has a very substantial burden of disease, not only from HIV and AIDS but also from preventable conditions arising from poor sanitation, nutrition and other conditions of poverty, as well as a growing burden of non-communicable disease affected by lifestyle. High levels of crime, physical trauma and violence places a further burden on the healthcare system. The important role of FBCs and FBOs is already indicated in the Department of Social Development's 2011 report on the South African Non-Profit sector. Faith-based organisations are the third biggest sector (12% = 8839 out of a total of 76175), after Social Services (34%) and Development and Housing (21%). This is followed by the Health Sector (11% = 8723). The South African Government's National Strategic Plan on HIV, STIs and TB 2012-2016 (n.d.) recognises the important role of the Faith-Based sector and the networks it provides. In the 2012 article on The Scale of Faith Based Organization Participation in Health Service Delivery in Developing Countries, Kagawa, Anglemeyer and Montagu has estimated that faith-based organizations play a substantial role in providing healthcare in developing countries and in some cases provide up to 70% of all healthcare services.

A hallmark of South African Society, apart from its diversity and inequalities, is the religious involvement of people and communities. In the 2011 census questions about religion was not included. The 2001 census indicated that more than 80% of South-African had some religious affiliation (<http://www.statssa.gov.za/>). The 2012 Gallup poll has however indicated a 19% decline in religiosity from 83% (2005) to 64% (2012). A very interesting trend is that levels of religiosity are much higher in low-income groups (66%) than in high income groups (49%).

Magezi (2008) is therefore correct in emphasizing the churches contribution to national

health and wellbeing. The church is a subsystem of the community and as such can influence the community and society (Magezi 2008:273). As much as the church, a clinic or a hospital must also be considered as part of the community and the church (FBCs and FBOs) can make an important contribution to the function and impact of these facilities. The church also has access to and can offer physical and human resources to the community, part of which can be health related (Magezi 2008:274). The church provides social and community cohesion and its leaders can play an important role in societal and moral transformation (Magezi 2008:274). Magezi (2012:167) pleads for the repositioning of churches from the periphery to the centre in order to make a meaningful contribution to public healthcare and indicates three areas of participation: increasing access to primary and preventive care, improving delivery and quality of healthcare and improving patients' self-management of their disease. FBOs and CBOs can also play an important role in community healthcare and primary healthcare. De Gruchy (2007) has indicated the value that religion can add to health in the following areas: Religion offers presence; Religion offers an integration of tangible and intangible health promoting factors; Religion offers relationships and networks; Religion offers an interpretive framework.

What needs to be added is that the faith-based community also provides context for care, compassion and hope. People throughout history have dealt with illness, loss, suffering, trauma and pain in spiritual ways. According to Louw (2008:118-122) illness must be seen as a conflict and existential crisis. It causes conflict with the body, the self (identity crisis), the environment, and a crisis of faith and ultimately an existential life crisis in which our sense of purposefulness and direction is questioned. Illness further threatens our will to live, confronts us with our finites and mortality as well as with our past actions and its consequences for the future. Representatives of that community (whether professional or volunteer) build a bridge to the faith community to communicate that we are part of a bigger group who share in our humanity and vulnerability. The faith-based community is

also an important resource to support health-care workers in their commitment to provide compassionate care.

It is clear that spirituality, spiritual and pastoral work and FBCs/FBOs have an essential role to play in the provision of holistic people-centred healthcare. This is internationally recognized and there are already excellent best practice models available. However, the nature and extent of this contribution in the South African context and how it can be enhanced is not easy to define.

4. HospiVision: A South African case study

Hospivision traces its roots back to a decision by Christian Doctors and Ministers to build a chapel in the Pretoria General Hospital during 1945. This chapel was inaugurated in 1956. From this base "pastoral services" was provided until 1996, mainly by the Dutch Reformed Church. By this time the name of the Hospital was changed to Pretoria Academic Hospital. In 1996 a chaplain's position, funded by the Dutch Reformed Church, was discontinued. Churches in the area become involved and this led to the establishment of a Faith-Based organization called HospiVision, which was formally registered as a Non-Profit Organization in 1999. The Pretoria Academic Hospital had by then relocated to a new hospital called Steve Biko Academic Hospital. HospiVision chose to follow an ecumenical and non-denominational route and to provide spiritual care to all patients, family and staff, irrespective of religious orientation. The organization also set a goal to make spiritual care services available in other hospitals, as the trend to discontinue formal chaplain's positions, continued in other denominations. Currently HospiVision renders its services in hospitals in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

4.1 The HospiVision model

4.1.1 Organizational identity

Vision: Touching lives. Giving hope.

HospiVision touches the lives of sick and vulnerable people and those around them through spiritual and emotional care, counseling and physical support, and gives them hope through developmental empowering programmes.

Mission

HospiVision facilitates the establishment of sustainable integrated support and developmental programmes that reach out to and serve the sick, vulnerable and disadvantaged, their families and those who care for them.

Values

HospiVision is committed to spiritual values such as respect, responsibility, integrity, love, fairness and service. Ownership by the community, church, family and individuals involved, is encouraged. HospiVision promotes a culture of lifelong learning and development.

4.1.2 Guiding principles

HospiVision follows a holistic people-centred approach which includes the following elements:

- A Bio-psychosocial and spiritual approach
- A re-visioning of the understanding of “Bio” to include all aspects of the person’s physical life
- From “person-centered” to “people-centered” with the focus on the hospital as a community
- Contextually relevant programs which take into account limited resources, poverty and lack of support systems. This is true of patients, families and staff.
- Adaptation to diverse health care contexts, from academic, district, township and rural hospitals and specialized settings such as rehabilitation hospitals.
- Trained staff working as part of the multi professional health care team
- On site services: Hospitals provide facilities from where our services are rendered. In some cases we also provide 24 hour crisis and trauma support services, for example at the Accident and Emergency unit of Steve Biko Academic Hospital.

As a Faith-based organization HospiVision creates a context and community to find meaning in suffering. Volunteers from local congregations provide a valuable service to reach out to patients, family and staff. In a volun-

teer, a patient finds a friend who is present to listen, support and encourage as they face suffering or the crisis of a life-threatening illness. HospiVision also has professional volunteers who offer their services as part of community engagement.

We follow a collaborative partnerships model which includes the following role players:

- HospiVision staff and volunteers
- Hospitals
- Other organizations
- Donors
- Communities
- Training institutions and universities

As a non-profit organization, creative communication and resource mobilization is part of our core business. We use a variety of communication channels, both printed and electronic to communicate with our staff and our donor community. Donors include individuals, churches, businesses, local and national foundations and in some cases international donors. We also have a variety of fundraising events.

As a non-profit organization sustainability is a goal we work towards. This means that apart from donor funding we also generate other income streams through training, social support programmes and the development of income generating programs. This includes various skills training, crafts, sewing, baking and gardening activities. In doing this we do not only create opportunities for people who access our services but also create income for the organization.

In terms of organizational support and development we place a high value on the following:

- Governance, management and administrative systems
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting
- Partnership development and management

4.1.3 Programs

We provide the following programs:

Hospi-Care (Touching lives)

- Spiritual and emotional support, care and counselling to patients, their families and caregivers.
- Employee assistance programs
- Trauma support and counselling
- Hospi-Kids: care and support to sick, orphaned and vulnerable children, in particular those infected or affected by HIV & AIDS in the family and/or living with a life-threatening illness (e.g. cancer)
- Counselling centre: trauma counselling, bereavement support and professional health care related counselling services

Hospi-Help (Giving hope)

- Physical and nutritional support
- Skills training and socio-economic development programs for people living with HIV and AIDS, chronic illness and disability
- Community support and engagement
- Volunteer recruitment, selection, training and mentoring
- Accredited training for volunteer and professional caregivers, companies, as well as community and faith based leaders
- Marketing, communication and resource mobilization
- Radio pulpit

5. Conclusion

Spirituality, spiritual and pastoral work, the faith-based community and faith-based organizations can make a valuable contribution to holistic people-centred healthcare in South Africa. We are faced with a complex interpretive task because, on the one hand, this must take place within an African context and world view. On the other hand the modern healthcare environment will require that we must work within a well-defined framework. We need to develop a framework which is theologically grounded, contextually relevant (for the South African healthcare environment), inclusive and pluralistic (making room for Western medicine and African worldviews, culture and practices). Our approach should be empirically and methodologically sound and consistent, as well as evidence based (taking note of and developing best practice policies and procedures for the South African context). Key to this will be the creative mobilization, use and management of available and potential physical and human resources.

Having said this, we must constantly be reminded that there are more to the human being and his/or her existence than what can be researched, described and evaluated. 'Spirituality' and 'health' will always have elements that will not comply with nomothetic knowledge systems. Crisis, trauma, illness, loss, suffering and death is part of our human condition and will continue to challenge our conceptual frameworks and quest to find meaning in the midst thereof.

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Daniël J. Louw

Human Embodiment as Soulfulness. 'Anatomy of the Human Soul' in a Pastoral Anthropology and Theological Aesthetics

Antropologie in die Christelike tradisie was hoofsaaklik deur twee paradigmatische strominge bepaal: (a) die Platoniese dualism tussen liggaam en siel, en (b) die pessimistiese siening dat die menslike liggaam bloot 'vlees' is en in verband staan met verganklikheid en sondigheid. Die misterie van menslike broosheid is dan direk verbind aan wêreldgelykvormigheid, sondigheid en Godelike oordeel en straf. Daar is egter ook 'n ander perspektief moontlik, naamlik om 'n Christelike antropologie te bedink vanuit 'n stereometriese benadering binne 'n teologiese estetika. Daarom die argument dat elke deel van die menslike anatomie verteenwoordig 'n vorm van singewing en estetiese kwaliteit wat dui op die genieting, waardering en heelmaking van die totaliteit van lewe (cura vitae). Heling in 'n spirituele antropologie van menslike beliggaming is 'n integrale deel van sinsoeke en kan by monde van die sosioloog Peter Berger beskryf word as 'duidinge' en 'tekens' van transendensie. Daarmee word bedoel dat lewe kwalitatief gedui word deur die etos van offerliefde en die spirituele dimensie van 'n eucharistiese modus van intimiteit, onvoorwaardelike liefde, diakoniese barmhartigheid en genadige deernis. As illustrasie van 'n integrale en holistiese antropologie, is twee diagramme vir 'n diagnostiese en hermeneutiese benadering ontwerp.



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Anthropology in the Christian tradition has often been dominated by two paradigms: (a) the Platonic schism and dualism between body and soul, and (b): the pessimistic view that the human body is merely ‘flesh’ and, thus, the tendency to link corporeality to sinfulness. All human misery is then viewed as the result of the combination between worldliness, sinfulness and divine punishment. However, there is another perspective, namely to rethink Christian anthropology from the perspective of stereometric thinking and a theological aesthetics. In this regard, it is argued that every part of the human anatomy, every organ, is designed to reflect the beautification of life; i.e. to enjoy life and to heal life (*cura vitae*). Healing in a spiritual approach to human embodiment is closely related to significance and a sense of meaning and destiny that view the human body as a signal of transcendence (P. Berger); i.e. life as determined by the ethos of a sacrificial ethics and the spiritual notion of ‘eucharistic intimacy’, unconditional love, diaconic charity and graceful kindness. As illustration of a holistic approach, two diagrams for an integral anthropology in a diagnostic and hermeneutical approach are designed.

Due to the notion of *corruptio totalis*, it was always difficult for Christian theology to acknowledge the ‘goodness’ and constructive significance of our being human. The connection between ‘soulfulness’ and human embodiment was difficult to articulate due to the dominant association between sinfulness and the corporeal dimension of being. Humans are therefore always crippled by their sinfulness and rendered as victims of the fall.

For example, The Canons of Dort (Psalter Hymnal 1959:44) starts as follows: “As all men have sinned in Adam, lie under the curse, and are deserving of eternal death, God would have done no injustice by leaving them all to perish and delivering them over to condemnation on account of sin”. The text of reverence is then: Romans 6: 23 “For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God”.

The connection between human sinfulness and human sexuality was well established in many pietistic circles. In general, the human body

was excluded from ‘soulfulness’ and reduced to the realm of ‘flesh’. The genitals were not part of the beauty of the human soul and have most of times been viewed as dirty and filthy. One should convert your heart (*kardia*) by means of the mind (*noes*), not your penis and vagina.



Depiction of human sinfulness and hell in the Last Judgement¹. Baigio da Cesena, a papal master of ceremonies, criticized Michelangelo's work saying that nude figures had no place in such a sacred place, and that the paintings would be more at home in a public tavern. Michelangelo included da Cesena in the Last Judgement as Minos, one of the three judges of the underworld. When Baigio complained to the Pope the pontiff explained that he had no jurisdiction over hell and that the portrait would have to remain. In Greek mythology, Minos was the king of Crete and was the son of Zeus and Europa. He became one of the three judges of the underworld after his own death and Michelangelo has depicted Minos with ass-ears and wrapped in serpents coils. The coils indicate to what circle of hell the damned are destined. The serpent's bite on the genitals of Minos (da Cesena) illustrates Michelangelo's disdain for the Cardinal and the fact that official ecclesiology always connected human sinfulness to sexuality and the area of the human genitals.

¹ Online: <http://www.italian-renaissance-art.com/Last-Judgement.html>. Accessed: 23/05/2014. Public domain.

In many cases in Western, Christian reflection on anthropology (theory formation), Platonism determined reflection on the interplay between the human soul and our bodily existence. In the interpretation of the relationship between body and soul, a Hellenistic dualism rather than a Hebrew systems thinking prevails. Due to the one sided emphasis on human sinfulness, the body is esteemed as being from a lower order. Caregiving should thus focus predominantly on the salvation of a substantial and immortal soul. Man has lost his/her sense for value, dignity and purposefulness.

The consequence of a negative and pessimistic anthropology is that life has become a toilsome endeavour and burdensome struggle against nausea, nothingness and sinfulness (failure). Sin always casts a devastating shadow over the human quest for meaning and the attempt to design a constructive theology of human affirmation. Caregivers know how to admonish. How to affirm and nurture the 'good of creation' seems always to be a kind of theological embarrassment for theologians that are trained to condemn rather than to bless.

Rather than stereometric and systems thinking, analytical thinking dominates reflection in theory formation on the interconnectedness between body and soul. Applied to anthropology, the human body is seen as a kind of prison for the human soul. Due to this Platonic dualism, body and soul are viewed as two opposite, polar categories. Applied to the field of pastoral caregiving, the impression was left that soul care is merely interested in a disembodied soul and not in the enjoyment of bodily health and sexual delight.

But should we start with fall in the design of a pastoral anthropology or rather with grace (the eschatological perspective of salvation and healing)?

The core anthropological question in this essay is: if a theological anthropology does not start with sin or the fall, or with a romantic assessment of the good in human beings due to an 'optimistic incarnation-humanism', what should

be a starting point for the design of a theological anthropology that incorporates the corporeal dimension of our being human? Within the scope of a praxis of hope care and the critical realism of spiritual wholeness, how should one view the meaning and character of our being human and what is the role of human embodiment within a holistic approach and integral understanding of soulfulness as embodiment and embodiment as soulfulness?

At stake is the question: How can pastoral caregiving contribute to the healing of human life and the aesthetics of the human soul? Is it possible to incorporate human embodiment and human sexuality as an integral part of spiritual wholeness?

The human being: totally corrupted - the unfortunate twisting of life

Within the history of orthodox, Christian faith, the confessions of the church were mostly concerned with the formulation and definition of "true faith". Faith is designed for rational formulae not for aesthetic experiences. Ecclesiastical councils, synods and clergy wanted to defend ecclesial doctrine against heresy. Theology was designed to please God (it should be orthodox), not to please humans (orthopraxis). Faith is a serious business, not a playful enjoyment. Questions about right and wrong, good and evil, were more 'spiritual' than questions about sensual beauty and bodily pleasure.

It often happened in the history of the Christian faith that in terms of a dualistic and Hellenistic interpretation of sinfulness and human embodiment (sarx), that sinfulness had been associated with sexual desires and bodily needs. Sin has been viewed as a substantial category and evil principle inherent to all flesh.

However, if one scrutinize the different concepts used in the Biblical text to describe human sin, they point more to the direction of abhorrent, disobedient behaviour, immoral responses and dysfunctional relationships, than substantial categories emanating from a predestined ordination or inherent evil cosmic principle. The following concepts in the Old Testament re-



fer to sin (Ellens 1989:60-61; Günter 1978:573-587):

Hatta't: a failure to achieve exactly what was expected – a missing;

Pesa: a failure to conform to the standard – a rebellion and transgression;

'Awon: a distortion or corruption of that for which one was intended – a perversion;

Ra': a nastiness of disposition – evil;

Resa': an insensitivity to that which would be appropriate to a child of God living before the face of God – impiety.

The New Testament words for sin have a similar character and content. They include:

Hamartia: a failure to achieve exactly what was expected – missing the mark or target;

Parabasis: a failure to do things just the way they were required – a transgression;

Adikia: a failure to conform to the standard and thus a falling into behaviour that is not affirmed and approved – unrighteousness;

Asebeia: an insensitivity to that which would be appropriate to a child of God living before the face of God – impiety;

Anomia: a failure to adhere to prescriptions – lawlessness;

Poneria: an inability to do right and good – depravity;

Epithymia: a longing to do differently from what is appropriate and prescribed – evil desire.

From the previous outline, we can conclude that sin is not an ontological element of our creaturality. "Nature" is not a predestined condition of sinfulness. Sin rather points to irresponsible behaviour (transgression); a kind of attitude and life style that does not take God and his will seriously in the making of decisions. The result is disobedience and a foolish lifestyle robbed from meaning. The Bible does not project a pessimistic view of life (merely doomed sinners), nor does it promote a kind of optimistic view of life (everything is fine and humans are angels).

The life view of the Bible is realistic: if you transgress the borders set by wisdom, and make irresponsible decisions (disobedience), if you do not reckon with the will of God (the Torah) and you abuse and hate your neighbour (lawless-

ness), then life becomes meaningless and therefore ugly: you are branded as being merely a fool (spiritual ugliness). If one adheres to the will of God, as explained in the Torah (in Jewish thinking the source or fountain of life), life is good (purposeful and meaningful). One should obey the commandments and, thus, start to beautify life (spiritual aesthetics).

In a theological assessment of life and the understanding of the divine destiny of the cosmos, it is indeed a fundamental question in theological theory formation whether we should start with the fall in a hermeneutical approach to a Christian anthropology, or rather with the exclamation mark of God the creator: it was very good! (Divine aesthetics).

The latter intriguing question presupposes a paradigm shift, namely, instead of merely ethical and morality thinking (good – bad; right – wrong), to aesthetic and creative thinking. The primary point of departure in anthropology is the aesthetic question: What is meant by 'good' within the framework of a covenantal and foundational understanding of hope?

From merely ethics (question mark?) to aesthetics (exclamation mark!): Divine delight

The aesthetics of hope includes art and the beautification of life. Creation and nature are pieces of divine art; the whole of the cosmos is in this sense 'iconic' – signals of transcendence. The questions where to and wherefore point to what the sociologist Peter Berger (1992:121) calls: the quest for "signals of transcendence." We each have a desire, or need, for something greater than ourselves; some bigger purpose or meaning in life. "In openness to the signals of transcendence the true proportions of our experience are rediscovered. This is the comic relief of redemption; it makes it possible for us to laugh and to play with a new fullness." Signals of transcendence create spiritual spaces for processes of hoping when life seems to be merely the tragedy of a *cul de sac*.

In fact, the whole of creation could be viewed as a cosmic signal of transcendence.

Cosmic beauty is both an ontological and ethical quality. In his most remarkable book, On

Beauty, Umberto Eco (2004:281) advocates very strongly for the rediscovery of the sublime in nature. To recognize the sublime in nature is *inter alia* to become aware of the deformation of nature in terms of ugliness, formlessness, terror and exploitation. Beauty then demands justice. “For example, in answer to a question on the criterion for appraising beauty, the Delphic Oracle replied: ‘The most beautiful is the most just.’ Even in the golden age of Greek art, beauty was always associated with other values, like ‘moderation’, ‘harmony’ and ‘symmetry’” (Eco 2004:37).

However, a spirituality of beauty probes deeper; beauty is an ontological concept that refers to the quality of being and the destiny of the cosmos.

In the words of De Gruchy (2001:8), art has to do with that awakening that aesthetic existence becomes possible and transformation begins to take place. Thus, the following thesis: practical concern should be supplemented by practical art. Practical art then as the skill through which we beautify the human soul, the place of land and the space of creation via the mode of *prāyś* ☐ the creative power of humility (the *habitus* of eschatology) and the creative energy of hope. In practical art and hope, the endeavour is to beautify life and to rediscover the beauty of creation.

“Very good” (the text adds *וַיֵּן*, *meod* - very) in Genesis 1: 31 refers to appropriateness and a kind of divine delight regarding the beauty and purposefulness of creation. In Revelation 4: 11 the connection honour, glory and power are emphasising the connection between creation and the reflection of the mind and will of God. Good, wisdom and Torah-thinking are inter-related. According to Ecclesiastes 3:11: “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” A more free translation: “He has made everything appropriate in its time.” (Version of New American Standard Bible).

Against this background, one should take into consideration that ‘anthropological categories’ in scripture do not refer to a formal anthropology or an abstract theory regarding the es-

sence of being. One cannot use them in order to design a kind of description about the character of being. Even substantial thinking does not suffice. The reference for example to ‘soul’ (*nēphēsh*) is then more a qualitative category referring to the value of our being human in relationship to God. It refers to the meaning and cause (*telos*) of life emanating from the encounter between God and human beings. Categories describing aspects of human life should be understood in a complex network of relationships referring to the whole of life, thus the emphasis on a systemic approach that incorporates stereometric thinking.

Stereometric thinking in a theological anthropology: more than merely ‘soul’

A stereometric approach to anthropology means that every aspect of our being human represents the whole of life as determined by the transcendental realm of the human spirit. The whole is represented in every aspect. However, merely calculating all the different parts together does not imply that the whole of life is thus captured and grasped. The whole is always more than its parts. ‘Soul’ is therefore more than reason and the ‘body’ more than *psuchē*. Both body and soul are more than *spiritus* or flesh (*sarx*). Human beings are embodied souls and ensouled bodies. As a created in the image of God, wholeness as a spiritual category implies in Christian anthropology that human beings are designed for the cause of *doxa*; i.e. to reflect divine destiny (*telos*), a humane mode of living (Calvin: *la principale fin de la vie humaine*).

“Stereometry” is the overlay of images and motives that not only enhance the concreteness of special statements but also subject them to a multiplicity of perspectives (thus, as it were, “exploding” their meaning). Words and texts are thus rendered semiotically transparent to one another, thus disclosing one another’s meaning (by opening up semantic spaces). Applied to Old Testament anthropology this implies such stereometric thinking “defines man’s area of life in terms of characteristic organs, thus describing man as a whole.” On a conceptual level, this wholeness also envisages talk about the complex and differentiated unity of persons

for whom, since “the body ... anchors us in the world” “not only the sphere of life but also the sphere of social relationships is constitutive”.²

Applied to Old Testament or sapientia thinking, stereometric thinking “pegs out the sphere of man’s existence by enumerating his characteristic organs, thus circumscribing man as a whole” (Janowski 2013: 18). Concepts like heart, soul and spirit are often used alternately in Hebrew poetry to reveal certain aspects of the human being. One component of our being human, for example the ‘heart’ or ‘mind’, represents the whole of life.

Stereometric reasoning allows for the Semitic view of a person as an integrated unit within the whole of the cosmos. The Greek dualism of body and soul is foreign to a Semitic approach. Stereometric reasoning is relational and systemic. It does not view a person in terms of isolated, different parts, but as a functional unit (whole) within a network of relationships. The subject-object split of rational scrutiny is far removed from the relational dynamics of Semitic communalism.

The ‘shape’ of the human body: embodied soulfulness

It was Michelangelo, in his struggle with his own agony and ecstasy, which turned to classic beauty in order to find “spiritual peace” and to strive for contentment in life. The Pope and the doctrinal stance of the clergy resisted his art, because faith could not make space for the beauty of the naked human body. The image of a body without clothes was perceived as disturbing ugliness rather than uplifting beauty. In the eyes of human beings, it stirred up notions of sin, guilt and shame rather than devotion, admiration and visionary hope. In classical art, the nude represents nobility and wisdom as the highest expression of human dignity.

Through stone and marble, the striving of the classical artist was to probe into the transcendent realm of divine perfect shape by means of

the human figure. For the ancient Greek viewer the marble sculpture has not been a dead slab of marble, but a living being. The everyday world was imbued with the sacred. It was normal if you lived in ancient Greece to think of life as a container of spiritual forces. The sculpture actually constructed the identity of the Greek aristocratic class: the very form and appearance of these sculptures came to embody aristocratic values and self-identity. The aristocratic class embodied the sacred in their self-representation and mobilised it on behalf of the community (Erez 2012:3). Youthful strength and vigour, grace splendour of appearance became qualities sculpted into the form of deities by the Greek craftsmen because they were conceived of as signs of divine favour. The shape of the human body served to reinforce commitment to an elite self-identity while engendering a feeling of awe.

The portrayal of the divine in terms of a human figure was always a disputable issue in orthodox theology. Michelangelo made a kind of “break-through” in the sense that he viewed the perfect human figure as a representation of God (divine embodiment) or Christ not as a “graven image” to be worshipped (idolatry) but as a depiction of the beauty of God (God’s love) as reflected in the essence of the human soul³. At the same time, the movement and proportions of the human body are always framed by torment and suffering.

The meaning of the Last Judgment resides not in the naked bodies but “the shop wreck of entire tormented and suffering humanity...anxiously awaiting the fulfilment of the promise that in the presence of Christ the Judge and Redeemer the righteous will rise from the dead at the end of time” (Vecchi in: Paris 2009:175).

K. Schoeman in his book on Michelangelo Buonarroti (2009:555) refers to the fact that in

2 Dabrock 2010. Online: <http://cb.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2010/08/16/cb.cbq015.full#fn-20>. Accessed: 27/04/2014.

3 From Socrates Michelangelo learned that the purpose of painting was to present the human soul, the life of human souls, as an expression of the very internal being of humans. According to Néret (2006:32), Michelangelo was only interested in the people he painted because perfect bodies were the carriers and containers of the idea of eternity.

his reflection on life and its purpose, it was all about the attempt how to bridge the gap between God and human beings by means of the aesthetics of beauty, the expression of love and the imaging of art. The beauty of the cosmic body within its imperfect earthly realm, as well as the attempt to depict it in painting and sculpturing, serve as a vehicle to glorify God.

For Michelangelo imaging in art is iconic because it is helping him to approach the perfect beauty of God (Schoeman 2009:559). To capture human embodiment is to capture the ensoulment of life and the aesthetics of God.

The naked human body: anatomy of the human soul

Within Greek art the naked human body and its perfect symmetry equals beauty and should be assessed as a piece of art. Spivey (2006 75) refers to the canonization of human embodiment in art by Polykletos. For Polykleitos the human body is from an aesthetic point of view perfect due to the tension between symmetry, balance and harmony. The naked human body therefore reflects dynamics, balance and harmony not pornography⁴.

Pornography is derived from two Greek words, pornai and graphai (Melton et al. 1989:68). Pornai is derived from peraymi that means 'to sell', usually in reference to a slave or prostitute for hire. Graphai refers to that which is written, inscribed, or pictured. "Pornography" then literally means to picture or describe prostitutes, with the connotation of an unequal slave/master relationship.

Pornography is therefore not nakedness as such (see the statue of David by Michelangelo and the paintings in the Sistine Chapel), or explicit sexual pictures or portrayals of sexual acts, or erotic material, stimulating sexual excitement.

The criterion cannot be sexual excitement or fantasy, because then any stimulation or visual impression related to sexual connotations and to sex will fall under the category of pornography.

Pornography refers very specifically to sexual exploitation and the dehumanisation of sex so that human beings are treated as things or commodities (Court 1990:929). Pornography points in the direction of the depiction or the description of the unequal misuse of power and violent sexuality (physical and psychological violence against others and oneself) promoting promiscuity. The genitals then become playful tools (the instrumentalisation of physiology) not intimate icons to celebrate the beauty of life. The advantage of the Michelangelo perspective on the aesthetics of human embodiment is that introduces a paradigm shift in anthropology from the hedonistic perspective of promiscuity to the aesthetic perspective of beauty, from the performance of sexuality to the enjoyment of sexuality. In fact, the human body and the genitals are not designed to destroy and to ruin, but to heal, to beautify and to console, to comfort, to bestow compassion in life.

The further implication is that every part of the human anatomy becomes a representation of the whole, namely the soulfulness of life. The human anatomy participates in the notion of the image of God and cannot be excluded from the spiritual destiny of humankind, i.e. to represent God and his grace. The whole of the human soul is enfolded in every part. Nothing about the human anatomy and functioning can be called filthy or dirty. For example, in the Old Testament excretion like semen was rendered as 'unclean'. According to the eschatological perspective, nothing can anymore be rendered as unclean. The whole of life and the entire cosmos are under the rule of God and serve the glorification of the Creator. With reference to Psalm 24:1; 50:12, 1 Corinthians 10:26 declares that the whole earth is the Lord's and everything that is in it. After Pentecost Peter has to discover nothing, even pork, is holy and partakes in the glory and holiness of God. Nothing can be called anymore unclean. "What

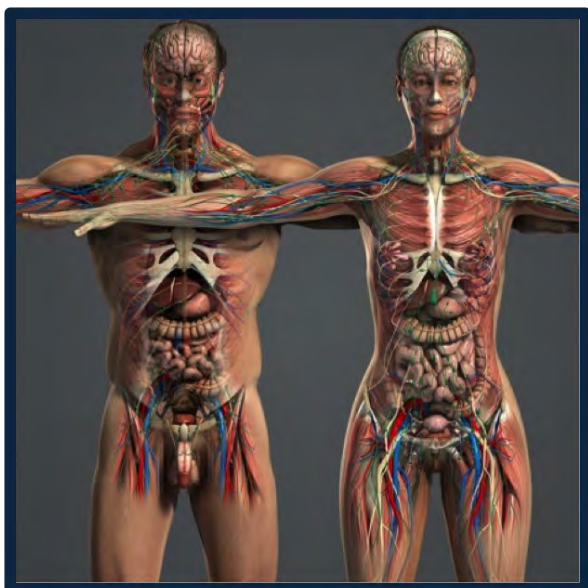
⁴ During Pius V's pontificate, the Congregation of the Council of Trent decided, on January 11th, 1564, to have the private parts cover. The most pornographic decision in the history of Christian spirituality! Pope Paul IV therefore summoned the House of Carafa Daniele da Volterra to cover the genitals. The artist who did the covering was given the name "Braghettone" meaning "trouser painter" (Néret 2006:78).



God has cleansed and pronounced clean, do not you defile and profane by regarding or calling it common or unhallowed or unclean” (Acts 11:9, Amplified Bible). We are summoned to honour God and to bring glory to him in our body (I Cor. 6:20).

Unfortunately, the human anatomy is not rendered in every aspect as a vital aspect of soulfulness and beauty. For example, the genitals are often used to refer to filthy and under the belt jokes. They are not rendered as the aesthetics of the human soul. However, patients with a stoma discover rapidly the ‘beauty’ (efficiency) of having a normal and healthy anus. In the same sense, the male penis and female vagina should be rendered as elements of the human soul, in essence beautiful, and not ugly. They are intrinsically connected to the generation of life and the ‘beautification’ of human beings.

Wholeness is therefore an inclusive concept. Soulfulness is synonymous with embodiment and vice versa. Spiritual wholeness is not possible without the wellness of the human body. Human health includes corporeality; the human anatomy is an external reflection from the ‘inner’ beauty of the human soul and should be cultivated in hope care.



To conclude: Wholeness is in the first place an aesthetic category. Every single part of the human anatomy partakes in the telos of the whole, namely to represent the gracious presence of God. In this sense, the human anatomy is soulful and can be called sacramental. Each part and organ of the human anatomy is ‘holy’ and should be used to heal the human soul. Healing in this regard is about the whole of beings functions reflecting the sacrificial presence of God in all relationships. The challenge is to portray and exhibit unconditional love, grace and justice. In this sense, human sexuality is a vital part of a healing endeavour. The penis and the vagina cannot be excluded in stereometric thinking from the whole. In addition, the whole of human life should promote human dignity and be used to combat stigmatisation, discrimination and violent abuse of power. Pornography sets in when any part of the body is isolated from the whole. Destructive fragmentations, and the dualism between body and soul, contribute to the danger that nakedness is reduced to the instrumentalisation of the genitals. Without commitment and trust erotic desire can become vulgar. When the naked human body is abused for seduction and temptation and portrayed as merely ‘flesh’ without the spiritual dimension of faithful devotion, unconditional love and compassionate intimacy, vulgarity and promiscuity set in. The telos of the body is not pure lust (eroticism: eros isolated from agapē) but humane passion: compassionate intimacy.

‘Anatomy of the human soul’¹ as an integral component of our being human within the dynamics of human relationships, and the human quest for intimacy and unconditional love. The human encounter is always about an anatomic encounter within a bodily space and specific attitude (being function) (habitus). As a qualitative category, the aesthetics of the human genitals and organs; as exemplification of embodied spirituality, are designed to express fulfilment and joy. The penis and vagina are not dirty and designed for rape but for compassionate intimacy and the enhancement of human dignity, thus an object of beautification and soulful delight.

1 Online: https://www.google.co.za/search?q=human+anatomy&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=f0-fU6-3NuOu7Ab3o4CgCw&sqi=2&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAQ&biw=1009&bih=446#facrc=_&imgdii=_&imgsrc=7tS3mtQW8L985M%253A%3BIVjkh5NDLzLM%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Ffi2.wp.com%252Fwww.anatomy3dmodels.net%252Fwp-content%252Fuploads%252F2013%252F11%252Fhuman-anatomy-3d-model-1.jpg%253Fsize%253D600%252C600%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.anatomy3dmodels.net%252Ftag%252Fanatomy%252F%3B600%3B600.

Accessed: 16/06/2014 (For academic purpose only).

The whole of the human body is designed to foster a culture of unconditional love without the fear for rejection. In this sense, the spirituality of human embodiment becomes a beacon of hope.

The point in the argument thus far is that in the attempt to overcome the schismatic dualism in a pastoral anthropology between a spiritual focus and a corporeal focus is that a human soul without a physical presence and without embodied expressions is unreal and does not correlate with the pneumatological focus of Pauline anthropology namely that the human body is the temple of the Spirit of God. Soulfulness is expressed in human embodiment as the enfleshment of the fruit (charisma) of the Spirit. However, what exactly is meant by spiritual approach to human embodiment?

Spiritual expressions/signals of the human soul (soulful embodiment)

Spirituality is a many-layered concept⁵. It is indeed difficult to capture the meaning of spirituality in a pastoral anthropology and to reflect on the implications thereof for wholeness and healing in caregiving⁶. That is indeed the case when spirituality is intertwined with human embodiment. Our basic assumption is that spirituality is not a non-corporeal issue.

In order to get clarity on the impact of spirituality on life issues and the existential realm of human embodiment, as well as on the notion of soulfulness in an anthropological understanding of wholeness, it is perhaps necessary to see whether one can identify basic 'spiritual expressions' or 'signals' of the human soul. If one can come up with a kind of diagram that depicts an integrative approach to anthropology, such a depiction help the pastoral caregiver to understand the unique character of caregiving and the identity of the caregiver in a team approach

⁵ Swinton (2013:19) describes in a generic approach to spirituality, spirituality that irrespective of the influence of formal religion as issues of meaning, purpose, value, hope and love.

⁶ Handzo (2012:24) define spiritual care: "Interventions, individual or communal, that facilitate the ability to express the integration of body, mind and spirit to achieve wholeness, health and a sense of connection to self, others, and [/or] a higher power."

to helping and healing.

In a qualitative and relational understanding of soulfulness, one should reckon with the fact that the 'human soul' is constituted by at least five basic anthropological components/ dimensions or constructs the affective, the cognitive, the conative, the body and the existential realm of context, culture and ecosystems. In caregiving a sixth component/dimension becomes paramount, namely the spiritual realm of wisdom thinking and its connection to a sound conscience, common sense and insight. All the dimensions are vital components of human self-awareness and contribute to an I-identity (ego-structure) and the psychological dynamics of personhood. The human psyche is indeed a complex category. Whether one approach the psychological dynamics from a Freudian perspective with the many layers of id, ego and super-ego, from a cognitive perspective within the dynamics between the rational and irrational components, or from a behavioural perspective with the focus on the phenomenon of human conduct, the human spirit will always supersede all forms of descriptive analyses.

However, a pastoral anthropology should reckon with at least the following six essential components in human-hood and a soulful dynamics.

- The affective: represents the dimension of emotions and feelings
- The cognitive: represents the dimension of the human mind and the capacity for reason, analytical thinking and rational understanding and comprehension.
- The conative: represents the dimension of the human will and its connection to motivation and inspiration.
- The bodily: represents the dimension of corporeality and its connection to physical, physiological, biological, neurological, hormonal aspects of human embodiment. Embodiment underlines the factor of vitality in our being human and the immediacy of desires, senses, sensuality and all basic drives such as sexuality.
- Environmental 'Gestalt' and relational net-



working: human orientation is existentially embedded and takes place within the structures of culture, social contexts, community dynamics and eco-systems. Human contextuality is essentially demarcated but the realities, of suffering, misery and death.

- The spiritual realm of wisdom thinking and its connection to a sound conscience, moral awareness, integral, consistent and responsible thoughtfulness, comprehension, insight, human respond-ability (accountability). The spiritual realm of life includes worldviews and is defined by constructs and different schemata of interpretation representing belief systems. Spirituality also represents the aspect of telos (purposeful devotion) in soulfulness; it constitutes a disposition/habitus of God-directed dedication and space of sacred eusebeia in all relationships: ethos of unconditional love.

In conclusion

Stereometric thinking helps one to understand that a disembodied soul is pagan thinking and not in accordance with Christian wisdom thinking. Our human body is sacred because our soulful expressions of love and gratitude are exhibited through every part of our being human; even the human sexual organs are soulful and expresses the 'beauty of the human soul'. Beauty then means that every part of the human anatomy is designed to glorify God, i.e. to reflect the healing dimension of unconditional love and unqualified grace.

What we have in mind is wholeness and unity. A human being is an embodiment of soul as well as an ensoulment of body. One does not have a soul; one is one's soul in terms of mind, will, emotion and body within the dynamics of relationships and cultural contexts. The religious dynamics in this embodiment and ensoulment is spirituality as expressed in our directedness towards transcendence (the divine and the ultimate) and enfleshed within all the realms of life.

A biblical perspective should always think along the lines of a holistic approach. Each part of the body, whether it is soul, spirit, mind or kidney,

presupposes the whole as a functioning unit. Whether soul or body, kidney or penis, mind or heart, each part is connected to one another and constitute a 'soulful whole'. Soulfulness is therefore about as systemic psychophysical and social unit consisting of processes of interactive networking.

Our position can be summed up in the following quotation: "Soul is not a thing, but a quality or a dimension of experiencing life and ourselves. It has to do with depth, values, relatedness, heart and personal substance" (Moore 1992:5).⁷

This qualitative and integral approach to anthropology can be summoned up in the following diagrammatic design and figure regarding the systemic dynamics of the human soul (a nēfesh-disposition). The figure helps one to understand that spiritual wholeness includes all the dimensions of our being human: the cognitive, conative, and affective dimension. In pastoral anthropology an ego-awareness and I-identity (me-experience) bring about an understanding of individuality and uniqueness. It demonstrates the fact that the dynamics of a person is contextually and culturally embedded.

Furthermore, the diagram wants to illustrate the point that integration in one's life (spiritual wholeness) depends on patterns of thinking, schemata of interpretation and the quality of belief systems and philosophical life views. Paradigmatic issues are essential for the fostering of spiritual wholeness and healing. It is in this regard that the Christian paradigms of for example unconditional, kenotic love and sacrificial outreach (diakonia) play a fundamental role in a pastoral anthropology for the spiritual healing of life (cura vitae) (Louw 2008).

Reflection on anthropology in pastoral caregiving, should take into consideration that in the wisdom tradition of Hebrew thinking, our being human is always embedded within and framed by the realm of suffering and death. Out human misery and awareness of transience and

⁷ See in this regard the argument in Nauer 2005:471 for cura animarum and its connectedness to nēphēsh. Humans don't have nēphēsh, they are nēphēsh (2005:472). We are in our totality soul, in all relations.

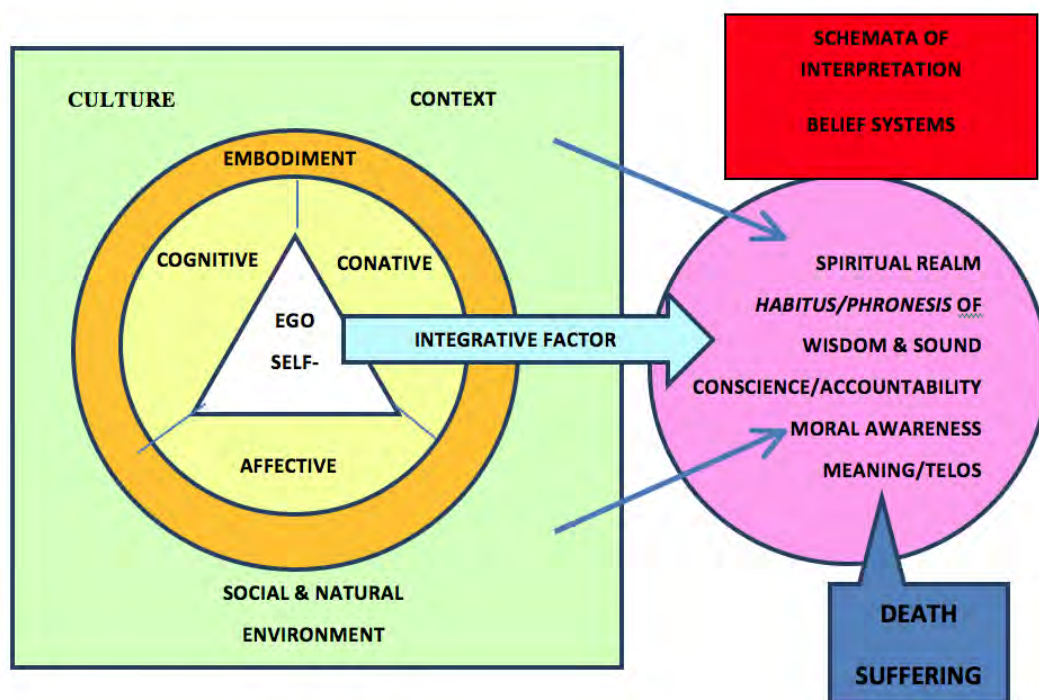
vulnerability, are fundamental ingredients of a Christian realism. Hope, meaning and healing are intrinsically connected to a wisdom that reckons human suffering not as fate and tragedy but as 'signals of transcendence', reminding faith of the faithfulness of a covenantal God to his promises of peace and salvation (Louw 2015:1-50).

Towards an integral model in pastoral anthropology

Systemic dynamics of the human soul: nēfesh-disposition

But what about the human spirit (pneuma) in an integral model for anthropology?

The following question surfaces: but where fits



the human spirit (pneuma) and therefore, the spiritual realm into this picture of the dynamics of the human soul?

One must acknowledge that it is actually impossible to portray the dimension of the spirit and its representation of the existential realm of life. However, the argument is that spirituality brings about cohesion and a sense of integration and wholeness. Every element and dimension is an ingredient of what can be called the

human spirit. The difference resides in the telic dimension of habitus: the quality and mode of being functions within the networking dimension of human relationships. It is determined in a religious understanding of 'soulfulness' by the belief system and God-image.

From a Christian perspective the endeavour is to go back to the Pauline roots of spirituality because in later developments, spirituality (spiritualitas) came to designate the non-material in contrast to the material (materialitas or corporalitas) (Ryan 1997:11). The reclaiming of spirituality as a means to articulate the humane value and meaning of life, can be linked to Paul's assumption that the 'spirit' within the human person is all that is ordered, led, or influenced by the Pneuma Theou or Spiritus Dei, whereas

sarx or caro or flesh is opposed to the destiny of God for life. Spirit and flesh designate two different ways or directions of life. When 1 Corinthians 2:14-15 refers to the 'spiritual person' it is not referring to a kind of escapism from the existential realities of life, but a different orientation that is guided by the principles of the kingdom of God. Ryan (1997:10) clearly points out that the contrast is between two ways of

life or attitudes to life (life views, paradigmatic frameworks) rather than between the material and immaterial world.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Paul speaks about the trichotomy of spirit, soul and body. The implication however is not a threefold division, but different perspectives within a unity. The text should not be exploited and misused for a philosophical or psychological speculation about three different entities and anthropological ca-

tegories. Paul's remarks should be read within his eschatological understanding of the kingdom of God and its implication for the new life in Christ.

In some places in the New Testament, soul is connected to spirit (pneuma). For Paul there is interconnectedness between soul and spirit.⁸ In some texts, the meaning is actually more or less the same. When Paul indeed refers to spirit/pneuma, he wants to describe a unique relationship between God and human beings. With reference to Christology, soul then becomes an indication and expression of a very specific state of being due to justification (salvation). One can say that pneuma indicates the condition of the new person in Christ over against the condition of the old person, captured by death and sin, pneuma constitutes spiritual wholeness and a condition of a peaceful mind and hopeful state of being. In this regard the Spirit of God (pneumatology) plays a fundamental role in Christian anthropology.

To sum up: With aesthetics in soulfulness is meant: meaning, healing, hope, compassion, wise decision-making, helping (support/outreach), a sense of well-being and the ethos of unconditional love. Wholeness without passion and compassion easily becomes soullessness and an ideological endeavour on an abstract rational level of theoretical speculation. The dynamics of spiritual soulfulness can be expressed in terms of:

- (a) The quest for integration within experiences of disintegration (congruence and consistency).
- (b) The quest for appropriate categories, philosophies of life and paradigms to interpret life issues in a comprehensive way, as well within a constructive, positive perspective (hermeneutics of life).
- (c) The quest for healing and wholeness within the existential realities of anxiety; guilt/shame; despair/dread; helplessness and loneliness; frustration and anger; greed and exploitation (modes of human suffering and factors contributing

to estrangement and disorientation in life – intoxication of life).

The intriguing question now is how do one trace back signals of spirituality that function as possible expressions of soulfulness in our attempt to come to terms with life demands, and the quest to find spaces and places (safe havens) which communicate peace as well as signals of wholeness and transcendence?

The following spiritual expressions can be described as indicators/signals of soulfulness in our life journey towards peace and healing. It can be applied in our attempt to make a spiritual assessment (McSherry 2013:61) regarding the value of life, the appropriateness of belief systems, the quality of our being human and the attempt of people to find meaning in life

- Vocation and meaning: healing as a sense of purposefulness, belongingness and significance. The meaning-question boils down to the following: towards what? The what-issue in life refers to inter alia meaningful frameworks of interpretation that gives direction and helps one to commit oneself to something or somebody. Vocation is embedded in a network and systemic dynamics of human relationships that appeal to the general fostering of human dignity and human rights. Herewith the importance of the interplay between communion and community.
- Virtue and value: healing as sense of moral integrity, responsibility (*respondeo ergo sum*) and sensitivity. Values create a normative framework for meaningful living. If values become internalized in customs and behaviour they attain the meaning of virtue and help to indicate direction, as well as an awareness of limitation, accountability and being empowered and equipped. Virtue and value bring about authenticity, integrity and sincerity.
- Vision and hope: the healing sense of expectation, anticipation of something new and constructive change. The pivotal question in hoping and visioning is where to? In this regard, healing-interventions need

⁸ To speculate about a psychology of personhood by Paul, is to overestimate his use of the concept. See Malina & Neyrey 1996:14-15).

imagination and the creativity of aesthetic thinking, namely what may contribute to a common good and the well-being of human life. With the beautification of life is meant a vision that can enhance human dignity and empower human beings around issues of justice, equal worth, reconciliation and forgiveness.

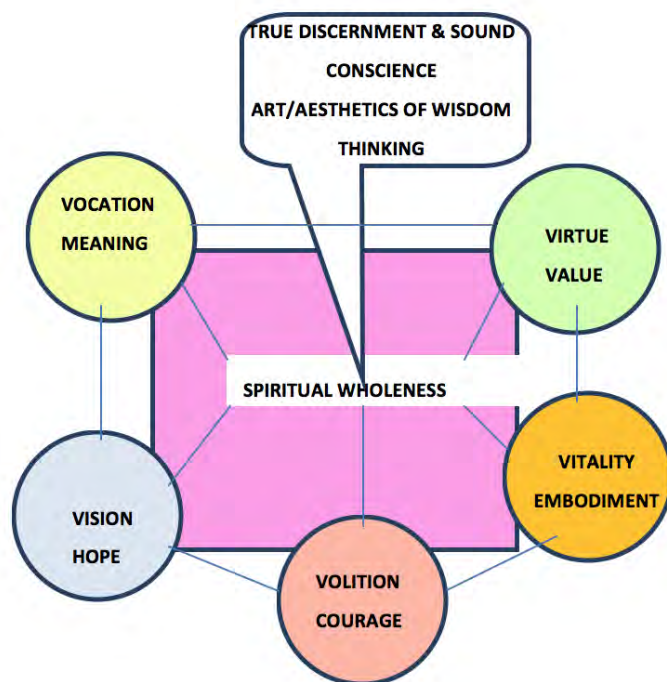
- Volition and courage/boldness: healing as sense of devotion, commitment and outreach despite resistance. Volition expresses different levels of motivation. It deals with the question: why (reason)? It boils to being functions that is fuelled by a kind of sustainability and willingness to endure suffering with patience and reasonable insight. Soulfulness is about questions that keeps one going when all human logic is contradicted by the many paradoxes in life. Volition presupposes the quality of being functions: to be there for the other despite contradiction.
- Vitality and embodiment: healing as a sense of aliveness (*elan vital*). Vitality represents different levels of physical wellness and optimal levels of health. Sickness and impairments, ailments and disability or disfigurement play a decisive role in soulfulness. Questions regarding physical abilities are related to bodily needs, corporeal desires, the senses and the sensual realm of embodiment. The fact is that we do not have a body, we are our body. A corporeal sense of aliveness is imperative for a wholistic understanding of soulfulness in anthropology. Care for the body and nutrition should therefore be rendered as spiritual issues as well.

It has been argued that the spiritual dimension, with its emphasis on meaning, virtue, vision, courage and embodiment, functions as a coherence factor in embodies soulfulness. The spirituality of *pneuma* contributes to the dynamics of integration between all the different anthropological dimensions; the ethos of unconditional love intends to articulate a sense of unity and wholeness in human embodiment. The diagram below is an attempt to come up with a depiction of an integral model. It illustrates

the dynamic interplay between vocation, virtue, vitality, volition and hope. Together they contribute to the dynamics of spiritual wholeness. With reference to wisdom thinking, informed decision making (in the light of sound values and a normative system for human behaviour) creates a sense of soulfulness and meaning.

Ethos, a mode of being, is never totally neutral. In wisdom thinking ethos, the mode of human being, is directed by kenotic love. Ethos helps to structure normative behaviour and in most cases deal with questions regarding the interplay between good and bad (evil). Soulfulness is thus connected to the anthropological notion of conscience as kind of moral alarming system (moral sensitivity) in processes of healing. The further argument is that empathy and sympathy are not merely about emotional fluctuation, but are embedded in a basic sense of responsibility and respond-ability (*respondeo ergo sum*). In this regard, a shift from achievement ethics towards sacrificial ethics (grace and love) becomes paramount.

Spiritual expressions/signals of embodied human soulfulness



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Sam Berg (Canada)

Comment to “Human Embodiment as Soulfulness.”

Professor Daniel Louw has written a thoughtful and provocative paper presenting a holistic, biblical, and Christocentric vision of the human being. He begins with a critique of the historical, Christian theological anthropology of the sinfulness of the human being, and through a listing of the rich biblical vocabulary concludes that the Bible presents not a depiction of humans as ontologically sinful, but as such in their decisions and actions. This leaves room for an appreciation of original goodness as declared by God in Genesis 1. The declaration presents not only God's evaluation of his creation, but his delight in it, and this delight forms the ground for the appreciation of its beauty.

Several pieces of the paper evoke further thought. First, his notion of stereometric thinking (a new word for me) is an explanation of how the whole person may be viewed, as we understand the parts superimposed upon each other and each contributing to the visualization of the whole. Pertinent to this is the sexual differentiation between male and female. I especially appreciated his discussion of pornography in this context as an objectification of the human being, perhaps even a dis-integration of the stereometric quality so that the genitals become toys rather than organs of creativity, not only in the concrete sense but also in the metaphoric sense.

In this regard, I have a couple of questions for professor Louw. First, it would have been interesting to read of his thoughts on the “one flesh” result of the male/female union, and whether and how this fulfills further our soulful embodiment. This consideration raises for me the related questions of how sexual diversity as described in the LGBT literature may be evaluated in light of stereometry. Additionally, while he hints at communality (I greatly appreciated his linking of communality and communion), it lead me to wonder about how the *nepshesh* might be understood communally. As Sher-

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Article by Sam:

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/7/#/44>

lock (The Doctrine of Humanity, InterVarsity Press, 1996) has pointed out we bear the image of God as individual humans, as male and female together, and as the collective human race (perhaps another place where we need to think stereometrically).

All of this of course presents us with the question, “So what?” Better, we must ask how this understanding of humanity might be applied in our pastoral and counselling work. Here, Louw presents a vivid and compelling description of the aesthetic telos of the stereometric view, in his “V” list. I found this to be a fulsome description of a vision of the “good life” that all those involved in the sacrificial ethic of ministry to others must have. Even though we recognize that our pastoral involvement in live of those we are called to serve is always incomplete, we must nevertheless have an understanding of what the end result of our work might be. His description of Vocation, Virtue and value, Vision and hope, Volition and courage, and Vitality and embodiment, provide such a telos. The last, vitality and embodiment, brings his argument full circle.

Thank you, Professor Louw.



Willem Joubert

Being transformed by blessing - by giving it away

WORD DEUR SEËNING GETRANSFORMEER – DEUR DIT WEG TE GEE.

Die Woord van God beklemtoon deurgaans die ervaring van God se seëninge op mense se lewens as transformerend. In hierdie artikel word die betekenis van die Here se transformerende seëning ondersoek en toegelig uit die Skrif. Die Skrif wys op die belofte van God dat Hy die mense vir wie ons bid sal seën. Die oordra van seëning aan ander deur gebed word verder beredeneer met verwysing na die roeping van gelowiges as priesters van God en die opdrag tot vergiffenis van almal wat ons benadeel. Vergiffenis en gebed dat die Here mense en plekke moet seën lei tot die ervaring van diep vrede en innerlike transformasie.

Introduction

The blessing of God is one of the central themes of the Holy Bible. Many believers in Christ as their Saviour and King want to receive God's blessing for themselves and their family or church. The obligation on believers to act in their role as priest to bless others receives less attention and is often left to the clergy.

In this article we explore how believers can practice their priesthood daily by giving God's blessing to others – and in the process receive a blessing from the Lord.

The priesthood of the believer

One of the roles of a priest is to bring God's blessing to those that he is appointed to bless. Another role is for example to officiate over offerings.

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When God calls Abram in order to establish a nation for Himself He says

*I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
3I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
(Genesis 12:2-3 NKJV)*

Thereafter Abram builds an altar and makes an offering to God in his priestly role. We also see how God intends to bless His new nation and wants them to be a blessing to all families on earth.

When Abraham fought for the king of Sodom and others to defeat the kings that defeated them and took Lot into captivity, God sent His Priest to bless Abram:

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

(Genesis 14:18-20 NKJV)

When God finally brings Abraham's seed out of captivity in Egypt and establishes them as a nation, He also establishes the formal priesthood under leadership of Aaron, the first High Priest of that dispensation. Detailed descriptions were given of the tasks of the priest, amongst others their task of asking God's blessing to be on the nation:

22 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 23 "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: 24 "The LORD bless you and keep you; 25 The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; 26 The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." ' 27 "So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."

(Numbers 6:22-27 NKJV)

God's intention was that this nation of Israel will become a kingdom of priests (Exodus 9:3-8)

When Jesus came as High Priest and offered Himself to become the final sacrifice on Golgotha (Hebrews 9:11-14), two things happened:

Firstly, He set us free, so that all who believe in Him will not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

Secondly, all these believers became a kingdom of priests as God intended for His holy nation, the spiritual children of Abraham:

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ

(1 Peter 2:4-5 NKJV)

and furthermore:

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

(1 Peter 2:9-10)

So every believer is a priest and king – part of the people of God – His kingdom!

Thus:

In Christ we (the believers) received the most wonderful blessing from God:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

(Ephesians 1:3 NKJV)

Jesus established all believers as kings and priests in His kingdom:

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

(Revelations 1:5b-6)

As a priest, every believer has a role to play, one of which is to bring God's blessings to the people around him/her whom is or is to be his children.

Current Practice

Over the approximately 2 000 years since Jesus' sacrifice and ascension, we see that instead of every believer operating in their priestly role, the different streams and denominations of the Church in the world have mostly opted for

a clergy/layperson model. The priestly role is fulfilled by a small number of leaders or clergy, while the so-called lay people listens to them (Dawson, 2008). This is not Jesus' model.

We find His model in Ephesians 4:11-13 (NKJV):

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

So we see that God has given people with five types of gifts to equip the saints (all believers) for their work of ministry to edify (or build) the body of Christ (the Church) to perfection. Everybody is in ministry and are priests and kings in the Lord's kingdom.

Even where believers realise their role as kings and priests they are not always sure what to do about it everyday.

One of the things they can do in their priestly role is to ask God's blessing to be on the people around them. There are off course many other roles that the priest has, which is not within the scope of this article.

Introduction to the faith-praxis of blessing others.

It is one thing to understand from the Scriptures that I as a believer am a priest in God's kingdom. It is entirely a different matter to have the faith to act out my knowledge in practice where I move everyday.

To gain understanding of how Jesus instructed his disciples on living their faith and pronounce blessings, we can look at Luke 10:1-9 where He send out seventy-two disciples ahead of Him. Amongst other things, He says

5 But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.'

(Luke 10:5 NKJV)

This greeting is in the form of a blessing. It is used in the Old and New Testament (see also John 20:19, 21, 26; Judges 6:23; 19:20).

In the next verse in Luke 10 Jesus gives a glimpse of the powerful impact of this blessing:

6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. (Luke 10:6 NKJV)

In order to find a way for a believer to act out his/her faith in ordinary day life a lifestyle programme was developed around Jesus' instructions to the disciples in Luke 10. It is called Luke 10 Transformation (www.luke10t.com). It contains four simple lifestyle actions, namely to ask the Lord blessing on people; building relationships with not-yet-believers; meeting the needs of the people around you daily and lastly to tell not-yet-believers about the gospel of Jesus.

We will now further investigate the first action, that is, how a believer can make the asking of God's blessing on other people a lifestyle, what Scripture says about it and what people report as the impact of living this lifestyle.

What is God's blessing?

There is a number of places in Scripture where God speaks His blessing over people or a nation (Gen 1:28 (Adam and Eve), Gen 12:1-3 (Abraham), Deut. 28:1-14 (Israel)). We see that sometimes He just use the word "blessing" and sometimes He spells out what the blessing will entail and sometimes there is a condition.

We can summarise these by saying that God's blessing is the most wonderful thing that can happen to a person, city or nation.

There are different types of blessing and directions for blessing. Asking God's blessing for ourselves (for example praying the "blessing of Jabez"), blessing God (for example Ps 103:1,2,20-22; 104:1,35) or other people (for example "bless you" used loosely even when someone sneezes) directly or doing a prophetic blessing of people are not within the scope of this article.

We are concerned solely with asking God to bless other people and places around us. It is in essence a prayer to God asking Him to bless the object of our prayer.

Who can ask God's blessing on others and when and where?

We have seen in section 2 (the priesthood of the believer) that every believer can do this. Children can do this from the moment they have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, because then they are believers.

The blessing can be asked at any time of the day or night in any place whether one sees the object of the blessing or not.

What is the format and mode of the prayer for blessing?

In its simplest form the format of the prayer is: "Lord, I pray that You will bless OBJECT OF PRAYER. In the Name of Jesus. Amen." For example, "Lord, I pray that You will bless the man walking there across the street. In the Name of Jesus. Amen."

Due to the fact that a believer will pray this prayer in the streets, classrooms, shops and meetings, we recommend that the prayer is done silently and with open eyes. It allows any believer to do the prayer at any time during the day in any place. When one is alone or with another believer it is good to pray to together.

We do not advocate that the prayer is done out loud to not-yet-believers (more training would be necessary and all people might not initially have the gift of boldness to do this.) In any event such a move does not necessarily strengthen the prayer, indeed, it shifts the action towards direct evangelism.

Expanding the prayer of blessing

The prayer of blessing can be expanded if there is time. The believer can use his/her own words or use three guidelines:

Firstly, use the main priestly blessing as originally given by God to the priests in Numbers 6:24-26 (NKJV):

*"The LORD bless you and keep you;
25The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
26The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace."*

Secondly, If there is time, expand the prayer of blessing to other areas of the person's life (Note the BLESS acronym for easy remembrance):

- Body – health, protection, strength
- Labour – work, income, security
- Emotions – joy, peace, hope, love
- Social relationships – marriage, family relationships, friends, neighbours, colleagues
- Spiritual relationship – salvation, faith, grace, mercy, spiritual growth, forgiveness of sin (Neh. 1:6-9)

Thirdly, the pray-er might pray for the Lord's love or peace to be on someone instead of blessing. In the Bible these two words are often used as synonyms of God's blessing. Especially when training young children (pre-school or junior primary) to pray the prayer of blessing it is better to start with love and then peace as "blessing" might be a too abstract concept at that stage of the child's development.

The objects of the prayer of blessing

The objects of the prayer of blessing are people and places. People may be believers or not-yet-believers and many times daily we will not even know to which category people belong. It may be strangers that you see walking or driving or in a mass transit vehicle with you.

It may also be people you know or do not know in your study, work or shopping place. It can include family and friends if you are not already praying for them.

The places we pray for can be countries, cities (Jeremiah 29:7 NKJV), suburbs or sub-divisions, workplaces, schools or universities, government offices or healthcare facilities. When we pray the blessing of God on an organisation we can include all those in authority, the employees, the clients, suppliers and directors.



The frequency of the prayer of blessing

The frequency of the prayer depends on the pray-ers motivation and circumstance. On a day in which one does not go out of the house much, opportunity might be limited to people in the house or who can be seen from windows. The pray-er might pray for other people he/she knows about or general prayers of blessing for a place such as organisation suburb/sub-division or town/city.

Other people who go to work, school, university or shopping might pass by a multitude of people in vehicles, on foot and a multitude of places such as buildings (apartments and office , houses, shops and public places. It would be impossible to pray for all, so the pray-er will just select a few one after the other. Such a pray-er may pray 40-60 times per day.

One's job might also play a role. If the nature of your job is to be around many people daily, many opportunities will arise. If one is secluded in an office with few visitors – then there will be less opportunities.

Obstacles to the lifestyle of praying for God's blessing

The motivation in this article should be enough to get a believer to adopt the lifestyle of praying God's blessing. What people experience who have made an inner commitment to do so, is that they might simply forget to do it. They might be distracted by people in the same vehicle as them and talk incessantly as they are used to, instead of praying.

Others will start well but become too busy and forget to pray.

A simple remedy suggested is to pray for the opportunities missed (or at least some of them) the moment one realise that you have forgotten. As the prayer takes so little time, even the busiest person can live such a lifestyle of prayer.

The Luke 10 Transformation lifestyle programme mentioned in section 4 is designed to assist believers individually or in congregations to overcome resistance to change and adopt the new lifestyle.

The attitude of the one praying

The attitude of the pray-er is very important. It should be a humble attitude, standing (or sitting, walking or driving) before the Almighty God on behalf of the object of payer, asking the Almighty God to intervene in that person or organisation or part of a city's life with His absolute goodness and mercy.

In the prayer for personal blessing, some of the deception that often enters the prayer life is selfishness and hope for prosperity. In this prayer for blessing for others, this is less of a problem and the believer can see himself/herself as following Jesus as mediator between his/her neighbour and the Lord for the Lord's most wonderful intervention in that person's life.

Taking the prayer of blessing for others to higher levels

The first level of the prayer of the prayer of blessing is in its simple form as described in sections 4-9. Believers can, however, take it to higher and wider levels. These are:

- Praying for God to bless those who persecute you.
- Being a blessing by appreciating the people around you

Each of these higher/wider levels will now be discussed shortly:

Praying for God to bless those who persecute you.

In real life we often meet or have people that we are in conflict with. They may have hurt or abused us or people close to us a long time ago or recently or it may be on-going. Sometimes the perpetrator may be unknown. The believer's response to the perpetrator may vary from murderous thoughts to hatred, to anxiety and fear, or we may have suppressed our feelings.

We might come across these people or think about them from time to time. In this article our faith-praxis is to pray God's blessing on them. In practice, however all our thoughts come flooding back and praying for blessing may be difficult.

Jesus' command is clear:

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

(Matthew 5:43-48 NKJV)

It is clear that Jesus is inspiring His followers to a higher level of living. The implication for us is clear: We should also ask God's blessing on those who have or are mistreated us and those close to us. This is not easy. To move from the valid feelings we currently have to the point where we pray God's blessing and begin to feel His love for them, we need to move through forgiveness.

Again Jesus has covered forgiveness thoroughly. In the Our Father prayer, He teaches us to pray for God's forgiveness of our sin conditional upon our forgiving those who wronged us (Matthew 6:12, 14-15 NKJV). He seals His teaching in the parable of the king who settled accounts with his creditors. He forgave one who owed much, but upon hearing how that one treated one who owed him little, the king reversed his decision and punished the forgiven one severely (Matthew 18:23-35 NKJV).

God has forgiven us all our sin through Jesus Christ. For us to hold something against others who wronged us is not an option.

Moving from hatred to forgiveness to prayer for blessing is a process. We suggest the following in outline:

- Acknowledge that the hatred/offense is there.
- Acknowledge that you cannot hold on to it.

- Acknowledge that Jesus understands because He faced a similar situation as a human being.
- Give the hurt to Him to dispense of as He sees fit (not by judging the other person). Please note that there is no doubt about the realness of the hurt and wrongness of the action and person(s) that caused it.
- Now you can forgive the other persons (whether they know it or not).
- Start praying for them.
- Start asking for the Lord's blessing, peace & love on them.
- Start loving them with His love. (Ask Him to give His love for them to you.)

Actual Impact: Believers who have done this report a tremendous freedom and the love of God flooding their bodies! People are amazed about the impact of forgiving according to the Scriptures.

Do not worry if this takes time. Deal with past issues and off course daily with present issues. If abuse is continuous you need to seek assistance from competent counsellors.

Please note that in order for us to freely pray God's blessing on those we are in conflict with, we need to forgive. This does not necessitate going to the perpetrator and telling him/her about our forgiveness. That is part of the process of reconciliation, which is a further process and not part of the scope of this article.

Being a blessing by appreciating the people around you

Our faith-praxis implementation consisted mainly of silent prayer up to now. But we can extend our blessing by doing acts of appreciation. The process of appreciation works by you observing the good in people around you and then doing an act of appreciation. Off course you will also be asking God to bless them and praise Him for them!

People usually respond very positively to appreciation. Appreciation has always got to be honest – not manipulative, syrupy or using the same thing too often.

We may appreciate people around us mainly in five different ways: by speaking words of affirmation, giving tangible gifts, spending quality time, doing acts of service or where appropriate giving physical touch (Chapman & White, 2011).

The words “thank you” in all instances where it is appropriate (even where it is people’s duty to serve you) can be a good beginning!

Scriptures confirming the prayer of blessing and its impact

We need to know what the Scriptures say about the prayer for other people.

Firstly praying for all

In 1 Tim 2:1-3 (NKJV) the Lord says: Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

It is important to note that this Scripture urges in the first place that prayers of all kinds be made for all men. In its simple way that is what the prayer of blessing done daily does – it confirms that doing that is something good and acceptable to Jesus.

What is more, it speaks of a promise – living quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and reverence.

Actual impact: People who do the prayer of blessing daily report across the board the amazing peace that they start to experience in their lives.

The Great Commandments

In Matthew 22:37-40 Jesus summarises the Law into two great Commandments:

37 Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor

*as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”
(Matthew 22:27-40 NKJV)*

The prayer of blessing really assists all believers to live out the two great commandments multiple times per day. Prayer is communication with the Lord and an expression of our love for Him.

Furthermore, the believer is loving and caring for people around him/her multiple times per day by asking God to give His most wonderful gift to them. These people are mostly strangers and he/she does not know or need to know whether they are believers.

The Holy Spirit assists our prayers

The believer can also know for certain that his/her prayers are assisted by the Holy Spirit to be in accordance with God’s will.

*26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.
(Romans 8:26-27 NKJV)*

Conclusion

As believers start to practise the prayer of blessing as part of a lifestyle of faith-praxis living – asking God to give His blessing to others, they first experience the transformation in themselves. The Scriptures quoted in this article shows that this should not surprise us – it is the promise of God.

This lifestyle of exercising the priesthood of the believer is available to all believers as it is in essence a silent prayer. Its impact on those that we pray for is mostly not known (except when we do it in our families, churches and workplaces), but from Scripture God promises a major impact. The one thing that we can experience, though, is that as we pray, God is transforming us.

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Vibeke Möller (Denmark)

Comment to „Blessing – a life style“

It has been refreshing to read this article about blessing. You find blessings (God blesses the man and the woman) from the first chapter in the Bible and then through the whole Bible. It is seldom that you read about blessings or hear it preached. His article reminds me of the book “The Gentle Art of Blessings” by Pierre Prader-vand.

I am sure that if we practiced blessings much more our world would look different.

Blessings are very powerful and can, as Joubert writes, have different forms, and different words can be used as in Luke 10: 5 “Peace to this house”. As far as I know The Faroe Islands still use God’s peace as a greeting when they enter a house, and I have experienced the same in Sweden. You can also find parents on The Faroe islands say “God Bless you”, when they send the children to school. It is a part of their culture. To bless a house, people etc. with peace has an enormous effect, because the peace with which you bless people is shalom. Shalom means to heal you, make you as a newborn baby without any spot or blemish.

As Willem Joubert writes you can bless nearly everything in a person’s life. What I think is very important is that you bless specific areas. This could be to bless a person’s emotions to expand. For example, many people, who have been abused, do not have any anger about what has happened to them. Those, who work with abused people, know that the backbone of healing is anger. So you can bless the anger in them to grow and come out.

How do you bless: Do you just say “I bless this and that”? Or do you say “I bless you with courage and strength to do this or that”? When God blessed the first people on earth in Genesis 1 he also said “Be fruitful”.

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Contribution by Vibeke
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/7/#/190>


Jesus told us to bless those who persecute us. Is this a command or an invitation? I would translate it as an invitation. Jesus invites all the times. I do not agree with Joubert’s writing about forgiveness. Not that I am against forgiveness. It has to have its right place in people’s life and history. I have experienced again and again in churches that people have been forced to forgive before they have been ready for it. Jesus never forced people to forgive.

The Lord’s prayer: Forgive us the wrongs we have done as we forgive the wrongs others have done to us. What does that mean? Does that mean that if I do not forgive those who have hurt me then God will not forgive me and I will not go to heaven? If this is true then our salvation is conditional. In the Syrian Bible it says we will forgive those who have hurt us. There is no time limit when you have to forgive.

Forgiveness is a process and it can take many years to come to that point. In my organization we talk about the school of forgiveness. You start one day in school and you ask God to teach you how to forgive just as you learn different subjects in school starting in grade one. In my opinion, there is something missing in his outline about forgiveness:

1. We need to follow God/Jesus's example about forgiveness. When Jesus hang on the cross he said: God forgive them because they do not know what they are doing. He did not forgive. In Luke 17: 3-4 Jesus says: If your brother sins rebuke him. If he repents then forgive him.
2. 1 Joh, 1: 9 says But if we confess our sins to God he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoings.
3. As I see it and understand what has to be done before we must forgive is that those who have wronged us must confess and repent.
4. In my opinion there is a spiritual and a psychological form of forgiveness. We tend to mix these in the churches and very seldom use the way God has taught us – confession and repentance before forgiveness.
5. It is also very important to not only acknowledge but express your feelings and work with your feelings before you can go to the next steps.
6. The psychological forgiveness is that you can work and decide to let go of your feelings – hatred, anger etc. against that person who has wronged you before the person who has wronged you has repented.





Paper in
Progress

Topic one:
**We all know persons,
but
what is a person?**

*Several authors comment and inspire one another
and think ahead, meeting artists
on the way around the world*



Introduction

“Paper in Progress” looked like a great idea: several authors comment and inspire one another and think ahead, meeting artists on the way around the world.

What does this mean: “Paper in Progress”?

The first author writes 1-2 pages on the topic and sends it to me, then I send it to the next of the four authors. This author again writes 1-2 pages, can read what he has received, can comment on it; inspired by what he has read, he will write new ideas. Then he sends the result to me. And so on.

There will be two stages, meaning that every author will get the Paper in Progress twice.

And what does this mean: “Meeting an artist on the way”?

After the third author I will send the paper to an artist. He or she can read everything, and is challenged to formulate what he / she has understood in an art work.

The art work will be integrated into the paper so that the following authors can be inspired by the art work in their writing.

During the second stage, a second artist will get the paper for a second art work.

And I managed to find others ready to take part in this idea. Thank you.

I am happy to present the result here. You will be interested to read and consider these impulses from different continents, from different cultures and different backgrounds, from different professional perspectives. Thank you to all contributors!

But, from my point of view, I have failed here! I did not succeed in reaching the goal of mutual inspiration.

Why?

I think this idea is not so suitable for a psychological topic which cannot easily be developed further on 1-2 pages. Such topics are much too complex and go too deep. Further development, and inspiration for new hypotheses, need time, time taken from your life, time for studies, time for research, ...

Even with clearer instructions to the authors, as already mentioned, the goal would not have been reachable. I failed to provide these clearer instructions because the basic idea fascinated me. This may be understandable, but is not a justification.

Despite all this, we do not want to withhold the result from you and not from the authors. To be quite honest, the whole project was also fun. And the contributions, the cooperation, the variety of thoughts make it worth continuing with the reading!



Werner May

Step 1: Andrey Lorgus (Russia)

The Christian doctrine of the human person

Psychological understanding of the human being needs a specific and unique theoretical apparatus that will exclude any confusing reduction or assimilating of the human being to any other kind of beings. Such apparatus may include theory, main concepts, practical knowledge and applied theory. From the Christian point of view any other basic psychological concept of human being except the category person seems impossible. This category is introduced to psychology from Christian theology and Christian philosophy, and therefore is based on theological concepts of the person doctrine and on Christian philosophy of person.

As the initial definition of the person as a theological concept we propose the definition by S. A. Chrusanov¹: "A person is non-reducible to nature, free, open, creative, unique, integral in its indivisibility and inviolable identity, unknowable by analytic objectifying methods, the ontological basis of the human being, and that which determines the way of existence of human individualized nature."

Psychologically understood, a person is a human being in relation to himself, to the world, to an-other; a human being who is possessing himself and changing himself. A person as a sovereign of his existence - his body, his life, development and death, as well as his own space (cosmos) and eternity (God) – this person proves to be the Divine image.

A human being is a person, but not a mechanism, animal, subject or social element, and considering a human being as any of these categories is non-Christian approach.

Thus, the very existence of the human being is realized in person. The psychological concept of person in Christian psychology may start from the acknowledgement of this statement, but without trying to prove it or to derive it from other more general theses. The genesis of a person cannot be revealed by psychology. It is possible to reveal only its existence. We can begin the analysis in psychology only from the moment when a person already has revealed itself in a special, "psychologically detected" way.



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¹ Theological anthropology. Russian-Orthodox/Roman-Catholic concise dictionary. Moscow: Nikea -2013. Art. Person. Chrusanov p.71

Thus, a human person is:

- Inimitable self-relation and relation to the world;
- This self-relation has unique emotional, mental and existential characteristics;
- A person is self-realizing as a God-like creature in its own life; realized in the image of the
- Creator, and therefore self-worth is the basis of a person;
- A person needs freedom, development, integrity, communication, immortality, and that is why we are speaking of the main personal “needs” or “aspirations” - self-worth, self-sufficiency, self-realization, belonging (communication), safety, theosis.
- All the internal dynamics of personal development are based on the realization of the main personal needs or aspirations;
- The therapy of a person is the movement towards such personal realization.
- Psychotherapy is life-supporting, that means offering help in self-realization as a human being, a free, creative and unique person;
- Psychotherapy is “returning to oneself”, “returning to God”, “returning to other people”

The human person and the human personality

1. Reflections on the text by Andrey Lorgus

In searching for the particularities of human nature, Andrey Lorgus correctly points to the category of the person as the most important determinant of the truth which is man. "The person" – this is a philosophical or religious term. But if, in psychology, we want to grasp what is most human in order to defend ourselves against a reductionist view of man, the personalistic concept appears especially important and useful. For, among the creatures living on earth, the human being, and only the human being, is a person.

Man as a person, because of his similarity to God, is indeed "the master of his existence" – as A. Lorgus writes. The term "person" relates to man. An enriched understanding of this could be achieved by the cognitive double perspective which is derived from philosophy and psychology. The interpretation of the functioning of the person is of course different in psychology and philosophy compared to theology. Each of these fields, however, reveals specific, interesting and important information about the person.

Describing the person in relation to his characteristics or attributes is closer to psychology than philosophy, which takes its orientation more from the question of the essence of the human being. One important question, however, remains open: how does a person exist? Is a person a real existence or a hypothetical construct?

The word "person" meant, for the Etruscans and Romans, the mask of an actor, through which the voice of the actor sounded ("personus" – from "personare"). In Greece, the word prosopon was used, which is derived from the verb "to see, to be visible". Persona (prosopon) played the role of the messenger. It was used to conceal direct experience of the actor and to present the state of the feelings of the hero represented. The ability to communicate (above all in dialogue) is a specific human disposition. This dimension of inter-personal communication also raises the question of the genuineness of the identity of the man who uses a mask.

The identity of the human race is not the sum of the attributes (rationality, freedom, dignity, responsibility), but the experience of oneself as subject and object simultaneously. Andrey Lorgus rightly emphasises that the person expresses itself in a certain attitude to others and to the world, and that therapy is the motion towards a personal realisation, a returning-to-oneself, a returning-to-others, and a returning-to-God.



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<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/116>

2. The meeting of philosophy and psychology – the person and the personality

The meeting between philosophical and religious thinking on the nature of the human being and psychological concepts of human experience and behaviour takes place in two ways. The first is connected with the acceptance of extra-systematic anthropological presuppositions which are more or less useful for psychology. Psychology seeks not only to describe psycho-physiological processes, but also to clarify definitively the phenomena investigated, with the aim of creating the concept of a mature personality (Allport, Maslow, Rogers). The acceptance of the concept of the human being as a person helps in clarifying definitively the context of the facts with which psychology concerns itself (experience and activities).

The second way starts from psychological descriptions of human experience, particularly the analysis of the meaning of subjectivity and intentionality and of the meaning of identity, or from the psychology of motivation, and aims at discovering the hypothetical dispositions which are a basis for the elucidation of the nature of the phenomena investigated¹.

Motives – the psychological perspective	Personal Attributes – the philosophical perspective
1. The path from empirical facts to the theory	2. The path from the theory to its empirical verification
The striving for understanding and self-awareness	Rationality and self-awareness
The striving for (personal and public) identity	Identity and continuity, subjectivity (being a agent)
The striving for self-determination and for a range of choices	Freedom and intentionality
The striving for attribution of agency and responsibility for one's own behaviour	Responsibility
The striving for creative development and going on from circumstances here and now to future circumstances (wish for transcendence, rising above)	Creativity (transcendence)
The striving to retain one's own dignity, one's own value	Dignity
The striving to retain intimacy, the private sphere, the interior world	Intimacy, private sphere

¹ H. Gasiul, Ausgewählte Methoden der Interpretation von Volitionsprozessen und volitiven Freiheiten in der modernen Psychologie. Realisierung von Motiven als Grundlage für die Entwicklung von volitiven Dispositionen. Selected Models of Interpretation of Volition Process and Freedom of Will in Contemporary Psychology. Fulfillment of Self-motives as a Base of Development of Volitional Disposition. In: Christian Psychology, 10, Person and Will, Poznan, 2013, 23-46.

In this case, the personalistic perspective enables an explanation and justification of the psychological facts to be found in personalistic anthropology.

Personal dispositions can develop into a constantly maturing personality, which is understood as a concretisation of the realised existential innate capacities. An important role in the self-realisation of the person developing into a mature personality is the observation of the motives which accompany the personal development. These include the following motives: self-reinforcement, self-protection, self-affirmation, self-expansion, self-evaluative motives, self-assessment, self-image, self-confidence, self-relevance. Identity-based motivation and the wish for self-improvement have great importance in the process of becoming, of individuation, of development.

The consideration of intentions as a form of individual signification as a basis for motivation to act is the first level of explanation that the theory of personality should strive to attain². Intentionality is in fact a significant context for the moral and religious life of man.³

3. The theological and psychological existence of the person

According to existentialists, fear for one's existence, combined with existing in the world, is nourished by these factors: surprise, enthusiasm and insecurity. All this results from the ability to ask these questions: Who am I?; What am I?; What could or should I be?. In the view of V.E. Frankl, "Der Wille zum Sinn", this is the most characteristic feature of the human being. Meaning lies in values. Freedom without relation to values becomes blind and dangerous. It is therefore only possible to overcome the helplessness of man in the face of evil by referring to the world of (mostly religious) values. This helplessness is described by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (Rom. 7,15-17). Perhaps this is why J. F. Crosby⁴ emphasises that such a form of human existence is that of a person who is denoted as ungodly. In this way, he delineates a significant difference between the person of a human being and the person of God.

Holiness is an important personal attribute. This attribute is ascribed to God, but also to man, who is made in his image. A person is holy. Whatever is holy is noble, has dignity, may not be trampled underfoot, destroyed. It is not permissible to destroy the dignity of the human person or of God's person. It can happen that a person's behaviour is without dignity. He cannot actualise his fundamental disposition in himself, but, in the depths of his ontic structure, he remains holy, and this is the basis of his dignity.

2 J.C. Wakefield, Levels of explanation in personality theory. In: Personality psychology. Recent trends and emerging directions, eds. By D.M. Buss, N.Cantor, New York, 1989, Springer-Verlag, pp. 336.

3 Mroczkowski I., Die Natur der menschlichen Person, Grundlagen der menschlichen Identität. The Nature of Human Being. Foundation of Human Identity. Płock PWN, 2012, pp. 248-286.

4 J.F. Crosby, Der Umriss der Philosophie der Person. Die Selbstheit. The Selfhood of the Human Person. Kraków Wyd.WAM 2007, pp. 277-312.

Dignity corresponds to morality. Morality is based on such attributes of the person as these: awareness, freedom and responsibility. Personal freedom is not expressed in the fact that the human being is driven by his internal instincts or environmental stimuli, but is guided by the ability to act intuitively. The ability to trigger intentions is one of the characteristics defining a person. It forms the basis of responsibility for the quality of life and for holiness.

A person is able to give, to transcend himself, to sacrifice himself. This ability to give, to give away, presupposes self-possession. I can only give what I have. When I give, I not only make others richer, but also myself, because I realise the most characteristic human ability – the ability to love. Love is an expression of personal life. Johannes Paul II⁵ said: “The question of human free will is tied up with the dialectic of the power of the will (I can) and the will for power (I can).” The following questions are therefore still relevant: “Where can I go?”, “What can I do?”. E. Kant wrote: “Act so that you always see humankind, both in your person and in the person of everyone else, as a purpose, never simply as a means”.⁶

There are many difficult questions surrounding the interpretation of person. One great difficulty is the question of physical and mental integrity and the mystery of death. How does man receive a body and a spirit? It should not be forgotten that the term “person” is used in explaining theological truths, especially the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, as well as in the Christological interpretation of the two natures (divine and human) which are united in the one person of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. This topic, however, is avoided in psychology, although its psychological interpretation (remaining faithful to the theological meaning) could be fruitful heuristically in the search for an understanding in depth of human experience and behaviour.

⁵ K. Wojtyła, *Person und Tat*. Lublin, 1994.

⁶ I. Kant, *Die Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, Warsaw, 1984, p. 62.

Step 3: Gladys K. Mwiti, Kenya

What is a Person? An African Perspective

Understanding personhood enhances holistic balanced living. This is wisdom and insight. The worth of a human being does not depend on what one owns, where they live or the level of education achieved. “Knowledge without wisdom is like water in the sand,” (Guinean Proverb).

A person is made up of interlocked system – all forming one organism called a “human being.” A human being is not all body or just physical, not all mind or intellect, and not all soul or spirit. To perform optimally, one needs balance between all these sub-systems. Investing concern and energy to consistently maintain this balance is what we call personhood or holistic living.

The Body

A person lives within a body that houses our organs that give us the ability to touch, see, hear, smell, taste, breathe, eat and exercise. Balanced personhood calls for the care of the body: maintaining a balanced diet, keeping it clear of toxins often ingested in what we eat, smoke or drink. It involves the practice of moderation so that we do not overeat or ingest too many substances that compromise health. Exercise tones the muscles, enhances breathing and oxygen supply, and ensures healthy blood circulation.

We are what we eat. In African, we have our own traditional foods – most of it organic, herbal and wholesome. Once, an American doctor who trains the USA Olympic team passed through Nairobi and was interviewed in a local radio station on health matters. He dissuaded Kenyans from adopting a sedentary lifestyle, encouraged exercise and walking instead of riding in vehicles for short distances. Later on, he was asked to comment on diet. “What advice would you give Kenyans on healthy eating? What should we eat? His answer: “Eat Kenyan food.” He went on to say that Kenyan traditional diet is low in sugar, high fibre, mainly organic and balanced. However, obesity is creeping into families that adopt fast and processed food, forgetting that Kenyan five-star hotels serve arrow-roots, sweet potatoes, irio, sukuma wiki or kale.

Beyond traditional food, we encourage exercise and regular medical check ups.

The Mind

A person’s other system is the mind: comprising of the will, intellect, thinking, creativity, giftedness and emotions. The mind houses a sense of hope and patience when we pass through challenging seasons of life. The basic foundation of maintaining a healthy mind is based on the values we uphold – cultivating hope, dealing wisely with failure, exercising discernment, persisting in personal development and living a focused life where we maximize our giftedness.



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Africans urge people not to despair. Difficult times are sure to come but they will eventually pass on: Water does not stay in the sky forever (Kalenjin proverb), The remedy against bad times is to have patience with them (Egyptian proverb), Daylight follows a dark night (Masai proverb) and However long the night may last, there will be morning (Moroccan proverb). In these days of demand for instant results, the pressure to succeed is ever present and failure can be devastating. However, to fail is normal. How do we deal with failure? Wisdom teaches us: Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped (Liberia proverb). On persistence and never giving up if you know the path you walk is the right one: Courage is the father of success (Nigerian proverb).

On exercising discernment and caution: No one tests the depth of a river with both feet (Ghanaian proverb). On focused living: Work on your reputation until it is established; when it is established it will work for you (Tunisian proverb). Giftedness is a combination of learned skills and natural gifts. We know that each individual is uniquely gifted and no one can take away your talents: No man's path lies in another's (Akan proverb). This points to the need for each of us to know our gifts and not to waste years persisting in an area where we are not skilled or gifted: Leave alone a dance you are unable to perform (Lega – DRC proverb). How do we discover talents? Natural giftedness shows itself even with little encouragement: Even without drumbeats, banana leaves dance (African proverb). Special gifts can be quiet and unassuming, and even the ability to watch others and encourage them in these days of stressful competition is a gift in itself: If everyone is going to dance, who, then, would watch? (Cameroonian proverb).

The Spirit

A whole person takes care of their spirituality. Africans are religious, believing that whatever exists owes its life to the Supreme Deity. In this regard, creation is the most widely acknowledged work of God throughout Africa. Various proverbs on God and creation remind Africans to live in humility and awe of God. This wisdom recognizes God as the one from who all life and creation emanate. Pride that does not recognize this sovereignty is termed as foolishness: If you are filled with pride, then you will have no room for wisdom (African proverb).

Keeping fit spiritually is based on the health of the soul or spirit. This system houses life's sense of meaning and significance often called existentialism – knowing and living out our life's purpose that is linked to God's reason for our individual existence. The human being is just a tiny dot in God's universe. Apart from planets, how many stars do we have in the universe? Astronomers estimate that there are "at least 70 thousand million million million (70 sextillion or 7×10^{22}) stars in the Universe. The Universe probably contains more than 100 thousand million (100 billion or 1011) galaxies," (Fact Files, Royal Museums, Greenwich). One such galaxy is the Milky Way of which our sun is part. What is the size of a galaxy like the Milky Way? The best estimates suggest that the Milky Way contains about 500 thousand million stars and a total mass equivalent to 1.9 million million Suns.

Then who is an individual within such enormous expanse of matter? Do one individual count? Yes, indeed! Africans believe that the very God who created the heavens took pleasure in creating human beings in his own likeness and placing them in a habitable planet called Earth. This God personally takes interest in each individual giving them worth and identity. Africa is reputed to be a continent that is still in touch with these spiritual realities and may “yet prove to be the spiritual conservatory of the world ...When the civilized nations in consequence of their wonderful material development, shall have had their spiritual susceptibilities blunted through the agency of a captivating and absorbing materialism, it may be that they have to resort to Africa to recover some of the simple elements of faith,” (Edward Wilmot Blyden, Liberian Statesman and Educator, 1869).

Relationships

Africans believe that a person is not whole without healthy relationships: A single bracelet does not jingle (Congo proverb). If you want to go quickly, go alone; if you want to go far, go together (Kenyan proverb). Relationships create friendships, and friendships enhance efficiency: Two ants do not fail to pull one grasshopper (Tanzanian proverb).

A whole person develops, nurtures and maintains relationships. In relating with others, people generally move in three ways: towards, away from or against. People who move towards others are secure and unafraid of relating, focusing more on the needs of others rather than their own. These people are natural encouragers. They pay attention to others and listen with care, refraining from demandingness – the compulsion to behave as is others are there to meet their needs. Their sense of security assumes that the individual's needs are being met from somewhere else, and so the focus on holistic living.

People who move away from others are insecure and afraid of relating with others. Most probably, someone wounded them in a past relationship or they suffered rejection. Now, the thought of coming close to others scares them intensely. Past pain causes such people to undermine themselves and even to kill potential relationships before they take root. Past pain should be dealt with if holistic balanced living is to be realized. People who move against others are usually angry and vengeful most probably hurting from a painful past where their trust was betrayed. They have convinced themselves that the world is a bad place and no one can be trusted. Most of these individuals' energy goes to blocking relationships or narcissistically drawing attention to themselves. Such people quickly build resentment around themselves as others shun them and their company. To live holistically will mean careful evaluation of why the individual repels others so that the roots of anger or narcissism can be addressed and balanced living restored.

Holistic balanced living calls for not only making friends but also nurturing healthy relationships – Hold a true friend with both your hands (Nigerian proverb) and using friends to evaluate oneself: There is no better mirror than an old friend (Cape Verdian proverb). Friends enrich us: To be without a friend is to be poor indeed (Tanzanian proverb). We should

never befriend anyone because of what we get from them: If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes and the monkey remains as is (Egyptian Proverb).

Family

Africans believe that a whole person should invest in building and sustaining the family, nuclear and extended. There is conviction that: sticks in a bundle are unbreakable (Bondei proverb) and that walking through life with others provides safety: Cross the river in a crowd and the crocodile won't eat you (African proverb).

In as much as the single human being is a system of interlocked systems, from birth, each individual is linked to others in the family: the living and those who have died. However far the stream flows, it never forgets its source (Yoruba proverb). Keeping our family relationships healthy involves the knowledge that each person is part of the system of the unborn, the living and the dead. This wisdom instills careful consideration in how one lives, relates with others and honors the memory of the departed. In Africa, legacies are passed from the unborn to the living and the departed are remembered with honor: If we stand tall it is because we stand on the backs of those who came before us (Yoruba proverb). To this end, Africans value babies because each birth marks a line of continuity. To this end, among the Meru people of Kenya for example, babies would receive a name signifying a character of an adult in the family even the departed because although physically gone, the memory of these people survives in the family.

Community

In Africa, a person is defined by belonging to a community and so builds and nurtures community ties. Many individuals and families come together to support one another so that sharing and caring become life themes that help the whole as well as enrich parts of that whole. Balanced personhood involves activities done with other people. This is not necessarily selfishly seeking individual gains but giving oneself for the sake of others or the greater gain of the whole.

The African proverb: A person is a person through other people exemplifies the spirit of ubuntu that basically defines the quality of being human. Archbishop Desmond Tutu observes: You might have much of the world's riches, and you might hold a portion of authority, but if you have no ubuntu, you do not amount to much, revealing the African worldview that each one owes their selfhood to others and that there are many gains in community. The wisdom: One finger cannot pick up a grain (African proverb) is lived out in Africa through willing participation and unquestioning support to others when needed. Of course, responsible Ubuntu should not encourage dependency and laziness. That is why the Meru people of Kenya believe that: A visitor should last only two or three days. On the third day, you give them a hoe to join you in weeding the garden." Balanced holistic living calls for building and nurturing community and everyone gains when collective gifts of community come together to complete a project, be it child naming, wedding or building bridges.

Creation

Holistic personhood in traditional Africa was defined by how well the individual cared for the environment. Will Smith once noted: Africa is “really beautiful. It feels like God visits everywhere else but lives in Africa.” And, from time immemorial, Africans have known that they live in an amazing Continent and owe it to the Creator to take care of it. Creation includes animals and plants, dry land and the sea, the heavens above and the earth below, and that the human being is to exercise stewardship over his world. We cannot remain holistically fit in a broken toxic environment.

Africans traditionally believed the reality that the living had the responsibility to conserve the environment for future generations and were accountable for this stewardship to their ancestors. This belief and practice was inbuilt into traditional religion and taboos attached to any attempts at environmental degradation. Indeed, wetlands and lakes were said to be the abode of spirits and forests were said to be haunted. It is only now that many African communities know that the reason was to ensure that these areas were conserved. Holistic balanced living calls for creation care – planting of trees, flowers, grass; conserving of wild life and forests; protecting water catchment areas; giving thanks for harvest; rejecting overuse of pesticides and fertilizer to conserve the soil; growing and eating organic foods as much as we can. Holistic personhood and balanced living also calls for maintaining a clean toxic free environment; minimizing use of pesticides; protecting our lakes, rivers, conserving rainwater; ensuring that trash is collected and keeping the air we breathe clean.

Why such commitment to environmental conservation? A Nigerian Elder Okyenhene, Nana Ofori Atta said: I conceive of land (and the whole environment) as belonging to a large family of which many are dead, a few are living and countless are yet to be born. This awareness was contained in traditional education and passing on of knowledge from one generation to another. However, Western education and main religions coming to Africa disconnected the environment from education as well as from worship. Stewardship of life systems ensures that life flows back to us because nature is cyclic. The desire for more and more has led to environmental degradation, toxicity and pollution of both water and air, and using up land set aside for Recreation Parks and family relaxation for development especially in cities. Thank God that several African nations have at least conserved wild life, and Africa remains one of the last frontiers for animals to run wild and free in National Parks. Every African should be a conservationist by nature – faithfully making a difference right where they are.

Conclusion

Whether marred and broken or healthy and vibrant, each human being possesses the innate ability to live out as a whole person maintaining a balanced system. Africans believe that the center of this balance is spirituality and meaning. These link us to the compass of life, reminding us that: “The best things in life are not things.”

A person is a system of body, mind, spirit and relationships within

healthy community connections. Over-emphasis on one part of the system creates imbalance and once one part of the whole system is ailing, the whole feels the pain and there is imbalance. Africans believe that the human being is like a spider's web – when one thread is caused to vibrate, the whole network trembles! Indeed, various Africa proverbs remind us that to maintain a balanced system is wisdom. Lack of balance can lead to overinvestment in one or two systems that often leads to breakup of the whole, for: To overfill the pot is to break it (Tswana Proverb).

(A version of this article was first published in Afritorial.com)

**Drawings from the series „Head-Thinking-Being“,
all graphite on paper, ca. 35 x 38 cm.**



Karl Vollmer:

„I am a painter, draughtsman, photographer, sculptor, word artist. My interest is in representing life, asking penetrating questions, analysing, reflecting and representing the result, seriously and in play, and in communicating what I feel and notice in interacting with others. And I wish to communicate my view of life, the joy in life despite all the difficulties and torments in the world, and to inspire courage to life. I also want to communicate this „culture“ consciously as a Christian.“ <http://www.karl-vollmer.de>

kv@karl-vollmer.de











Step 5: Stephen P. Greggo (USA)

A Conversation Already in Progress

What an honor to join this conversation as it moves around the world! The question “what is a person?” may be more about implication than definition. This is evident in the way that participants thus far are pointing beyond culture and language to reference a unified portrait of a theistic reality.

My thanks to Andrey Lorgus for starting off the exchange by supplying its necessary gravitational stability. Defining a person is most certainly a theological task. Psychology as a discipline makes observations, offers descriptions and ponders motivations. Accumulating such features into a comprehensive whole falls short of actually exposing full human identity and status. The notion of ‘personhood’ emerges distinctly from within Christian tradition. This theological worldview is built not only on empirical discovery or rational examination but on revelation (divine discourse). Human beings are God-like creatures who reflect the image of their Triune Creator (Gen 1:26-27). Persons are sacred, to be protected and preserved, for God created humankind as his representatives on earth (Gen 9:6).

Romuald Jaworski affirms and adds to this premise. He places the spotlight initially on the linguistic origin of the word ‘person’ as the voice who speaks through a character to deliver a message. There is recognition that the sophisticated ability to communicate is a unique human disposition. This brings to mind the Genesis account where God spoke to human persons made in his image. The dialogue, once begun, continues even after the Fall (Gen 2:16-17; 3:8-19). The Lord God takes initiative to keep it going by pursuing Adam and Eve to inquire “Where are you; who told you; and what have you done?” Christianity recognizes that persons are creatures designed to converse with their Creator. Jaworski moves the conversation further by bringing in a personalistic perspective. There is acknowledgement that innate human strivings and acquired characteristics become attributes that ultimately declare human dignity, morality, holiness and transcendence.

Gladys K. Mwitwa speaks from her cultural background to present a holistic and balanced view of a person as a single organism comprised of an interlocked system. There is rare beauty in her collection of pithy African proverbs. Such word pictures will not permit reducing a human person to anything beneath a robust comprehensive combination of body, mind, spirit, relationships, family, community and creation.

Karl Vollmer, the artist in this conversation thus far, leaves words behind, but puts a powerful message on exhibit. This is fitting, for language surely



Rev. Stephen P. Greggo,

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fails in its quest to describe the complexity, dimensionality, emotionality and intimacy associated with a human person. My heart reacts; but I am left speechless gazing at Vollmer's drawings that defy simplistic summation.

Persons in Theodrama

Christianity gives deep and earnest consideration to the human person for a very good reason. God's story depicts persons as central to what the Creator is doing in his world. According to theologian Kevin Vanhoozer, the good news is theodramatic: it is God's doing in speech and action. In the beginning, God places human persons in his grand and ongoing production as dialogue partners and performers who reflect (image) his very nature.¹ This theodramatic surround contributes a useful theological context to the previously mentioned aspects of human persons.

Now the stage is set for this succinct response to the posed query. A person is a living soul with a distinctive voice to act out one's part as a communitive agent in covenantal relations. Soul (OT *nephesh*/NT *psyche*) is a broad biblical term that in this context captures the sense of a person's total being with visible and invisible characteristics. Our destiny is to be an expressive contributor to the fulfillment of cosmic history. Persons exhibit a "personal identity that is first and foremost a matter of our answerable agency" to the Lord of the universe.² Persons speak and act in ways that portray our characteristic response to the word and call of God.

The biblical text uses *imago Dei* to convey the dynamic, pulsating forces that give humankind its exceptional urgency to be in face-to-face relationships and conversation. The metaphor of 'image' suggests that a person mirrors God's nature as a corporeal icon. Our lifetime occupation as a person is to be active, deliberate and intentional to reflect our loving Creator and Lord. Image bearers crave proximity, recognition and communication with the One who is being represented. Humans echo divine speech as rational and relational urges burst from within to bond with others. Speech is the divine gift that equips human beings for communion, that is, enjoyable and rewarding dialogue with the Triune God and one another.³

1 Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of doctrine: A canonical-linguistic approach to Christian theology*. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005). For a brief review of theodrama with implications for Christian psychology, see Kevin J. Vanhoozer's "Forming the performers: How Christians can use canon sense to bring us to our (Theodramatic) senses in Edification: The Transdisciplinary Journal of Christian Psychology, 4 (1), 5-16. [http://www.christianpsych.org/wp_scp/wp-content/uploads/Edification-4.1.pdf]

2 Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Faith-Speaking Understanding: Performing the drama of doctrine*. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Know Press, 2014, p. 117).

3 Stephen P. Gregg, "Theodramatic anthropology and the 'significant' self: Implications for therapeutic relating." Paper presented at the 66th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), San Diego, CA, November 20, 2014. Submitted for publication.

Counsel that is Christian

Counselors in the Christian tradition assist those aspiring to answer God's invitation. Such mental health professionals and pastors hear clients while simultaneously listening for the Holy Spirit. Our helping ministry operates in the awareness of the reality of theodrama. We imagine the unique manner, the specific role and the Christ-revealing action that a client as a divinely loved person is attracted to represent. The hope is to prepare the client as performer to enjoy the esteem of the Father by imitating the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Counselors strive to clarify how this person can be authentic in the consistent imitation of Jesus Christ.

This perspective returns us to the closing words of Step 1 by Lorgus who stated that psychotherapy is a life-supporting process to enable clients to return to self, God and other people. In our efforts as therapists, pastoral counselors or spiritual directors, we routinely apply this understanding of a person in a narrative-ethical sense. This is a means of guiding persons as manifested in their distinct personality to maximize dispositional traits, realize personal goals and develop the next chapter in their ongoing life narrative.⁴

Further, Christian-oriented practitioners realize that our clinical dialogue is conducted without losing a vision of the metaphysical-ontological reality that establishes personhood.⁵ This applies whether contemplating a mental health syndrome, a bioethical decision, a relational entanglement, or a development adjustment in life direction. Persons transcend a lifetime. This view runs counter to the broad cultural climate pervading the United States where autonomy is exalted, the individual self is supreme and spirituality is self-construed. The client's worldview and cultural perspective is forthrightly respected, so wisdom governs our tongue. The reality of a Christian theological perspective is kept alive in our affection for the Lord and keeps our view of the person active in our mind. Humans are persons who dependently image our Creator. The outward display of convictions indicates his place in our hearts. Our vocational calling as persons is to be servants who bear his name and bring him honor.

Let the conversation continue.

⁴ Dan P. McAdams, *The Art and Science of Personality Development*. (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2015).

⁵ Michael S. Horton, "Image and office: Human personhood and the Covenant" in R. Lints, M. S. Horton & M. R. Talbot (eds.) *Personal identity in theological perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006, pp 178-203).

Step 6: Gladys K. Mwiti, Kenya

WHO IS A PERSON?

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION ...

We cannot understand who a person is until we appreciate how he came together, how he then came apart, and the plan that restores him together again. Christians believe that humanity did not arise out of a big bang in some atmosphere. Africans share the conviction that each human being is a methodical intricate creation by God who is sovereign over all things. The Almighty also seeks a close relationship with each individual who he “fearfully and wonderfully made,” (Psalm 139:14).

I come from a tribal community that valued this relationship and sought to maintain it at every cost. Among the Meru people of Kenya, if there was no rain, a commodity that spells life or death, people would seek to know why the Sustainer of the Universe has not sent rain in its season. After all, he holds the world together and controls wind and rain, sending what his people need at the opportune time. No rain meant displeasure. We have sinned. Broken your law. We have made you sad. The Priests and Elders would then go up the mountain to pray, sacrifice and beseech God, or Ngai to have mercy on his creation. The name for God in my tribe is Murungu or Almighty One, but He is also known as Ngai, the same name for rain. Indeed, rain is also used to denote blessing.

When the Priests and Elders left for the Mountain (Mount Kenya) to pray and sacrifice, the whole community would wait pensively in prayer. Many tales have been told that on the day this team descends coming down the Mountain, a heavy downpour would precede them into the villages. Ngai always heard prayer, forgave sin and responded by replenishing the earth. He is a God in perpetual relationship with his people. What would be central in the cause for drought? Many of the misdemeanors were broken relationships: between an individual or community and God or between a group of communities or individuals and God. For example, failure to care or stewardship of the environment was punishable by denial of rain and so drought and famine resulted. Abuse of orphans, widows and the disabled led to the same demonstration of the effects of a broken relationship expressed as disobedience. By taking care of the most vulnerable, the community was taking care of God's people and so obeying his law.

I remember well that as children, we were taught to be concerned for the elderly, the blind and the feeble minded. The elderly you help them carry their load. The blind, you help them cross the road. You do not laugh at those slow in mentally acuteness, even those with dribble falling on their besmirched stinking attire. These too are your brothers. Attend to them. Failure to do so might attract God's disfavor because he sees you all the time.



Gladys K. Mwiti,

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She is Chair, Kenya Psychological Association; Interim Chair, Kenya Society for Traumatic Stress Studies; member, Board of Directors, International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies; and member, Lausanne Congress for World Evangelization Care & Counsel as Mission Global Leadership Team. Dr. Mwiti, pioneer for transformational and integrative psychology in Kenya desires that the Church be reminded that in Christ and among us, we have all the resources we need for the healing and transformation of the Nations beginning with the household of faith.

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This indigenous sensitivity was in harmony with biblical teaching that later came to our tribe through Christianity. In Church, we learnt that God is sovereign. He made everything and owns everything. In relationship to the Almighty, the human being is his creation and, in God's world, merely a steward whose life should be lived in harmony with the Creator, the self and with others. Failure to live in this relationship results in a broken relationship between God and humanity and this affects even the weather and so people's livelihoods. We were happy to read passages like 2 Chronicles 7:13 – "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or commend locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

The main part of holistic personhood is therefore comprised of the individual's healthy relationship with God. My Christian roots are Methodist and my understanding of wholeness is informed by Wesleyan theology. In Kenya, the Methodist Church is unashamedly evangelical and so we embrace Wesleyan spirituality to the letter. John Wesley believed the biblical truth that through the sin and disobedience of Adam, sin entered the human race (Romans 5:12). Our ancestor therefore declared himself independent from God by going contrary to the command of the Almighty. Humanity continues in the same defiance – trying to live in disregard of the Creator. This causes us to run and run in search of harmony and fulfillment. However, for as long as we live away from the Creator, we are lost, thirsty for belonging and for ever wanting to discover who we are and where we are going.

However, God loved humanity so much that he gave himself to redeem us back to himself (John 3:16). When an individual recognizes his waywardness and seeks a fully restored relationship with the Triune God, he experiences sanctification. Sanctification is not just forgiveness of sin but includes reconciliation and re-establishment of a broken relationship.

This relationship with God is dynamic just like any other bond that needs consistent replenishing and revitalization. This dynamic relationship increasingly becomes part of our personhood as we are "marked, oriented and re-oriented by love."¹ Tennent adds that the Christian faith in Jesus Christ provides sanctification as we enter into full relationship where our whole life: body, mind and spirit become re-oriented "towards the joyful company of the Triune God."

John Wesley believed that this experience transforms an individual into a new holistic person whose desire is to live out the totality of the Creator. Living out this totality is the true principle of personhood. Wesley described his own experience thus:

¹ Timothy Tennent. Sanctification, A Reorientation of the Heart: Why I am a Methodist and an Evangelical. Asbury Theological Seminary. Thursday, July 14th, 2011 <http://timothytennent.com/2011/07/14/sanctification-reorientation-of-the-heart-why-i-am-a-methodist-and-an-evangelical-part-5/>

“On Monday morning, January 1, 1739, Mr. Hall and my brother Charles were present in Fetter Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. At about three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy and many fell down to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of His majesty, we broke out with one voice, ‘We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.’”²

Paul clearly described this new person: “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ... And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us,” (Romans 5:1-5).

Through justification and sanctification, the image of God is impressed on the created being. This forms the holistic person who now lives out his personhood through maintaining a healthy dynamic relationship between self and God, self and self, and self and others.

² Telford, John (1947). *The Life of John Wesley*. London: The Epworth Press. p. 394. ISBN 0-88019-320-4. pp117

Step 7: Kathrin Feser (Germany)



Step 1

2012, acrylic, 70x60 cm
Cry for help -have
mercy on me! Mark
10,47



Step 2

Father, into your
hands I commit my
spirit Lk 23,46
2014, acrylic, 60x80 cm



Kathrin Feser,
Diplompädagogin,
Kunstakademie Mün-
chen, Kunstschule
„Akademia“ in Stutt-
gart, freie Künstlerin.
„Ich zeichne, um Au-
genblicke einzufan-
gen oder mich kon-
kret mit Menschen zu
beschäftigen. Im Ate-
lier versuche ich mich
vorwiegend bibli-
schen oder mensch-
lichen Themen mit
Farben oder Druck-
techniken zu nähern.

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Step 3

teach us to number
our days that we
may get a heart of
wisdom.

Psalm 90,12

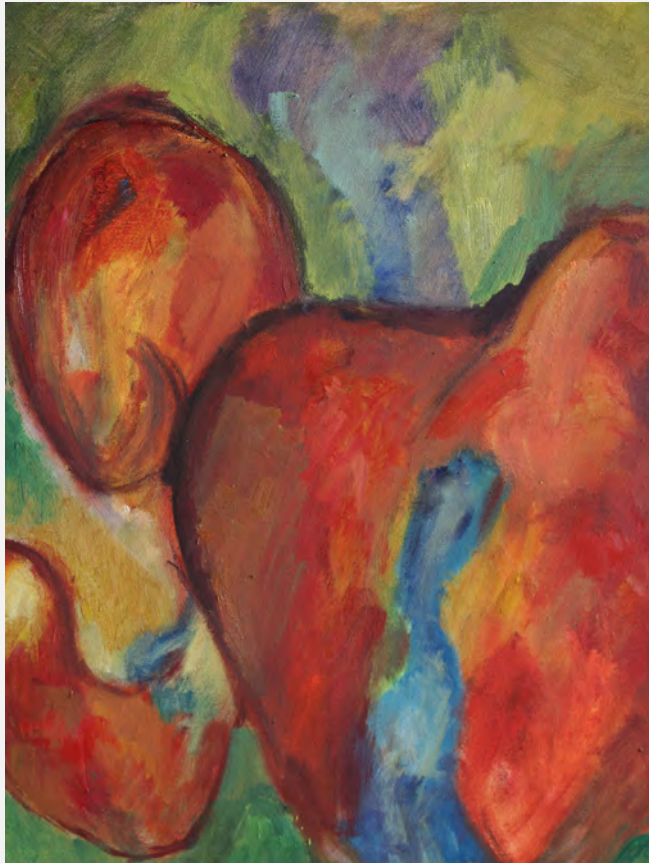
2014, acrylic, 70x100



Step 4

It is finished. John
19,30

2014, acrylic,
60x80 cm



Step 5

A wise, listening
heart- I give
you a wise and
discerning
mind- 1.kings
3,12
2015, Öl,
60x60 cm



Step 6

Fraternal love
feast
2014, acrylic,
70x100 cm

Step 8: Romuald Jaworski (Poland)

Person and Love

Not only the reading of the already presented texts by Gladys K. Mwiti, Stephen P. Greggo and Andrey Lorgus, but also deep associations which were evoked by the pictures by Karl Vollmer and Kathrin Feser, moved me to consider the person as a loving and loved being. Love is the most important ability and characteristic of a person. With God, for whom existence and being are the same, love is a sign of his identity.

Being a person is expressed by intentional actions, by relationships. The most characteristic intentional action is namely love. It can therefore be said that a person is expressed in love. For the person, love is a gift and a task (an obligation).

The importance which love has in discovering the truth about God and ourselves is shown by a number of biblical texts. "God so loved the world ..." (Jn 3,16), "As the father has loved me, I have likewise loved you. Remain in my love!" (Jn 15,9), "For the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (Ro 5,5), "God is love" (1 Jn 4,16). When the apostle Paul characterises human life, he says: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor 13, 13-14). Being a person means the ability to love and to be loved. Only the relationship of love will provide the equipment of the human being on the path through the gates of death into eternal life. The relationships of love will last and will be purified.

Love, as a personal act, naturally involves all spheres of human life: the somatic ("So now they are no longer two, but one flesh"), the psycho-social ("No-one has greater love than this: that he lays down his life for his friends.") and the soulish ("As my father loves me, I love you; remain in my love"). These spheres are taken into consideration by G.K. Mwiti in her thoughts (page 8).

A person loves, but has at the same time the right to be loved. Love can be verified. The test of love is the ability to dedicate oneself and the readiness to suffer for the person loved. This relationship of love is fulfilled most completely in the suffering and on the cross of Jesus Christ. It can therefore be said that the splendour of a personal life is expressed in suffering and by suffering.

Karol Wojtyla wrote the book "Love and Responsibility". In it he emphasised the link between these two experiences of the human person. Saint Exupery says in „The Little Prince“: "Throughout your life you are responsible for what you have come to know intimately". Bearing responsibility for the person whom I love enables me to transcend myself and concentrate on others. It is a special possession of oneself that is combined with the freedom to sacrifice oneself. The more a person opens himself towards a second person in love, the greater he becomes.



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Articles by Romuald:
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#/34>
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#/46>
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/3/#/4>
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/116>

Although sins against love do weaken a person's condition, they do not destroy his personal ability to love. We are born with this readiness to love, we were created by God to be his image. This personal God is love, and we develop ourselves as persons by intentional actions thanks to our awareness and our freedom, our ability to love. Love which is experienced in the atmosphere of awareness and freedom is a measure of human greatness and dignity.

The love experienced by a person has various recipients. In love, the sequence is significant: first of all towards God, then towards oneself, then towards one's spouse, after that towards the children and parents, then towards further relatives, friends, acquaintances, strangers, enemies, finally towards our natural environment. A special form of the love relationship is love towards oneself, which is expressed by paying attention to all spheres of human life (somatic, mental, soulful). The greater the area of reality that is loved, the more consciously we direct ourselves towards it; the higher the level of responsibility taken for this beloved world, the more complete a person's experiences and their fulfilment.

For me, as a Catholic priest, the following has a particular importance for my understanding of the love of a person: Communion, the church service, the feast of love. We find its model when God is the guest of Abraham; when the Passover Feast is celebrated by Jesus Christ with his apostles; in the suffering and the resurrection of Jesus Christ; in the supper with the disciples at Emmaus. In sharing Communion, beginning with the Passover Feast held by Jesus with his apostles, the human being and human love develop according to the pattern of the love of Jesus, which reveals itself in his suffering, on the cross, in the resurrection. Every church service is for me a Passover, God's passing through my life, the enriching of my life with God's love. In this context I very much like the picture by Kathrin Feser: "Fraternal love feast".

When I look at the pictures by Karl Vollmer (especially those on page 17), I see the essence of personal life and of love in the union at understanding and heart. In therapy, one often hears of the necessity of finding a path between the heart and the brain. This is a symbolic expression of the longing which appears in man in connection with the disruption between feelings and thoughts. Proper, authentic, mature love is distinguished by the integration of feelings and thoughts, which takes place most deeply in the reality of the conscience. The conscience is a guard of love. It keeps watch to ensure that wisdom and kindness are united. It can therefore be said that the conscience guards the condition of the human person. The maturity of the human person is linked to the maturity of the conscience. One expression of this maturity is love, which God gives to man so that the latter can multiply it, enrich it and live it to the full.

Stephen Greggo emphasises the truth of the holiness of the person and the fact that the human being was made as God's image. He describes counselling and psychotherapy as an interpersonal dialogue, as a *theo-drama sui generis*. These remarks are very important and deep in their

content. I have the impression that the Bible-Drama that I practice, as a special form of confrontation between one's own life and biblical content, leads in an extraordinarily deep way to the discovery of personal identity. Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Saul and Paul live in each of us. By identifying with the protagonists of the biblical stories, the participants in the encounter with Bible-Drama discover that previously unknown aspects of their own identity. In the acted biblical scene, they identify with the protagonists of the biblical stories and discover, hidden in the unconscious, the richness of the truth about themselves, about their identity, that they are a loved person who is called to love others and that they are simultaneously a wounded and sinful person. They discover that the biblical protagonists, despite their weaknesses, remain in the relationship with God and people. The biblical protagonists reveal new aspects of our personal identity. When we identify with them, we discover different roles in this divine theatre. For example, David is the youngest child of his parents, the youngest of his siblings, shepherd, poet, warrior, king, criminal, penitent, father, old man. This person, with a rich and complicated personality, longs for love, searches for God and himself, becomes an inspiration for us to enquire about our personal condition, about our love. There are many paths of love. These numerous paths show how rich personal life is, how one can realise oneself as a person. We are moved to reflect on this truth by Kathrin Feser's picture "Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90,12).

Tell me whom and what you love,
tell me how you love,
and I will tell you what person you are.

Meditating on Verbal and Visual Metaphors

The design of this fascinating 10-step exchange is to inspire productive thought on the question “what is a person?” Without a doubt, my own theological and psychological imaginings continue to be provoked through the verbal and visual metaphors shared. For example, in her recent step, Dr. Mwiti expands on the portrait of holistic personhood by blending African cultural priorities of care with the theological category of sanctification. She rightly places emphasis on the recognition of sanctification as forgiveness of sin and as restored relationship with the Triune God. Such reorientation brings us to live out the totality of what it means to be alive in the community of the Creator. Further, Fr. Jaworski deepens his contribution by naming and exploring the central characteristic of personhood: the capacity to be loving and be loved. This prime feature of human persons reflects and resonates with God’s identity.

Artwork adds a fresh dimension to what might otherwise become a mere academic exercise. The artistic illustrations added in step 7 are indeed a rich addition. Spending devotional moments with the contributions by Kathrin Feser stirred worship. From the painting based on the Lord’s spoken promise to Solomon, one has the perception of a river with a heavenly source flowing directly through the heart. This gives exceptional clarity to the constructs of a ‘listening heart’ and ‘discerning mind’ (I Kings 3:12). This is a picture with potential to invigorate more urgent leaning on His understanding for refreshed perspective.

The stimulation of theological creativity is further enhanced by Fr. Jaworski’s acting recommendation. There is encouragement to notice how and when our lives become a theodramatic display as we reenact scenes that recall biblical protagonists. Our own identities can recast the roles of these biblical characters. We align with their frailties, choices and discoveries. Making links between biblical historical figures and our life narrative can release inspiration to locate the role God has for us in his ongoing redemptive story.

Personhood in a Gospel Scene: A Responsive Offering

These contributions released an interesting progression of thought. My attention was drawn to review gospel interactions, revelations and parables. This involved revisiting ways that Jesus Christ recognizes and responds to the persons around him with comprehension of their essential nature. The gospels are accounts of God literally dwelling, speaking and interacting in the flesh. There was a long pause on one report from Matthew with discernible personhood implications. This chain of event depicts an action sequence that moves rapidly from the astonishing miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand (Matthew 14:13-21) to a tale of terror and revelation on the water (Matthew 14:22-33). This biographical history vividly displays a biblical portrait of the plight and promise of



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human beings as created persons.

The crowd under Jesus' teaching, after being pleasingly fed, begins to buzz and conspire. The mood of the mob was ripe to turn Jesus' gift of nourishment into a political coup. The timing of this spontaneous press for a new sovereign was not fit for our Lord's assent to his rightful position. Jesus thus directed the disciples to make an immediate lake crossing. He himself withdrew into mountain solitude for an extended period of prayer. The climax of the passage comes during the pre-dawn watch. After over eight hours of laboring against the wind, the disciples were in imminent danger from the now raging storm. Jesus appears, walking across the turbulent water. Seasoned fishermen or not, these seamen were deeply alarmed to encounter a ghostly figure approaching them amidst the tempestuous darkness. What more ominous sign could peak their fear to its highest level during this distressing squall than a mysterious visitor from another world? This is where the author's spotlight reveals a striking theological theme. The exchange between Jesus and Peter exemplifies a continuous loop in our lives. It is often observed during seasons of crisis in the lives of our parishioners and patients.

The scene is one of chaos, danger and the unknown. Then Jesus announces himself, using words that echo his heavenly Father: "I am" or "It is I" (Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 43:10; 13). Peter recognizes and responds to Jesus' voice. There is a bold declaration of willingness to imitate the master. With Jesus the Messiah in his earnest gaze, Peter does the impossible. He takes those famous first steps outside of the boat and across the surface. It is no surprise that his concentration is compelled to return to the immediate surround of wind and waves. Peter begins to sink. There is such a familiar ring to his fateful cry, "Lord, save me." And Jesus does exactly that. Jesus reaches out; offers his hand and executes the rescue. These memorable words and the striking visual exchange offer a powerful theological motif of the overarching theodrama. Here is God in human flesh, speaking and doing.

Each person is a distinctive living soul, designed with the capacity to be a communitive agent in covenant relationships with others and with the Lord. There is often an emphasis in the retelling of this particular gospel event on Peter's eagerness, impulsivity, and eventually, his inconsistency. Observations on his personality features are interesting, particularly to those who are psychologically minded. Nevertheless, it is not around these human characteristics that this story turns. The walking on water episode is foremost about the majesty, wonder and safety that our Lord exhibits from his very essence. After all, he is the Great King. This is his kingdom, even if he entertains no plan to assume that throne at the insistence of a fickle crowd impressed by an extemporaneous meal. Jesus speaks and acts from who he is in eternity and in relation to the Godhead. From this identity, Jesus dialogues and performs with persons he loves.

Notice the underlying and telling theological movement. Pandemonium and panic is all around. Jesus announces his presence. He is recognized

for who he truly is. Jesus converses and calls. The person being addressed speaks and acts in ways that manifest extraordinary potential. Such marvel does not occur in human persons until Jesus is the full object of our gaze. Peter's personal identity is on display in his 'answerable agency' to the Lord of the universe. Human potential reaches its full heights when there is a bond and mutuality with the Creator. Peter's spontaneity may contribute to the appeal of the moment. Without any doubt, it is the strength and faithfulness of Jesus that drives this theological demonstration of personhood.

Human persons are created to enjoy mutual conversation with the Triune God who created us. Persons are mirrors that image God's nature and become actors in his redemptive story as we move into the role he has for us. When we turn our being (agency) toward him (answerability) and walk in his way (action), he brings forward our specialness (new creation) addresses our wayward distractions (salvation), and instills profound meaning (vocation) as we reveal his glory (covenant). Humans are persons destined to image the Creator. This occurs passively as persons exist, and dynamically as unique human persons enter into abundant life by accepting his gracious invitation to make the essence of life worship. That is, the center of our being is bound to worship when our living becomes communion in word and deed with the Almighty.

The concepts offered in each step thus far may be distinct; still the consensus in the conversation is evident. My gratitude goes out to each contributor who gave step-by-step to this conversation.

Step 10: Andrey Lorgus (Russia)

Our journey from continent to continent, from city to city, from author to author has come to its end. The circle is closing - the circle of the theological movement towards discovery of meaning, the origins of which are in the Hand of God. This meaning is the Creation. The Act of Creation, the Creation of the human being, which is the key to all anthropology and psychology.

A human being is a person. This means that the human being has not originated from the earth (despite the words of Genesis, that man was formed from the dust of the ground), but he is the spirit coming from the Spirit, image from the Image, person coming from the Person. Human origin is of different nature - not the genesis, but the momentary embodiment, the explosion, the act of existence. A human being does not belong to this world!

Personal existence is original existence, which is unlike anything else, different, not known, free and new in every person!

Psychologically, a human being has to become a person, should go through all the stages of development - formation. Theologically, he is always a person, even when just born. Here lies the difficulty and antinomy. Here is also a scientific mystery. In science there is a place for mystery. In psychology this mystery is the human being, person, living soul.



Andrey Lorgus,
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Articles by Andrey:
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#/96>
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/3/#/24>
<http://emcapp.ignis.de/3/#/142>

Gladys Mwiti & Al Dueck
Christian Counselling.
An African Indigenous Perspective

2006, Pasadena: Fuller Seminary Press, 309 pages



Agnes May, Germany

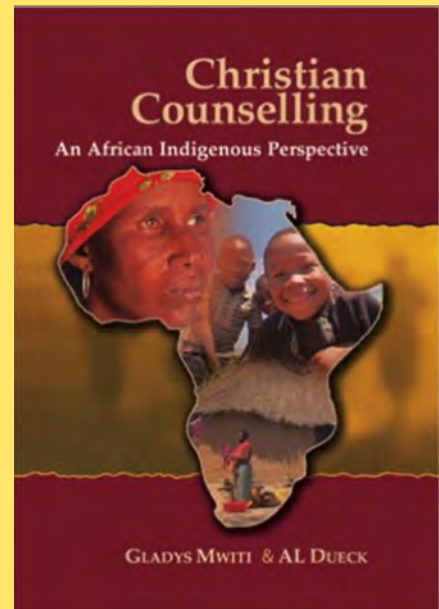
Training in religious education and adult education. Since 1998 at the IGNIS Institute as editor, writer and adult educator for the correspondence course Foundations of Christian Psychology, since 2004 as person in charge of this course.

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Articles by Agnes:

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#/48>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/5/#/112>



This book is worth reading not only for those, who have to do with African counselees, but for all, who want to reflect on the interrelationship of counselling, world-view, culture, faith, ideas of self, others and God, for all, who want to reflect on their own understanding of counselling and Christian counselling.

It is written in an understandable way as a handbook for the training courses in “Christian Counselling: An African Indigenous Perspective” that have been developed by Fuller (since 2004) in order to provide a counselling training for evangelists, counsellors, church planters, pastors, and leaders in the two-thirds world. You also get DVDs and a comprehensive instructional manual that supports those lessons (millikan@fuller.edu).

The authors are Dr. Gladys Mwiti and Al Dueck. Mwiti is a clinical psychologist and, together with her husband Gershon, founder of Oasis Africa (a pan-African professional counselling and behavioral healthcare organization <http://www.oasisafrica.co.ke>). Al Dueck is professor of Integration of Psychology and Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary’s School of Psychology.

Review by Agnes May (Germany)

In the first three chapters, you learn about basics of a specific African and Christian approach to counselling.

Chapter 1 “Dis-membered and Re-membered” describes the situation of the African people who have been separated from their past, culture, identity... by western colonialism, especially been “dis-membered” by the ideals of western individualism, and who have to be re-membered to their fundamental resources. “Our greatest challenge is that Africans walk around like paupers and beggars when in fact they are rich and blessed... The Christian counsellor can become the connection between vacuums and vitalities... Christ is essential to any reconstruction and re-membering of Africa. He opens our eyes to see the many resources that can be used to rebuild and reclaim – resources such as meaningful symbols, proverbs, rituals, and folk tales. With these resources, Christian counselling becomes not merely another rescue operation, but the opportunity to rebuild the broken in partnership with the Master Architect.” (p. 19-20)

Chapter 2 “Personality and Brokenness” describes - in contrast to western understandings of the self - the holistic African understanding of every individual as a person within a community. Spiritual, mental, biological, genetic, behavioral, and social elements cannot be understood separately. Therefore, “counselling in Africa will need to be guided by approaches that are holistic in nature. These approaches will utilize a multiplicity of interventions and partnerships to achieve wellness among those served. The same methodologies must build on rich indigenous cultural practices that are consistent with a biblical value system. Africa’s traditional oral psychology is rich in tools that have been used for healing over millennia. For training, teaching, and counselling, African Christian counsellors can use folk tales, African proverbs, songs, dances, and musical instruments. Professional African Christian counsellors are called to a commitment to scholarship in Western psychological theory, so that they can both critique it and employ points of commonality with African understanding of health and wholeness. In the end, we hope that what is uniquely African may be enriched through cross-pollination with other systems of healing, be they Western or otherwise.” (p. 58f)

Chapter 3 “Objectives and Characteristics” gives short descriptions of three African pastoral counselling approaches – indigenous African counselling (Malidoma Somé, Burkina Faso), African pastoral counselling (Jean Masamba ma Mpolo, Republic of Congo, and Abraham Berinyuu, Ghana), and African-American pastoral counselling (Edward Wimberly, Nancy Boyd-Franklin). Building on these models, African Indigenous Christian Counselling is proposed as an eclectic model that integrates indigenous cultural sensitivity, biblical grounding, and carefully selected non-African biological, social, and psychological insights. These three aspects are compared to the three-legged stool on which the wise elder of a village sits. The entire stool is carved from one piece of wood, with three legs held together by the seat. In the same way, each aspect (culture, scripture, wisdom) needs to support the others. (p. 68)

Objectives that shape healing in the African indigenous Christian counselling model are: to reestablish community connectedness, to restore creation (image of God), to seek wholeness, to recognize brokenness, to facilitate reconciliation, and to enhance community resiliency.

To serve in this context, a counsellor must be able to protect his reputation, seek wisdom and knowledge, display empathy, understand the story of the counselee, recognize physical symptoms, identify problematic thinking, hold counselee’s unpleasant feelings, use scripture wisely, adapt in counselling non-Christians, affirm spiritual needs, and build community connectedness.

These objectives and characteristics are illustrated by an exemplary counselling situation between Ruth and Maria.

Maybe, even African counsellors, who have been trained in Western psychology, will be surprised by the approach. But many Africans still seek help from wise village elders or medicine men and sometimes feel disconnected from Western ways of help. “Appreciating people’s indigenous cultural value systems, speaking in a language they can understand, discovering and using their metaphors, and planting seeds of change by using biblical practices that build on people’s traditions – all this will build up a practice of psychology and counselling in Africa that resonates with people’s identity. This way, healing will be sustainable over time and will become a ripple of positive change over generations.” (p. 85)

The following chapters 4-9 turn to different topics, which are relevant for counselling, and explain them from the African indigenous Christian perspective: stress management, God’s benevolence and mass suffering, building resilient communities, premarital counselling, marriage counselling, and family counselling.

In the last chapter, “Spirits, Demons, and Scourges”, the authors discuss about mental illness and AIDS, their probably demonic causation, and emphasize in the first place, that mental

illness and AIDS must be faced directly rather than denied, and responded to compassionately rather than with punishment in Christian counselling (p. 244).

What compassionate caring means, is illustrated and reflected by telling about Jamba, a young man with anxiety problems. He has a life story with various stress factors, including a frightening treatment by a traditional healer. From both, a traditional African and a Christian perspective, one might call him possessed. But is this the only perspective? "In the situation of people like Jamba, there is much controversy as to the cause of their suffering, as well as about appropriate treatment. Christian counselors cannot evade this debate. Our deliberation centres on four aspects: psychological, physical, theological, and demonic." (p. 248)

On the whole, mental disorders are less frequent than in the West, especially in rural regions of Africa, where many mentally ill live as part of their group and get support. AIDS is a much bigger problem.

For diagnosis one cannot just follow the DSM-IV-TR. In African Indigenous Christian Counselling they assume that counsellors first examine appropriate cultural means of diagnosis and healing before patients present themselves for psychiatric or psychological help (p. 253). Much help goes on the grassroots level, the value of local, community-based diagnoses and interventions must be recognized and included into healing (on the family or community level).

After discussing a bit more detailed about counselling depressed persons, and about HIV and AIDS counselling and prevention, the chapter ends with four conclusions for the Christian counsellor:

Avoid quick fixes to problems that traverse generations and crisscross educational training systems – discern which indigenous practices, methodologies, or contemporary psychological perspectives will be helpful!

Be committed to study, self-improvement, and professional excellence!

Understand the dynamics that underlie symptoms of mental illness in Africa, get a holistic view!

Emphasize the development of holistic approaches to the practice of psychotherapy! "We need a balance that considers the wealth of African indigenous cultures together with knowledge from Western psychologies all tested by, and founded on, solid biblical truth. Such an approach will bring not only healing but also transformational change to Africa." (p. 272)

Reading this book does not already provide training in Christian counselling. But learning about an African perspective widens my understanding and encourages me to look for my own "indigenous" values and resources, for a sound biblical and God-centered approach. And I get many basics for a good counselling training program.

Kelly O'Donnell and Michèle Lewis-O'Donnell

Global Integration

Addressing the Pressing Issues Facing Our World

Overview and Opportunities for Mental Health

Professionals

Today we are also taking a decision of great historic significance. We resolve to build a better future for all people, including the millions who have been denied the chance to lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential. We can be the first generation to succeed in ending poverty; just as we may be the last to have a chance of saving the planet.

United Nations, Transforming our World (2015, excerpt from paragraph 50)

Global integration (GI) is a framework that we have been developing over the past five years, as we consider, like so many others, how to help make our troubled world a better place. We have found this framework to be relevant for the increasing numbers of mental health professionals (MHPs) and colleagues across sectors (e.g., mission, health, humanitarian, development) who want to be meaningfully involved in our globalizing world. This brief paper overviews GI and encourages MHPs to take advantage of the many opportunities to improve the wellbeing of all people and the planet.

Overview of GI

We define GI as actively integrating our lives with global realities by connecting relationally and contributing relevantly on behalf of human wellbeing and the issues facing humanity, in light of our integrity and core values (e.g., ethical, humanitarian, faith-based). Crossing sectors for mutual learning and support is a key process of GI. A related term we use is “Global Integrators,” colleagues of integrity who link their skills, values, and relationships on behalf of major issues in our world. Some key features of the GI framework are the emphases on integrity/character along with skills/competencies, sharing one’s life in addition to offering useful services, and relationships. We summarize these

emphases as collectively “building the future we want-being the people we need.”



Cover detail, Global Member Care: Crossing Sectors for Serving Humanity (2013)

As psychologists working in the mission/aid sector, we have been particularly interested in applications of GI for mission/aid personnel. For some examples from our work, see “Field Consultations: Risk, Resilience, Relevance, and Relationships” (O'Donnell and Lewis O'Donnell, 2015a). It describes how we set up and do field consults and describes multi-sectoral resources that we have used in recent member care trips (e.g., tools for assessment and personal growth).

We have focused substantially on GI in the mental health context (GI-MH) and especially global mental health (GMH) and mental health-

psychosocial support in humanitarian settings (IASC 2015, O'Donnell and Lewis O'Donnell, 2016b, United Nations, 2016). These areas are full of opportunities for MHP involvement, including colleagues in the faith-based sector. We describe GI-MH as:

an emerging domain with roots in the integration of mental health and theology, in which colleagues actively seek ways to connect and contribute as “forces for good” who skillfully address the challenges facing humanity. It involves practitioners with character, competence, and compassion who caravan together into GI, crossing cultures and countries, disciplines and sectors, time zones and comfort zones in order to stretch our thinking, practice, and impact on the world. It is mental health AS mission. (O'Donnell, 2011).

We define GMH as:

an international, interdisciplinary, culturally-sensitive, and multi-sectoral domain which promotes human well being, the right to health, and equity in health for all. It encourages healthy behaviours and lifestyles; is committed to preventing and treating mental, neurological, and substance use conditions (MNS); and seeks to improve policies and programs, professional practices and research, advocacy and awareness, and social and environmental factors that affect health and well being. (based on O'Donnell 2012).

Further information. To review some foundational thinking about GI, see the 10 entries on the CORE Member Care weblog (O'Donnell, 2011). These entries include applications for mental health (i.e. mental health as mission) and member care (i.e. the wellbeing and effectiveness of mission/aid personnel). For further information on Global Integrators, see “Making Your Mark in Our Troubled World” (O'Donnell and Lewis O'Donnell, 2016a) and the 25 diverse weblog entries on the subject (O'Donnell, 2015a). For some core materials on GMH, see our GMH-Map website and our recent article “Global Mental Health: Tracking and Trekking Across Sectors” (O'Donnell and Lewis O'Donnell, 2015b).

Opportunities for MHPs

GI-MH and GMH are especially pertinent for the major multi-sectoral efforts promoting well being for all people and the planet. A primary example would be Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015). Foremost on this Agenda is Goal 1, the commitment to eradicate poverty in all of its forms. This first goal is followed by 16 other ambitious and overlapping goals, including equitable access to quality and affordable physical and mental health care (a core part of Goal 3). With an estimated 450 million people experiencing a mental, neurological, or substance use condition, the vast majority who receive little or no effective care, especially in low-resource countries (World Health Organization, 2013), we believe it is important for the mental health profession to review its training emphases, strategic roles, organizational priorities, ethical responsibilities and above all opportunities to help make a difference in the glaring mental health needs worldwide. The same is true for individual MHPs as well as mental health-related organizations. See the examples of organizations, projects, forums, and resources on the Mental Health Innovation Network and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Network websites.



Another important document to help inform and guide MHPs is the World Health Organization's Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020 (World Health Organization, 2013). The Action Plan's overall goal is to “promote mental well-being, prevent mental disorders, provide

care, enhance recovery, promote human rights and reduce the mortality, morbidity and disability for persons with mental disorders (p. 9). It's four main objectives are to: "strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health; provide comprehensive, integrated mental health and social care services in community-based settings; implement strategies for promotion and prevention in mental health; and strengthen information systems, evidence and research for mental health" (p. 10). More ideas for relating the Action Plan to the work of MHPs and vice versa are in the WHO mh-GAP Newsletters.

Our work as psychologists in GI is strategically based in Geneva. It includes regular interactions with personnel/events in the United Nations, World Health Organization, and international NGOs—and hence materials, perspectives, and resources that we review and then share with colleagues. We regularly send out Global Integration Updates to over 1900 colleagues as part of our commitment to foster "common ground for the common good" and "personal transformation for social transformation". The Updates are archived on our main website (Member Care Associates). The December 2015 Update, "Staying Current-Navigating the News", is especially relevant (O'Donnell and Lewis O'Donnell, 2015c). It includes a) Newsletters/Updates from some of the larger humanitarian-

development organizations; b) World Reports on special topics; c) links to several News/Media Sources; d) recent resources from the United Nations, humanitarian, and the global health/mental health sectors; and e) reflections on the importance of informed, skilled, and critical partnering for sustainable development.

Further steps. We believe that getting a variety of input to help shape and support GI is essential. Organizing informal GI roundtables/consultations (online and in vivo) and including GI and GI-related topics as part of conferences, academic courses, articles, and webinars would be helpful. Ultimately, one of the greatest opportunities for further developing GI would be organizing a new coalition(s) of colleagues who are committed to GI, including a multi-sectoral entity and one for specific GI emphases such as GI-MH. Serving all the above GI components could be a core group of colleagues, a growing global network, a special GI website, and an en-

dowment to help make it all happen.

Finally, we want to emphasize that GI, given the pressing issues facing our world, is a crucial direction for the diversity of Christians involved in mental health. Glen Moriarty's 2012 article on the future of integration calls for "integration systems" that are more diverse, global, and with more in-roads in non-religious settings. The excerpt below, a supportive admonishment



Dr. Kelly and Dr. Michèle O'Donnell are consulting psychologists based in Geneva with Member Care Associates. Their professional emphases include several GI-related areas: the health/effectiveness of mission/aid personnel and their organizations, global mental health, sustainable development, and anti-corruption. In addition to their regular Member Care Updates and Global Integration Updates, their recent publications include overview articles on global mental health (Psychology International, 2014, 2015), member care history (International Bulletin of Mission Research, 2015), and volume two in the Global Member Care series, *Crossing Sectors for Serving Humanity* (2013).

mcaresources@gmail.com

to global action for Christian MHPs around the world, is especially relevant for GI as we consider the many opportunities for connecting and contributing in new ways and across sectors ad maiorem Dei gloriam.

If we want integration [of psychology and theology] to be a credible and relevant voice in all corners of our world, then we need to be proactive about learning, engaging and collaborating with Christian mental health professionals outside of North America.... We

want to get in on the ground floor—not once institutions are already established. Kelly O'Donnell has insightfully called this “global integration.”.... We in the integration field find ourselves in a unique position. Unfortunately, globalization and technology have caught us flat-footed... We have a time limited opportunity to make a huge impact in the future of faith and psychology... We can begin by answering the question I started with: Where do we want to be in 10 years? (pp. 43, 44)

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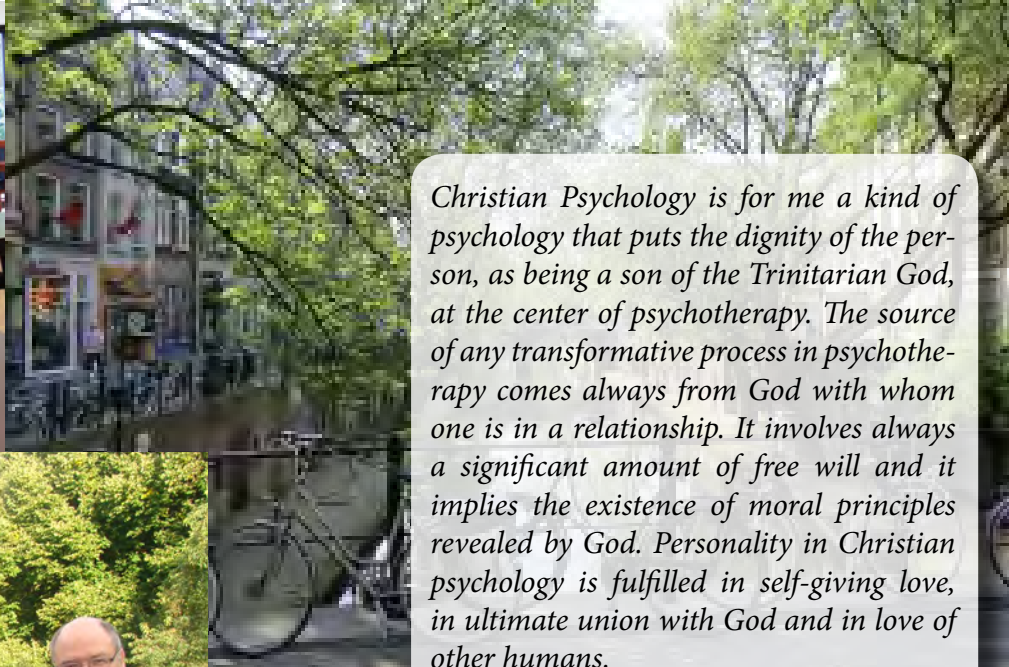


*I am especially impressed by an increase in the level of lectures and discussions during the symposium in Heiloo. Participants presented many practical aspects of integration of the psychological and spiritual dimension when thinking about the human being. And what is important: it was visible not only in concepts but also in real attitudes of humility and love to others.
Anna Ostaszewska (Poland)*



*The EMCAPP symposium 2015 in the Netherlands was wonderful and it's impossible to sum up all the beautiful aspects, so just some highlights for me personally: welcoming all international participants to the Netherlands and watching them enjoying all the good sides of it; both celebrating our unity in Christ by transcending cultural and denominational differences, and being enriched by each other's differences by frankly questioning and contributing to them.
Timo Jansen (Netherlands)*





Christian Psychology is for me a kind of psychology that puts the dignity of the person, as being a son of the Trinitarian God, at the center of psychotherapy. The source of any transformative process in psychotherapy comes always from God with whom one is in a relationship. It involves always a significant amount of free will and it implies the existence of moral principles revealed by God. Personality in Christian psychology is fulfilled in self-giving love, in ultimate union with God and in love of other humans.

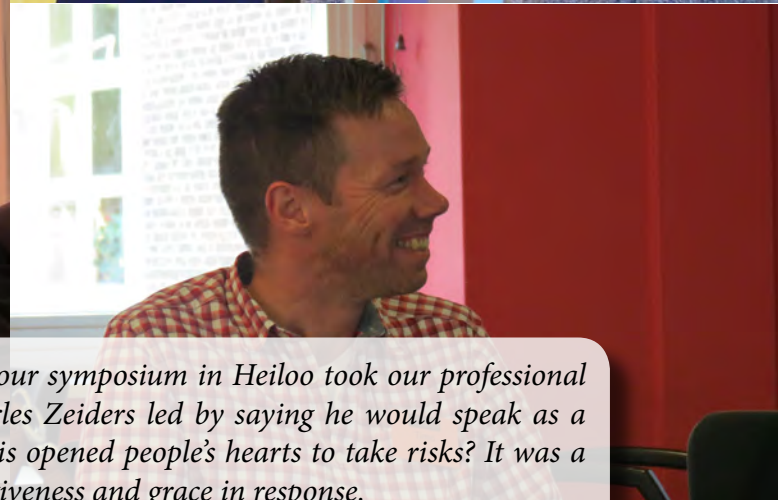
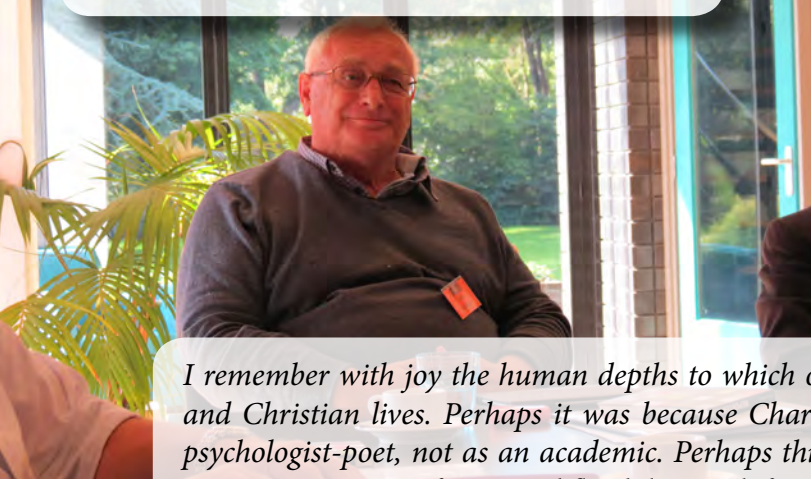
Mar Alvarez Segura (Spain)



The 14th Symposium of EMCAPP

September 10th – 13th 2015

**Christian approaches to Person and the
Meaning for Therapy and Counseling**



I remember with joy the human depths to which our symposium in Heiloo took our professional and Christian lives. Perhaps it was because Charles Zeiders led by saying he would speak as a psychologist-poet, not as an academic. Perhaps this opened people's hearts to take risks? It was a unique experience of trust and flexibility, with forgiveness and grace in response.

Trevor Griffiths (Great Britain)



The EMCAPP Symposium 2016 in Warsaw (Poland)

The Meaning of Relationship for a Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy

1th of September 2016 - 4th of September

Main speakers:

Gladys Mwiti (Kenya): „The Role of Relationship in Psychotherapy
-- A Christian African Indigenous Perspective.“

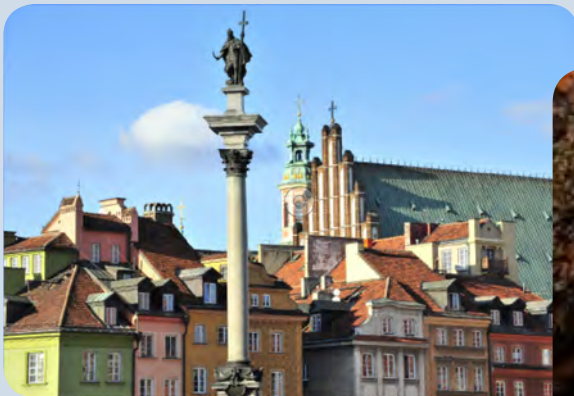
Nicolene Joubert (South Africa): About Community Psychology

Romuald Jaworski (Poland): „Coincidentia oppositorum and trust as the
foundations of good relations – from the perspective of Christian anthropology“

Workshops with Andrey Lorgus (Russia),
Anna Ostaszewska (Poland) and others.

The Symposium (conference room and accommodation) will take place
in the European Centre of Communication and Culture
<http://eccc.pl> , Warsaw - Falenica, Poland

If you intend to come or you have
further questions please send an e-mail
to werner.may@ignis.de



Next Number

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About Us

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

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

Per year, two issues of the journal are planned: The main articles of each number will be prepared by a focus country.

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für Christliche Psychologie



Seven statements of EMCAPP

1. EMCAPP is based on the faith that there is a God who is actively maintaining this world, so when we talk about Man we should also talk 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 appreciates the cultural and linguistic diversity of backgrounds of its members.

5. EMCAPP wants its members to learn recognizing each other as friends, brothers and sisters.

6. EMCAPP encourages its members in their national challenges and responsibilities.

7. EMCAPP has a global future and it is open to discourse and joined research opportunities round the world (World Movement).

For more detailed version of statements: see www.emcapp.eu.