Counselling Connections Across Australia

CULTURE, TRANSCENDENCE AND TRANSITIONS

CCAA

From the Editor

As I review the many articles flowing in for our 2014 edition, my mind is drawn to the core objectives of Christian Counsellor's Association and I am encouraged. As our PACFA report indicates we have made considerable gains in establishing counselling as a profession. I think back to the time I began to practice, and feel satisfied with the advancement made as we have worked together to earn credibility. We can now confidently present counselling as a viable, accessible and competent profession sitting alongside similar (but distinct from) other allied health professions.

Research and the writing down of conclusions drawn from counselling practice in quality articles represent solid steps in advancing Christian counselling. In a small but significant way therefore our journal contributes towards the growth and development of counsellors and of our profession. I have in mind the writers of our articles who have sat down and put into words how they work and what they do as they practice their craft. I think of Neil Harris, who has provided a thoughtful review of a recently-published Christian counselling text, **From Woe to Go**, a book written by two of the 'fathers' of Christian counselling, Graham Barker and Clifford Powell.

The book is full of spiritual wisdom. I would particularly like to mention Peter Milnes, who collaborated with Aboriginal pastors to produce an insightful and compelling article on forgiveness, and

John Anderson, who has contributed two excellent articles from a spiritual perspective. You may notice that the current edition is rich with spiritual insights and practical 'how to'. The integration of faith and practice is a core objective and distinctive of our Association.

In conclusion, to our valued members I would like to extend my thanks to you all for providing feedback during the survey conducted last year, which has contributed to the emphasis on integrating faith and practice in this year's journal. We have also commenced a "Counsellor's Toolbox" section on our website with handy quick tips for counsellors. We welcome your contributions to both journal and website.

With warmest regards,

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About Us

Dr Genevieve Milnes

CCAA National President
Psychotherapist and Counsellor, Clinical Psychologist

To All Our Wonderful Christian Counsellors Across Australia.

On behalf of CCAA National Council I thank you for your dedication and faithfulness in service to your clients and to our Association. We are going from strength to strength as we become known both through our State Member Associations and through the Find a Counsellor link on our national web page. It is through our belief in the integration of our faith with our practice that we offer a service that we believe touches peoples lives in a deeper and more spiritual way than secular agencies can offer. With permission from our clients we can share with them an understanding common to both that God is the one 'in whom we live and move and have our being'. I do hope you thoroughly enjoy our journal and find something here that meets your needs in some way. Do let us know won't you? I pray that God blesses your work and increases favour towards you as you serve in your community.

Yours in the service of Jesus

Chris Brown
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Dominie Nelson
SA | Journal Chair

Genevieve Milnes
WA | President

John Anderson
Victoria | Ethics Chair

Julie Weekes
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NSW | Training Chair

CCAA MEMBERSHIP

CCAA provides registration, networking and support for Christian counsellors.

CCAA is an association of State Christian Counselling Associations incorporated in 1998, beginning in Victoria in 1982. CCAA is a member association of PACFA, the Psychotherapy and Counsellors Federation of Australia.

Registration

You may become a Registered Member of CCAA at three levels:

Intern Members complete the requisite study plus 10 hours of supervision related to 40 hours of counselling practice.

Graduate Members have a Bachelor degree or equivalent in counselling over 3 years, or a Postgraduate qualification in counselling over 2 years. They have completed 50 hours of training supervision related to 200 hours of counselling internship, and met CCAA theological and accountability requirements.

Clinical Members have, in addition, successfully completed 75 hours of supervision related to 750 hours of counselling.

Benefits - Registered Members

Over recent years, a consensus is emerging nationally as to appropriate benchmark standards for professional recognition for counsellors, called the PACFA Training Standards. Being registered by CCAA as a Graduate Member means you have achieved this benchmark of professional recognition.

Graduate and Clinical Members:

- are automatically listed on the PACFA Register at Provisional level (for Graduate Members) or Clinical level (for Clinical Members), at the member's request
- receive a CCAA Membership Certificate they may attach 'CCAA (Grad)' or 'CCAA (Clin)' after their name
- may advertise details on the CCAA 'Find a Counsellor' web page
- may set up their own webpage hosted on the CCAA website
- will have the full support and services of CCAA and PACFA Ethics committees in mediating and resolving complaints

Clinical Members:

- may be eligible to be listed as a CCAA-Accredited Supervisor on the State 'Supervisors' pages

Associate membership:

People who are involved in the counselling field (students and those in ministry) can join the Association as Associates.

Contact us through your state or national office.

Values | Vision | Mission

Vision

Our vision is professional excellence for Christian counsellors, serving God, the Church and the wider community.

Mission

CCAA registers professionally trained Christian and pastoral counsellors and provides professional accountability. It promotes professional development through networking, seminars and conferences.

Specifically, CCAA achieves this by:

- Registering Christian counsellors as Graduate or Clinical Members of CCAA
- Regulating high standards of ongoing professional development, supervision, and accountability to the CCAA Code of Ethics
- Promoting professional development and networking through seminars, workshops, local meetings, and a biennial National Conference, with a focus on integrating faith and practice
- Providing advice and a network of support for Members and Associates of CCAA
- Raising the professional credibility of counsellors through membership of PACFA, the Psychotherapy and Counsellors Federation of Australia, our registering umbrella organisation
- Partnering with the church, pastoral counsellors, people in ministry and educators in Christian counselling, and encouraging members to pursue academic research in areas unique to Christian counselling
- Connecting people of all levels of interest in Christian counselling, through state and national newsletters, the CCAA eNews and the CCAA website

Values

These CCAA Values are the heartbeat of our Vision and Mission:

- Serving Jesus Christ in the world
- Personal and professional integrity and accountability
- Integrating biblical theology and principles with counselling theory and practice
- Inclusiveness, community, networking, partnership, empowerment
- Being a distinctive Christian presence and voice
- Professional competence, excellence and leadership in Christian counselling

Over the past few years, the Board of PACFA (the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia) has worked consistently to establish good relationships with the right people in order to promote counselling as a professional endeavour undertaken by trained, experienced and qualified people. Much energy has been expended in lobbying state and federal ministers; this has been done with patient efficiency in spite of the urgency many of us feel as we consider the acute shortage of mental health workers particularly in regional areas of Australia. Good relationships

and assists in identifying areas of risk and how they may be problematic. Terminology is being reviewed to ensure the Code is relevant, appropriate and accurately describes the professional services offered by counsellors and psychotherapists. It has been noted that our scope of practice corresponds to that offered by psychologists. As our profession changes and develops the Code as a dynamic record will track the changes and create clarity on risk management and ethical practice. Governance, conduct and complaints procedures are located under the Ethics tab on the

PACFA REPORT 2014

have been a focus of PACFA's approach to several EAP's; currently negotiations over appropriate fee for service for counsellors are part of the discussions.

An indicator of good progress has been the government's recent invitation to PACFA to participate in a limited inquiry into mental health services. PACFA is participating in consultation on a National Code of Conduct for Health Workers. It has been noted and advised that the current Code of Conduct for unregistered health practitioners is generic and irrelevant, as well as being inaccurate as we are registered as professionals with PACFA. It has been noted that representation of counsellors on government lists and registers has particular significance as government lists are the basis for clients and service providers looking to acquire mental health services. PACFA continues to lobby for the inclusion of registered counsellors on such lists.

PACFA consists of a board with 9 Chairs taking responsibility for different areas of professional endeavour. The sub-committee working with the Ethics Chair has developed a Code of Conduct for managing complaints against MA's, consult the PACFA website for details. The Code raises awareness of ethical implications

PACFA website. It is encouraging to note that counsellors have an excellent reputation and that there have been a very low number of complaints against counsellors and psychotherapists.

Consultation with Member Associations (MA's) takes place during Forum at each PACFA meeting. During the March round of meetings the sense of urgency about potential closure of some MA's (due to decreasing committee members and increasing workloads) was held in tension with the need for a measured approach towards restructuring. A measured approach allows for sufficient consultation to occur so that no MA feels disenfranchised from the process. Issues of autonomy, finance and maintaining diversity were the basis for much discussion. PACFA is open to exploring alternative ways of re-structuring; the currently proposed College/Chapter structure is simply one idea. PACFA is sensitive to the need not to take a 'top down' approach in any restructure.

The PACFA board desires all MA's to remain involved as this is essential to representation and authority and reiterated that no MA will be forced to accept any new structure. A Working Party has been established to compile a report for the October

AGM to identify and discuss what a restructure might look like and whether PACFA has permission to move ahead and address the issues raised in the World Café Forum. Neil Harris has been tasked with this responsibility on behalf of CCAA. A concern was expressed that if individuals are allowed to register directly with PACFA, MA's may become irrelevant. This has been suggested by the opinion of training institutions and many comments through the PACFA survey that registration and professional accreditation is what both members and trainees are seeking and is therefore of primary importance. PACFA continues to invite consultation from all Member Associations on difficulties they may be facing, and is proactive in generating solutions. For example, PACFA is considering the promotion of our smaller, specialised training institutions in providing post graduate training in specialised areas. This will serve our profession well as professional diversity will be maintained.

Recognition that quality research represents an essential step in gaining professional and governmental recognition led to the inclusion of a Research Chair. Dr Elizabeth Day is PACFA'S Research Chair and the aims of her portfolio and working sub-committee are to disseminate information on findings of research, facilitate quality research into counselling and psychotherapy processes and outcomes, and to promote PACFA. The establishment of a journal, PACJA, is a visible part of initiatives in this area. PACJA has offered to peer review CCAA journal articles and to include reviewed articles in the PACJA journal. This does not in any way limit our use of the articles and is illustrative of the collaborative process between PACFA and MA's.

The new PACFA website incorporates a portal for administrative purposes, including listing of PD events, storage of documents and codes, therapist profiles, PD, supervision and client logs. Therapist profiles are a feature of the new site. All are products that may be purchased through the portal, which also has the facility to allow registration and renewals on line direct with PACFA. At this time renewals will continue to be conducted through CCAA, however portal access is being considered by CCAA, as a way to reduce workload for the individual states which is particularly onerous at renewal time. Although portal access would incur a financial cost, this is likely to be a one-off payment and has the benefit of reducing administrative time and expense.

It may be that, in the fullness of time, PACFA becomes a service provider for the Member Associations currently forming its front-line ranks.

Dominie Nelson

Delegate, PACFA meetings April 2014

WWW

PACFA
www.pacfa.org.au

ARCAP
www.arcapregister.com.au

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI (1181-1226 A.D.)

BY JUDY HAYS WILKIE

Transitions To Cultural Transcendence

INTRODUCTION

Melbourne trains and roads abound with colours: people are dressed for the footy or hanging team scarves from car windows. Kids inducted into their parents' favourite codes and clubs join with their parents' enthusiasm. Are they different from young children elsewhere being trained to hate those not of their group? Children are born into the worlds of their parents, who also were shaped by interpreted circumstances. Some belong to powerful groups; some are minorities or marginalised. Their locations may be by birth or by choice. Some could leave, return or go to another context; some cannot. Children are taught beliefs and allegiances and learn from experiences highlighting social differences. Their identifications with others shape their self-identity, group belonging and values or beliefs concerning the nature of reality.

Culture is like the air people breathe. A city person may strongly smell farm animals and a rural person the chemical odours of factory and traffic, but each may hardly notice the familiar air. Culture signifies and describes like a language does: a person or object "is" as named and as expected to function. Culture sets unchallenged relationships, such as invariant roles for "boys" versus "girls". To know one culture is to "know" no culture (Augsburger, 1986). Other cultures surprise with options.

Training in intercultural skills, the basis for multicultural counselling competencies, begins with awareness. With awareness comes the need for knowledge to explain newly distinguishable differences. Then there is need for skills, such as speaking new words or greeting people according to different rules. These three interact progressively.

Acquiring knowledge may lead to attempting new behaviour. Trial of a skill often leads to new awareness and need for more knowledge (Kohls & Brussow, 1995; Roysircar et al, 2003). Managing different gender expectations in different situations, for example, suggests that intercultural refinement continues.

The multiplicity of cultures, interactive cultural strands and factors of change ensures that one cannot possibly "know" all. Multicultural counselling competence requires increasing capacity to notice and learn with humility and careful communication. Some western-trained counsellors have called for meta-theories that account for the cultural complexity of all people and all therapeutic practice (see DeVito, 1999; Sue, Ivey & Pederson, 1996). Cultural self-awareness is essential for perception of others. The feedback of contextual relational experience from infancy through adulthood shapes people and perceptions through interactive mirroring and external norming.

Christians consider that people are personally and corporately made in the image of the Trinitarian God revealed in the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ. Our perceptions remain limited until eternity: now we see Him and others only as a reflection as in a mirror (1 Cor. 13:12). However, we know that unity in diversity is the norm of God and our own future in this life and the next (John 17:22-3; Rev. 7:9).

The following discussion draws upon these perspectives as it looks at cultural dimensions of identity and transitions in cultural identity toward transcendence.

I. CULTURAL IDENTITY

Every person is a multi-coloured weaving of many cultural strands. Many have used the formulation of anthropologists Kluckhohn and Kluckhohn (1940s) that each individual is like all others, like some others, and like no other (Hesselgrave, 1986, Sue & Sue, 2003). Human biology and genetics show that people are far more alike than dissimilar. Humanity as the human race, displays generally consistent biological form with critical periods for certain brain development, language learning, neuronal prunings, sexual maturation, etc. At the same time, no two persons are entirely alike, from fingerprints and DNA to differential, unique experiences. People choose thoughts, actions, speech and interpretations and have unique places in their dyads, triads, and various groups. Western individual counselling theory and practice builds upon human universality and uniqueness. System-sensitive counselling also considers that groups such as family, co-workers, teams or communities shape their members. Positions in group membership are shaped by such factors as age, gender or marital status, ways

in which people are like some others. Larger systems such as social class, religion or tribal membership are powerfully life determinative. Each person is like some others in various dimensions and in both constant and changing ways across a lifetime (McGoldrick, 1998).

Like Some Others

People are "like some others" and correspondingly "different from some others" in some consistent ways. In every family the age and gender of each member is salient to individual identities and to family function. Age moves through time while gender defines a person from birth. Expectations, privileges, restrictions and roles correspond to both age and gender. Some aspects extend across cultures because of biology: infants must learn to walk and post-pubescent women alone may bear children. There is a cross-cultural identification with those of similar age or gender. But worldview also defines the meaning of age and gender. More correspondences exist between those of the same gender or the same age within a group that holds other cultural strands in common.

Psychologist Pamela Hays (2008) developed a framework for identifying cultural strands to be considered with all people: **ADDRESSING**. She begins with **A**ge and ends with **G**ender. **E**thnicity, the middle factor is difficult to delineate. Ethnicity is not "race," for which she names no category. Human "racial" distinctions are based on observable physical characteristics (such as skin colour, certain facial features and hair colour or texture) reproduced in geographic regions over generations. Such physical features are noted immediately upon meeting a person face to face, so people tend to categorise others based on them, but they are very misleading. The interpersonal ethnic story with which they are associated is invisible and the ignorance of the observer leads to false attributions. Ethnicity more accurately describes group membership. Discrimination may be based on various evident physical characteristics including height or "beauty"…and ethnicity, age and gender also.

Hays' other **ADDRESSING** categories are **D**evelopmental or acquired **D**isability, **R**eligion, **S**ocioeconomic status, **S**exual orientation, **I**ndigenous heritage, and **N**ational origin. All may have both evident and hidden features affecting immediate social experience. People experience bias, whether in privilege or restrictions, according to each of these categories and to particular social locations. Some may overlap, such as gender with gender identity and hence sexual orientation, and ethnicity with indigenous heritage and national origin. Each category contains differentiations, plus interactive group factors change

the meaning of each aspect of a person's identity in different contexts. Different groups may confer more or less power for different characteristics within any group to which one belongs and with respect to other groups. The model is a starting point, bringing potential strands of cultural experience to awareness for further exploration.

Identification

Pastoral counsellor Aart van Beek (1996) described cultural factors in terms of three interactive human dimensions: identity, belonging and worldview. These all adapt to changes over time. Dissonance occurs when they are not in sync. Some life changes may align with expectations, such as family positions and roles across the life span. The young may become wise elders in their settings as cumulative experience leads to an increasingly complex understanding of the world. But surprising encounters with others, tragedy, social change, dislocation and migration call life's original maps into review (see also Brown, 2008). In an increasingly global environment, greater awareness of or encounter with others of different cultural background bring disorientations that need resolution. As identity, belonging and worldview formed originally in identification with others, new identifications enable re-learning, expansion and integration (van Beek,1996). A woman who experiences new abuse as a woman or learns about women in another context or finds herself in another context may re-identify with other women in a way that reorients her sense of self, her belonging and social power, and her understanding of the world. Or an Australian who felt "poor" re-examines himself and his context after an international encounter with people who have less.

Self-understanding, group identifications, and worldview may be profoundly changed as awareness and knowledge of self and others continues to grow through learning and reflection. Perspectives change as one ages, moves through the family life cycle and manages social change. Globalising factors like technology, media and the impact of migration also are increasing awareness, leading to haphazard knowledge acquisition. But lack of relational contact, fear of offense or difference and lack of broader knowledge hinder clarification and create confusion. The worldview urgency is greater for migrants or their children and anyone who experiences minority status or enclaves and negotiating two worlds than for those in more powerful or majority positions. But both struggle to identify with different others and to develop skills to interact constructively.

Effective counsellors identify the cultural strands of their personal stories. Cultural factors that place a counsellor in a majority position may be invisible to the counsellor. If a client appears to be like the local majority or like the counsellor, both counsellor and client may make incorrect assumptions because no questions of difference were obvious (awareness). Differences that appear also may not be well understood (knowledge) or properly contextualised. Both parties may misinterpret without exploration or acknowledgement. Adaptations needed (skills) may be unclear or undeveloped. The counsellor is responsible to lead the awareness and work toward mutual understanding.

II. TRANSITIONS TOWARDS CULTURAL TRANSCENDENCE

Transition toward cultural transcendence depends upon developmental capacity, learning and choice. People may live out facets of cultural identity from childhood to old age. Children can see forms of injustice and have compassion but their interpretations depend on learning. Capacity to analyse abstraction and to take the perspectives of others depends upon maturation, specifically the cognitive shift to formal operations at adolescence described by Piaget and the formation of psychosocial identity posited by Erikson. Erikson and others describe further adult development needed to achieve the integrated wisdom of cultural elders (Capps, 2008; Fowler, 1981, 1987). Capacity for complex processing requires development and disorienting experiences expose worldviews for reflection.

Human Development

People are shaped interactively. A baby comes to know self as distinct during reciprocal relations that cultivate attachment. Findings in attachment, neuroscience and trauma have emphasized the importance of early years for forming attachment bonds and neural connections, and the durable impact of relational disruptions, neglect, or frightening events. The brain continues to change, as it prunes back unused neural possibilities and is washed in hormones at adolescence but also in adulthood, both typically and as affected by experience and choice (Cozolino, 2008). While children absorb, imitate and perform what they encounter, which may include enriched language and cultural environments, adolescents can imagine possibilities and consider what another person may be thinking.

TRANSCENDENCE

People with "surfaces" become people with imagined interiors (Fowler, 1987). Adolescent cognitive development fosters ability for mutual perspective-taking without losing the self.

The theories of Piaget (cognitive), Freud (psychosexual) and Erikson (psychosocial) continue to usefully describe biological capacity and typical growth trajectories by which one comes to know self, others and the world. Piaget observed fairly universal capacity changes. Others posit that resolution of tensions affects capacity for later stages. Kagan (development of a self) and Kholberg (moral development) build on Piaget, and Fowler (faith development) builds on Piaget and Erikson to describe what maturation is possible, and in their views desirable. Balswick, King & Reimer (2005), Capps (2008) and Fowler (1981,1987) provide rich comparative discussions of these theories. The following table aligns them by ages in order to consider implications for cultural identity transitions.

Age	Freud: Psycho-sexual	Erikson: psychosocial tension: virtue	Piaget: cognitive	Kagan: "self"	Kholberg: moral development	Fowler: faith development
0-1.5	Oral	Trust vs mistrust: hope	Sensorimotor	Incorporative		Undifferentiated
1.5-3	Anal	Autonomy vs. shame & doubt: will	2 yrs+: Pre-operational	Impulsive	Pre-conventional 1.heteronomous	Intuitive/ projective
4-5	Phallic	Initiative vs. guilt: purpose				
6-12	Latency	Industry vs. inferiority: competence	5/7 yrs+: Concrete operations	6-8 yrs+: Imperial	Pre-Conventional 2.instrumental exchange	Mythic/ literal
13-18+	Genital	Identity vs. role confusion: fidelity	Formal operations	Interpersonal	11+Conventional 1: interpersonal	Synthetic/ conventional
18+-35+		Intimacy vs. isolation: love		21+: Institutional	Conventional 2: social law & order	Individuative/ reflective
35+-40+		Generativity vs. stagnation: care		Inter-individual	Post-conventional 1.social contract/ individual rights	Conjunctive
45+					2. Universal ethical principles	Universalizing God-grounded
65+		Integrity vs. despair/ disgust: wisdom				

Kagan, Kohlberg and Fowler attend to the increasing levels of complexity persons may become capable of managing. Complex perspective-taking is needed to consider increasing awareness of diversity in various aspects of cultural identity. All the models push beyond oneself and one's closely identified, socially approving others to reorient identity and belonging to a more inclusive or transcendent worldview. All these theorists are western males and Kohlberg's research was entirely with US (probably majority white) males so their visions of what is ideal may be questioned. The individualism of the west versus the collectivism of tribal and eastern cultures strongly influences visions of mental health (Augsburger, 1986). But the ability to move beyond personal interest, whether defined by one's self or one's group, seems to require maturation, experience and choice.

For all of these theorists, the resolution and completion of aspects of one stage are necessary for fully engaging the next. Childhood lays a foundation for knowing about different "others" to whom one belongs or contrasts in relation to family, friends and communities. Attention to factors distinguishing people is taught or raised by experiences (especially painful ones like prejudice, trauma, relocations and disasters) with biases, meanings and interpretations seeded and reinforced by important others and influences. But chronological age, capacity and life experience do not insure greater awareness,

emotional resolution or integration of dissonances, so the theorists do not see development to more complex positions as inevitable. An adult could remain in a pre-adolescent stage with respect to developing a self, morality, or faith or with respect to certain aspects of culture named by the ADDRESSING model versus others.

Cultural Development

Fowler (1987), a pastoral theologian, writing a few years earlier than van Beek (1996), posits a triad of self, others and "shared centres of value and power," somewhat like van Beek's interactive identity, belonging and worldview. Fowler defines faith not by belief content but by relational action or commitments within this triad. His adult stages, individuative/reflective (capable of third person perspectives) conjunctive (capable of holding dialectic tensions) and universalizing (God-grounded capability of an open self) increase the possibility of dialogue between people whose centres of value and power are divergent. Such dialogue requires the ability to acknowledge that persons or arguments are not necessarily all right or all wrong, and non-defensively to tolerate becoming aware of one's group as seen from another perspective. Patient acquisition of knowledge and cognitive and relational skill to navigate different options are needed. When immersed as a foreigner in a second culture the need and challenge intensify, as one also experiences vulnerability due to lacking the knowledge and skill held even by children in the second culture. Learning new cultural ways requires tolerating feelings of incompetence and even rejection due to negative feedback on failure to "know" or do as expected, especially if without bicultural guides. This is dissonant with adult identity and creates relational and worldview confusion. Maturation and points of identification are needed.

Elmer (2006) describes the humility required to learn from those of a second culture as challenging even for Christians who identify with Christ for a transcendent orientation. Christian spiritual maturity is described in the New Testament as progressing from one stage to the next and requiring effort, with love as its ultimate fruit (Colossians 3, 2 Peter 1). The apostle John (1 Jn. 2:12-14) says he writes to "children," "young men" and fathers, clearly referring to spiritual growth. The children "know the Father" and the fathers "know Him who is from the beginning." To become more like Christ is to become more like the transcendent God who knows all diverse people. But the incarnational process is a costly one, learning through many humble choices to identify with others as Christ did.

Some social scientists study how to expand identity, relational belonging and worldview in ways that decrease disadvantage. The dominant group is not always the majority but has the power to control. Fewer people are rich than poor; among Hindus fewer are high caste than low; women are not a minority in contexts where they are oppressed. People also have more access or vulnerability to change in certain aspects of their cultural identity than in others. Several have developed models of racial/cultural identity development. Sue & Sue (2003) summarise these into one model, contrasting the experiences of those whose race or culture is perceived in a given context as normative, dominant or majority versus those who are seen as deviant, subjugated or minority. Although members of a minority (Asian-Americans), Sue & Sue recognise that the majority (in this case "white" Americans) absorb and imitate their context from childhood. Thus they see both dominant and subjugated groups as victimized by systems larger than themselves that control experience and perception.

The model moves from mutual naïve acceptance of the status quo to increasing personal and worldview awareness of bias and injustice. Polarized reactions, upon reflective introspection also may prove unsatisfactory and one may discover expanded identifications with both groups.

Minority/Subjugated
Majority/Dominant

Stage 1: Conformity (to Majority)
Stage 1: Conformity (Cultural Encapsulation)

Stage 2: Dissonance
Stage 2: Dissonance

Stage 3: Resistance & Immersion (in Minority)
Stage 3: Resistance & Immersion (Pro-minority)

Stage 4: Introspection
Stage 4: Introspection (Retreat to Dominant Culture)

Stage 5: Integrative Awareness
Stage 5: Redefinition & Integration

The minority person may first conform and seek acceptance by the majority as "like" them. This position shields from shame and tries to minimise harm. When confronting experience reveals denial, dissonance occurs. Helplessness, anger and the painful awareness of having rejected one's group then may lead the person to embrace group identity, rejecting the majority. However the now-affirmed minority itself has flaws and not all majority persons are equally bad. Integrative awareness is possible when with a clearer identity one can move towards the other without losing the self.

The majority or dominant process begins with assumptions that one's group is good. Unearned personal privilege is invisible and guilt is avoided. Dissonance occurs when it is

recognised that others suffer at the hands of one's group. One either ignores this or feels guilt and seeks to be anti-racist, pro-minority. At this third step the majority person identifies with the minority with some rejection of self/group. However not only the majority culture resists the "do-gooder" but the subjugated group also suspects the majority person, sees ignorance and hidden pride, and may be rejecting. Wounded, fearful, angry, confused and less confident, the person may retreat from minority identification to home base. However, the immersion experience may lead to reformulation of what it means to have privilege and to a more realistic identity. Tentative re-engagement for the majority, like the minority, humbly tolerates failings of one's group and forgives failings of the other while valuing persons in both, promoting change and mutual welfare, the integrative stage five.

Transitions to Transcendence

These transitions in relationship to self, to one's own group and in worldview move toward transcendence. Willingness to engage in mutual perspective-taking leads to increasing ability to deal with the other, a process that can be repeated with various cultural differences but always is challenged by power dynamics. As one's cultural self-awareness is raised by each aspect of the ADDRESSING model, more perspectives emerge and more knowledge is needed to clarify meanings. The transitional process involves transcending various positions in order to reflect critically on embedded values and vulnerabilities. One may consciously try to interpret differently. But it is a long journey to personal ease and developed skill in another culture alongside increased respect for one's own. Belief in the transcendent Lord Jesus Christ who laid aside his power in order to serve humanity can give the humility and security to explore.

Flexibility of thought and action may be hindered by strong caveats from religious, political, economic or family spheres that reinforce power or identity. Whoever does not follow the system that enforces social cohesion is seen as a threat by the group. Some form of social cohesion is necessary for a functional society, so groups resist the development of their members towards transcendence. The belonging and identity of members are interactive with a shared or enforced worldview, so dissidents may be dehumanised and punished or cut off. Taking up one's cross to follow Christ can mean sharing his death. If one hopes to influence a culture, attempts to keep relationship with power brokers may enable serving the whole, including the disadvantaged (Elmore, 1993).

A worldview resists transitions within itself or its adherents unless it is complex enough to accommodate difference. Christianity is capable of holding complexity by having a universal reference point outside humanity in the true transcendent God who loves diversity, made all people in his image, and became human. However Christ clashes with every other system because he requires loving him before all other individuals or groups. The ongoing story of religious persecution, particularly of Christians, is partly explained by

Mayers (1986) created six axes from twelve ranges: time vs. event, person vs. task, holistic vs. dichotomist thinking, crisis vs. non-crisis orientation, status vs. achievement, concealment of vulnerability vs willingness to reveal. Augsburger (1986) says different cultures predominantly use fear, shame or guilt in social control and that most cultures judge others by the perceived worst of the other compared to the perceived best of one's own. Reflecting upon possibilities raised by different cultures illuminates aspects of God revealed through them as well as what the gospel transforms. Diverse cultures reveal blind spots in any one culture's transformation toward God's kingdom.

CONCLUSION

The triune God who made people in his image enables Christians to value diversity, for God is socially three persons who relate dyadically and triadically. God's nature also leads to valuing individuality, for each of God's distinct persons is God, and universal oneness, for God is one. Being in God's image is to be made to be socially like some in multiple loving relationships, like none particularly and like all in one human race. God as transcendent reference point gives direction for development towards maturity. Without transcendence culture tends to require conformity shaped by powerful people. Multiculturalism without the transcendence that is in the God who made diversity sets up competition for power, not love.

Identification with the incarnate Christ leads followers to deeper knowledge of the one who is transcendent and who provides contrast to all individuals, groups and human worldviews. He clarifies as persons are transformed through learning, maturation and choices. Christ leads those who identify with him toward his care for all others, and into interactions which reveal prior identifications made during development. He leads people away from blind acceptance of one cultural orientation, creating a social marginalisation in this life that sets up longing for the fullness of heaven. There in heavenly diversity it will be true that there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female for all will truly be one in Christ (Gal. 3:28); all shall be like him, at last seeing him as he is (1 Jn. 3:2).

For Christian counsellors, growth in cultural awareness is achieved gradually through many interactive transitions in awareness, knowledge and skill. Growth is not only cognitive but emotional, relational and spiritual. Counsellors are trained to seek supervision and sometimes personal therapy because any lack of self-awareness may contaminate the counselling process with transference and counter-transference. Even being Christians in a culture no longer willing to affirm Christianity as central creates self-conscious awareness that mutual perspective-taking takes bridge-building and more transcendence is needed, not less. As humble learners, counsellors may transition more toward the transcendent viewpoints of God and develop better skills to reveal his loving acceptance to those that highlight different aspects of his image.

this problem. Christianity has in Christ the example of how to be like some others in a particular social location while maintaining a universal spiritual and human orientation. Multiculturalism, the place where secularists and militant minorities meet in the west, is complexity with no centre, except against the transcendent claims of Christianity, the very source of belief in human dignity and freedom that fostered it. It leads to a competition for power. But even Christians do not always find constructive ways to build social cohesion. Christians begin from diverse starting points, both developmentally and in worldviews. While people grow in relational knowledge of God, their shared centres of value and power in the church are still clarifying. How much more complex is the interaction with those who do not yet know Jesus! God is building a kingdom transformative to earthly cultures, without obliterating diversity.

The transcendence in Christianity establishes a priority in life on the margins: Christian-man, Christian-teenager, Christian-Australian, etc. Some define Christian-Muslims or Christian-Aboriginals to show that even spiritually identified cultural groups have aspects that do not have to be lost in coming to know the Saviour of the world. Others facilitate cross-cultural understanding by analysing a given culture's orientation to key aspects of human life. For Kluckhohn and Kluckhohn's Values Orientation Theory, ideas around human nature (good/mixed/bad), human relation to nature (over/under/with), orientation to time (past/present/future), activity orientation (being/doing) and social relations (includes individual/collective, egalitarian/hierarchical) provide a basis for comparison. Lingenfelter and

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Understanding the Impact of Cultural Difference
on counselling practice

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As counsellors, we aim to enter counselling situations as intentional, conscious, and aware therapists. Our training and experience have taught us that these attributes assist us as professional helpers and contribute towards a healing process. And yet, there is an obvious area in which counsellors can be unintentional - they are unaware of cultural aspects of the craft of counselling and unconscious of the way in which their culture informs the way in which they counsel.

In fact, there is a lot of literature ruing the lack of clients from certain parts of the population – often identified as cultural groups[1]. One way through this impasse is to gain a better understanding of the impact of cultural difference on the counselling process. This paper should provide practitioners with tools that provide a better understanding of cross-cultural counselling, and lecturers[2] of counselling courses with a ready-made introduction to cross-cultural counselling practice.

Cultural comparisons are not undertaken to find 'superior' or 'inferior' ways of doing things, but rather to understand differences. When we are able to understand cultural difference more fully, we are able to gain deeper insight into the issues faced in cross-cultural counselling[3]. This can be provided by explanatory evidence-based models such as Hofstede's[4] Five Dimensional Model of Culture, House's[5] "GLOBE" Nine Dimensional Model of Cultures and E.T.Hall's[6]

Context Model. While each of these has merit, we have chosen Hofstede's theory for further consideration because of its level of acceptance, simplicity, depth of insight and evidence base. Hofstede's original Values Survey Modules (VSM) administered to 116 000 IBM employees in 40 countries during the 1980s has been through a number of revisions and replications before the current VSM-08[7]. Six major replication studies[8] have confirmed most of Hofstede's original framework. Hofstede has encapsulated cultural differences into four "spectra" – the Power-Distance Index (PDI); the Individualism Index (IDV); the Masculinity Index (MAS); the Uncertainty-Avoidance Index (UAI). To these we have added Social versus Economic Time Orientation Spectrum (TOS) and Environmental Worldview Spectrum (EWS). Examination of these "spectra" greatly assist awareness in cross-cultural counselling contexts. In this way we can become more intentional and conscious.

An immediate question about "cultural difference" is to ask "How different?" Hofstede's model[9] is presented in a binary form that contrasts polar ends of five spectra[10] – with the rider that all cultures fall somewhere between the two extremes. The model become rather complex placement of cultural groups within the spectra added to the combination of the various spectra increases the complexity of the model. Examination of the "extremes" of difference also make it easier to describe cultural differences, suspend value judgments about "good" or "bad" cultural traits[11] and provides greater understanding of the thinking, values and behaviour patterns that may be present in cross-cultural counselling contexts. Cross-cultural counselling can be annoying, frustrating, or even incomprehensible and mysterious but the application of understandings provided by these spectra can assist counsellors to make appropriate adaptations required for effective practice.

POWER DISTANCE INDEX (PDI)

The Power Distance Index (PDI) spectrum refers to ways in which cultural groups deal with power inequalities in society[12]. Anglo-Australians prefer smaller power distances and a narrower gap between the privileged and the common person. For example, Australians may react positively to the sight of an Australian Prime Minister showing that "humility" by carrying his own briefcase[13] whereas in other countries, such as Malaysia, this may be viewed with suspicion – the Australian Prime Minister must not be up to leadership if he has to carry his own briefcase and so he must have been a servant. Similarly, counsellors from a lower PDI culture may assume that being "equal" is important and so minimize the professional distance from their clients - only to find that people from a higher PDI culture see these actions as indicate uncertainty of their knowledge and expertise. Similarly, counsellors from a higher PDI may find themselves resented by lower PDI patients for maintaining professional distance and being over-bearing. Some examples of PDI may be confusing to outsiders. For example, Aboriginal elders may exhibit higher PDI in matters of traditional 'law' while appearing to lack control over the behaviour of young people in the community. A community worker may misinterpret this as powerlessness, and ignore the elders in favour of articulate younger persons — only to find that their community agreements do not work because the elders were not consulted. Age is very important in Aboriginal culture and younger counsellors may be confused and frustrated by the lack of respect shown for their professional position and surprised when their views are not taken seriously because of their age.

Table 1: Power-Distance Index (PDI) Attributes[14]

High power- distance attributes	Low power- distance attributes
Inequalities among people are both expected and desired	Inequalities among people should be minimized
Parents teach children obedience and respect to older relatives as a lifelong virtue; Children are a source of old-age security for parents	Parents treat children as equals; children treat parents and older relatives as equals; Children play no/little part in old-age security of parents.
Teachers are expected to take all initiatives in class; teachers are gurus who transfer personal wisdom; students give teachers respect even outside of class	Teachers expect initiative from students in class; teachers are experts who transfer impersonal truths; students treat teachers as equals
Subordinates expect to be told what to do	Subordinates expect to be consulted
The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat or good father	The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat
Privileges and status symbols for managers are both expected and popular	Privileges and status symbols are frowned upon
Powerful people try to look as impressive as possible	Powerful people try to look less powerful than they are
Power is based on family or friends, charisma, and ability to use force	Power is based on formal position, expertise and ability to give rewards
The way to change a political system is by changing the people at the top (revolution)	The way to change a political system is by changing the rules (evolution)
Prevailing religions and philosophical systems stress hierarchy and stratification	Prevailing religions and philosophical systems stress equality
Patients treat professionals such as doctors as superiors; consultations are shorter and controlled by the professional.	Patients treat professionals such as doctors as equals and actively supply information

THE EFFECT OF PDI ON CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELLING – PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS & QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Western training emphasizes a collaborative approach between clients and counsellors and clinicians are warned against assuming too much professional power. On the other hand, the person from a higher PDI expects the counsellor to be an "expert" – placing great emphasis on degrees, title and training. What are the cross-cultural ramifications of this cultural orientation in a higher PDI culture?

- A Counsellor coming from a higher PDI culture to Australia encountered opposition because of his "haughty manner" and his unwillingness to form friendships with staff from lower down the ladder. Describe the cultural differences perceived by the Australian staff and suggest ways of working successfully in this cross-cultural context.

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM (IDV)

The Individualism versus collectivism spectrum refers to the cohesiveness and independence exhibited by members in a cultural group[15]. Individualistic cultures with a higher IDV index, exemplified by mainstream Anglo-Australian families, expect everyone to look after themselves and their immediate nuclear families. It is considered healthy to be self-sufficient, "follow your own dream", "be your own boss", "do what is right for you" and make your own decisions about your career, partner and lifestyle. Collectivist cultures with a lower IDV index, such as many African, Asian and Australian Indigenous people groups, integrate a person from birth into strong, protective and cohesive in-groups in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. Personal identity is based on the social network to which one belongs and complex extended families. People are expected to consult with others within their communities regarding career choices, selection of partners and lifestyles. Counsellors in higher IDV contexts need to be aware of the importance of "collectivist" questions— "Who are you related to?", "Who do you know?" and "Where are you from?"— that establish connections to a times, places and relationships[16]. In   lower IDV contexts people may have the propensity to make consultations into group activities where the importance of relationships is considered important and the lack of confidentiality ignored. This may cause confusion for higher IDV counsellors from the Anglo-Australian community trained to value the autonomy of clients.

In 1966, Julian Rotter published a scale in *Generalized Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement* which explained his "Locus of Control I-E Scale[17]. Rotter was astounded by how much attention this scale generated, claiming it was like lighting a cigarette and seeing a forest fire[18]. The concept of "locus of control" measures the difference between internally controlled individuals (I) who assume that responsibility for their own behaviors and for what happens to them, compared to externally controlled individuals (E) believe that control of their lives are in the hands of other people and/or outside events. However, the concept of "Locus of control" contains a western cultural bias that assumes that contains the notion that internal control is always more desirable than external control[19]. This "cultural bias" may unwittingly influence the way counselors conceptualize clients' problems and conduct the counselling process – away from E and towards I.

Table 2: Individualist and Collectivist (IDV) Attributes[20]

Collectivist attributes – Low IDV	Individualistic attributes – High IDV
People are born into extended families or other in-groups that continue to protect them in exchange for loyalty	Everyone grows up to look after him/herself and his/her immediate (nuclear) family only
Identity is based in the social network to which one belongs; Children learn to think in terms of 'we'	Identity is based in the individual; Children learn to think in terms of 'I'
Value standards differ for in-groups and out-groups: exclusionism	The same value standards are supposed to apply to everyone: universalism
Harmony should always be maintained and direct confrontations avoided	Speaking one's mind is a characteristic of an honest person
Friendships are predetermined	Friendships are voluntary and should be fostered
Resources should be shared with relatives	Individual ownership of resources – even for children
Private life is invaded by group/s group membership; frequent socialization in public places	Everyone has a right to privacy; "My home is my castle."
A "deductive" learning style by rote and memorization. A personalized educational system where teachers have a personal mentor relationship with the pupil.	An "inductive" learning style emphasizing inquiry and creativity. An impersonal educational system where teachers teach pupils to be independent.
High-context communication prevails – the context and relationship have meaning	Low-context communication prevails – the emphasis is on the words, exact descriptions and precise contracts
Trespasses lead to shame and loss of face for self and group	Trespasses lead to guilt and loss of self respect.
Brides should be young, industrious and chaste; bridegrooms older. Marriages are "arranged".	Criteria for marriage partners are not predetermined. Marriages are largely left to individual choice.
Harmony and consensus in society is an ultimate goal	Self-actualisation by every individual are ultimate goals

THE EFFECT OF IDV ON CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELLING – PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS & QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Western counselling is usually conducted in higher IDV context. What effects does this have on counselling in collectivist (lower IDV) context?

- Individualism places a high priority on privacy and privacy protection. Counselling systems that have placed emphasis on privacy may not always be appropriate in collectivist (lower IDV) contexts. Discuss the appropriateness of "privacy" in all cultural contexts.

- Individualist western counselling services (Higher IDV) regard the interview as a place where the patient honestly describes the symptoms while this may not be assumed in collectivist (Lower IDV) societies. Discuss the ways this changes the way medical services are delivered

CULTURAL MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY SPECTRUM (MAS)

Cultural difference in the assignment of gender roles ranges from traditional male/female roles of employment options, power base and manners[21] to the modern "equality of the sexes". Since the 1960s western women have been entering traditionally masculine occupations and with this "equality", there is an expectation that women and men take a share household responsibilities. The *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*[22] and updating the *Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986*[23] ensures legal gender equality and prohibits sex discrimination. Traditionally masculine, hierarchical and competitive roles have shifted and this may not be understood in other cultural groups where clear hierarchical structures continue to define gender roles and obligations. Even though colonization and modernization may have destroyed many aspects of the traditional patriarchal power base within other cultures the strong role definitions often remain. Some men may still be informed by their cultural norms not to accept females in leadership or negotiation roles while modern western female managers may feel offended by these "sexist" attitudes. Some therapists may be appalled at the weak submission of some women to what they perceive as spousal abuse and lose sight of the validity of prescribed cultural gender roles. On the other hand, this raises questions about the role of therapy in bringing about cultural change.

The MAS also affects practice in cross-cultural cross-gender counselling. For many cultural groups, the issue of relationships between genders is taken very seriously. In cultural groups where virginity is seen as extremely important, active steps will be taken to exclude improper conduct and provide protection – especially for their young females. So, cross-gender counselling is seen as "improper". This may cause distress to counsellors who cannot see any "danger" and insist on mixing with persons of the opposite

gender only to be confronted by hostility and suspicion. The same can apply to matters of modesty. While westerners place the onus of morality on to the ability of males to control themselves, other societies impose strict rules for women to ensure their protection. For example, some Islamic codes requires that women completely cover themselves because to them it is logical that women assist in their own protection by being covered. Modesty, even before members of the same sex, is required[24]. Counsellors need to be observant of strict cultural protocols of modesty within the professional context as well as in their choice of dress.

Controversially[25], Hofstede also used the terms "masculinity/femininity" to describe cultural orientation so that "masculine" cultures are those that are competitive and assertive and "feminine" are caring. However, his "Masculinity Index" (MAS) has been the subject of wide-scale research verification[26] and used to inform marketing and management.

For counsellors, the comparison of Hofstede's MAS characteristics can still be helpful:

Table 3 Masculinity Index (MAS)[27]

Competitive (masculine) attributes	Caring (feminine) attributes
Challenge, earnings, recognition and advancement are important (especially for men)	Relationships and quality of life are important
Men should be assertive, ambitious and tough	Everybody is supposed to be modest
Women are supposed to be tender and to take care of relationships	Both men and women are allowed to be tender and to be concerned with relationships
In the family, fathers deal with fact, and mothers deal with feelings	In the family, both fathers and mothers deal with fact and feelings
Girls' beauty ideals are most influenced by the media and by celebrities	Girls' beauty ideals are most influenced by the father and mother
Brides need to be chaste and industrious; grooms don't. Husbands should be healthy, wealthy and understanding; boyfriends should be fun	The same standard applies for bridegrooms and brides; husbands should be like boyfriends
The standard pattern is that the father earns and the mother cares	Parents share earning and caring roles
Managers are expected to be decisive and assertive; Conflicts are resolved by fighting them out	Managers use intuition and strive for consensus; Conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation
There is a stress on equity, competition among colleagues and performance	There is a stress on equality, solidarity and quality of work life
Dominant religions within the culture stress the male prerogative	Dominant religions within the culture stress the complementarity and equality of the sexes
Women's liberation means that women will be admitted to positions hitherto occupied only by men	Women's liberation means that men and women should take an equal share both at home and at work

THE EFFECT OF MAS ON CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELLING – PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS & QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

• In western cultures, there is often concern about the "liberation" of females from repressive male regimes. What part should counselling play in changing these culturally defined gender values?

• How do the views on modesty affect the delivery of counselling services – particularly in cross-gender counselling situations?

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE INDEX (UAI)

The Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) spectrum refers to the ways members of different cultures react to uncertain or unknown situations. Norton[28] suggested that ambiguous situations contain 1) multiple meanings, 2) vagueness, incompleteness, or fragmentation, 3) probability, 4) lack of structure, 5) lack of information, 6) uncertainty, 7) inconsistencies and contradictions, or 8) lack of clarity. Budner[29] observed a scale he called "Tolerance of Ambiguity" (ToA) as an individual[30] response to ambiguous situations. It was surmised and saw that both high and low levels of ToA can be beneficial to industry - while higher ToA can result in flexibility and creativity are valuable in the unpredictable

process of globalization[31] but on the other hand, Anitsal et al[32] found that people with higher ToA were more likely to cheat.

In contrast to this rather individual scaling, Hofstede[33] observed Uncertainty Avoidance as a cultural trend and proposed that uncertainties of life are avoided through a combination of technology, law, religion and relationships[34]. Faced with uncertainty or disaster, people may respond by placing faith in either the technology/law axis (legislation and technological change so that "this will never happen again") in contrast to those who will use religion/relationships (prayer for divine intervention or the help from someone such as an uncle). Anglo-Australians, encouraged to question tradition, ethics and religion in their training, have a relatively low UAI in the religion/relationship axis but exhibit a much higher UAI in technology/law by which they hope to overcome the threats of natural disaster. In contrast, other cultural groups may be far more tolerant of the sickness and climatic extremes (lower UAI) but exhibit a far higher UAI in matters regarding their beliefs, values and ethics by seeking spiritual stability in the continuity of laws, rituals and stories. In some contexts, an Anglo-Australian counsellor may not understand an apparent lack of concern for personal well-being and their heart-felt concern for the welfare of others[35]. At the same time, the lack of religious conviction may decrease their ability to have spiritual affinity with the local people[36] or understand the importance of community obligations.

Table 4 Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)[37]

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance	Strong Uncertainty Avoidance
The uncertainty inherent in life is accepted and each day is taken as it comes	The uncertainty inherent in life is felt as a continuous threat that must be fought
Ease, lower stress, self-control, low anxiety	Higher stress, emotionality, anxiety, neuroticism
Higher scores on subjective health and well-being	Lower scores on subjective health and well-being
Tolerance of deviant persons and ideas: what is different is curious	Intolerance of deviant persons and ideas: what is different is dangerous
Comfortable with ambiguity and chaos	Need for clarity and structure
Counsellors may say 'I don't know'	Counsellors are supposed to have all the answers
Changing jobs no problem	Staying in jobs even if disliked
Dislike of rules - written or unwritten	Emotional need for rules – even if not obeyed
In politics, citizens feel and are seen as competent towards authorities	In politics, citizens feel and are seen as incompetent towards authorities
In religion, philosophy and science: relativism and empiricism	In religion, philosophy and science: belief in ultimate truths and grand theories

THE EFFECT OF UAI ON CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELLING – PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS & QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- The counselling profession has traditionally emphasized clarity of word and structure (Higher UAI). How should counsellors adapt to situations that appear to them to be ambiguous and chaotic (Lower UAI)?

- How does the counselling clients from higher UAI in health matters fit with low UAI in subjective health and well-being?

TIME ORIENTATION SPECTRUM (TOS)

Anglo-Australian language demonstrates an "economic" view of time — time, like money, can be *lost, spent, gained* and *used* for future purposes. Alternative conceptions of time include the Japanese Zen view that time is like a pool of water with no past, present or future or the Sioux lack of words for time, late or waiting. These views can be labeled "social time" where the emphasis is on the people who are relating at the time. "Social time" emphasizes the maintenance of social obligations and connections. While a western counsellor may be anxious about the loss of "professional time" because of factors such as late arrival, socialization during work time and absence, their clients may appear unconcerned. "Economic" time-oriented westerners can also be confused by the apparent lack of planning. For example, in some languages there

is no word for "plan" - a problem overcome in one northwest Aboriginal community by using the phrase "stories for tomorrow" – but where social connection and time was combined. Unless counsellors used to "economic time" recognize different time orientations, they are liable to experience a high degree of frustration. Indeed, there is confusion about "lateness":

How late is "late"? This varies greatly. In Britain and North America one may be 5 minutes late for a business appointment, not 15 and certainly not 30 minutes late, which is perfectly normal in the Middle East. On the other hand, in Britain it is correct to be 5-15 minutes late for an invitation to dinner. An Italian might arrive 2 hours late, an Ethiopian later, and a Javanese not at all - he had accepted only to prevent his host from losing face.[38]

For many cultures where "lateness" (according to higher economic timers) is the norm, the closing of an encounter is also "flexible". For example, in some societies it is considered rude to look at your watch and say "It's time to go" (inferring that "time" is more important than relationships). This can be illustrated:

Adapting to different time orientations can be tricky – in one consultancy that I conducted I had a number of appointments made with Directors of Departments spliced between appointments with community members from a different TOS. The problem was that the community member would arrive 30 minutes late and expect to go into the next hour while the Directors of Departments were annoyed with even 60 seconds of lateness. I solved the problem by rearranging the appointment schedule so that the "social timers" appointments were all placed together on the same day while the "economic timers" were on a separate day.[39]

The ability of counsellors to adapt to differing TOS is going to require adaptability and tolerance.

Table 5 Time Orientation Spectrum (TOS)[40]

Short term economic 'time'	Long term social 'time'
Do one thing at a time	Do many things at once
Concentrate on the job	Highly distractible and subject to interruptions
Adhere religiously to plans	Change plans often and easily
Concerned about not disturbing others; follow rules of privacy and consideration	Committed to people and human relationships

THE EFFECT OF TOS ON CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELLING – PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS & QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

• Counsellors are often bound by "economic time" considerations. How can this be adapted for "social time" contexts?

• How does one cope with code switching between the two views of time – economic (on-time) versus social (late)?

ENVIRONMENTAL WORLDVIEW SPECTRUM (EWS)

Post-modern awareness of environmental issues is not new - there have always been cultures that emphasize an appreciation and preservation of the wonder and beauty of the earth and skies. For example, traditional Australian Aboriginal "Integrating/Spiritual" worldview emphasized the religious connection between the "Dreaming" (formation of features of the land, spirit beings) and humans. In contrast, the western "Utilitarian/Scientific" worldview separated humans from their environment[41] heavily influenced by Comte's[42] epistemology of "positivism". In this view "all knowledge is scientific knowledge" and "facts and values can be kept separate so that objectivity is possible". Utilitarian/Scientific Worldview "value-free" proclamations project the illusion of political and moral neutrality" in matters of environmental management[43]. While these extreme views of the environment may be caricatures, a contrast between the Utilitarian/Scientific and Integrating/Spiritual Worldviews can be instructive for counsellors. Counsellor training can emphasize "evidence based science" and yet graduate counsellors have been required to work in opposite contexts where religious, spiritual and mystical beliefs are important. An Aboriginal academic, Dr.Keith Truscott[44] described the disjunction from these opposing worldviews:

Any attempted engagement in this contest (between the utilitarian/scientific and integrating/spiritual worldviews) is going to be fraught with difficulties of negotiating similarities and differences that easily lead to misunderstanding, frustration, stalemate and animosity. Not only must the physical space have to be negotiated, crossed and "tamed", but the social space and mental space at the same time.

There is some overlap between this and the religious element of UAI. For counsellors, this is going to be manifest in the way in which problems are dealt with. In other words, is the problem "natural" or "spiritual"?

Table 6: Environmental Worldview Spectrum (EWS)[45]

Utilitarian Scientific	Integrating Spiritual
View the environment as: • Physical, mechanical • Scientific observed • Rationally understood • Controllable • Apart from Nature • Right to modify nature • Property is for self/few • Utilize natural environment	View the environment as: • Spiritual, organic • Spiritually known • Mystically understood • Fatalistic • Part of Nature • Accept natural order • Property is for everyone • Conserve the environment

THE EFFECT OF EWS ON CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELLING – PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS & QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

• What are the challenges that would arise from counselling in an integrating spiritual cultural context?

• How can "western counselling systems" adapt to the demands of integrating spiritual cultures?

CONCLUSION

Hofstede four cultural "dimensions" – the Power-Distance Index (PDI); the Individualism Index (IDV); the Masculinity Index (MAS); the Uncertainty-Avoidance Index (UAI); as well as Time Orientation Spectrum (TOS) and the Environmental Worldview Spectrum (EWS) should provide a counsellor with greater awareness of the cultural differences. Obviously not all dimensions will be evident in every counselling session but understanding them all should give counsellors tools of understanding that lead to aware, conscious and intentional practice.

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2   There are a number of discussion points" that can be used in training situations after each of the paradigms has been explained.

3   D.Spence (2004) Prejudice, paradox and possibility: The experience of nursing people from cultures other than one's own. In K.H.Kavanaugh and V.Knwolden (Eds) Many Voices Toward Caring Culture in Healthcare and Healing, University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin.

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6   E.T.Hall (1990) Understanding Cultural Differences, Intercultural Press, New York.

7   G Hofstede, G.J.Hofstede & M.Minkov (2010) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival (3rd Ed.), McGraw-Hill, New York, chapter 2.

8   Government workers (M.H.Hoppe (1990) A Comparative Study of Country Elites: International Differences in Work-related Values and Learning and their Implications for Management Training and Development". PhD. Dissertation, University of North Carolina), Employees from six corporations (not IBM) in 32 countries (S.A.Shane (1995) Uncertainty avoidance and the Preference for innovation championing roles. Journal of International Business Studies 26, pp.47-68.), Pilots from 19 countries (A Merritt (1998) "Culture in the Cockpit: Do Hofstede's dimensions replicate? Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology 31 (3), pp.283-301.), Consumers from 15 European countries (M.de Mooij (2004) Consumer Behaviour and Culture: Consequences for Global Marketing and Advertising, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California.); Civil servants from 14 countries (P.E.Mouritzen & J.H.Svara (2002) Leadership at the Apex: Politicians and Administrators in Western Local Governments. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh); and International bank employees in 19 countries (T.van Nimwegan (2002) Global Banking, Global Values: The In-House Reception of Corporate Values of ABN AMRO, PhD dissertation, Nyenrode University, Delft, Eburon)

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10   To which two have been added.

11   When the cultural traits are put together they make logical sense.

12   G Hofstede, G.J.Hofstede & M.Minkov (2010) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival (3rd Ed.), McGraw-Hill, New York, chapter 3.

13   For example, J.Bentley,28 March 2014, Letter to the Editor, Sydney Morning Herald.

14   Adapted from G Hofstede, G.J.Hofstede & M.Minkov (2010) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival (3rd Ed.), McGraw-Hill, New York.

15   G Hofstede, G.J.Hofstede & M.Minkov (2010) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival (3rd Ed.), McGraw-Hill, New York, chapter 4. Also see H.Triandis, R.Villareal, M.Asai & N.Lucca (1988) Individualism and Collectgivism:Cross-cultural perspectives on self-group relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54: 323-338. who began work in the 1960s on the individualism-collectivism construct and found empirical support for it wihtin countries as well as between countries.

16   Especially in Aboriginal communities.

17   Duttweiler, P.C. (1984) The Internal Control Index: A Newly Developed Measure of Locus of Control. Educational and Psychological Measurement. 44(2): 209-221. Criticism of the "forced choice" inherent in Rotter's initial scale have been overcome in Duttweiler's Internal Control Index (ICI).

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35   Such as the hospitality practices of having others to stay with them.

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TO INTEGRATE OR DISINTEGRATE:

Faith and Practice in the Counselling Room

By Helen Miller

ABSTRACT

The debate around integration of faith and practice in counselling has been active for the last decades as Christian practitioners trained in psychological theory attempt to find ways of integrating that knowledge with that of theology. This paper, while accepting the legitimacy of that quest, discusses a more core response to this dilemma. If we are created in the image of God (imago Dei) our relationship with God and others must remain at the core of our thinking as we add further knowledge to our understanding of how people work and respond. It is the person of the counsellor who needs to be integrated. God then, remains at the centre of all that is done in the counselling room, regardless of what lenses are used to conceptualise the issues arising. And when the results of sin and suffering in the world are diminished through counselling work, God is glorified.

THE THEOLOGY /PSYCHOLOGY DEBATE

There have been many hundreds of works written about the integration of faith and practice by and for counsellors/ psychotherapists/psychologists in the last 30 years. There have been new models written, new theories formed and new thinking shared in an attempt to pursue the question of how to integrate our faith and counselling practice. One notable author even goes as far as to suggest that the term/concept/ practice of integration has become "a virtual shibboleth among evangelicals in institutions of higher learning and the Christian counselling community" (Johnson, 2011, p.339) thus suggesting that it is used to indicate who is in the in-group of acceptable thought on this topic. This article will briefly summarise a few of those approaches to integration before suggesting an alternate way of viewing this issue.

As early as 1986, Kirwin suggested there were four basic counselling positions. These were the un-Christian, spiritualised, parallel and integrated view. Balswick, King and Reimer state that "both these traditions of thought…are not parallel lines of inquiry and do not address questions of human nature on the same level" (2005, p. 29). For those who want a more detailed background to the debate originating from the USA, there are excellent articles written by many leading Christian counsellors and psychologists including Johnson (2011), Beck (2006) and McMinn (1996). In Australia a recent publication by Barker and Powell (2014) also has a chapter on this issue. The majority of these writers come from a psychological background and attempt to address the dilemma of finding a way across from a scientific-secular paradigm to a Christian faith – theological paradigm. Others start from their Christian faith and attempt to integrate that with received psychology (Johnson, 2012).

At this point I wish to indicate that I echo Evans' statement that "much harm is done if we think of integration primarily as an attempt to integrate the two disciplines of psychology and theology" (2012, p. 32). The dilemma of integration is far more complicated than just looking at combining two disciplines, or attempting to understand two paradigms that are incompatible and parallel.

This divide has been addressed in recent years in a variety of ways. One way which has led to widespread acceptance is the addition of the concept of spirituality in the counselling room - 'Incorporation of a spiritual dimension into mainstream counselling reversed the split between religion and psychology that had marked the emergence of psychology as a 'scientific' discipline anxious to divorce itself from philosophy (and this included religion) to establish its credibility as a science' (MacKay, 2009). While the practice of allowing a spiritual aspect to enter the counselling room does to some extent address the integrative dilemma, there remains an issue around ethical rules and limitations.

Another construct set out a direction to integrate postmodern thought with Christian contemplation. Postmodern thinking denies the existence of any ultimate principles and any scientific, philosophical or religious truth offers explanations for creation and existence. Blanton (2008) suggests that Christian contemplation, albeit mismatched and non-compatible with postmodern thinking at times, is able to be integrated into a model of counselling that crosses the divide, because its starting point is with relationships.

Yet another integrative construct comes from Moon who suggests that there is a way ahead by integrating spiritual direction and psychology where a psychologist/counsellor adds additional training in spiritual direction which they can use within the professional counselling process. – "If one views invisible things like soul and spirit to be legitimate parts of the person, then the key issue becomes additional and adequate training, not "ownership" of those domains created by modernism and reductionism" (Moon, 2012, p.70). This is also the thesis of McMinn's text Psychology, theology and spirituality (1996).

Despite the integrative call, many of these authors begin with the person of the counsellor. Tan suggests that it is essential for the Christian integrator to be "Christ-centered, biblically based, and Spirit-filled in order to do integration that glorifies God and blesses people. Our own personal daily walk with God, and spiritual formation into deeper Christlikeness (Rom. 8:29) with the resurrected life of Christ growing in us by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, in the context of Christian community

and the church, are crucial priorities. We are dedicated to Christ first in radical discipleship, and therefore to integration and beyond" (Tan, 2012, p. 148).

What is obvious from these authors is that the development of psychology as a medico-scientific modality during the twentieth century moved this helping profession away from its original roots in soul care and that Christian counsellors are attempting to reclaim what has been lost. The common theme in the literature mentioned above is that we cannot divide a person and only work with that part of them that modern psychology dictates. This is echoed by Benner who suggests that soul care can be considered as 'psychospiritual' as it refers to the fact that "the inner world has no separate spiritual and psychological compartments" (1998, p.110). Benner suggests that no problem of the inner person is either spiritual or psychological but that all problems are psychospiritual and that any segregation of psychology and spirituality is artificial and destructive.

McMinn and Campbell likewise suggest that we don't have a soul – we are a soul and that soul care involves caring for a whole person who has both spiritual significance and physical substance. "A soul integrates the various dimensions of a person – thoughts, feelings, choices, body and relationships – into a life that has significance and meaning in a spiritual sense". (Willard 2002 in McMinn and Campbell, 2007, p. 349).These authors go further to suggest that "caring for souls is caring for people in ways that not only acknowledge them as persons but also engage and address them in the deepest and most profoundly human aspects of their lives' and that the essence of soul care is that transformation involves a healing relationship" (Benner 1998 in McMinn and Campbell, 2007, p. 350).

This, then, is a critical starting place in the discussions around integrating our faith with our clinical practice. I believe in Australia the integrative dilemma, as described in the U.S.A., is indeed relevant to those counsellors who have come through the secular university system in psychology as their initial training where they have, on the whole, been trained to think scientifically about their profession and there is no place for individual values and beliefs to be imposed on clients. One research project (Miller, 2002) suggested that counsellors tend to defer to their initial training and to think of themselves professionally from that viewpoint. This raises the issue of how this affects those attempting to integrate.

AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO BEING ME

As one of the old timers who came through counselling training before there were university degrees in counselling as a separate professional entity, it was an easier task to attempt the integration of theology and psychology because my training as a counsellor within a Christian setting provided a solid grounding from which to view the world of psychology. Many of us were trained in skills, self-awareness and process within the Christian agency system and when we arrived at university in later years, we added that knowledge to our original experiential

learning to broaden our thinking but not take away from the core of relationship being the centre of healing. This created a much lesser dilemma as to how to be fully Christian while be fully professional but without a strong scientific knife inserted into the process. My image of self as counsellor, Christian and person began and ended in a solidified position – there is no separation of each of these elements. Who I am as a counsellor is who I am as a Christian, is who I am as a person. Jeffrey Kottler suggests that "there are few careers in which the boundaries between work and play, between professional and personal are so permeable. All the powers of observation, perception, sensitivity, and diagnosis are equally useful with clients, family or friends…all our personal experiences, travels, learning, conversations, readings and intimate dealings with life's joys and sorrows provide the foundation for everything we do in the therapy room" (2010, p.43).

Therefore, the question for me after years of teaching counselling students in varied institutions and settings in Australia is not how we integrate but how we prevent disintegration. We are created in God's image (Imago Dei), to be in reciprocating relationships with both God and fellow humans (Balswick, King and Reimer, 2005). Relationship is at the very core of what we do in counselling. The nature of God as Trinity enables us to view the depths of intimate relationships which are characterised by reciprocity, authenticity, mutuality and being known in fullness (Miller, 2009; Balswick et al 2005). If we are to be in truly intimate, authentic, mutual relationships in the counselling room, then we need to start from a position where we are an integrated, authentic, genuine, real and whole person. This flies in the face of having two streams of thought and action which we are attempting to integrate.

If we begin from the integrated self who is grounded and rooted in God then our way ahead is to view the world (and the clients in our counselling rooms) through a series of different lenses. These can be considered from a wider viewpoint e.g. a psychological or theological lens, or a narrower one e.g. a psychoanalytical lens or a Biblical eschatological lens. We need to approach each counselling session and each counselling client as an integrated, whole, authentic person who has a range of knowledge in psychology and theology and a personal relationship with the Living God. When this happens, we bring the whole of ourselves to the task of being with the client and not a disintegrated part.

So how do we begin to conceptualise our work as Christian counsellors? Ultimately all we are and all we do becomes our unique offering to glorify God. If we believe the Holy Spirit is dwelling within us, then we cannot put Him aside for the time we are being a therapist or counsellor. The Holy Spirit offers much to both the counsellor and her client. 'He offers the opportunity of a deeper, more intimate relationship with God, as well as an understanding and recognition that He plays an active part in the counselling process in the counselling room'(Wilde, 2013).

If we are integrated as a person then what we think, and what we believe and what we feel and what we do are all congruent and we will not be torn by polarities of thought or belief or direction. Of course that is not humanly possible 100% of the time, but if that is our aim, it leads to a place where much of the time we are able to be wholly ourselves in the counselling room in the way that God created us to be.

If we begin with relationship rather than psychological theory what difference does that make? We do not throw out the knowledge we have be it from the field of psychology or theology. Far from it – it is useful, wonderful, and allows us to see the problem through a variety of lenses to make good interventions. But this paper is calling for Christian counsellors/therapists to put their own relationship with God at the front. Does that mean that all we should be doing is evangelising? Far from it. We should be integrating ourselves – who we are as a person, as a Christian and as a professional therapist and bringing that person into the role of counsellor. How can any of these things be separated out from the intrinsic person who was created in God's image and craves to be in reciprocating relationship with others? How can we not see our mission then "to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever" (Westminster Shorter Confession)? Our work in the counselling room is a celebration of God's glory and everything that we do to eliminate or retard the results of sin and suffering in the world, glorifies God.

While the discussions around integration and what this looks like will rebound around the world for years to come, ultimately each of us in our counselling rooms are already working away at the task, day by day, hour by hour, session by session. Integration is the product of learning more and more what God is like and how we can be in His image. Integration is about awareness of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. Integration is about bringing the whole of who we are to the counselling room in the process of reducing the impact of sin and suffering in the world. Integration is about knowing who we are and how we limit God working through ourselves by our own inadequacies. Integration is being authentically, genuinely and congruently ourselves and then offering that person to be beside those seeking counselling assistance. Integration is observed when our responses to someone becoming more 'whole' are to experience joy like that of the angels in heaven when a lamb which was lost is found again. Integration is about relationship, about being with another person made in God's image, about walking in sacred places and ultimately about using all that we are and all that we have to honour and glorify Him.

Helen Miller is a lecturer at Morling Baptist Theological College in Sydney as well as an individual, couple and relationship counsellor of more than twenty years' experience. Prior to her position on faculty at Morling, Helen was involved in writing, teaching and coordinating Christian and Pastoral Counselling courses from Certificate IV to Masters level through Charles Sturt University and St Marks Canberra. The setting for her clinical work has been both in private practice and working for Anglicare in Sydney. Helen is passionate about ensuring that both she, and those she trains and teaches, are able to integrate their faith with their counselling practice.

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INTERFAITH COUNSELLING: FACILITATING SOUL JOURNEYS

By John Anderson

Interfaith counselling is a therapeutic process where we engage in spiritual dialogue and reflection with clients who have a different religious faith or spirituality to our own. Moreover, this dialogue is an engagement with the client's belief system and spirituality. Interfaith counselling does not yield to the temptation to invite a client with a different faith or spirituality to try the Christian path, or offer Christ as the solution to the client's crisis or problems. It is NOT an opportunity for proselytizing. Rather, it provides a place for dialogue and encouragement that involves engaging with the spiritual dimension of a client's experience.

Interfaith counselling recognizes that spirituality is integral to being human. To be human is to have spirituality. Spirituality is our engagement with and experience of transcendence, and from it we derive a sense of meaning, value and purpose. As Anderson stated,

"spirituality is about authentic living as well as meaning-making; it is a highly personal reality."[1] Spirituality is distinct from religion. It is personal and can be experienced both within and apart from the formalized beliefs of a religion. Religion is an organized institutionalized belief system that includes values, theology, and religious rituals and practices that are adopted by a faith community.

Spirituality and religious beliefs have an important place in our client's lives. So it is an important consideration in counselling with all clients, regardless of their religious persuasion. A holistic approach to counselling therefore includes spirituality. Hence adopting an interfaith approach in counselling is superior to ignoring the spirituality of non-Christians altogether.

We live and practice in an increasingly pluralistic multi-faith society where the old categories of Christian (in) and non-Christian (out) no longer serve. We are accustomed to the viewpoint that Christian counselling is primarily for Christians; that it is the Christian clients who primarily benefit from the convergence of our Christian values and spirituality. All others are "excluded". Yet in maintaining this essentially sectarian viewpoint, we deprive ourselves of the advantage that Christian counsellors have in attending to the spiritual journeys of a diverse range of clients who express a vibrant spirituality through different faiths.

The client's spirituality is a significant resource in counselling. Transcendent spiritual beliefs are key ingredients in healthy family functioning, and having shared values and beliefs contribute to family cohesion and structure, and contribute to family resilience. Walsh recognized that spirituality provides rituals to manage significant life transitions and provides meaning, purpose, hope and courage in the face of adversity – all important ingredients of resilience.[2] Spirituality is an important resource for constructing meaning out of affliction and suffering. As Lorraine Wright expressed it, "My own clinical experience with families has taught me that the experience of suffering from illness becomes transposed to one of spirituality as family members try to make meaning out of their suffering and distress."[3] Spirituality guides a person's response to suffering and adversity. Consequently, therapeutic engagement is enhanced by helping clients and families marshal their spirituality to find a resilient response, hope and meaning in the face of adversity.

This means that counselling approaches that deliberately exclude spirituality become truncated to the degree to which spirituality is a significant part of a client's life and experience. Christians are drawn to Christian counsellors precisely because they expect that their spirituality will not be excluded from the counselling room. Clients with other faiths and with their own spirituality have the same need for a counsellor to extend soul hospitality and welcome their spirituality into the counselling room. Failure to extend the openness to spirituality we offer Christian clients to those of other religious persuasions results in a truncation in our counselling. Hence, it is beneficial to engage in interfaith counselling that welcomes and engages with clients in their spirituality.

This raises the question of how can Christian counsellors work with clients with other faiths and spiritual backgrounds in a holistic manner that is inclusive of a client's spirituality in the counselling room.

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR INTERFAITH COUNSELLING

I want to begin this discussion with laying out some theological foundations for interfaith counselling which are provided by the Christian doctrine of creation, examples from Christ's ministry, and the cross as atonement for sin.

1. Doctrine of Creation

The doctrine of creation affirms that all humanity has been created by God, who is the Father and Creator of us all. Moreover, humanity was created in the image of God, which means that humanness is meaningful only with reference to God, to whom we are related as an image refers back to its original. As Pannenberg pointed out, "To speak of the image of God in human beings is to speak of their closeness to the divine reality, a closeness that also determines their position in the world of nature."[4] Brunner went further in emphasizing that the context for human existence is in relationship to God, and that autonomous existence apart from God is in effect an "alien" environment for human existence. Human existence is a personal existence of encounter with God in I-Thou relation. This is integral to human existence, not just the exclusive privilege of the believer.[5]

Consequently, to speak of unbelievers having no relationship with God is strictly incorrect. It is not a matter of whether or not a person has a relationship with God, but the quality of that

1   Herbert Anderson, "Feet planted firmly in midair: A spirituality for family living, pp. 157-176 in Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy, edited by Froma Walsh. New York: Guilford Press, 1999, p. 157.

2   Froma Walsh, "Opening family therapy to spirituality", pp. 28-58 in Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy, edited by Froma Walsh. New York: Guilford Press, 1999.

3   Lorraine M. Wright, "Spirituality, suffering, and beliefs," pp. 61-75 in Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy, edited by Froma Walsh. New York: Guildofr Press, 1999, p.62.

4   Wolfhart Pannenberg, Anthropology in Theological Perspective, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Philadelphia, Penn.: Westminster, 1985), 20.

5   Emil Brunner, Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth Library (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), 55-56.

relationship. God is in relationship with every person who is living.

From God's side of the relationship there is no barrier. God involves himself in every person's life and engages with every person in his or her soul journey. It is not simply a matter of "in" or "out" but rather the less clearly defined question of how much room a person has made for God. People range from having no room for God, expressed in atheistic ideology or apathetic indifference, to having lots of room for God, expressed in open love for God and godliness. All people find themselves somewhere along this dimension.

This means that the spiritual dimension of a counsellor's therapeutic task (regardless of religious persuasion) is to encourage a person to make more room for God, and this encouragement is not limited to clients of Christian persuasion, but can be legitimately done with all clients regardless of their religious persuasion.

God's involvement with every person implies that there may be a divine purpose and opportunity in the therapeutic encounter that I have with every client. This is not restricted to Christian clients, but includes clients of all spiritual persuasions. So I need to be sensitive to discern what is God wanting to do in the life of this client, and whether there are opportunities for encouraging a client in the pursuit of his or her soul journey regardless of religious persuasion.

2. Inclusive nature of Christ's ministry

If we follow the example of Christ's ministry, then Christians need to be inclusive rather than exclusive. Miroslav Volf passionately argued that exclusion is contrary to the Gospel because the thrust of Jesus' ministry was inclusion of the marginalized, and embrace of the rejected.[6]

A few stories illustrate this characteristic of Jesus' ministry. Jesus' encounter with the Syrophoenician woman Mt. 15:21-28 is an example of care-giving ministry to people from different faith traditions. The status quo was that she was outside the grace of God that was reserved for Jews who were the in-group at that time. The equivalent contemporary in-group is those who accept Christ and share the Christian tradition. The Syrophoenician woman's request for mercy was out of place and socially unacceptable. Jesus' initial refusal was socially

appropriate. Her telling response, however, that even the dogs lick up the crumbs from under the master's table asserted the possibilities for the extension of God's grace and mercy across ethnic and religious boundaries. Jesus' favourable response to her was such an extension.

A similar encounter is presented in the story of the Roman centurion, who was a good man (Mt. 8:5-13). In healing his servant, Jesus extended God's grace across ethnic, religious and political boundaries. Then there was Jesus' "chance" encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. This encounter was also one of extending God's grace across ethnic and religious boundaries. In this instance, Jesus initiated the encounter by engaging the woman in dialogue. The fascinating feature of this story was that one of the earliest messianic declarations Jesus made was to a Samaritan, a complete outsider. And he spoke in her terms, her language, and displayed an intimate knowledge of her situation, which testifies to a divine mindfulness to her as a valued person.

Similarly, inclusive ministry involves encounters on the "borderlands" between the in-group of the church, and the out-groups of different ethnic backgrounds and religious faiths, and the marginalized, stigmatized and discriminated, disadvantaged people that we inevitably encounter in our counselling practice.

3. The Cross as Atonement

Third, we need to expand our view of the cross. John the Baptist stated that Christ was "the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the *world*." (John 1:29). Hebrews 9 made a strong symbolic connection with the death of Christ fulfilling the sacrifice made in Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. And so what this sacrifice for sin on the Cross accomplished was interpreted in the New Testament with reference to this festival.

Yom Kippur features the sacrifice of two goats. The purpose of Yom Kippur was to make atonement for all the unconfessed, unrecognized and unknown sins that have been committed within the nation of Israel over the last year. Its aim was to cleanse the temple sanctuary and the community from the polluting impact of sin. One goat was slain and the high priest entered the most sacred sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled the blood of that goat on the mercy seat. The purpose of this sacrifice is to purify the sanctuary and the temple. The other goat, the scapegoat, served a different purpose. The high priest would lay all the sins of the people of

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6   Miroslav Volf, Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation. Nashville TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Israel upon the head of the scapegoat. Then it was driven out into the wilderness bearing the sins of the people of Israel with it. Thus sin was removed from Israel.

Yom Kippur is not about paying the penalty of sin through sacrifice. Rather, it was concerned with the removal of pollution of sin so that nothing would hinder the communion of God with his people. Yom Kippur did not need to address confessed sin, nor deliberately committed sins, nor the transgressions provided for by the other sacrifices in the Levitical code. It dealt with the "etc.", the sins left over.

This is a very different perspective to the one presented by the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, that Christ suffered the divine punishment for sin in our place. This leads to a view that Christ died for me, and bore my sins and died in my place. It also leads to the implication that the Cross is only effective in reconciling the believer, in effect only Christians benefit from the Cross because we are forgiven. The rest of the world lies outside.

This was not Yom Kippur. A view that is closer to the original New Testament perspective of atonement was in the Cross God accomplished a dramatic extension of the scope of the atonement accomplished in Yom Kippur. God extended it from applying solely to Israel to atoning for the entire world. Furthermore, God extended its efficacy from merely one year to one act of atonement for all time and all humanity. From this perspective, what does the atonement on the Cross accomplish? It accomplishes the removal of the barrier created by sin from God's side of the relationship, so that God can engage with and have communion with the entire world, with every person in the world.

One implication of this is when John 14:6 affirms that Jesus is the Way and no one comes to the Father except through him, that from God's perspective Jesus through whom atonement is accomplished is *The Way* for reconciliation quite apart from the degree to which humans openly acknowledge it. Jesus remains the way both for those who openly acknowledge and receive him and for those who do not know him. The way is available to everyone except those who reject the Father and the One whom he has sent.

This does not automatically mean there is universal salvation, but rather that the choice remains with each person whether he or she will receive and accept God or choose to reject or simply shut God out. Individual salvation rests upon that choice.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERFAITH COUNSELLING

Interfaith counselling stands on the recognition that we all possess the same human spirituality and a common human experience. It recognizes that every person is on a soul journey – a faith journey that is an adventure into the unknown, into exploring the mystery of who God is. Counsellors may find themselves with opportunities to do soul companioning that sensitively affirms and encourages clients to pursue their soul journeys further. The goal of soul companioning is "to listen for the soul and the presence of God who is active in their lives."[7]

Henri Nouwen encourages us to take the initiative in reaching out in providing soul hospitality as opposed to allowing faith differences to create blockages in dialogue.[8] A Christian counsellor is able to provide this to clients with different faith because as Viti puts it, "the concern in placed on the spiritual needs of the person rather than on the religious differences."[9] The Christian counsellor has no need to defend his or her beliefs in the presence of the different beliefs of the client, just as the Christian counsellor has no obligation to "stand up for" his or her Christian moral standards in the face of the different moral standards of the client. Interfaith counselling is not about the counsellor's beliefs or moral standards, but about the soul journey of the client.

We do not compromise our spiritual integrity when we empathically step into the world of a client with a different faith. In doing so, we construct an interfaith bridge between us. This movement is an expression of the Christian ethic of care which extends to every person without distinction.

Interfaith soul companioning involves abandoning the polemic stance towards other religions, which has its origins more in the religious wars of 16th century Europe following the Reformation than in Scripture itself. This polemic stance leads us to regard religious diversity in terms of the theological distance between us, that other religions are wrong because they do not agree with ours. The dilemma with regarding different faith in terms of theological

7   Ibid., p. 27.

8   Henri Nouwen. Reaching Out. New York: Doubleday, 1975, p. 69.

9   Joseph F. Viti, "A journey of soul companioning: personal, vocational, and ministry reflections" pp. 11-28 in Interfaith Spiritual Care: Understandings and Practices. Edited by Daniel S. Schipani and Leah Dawn Bueckert. Kitchener Ontario: Pandora Press, 2009.

distance is that it generates counter-transference anxiety that gives rise to avoidance of important spiritual issues the client with a different faith to ours may need to explore. Furthermore, a perception of theological distance creates a relational distance between the counsellor and client, which undermines the therapeutic relationship itself.

Interfaith soul companioning involves adopting a stance of respect that presumes the validity of the client's spiritual viewpoint. It involves adopting a stance of therapeutic curiosity that asks questions, explores, sits with the client and encourages reflection on the spiritual aspects and questions in the client's world.

The basis of the dialogue is either the client's faith tradition, such that it takes place on the client's "ground", or mutually recognized "common ground" that both religions share. For example, there is ample common ground between Christians, Jews and Muslims in a shared Old Testament heritage and common faith in YHWH the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. There is common ground between Christians and other faiths in similar understandings regarding the nature of spirituality. There is common ground in shared values of love, respect and the worth of human beings. The common ground we share with people with other faiths provides a basis for dialogue that does not require that I compromise my Christian identity.

It is helpful to develop a familiarity with the key concepts and faith language of clients with different faiths. We can then engage with them using their language on the basis of an informed understanding of the key concepts and insights of their faith. This involves reading – reading scriptures of other faiths and introductory books, so that we can dialogue in an informed manner. Thus we can affirm and challenge a client to utilize the spiritual resources of his or her faith tradition.
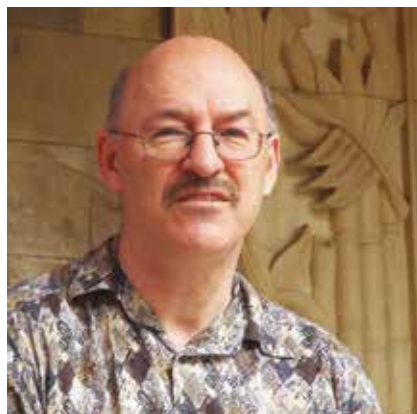
A case example of interfaith counselling from my own experience was in working with a Buddhist client. We discussed actions in terms of *karma*, that ethical conduct involves doing skilful deeds *kusala*, as opposed to doing unskilful deeds *akusala*, and challenging the client to reflect on the ethical nature of his actions. *Karma* points to the inevitable consequences of our actions with reference to the moral order of the universe. In addressing his anger that those who had hurt him were getting away with it, I pointed to the inevitability of karma and that violations of the moral order of the universe have inevitable impacts upon violators in terms of who they do not become quite apart from whether or not the fruit of their actions catch up with them.

In working with this client's depression, I focused on challenging him to cultivate detachment as a means of achieving self-differentiation, being non-harming as opposed to retaliating and holding bitterness against those who had hurt him, and cultivating mindfulness by buying statues of Buddha and developing a practice of daily meditation. Through these discussions I was drawing on the spiritual resources that were available to the client from his religious tradition to enable him to pursue his therapeutic journey. The outcome was despite the ongoing management of a chronic medical condition, the client became no longer depressed and became a more devout Buddhist in the way he anchored Buddhist teaching and practices into his everyday life.

This case example illustrates how interfaith counselling can extend the scope of a counsellor's interventions with a client. It enables the counsellor to draw upon the spiritual resources of clients of every religious persuasion in fostering therapeutic growth and change.

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THREE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL PASTORS INTERPRET FORGIVENESS

A brief look at Australia's Aboriginal history[1] reveals that there is a lot for Aboriginal people to forgive. The PM's Chief Aboriginal Advisor, Warren Mundine, told the Australia Day Breakfast in Canberra on 26 January 2014 that:

It seems to me that when we talk about reconciliation in the context of Indigenous affairs, we talk a lot about the sorry part but we don't talk much about the forgiveness part… for real reconciliation, it is not enough that the country says sorry, feels remorse, rejects racism and seeks to make amends … For real reconciliation, Indigenous people also need to forgive.[2]

The historic "apology" issued to Aboriginal people on 13 February 2008 by the then Prime Minister, Hon. Kevin Rudd, enables us to focus on forgiveness and reconciliation as restorative processes toward peace and hope as a nation. Three Aboriginal pastors (Pastor David Unaipon [1872-1967], Pastor Ron Williams [1940-2003] and Pastor Keith Truscott [b.1950]) experienced the full force of *prejudice* (based in emotions and attitudes), *racism* (based in beliefs and myths) and *discrimination* (actions based on prejudice and beliefs)[3]. The power of prejudice is still manifested in dark and sullen streams that flow down through generations so that many Australians are unaware of its unconscious force in forming their beliefs and actions. Stories that use untrue, partially true or misconstrued evidence to say "we are like this, they are like that" are passed down to inform their thinking and justify

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1   K.Truscott (2011) More than the three 'Rs' in the Classroom: A Case Study in Aboriginal Tertiary Business Education. Unpublished PhD thesis, Edith Cowan University, Perth: chapter 4 divides up Aboriginal history into four administrative eras - Presbuteros (up to 1788) pre-colonial self-sufficiency, Colonos (1788-1901) external colonial conquest and domination driven by the twin policies of "extending the blessings of civilization" and the "extension of the empire" resulting in Aboriginal pauperization; Ethnos (1901-1967) State-controlled, racial segregation policies based in Social Darwinian theory to "protect" Aboriginal people while they "died out" that allowed the "Chief Protectors" to remove Aboriginal people from their lands, and interfere in their personal lives – resulting in "stolen generations" and forcing Aboriginal people to the "fringes"; Demos - (1967-present) begun with the 1967 referendum that gave assent to the Commonwealth control of "local policies", but where economic opportunity and education is limited and where ill-health and incarceration are too common in spite of well-meaning policies.

2   W.Mundine (2014) Great Australia Day Breakfast Address. Full text appeared the following day in The Age, January 27, 2014.

3   J.Elliot (1998) Blue Eyed Training Manual, Marcom Projects Pty Ltd, Australia

their emotions[4]. For example, approving quotations of William Dampier's (1699) pejorative description of Aboriginal people appeared in Australian text-books right up to the 1960s[5] - that Aboriginal people had no houses, no agriculture, no clothing, no churches, and communicated in "grunts and snorts" so they "differ but little from brutes" – to infect the next generation. Discrimination based on prejudice and racist myths can be *overt* when translated into text, legislation and policy[6], or *covert* when it is hidden within small actions such as failure to greet or to delay service to Aboriginal people. This paper will use the Enright Paradigm (*Uncovering, Deciding, Working* and *Deepening*)[7] to analyze the psychological and spiritual responses of three Aboriginal pastors to their circumstances, with or without an apology, and demonstrate the power of forgiveness.

1. PASTOR DAVID UNAIPON (1872-1967)

Uncovering David's life reveals that he was born at the height of the colonial era driven by the extension of the empire. He was then subjected to the privations of the State-based "protection" policies directed against people of his ethnicity. He died just a week before the 1967 referendum on 14 February 1967 would have made him an "Australian citizen". David Unaipon, who has been called "Australia's Leonardo da Vinci"[8] was *never* an Australian citizen. Instead, he was a Ngarrindjeri man born in 1872 in a *wurly* along the banks of the Murray River at Tailem Bend.

He attended the Point McLeay Mission school and left at the age of 13 to work for five years as a servant. His master, C.B. Young in Adelaide, encouraged him to read literature, philosophy, science and music. He developed a lifelong interest in mathematics and physics which eventually flowered in his most famous invention - a shearing handpiece that replaced

the curvilinear motion of traditional shears into a straight-line, horizontal movement. David also suggested a basic design for a helicopter based on the motion of the traditional boomerang, the use of laser light as a weapon of warfare[9] and his other patented inventions included a centrifugal motor, a multi-radial wheel and a mechanical propulsion device. David was gifted in language and literature and became the first Aboriginal person to publish *Native Legends*.

However, when uncovering the indignities borne by David, we discover that nearly all these achievements were stolen from him. In spite of possessing a patent for his shears[10], he received no compensation[11], and the publication of *Legends* was claimed by William Ramsey Smith with no reference to David's authorship[12]. These indignities may have been belatedly restored by more recent recognition such as the Coronation Medal in 1953 and being honoured on Australia's $50 note.

The *uncovering phase* also reveals that David Unaipon lived in very racist times when prejudices were openly expressed and discrimination was part of government policy. His achievements were often explained away "because he was different from other Aboriginal people"[13]. Modern authors[14]

may criticize David Unaipon as a white man's puppet but closer analysis reveals a far more nuanced perspective because David made a *decision* to forgive. His father, James Unaipon (1834-

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4   P.Freire (1972) Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Middlesex, Penguin.

5   For example, A.E.Williams (1962) Social Studies Through Activities (Year 5), Perth, Education Department.

6   P.Milnes (2005) From Myths to Policy: Aboriginal Legislation in Western Australia, Belco, Perth, p.12.

7   P.M.Sutton (uploaded 2014) The Enright Process Model of Psychological Forgiveness. http://couragerc.org/wp-content/uploads/Enright_Process_Forgiveness_1.pdf

8   K.Swan, (2014) David Unaipon Inspires Theatre Production, 7.30 Report, TV Program Transcript, http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2004/s1131623.htm, broadcast: 14/06/2004

9   A.Kidman (2014) The Australian Da Vinci: How David Unaipon (Almost) Changed Our Nation, 18 March, 2014 http://www.gizmodo.com.au/2014/03/the-australian-da-vinci-how-david-unaipon-almost-changed-our-nation/, 18 March 2014.

10   Commonwealth provisional patent #15 624

11   Unaipon says with remarkable restraint, "not being properly protected I lost financially any material gain arising from this discovery, as this was passed to others who made use of my invention without giving me any compensation." Leaves of Memory, Aboriginal Friends Association. Annual Reports, 1953.

12   You can view a scan of Unaipon's full original manuscript on the NSW State Library site.

13   Often expressed in patronizing and racist terms such as 'An Ingenious Aboriginal' (1910) *Adelaide Advertiser* (1910) or 'Australia's cleverest Darkie' Richmond river Herald (1914).

14   B.Miller (2008) Confusing Epistemologies: Whiteness, Mimicry and Assimilation in David Unaipon's 'Confusion of Tongue'. Altitude, Vol. 6.

1908) was a community leader and lay preacher who took him into the solitude of the bush, read the Bible to him and prayed that David might grow up to be a good man and live at peace with all men[15]. David came to believe in an equivalence of traditional Aboriginal and Christian spirituality as well as the equality of all races. David explained the *uncovering* process that he went through in making the *decision* to forgive:

> *In various places of the Bible I found the blackfellow playing a part in life's programme. I found it was a blackfellow that befriended the prophet Jeremiah when he was unjustly cast into prison. It was a blackfellow who was there at the right moment to relieve Jesus by bearing the cross when the Saviour fell beneath its weight. It was in this Book I learned that God made all nations of one blood and that with Christ Jesus colour and racial distinctions disappeared. This helped me many times when I was refused accommodation because of my colour and race.[16]*

David Unaipon then entered the *working* phase of forgiveness by becoming a *deputationer,* collecting subscription money for the Aborigines Friends' Association that allowed him to "go walkabout in a white man's world"[17] to speak about the need for equality in the pulpits of various denominations, especially in South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria. Prejudice, racism and discrimination reared their heads within the churches. The mission tried to control his movements and employment[18], and many a time this urbane and mild-mannered man found himself subjected to racial discrimination – being spoken down to, refused accommodation and subjected to verbal abuse – by the very people who were supposedly his "friends".

The *working phase* was a difficult phase. David found himself embroiled in controversy. As a keen supporter of Aboriginal self-determination he lobbied the Australian Commonwealth government to take over the State responsibility in 1928[19] and he proposed a separate territory for Aboriginals in central and northern Australia. This led to harassment and an arrest on the grounds of vagrancy when he visited his home at the Point McLeay Mission in spite of the possession of three pounds in his pocket. At the same time he came into conflict with other Aboriginal leaders when he criticized the Australian Aborigines' League's "Day of Mourning" by arguing that "colour and race prejudice should be laid aside and equal

rights given to both black and white Australians. Sympathetic cooperation is the keystone to success."[20] No doubt in grappling with working out his process of forgiveness, David found himself in contradictory positions[21] – a point not lost on modern scholars.

His process of forgiveness included a lot of *uncovering, decision* and *work* before he was able to *deepen* his understanding of forgiveness. Perhaps the most vivid description of the conflicted feelings about rampant racism and his struggle to forgive can be found as a narrative reminiscent of Psalm 24 that he inserted into one of his *Native Legends* - "Hungarrda":

> *Thine anger and thy power thou revealest to us ... Thus in wonder am I lost. No mortal mind can conceive. No mortal tongue express in language intelligible. Heaven born Spark, I cannot see nor feel thee… My soul is filled with gratitude and love for thee … and conscious too, of thine all pervading Spirit presence. It seems so strange that thou wilt not hear or reveal thyself nor bestow a blessing unless I pray.[22]*

In the face of the "all-pervading Spirit presence", David was able to discover the blessing of love through his prayers and come to the place where he was able to minister to the very ones who were so unfair to him.

2. PASTOR RON WILLIAMS (1940-2003)

In *uncovering* Ron's childhood, we find profound effects of the State government's policy of segregation and abuse. In 1940, a beautiful 16 year old Aboriginal girl in Albany WA became pregnant and gave birth to Ron as a fatherless child. Her parents, Joe and Gracie Williams, became Ron's parents. However, their family life was disrupted by the *Aborigines Act (WA)[23]* that gave the Chief Protector of Natives, the right

15   S.Hosking (1995) David Unaipon: His Story. In P.Butterrs ed. Essays on South Australian Writing, Kent Town, Wakefield Press: Chapter 6

16   D.Unaipon (1953) Leaves of Memory, Aboriginal Friends Association. Annual Report 1953.

17   D.Unaipon (1953) Leaves of Memory, Aboriginal Friends Association. Annual Report, 1953.

18   S.Hosking (1995) David Unaipon: His Story. In P.Butterrs ed. Essays on South Australian Writing, Kent Town, Wakefield Press: Chapter 6

19   South Australian Government (1929) Bleakley Enquiry

20   B.Attwood & A.Markus (2004) Thinking Black: William Cooper and the Australian Aborigines League, Aboriginal Studies Press: Canberra: 86-88.

21   S.Hosking (1995) David Unaipon: His Story. In P.Butterrs ed. Essays on South Australian Writing, Kent Town, Wakefield Press: Chapter 6

22   D.Unaipon, David (1929) Native Legends. Adelaide: Aborigines Friends Association.

23   The original Western Australian Aborigines Act 1905 was strengthened

to move Aboriginal people from one place to another and to remove children from their parents[24]. Ron, with his family, was always on the run from the police or welfare, living on scraps and subjected to severe racial discrimination[25]. Remarkably, the family managed to stay out of the infamous Native Settlements and Ron was even able to start school in 1948 at the age of 8 – a privilege that had been denied Aboriginal children until that time. At school Ron was subjected to overt racial abuse and he left at 14 to begin a life drifting from place to place[26]. One evening Ron refused his grandfather's request to go with him to scrounge at the local tip and woke up the next morning to the news that his grandfather had been attacked and murdered. Plagued with guilt, a dishevelled Ron became nicknamed "Spook" and his family's biggest worry, as he lived a dissolute life on the edges of the townships, playing guitar to accompany sad Country and Western songs and overindulging in alcohol. Ron even contemplated suicide - he was sick of life and went to jump down a well but when he looked down and saw the cross-beam which might snag him he decided not to jump[27]. Then one day at the Gnowangerup Show a young missionary gave him a Bible and Ron made a decision to ask Jesus to change his life for the better and to give him hope.

For Ron, the *decision phase* was not just giving his life to God but also learning to forgive and, given his painful past, there was a lot to forgive. One of his first people he wanted to forgive was his mother who had denied him any opportunity of bonding, abandoned him at birth and spent her life in alcohol abuse and being abused in violent relationships. When he found out that she had died, he wept tears of remorse for never having told her that he loved her[28]. Ron's *decision* to forgive involved giving his life to God and so, a year later, Ron became an inaugural student at the Gnowangerup Bible Training Institute where he was trained to be a pastor. Upon graduation he joined the United Aborigines Mission (UAM) as a cross-tribal missionary to Warburton Ranges where the Aboriginal men initially called him "whitefella" because his skin was lighter. Soon, because of his obvious love for them, he became known as "*Kuta*" (brother)[29]. It seems the freewheeling lifestyle of Ron's early life stayed with him – he was at home on the open road, travelling from place to place, playing his old guitar "western style", meeting anyone and everyone, talking to them about his Lord, often giving away his last dollar and wanting to make a difference - particularly to the marginalized. Ron later

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at the insistence of the Chief Protector of Aborigines, A.O.Neville, in the Aborigines Act Amendment Act, 1936.

24   Western Australia. Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936, s.8.

25   D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 49.

26   D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 51.

27 D.S.Bone (2007) From Mallee Boy to Missionary Pastor, Challenge, Cloverdale:165-167

28 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 55-56.

29   "Kuta" is pronounced "gooda"- as in "good" with a suffix of "a" added.

confessed:

> *'I know what it's like to be on the outside, where nobody wants to know you, so I try to help those wherever I can' … He became a bold Aboriginal man who had grown from a timid child, his brown face pressed against a window pane, looking in at white society, never being invited in, but having something to say. As an adult he invited himself in.' [30]*

He had *decided* that, with God's help, he was going to forgive and work towards reconciliation.

Ron Williams' *working phase* was long and hard. We have been given a window into the struggles of his *working phase* in *Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet* written by his wife Diana:

> *Little by little Ron shared his heart with me. What was said in the confines of our car, lying next to each other in bed at night, or watching the play of the camp fire's flames was much different from what he said behind the pulpit or to anyone in authority. I struggled to make sense of not only the contrast, but also the internal conflict.[31]*

The pain from abuse experienced during childhood did not go away and he often had to endure many instances of overt prejudice in the *working phase* of forgiveness. His wife Diana was in a good position to describe some of the struggles that Ron had with his feelings:

> *Anger brewed inside Ron, at times like a sleeping lion, at other times roaring … He glanced at a man walking toward him on the street, smiled and said, 'G'day, mate!' The man turned angrily to Ron and snarled in his face. 'You black bastard! I hate you … I wish to God that my forefathers had killed you all … You talk like us … Your wear our clothes … oooooh, how I hate you!' Ron turned away saddened. The time he felt sorry for the man, sorry for the whole human race. The angry lion roared with a tinge of pity.[32]*

But what hurt Ron Williams even more was the pain of covert prejudice from fellow missionaries summed up by an Aboriginal pastor who shared Ron's road:

> *There are a lot of people, Christians and all, who tell us (Aboriginal people) what to do, have all*

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30 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 94

31 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 108.

32 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 64

the good ideas, but I'm sick of it.[33]

From their point of view, covert discrimination meant that Aboriginal pastors were acceptable when they were good enough, tame enough and compliant enough.

A point that was particularly painful to Ron was the strident condemnation of his second marriage eleven years after his first wife had died[34] to an American divorcee missionary with two masters degrees, Diana. After years of service, there was a parting between Ron and the UAM and all associate Aboriginal churches over the literal interpretation of Luke 16:18 "prohibiting marriage to a divorcee".

> **For over 25 years Ron had been loyal to the mission, even when others were leaving because of its patronizing attitudes. Ron had been 'star property', proof that an Aboriginal could succeed. 'That's our Ron, they would say'.[35]**

Ron's marriage with Diana also gave them both many more opportunities to practise forgiveness because it reached across a cultural divide between Ron's fluid Aboriginal-style, socially driven planning and her structured and forthright American approach to living. The *work phase* of forgiveness was not a one-off event and it was a constant struggle. Ron's wife, Diana, describes the way in which this struggle even infiltrated their relationship:

> **When Ron returned (from a funeral of a friend, David), I went to hug him, but no longer was he gentle. Our intimacy that night was harsh and painful, as if I was being punished for what he had experienced at the hands of whitefellas all his life … He started to blame the whitefellas more. He would talk about David's life and the discrimination he had been dealt. His anger spilled over into our personal life together … when I made a suggestion, he would bark out the words, 'That's what the white missionaries always said.' I knew what that meant to him and those words were like a slap in the face.[36]**

Diana's book, *Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet* reveals many heartfelt instances within their cross-cultural marriage when they both needed to work hard at forgiveness and overcome their obstacles by love and open communication that included apologies, forgiveness, laughter and tears.

Ron was not one to shirk the pain of more public forgiveness and this meant that his **uncovering** was thorough. When he arrived at a new place, he would go to the library to study the local history, walk around the perimeter "Aboriginal –way", respecting their territory and talk to people up and down the street before he rose to preach about the pains of the past and the need for reconciliation[37]. For him the **decision phase** was not "forgive and forget" but "remember and choose forgiveness". In doing so, he released himself and his listeners from its power if they decided to forgive. The **working phase** of forgiveness would also be needed in expressing forgiveness publically:

> **Ron is outspoken, willing to face cultural shifts, eager to travel into new worlds, and quick to enter controversy. But when I observe him in public situations with white people of authority through eyes that only a wife can have, I still see his discomfort, his insecurity and his shyness display themselves in his body language, the tilt of his head, the twisting of his shirt sleeve, the shadow across his face.[38]**

Through the process of forgiveness Ron was able to wish those who mistreated his people well and treat them with respect. Whether he met with heads of state, business executives, fatherless children and prostitutes, he accorded them all the same respect[39]. Ron seemed to have a gift of being able to communicate encouragement.

Ron and Diana Williams were able to enter into the *deepening phase* in which reconciliation became possible. Diana writes:

> **Together we have learned to wait for the arms of others to open in the integrity of reconciliation. Underneath a dark grey tent erected in Gnangara Village outside Perth, five years of waiting ended with the touch of an arm on my shoulders. The Aboriginal preacher shouted out the words of Jesus about forgiveness. 'We need to forgive these whitefellas, he said. It'll free us to go on and not feel sorry for ourselves any longer. It you've been hurt by any one, come up here for prayer'… In the midst of my reflection I felt an arm gently come around my shoulders and draw me towards its owner. 'I'm sorry,' whispered the voice. 'I've been wrong about you. I want you to know that I respect you and love you.' Too shocked to raise my head, I could only glimpse the woman holding me close as one who had**

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33 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 171.

34 Ron Williams became a widower when his first wife, an Aboriginal from Halls Creek in the Kimberleys, Marjorie, died from heart failure.

35 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 73.

36 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam:190.

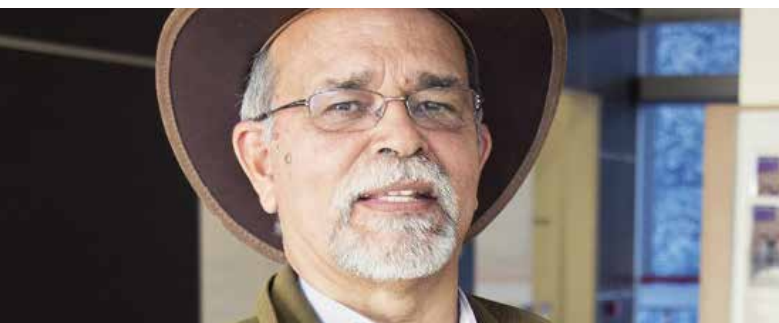37 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam: 309.

38 D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam:308.

39 G.Moyes MLA, Hansard, New South Wales. 12 November 2003: 4791.

ferociously condemned my marriage to Ron five years previously. The boundaries had melted, allowing us to embrace.[40]

Ron's legacy in the *deepening phase* of forgiveness and reconciliation was nationally recognized:

On 7 November, the Great Hall at Parliament House in Canberra resounded with the sound of black and white alike singing songs of thanksgiving for the life of Pastor Ronnie Williams and for his love and service to the people of Australia, black and white. He is only the second person since the Federal Parliament building has been open to be accorded the honour of a memorial service in the Great Hall of Parliament House in the Australian Capital Territory. It is a fitting tribute to a man of the people who was also a man of God. The spirit of Ronnie Williams, this remarkable indigenous leader, lives on.[41]

PASTOR KEITH TRUSCOTT (B.1950)

The very entry of Keith Truscott into the ramshackled town of Darwin in 1951 was scandalous and occurred at the height of the "stolen" generation era that subjected many Aboriginal children to the double-edged sword of "assimilation". Keith became a Ward of the Commonwealth because draconian government policies allowed them to interfere in Aboriginal family life. Keith's mother had been removed from her own mother when she was just six. After Keith was born, his biological father was sent to Fanny Bay Gaol for six months with hard labour and ordered to pay maintenance for "consorting with an Aboriginal girl"[42]. It later came to light that the government authorities had made an example of Keith's parents to discourage other inter-racial marriages. The official excuse that Keith's parents did not have the means to support him was clearly a lie because his father, Wally Boase, faithfully paid for

his maintenance a year in advance for eight years. Incredibly, it later came to light that Wally had Aboriginal descent as a Koori. Understandably, the relationship between Keith's biological parents was also ruined. As a Commonwealth Ward, Keith joined an older half-brother in the Retta Dixon Homes and it was ironic that they were taken from "financially struggling parents" to be placed in the Mission that also struggled economically to care for the 70-100 kids. The children were cared for by single white ladies who did their best to provide happy homes for the children and Keith has many happy memories of his playmates there. Keith had intermittent contact with his mother and was introduced to his father as "Wally" through a wire fence even though he was given his last name Keith Boase. Keith's first eight years at the Retta Dixon Home for "half-castes" was located in between two sections of Bagot Mission for "full-bloods". They were told not to mix with and talk to any of the people from Bagot Mission and this was reinforced symbolically by a barbed wire fence between them and setting them onto a pathway half way between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world.

Then everything changed, Keith was given a written test that was used as a guide to his suitability for adoption. Suddenly, Keith was told that he was being sent from Darwin to Sydney to be adopted by a white family and that he was going to be

"The very entry of Keith Truscott into the ramshackled town of Darwin in 1951 was scandalous and occurred at the height of the "stolen" generation era that subjected many Aboriginal children to the double-edged sword of "assimilation".
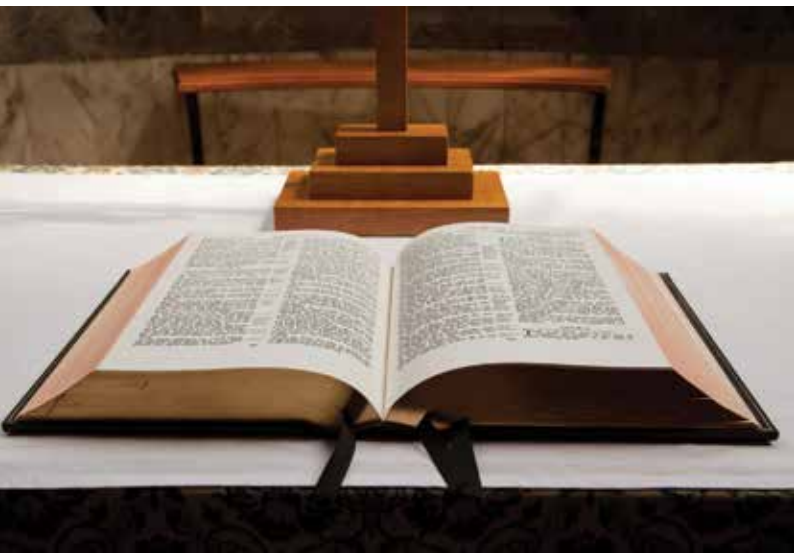
called "Keith Williams". He remembers feeling uncomfortable in new black leather shoes and feeling self-conscious from his mother's kiss – the only time he could remember her kissing him as a child – at the airport bound for the Central Coast of New South Wales to be cared for by a pensioner-aged couple who lived beside an inland sea-water estuary. Life in the Williams family did not work out because their marriage was failing and they wanted to send Keith back to Darwin. In the end, and at the age of ten, Keith was fostered at the Truscott household and had his name changed back to "Keith Boase". Keith was happy at his new home and agreed to be adopted into the Truscott family when he was twelve. At this time, they found out that the first adoption lacked biological parent permission but in the end, the appropriate signatures were placed on the adoption papers so that became "Keith

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40   D.Williams (2001) Horizon is Where Heaven and Earth Meet, Sydney, Bantam:316.

41   G.Moyes MLA, Hansard, New South Wales. 12 November 2003: 4791.

42   Years later it came to light that Keith's father was an Aboriginal descendent.

Truscott" – the fourth surname change before the age of 12. In spite of his adoption, Keith remained a Commonwealth Ward. These arrangements would be a basis of a potential identity crisis. Just as he entered his teenage years, the stage of identity formation, Keith was told that his older brother had died in a car crash over twelve months before. Stunned and saddened, he felt "as if a limb had been dislocated permanently". He became moody and homesick for his Darwin family and community. Previously Keith had excelled in his studies, sport and community activities but he found that his heart and mind were miles away in Darwin and he felt as if he was continually told what to do. As soon as he was 18 years of age and no longer a Ward of the Commonwealth Government, he returned to Darwin.

Common to many other "stolen children", Keith found that he did not belong anywhere on his return home to Darwin. His mother's different, carefree lifestyle was at odds with the way he had been raised in Sydney. Soon he was on his way and it was three years before he saw his mother again and five years before his saw the Truscotts. His severe identity crisis was

exacerbated by the offence he felt from conflicting family lifestyles. After a period of time employed as a stockman in northern New South Wales, Keith decided to follow Christ and then wondered how he could best "serve his people". This led him to enroll at the University of Western Australia to study Anthropology in order to discover his roots.

Soon after his graduation from UWA, Keith entered the Baptist Theological College of Western Australia to train for the ministry. His wife, a Noongar Aboriginal from WA, was unhappy about his choice of career and left him on his own to finish his studies and spend eight years raising his three children as a supporting father. In the early 1990s, Keith re-entered the workforce as founding Director of the Noongar Alcohol and Substance Abuse Service (NASAS) and then after finishing post-graduate studies,

gained an academic appointment at the *Kurongkurl Katitjin*[43] at Edith Cowan University. However, Keith's real passion was the ministry and he would spend most of his spare time and weekends ministering to Aboriginal people in Perth. Keith experienced further pain when he married an African American gospel singer, Stephanie, and was told by the Aboriginal Church association that he could not be in ministry if he remarried after divorce based on a literal interpretation of 1 Timothy 3:2. However, Keith has remained in ministry and started the Mt Zion Aussie Indigenous Church (MoZAIC) which is devoted to down-and-out and needy Aboriginal people in Perth.

Keith worked through Enright's book on forgiveness and his diary reveals the conflict, torment and pain in his personal journey as a member of the "stolen generation":

Uncovering:

First I must speak of my rejection: I want to forgive my mother for rejecting me as her second child. The rejection I felt was in favouring my older brother, Kenny, her firstborn. I seemed to be faster learning to read. I felt rejected by my mother in wanting to crush my quick reading and speaking ability. I don't ever remember her hugging me or kissing me except when I caught the aeroplane to Sydney when I was eight years of age to be adopted by white folks, three States away. Mum had a lot of open spite and resentment towards me, compared to my older brother. Mum's husband, Jim C., did not seem to want me around. Us mission kids, we felt no-one close to us wanted us. When we went to school, we were marked as different and out of place.

I have avoided dealing with anger by not actually itemizing my feelings of hurt, loss and rejection which I believe began with my mother. Strangely enough I am thinking that she may have birthed me, but the missionaries had stronger responsibility and loving-kindness towards me, or showed it more often. Mum would visit the Mission to visit me and my older brother every Sunday afternoons, as that was the official visiting time by family. That really was not enough to build any strong, close relationship. But I knew she was my mother and I yearned for her open acceptance of me.

Have I faced my anger for being unwanted by my mother? For years I am not sure if I was in denial, suppression, repression, displacement, regression or identification with her. Being adopted miles away in another State symbolizes to me that I denied, suppressed and repressed it. But when the *Stolen Generations* report came out in 1997, I felt hurt. I felt as though I suffered a great loss of my biological, maternal attachments. I wonder if I displaced my anger to my two adopted white mothers and my early girl relationships. I believed I did practise displacement. I was never sexually abused, rather I was verbally abused by my

mother and I began to stutter as a young child until "I grew out of it", so-called. Sometimes I would be caustic with my tongue with females and my first wife. I transferred the rough sarcasm that was directed at my biological mother to them. I apologize to her and to God and to all those ladies I have verbally abused. I ask for your forgiveness.

For years I was afraid to face my shame or guilt because I was fostered into a "white" family that was supposed to be a "model" family. But looking back they were not "model", upstanding families but ordinary families that had shortcomings and hassles to face, which all families have. But I am not afraid to face my shame or guilt for not expressing my feelings of rejection and not being wanted by my mother.

A way that I repressed my anger towards my birth Mum was when I did not write or talk to her for three years. Also I did not talk to my adopted parents for that long. I was angry at both of them. I did not feel any part of them. That is, what I saw in them I did not want. My birth Mum had a carefree lifestyle on the weekends although she held down a job. Mum and Dad Truscott were still church-going Christians which I did not want. So I went off into the world by myself. I fell off a horse and ended up in hospital for four days. That made me think twice about which direction I was going in life. So I decided to come back to studies, full day matriculation for 12 months at 24 years of age. So my anger softened and I matriculated and I started talking to my birth Mum and Mum and Dad Truscott again.

I still do love my birth Mum and my Mission upbringing and two adoption experiences. The loneliness, isolation and estrangement from blood relatives from 8-18 yrs of age was heavy on me. I felt that I had to carry it by myself as no-one would understand. But I have come to see that my birth Mum was limited in her engagement at the cultural boundaries legally, socially and economically. She never talks to me about her racist jibes she faced so much. She would have had to face more open racism than me. To be forgiving against those who mistreated me on the base of race, or social status or privilege has not worked for me before. I have tried Marxist worldviews but it has not given an effective solution. I would rate it 4 out of 10, a failure. Even being fearful of white folks and committees has proved ineffective as a solution. This is 3 out of 10 for effectiveness. So I will change my direction, my worldview. I will offer forgiveness as another way to confront injustice. I will make room for a compassionate approach to others. As theologian Lewis Smedes says,

> *"Surrendering the right to revenge can be equated to surrendering the right to carry the weight of the world on your back and forgiveness offers the best hope of creating a new fairness out of past unfairness."*

So I will decide to forgive the racism I have faced whether visible and/or invisible. Joanna North summarizes Enright - *we forgive when we overcome the resentment toward the offender, not by denying our right to the resentment, but instead by trying to offer the wrongdoer compassion, benevolence, and love; as we give these, we as forgivers realize that the offender does not necessarily have a right to such gifts.* Forgiveness is an act of mercy toward an offender, someone who does not necessarily deserve our mercy. It is a gift to our offender for the purpose of changing the relationship between ourselves and those who have hurt us.

Forgiveness is more than… accepting what happened, ceasing to be angry, being neutral toward the other, making oneself feel good. Forgiving is not…condoning or excusing, forgetting, justifying, calming down, pseudo-forgiving (that seeks to manipulate people and gain control over them). Forgiveness is related to but more than reconciliation.

My Decision to Forgive

I will refrain from subtle revenge as I say sorry to those who have hurt or offended me in the past and today. Today I count my five families who have hurt me - my biological, Mission, Williams, Truscott and now my 3 children's families. I forgive them for my feelings of being isolated, abandoned, unwanted and controlled. The feelings that appeared which began with my biological family also existed in the Mission and Williams family. What was missing was consistent, evidences of love for me. Yet it would have been hard for Mission workers to give constant love and attention to everyone. At night we were left to our devices, being separated from them close by. My Truscott parents tried to make me feel wanted, loved and part of their every day events. But I still felt controlled - this occurred in my Mission and Williams family. They wanted me to be their successful, adopted Aboriginal son. That is, a showpiece of good assimilation and forgetting my Indigenous background and heritage. But I forgive them for that as I see their human side of just wanting to be parents with their "own" son, whether Indigenous or not. Last week my adopted Mother Truscott died and I arranged the funeral. Many people wrote wonderful eulogies the highlighted her good, kind and human characteristics. I too, was able to see these good characteristics, as the wider community saw them.

Work toward understanding

I would like to work toward my understanding by remembering that all my parents had a hard upbringing.

- My birth Mum was part of the Stolen Generation and raised in a Mission and molested as a 6-8 year old girl. When she left the Mission there were no close role models to take them on to the next stage of

employment and how to live in the city. They needed a kind of half-way house. So inevitably she was exploited sexually, socially and financially by unscrupulous law-keepers, so-called friends and strangers.

- Dad Boase was swindled by his Victorian family out of land and property and so he moved up to the Northern Territory to live independently. He was a soldier in Bougainville and lost his brother 7 days before the war ended.

- My Mission parents were mostly single white women. Some were young and others were old. From kindergarten to 8 years of age I was cared for by them. It would have been hard for them to try be both mother and father to us. The married couples had their own families and showed little interest in other children when I was there. Or if they did show interest, they showed interest in their favourite Mission children, e.g. take them to their own home for the weekend or off the Mission grounds.

- Mum and Dad Williams were never a happy couple together. Looking back I think Dad Williams was hard on Mum Williams. Dad Williams was extra kind to me to the point of spoiling me. I never remember him hitting me with his hand or a strop. Mum Williams was disappointed that Dad Williams never came to church with us and thought I was heading the wrong direction. One of their arguments was pretty severe and she called the Mission Director in Sydney in tears and asked for me to be removed. I was shocked and felt again unwanted, isolated and abandoned by adults.

- Dad and Mum Truscott were children born in the Great Depression and so were always scrimping and not spending but saving money. "Waste not, want not" was a favourite saying of theirs to me. Mum lost two brothers in WW2 over Europe, a long way away and their bodies never returned. Dad Truscott was the youngest son with a big gap in ages between him and his two older sisters. His father died at 51 years of age with lung cancer when he was young due to passive smoking.

So I feel sorry for all sets of my parents and I am beginning to understand their struggles in their early lives. This affected how they treated me and I am sorry for their difficult upbringing and relationships with each other and others around them.

We have seen the struggles of three Aboriginal pastors to extend the gift of forgiveness to the people that had wronged them. Enright[44] described forgiveness as "foregoing of resentment or revenge" when the wrongdoer's actions

deserve it but giving the offender gifts of "mercy, generosity and love" instead. In other words, when people forgive, they give up the anger to which they may be entitled and give to their offenders a gift to which they are not entitled. Pastor David Unaipon and Pastor Ron Williams showed that it was possible to forgive in the absence of a National Apology. They encountered many people who did not seek their forgiveness and were often aware of the impact of their offenses. Forgiveness is not for the faint hearted. As Mahatma Ghandi said, "the weak never forgive, forgiveness is an attribute of the strong"[45]. In fact, there is evidence[46] that the process of forgiveness makes the forgiver stronger. Warren Mundine has called on Aboriginal people to forgive as a step towards reconciliation. These three Aboriginal pastors have shown that when we glibly speak of reconciliation in Australia, we need to also realise it is only the fruit that comes from the pain and strength of forgiveness.

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45   M.Ghandi (2000) The Collected Works of Mahatma Ghandi (2nd ed), Veena Kain, New Delhi: 12.

46   American Psychological Association (2006) Forgiveness: A Sampling of Research Results, APA, Washington.

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Dr Keith Truscott was born in Larakia country (Darwin, Northern Territory) and he lived from birth till about eight years of age in a small inter-denominational mission called Retta Dixon Home (a home for Aboriginal children). He then moved down south to Darkinyung country (Gosford, Central Coast, NSW) for half of his primary schooling and all his high schooling. This meant that he was adopted twice by non-indigenous families and is happy with his current surname. He is a second generation "stolen generation" person and so was extremely happy that at the age of 24 he was able to met up with his mother's traditional people, the Antakarinyin speakers (around Oodnadatta, SA), and a dialect of the Western Desert language group (he still maintain links with them). Today he lives in Wadjuk (Perth, Western Australia) as a pastor of an Aboriginal church and as an academic at Curtin University. His research interests are worldviews, theology, pastoral care and Aboriginal cultural studies.

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44   R.Enright & R.Fitzgibbons (2000) Helping Clients Forgive (Washington: APA, 2000) www.forgiveness-institute.org

I'm getting to understand a new culture now, I thought it was mine before, and it is, it was in the past, but things have changed and I've changed and now I have to readjust" (Zach)..

By Ann Ibrahim

IDENTITY LOSS:
THE RETURNED MISSIONARY'S STORY

MY STORY

Ten years working in Asia brought me into contact with missionaries from a diverse range of cultures, mission organisations and church backgrounds. It became apparent the more I heard their stories and read others, that the process of returning home for those who had spent a significant period of time overseas was anything but easy. Many recounted feeling abandoned by their home church, misunderstood, or simply ignored. Others recounted strong feelings of loss and confusion around their identity. This coupled with what I perceived as a paucity of relevant professional mental health care for returned missionaries sparked an interest in researching their lived experience to gain a greater understanding of the nature and breadth of loss, particularly as it related to identity for the returnee. A qualitative study was undertaken with fourteen Australians via in-depth interviews and focus groups to explore the disenfranchised nature of identity loss and identity gaps for returned missionaries.

BACKGROUND

Missionaries, by the very nature of their work, lifestyle, and crossing geographical, relational and cultural boundaries, are required by necessity to transcend a myriad of life's difficulties and stressors, often simultaneously[1] (Foyle, 2001). An unspoken assumption, often informed by the 'pedestal effect'[2], can accompany this image; i.e. one of missionaries being highly resilient, having an extra level of spiritual strength that sustains them and consequently being able to navigate and endure whatever life on the mission field brings their way (Selby et al., 2010). One could be excused for believing that returning to their home country should be a simple process in comparison. Yet returning home is almost without exception accompanied by multiple losses (Foyle, 2001; Knell, 2007; Hunter, 2005; Meech, 2008; Selby et al., 2009a; Selby et al., 2010; Selby, 2011).

One of the most frequently cited losses for returned missionaries is the multifaceted loss of identity (Austin, 1983; Hunter, 2005; Knell, 2007; Meech, 2008; Selby, Jones, Clark, Burgess, & Beilby, 2005; Selby et al., 2009a; Selby et al., 2010; Selby, 2011). Yet this loss and resultant grief may or may not be acknowledged by others. Where loss and grief are not acknowledged, validated, or viewed as socially acceptable,

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1 Dodds & Shafer (1995, as cited in Foyle, 2001) noted "that cross-cultural workers experience about 600 points of stress each year, well over the accepted norm" (p. 25).

2 The 'pedestal effect' refers to a special identity ascribed to missionaries by others; i.e. they are put up on a pedestal. This is often related to high-level perceptions of what they have done on the field and generally characterised by the belief that a missionary is more spiritual, resilient, and doesn't experience problems like those back home. This often creates a barrier to forming close friendships upon returning (Selby et al., 2010).

it becomes disenfranchised (Doka, 2002). At times these losses and associated grief may also be self-disenfranchised; i.e. where the returnee either chooses to disown, or does not recognise their grief response. Often those who have been looked to to provide support and connection for the missionary upon returning home fail to recognise, validate or acknowledge the losses experienced by the returnee (Selby et al., 2009a).

While the focus of this article is particularly on the returned missionary's experience, much of what they negotiate in re-entering their home culture is shared by other personnel as well. This includes students who have studied overseas, aid workers, military personnel, Peace Corps volunteers, diplomats, corporate employees, spouses, 'third culture kids'[3] and returning migrants (Church, 1982; Onwumechili, Nwosu, Jackson, James-Hughes, 2003; Szkudlarek, 2009). Therefore, much of the following has relevance for others who have spent a significant period of time living and working overseas.

WHAT MAKES RETURNING HOME SO DIFFICULT?

Numerous terms have been coined to describe the experience of returning home. 'Re-entry' was popularised by Jordan (1992) who likened it to the hazardous journey of an astronaut re-entering the earth's atmosphere. Reacculturation, a common anthropological term, implies re-experiencing acculturation; i.e. the process of "cultural adjustment in a foreign culture" (Martin, 1984, p. 115). Terms such as 'culture shock' and 'reverse culture shock' further highlight the challenge of losing all that is familiar, often resulting in "anxiety, helplessness, irritability, and a longing for a more predictable and gratifying environment" (Church, 1982, p. 540). Foyle (2001) notably titles it 'reverse bereavement', highlighting the grief and loss dimensions of returning home. Given the above terminology, the implication is that returning home is simply a repeat of the process of the adjustment a missionary experiences when they first move to a new country and culture. However, this is not necessarily the case.

Important differences exist between moving to a new culture and returning to a home culture. Expectations play a significant role in how a person experiences re-entry (Rogers & Ward, 1993). Expectations of an easier adjustment and a sense of belonging upon returning home than when returnees initially moved to their host culture are often cited as creating difficulty for the returnee (Huff, 2002; Storti, 2001). Both external and internal changes with people and places back home have occurred while a person is away, and lack of expectations around these changes can leave a returnee confused, disorientated and distressed (Foyle, 2001; Huff, 2002; Jordan, 1992; Storti, 2001). The returnee has also changed while overseas, often returning with new perspective,

viewing people and places back home differently. This may leave the returnee alienated, confused, frustrated and even disgusted at what they experience (Storti, 2001; Szkudlarek, 2010).

The other major cognitive aspect is one of identity change. A person's identity often changes while overseas, and depending on how strongly this is aligned with the host culture and a sense of belonging can impact re-entry adjustment (Szkudlarek, 2009). Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) noted that those who had not discovered a strong sense of identity before leaving home tended to find resolution in this while in their host culture, making it difficult to shed this identity or create new identity upon returning home (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Martin, 1984; Sussman, 2001).

The spiritual adjustment aspects of re-entry too cannot be underestimated. Spiritual distress occurs for many reasons and may be linked to the loss of a missionary's sense of vocation and identity while on the field. Returning home can leave them with many unanswered questions in this domain (Knell, 2007). Selby (2011) states that this distress may result from loss in one of the

> *"Often those who have been looked to to provide support and connection for the missionary upon returning home fail to recognise, validate or acknowledge the losses experienced by the returnee".*

following "construct's of a person's spirituality: connectedness, faith and religious belief system, value system, meaning and purpose in life, self-transcendence, inner peace and harmony, and inner strength and energy" (ibid., p. 26).

It's little wonder that re-entry adjustment therefore was viewed by many authors as being more difficult and distressing than the initial process of adapting to a host culture (Adler, 1981; Adler 1975; Austin, 1983; Martin, 1984). Approximately 70% of returnees are reported to experience significant psychological discomfort upon returning (Mendenhall, 1992b, as cited in Szkudlarek, 2009). Szkudlarek (2009) cites Chamove and Soeterik (2006) who demonstrate that returnees' level of intensity of grief is comparable to those who are bereaved. Austin (1983) and Storti (2001) describe re-entry as a process involving stress, loss, grief, identity issues and loneliness. Isolation, anxiety and rejection were reported as frequent experiences in varying levels of intensity for the returnee by Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963). It is sobering to note that Lovell (1997, as cited in Selby et al., 2007) states "over 40% of returned workers had psychological issues with 80% suffering from depression". Selby et al. (2007) asserts that what may present as physical and mental illness for

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3   The term 'third culture kids' (TCK's) was coined by Pollock and Van Reken (2001) and defined as "a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' home culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background" (p. 19).

returnees is often complicated mourning and disenfranchised grief and loss and needs to be approached as such.

IDENTITY LOSS

Multiple perspectives and meanings have been applied to the term 'identity'; to fully address them would be outside the scope of this article. For the sake of simplicity, identity is defined here as,

> *The various meanings attached to an individual by the self and by others; these meanings may be based on the social roles a person holds – social identities – or on personal, idiosyncratic characteristics the individual displays and others attribute to him or her based on his or her conduct – personal identities (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, p. 137).*

Identity loss, where meaning attached to the returnee's sense of self shifts, is a frequently reported experience for those who return from living overseas for an extended period of time (Onwumechili et al., 2003; Austin, 1983). This loss is multifaceted, often contradictory, and its impact should not be underestimated for the returnee. The aforementioned study, while not proposing to be an exhaustive list of identity losses or be applied as generalised conclusions across the population of returned missionaries in Australia, does provide some clues as to the wide spectrum of identity losses experienced. The following is a discussion of these losses from the lived experience of these participants.

SHEDDING THE MISSIONARY MANTLE: BY CHOICE OR IMPOSED?

> *"And they expect you to be like them again, now that's not to say they're not prepared for you to be a bit weird and different and maybe have your struggles, but I was surprised that people didn't actually view us as missionaries anymore" (Daisy).*

For many, removal of a missionary identity may be abrupt, externally enforced, and often usurps opportunity for closure. This may leave a returnee with a sense of powerlessness and disorientation. While some participants cited wanting to be rid of all the extraneous expectations and activities that come with this identity, reticence was expressed at having it forcefully removed.

> *"And I think we'd had enough of our identity as missionaries, and yes, we just wanted to be the Joe Blow family from M... that go to the local church and not have any other sort of fanfare, that's enough" (Becca).*

> *"I was kind of ready to give up this identity of being a missionary, but that's one thing to say that, but it's another thing to come back and then not be acknowledged isn't it" (Daisy).*

A LOSS OF HISTORY

> *"Unless there's people who've kept close contact over the years you just can't relate some of those things in a short period of time with people. So there's a sense of loss there, like as if you've got a history and no one wants to hear it" (Zach).*

To recount their history on the field, the complex story of their life, relationships, challenges, celebrations, pain and joy in so foreign a context to those back home is an almost impossible ask. The period of time away, be it two years or twenty, has little for those at home to connect or identify with. Time limitations and the busyness of those the returnee reconnects with rarely have the space to hear a history beyond the essential facts or main events. It's 'business as usual', and they may not understand this lack of continuity for the returnee and the need to recount their history to combat a sense of loss.

SEEKING AND CREATING NEW IDENTITY

> *"We really are just taking a back seat, finding out where we are, who we are ... Right now our need is to just resettle, get known as who we are, not what we were, and yeah, find our feet in our new life" (Louise).*

The choice and/or desire to actively shed the missionary identity, or its enforced removal, often exists in tandem and at times in conflict with the desire to forge a new identity. Participants reported a tension between longing to start afresh and move forward creating a new sense of identity while still negotiating the missionary residue. Life becomes something of a no-man's land; the returnee has left the field and is on new soil but life is still caught in the tension between living in both but not fully in one or the other. Whilst the longing to quickly negotiate finishing off one life and begin actively participating in the next is often sought, it is rarely realistic.

> *"That was how I kind of packaged it in my mind, once I get this mission thing done I will then be able to begin my new life after that" (Daisy).*

> *"It is transitional, because often we forget those strong identities we had after a decade of investment in the place. And sure, after a decade here, we are probably going to have a pretty strong sense of identity as well. It's a bit unreasonable to expect it the day you get back" (Paul).*

SOCIAL LOSS

Social loss, in particular the loss of deep friendships, was one of two most commonly cited themes wacross the group of participants. These friendships were perceived as 'once in a lifetime' friendships that transcended all of life categories as opposed to what was perceived as compartmentalised relationships back home.

"Here it's different because you've got family ties, you've got friends ties, you've got school parents, you've got so many different boxes you put people in socially. Whereas over there it's friends, family, D&M (deep and meaningful) partner, coffee drinking partner, it's all the same person" (Louise).

"When you spend an amount of time in a country you develop deep friendships, kindred spirits, prayer partners, all that sort of stuff. And so when you leave that and you come back to your home, even though you have good friends or a network of people over here, it's different because you've done life together over there" (Rachel).

The sense of social and relationship loss can be exacerbated by immersion in a culture and community. Relationships become more than friendships, they become the missionary's on-field family characterised by a significant depth of investment.

"Some of these guys are like my sons, some of the girls like daughters, some are like sisters ... it was hard to leave them, very, very hard to leave them" (Joan).

"We lived twenty four hours on campus with students and some of the lecturers … so it was like family. It wasn't like our Sunday friends we see on Sunday at church, it was people we lived with" (Leigh).

Creating new social networks back home also heightens this loss. Friendships have shifted, people have moved on and the dynamics are different. In addition, the cultural cues and norms that surround friendship levels and building connection at home are different. A loss of confidence may result which at times can be immobilising for the returnee.

"They've moved on and to expect the relationship to be the same way as it was before, to not be different, with formerly close friends, we left, they've found other close friends to link with. And with our perspective change as well, things we used to enjoy or found a common interest in isn't there anymore. I mean there's still some that are good close friends which I treasure, but there are some others that you just have to say, we've moved on" (Stephen).

"Things have changed and I've changed and now I have to readjust. So it's painful when you've got to build friendships again "(Zach).

There's this sense of loss I suppose of the type of interaction that we were having in M... which was perhaps a bit more relaxed, not so driven by the next task that has to be fulfilled. Being part

of somebody's agenda rather than just relating to people. I think that's a bit of a loss for us, that type of relationship" (Becca).

ROLE/OCCUPATION LOSS

Loss of identity in a returnee's role/occupation was cited by the participants as a significant loss. Many missionaries acquire diverse skills on the field and struggle to find work that will utilise their training and experience upon returning home. Interestingly, Adler (1981) found returning corporate and government employees had a similar experience where little value was placed on their newly honed skills and knowledge gained while overseas.

"Because I was doing so many different things, now it's like, wow, where can I find a role like that? My language was very important, I did a little bit of translation work, I was the intermediary in different situations, now I'm intermediary to no one. So of course I suppose work's very important to a man and that work aspect is not there" (Zach).

The importance of identity being significantly impacted by occupation loss for a returned missionary cannot be underestimated. Loss of role, or occupational loss, is often accompanied by loss of status (Foyle, 2001). In addition, where all of life as a missionary has been engaged in an occupation overseas, returning home often means losing a major aspect of identity. To add to this, for most missionaries, their work and role on the field is strongly aligned with a sense of purpose, calling and meaning.

"For me, being where an unreached people group is, that's like the action, where it's all happening, whereas being in Australia is not … So just coming to terms with that, that at least for a season that we'd be back here in Australia ... you're not sort of the pioneer anymore" (Fred).

"It's like being sent, going with a purpose and then you come away from that. And so we lose that element of who we are" (Rachel).

Expectations play a big part in negotiating a loss of role. Other's expectations can heighten a sense of inadequacy for the returnee; conversely unmet expectations with job prospects back home can heighten a sense of loss.

"Certainly I feel the pressure that people will say to me, so you're not working ... whereas I suppose over there you didn't have that, are you working, because you were always working. I mean that was life, that's what you were there for ... We'd been here three days, my kids had been at school one day, and my mother-in-law said, so you're settled, what are you going to do now? When are you going to start work?" (Louise).

It probably took me some months to, I guess, mourn the fact that I wasn't going to do that regional directorship which was something I was really excited about, and pastoring seemed to be like the second best to me after that" (Fred).

At times, returnees may feel that they've been left behind professionally. Where their expertise was valued and highly relevant on the field, back home they may find this is no longer the case. The loss of being able to use their professional skills in a setting that was not only fulfilling, but highly sought after can create significant anxiety.

"One of the things that I find I'm experiencing a loss in is in my professional work. I'm a nurse and a midwife and you know, those things are very much called upon over there, especially in a really undeveloped area where there's very little in the way of good care, health care. And so coming back here, not just the standards changing here, but there's always a push for higher standards, there's always a push for more continuing professional development. And I come back and I'm behind everybody " (Tilley).

LOSS OF CONFIDENCE

"I've lost my confidence, totally lost my confidence. Because of that lack of confidence, I find it difficult to even get in touch with old friends. … And I know I need to get out there and do it, but there's just, it's like this wall there" (Joan).

Loss of confidence was expressed by a number of participants. This crossed a number of domains including connecting with others, finding work, understanding cultural nuances back home.

"I work at school here part time as a volunteer, I'm trying to get back in there as an employee, but of course I lost a bit of confidence when I got back and I just couldn't face applying for jobs … It had only been three years, you lose a lot of your thread" (Leigh).

LOSS OF A CULTURAL & GEOGRAPHICAL HOME

A silent and unexpected shift can occur where the cultural and geographical location on the field begins to feel more like home than their pre-field location. Aspects of the on-field culture that either don't exist, or exist to a lesser degree or frequency back home can be acutely missed.

"I realise that there are elements of the way people relate to one another in Spanish that I really miss. Just the other day I was speaking to a friend and they talk in very emotional terms, they use a lot of affection in the way that they talk to one another … And I think I miss that quite a bit, as I see my boys becoming more Australian, answering their mum back more and things like that. I think I like the M... way a bit more where there's a lot more respect for elders, there's gentler criticisms, people aren't quite so in your face" (Becca).

LOSS OF FREEDOM

"I think one thing I have really missed … I just have days where I'm just like, I've got to get out of the office because I cannot sit in front of a computer any longer, like I'm boxed in you know. Because over there, I was in charge of my own schedule, I mean I had commitments and I worked with a team … but there was a sense of freedom about it" (Rachel).

Loss of freedom was cited by a number of partipants in relation to loss of freedom with finances, loss around determining work goals, structure and day to day activities and even the loss of freedom living in someone else's home.

FINANCIAL LOSS

"The fact that all of a sudden we are not self-sufficient, I struggled with that, I really did, and a couple of times I remember saying to God, I don't know, the journey was great, but I don't know whether it was worth it, because now I haven't got that you know … I really have to struggle with this thing on Newstart" (Leigh).

Loss of financial independence may appear a contradiction to those who have not been on the mission field. How could a missionary living on support experience more financial freedom on the field than when they return? However, depending on

the field location, money may go further than back home. This loss is often disenfranchised; it is hard for a returnee to say they were financially comfortable on the field when stereotypes of missionaries and finance prevail. To then admit how much they are struggling and to feel dependent when they return is also painful and can be humiliating. As a result financial loss is rarely acknowledged by others or deemed socially acceptable to grieve.

"When you're on the field you are seen as somebody with means. You know, white skin has money. And so everyone goes to you with their problems you know ... And then you come back and suddenly I find myself standing in a Centrelink line for a health care card. I've gone from being the one with means to the poor one. And it's like, how do you reconcile that? ..." (Tilley).

"I think perhaps it's a loss of a sense of freedom in just letting God provide for the needs day to day. And what we've come back to is we actually have to really fight for that sense of security in God's provision, because culturally we feel like there's a lot more pressure. Relationally we feel like there's a lot more pressure to start being in control of our finances and that sort of thing" (Becca).

SPIRITUAL LOSS

"You know that spiritual loss where on the field you're living more on the edge, you're so dependent on God for everything because there are no other resources ... And here because all these people are around you, and these resources are around you, you kind of don't live on the edge so much spiritually. And I see that as a loss" (Tilley).

Several participants acknowledged that being removed from their usual resources, close relationships, familiar surroundings and other coping strategies naturally led to a dependence on spiritual resources while on the field. Upon returning home a number of participants recognised they felt less of a need to be dependent on God at the same level of intensity. Although this often came with the territory of returning home, it was also seen as a loss. Similarly, spiritual fellowship was also cited as a loss.

"Your perspective changes, and the whole fellowship group that we belong to I've been with for over ten years, you come back, you just don't feel as comfortable in there as you used to or you cringe when you hear them talking about certain things. It's such a waste of time talking about those things" (Stephen).

FINAL THEMES

Two final themes emerged around identity and loss. Firstly, loss was perceived as all encompassing, and secondly, loss was also offset by gain; it was a two-way experience.

"You've lost everything, your contacts, your support background your prayer background, everything background, your friendships, everything, you lose it all" (Joan).

"Here I've got my garden, I have my grandchildren, I have lots of interests, but over there I think I only had one interest. And it was ministry, whether to children of the Bible College or whatever, it was my whole life, and I think that is the difference" (Leigh).

It's hard because so many of these things are tied, like the loss and the gain are tied so closely together. I miss driving in crazy traffic, it was out of control over there but it was fun. I miss driving past elephants and being filled with wonder. I miss the colour and the spice and from time to time the noise because I live in a very quiet area which is beautiful ... so it's hard when the loss and the gain are often so, well I really like this, but I miss this (Rachel).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNSELLORS

Selby's (2011) research "confirmed that the loss and grief paradigm has been central to the understanding of psychological distress during re-entry" (p. 269). Lester (2000) states that the missing piece in understanding re-entry adjustment is grief and loss, in line with Attig's (1996) notion that grieving is about relearning one's world across the different domains of life. Considering that numerous losses are often experienced concurrently by returnees (Austin, 1983; Hunter, 2005; Knell, 2007; Lester, 2000) and that identity loss traverses many of these losses, while clients may present with symptoms mirroring mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety, a framework of disenfranchised grief is needed to provide appropriate care and to prevent complicated mourning (Selby et al., 2007). Without this perspective, returnees are likely to be misunderstood, and will struggle to understand or recognise the basis of their own psychosocial adjustment difficulties.

In tandem with negotiating loss, forging a new identity is considered just as necessary (Meech, 2008). Approaches such as Narrative Therapy that assist individuals to renegotiate and adopt preferred identities may be particularly relevant for the returned missionary (White, 2007). There is a danger however that the deep longing for a sense of identity and belonging can make it tempting for the returnee to quickly immerse themselves in diversions (e.g. adopting new roles prematurely, particularly within the church context). There are indications that the lengthy process of re-discovering and creating identity may be hindered by this practice (Meech, 2008; Kauffman, 2002). Supporting the returnee in not rushing in to new commitments is encouraged.

Strong levels of social support are considered a predictor of higher levels of resilience for the returned missionary (Selby et al., 2009b). Identifying where support systems are lacking, and exploring ways of establishing new support networks is an integral part of helping the returnee to adjust. Recognising that many of the previous relationships and support networks held by the returnee may have shifted or no longer exist will be part of this process.

Considering the prevalence of role loss, demonstrating value and respect by highlighting the different skills, perspectives and wisdom a returnee has gained may create new perspective. While many returnees may dismiss or minimise their learning on the field as being irrelevant, drawing out and reframing all they have learnt and experienced can provide hope. Exploring ways or encouraging the use of professional services to translate this into Australian workplace terminology may be of benefit.

Finally, providing a space for some sort of ritual, whether it be a celebration or more sombre ceremony, may aid the returnee in moving forward. Recognising that they will never be the person they were before they went to the field, and by necessity, accepting that they cannot continue to be the person they were on the field is a rite of passage. The experience of being a missionary changes an individual; their perspective, values and outlook will never be the same. As one participant described it:

> *"Our son … after twelve months says, dad, I am different and I am comfortable with that difference. And I think that's what we're heading towards. And you know, we will get to a point where we are comfortable, yet we do walk with a limp, and that's okay for us. And I think you know that's a process where we sort of get ourselves through"* (Lynden).

Being a returned missionary struggling with re-entry adjustment and experiencing significant grief and loss is not a sign of not making the grade. Rather, it is part of the journey. Eliminating or avoiding the pain of identity loss is not the destination. Rather, acceptance that many returnees do "walk with a limp", and that the limp can create beauty and growth, is the journey.

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CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING

By John Anderson

A CHRISTIAN COUNSELLOR IS A PRACTICING THEOLOGIAN ENGAGED IN THE WORK OF THERAPY

What is it about the heart and soul of Christian counselling that makes it distinct from simply counselling provided by Christians? This is the question I am going to reflect on with you within this article. There are hidden and open differences in the process of counselling that are distinctive to Christian counselling. These differences arise from doing theology in the counselling room.

In presenting my argument I make some assumptions.

The first assumption is that God who is the Father and Creator of us all is already involved in the life of every client – regardless of that person's faith or belief in God. God is involved with the atheist, the New Age spiritualist, the Muslim, the agnostic, and the believing Christian alike. The differences lie in the quality of the relationship each person has with God, and the amount of room that person has for God. Therefore, we can pray and expect that God brings every client who approaches us for counselling, and

furthermore, God has an agenda for what God wants to accomplish through our work together. This expectation is not restricted to just Christian clients.

The second assumption is that every client is the object of God's love and compassion. So it is appropriate to extend the Christian ministry of care and compassionate presence to every client.

The third assumption is that God the Holy Spirit is present, so there are a minimum of three persons in the counselling room. This assumption has important implications for counselling process. Christian counselling process involves relating to the Holy Spirit as co-therapist. This means the counsellor is attentive to both the client and the Holy Spirit. I frequently privately pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and be active in the counselling conversations with clients.

I then remain attentive, alert for anything the Spirit may say to me in the counselling session. I expect the Spirit to be involved in the process, so I have learned to trust

where the process goes. When I enter the counselling room I do not go in with an agenda, but with an expectation. I do not need to be in control; I can trust the Spirit through the unfolding process.

The second key to Christ-informed counselling is listening. Listening to the Spirit is the key to my creativity as a therapist. I rapidly gained a reputation for being a creative therapist when working in Nebraska, and the secret was I listened to the Spirit, and it was the Spirit's creativity. Creativity can take the form of metaphors, new revelatory insights, hunches, questions, activities – you name it. And they often work, and I discover a new intervention in the process! The Spirit is insightful. The Spirit is on the money. The Spirit is creative. Learn to listen and be attentive to the Spirit. Learn to recognize the Spirit's voice, and act on it. Making room for God to work as co-therapist alongside me in counselling is an important distinctive feature of Christian Counselling.

A good therapist listens to his or her

clients. I am also alert to what the Spirit may inspire the client to say. I look out for those serendipitous moments when the client makes a profoundly insightful statement, often unknowingly. Such a moment provides the key for therapeutic engagement. Frequently the Spirit alerts me to it, and I immediately intuitively recognize the client's statement is key. It becomes the focus for the rest of the session.

Christian counselling is informed by Christian values. There is no such thing as value neutrality. However, value respect is an ethical obligation. Christian values blend into common sense wisdom. Actions in line with Christian values generally make good therapeutic sense. The wisdom I provide as a counsellor is informed by my Christian values. There is a place for wisdom. This is an important consideration that Christians make in choosing a Christian counsellor. They want a counsellor who shares their Christian values.

Yet I need to be mindful that my task is to help a client make good decisions. Therefore, I can offer perspectives, options, opinions, as long as I am mindful that the client is free and responsible to make his or her decision. I am not responsible for the quality of the decision a client makes. Neither do I have to defend my Christian values or morality. Thus I can sit with a client who responsibly makes a decision to do an abortion without compromising my Christian anti-abortion stance. My Christian morality is concerned with my actions, not the actions of my client. The line is drawn in that I must not advocate a course of action that is contrary to my Christian values yet I do not, however, compromise my Christian values, when I even-handedly explore alternative moral options available to my client.

Christian counselling is most openly distinctive when we engage in theological reflection with our clients. Theological reflection is often needed. Christians in psychological distress commonly have important theological questions they need to wrestle with. Alternatively, Christian clients suffering from psychopathology or troubled relationships often have personal theological outlooks that support, legitimize and maintain that psychopathology or behaviour. So we need to challenge painfully constraining personal theological belief systems. We need to open up biblically based theological perspectives that reflect God's love and life giving grace to the believer.

Common theological problems that need to be addressed in Christian counselling are: If God is a good God who loves me, why did he allow this to happen? Where was God when the abuse happened? Clients have developed an image of a perfectionistic judgmental condemning God they can never satisfy? They maintain self-images of guilt and shame, that warrant God's condemnation, rejection and judgment. "I am a contemptible sinner [saved by grace], but that makes no difference." People have been hurt and disillusioned by the church. Christianity had become in too many quarters a "do more, better" religion, where the love and gracious acceptance of the person by God has been lost to view. It is a common

occurrence that a client's theology it itself part of the problem. A client's own pain and negative self-image is projected onto God, leaving a person feeling hopelessly unloved, condemned and unacceptable. And bringing about lasting change may include challenging dysfunctional theological beliefs, so the gospel can indeed become life-giving good news for the client.
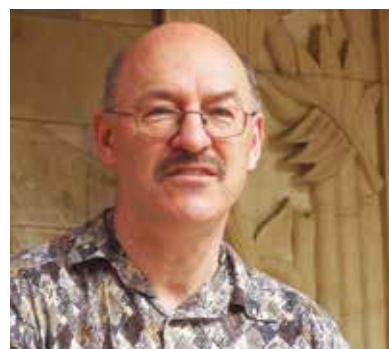
Therefore, we need to be able to do theology with our clients. Being a Christian counsellor requires that we become practicing theologians. Just reproducing the theology we have been taught won't cut it. We need to pursue these theological questions ourselves. We need to ask whether the Bible really teaches what our traditions have taught. What does the Bible teach about love, acceptance and grace? What does Job teach us about suffering? Are the doctrines of total depravity and original sin biblical or merely theological? What is God really like? Are Christians righteous saints or remain sinners saved by grace? Where is God when it hurts? How do we handle disappointment with God? We need to develop theological answers and insights that are truly biblically based. An accurate understanding of the Bible enables us to provide the theological restorative work that our clients need, to allow them to move from legalistic judgmental Christianity into the freedom of the love and grace of Christ.

Doing Christian counselling requires that we not only become competent therapists, but also practicing theologians who not only draw upon the body of our clinical knowledge, but also our of our spirituality. This means additional demands upon our professional development. We not only need to do the ongoing professional development with reference to clinical theory and interventions that is expected of counselling professionals. We also need to do professional development focused on theological reflection and study, as well as paying attention to developing our own spirituality and spiritual maturity.

Christian counselling, then is a distinctive approach that is based upon the presumption of the presence and involvement of God in the lives of clients and in the counselling room. It involves listening to and trusting the Spirit in the counselling dialogue, being informed by our Christian values, and finally doing theological reflection with our clients..

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WHAT'S THE BEST THEY CAN HOPE FOR?

By Paula Davis

RESILIENCY AND POSTTRAUMATTIC GROWTH FROM THE COMPLEX TRAUMA OF POLITICAL AND WAR VIOLENCE

INTRODUCTION

The outcome from violent civil conflicts throughout the world has resulted in entire populations suffering from political and war violence. Unique challenges are emerging as new opportunities emerge to intervene and respond in ways that alleviate acute traumatic stress. As a clinical trauma counsellor and educator this requires me to possess distinctive knowledge and competency to adequately train local mental health personnel in post-war regions who are generally as severely traumatised as those they seek to assist. My work in in post-war developing countries requires trauma models that are contextual. A starting point is developing an understanding of complex trauma and what encompasses resiliency and posttraumatic growth in trauma recovery for these populations.

INVITATION TO UGANDA, EAST AFRICA.

In July 2004, in response to an invitation from the Anglican Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, East Africa, a trauma recovery training team of five clinical counsellors and educators from Wesley Institute, Sydney, travelled to Kampala, Uganda to work with Mrs. Vivian Kityo, director of Wakisa Ministries, an officially-registered NGO caring for young women with unwanted pregnancies throughout Uganda, and Mrs. Theodora Niringiye, director of Relate Counselling,

Kampala. Our mandate was to provide trauma training for workers in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, originating from Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo. As Senior lecturer in a Masters of Counselling program I formed part of that team. Participants consisted of adult men and women of all ages including teachers, clergy, medical health professionals, and those involved in non-government organisation.

Reporting on the initial workshops, Mrs. Kityo strongly recommended that further counselling workshops be "organized annually because the need is great. Many children and youth are emotionally traumatized." This was a gross understatement of the team's personal experience as every day

we heard stories of untold horror: murder, gang rape, torture, mutilation and displacement, with the worst affected being children and young people. So we continued to return yearly for several years and for me and emerging question was:

> *What's the best they can hope for considering many are so damaged in early development into adulthood?*

Even though the team has since disbanded, I have continued to partner with Mrs. Vivian Kityo and Mrs. Theodora Niringiye to design and deliver further trauma recovery training and marriage education workshops (with my husband) for traumatised couples in Northern Uganda. Finally, in 2010, at the invitation of the Uganda Christian University, I taught an intensive module titled, **Crisis and Trauma Counselling that formed part of the Counselling Psychology (MA)** program.

INVITATION TO SRI LANKA.

In 2011, at the invitation of Mr. Robert Silva, **Connect for Life**, Sri Lanka, my husband and I set out for Sri Lanka to train para-counsellors in trauma recovery. I met Robert during his years of study in the Masters of Counselling program held at Wesley Institute where I was one of his lecturers. As a graduate student, Robert knew of my work in Uganda. He explained to me how his country had experienced decades of civil war and now the severely traumatised population had little idea how to adjust, heal and recover. Therefore, Robert invited me to come to his country to assist him in training para-counsellors in trauma recovery. Since the first visit in 2011, I have returned five times and conducted training and marriage programs similar to those in Uganda.

WHAT IS COMPLEX TRAUMA?

Complex trauma is a classification coined by theorists in the trauma field (van der Kolk, 2005) that recognises when a person is exposed to unrelenting, ongoing and deleterious experiences, he or she has a higher risk of developing a serious mental health problem or condition (Sutker, Uddo-Crane, & Allain, 1991). Many writers concur that the risk for mental health sequalea rises with the duration and level of exposure to traumatic events, for example, the nearness of a victim to the epicentre of the traumatic event(s) and the estimated length of time of exposure to sensory experiences such as petrol odour combined with the sight and smell of fire (Courtis, 2008; Courtois & Ford, 2009; Roberts, 2002; van der Kolk, 2001; Williams & Poijula, 2002). The length of time a person is affected by an event such as a community disaster, violent crime, or war also contributes to the intensity of traumatic stress (Roberts, 2002). " ...the more prolonged the exposure and the more intensely negative the circumstances are, the more likely it is that people will experience distressing emotions" (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2012, p..2).

Further, traumatic stress is intensified by a victim's perceived recurrence of the event(s) (Courtois & Ford, 2009; Roberts,

2002; Williams & Poijula, 2002). Roberts (2002) believes that most children experiencing a single, isolated traumatic event possess memories that they are able to recall. They do not typically dissociate, develop personality disorders or experience memory loss. In contrast, children who experience chronic, multiple, or repetitious trauma, such as prolonged political and war violence tend to develop:

> *"…dissociative disorders (also known as multiple personality disorders) or borderline personality disorder (BPD), recurring trance-like states, depression, suicidal ideation and/or suicide attempts, sleep disturbances, and to a lesser degree self-mutilation and PTSD) (Terr, 1994; Valentine, 2000)" (Roberts, 2002, p. 3).*

Roberts considers that these symptoms constitute complex trauma. Chronic, developmental, complex trauma is believed to interfere with normal, sequential neurological development and "the capacity to integrate sensory, emotional and cognitive information into a cohesive whole" (van der Kolk, 2005, p. 402; Bowlby, 1988; Ford & Kidd, 1998; Perry, 2002a; Perry, Pollard, Blakley, Baker, & Vigilante, 1995; Schore, 2001a, 2001b). Bruce Perry (2001) and Daniel Hughes (2000) describe two persistent patterns in traumatised children: 1) A high degree of dissociation and withdrawal; and, 2) A persistent, highly aroused vigilant state. Perry concludes that both lead to disordered and disorganised development and future psychopathology. Both patterns manifest developmentally in an extreme absence of words to describe their inner landscape and efforts to do so tend to towards fragmented and disordered meaning, lacking any sense of coherence (Hughes, 2000; Perry, 2001; Perry, Pollard, Blakley, Baker, & Vigilante, 1995). Thus, the experience of complex trauma is considered to profoundly affect adult functioning.

Distinguishing between simple and complex trauma allows for recognition of the profound impact of political and war violence on victims. Simple trauma refers to a traumatic event that occurs in the context of physical and emotional safety. Complex trauma refers to situations that offer no degree of physical or emotional safety (Courtois & Ford, 2009). An example is prolonged political and war violence in the developing countries of Uganda and Sri Lanka where I conduct humanitarian work. In these complex trauma situations the stress is deemed so great that it "cannot be defended against, coped with or managed" and subsequently immobilises the individual (Boss, 2006, p. 24). The metaphor of a bridge assists in understanding the concept for the weight of complex trauma causes a bridge to collapse because its supports can no longer withstand the immense pressure (Boss, 2006). This resonates in my work with communities experiencing complex trauma.

If profound trauma during a child's formative years leads to complex impacts in adult life, how do they cope? Traumatised children learn to adopt extreme coping strategies to manage overwhelming traumatic stress and as a result, there is an extremely high risk of developing major psychopathological issues in adolescence and adulthood (Perry, 2002a; 2002b; Schore, 2001a; Schore, 2001b; van der Kolk, 2005). Arguably, children exposed to prolonged and pervasive complex, war-related trauma experience a detrimental impact on personality development and identity formation, overwhelming coping mechanisms and leading to acute mental health issues in adult life. For this reason, continued political and war violence ascribes to a category of complex trauma. Western trauma specialists assert that it requires specialised intervention by trained trauma specialists. So again, what's the best they can hope for?

There exists a large body of research and interventions into trauma resulting from chronic childhood abuse, especially multiple, prolonged, interpersonal traumatic events experienced during critical phases of development (Perry, 2002; van der Kolk, 2005). However, there is less research on the effects of severe and prolonged exposure to the complexity of enduring nature of political and war violence. Moreover, there is a currently campaign to detach massive, severe, extensive, external trauma from what might be considered ordinary trauma (for example, divorce of parents or the birth of a sibling) (Herman, 1992; 1997, 2005; Perry, et al., 2004). Western clinicians are attempting to differentiate between complex trauma and simple trauma to find appropriate terms befitting different levels and types of

"… children exposed to prolonged and pervasive complex, war-related trauma experience a detrimental impact on personality development and identity formation, overwhelming coping mechanisms and leading to acute mental health issues in adult life …"

trauma.

Again, the question arises as to what helps individuals and communities to recover from complex trauma. Courtois (2008, (pp. 93-95) posits in an article on complex trauma that Western contemporary treatment encompasses a sequenced, stage-oriented model organised "to address specific issues and skill". The model bears resemblance to Janet's formulation of a model of trauma treatment as early as 1907 and Herman's landmark work in 1992. Courtois details the model as follows:

Stage 1:	Pretreatment issues, treatment frame, alliance building, safety, affect regulation, stabilisation, skill-building, education, self-care, and support.
Stage 2:	Deconditioning, mourning, resolution, and integration of the trauma.
Stage 3:	Self and relational development, enhanced daily living.

Courtois asserts that the first stage is the longest and is crucial to treatment success. Much of my work with complex trauma in Uganda and Sri Lanka concentrates primarily on stage 1. Perhaps this partly

answers my question as to what's the best they can hope for. My interventions are designed to assist traumatised para-counsellors to stabilize by creating a safe place for them to learn and practice skills that will assist them to function on a day-to-day basis without debilitating flashbacks and hyperarousal symptoms. I see positive results from my work. Nonetheless, understanding resiliency and posttraumatic growth is essential as I continue the struggle with my question.

WHAT IS RESILIENCY?

The concepts of resiliency and posttraumatic growth are often used interchangeably but reflect subtle differences. The traditional focus in psychology has been on individual negative functioning and distress in the area of psychological health as opposed to resiliency and posttraumatic outcomes and there is a welcome shift towards sensitivity to cultural and contextual dimensions in collective cultures such as Uganda or Sri Lanka (Drozdek, 2013; O'Dougherty, et al., 2013; Wood & Tarrier, 2010). This changing focus strives to integrate mental health issues with positive emotions and behaviours emphasising strengths as opposed to deficits (Masten, 2001). Thus, effective interventions focus on strengths, gifts, assets and the opportunity to reflect on spiritual themes both individually and in communal settings.

Human beings are born with an instinctual capacity for resilience, including victims of enduring warfare (Zolkoski & Bullock, 2012). Resilience refers to the "ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity or the like," the "ability to regain shape" and, "resistance to adversity" (Tedeschi, 2012). The American Psychological Association (2013) defines resilience as "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors." Hence, it means the propensity to bounce back from difficult experiences and sustain a healthy outcome following traumatic event/s (Alvord & Grados, 2005; Brooks, 2006; Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1997; Seery, Holman, Silver, &

Cohen, 2010). George Valiant (2002, p. 285) describes resilient people in the vein of "a twig, with a fresh, green living core. When twisted out of shape, such as a twig bends, but it does not break; instead it springs back and continues growing." Interestingly, participants in a trauma workshop conducted in Sri Lanka liked drawing the metaphor of a tree to describe their journey as it represents familiarity and growth "with a fresh, green living core."

The association between resilience and various socio-contextual factors indicates that resiliency after traumatic events is more common than first thought (Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, Vlahov, 2007) and this has been my experience of working with the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. Bovin and Marx (2011) found that a healthy outcome for PTSD depends on an individual's appraisal of the event(s) and this is vital in shaping the significance and meaning of the event for future wellbeing. Inherent in resiliency is hope, for when hopes are shattered one's meaning in life is lost leading to isolation, hopelessness and despair (Boss, 2006). Resiliency is like the metaphor of an inoculation where individuals are more likely to experience a protective function when exposed to future adversity. Thus, how a person interprets experiences of trauma has a significant effect on resiliency. Instilling hope in broken communities supports the healing process. Where does hope begin?

Resilient individuals share common factors like hope. Brené Brown (2010, p. 64) in her book, The Gifts Of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are, discovered from her research that five of the most common factors of resilient individuals to be:

1. They are resourceful and have good problem-solving skills;

2. They are more likely to seek help;

3. They hold the belief that they can do something that will help them to manage their feelings and cope;

4. They have social support available to them; and

5. They are connected with others, such as family or friends.

Brown (2010, p. 65) discovered that "the

very foundation of the "protective factors" – the things that made them bouncy – was their spirituality" and this spirituality consisted of "a shared and deeply held belief." Without exception she found that spirituality emerged as one of the important components of resilience. From this base she acquired three further components essential to resilience:

1. Cultivating hope;

2. Practicing critical awareness; and

3. Letting go of numbing and taking the edge off vulnerability, discomfort, and pain.

Thus, Brown's first component of resiliency, cultivating hope, is inherent in resilience. Lack of hope leads to powerlessness and the "inability to effect change" produces feelings of desperation (Brown, 2010, p.65). Thus, hope emerges from spirituality and deeply held beliefs about its source.

Brown's other components are practicing critical awareness and letting go of numbing and taking the edge off vulnerability, discomfort, and pain. Practicing critical awareness involves "reality-checking" to assess the messages being received from socio-cultural processes (Brown, 2010, p. 65). Then, Brown declares that letting go of numbing and taking the edge off vulnerability, discomfort, and pain, sabotages resilience. She believes that this style of coping actually dulls any good feelings such as the ability to experience joy. Emotions cannot be selectively numbed. As painful as it when a frostbitten finger thaws, traumatised people need to come out of numbing in order to heal. A strong faith community can help if it is safe. Sadly, I have rarely come across one that is and a common injunction in my overseas work has been, "…please not tell my Pastor, or family, or friend. They will not understand and I might end up more isolated than before." Thus, people carry their secrets in silence.

WHAT IS POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH?

Posttraumatic growth is different to resiliency although they possess common

attributes. Posttraumatic growth is defined as "positive change experienced as a result of the struggle with trauma" (Kilmer, 2006; Tedeschi, & Calhoun, 1996, 1999) and expands on the notion of resiliency to include a shift to "a new level of functioning and perspective" and additionally, "transformative responses to adversity" (Tedeschi, 2012). Whereas resiliency is about bouncing back from traumatic experience, posttraumatic growth contains both individual and social factors such as individual growth, the implementation of more humanitarian social practices and social reorganisation (Tedeschi, et al., 2009).

Posttraumatic growth appears to be a universal phenomenon and is reported across Western and non-Western cultures including Israel, China, Turkey, Germany, Bosnia, Japan, Holland, Australia, Switzerland, and others (Tedeschi, 2012). Posttraumatic growth simultaneously involves both a process and an outcome (Tedeschi, Park & Calhoun, 2009) and can be experienced collectively by communities such as Uganda and Sri Lanka. The process includes components of resilience, for example, a positive cognitive mindset. However, confusion, grief and mourning precede rebuilding and this is a struggle. The metaphor of physical rebuilding pictures an internal reality where the old structures must come down before new and stronger ones can be erected in their place (Tedeschi, et al., 2009). This new and stronger outcome results from experiencing positive changes from the struggle with traumatic events (Tedeschi, 2012).

Kidnapping survivor Amanda Lindhout (2013, p. 11) knows this as she publicly shares her experience as a hostage in Somalia after spending 460 days in captivity. She does not dwell on her captivity. Instead she:

> *…relates moments where personal transformation occurred and she had the opportunity to turn suffering into growth. She explains how her journey through regret, anger and pain ultimately led her to discover that as long as*

> *she retained her ability to feel compassion, her humanity could never be taken from her. During her weakest moments, she found the ability to experience her greatest power: the power to forgive.*

Linhout declares, "The process of forgiveness is not easy, but the decision to engage in it is the single most liberating experience a person can have." Lindhout is coming to terms with the personal meaning of her traumatic experiences and her place in the world (Tedeschi, et al., 2004a, 2004b, 2006). This constitutes posttraumatic growth and does not occur from the traumatic events per se but the ensuing struggle to integrate the events and experiences into a new reality.

Indeed, compassion, forgiveness and integrating traumatic events into a new reality represent posttraumatic growth. Reports of posttraumatic growth indicate a new appreciation for life, a sense of the spiritual, changed priorities especially in regards to valuing close relationships, a sense of personal strength in surviving at great odds, and the acceptance of the trauma accompanied by appropriate grief (Tedeschi, et al., 2004a, 2004b). I attempt to facilitate this for the shattered people in Uganda and Sri Lanka.

WHAT'S THE BEST THEY CAN HOPE FOR?

So what's the best they can hope for? I'm still wrestling with the question but one thing I know: that healing is possible. But perhaps healing looks different to what most of us think. I like Richard Rohr's (1987) definition of healing. In his audio series, Broken and Blessed, he declares that he does not see a lot of deep woundedness disappear. However, he believes that profound healing is possible with God. He articulates what I have come to believe is the essence of healing:

> *It still hurts, you still remember it, and you often carry your hurts to your grave. Sometimes there are great graces given and the burdens are gone. But what I see is that when they*

> *pray through their hurts and pains, what goes away or the grace that is given is their power to destroy them and their power to let them destroy other people (Track 12).*

The war-traumatised people of northern Uganda and northern Sri Lanka have experienced profound complex trauma. Resiliency can already be seen in those who prefer to forgive and struggle to come to terms with a new reality instead of harbouring bitterness and resentment. I continue to be humbled by the persistent hope I see in some in the midst of crushing realities. They refuse to allow the trauma to destroy them and those they love. Perhaps the final word goes to Rabbi Harold Kushner (1996, cited in Viorst, 1979, p. 295) as he laments the bitter sweetness of healing and growth:

> *I am a more sensitive person, a more effective pastor, a more sympathetic counselor because of Aaron's life and death than I would ever have been without it. And I would give up all those gains in a second if I could have my son back. If I could choose, I would forego all of the spiritual growth and depth which has come my way because of our experiences, and be what I was fifteen years ago, an average rabbi, an indifferent counselor, helping some people and unable to help others, and the father of a bright, happy boy. But I cannot choose.*

Paula Davis is a clinical counsellor, educator and supervisor specialising in trauma. Along with her husband she designs and runs international marriage building workshops. She travels to post-war countries as a humanitarian, teaching local para-counsellors about trauma. She is a regular guest lecturer at Uganda Christian University. Paula has an unshakable desire to keep pushing the boundaries of integrating her faith with her teaching and what it means to love well. One of her abiding passions is making a difference in the lives of others. However, she also enjoys lingering over a good coffee with her husband and can be found utterly absorbed in having fun in the great outdoors. She enjoys anything that presents a challenge, and recently cage dived with Great White sharks in South Africa and zip-lined across Victoria Falls.

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RECOGNISING POWER AND POSITIONING IN A CONVERSATION ACROSS "CULTURES"

By Brian Morris

I am greatly encouraged by the title of this journal issue: *Across cultures – transitions and transcendence*, as it suggests culture is on the agenda as a topic for conversation by counsellors. I make suggestions as to the cultures from which counselling emerges, offer an example of an unhelpful "cross-cultural" conversation, and from that suggestions for ethical, culturally respectful conversations.

CULTURE IN THE PROFESSIONS OF FAMILY THERAPY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND COUNSELLING

If you have read on the place of culture in the theory and practice of family therapy you will have noted the critique that culture is marginalised in the theory and practice of that field (see for example McGoldrick & Hardy, 2008a). The engagement of psychology as a profession with culture, even more so than family therapy, has had a limited and marginalised history (see for example Billig, 2008; Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Lock & Strong, 2010; Rose, 1998). There are developments that are exceptions to this limited engagement with culture. For example, in the case of family therapy, the development of narrative therapy (White and Epston, 1990) and feminist therapies (Brown, 2010) are indicators of engagement with culture. Social constructionist (Lock & Strong, 2010) and critical psychologies (Billig, 2008; Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997) are two of the exceptions in psychology. However, in the main, both family therapy and psychology, as professions from which counselling emerges, have had difficulty in considering culture as important to the theories and practices these professions develop.

In the context of the development of the counselling profession from family therapy and psychology, what do I mean by culture? Culture is, first of all, the dominant social and historical milieu within which these two professions developed, which in turn shaped how these professions gave meaning to the subject of their study. Secondly, culture is also that which the dominant cultural and social milieu does not recognise. I suggest western psychology has both developed in a socio-historical milieu where the individual self is constructed as autonomous and unaffiliated, while also contributing to this

view (see Rose, 1998). Geertz (1979), a cultural anthropologist, in comparing the western view of persons to conceptions from other cultures, writes that the western view regards the person as "a bounded, unique . . . motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic centre of awareness, emotion, judgement, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively against other such wholes and against a social and natural background" (p. 229). Geertz suggests that while this view is "incorrigible" to us in the west, it is "a rather peculiar idea in the context of the world's cultures" (p. 229). With this cultural focus though, as Geertz argues, other cultural understandings of people that do not emphasize the individual as bounded and unaffiliated in their development are either ignored or not substantially recognised. I suggest that this individual focus is one cultural background from which the mainstream counselling profession develops its culture.

In regard to family therapy, as the other profession from which counselling develops its culture, I suggest the construction of the individual is not limited to the individual as in psychology, but expands to include the familial context, while not recognising wider cultural factors. In the context of America, but with relevance to the Australian context, as much of our theory and practice stems from America, McGoldrick and Hardy write,

> *We need to redefine the boundaries of our field to a cultural viewpoint that takes into account the diversity of our society and the way that societal oppression has silenced the voices and constrained the lives of individuals, families, and whole communities . . . Racial, sexist, cultural, classist, and heterosexist power hierarchies constrain our clients' lives and determine what gets defined as a problem and what services our society will set up to respond to these problems. (2008b, pp. 4-5)*

With this statement, McGoldrick and Hardy make a plea for those in the family therapy field to look wider than family systems for understanding – making meaning – of their clients' lives and responding to the concerns they have. I think the same plea is relevant to psychology as the other location for counselling's cultural background. Hence, a suggestion in regard to family therapy that I think is apropos for counselling as a profession, considering the two locations from which counselling develops its culture, is offered by McGoldrick and Hardy: "To re-vision the dominant discourses within family therapy [read counselling], we must examine the ways in which we have organised our theory and practice and analyze how this arrangement replicates the dominant value systems of our society" (2008b, p. 5).

POWER AND LANGUAGE IN DEFINING CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

In his seminal critique of colonial definitions of culture outside of its own unrecognised but "superior" culture, Clifford writes, "'Cultural' difference is no longer a stable, exotic otherness; self-other relations are matters of power and rhetoric rather than of essence" (1988, p. 14). Clifford highlights the two players at work when a dominant group defines a less dominant group – power and language. I suggest it is our understanding of power and language that must primarily be addressed in a re-organisation of our theory and practice if we are to begin to recognise – *transition or transcend* – our own cultural location and recognise and respond ethically to the wider cultural location of our clients. Hence, in the remainder of this article I offer a definition of power, a theory for using language ethically, and then I offer an example of power and language in conversation from a brief excerpt of a conversation I recently was involved in.

DISCOURSE: CONNECTING POWER, LANGUAGE, AND KNOWLEDGE

To set the scene for understanding power and language I first introduce a social concept that is intimately linked to these.

The concept is discourse, developed by Foucault (1969/2002). Foucault first introduced the concept of discourse for understanding how power and knowledge are related and shape the social world. Discourse is a "specific regime of power" that generates knowledge (McNay, 1992, p. 27), "a set of rules by which truth [knowledge] is produced" (Foucault, 1984/2000, pp. 296-297). The regime of power that produces knowledge in turn produces human subjectivity, positioning people to see themselves on the terms that that language and knowledge produced from discourse authorise (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000, p. 40; Davies, 1990-1999, pp. 43-44; Weedon, 1997, pp. 21-26, 95, 105). A classic example of a regime of power that produces knowledge is the production of the DSM (diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders). Produced from an authoritative (power) scientific or medical (knowledge) discourse the DSM defines different categories of symptoms into specific named mental illnesses (knowledge) and thus, anyone who might display those categorised symptoms can be diagnosed, or constituted (power), as having a particular mental illness. Thus, the person diagnosed is constituted by a regime of power that authorises knowledge through specific discursive language.

POWER

From the above definition of discourse and power, and the centrality of language and knowledge to the playing out of power in people's lives, it is clear that power is produced by the positions and ideas in society that we give authority to. Thus, power does not have an essence nor is it monopolised by one group over another, unless authority is given to a group (eg: the producers of the DSM) and an idea (eg: the scientific method or the medical model) to exercise power. However, even then, that authority and power can be resisted, which is why Deleuze writes:

> [P]ower has no essence; it is simply operational. It is not an attribute but a relation: the power-relation is the set of possible relations between forces, which passes through

> the dominated forces no less than through the dominating. (1988, p. 27)

Elsewhere Deleuze explains Foucault's view of power-relations as lines in a relationship which can be broken: "Foucault talked of lines of sedimentation but also of lines of 'breakage' and of 'fracture'" (Deleuze, 1992, p. 159). In Foucault's words, "as soon as there is a power relation, there is the possibility of resistance. We are never trapped by power: we can always modify its grip in determinate conditions and according to a precise strategy" (Foucault, 1977/1996, p. 224). Power is produced in relationship. Power is not an essential quality of a person. While power or authority can appear convincingly all-powerful there are points and places for resisting that production of power.

POSITIONING

I now turn to a theory that is helpful for using language ethically, with ideas and practices offered by positioning theory (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). By positioning in language, I refer to the way language used in conversations involves power and knowledge produced from discourses to position, or situate, people as being obligated to respond

in certain predetermined ways to the original authoritative speaker. An important component in positioning theory is the concept subject position. This concept was first introduced into the social sciences by Hollway (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, & Walkerdine, 1984) in her study on heterosexual relations and gendered subjectivity:

> Discourses make available positions for subjects to take up. These positions are in relation to other people. Like the subject and object of a sentence . . . women and men are placed in relation to each other through meanings which a particular discourse makes available. (1984, p. 236)

When two people have a conversation that makes sense they use material from discourse because the words they use have a common meaning. As they speak, they either tacitly or intentionally (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999, pp. 22-23) enunciate with "illocutionary force" a speaking position from which they expect the other person will respond (Winslade, 2005, pp. 352, 362, fn. 2). An example of this speaking with a common expectation that the other person will respond are our

greeting practices; such as when we say "hello" or "good morning" to a person, we expect a polite greeting in return from them. In most conversations, the initial speaking by the first person in the conversation structures the relationship, at that moment, according to a moral sense of who has the speaking rights, and who has a duty to respond in a certain way (Harré, Moghaddam, Pilkerton Cairnie, Rothbart, & Sabat, 2009, pp. 7-8; Linehan & McCarthy, 2000. p. 442; van Langenhove & Harré, 1999, p. 20; Winslade, 2005, p. 353).

Hicks (1996, p. 107), uses the term "moment to moment 'oughtness'", which I think helpfully names this moral sense that two people have in responding to each other in a conversation (Winslade, 2005, p. 353). To connect this "moment to moment oughtness" to discourse, I refer to Parker, who offers an analogy using Althusser's (1971) thoughts on the pull of ideology. Parker writes, "the discourse is hailing us, shouting 'hey you there' and making us listen as a certain type of person. . . . [directing] what we are expected to do when addressed" (1992, pp. 9-10). "Moment to moment oughtness", the hailing shout of discourse, highlights the discursive power that is present in conversations when one person speaks, intentionally or implicitly, from a subject position that demands the other person respond from an asymmetrical subject position.

A CONVERSATION ACROSS "CULTURES"

To illustrate discourse, power, knowledge, and positioning further I explain a small part of a conversation I had with Sue1 during research I recently conducted. During the conversation with Sue, which happened to concern the relationship with her partner, I asked her how she managed to get change to occur in that relationship. Sue provided a metaphor to explain the process of helping her partner change, and how she put the metaphor into practice. Sue concluded her point with the following: "[I would] get him to talk to me first about things he wanted to, and then gradually work him around.

1   A pseudonym

You know, women are very manipulative". To this statement I responded, "Are you manipulative or are you being smart about getting what you need?" "Maybe it is that", was Sue's equivocal response to my statement.

It is Sue's use of the word manipulative, my response to that word, and then Sue's further response to my words that I offer comment on in relation to discourse, power, knowledge and positioning in language.

In this conversation with Sue, I am re-producing a gender aware discourse, which provides knowledge that Sue's use of the word "manipulative" to define herself and other women is a production of power that is unfair. Hence, I respond with a statement masquerading as a question, "Are you manipulative or are you being smart about getting what you need?" With my response, Sue is positioned to respond to my statement in a specific way. She has been "hailed" as a certain type of person (unknowledgeable about gender politics) to respond accordingly. Sue, of course, can resist, but I have come from an enlightened discursive position, and expect her to respond with an acknowledgement of the new knowledge. Hence, along with the gender aware discourse in regard to the unjust treatment of women, I am informed by a discourse that places me in the expert position to be the one to inform Sue of the injustice. One could call it a privileged discourse, perhaps informed by my position as researcher or academic, or because I am a man. In questioning Sue's use of the word "manipulative", I put my knowledge and understanding before hers, thus producing power in the conversation that placed Sue in a "one down" position. By being positioned as one down, Sue was left with limited positions for a response to my question. Because of my production of power, whatever Sue's response might be, it would potentially contribute further to the production of power, or reinscribe power, leaving us in a deadlocked situation and with limited knowledge of Sue's experience and skills in the relationship with her partner. Along with this confined positioning offered from my position of "moral authority", I also positioned Sue as lacking such moral authority and knowledge.

After I questioned Sue's use of the word "manipulative", and suggested she was smart about getting what she needed, her response to me was, "maybe it is that". With this equivocal response, Sue is possibly repositioning herself, as having a different opinion to me, even a different moral authority to me, while not directly opposing or agreeing with my opinion. Sue produced power in her response to me, but with the equivocal response she offered, the reinscribing of power was left to me depending on how I responded to Sue. With her response, "maybe it is that", Sue offers an invitation to change the status of power in the conversation. While I positioned Sue unequally, Sue's response invites me to reconsider my position and conduct a different type of conversation, where things are discussed openly without either one of us exerting a moral authority or opinion that positions the other asymmetrically and unjustly.

AN INVITATIONAL CULTURE IN COUNSELLING

So how does this example of the intersection between discourse, power, knowledge, and positioning in conversations, tie back to culture in counselling? You can draw your own helpful conclusions, but I will offer three applications that connect with Clifford's critique of cultural differences as defined by colonial powers, '"Cultural' difference is no longer a stable, exotic otherness; self-other relations are matters of power and rhetoric rather than of essence" (1988, p. 14).

First, the production of power can be invisible to both the counsellor and the client, but it can still be harmful. One of the best ways to recognise the production of power is to see how we position ourselves and our client in each "moment to moment" of a conversation. Second, we need to be on the guard for placing over the top of the client's story our own theory of what we think a client needs, or what theory we think will help a client. Our theory can be like a blanket. It may be helpful and comforting, but it can also smother. Third, regardless of the culture of the person we are working with, I think it is ethically sound to search for, invite, and respect their knowledge.

With a clear recognition of power, and language as a production of power, as counsellors we can begin to engage with cultures other than that which has shaped our profession, and work with people to investigate identity and values that are outside the constraints of our own cultural heritage.

◻ Brian Morris has been involved in counselling off and on for 16 years, at times feeling energised about the work, and at other times wondering if the work of counselling is for him. The last eight of those years he has been involved in counsellor education at Tabor Adelaide in either a full-time or adjunct capacity. What Brian has found important for him over the time of his involvement in counselling is not so much the length of involvement with the profession but the times of intense learning which involved personal and skill development, and then being able to helpfully utilise these knowledges and skills for the benefit of those consulting him. Of particular interest at present for Brian is: working toward the completion of the PhD, which has been one of the intense and most exhilarating times of learning, being able to teach Narrative therapy ideas and practices with its insightful ethical and political awareness, and spending time with his family, of which a significant part is, he and his partner Helen's, first granddaughter.

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OUR THEORY CAN BE LIKE A BLANKET. IT MAY BE HELPFUL AND COMFORTING, BUT IT CAN ALSO SMOTHER.

TRANSITIONING WELL
A PERSONAL JOURNEY

By Vanessa Irakoze

Our life is made of both smaller and bigger transitions. The smaller transitions that occur in the course of our life will happen almost inconsequentially and can even go unnoticed, however, for other transitions, there is an immense need to come to notice them because they call us to re-evaluate and re-calculate our lifestyles, values and the meaning we have made of the world around us (Schlossberg, 1981).

A metaphor that can be helpful in understanding what I mean by this is the image of a bridge; transitions are the bridges that help us move from one place to the next . Bridges (2004) differentiates between transitions and changes in noting that changes are situational, so specific tangible events that occur in life while transitions are psychological events that occur following those changes. These are experienced internally and affect our inner workings and the meaning making of the world around us. Transitions, or the crossing of the bridges of life allow us to connect the different changes that happen and understand our worlds and selves as a whole rather than in singular events that are disconnected through time.

Overtime, change is unavoidable, it is a reality that comes with life. Several of these changes will happen through life stage changes, environmental changes, family cycles and even personal changes. Some transitions we go through will affect everyone and will be felt on a social and broader sense and others will be more personal and will affect us in more individual ways. Some of the most common life stage transitions we go through are entwined with chronologically predictable shifts; what I mean by this is the chronological moves from childhood into adolescence, adolescence into adulthood and adulthood into old age. For children, the move into adolescence can bring anxieties such as the search for identity and the preoccupation with the world around

and their place in it. Erikson a theorist in stages of development saw a successful transition between these stages and a tackling of the stresses each of these bring and could be used as an indication of the ability for individuals to move on (Erikson, 1950). The most memorable parts of transitioning for us I believe is the inner-reorientation that comes with the various changes, the refocusing of the lenses with which we are looking at life. Transitions are common, they are a natural part of life and are inevitable, however they are often met with a reluctance to let go of the realities we have known and the familiar place we are in they become tainted by fears of the unknown and the unfamiliar. Moos and Tsu actually suggested that transition in its intensity could potentially present either an opportunity for psychological growth or potentially psychological deterioration (Moos & Tsu, 1976, pg13). I would like to offer this thought: what if we could transition gracefully and move through the various stages and events of life mindful of the moment to moment experiences staying open to the process while engaging with everything that is happening rather than focus on what will be left behind and letting go of our attempts to control things beyond our control? Bridges (2004) identified three different processes to transitions where people gradually reach an acceptance of the details of the new situation and the changes that come with it. The processes he saw were: Ending, loosing, letting go; the neutral zone; and the new beginning. There have been many different approaches to understanding

transitions in the realm of psychotherapy but for the purposes of this article I will predominantly focus on Bridges work.

THE ENDING, LOOSING, LETTING GO PROCESS.

Bridges saw transitions as needing to begin with an end. In order for people to be able to move from one place to another he thought that closure was important. The first process of transitioning here he offered as focusing on the tangible and intangible losses in order to prepare and move on psychologically. Initially, he thought that people should focus on letting go and proposed that "endings are the first, not the last, act of the play" (Bridges, 2004, p. 132). He acknowledged the discomfort of endings in offering five aspects of the ending process as disengagement, dismantling, dis-identification, disenchantment and disorientation (Bridges, 2004). For my personal journey into marriage, I have known this to be true. Getting married is a happy event but as Bridges proposed this was not initially experienced in such a way. In the preparation into marriage, I had to let go if my identity as a daughter and child, my identity as a sister and begin to see myself as a independent person separate to my family structure. There were many loses involved and at each realisation of what was happening came much emotional discomfort. The disentanglement and dismantling of the constructs of my identity thus far and the very much needed re-calculating of who I had been so far meant that I had to let go of my role in my family to let go of the comforts of living with my family and participating in the day to day activities of family life. A very scary thought I remember having in the leading up to my wedding day was to think that life as I had known it would never be the same, my relationships would not be same and moreover my approach to life which had heretofore been as a single person would no longer hold. Feelings of sadness, grief and loss surrounded this step in my transition. Bridges (2004) considered that in order to manage the discomfort of letting go, there was a need for respect for the past, of compensating for the losses and marking the end with tangible things while also

defining what was over and what was not. For my journey, this meant a reorganising of the place my family occupied in my world. There was a redefining of the things that were over - living at home, having dinner with my family every night, spontaneously doing things with my sister or my parents and participating in the spur of the moment discussions that would arise in the household. Furthermore there was also a redefining of the things that were not over, for me this was the place my family holds in my life, a defining of the things that remained unchanged, so being a daughter, a sister and the broader sense of being a part of my family. Realising what was ending and the losses around it meant that I was able to shift into this new stage of my life with both eyes open rather than staying in denial about the inevitable realities of the near future or even becoming stuck emotionally in the discomfort of the stage of transition I was in. Moos and Tsu considered that with each transition comes a disequilibrium that requires adjustments of individuals world view and the working out of new ways of dealing with life circumstances (Moos & Tsu, 1976).

THE NEUTRAL ZONE PROCESS.

Bridges considered this part of the process as the in-between part of the process where one loses relatedness and purpose because much of one's identity is tied up with the old order of things (Bridges, 2004). In this part of the process, individuals are more likely to feel disconnected to the world around them and because there are no new anchors or meaning, individuals are more susceptible to old weaknesses and feelings of anxiety can arise and productivity fall (Bridges, 2004). In this process it is important for people to realign psychologically and develop new patterns and mechanisms in order to make sure transitioning happens safely. In order to make it through this stage of the transition process, Bridges (2004) proposed creating temporary support systems and setting of small short term goals. Similarly, Fetsh (1992) proposed setting up supportive relationships during this time in transition and suggests a reshaping of the things that are not working while reaching an acceptance of the things that cannot be

changed. It is important in this stage to set up or strengthen routines that will enable us to stay on track and continue living according to values held. Encouraging time devoted to self care is a protective factor in transitional times. For my journey when it came to the neutral zone, I realised what was happening a little late in this process and I approached this stage with a 'soldier on' attitude at first and continued living relatively normally. The first signs for me were the emotional changes, I became more prone to being irritable and short tempered and did not understand why, I was finding myself more and more absent from home with a general numbness about personal emotional responses. In this time my sleep patterns also changed immensely and I felt a sense of exhaustion and felt lethargic. My diet was also challenged, I stopped exercising and eating right and generally lost my life routines. As I was preparing the house my husband and I would eventually live in, I was neglecting the one I lived in at the time and found that this actually made me more vulnerable. My family is a huge part of my support system but in this time, I was not very connected to them. When I noticed what was happening in what seemed like a light bulb moment, I began changing the things that were making me feel disconnected, I started including my family in the nesting process of getting my house ready through discussing with them what we were doing to the house. It required me to let go of the protective instinct in me that had led me to exclude them from this. I also set up a sleep pattern that allowed me to continue being productive and develop a more balanced diet this however proved to be very difficult as the old order of things was no longer present. I realised that what the researchers in the field had uncovered was really valuable, if this realisation did not happen for me, I would have potentially felt what Moos and Tsu (1976)saw as the potentially psychological deterioration of the process of transition. Once I had understood the disconnect that had occurred I was able to discover feelings of anticipation of the future ahead, feelings of excitement and joy at the thought of sharing life with my best friend and partner and more over had a new outlook of the process of getting married. Bridges (2004) identified this stage

as holding a special asset, it allowed for a creative opportunity to take place. He thought that in this stage, being a limbo like stage, there was an opening to reshape ways of doing things as the old systems became 'unfrozen' and before the new ones became frozen (Bridges, 2004). This has meant evaluating the ways I had always done things, what I had learned as family norms. It has meant coming together with my future husband to discover a new way (our way) of doing things.

THE NEW BEGINNING PROCESS

At this stage, Bridges (2004) saw a need for the new identity to take form and the establishing of a new sense of purpose that would make the changes begin to work. Moreover, he thought that this stage of the process could only take place once the psychological and behavioural transitions had begun (Bridges, 2004). He thought that in this transition, four Ps would need to be assessed: the purpose of the transition, the picture or vision of where the individual is transitioning to, a plan in making this work, and finally, the different roles and part people in our lives would play (Bridges, 2004). The most important part in this process is consistency in order to ensure that there is enough time allowed to readjust and reorient oneself to the changes that have happened. For me this came much later in the journey toward getting married. Two weeks before the wedding I remember a feeling of contentment, I had begun thinking of myself as a wife and had made a map of the anticipated changes, I knew what the next two weeks would look like and felt confident that this would happen relatively smoothly. Consistency is something that is continuously happening and progressively perfected I believe so now as I have settled into married life, I am finding out new ways of understanding the world and discovering new patterns in relationships. This last stage of the process of transition is the one that takes the most time, it requires patience as the new identities take place and form and it requires allowing the discomfort to settle, it calls individuals to acceptance of the new order of things and a deromanticising of the way things used to be (Bridges, 2004) For myself, this part has been the

most enjoyable because I have come in with an attitude of curiosity, looking at the way things are and how others respond to the transition that has occurred for me with excitement. I understood in this time that transitions in life are more than just for the individual, although the person going through them feels the intensity of the stages of the process more, transitions have a way of reminding us that we are all interconnected, they call others to transition with us in a mild way and bring an opportunity to stand together stronger and more purposefully as we conscientiously watch 'the chips' fall into place.

THE HELPER IN TRANSITION - COUNSELLING THROUGH TRANSITION

In this very personal journey I have come to see the counselling process in a new light, as a counsellor in the helping profession I am a strong believer in not asking my clients to go where I myself am not willing to go. A major part of writing this article has been for me to open myself up to what most of our clients go through. More often than not, our clients come to us at a crisis point often caused by change or transition and I believe that understanding the process of transition can bring an edge to normalising the emotional pain they can be encountering and provide further insight for the counsellor into the client's experience. Understanding what is happening to our clients in terms of the transition processes can bring a real empathy towards our client's situation. Their stories allow us as counsellors to meet them where they are in a fluid way, connecting with the pain they are experiencing. For my part, I see understanding the transitioning process in counselling as a definite enhancer of the counselling relationship and this can help both the client and the counsellor to work together to create and ensure a safe working space, while dismantling the power discourses present in the room. The counsellor then changes from being a professional to being a person, walking alongside the client on their journey to recovery.

Vanessa Irakoze [Masters in Counselling (current); Graduate Diploma in Counselling; Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Psychology)] Practices at Life Design Counselling in Adelaide. Special Interest are complex trauma in children and adults, relationship issues, depression, anxiety, grief and loss and counselling for children and addictions counselling. Vanessa uses an integrative approach which incorporates modalities such as CBT, ACT, Narrative therapy & EFT.

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Citation for exemplary service to Christian Counsellors Association Tasmania

Les Batchelor (Pastor) OAM, Chaplain

Les' personal profile shows a long history of being involved in supporting and encouraging those who are in need within our community. As a Chaplain in the Tasmanian community he was often asked for information concerning Christian Counsellors and in 2002 he was instrumental in the formation of CCAA Tasmania. Subsequently he accepted the appointment of Honorary Treasurer for this new Association, a role he continuously held for 12 years prior to his recent retirement in August 2014. Although Les' profession was that of Chaplain this did not limit or prevent him from actively supporting and promoting CCAA Tasmania with a passion and commitment that has seen him become a person the committee members have looked up to and depended on when things have been challenging. His strength and quiet encouragement has been valued and appreciated beyond measure.
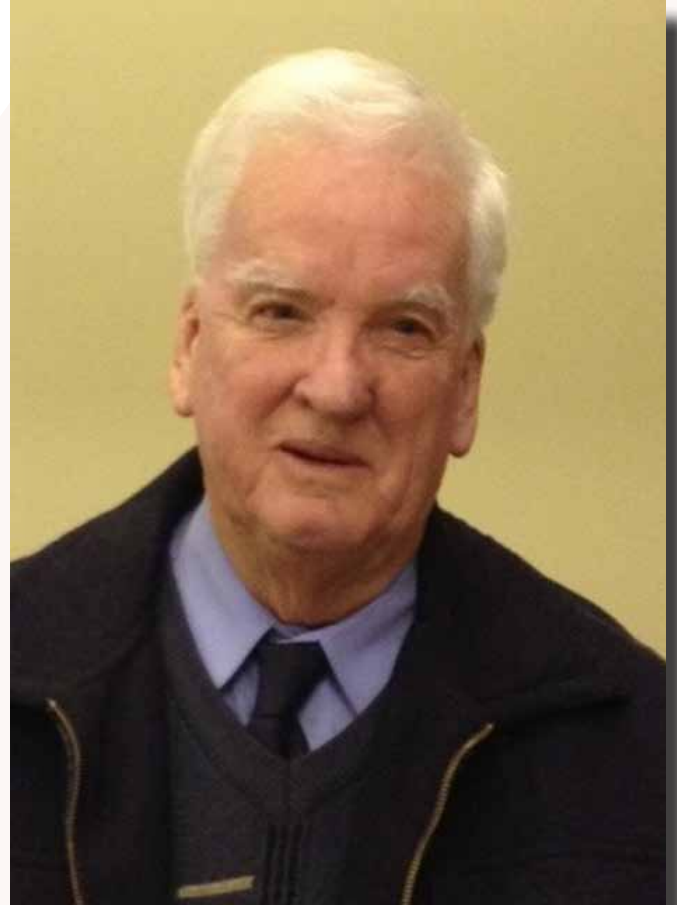
During his years of service to the community Les has held the following positions:

National President, Australian College of Chaplains
Mission Superintendent, Hobart City Mission
Visiting Chaplain to Tasmanian Prisons
President, Prisoners Aid Society (Life Member)
Chaplain, Royal Hobart Hospital (Current)
Treasurer, CCAA Tas
National Secretary, Australian Health and Welfare Chaplains
Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Tasmania
Chaplain, Converge International (for Tasmania Police)
Relief Chaplain, Tasmania Police
Council Member, Society of Justices of the Peace
Treasure, Tasmanian Cahpter, Australian Institute of Emergency Serviced
Fellow, Australian Institute of Emergency Services

In 2011 the Governor General recognised Les' tireless contributions across many contexts within the Tasmanian community, awarding him an OAM for his extensive years of service to the community through the church and a range of social welfare organisations. His service to CCAA Tasmania will be sorely missed.

Julie Weekes

President, CCAA Tasmania

AWARD

Award: Life Membership for Douglas Ian Sotheren

By Neil Harris, President of CCAA NSW

In my role as President of CCAANSW, I have the pleasure to confer a life membership award, which is only given to one member every three years.

This award was presented at the recent CCAA National Conference in Sydney and recognises the following:

- Excellence and high standards in the provision of Counselling over an extended period of time.
- Publishing of papers, and/or conducted workshops, and/or made conference presentations pertinent to Christian counselling.
- Has made a significant contribution to the running and/or growth of CCAA.
- Acted as a Counselling Supervisor for an extended period of time
- Has made a significant contribution to the running and growth of CCAA.

Doug Sotheren first trained as a relationship counsellor in 1970 – 1973. He then undertook further training in Gestalt and Family Therapy. In the late 1980's he developed an interest in body focused or somatic models of counselling and then undertook further training in this field.

For eight years, from 1973, he operated a counselling centre in Western Sydney which was the first counselling centre set up by the Baptist Union of NSW which in later years became LifeCare Counselling Service in Sydney. In 1989 he began a private practice as a Counsellor/Therapist, and human relations consultant on the NSW Central Coast.
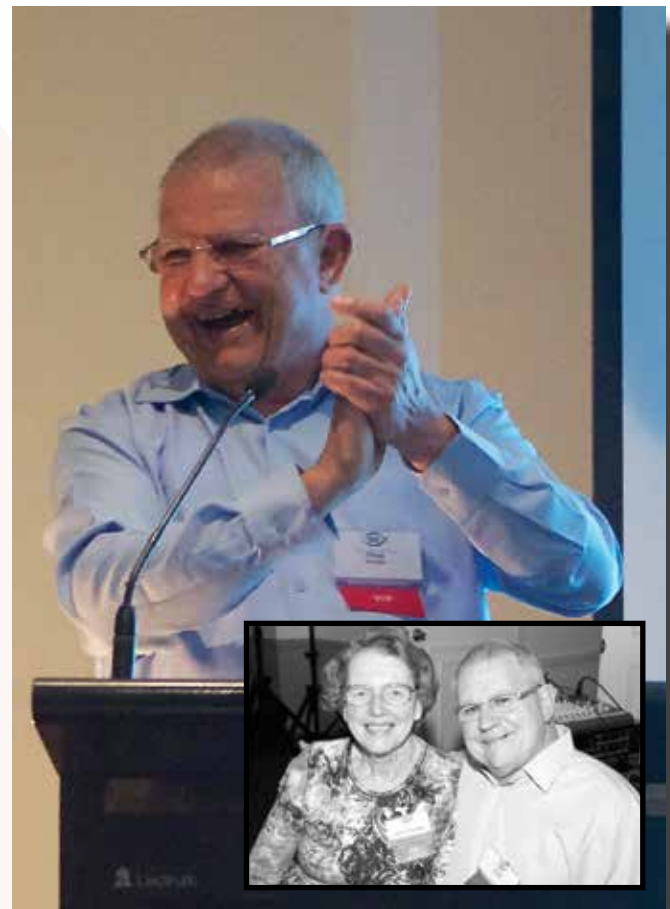
His experience includes over 40,000 hours of counselling and thousands of hours of intensive clinical supervision and group training for counsellors and other health professional throughout Australia. I am very honoured to say that I have had the good fortune and blessing to be just one of those possible 1000's of trainees. Doug is also a registered Baptist Minister, having trained in the late 60'S through to the early 70's at Morling Bible College where he won the Theology award two years in a row.

Along with his wife Judy, Doug has genuinely cared for and helped countless people with every resource at their disposal.

They have fed, looked after, given people a home, restored people back to health, the list goes on and on….I've often heard Doug say that without Judy, he'd never achieved a fraction of the things he has been able to do. So, this award is very much in honour of Judy as well as Doug.

It is with very great pleasure that I confer the award of Life Membership of CCAA to Doug, as an acknowledgement of all the many years of service and continuous outstanding therapy practice accomplished by you.

Congratulations Doug Sotheren.

MENTAL HEALTH
'NORMALITY' OR 'RECOVERY'?

By Dominie Nelson

How many of us as we begin our work with a new client pause to consider what it is we are doing, and how it is we might do it? The wise words of a supervisor early in my life as a counsellor still ring in my ears – the client sets the goal, the counsellor manages the process. I have more recently begun to consider both goal and process particularly in the light of the current mental health environment with its preference for short term empirically verifiable strategic intervention. What is it that we as counsellors are working towards as we engage with a client?

I was interested to read Martin Seligman's view of psychology as being an approach which in essence constituted 'the tail wagging the dog'. Seligman believes psychology has limited itself to bringing mentally-ill (read depressed, anxious, bipolar, and schizoid) clients back to a 'normal' base line. This started me thinking – what is normal? How do we define mental health? Is mental illness the opposite of mental health? How do we measure recovery (or know to what extent recovery is possible for a particular client)? How do we work with a client to facilitate their recovery? How might our counselling process encourage, support or block the client's progress towards recovery? Is it reasonable to expect a client with dual or multiple diagnoses or a longstanding history of mental illness to recover?

What is our concept of normality? I recall a psychology lecture where my concept of normality was stretched and challenged. Normality I was told is culturally defined, contextually informed, and subject to interpretation. By culturally defined, I mean what is normal for one culture is not for another. Do you know for example that catamites (small boys used by men for sexual enjoyment) were considered a normal part of Roman life? Our sexual norms and practices are currently in a state of flux- homosexuality, considered abnormal only a generation ago (homosexuality was defined as a psychiatric illness in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, as well as being prohibited by law) is no longer listed in the DSM, and currently Australian law no longer considers homosexual acts a crime, and some states are moving towards legalising same-sex marriage. What is normal varies between cultures and across time. By contextually informed I mean that the context gives rise to

certain expectations and assumptions, it would be considered normal to cheer and shout during a footy match, but not so normal in a parliamentary meeting (perhaps!). By subject to interpretation, I mean we each have personal rules for living that often emerge from our worldview and values about what is acceptable. Cross cultural counselling challenges the counsellor to examine and suspend their worldview and therefore their concept of normality. There are many things affecting our concept of normal.

Mental health more recently has been defined in terms of resilience and wellbeing – again, Seligman has been a key figure in popularising this thinking. Resilience is the capacity to bounce back from life's vicissitudes and to re-engage with life and relationships. Wellbeing is best considered in holistic terms – one's physical, psychological, social and spiritual capacities. The physical self is affected by diet, sleep/rest, exercise and pain. The psychological self consists of beliefs, feelings and requires mental stimulation (I like to study, think and write, others prefer su doku, crosswords, and the plethora of brain exercises found on the net). The social self needs meaningful relationships, some require more time with others, some re-charge by having time alone, but all of us need connection and loneliness has been identified as an accelerator of mental illness. The spiritual self needs hope, meaning, purpose and shared kindness. I find this holistic model useful for assessing the client, as it considers all elements of human experience. Imbalance in any area of life will affect the other areas – for example, a depressed client may avoid physical necessities (or over-indulge); this may increase depressive symptoms. An anxious client may avoid relationships or over-work a particular relationship. When assessing a suicidal client, protective factors such as hope or relationships can become anchors to help the person to find the will to live. Is having resilience, hope and life balance equivalent to recovery?

What then is the evidence of mental health? I presented this question to a staff member who dropped into my office. His conclusion was that awareness of life challenges together with the capacity to solve or manage problems combined with a will to engage with life equals mental health. I particularly value his mention of awareness as counselling process often involves raising awareness for the client and at the same time observing how clients respond to, distort or block awareness. I think he's onto something, but suspect that there is any number of definitions and considerable debate on what constitutes evidence of mental health.   As I reflect on what might be reasonable indicators of mental health these are the factors I have observed to be present in clients who 'make a good recovery'. Life balance is present, or a willingness to engage the process of achieving balance. Relationships are valued and there is the willingness and ability to repair relationships when needed. Clients who recover are aware, or are willing to become so and can make life affirming choices even when these are difficult to make. They have the capacity to inform their choices through reflection or are willing to become reflective. They believe that they (and others) have potential, are willing to engage (or re-engage) with life, enjoy contributing to others, can express

appreciation and have interest or curiosity in others. As I re read this paragraph, what stands out is that willingness to change and to learn seems fundamental to mental health and recovery.
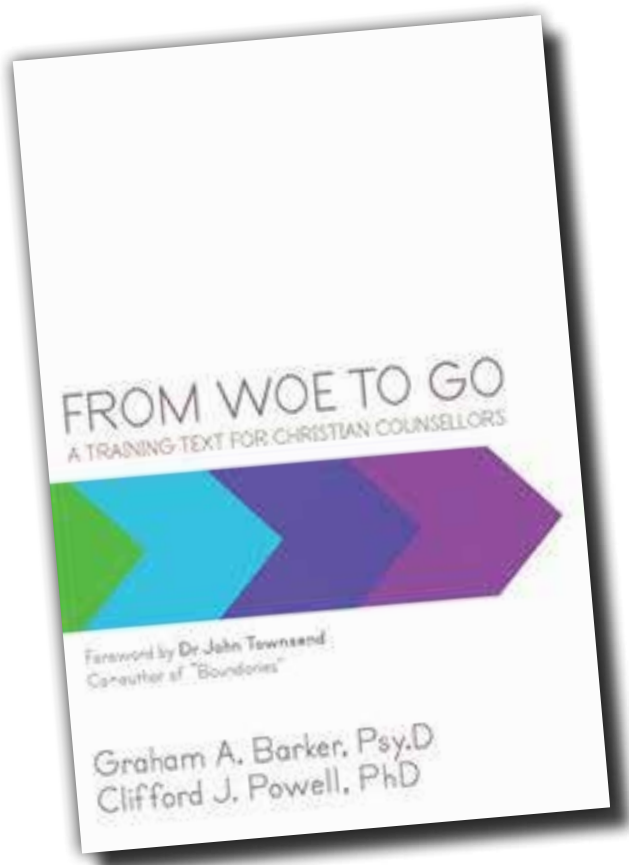
It is important to understand the client's ideas about recovery; otherwise we might well be working at cross purposes. Listening to and using the client's language for recovery can be of value in creating mutual understanding. Asking questions relevant to identifying and removing blocks to recovery raise awareness for the client and helps the counsellor to decide how best to help. At times the client's use of language may also suggest a theoretical framework for the counselling process, valuable if one works from a (responsibly) eclectic position.

Within a counselling context what then is recovery? I see recovery is a collaborative process which is mutually constructed between client and helper, in which the helper's knowledge and emotional support assists the client in a process of change. Markers of recovery may include increased sense of subjective wellbeing, feelings of hope and a renewed sense of direction and purpose in life. Recovery work may involve constructing new meanings for past and current events, resolving and or understanding feelings, acquiring new skills, challenging beliefs and attitudes and identifying resources. Recovery often includes engaging or re-engaging with relationships with a greater sense of safety, trust, equality and belonging. Recovery is not a destination, but a journey.

Our next edition of Counselling Connections Across Australia will focus on the theme of Mental Illness and Mental Health. Within the theme is scope to explore concepts of holistic therapy, resilience and wellbeing or strengths-based approaches to counselling. Articles exploring counselling interventions and best practice for common (or not so common) mental disorders and counsellor stories of working with clients on their journeys of recovery will also be most welcome. A peer-review process is available on request. Further information is available on the inside back cover of this journal.

I look forward to hearing from you.

■ Dominie Nelson - Editor,
Counselling Connections Across Australia

"FROM WOE TO GO"

Written by Dr's Graham Barker and Clifford Powell

Around the year 1993, Dr Graham Barker and Dr Clifford Powell, began teaching Counselling at the Wesley Institute in Sydney, NSW. Both having trained in Theology and Psychology, they began a journey towards thinking through the integration of these two fields and the process involved in decoding core constructs towards student counsellors so as to invite the development of the person of the Counsellor through Christian integration, as core to their training and development.

One might say the last 20 years or so of teaching, writing, thinking, designing courses, maintaining their own counselling practices (a hall mark of a good educator in my view anyway), and remaining faithful to this core belief of Christian integration, has culminated in the writing of the their text "From Woe to Go, a training guide for Christian Counsellors".

The book starts with a history of Christian Counselling through the metaphor of lifespan development. What is great about this is that it informs the reader of the story of integration and it also notes the formative texts written by our Christian forefathers, so the reader can know about these texts and read them if they choose.

Built from this are overviews of major Counselling theories with a section where the theories are critiqued with the added bonus of the author's demonstrating how they construct a critique and the ever important issue of harmony with Christian faith as part of the critique.

Focusing then on the essential qualities for the developing counsellor, the writers take you on a journey of heart felt lessons, often born from personal experience where we see the parallel of Grace becoming the genuine motivation for the counsellor to springboard into effective listening, not because it's a good thing for Counsellors to master (although it clearly is), but because as the training Counsellor envelops essential Christian Counselling attributes, so it follows that Grace will be the avenue in which the Counsellor can truly reflect the ever living Christ, in the Counselling session as well as in all other relationships.

The capstone of the book is then how the writers present their model of Counselling through the three stages of Connecting, Correcting and finally concluding. Each of these stages are then pulled apart and broken down into common sense sub stages where the reader has defined for them the process of the therapy from the first session where a client is met, through to correction of the three main areas of thinking, emotions and destructive behaviours, to the conclusion and consolidation of the changes made and the celebration of the shift in the client.

This book is an excellent inclusion in any Counsellor's library or used as a text in a Christian Counselling College. When you read a book written with both academic rigor and experiential insight, you know you've got something worthwhile.

Graham Barker and Clifford Powell are both therapists of excellence. They have a long track record of being able to produce, bring out, develop, and see the raw potential in a student who genuinely wants to serve Christ through Counselling. Their book goes a long way in giving advice, insight and direction for that student, or that therapist looking for key insight into integration and life changing therapy practice. It's well worth a read.

Neil Harris

CCAANSW President

Guide for Contributors

Counselling Connections Across Australia is the national journal of the Christian Counsellors Association. Published annually, we seek to promote the responsible integration of faith and practice and to encourage and promote excellence in counselling and psychotherapy. Our intentions in producing a journal are fourfold:

- To publicise and promote **Christian Counsellors Association of Australia** (CCAA) to the professional counselling community.

- To develop the practice and understanding of Counselling and Psychotherapy through research and reflection on theory and clinical experience.

- To provide an avenue for appropriate written expression to the Christian counselling fraternity.

- To express the values, vision and mission of CCAA.

Contribution of articles to CCAA for publication is welcomed, subject to the following guidelines:

1. Content is to be relevant to the current journal theme. **The theme for the 2015 edition will explore the topic "Mental Illness or Mental Health?" Within the theme is scope to explore concepts of holistic therapy, resilience and wellbeing, strengths-based approaches to counselling or particular theoretical orientations towards working with mental illness or promoting mental health.**

2. Articles are to be between 1500 – 5000 words, and reflect a scholarly approach to the subject matter. Research and the substantiation of key points and arguments are expected.

3. Readability – material to be logically and clearly organised, with use of appropriate nomenclature for professional counselling. Style may be narrative or analytical, and stated in the third person.

4. Contributors may write from personal clinical experience in order to capture the essence of clinical work in the counselling field. Examples of this writing style may include case studies or individual case reports which provide a clinical exploration and discussion relevant to the current journal theme. Reference to literature that assists readers to understand the issues raised must be included.

5. Please provide a bibliography, APA style, at the conclusion of your article. In-text referencing (with the exception of directly quoted material) and footnotes are discouraged.

6. A short paragraph on your professional interests, qualifications, professional memberships and counselling experience should accompany your submission, together with a passport-sized digital coloured photo of high resolution.

7. **Articles are to be submitted via email to the Journal Editorial Committee Chair, Dominie Nelson, journal@ccaa.net.au. Please include your name, postal and email address and on a separate page. The deadline for submissions for the 2015 journal is June 1st.**

Peer Review

Articles submitted for peer review must be accompanied by a letter requesting this process. A copy of the article is to be submitted with a separate page giving your name, address and contact details (email preferred). No identifying material (author or participants) is permitted within the body of the article. Peer review is conducted by two reviewers who are familiar with the counselling field and are academically qualified. Peer review results in a higher standing for published articles completing the peer review process.

Editorial Process

1. The articles are reviewed by the Journal Editorial Team. Authors of articles selected for inclusion in the Journal will be informed by the Editorial Chair. Publication includes electronic publication to the CCAA website. Please note that submission of articles implies permission for editorial process and changes to the article if deemed necessary.

2. A courtesy copy of your article with any editorial changes will be forwarded to your email address at the time of journal publication if the author is not a member of CCAA.

3. A complimentary copy of the journal containing your published article will be posted to all contributors (please provide postal address). Additional copies if requested will be forwarded at a cost of $15 per copy (inclusive of postage).

Advertising

Advertising space is available within the journal, subject to approval. Content of advertisements may include services, products or opportunities relevant to counsellors and psychotherapists or the clients they serve. Rates and formatting requirements are available on application to the editor. Our readership includes clinical counsellors, counselling supervisors, counsellor educators, counselling training colleges, social workers, psychologists and undergraduate and post graduate counselling trainees. Our Associate Members include those having an interest in counselling, pastoral care and ministry and we distribute 1200 copies on an annual basis. We actively promote quality counsellor and psychotherapy education as well as books and counselling and psychotherapy resources.