

Encountering the Other: Making Space for Learning

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The starting point of my theological and theoretical approach to supervision comes from an experience I had as a teenager. My family had taken a trip to London, and I met some of my mother's family friends for the first time. Two of her friends were Majer, who had fought with the Polish Resistance, and Stasick, who was a concentration camp survivor. They seamlessly wove theology into their conversation. I heard them debate the existence of the soul and of God in light of the suffering of the Holocaust. Initially, I was captivated by the liberating experience of addressing life's ugliness in the open. From this exchange, I learned that theological wrestling was one way to respond to suffering. I came to realize that at the center of life were questions, and spiraling out from the questions were cycles and cycles, generations and generations of responses, reflections and more questions.

Like music, life had a rhythm of sounds and silences, with expression alternating with rest, with spiritual clarity intermingling with uncertainty, with time transcending timelessness, and with infinity breaking through

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

finitude. I came to recognize that Stasick and Majer lived the human paradox of responding to suffering by living—and living passionately. Stasick, who survived the concentration camp of Auschwitz, painted images of Hasidic men dancing with Torah scrolls. Majer, who fought in the Lodz Ghetto Uprising and whose wife was murdered, mended garments, played the violin, and set Yiddish poetry to music. These two people, the death-camp-survivor/painter and the resistance-fighter/widower/tailor/musician, became my role models for living as a response to suffering. A significant aspect of this story for me has been that they lived their theological wrestling together. Much of my religiosity has been through relationship. In my prayer life, I have had the most meaningful experiences joining my voice with others in singing Jewish songs and prayers. I have felt a sense of transcendence hearing the various biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and contemporary “voices” of the liturgy and adding mine to theirs in dialogue.

I am a thirty-eight year-old Ashkenazi Jewish woman. I am a middle-child, oldest daughter, and mother of three daughters. I am a rabbi and a rabbi’s wife. I have experienced challenges and opportunities within my family and community of being a trailblazer in education, the rabbinate, chaplaincy, and clinical pastoral education (CPE). As a college student, I delved into Jewish studies and practice, landing in the Conservative Movement, feeling at home in its understanding of Jewish law and practice as binding and historically evolving. My most profound experiences of learning and growth have been through relationship—with other people, with texts, with nature, art, and with the Holy One. CPE, in general, and my approach to teaching emphasize learning through relationship.

THEOLOGY PAPER:

THE CULTURE OF MIDRASH AND THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

The exchange of ideas between the two Jewish thinkers Martin Buber (1878–1965) and Emmanuel Levinas (1907–1997) has intrigued me and informed my theological approach to pastoral care and education.¹ Levinas’ understandings of traditional Jewish study have been important to my understanding of the study of self and the other in pastoral care. In rabbinic study and literature, the process of curiosity, discussion, and debate about a text is called midrash. This term refers both to a process of study as well as

to a body of literature. Levinas emphasizes that, as a dialogue, midrash does not present a “totality” of thought; rather, it displays a variety of possibilities, reflecting the perspectives, contexts, and uniqueness of each person. Midrash calls one to develop and articulate one’s voice, similar to the Family Systems concept of self-differentiation, and to do so through relationship.

The Talmud and Midrash (as rabbinic bodies of literature) are compilations of dialogues between rabbis, between Jews, between Jews and their neighbors, and between schools of thought. Midrash defies systemization. Levinas believes that the text contains an “infinity” of possibilities for meaning-making. Encounters with people (whether patients, peers, students, or supervisors) also present an infinity of possibilities for interaction and for meaning. In an educational context, people can be understood metaphorically as texts, lending themselves to a continuous process of learning—whether learning about the “text” of oneself through self-awareness or learning about another.² Jewish study is most traditionally undertaken in pairs—or *hevrotot*—affirming the Jewish value of dialogue. Jewish theology lived through relationship, as a discussion rather than a set of beliefs, provides a place for me to confront life’s most difficult questions. It provides me with a sense of companionship and security.

Dialogue as Sacred Activity

According to Buber, “Everything is waiting to be hallowed, for there is nothing so crass or base that it cannot become material for sanctification.”³ Or, as one Hasidic rabbi said, “God dwells wherever man lets him in.”⁴ Human encounters in general, and study, in particular, and ordinary, mundane activities such as eating, getting dressed, and passing time all contain the potential for sanctification. CPE and supervisory education have challenged me to think theologically and ontologically about God’s presence in pastoral care and supervision. Jewish legend teaches that God’s Presence dwells with those who study Torah—in groups, in pairs, or even alone.⁵ In relationships, I experience God simultaneously as an Other with whom I have a relationship and as a God Who dwells within relationships in general.⁶ My religious experience and this theological orientation are especially compatible with Buber’s concept of the ‘dialogical process,’ described below.

According to Buber’s concept of the ‘dialogical process,’ when two people come together, the space created ‘between’ them contains infinite

possibilities. Buber believed that we are called to respond to the otherness of others (as well as the otherness of the Other, God) and that “genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding.”⁷ Buber distinguished Dialogue from Monologue. Monologue is “not turning away from the other but ‘reflexion’...bending back on oneself the withdrawal from accepting the other person in his particularity in favour of letting him exist only as one’s own experience, only as part of oneself.”⁸ The tension is between honoring the uniqueness while also communing with the other without diminishing the uniqueness.

Buber sought to reconcile this difficulty with his concept of “imagining the real” or “swinging to the other side” in service of dialogue by trying to understand the other’s point of view. One never becomes the other: one is called to maintain the integrity of one’s own position. The best people can do is imagine. For Buber, Monologue can take place even between two people who are not seeking to “imagine the real” of the other; and Dialogue can take place even by one person in relationship to art, nature, or sacred text when he or she breaks out of his or her “totality.” Buber’s concepts of Dialogue and Monologue are the processes that may take place in both I-Thou relationships and I-It relationships.

For Buber, the ideal in a relationship is an almost mystical unification with the other. His approach raises the concern that he is not adequately taking into account the uniqueness of the other. Levinas addresses this concern by founding his thought on ethics and on the service of the “wholly other” who cannot be communed with. My aim is to integrate the ethical thrust of Levinas’ thought to the intimacy of Buber’s thought. A close reading of Buber’s writing provides me with a middle ground. While Levinas would say we are commanded to be in service of the other, Buber understands that we are called to be in service of dialogue. This view is similar to systems ideas of groups functioning as a group-as-a-whole and acting on the interests of the group. Imagining the other does not presume to know the other. In the great diversity of CPE groups and pastoral care, these are important points for my own humility as a supervisor and for the approach to patient care that I teach.

Levinas also critiques the symmetry or reciprocity in Buber’s description of dialogical relationships. This is especially significant for how the concept of Dialogue functions within “helping relationships.” While as a supervisor, I do not disclose or seek to be understood for the sake of my

own growth or healing, I do make use of my Self (my story, my feelings, and my ideas) in an authentic way in service of the student's learning. For example, M brought a theology and theological struggle that was quite different from my own. She was wrestling with the possibility that her patient who was suffering from dementia might have been possessed by demons. Through seeking to "swing to M's side," I was able to imagine what that experience was like for her. I imagined that it was confusing, and I felt scared. Drawing on this "imagination," I was able to use both my intellect and my emotions to connect with M more fully. M and I engaged in a dialogue in which she was able to explore her theology, her emotions, and her intellectual struggle between religion and science.

Dialogue as a Response to Suffering

Like my mother's friends, Majer and Stasick, and so many people I encounter in the hospital and in CPE, I turn to theology during times of spiritual crisis. Theology provides a context for relationship—connection with others in person, through sacred texts, and with God—either in God's presence or absence.⁹ Alongside Buber's concept of the Dialogical, I find helpful the Creation mythology of sixteenth century mystic Rabbi Isaac Luria, who imagines Creation as a plan gone awry.¹⁰ His theology provides an understanding of God as imperfect, developing, and continuing to grow. Luria describes the following phases of the origins and human response to suffering.

Retreat (*Tzimtzum*). For Luria, the first act of Creation was an act of retreat. Luria was addressing the theological question of how God could create the world (which would be something other to God) if God was everything and everywhere. Luria answers that God retreated into God's self, creating empty space where the world could come into being. Rabbi Dr. Edwin Friedman applied this concept to leadership: the leader often needs to pull back to make space for the other in order for healing, growth, or development to take place.¹¹ I practice *tzimtzum* as a continuous process when I send the students up to their units, or when I ask them open-ended questions about which I have my own ideas, or when I encourage subgrouping in interpersonal relations seminar (IPR) but do not join in as a peer. However, *tzimtzum* is not the same as God's absence. As a supervisor, there are times when I must take a more explicitly active and "present" role (such as through more directive guidance during times of transition in the group and more directive teaching of pastoral care skills). Theologically, I

also understand God as being “present” during *tzimtzum* in two ways: (1) I imagine God as being in the parameters of the newly created empty space, giving shape and support to the space where creation will take place, and (2) God is not only in the parameters, but also simultaneously and paradoxically within the space as a personal God and a partner in continuous creation. Following Jewish tradition, Luria called this the *Shekhinah* (the Divine Presence), who wanders with Israel through exile and the wilderness.

Breakage (*Shevira*). In the second stage, Luria imagines that, as the process of creation continued, divine light flowed into the primordial space. However, some of the vessels (*kelim*) were not able to absorb, hold, and contain the powerful divine light. The vessels broke with pieces shattering and falling away. Divine sparks are encased in the broken pieces of the vessels, known as shards (*kliqqot*). These shards contain the divine, but they are also sharp and can injure. Whereas much earlier Jewish sources posit that suffering has its origins in primordial creation, Luria adds a new dimension: that God’s idea for creation did not go as planned. God is not always omniscient, omnipotent, or omni-benevolent. God is evolving and changing through time.¹² *Shevira* can take place intra-psychically and interpersonally. For example, when F came to CPE, she believed that she should not cry and that she should play the role of “the strong one.” When her peer described feeling power in her ability to cry, F began to rethink both her ideas and her functioning. Her assumptions had broken; and so had her interpersonal functioning; she began to try out playing “the vulnerable one.” Emotionally, this time was filled with loss and excitement. As a supervisor, I, too, experience *shevira*. Much as I try to anticipate problems in the CPE program and curriculum that I create, the “world” of my program will develop, evolve, and break and be insufficient at times. I must be willing to change as well. *Shevira* also takes place between the students and me when we are disconnected. The supervisory relationship, like all relationships, is dynamic with moments of greater connection and moments of distance. I recognize the reality of distance and breakage, and work with the students to stay connected, engaging one another in what is going on in our relationships.

Mending (*Tikkun*). After the breaking of the vessels, creation and the Creator called for a human response. The third stage in Luria’s creation story addresses human responses to wholeness and brokenness, return and exile. Luria describes a call for mending, *tikkun*.¹³ “Mending” does not fully

capture the meaning of *tikkun*; *tikkun* implies that the world will never be quite as it was before, but that it has the potential to be transformed. Traditionally understood, this doctrine means that through observing the commandments (*mitzvot*), people can be free and reveal the entrapped divine sparks, bringing out cosmological reconfiguration and bringing the world closer to Redemption. *Mitzvot* is the language of relationship between Jews and God (with other peoples having their own distinct languages of relationship with God). My spiritual home in the Conservative Movement understands the *mitzvot* as binding as well as historically and culturally evolving. Among the *mitzvot* or “free divine sparks” that connect me to other people and to God are visiting the sick (*bikkur cholim*) and comforting the bereaved (*nichum avelim*). In CPE, *tikkun* takes place when students grow in their pastoral skills, identity, and authority, when they take risks, when they learn how to learn experientially, and when they gain understanding about their functioning. Luria’s mythology has its limitations as a metaphor for CPE. When students’ theologies are different from this, I must be willing to meet them theologically where they are and assist them in their genuine theological development. I do this by drawing on the knowledge that my theology is in process and that there are times that I too have had other beliefs.

Case Example. P came to CPE ready to learn the ways of his teachers. After developing an initial supervisory alliance with P, I began to pull back (as an act of retreat, *tzimtzum*) to create the space for him to develop his own pastoral authority, identity, and style. P was initially perplexed, intrigued, and avoidant of my initial challenges about personal authority. He did not seem to understand my questions about the uniqueness of his personal authority. His mid-unit evaluation assignment included writing a fable about the group process. P left me out of the fable even though the instructions clearly said to include me. This lack of connection was a time of *shevira*, breakage, and our relationship was stressed. P and I began to engage in Dialogue in the “between” of our supervisory relationship. I tried to understand how my supervision impacted P and about his struggles to develop himself as a chaplain on his units.

While trying to “swing to the other side,” I made use of my real Self. I shared with P the rationale for my particular challenging supervisory intervention, and I shared with him how a piece of my story (regarding illness in my family) impacts me as a chaplain and rabbi. This self-disclosure

was important for P in giving him an explanation for the challenge and well as a way to build our relationship and alliance through which supervision would take place. The *tikkun*, mending and healing in our relationship, encouraged P's greater use of his Self with patients and staff. I again stepped back to create space for P's development. P began to be curious about how his personal story impacted him as a chaplain. Accessing a fuller sense of his self, P became more integrated into his multidisciplinary team and more connected with the patients he served (honoring both his and their uniqueness), and he began to make connections between his understanding of personal authority and other aspects of his ministry.

CPE Supervision as Continuous Creation, Revelation, and Redemption

Buber and Luria's theologies contain the idea that Creation is a continuous process.¹⁴ Luria's stages of the primordial creation—of *tzimtzum*, *shevira*, and *tikkun*—are also continuous processes. We, in general, and I as a supervisor, can retreat in order to make room for others to grow. I build imperfect creations that will break. My students and I have the capacity to respond to suffering in ways that heal brokenness, promote growth, and bring sanctification to the world. Although I am no more inherently able to connect with God or other people than anyone else, as a student of rabbinic literature, Family Systems Theory, chaplaincy and supervision, I am trained in Dialogue—to be able to “swing to the other side” of the other. I try to use my position, skill, and self (Buber would say my reality and uniqueness) to encourage students in their theological development and in their Dialogues.

Historical and cultural contexts are significant for the evolutionary process of continuous creation. As described above, I understand the commandments and observances of Judaism as the “language” of relationship between the Jewish people and God. Thus I am bound to learn the conventions of this language if I want to be in relationship, and yet this “convention” is evolving, as languages and relationships are. I am aware of many ways in which my own cultural context, as a Jewish woman in the beginning of the twenty-first century, has impacted my theological formation, and how my theology and religious experience (and those of others) impact our culture. Women have become ordained as rabbis for the first time in history, have gained educational access to traditional, male-dominated Jewish texts and learning, and have participated fully in religious services. In this paper, my facility with rabbinic and kabbalistic texts reflects this

historical reality, and my use of gender-neutral language and use of the concept of *Shekhinah* and presence reflect my Jewish feminist learning. I also live in a post-Holocaust era (as well as after the many traumatic events of the twentieth century), which has impacted the process orientation of my theology as opposed to a doctrine-based theology. Finally, I live in a time and place when different religious and cultural groups have perhaps their best collegial relationship. I have had the opportunity to learn from and to teach a diverse group of people. In addition to the many details of insight and integration, I have received, from my mentors and students, my attraction to multi-faith and multi-cultural pastoral care, and pastoral education reflects my general theological stance of the existence of a plurality of truth.

PERSONALITY THEORY

When my supervisor in my first unit of CPE identified me as the bridge of the group, I felt proud, because I had learned to value this role in my family-of-origin. Whether in the form of “diplomat,” “peacemaker,” “harmonizer,” “family historian,” or “family organizer,” I have played this role most easily in various contexts. As I have become more aware of my functioning in CPE, I have come to recognize how being a middle-child and a Jew in multi-faith and multi-cultural contexts have prepared me for these roles. I have learned about the strengths and limitations of these roles when I am in relationship with others. Part of what has attracted me to CPE is its opportunity for students to develop their self-awareness and to integrate personal history, culture, religious development, and pastoral functioning. A central component of this is the development of self-awareness through relationship. The work in supervision of developing self-awareness is in service of developing pastoral identity, authority, and functioning.

Core Concepts of Object Relations Theory

Jill Savege Scharff and David E. Scharff have written that Object Relations Theory suggests that the primary determinant for the development of personality is the motivation for relationship, beginning with the caregiver.⁵ While part of my supervisory work with students is partnering with them to explore their internal world and its impact on their pastoral relationships and formation, at the same time I am in a relationship with them as well, drawing on the fullness of my experiences as a caregiver. The supervisory relationship

forms much space in which I can learn about my students' functioning and difficulties. The following concepts from Object Relations Theory have had the most relevance to my supervisory thinking and practice.

(1) Object Relations. According to Object Relations Theory, there is a connection between one's relationships with significant other people and with the development of one's psyche. A person's relationships with significant others, called external objects, whether current or from the past, result in internal objects. A person's internal and external lives, past and present, are connected through object relations that manifest themselves through their relationships with new external objects (such as a supervisor). Throughout one's life, people can modify their object relations through new relationships, resulting in growth and sometimes in emotional healing.¹⁶

(2) Supervisor as Environment. A British Object Relations theorist described the dual role the mother played with her infant: as environment, mother creates the space for the relationship, and, as object, mother participates in that space in relationship with the infant.¹⁷ Based on the security of being held, an infant develops a sense of self and then is able to develop healthy relationships with others. As a supervisor, I create the educational space and develop a relationship with each individual and with the group as a whole. My supervisory alliance will be different with each student based on her personality and mine.

(3) Transitional Space and Objects. Winnicott named the literal and physical space between mother and infant as transitional space: "The gap between mother and infant is an external reality that is matched by an expanding internal space inside the infant in which he or she begins to grow and to think, really to become a person."¹⁸ Winnicott recognized the creative potential in transitional space. Within the transitional space, Winnicott describes infants developing transitional objects in order to cope with separation, loss, and frustration. Winnicott emphasizes that each individual uniquely creates transitional objects. For example, I became curious when B started writing his weekly reflection papers in Hebrew. I wondered, "Was he trying to distance himself by using a second language? Or, was he trying to connect with me over our shared religion, culture, and community?" Through my observations and discussions with him, I came to realize that in response to his anxiety about visiting patients, conflict in IPR, and meeting with me, B found comfort in using the language in which he prayed in, in which he studied, and in which he lived during the previous

year in Israel. It made sense to me. Hebrew is a “mother” language and the language of B’s homeland. It has been suggested to me that the chaplain can serve as a transitional object for the patient; similarly, I believe that the supervisor can serve as a transitional object for students. This informs my thinking when I go up to the units with the students—either to have them shadow me or to do some visits together.

(4) *Supervisory as Good Enough Mother.* Winnicott proposes that infants grow through learning to manage their separations from and frustrations with the imperfections of the mother or caregiver. As a caregiver, therapist, or supervisor, one need not create imperfections because they will naturally surface. Instead of trying to be perfect, a supervisor can expect that he will make mistakes and then make use of these to help the student grow.

(5) *Transference and Countertransference.* Drawing on these Freudian psychoanalytic concepts, Object Relations Theory understands transference as “the expression of internal object relationships experienced externally in the therapeutic relationship” and countertransference as the feelings and attitudes that develop in the therapist in response to the patient.¹⁹ I believe that transference and countertransference are phenomena that occur naturally in relationships with authority and not only in therapy relationships. I use these concepts toward meeting the educational goals that my students and I have established as they relate to the students’ pastoral development.

Case Example. At the beginning of the unit, L seemed to think that I expected perfection from her. She drew on her previous authority and competency as a caseworker for child services, always seemed enthusiastic about patient visits, and was hesitant to reveal her struggles with pastoral caregiving. As I learned more of her personal history, I began to develop an understanding of her transference to me: her mother was very critical and did not tolerate shortcomings, failures, or struggles. L had learned to feel shame when expressing her own suffering to her mother. Supervision became a holding environment for L, and she began to learn about herself. In the countertransference, I found myself sometimes feeling stuck and reflecting on the boundaries of supervision as education. I encouraged L to establish one of her learning goals about boundaries. A painful part of L’s development of self-awareness came when, in the third week, I received a complaint about her from a nurse regarding her conduct and blurred boundaries on the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. I realized that it was necessary

to change L's clinical assignment. I felt afraid of taking these actions, fearing she would feel crushed by the change of assignment since she feels such passion for being able to "save children." This was partly out of my own idiosyncratic (or subjective) countertransference that is inclined to avoid conflict, as well as out of induced feelings (or object countertransference) I was picking up from L. To my surprise, when I told her that about the change, she said, "You know, Naomi, I was thinking the same thing. I think that I have something about children and saving them and that for now I shouldn't work with them. I get too attached." L felt relieved from her burden to "save children." As people have the capacity to modify their object relations through new relationships, L experienced me not needing to be perfect as a supervisor (I was a good enough supervisor), and I did not expect her to be perfect. While taking responsibility for her actions and accepting the consequences, L began to learn about herself and her impact on others.

Applied Core Concepts of Family Systems Theory

While Object Relations Theory focuses primarily on the intra-psychic processes and provides insight about the intricacies of emotional relating, Family Systems Theory is about human functioning within groups or systems. My theoretical approach to the development of self-awareness through relationship began with my study in CPE of the works of Edwin Friedman, a rabbi, Family Systems Theorist, and student of psychiatrist Murray Bowen (1913–1990), who was an early theoretician in Family Systems Theory. Bowen's theory was a radical departure "from previous theories of human emotional functioning, by conceptualizing the family as an emotional unit and the individual as part of that unit rather than as an autonomous psychological entity."²⁰ Bowen found the determinism of classical psychoanalysis to be too subjective in its interpretations of personality, and he found that behavior reflected an organic process and a confluence of influences. Friedman applied Bowen's concepts to clergy contexts, drawing connections in clergy functioning in their families-of-origin, nuclear families, churches or synagogues, and pastoral families.

Scharff and Scharff explored the compatibility between Object Relations Theory and Family Systems Theory: "The individual personality can be seen as comprising an internal system that then creates interaction with other internal systems in significant others."²¹ Both theories encourage the

development of self-awareness. In order to distinguish this work from therapy, I focus on the development of self-awareness as it relates to the development of pastoral skills, identity, and authority. The following are four of Friedman's core concepts of Family Systems Theory (followed by a case example), which I use for understanding my students and which give me guidance in my pastoral practice.

(1) Identified Patient. Whereas individual therapy views the "identified patient" as the "sick one." Family Systems Theory views her as the "the one in whom the family's stress...has surfaced."²² Furthermore, the identified patient carries the family or system's stress by virtue of her position rather than because of her character or body being faultier than the rest. The patient, in Family Systems Theory, is the entire system. In the CPE context, which focuses on learning instead of symptoms and pathology, the identified patient can be the one whom the group focuses on trying to help at the expense of their own learning. In my CPE groups, I have been able to see how the role of the identified patient has been a way of stabilizing the conflicts in the group without addressing them.

On one occasion, my students were in conflict with the students of my fellow supervisory resident W. One of my students blamed the conflict on the communication style of one of the other students. Rather than focusing on that student as the "identified patient," we focused on strengths and the people most able to change. In this case, the ones who were most able to change were W and I. We realized that we had not been addressing our own conflicts with each other. We were feeling crowded in the office we shared, we were not scheduling our individual supervisions in full consideration of each other, and we were tired of the other one getting in our way. When the anxiety and tension between us decreased, they also decreased in our groups. It helped that we were able to talk about our conflict with our groups.

(2) Differentiation. Family System Theory identifies two instinctually rooted life forces: differentiation, or individuality, and togetherness.²³ These address the amazing capacity humans have for developing themselves as separate selves while also developing themselves in relation with others. Friedman defines differentiation as the "the capacity of a family member to define his or her own life's goals and values apart from surrounding togetherness pressures."²⁴ The goal of self-differentiation is to move toward greater emotional connectedness with others while not operating in reac-

tion to them.²⁵ This often involves a breaking of the established homeostasis, or balance.²⁶ Development, from a Family Systems perspective, can be understood as the age-appropriate movement toward greater self-differentiation.

(3) *Extended Family Field.* Because family systems theory focuses on position and multigenerational patterns, it looks beyond the individual for information for developing awareness. It includes the nuclear family, family of origin, extended family, community, and society. Family Systems Theory asserts that people learn patterns and roles in their families-of-origin that reflect their multi-generational history, and that taking on and playing a role has less to do with intra-psychic dynamics and more to do with one's position within the system. Healthy functioning comes about through awareness of the patterns and roles in one's family, as one can differentiate and not take on roles reactively and unconsciously. Ideally, one develops a repertoire of roles. In the CPE context, students (and supervisors) are prone to repeat roles and functioning from their families-of-origin in the "families" of the CPE group, chaplaincy department, individual hospital units, the hospital systems, and the individual families we minister to. For example, L played her familiar roles of "prophet," "challenger," and "bearer of bad news" in the CPE group and the role of "advocate" with patients. I seek to provide students with space for exploring, experiencing, and reflecting on their functioning—through genogram presentations, questions about roles and functioning in their verbatims, and a mid-unit activity of writing a fable of the group dynamics. Multi-generational patterns can manifest themselves between the "generations" of a hierarchy. For example, during the conflict between my peer W and myself and between our students, there was another level to the conflict—our training supervisors had a history of conflict. The realization of this three-generation conflict enabled me to differentiate and change my functioning.

(4) *Emotional Triangle.* Drawing on Bowen's assertion that triangles, or three-way relationships, are the basic building blocks of any system, Friedman writes: "An emotional triangle is formed by any three persons or issues. The basic law of emotional triangles is that when any two parts of a system become uncomfortable with one another, they will 'triangle in' or focus upon a third person, or issue, as a way of stabilizing their relationship with one another."²⁷ People naturally form emotional triangles since a dyad cannot tolerate much tension. Triangles need not only exist completely

between people; a common triangle is between chaplain, patient, and God. Exploring emotional triangles has helped students gain understanding about their functioning when visiting on the clinical units (with hospital staff, with God, with family members) as well as in the CPE group. It has helped me stay connected with my students without becoming triangulated in their relationships.

Case example. Family Systems Theory helped me understand L, described above, with regard to her functioning and gave me guidance in relating to her. L's functioning came in the context of a strong multi-generational pattern of people playing the role of "baby savior." The homeostasis of this pattern was challenged and then broken as the group and I challenged L and as she self-differentiated. Enrolling in an educational program is one change that can open up one's system and functioning to change. Had I "played along" with the set pattern of L's history, I would not have challenged L playing this role. By taking her off of the unit, however, I self-differentiated. Sometimes one change in a system can lead to other changes; in this case, my self-differentiation was followed by L's self-differentiation. Another way that L's functioning manifested itself was through her role in group. Though she was the "savior" on the units, in the group she took on the role of "identified patient." She and one peer had several conflicts around who suffered more. They each triangulated their people's histories into their interpersonal conflict.

Ethnicity

Using ethnicity as a framework, Monica McGoldrick challenged ideas, presented by Friedman and Family Systems pioneer Murray Bowen, that systems theory is universal.²⁸ For example, McGoldrick points out that communication is important for healthy systems functioning, yet talking is experienced differently in different cultures. This is an important critique to apply to CPE, recognizing that avenues for healthy functioning will be different for different students based on their cultural orientations. CPE ought to be able to contain several ethnically influenced ways of providing and learning pastoral care. I also recognize that based on power dynamics and one's position in a given system, students and I may function differently in different contexts. The confluence of diversity and power is also significant; I work to be aware of how my power as the supervisor and as an educated,

middle-class Caucasian woman might influence my students whose ethnic orientation depends on a different view of authority.

EDUCATION THEORY

When I was ten years old, I played Queen Vashti in my Hebrew School's Purim play of the story of the Book of Esther. I remember my teacher talking with me about Vashti's character and asking me to think about how I would feel if my husband wanted me to dance for all his friends.²⁹ When I as Vashti refused to dance, and my husband, the king (played by my brother), said, "Queen, you are banished!" I marched off the stage triumphantly, feeling proud that I had stood up for my beliefs. My teacher had invited me into a dialogue and process of interpretation, and to this day I still think of Vashti as a proto-feminist. Years later, I was baffled when I encountered a midrash in the Talmud that stated that Vashti refused to dance because she felt embarrassed about a skin condition she had.³⁰ This reading seemed absurd to me because my reading seemed like the only plausible interpretation of the story. Now I realize that for the rabbis in the time of the Talmud more than 1,500 years ago, in a different universe of gender relations, their reading seemed more plausible. When I immersed myself in a yearlong course in rabbinic literature during college and struggled with the absence of one "correct answer," my professor encouraged me to focus on the dialogue in the text. I experienced excitement, fear, responsibility, and connection through this model. Through my own study partnerships (*hevrutot*), I began to engage in this style of study, to develop my voice as a student of Torah, and to relax into the process and plurality of study.

My supervision is built upon the idea that CPE opens up an opportunity in space and time for pastoral development through relationship and plurality of truth. It is within this zone that learning and development take place. The writings of Lev Semyonovitch Vygotsky (1896–1934), a Russian philologist and psychologist, provide the educational foundation for my theory of supervision. He proposes a method by which society and culture affect each person's personality and behavior and these, in turn, affect the larger environment.³¹ Vygotsky understood learning and development as interconnected from the moment of birth. Vygotsky theorized that effective learning comes before development and assists in the maturational pro-

cess.³² Vygotsky's understanding of learning prompting development theoretically supports the integration of developmental issues within CPE, so long as it is connected to the student's learning. For understanding and guidance in group process, I weave Vygotsky's concepts together with those of Yvonne Agazarian (b. 1929), a contemporary psychologist and the founder of Systems-Centered Theory.

Social Development Theory of Learning

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Believing that learning prompts individual and internal development, Vygotsky sought to develop a method for identifying the growing edge, the optimal learning space that would be customized for each student. He theorized that to do so teachers need to assess two levels of the student's development and functioning. The first is the student's actual developmental level, "as determined by independent problem solving" that reflects "already completed developmental cycles." The second level is the level of potential development "as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." This second level requires the ability to learn through relationship and the ability to recognize both strengths and weaknesses. Vygotsky calls the distance between these two levels the zone of proximal development, and it defines the educational space where learning would be most fruitful. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development describe not only the gap between what is known and can potentially be known, but also the gap between what can be learned by oneself and what one is able to learn through relationship.³³

Difficulties in Application of ZPD. I encountered some initial difficulties in applying Vygotsky's theory and the concept of the ZPD to CPE. First, Vygotsky called for testing to establish students' actual developmental level and their potential level. Currently there are no instruments for establishing these in pastoral care. I partner with the student to determine these levels, challenging them to take responsibility for their learning and to give it direction. Students begin to give explicit voice to these levels through their application, their interview, a learning contract, verbatims, role play, IPR, etc. When they identify an issue as their growing edge, I know that, at the very least, they can discuss that issue with peers and that it is a realistic area for exploration. The ZPD evolve organically as the individuals and group develops. A second difficulty occurs when students

have difficulty in co-creating their ZPD (either by not acknowledging what cannot yet be done alone or by not being able to work through relationship). In these cases, I focus on helping the student learn to learn experientially, through the action-reflection model.

N would present “perfect” verbatims. Yet, he desired to be able to grow through CPE. His struggle in being able to present his failures and limitations became his ZPD. Individual and group supervision became places where he dialogued with me and his peers, wrestled with his fears about presenting his material, and began to take risks. This opened up his exploration of its implications for his pastoral development and ministry. As a teacher and a student, and as a caregiver and a care receiver, part of what attracts me to Vygotsky’s theory of the ZPD is its ability to make use of one’s failings for growth. This concept has helped me with my own tendency toward perfectionism and has helped me with own my failures. Recognizing my limitations has become instrumental in my ability to grow and develop as a supervisor and to develop and make use of an understanding of myself as a “good enough mother.”

Scaffolding as a Metaphor for Teaching. Students of Vygotsky called their teacher’s intentional pedagogic response to students’ ZPD “scaffolding.”³⁴ A similar metaphor would be building a construction zone around the actual area where students can learn.³⁵ Establishing the construction zone allows for focused “building.” As the student grows, the construction zone shifts. In the example above with W, I and other parts of the curriculum challenged him to explore his difficulty with perfectionism. These challenges formed a scaffolding or construction zone for his learning. Part of the learning in CPE is learning how to be part of a learning team: how to learn through relationship and group and how to assist one’s peers in their learning. I draw on Vygotsky’s concept of a “more capable peer” as potentially applying to any other person because each individual has unique perspectives. Students learn from patients, and supervisors learn from students and patients. However, students and supervisors must maintain appropriate boundaries for their roles in learning and caregiving.

Implications for CPE Evaluation. The ZPD provides me with guidance for evaluating students and their work. Throughout the unit, it helps me to be cognizant of where they started in their skills and development as people and pastors and how they grew. Evaluation is a process of the students and

myself assessing their growth and development throughout and toward the end of the unit and of telling the story of their process.

Case Example. B presented a verbatim which reflected his actual developmental level (which included establishing a pastoral relationship, basic emotionally joining, inviting, and encouraging storytelling, and engaging in custom-made prayer). B gave no indication of limitation or curiosity about his pastoral functioning for exploration during his presentation. I understood his verbatim theologically as reflecting Buber's concept of Monologue: self-contained with no intent to see from another perspective. With the goal of encouraging him to take responsibility for his learning, I engaged him in a Dialogue about his theological reflection in which he, drawing on Jewish mysticism, equated the body and illness as trapping the spiritual. Through Dialogue with his peers and me, B began to establish a goal of connecting with the patient on a deeper level. At this point, he was taking responsibility for his learning and establishing his zone of proximal development. While beginning to learn experientially and working in the zone of developing his pastoral skills, B also began to explore and integrate his theology and personal history with illness into his pastoral development.

Culture

Culture influences the educational process on both the individual and the systemic level. Vygotsky stresses how society and culture shape the mind and inform behavior.³⁶ CPE involves numerous overlapping cultures, formed by nationalities, ethnicities, families, institutions, gender, etc. As scaffolding or a construction zone, CPE creates a liminal space in which culture is experienced and can be learned from. On a most basic level, this requires me as the supervisor to have at least a basic level of knowledge of cultural diversity, to learn from my students about how their minds reflect their cultures, and seek to maintain cultural humility in my teaching. On a more subtle level, I seek to recognize and make use of how the students are continuously engaged in the dialectical process of influencing and being influenced by culture and society. Simultaneously, the systems of the CPE group, the department, the clinical context, and each system that is created in pastoral care and education are continuously influencing and being influenced by the people in it. Inevitably, the group will come into cultural conflict. CPE provides a context for addressing cultural conflict in a way that prompts learning.

An example of cultural diversity leading to learning involved D, a student originally from China. Since she seemed emotionally understated and since she avoided conflict, some of her peers and I had difficulty engaging with her. One day she shared how foreign CPE felt to her with its emphasis on making eye contact, identifying and expressing feelings, and talking about one's Self. While as a Jew, I could resonate in some ways with D's feeling of cultural marginalization, I could not understand this issue: I was well integrated into the world of therapy and self-reflection. However, peer E, an African priest, joined D and described himself as "bilingual" and "never at home." Discussing culture created a zone of proximal development in which they and the entire group grew, as we wrestled with what pastoral care and education would be like for us reflecting Western European/American, Asian, and African cultures. As D became curious about her affect and approach to conflict, she began to make connections between them and her personal history. She began to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of these aspects and began to see how they impact her as a pastoral caregiver. The phenomenon of cultural diversity exemplifies to me the inevitability of the breaking that will take place in the educational edifice that I build. Thus, I try to build CPE as a strong and supportive, simple, and malleable program that is open to change, keeping in mind how I impact the group culturally.

Integration with Systems Thinking

Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory is compatible with a systems approach to personality and group process. The concept of the ZPD provides a vehicle for conceptualizing an individual's and a system's growth in self-differentiation and healthy functioning. So much of growth in these areas is through increasing self-awareness and knowledge of others. In assisting students in their pastoral formation, I focus on their developing pastoral identity and authority. Their knowledge of themselves and their functioning is essential for the development of their "authorship" and authority. In order to serve others, students must also be able to recognize the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Family Systems Theory presents a general understanding of development as the age-appropriate movement toward greater self-differentiation.³⁷ The developmental task is to take increasingly greater responsibility for oneself and to deal with the consequences of one's choices and actions. The task is to stay

emotionally connected to others while increasingly making space for them to take responsibility for themselves.³⁸ Development, therefore, takes place as a system. Differentiated functioning in the development of a self often parallels their approaches to learning.

Group Process

Agazarian's Systems-Centered Theory expands my understanding of how learning and development take place through relationship and community. Like Vygotsky and Family Systems Theory, Agazarian finds that learning paves the way for development. Regarding how learning takes place in systems, she writes: "In systems-centered groups, the primary task is to develop an interdependent problem-solving system so that the work of therapy is done in the process of learning how to do the work of therapy."³⁹ In CPE, I am not only teaching certain skills; I am also teaching how to learn through relationship. It is through the experience of learning how to learn through relationship that helps students grow in self-awareness and develop pastoral care skills, identity, and authority. Given the symbiotic relationship between a student's learning and development, I support the integration of personal development work in CPE in a way that is in response to pastoral experience and related to the students' pastoral development.

Phases of Group Development. According to Agazarian, groups move in and out of three different phases: (1) the leader-focused phase, with flight and fight sub-phases; (2) the group-oriented phase, with sub-phases of enchantment and disenchantment with the group; and (3) the goal-oriented phase, in which the group experiences intimacy and is able to work on its goals throughout the curriculum. CPE groups during the time span of one unit often function in the leader-oriented phase, and the group is concerned with dependence, power, control, and authority. Learning and development in this phase involve coming to terms with authority and developing a functional relationship with authority. In CPE, this has particular relevance to how students as chaplains and pastors relate to authorities in the hospital and their religious communities and to their development as authority figures. The "group-as-a-whole" will function at a particular level, in a particular phase, not due to the levels of the individuals, but according to the developmental level of the group-as-a-whole. Members take on roles that reflect their historic roles and the needs of the group.

Subgrouping. Agazarian believed that three systems simultaneously exist in groups: the individual person, the group-as-a-whole, and the subgroup. Agazarian's term "subgroup" is significantly different from its meaning in much of psychodynamic theory. The pioneer of group theory W. R. Bion used the term "subgroup" to refer to schisms within the group that arrest development.⁴⁰ Agazarian uses the term to describe the relationship within group in which peers engage in the work of joining around similarities, exploring the unknown, and identifying and integrating differences. The creation of subgroups in group can be understood as the creation of ZPD. In IPR, I use the process of subgrouping with the goal of creating a time and space for the students to explore their experience through their relationships with one another. The process of learning to subgroup at each stage results in growth. Defenses to subgrouping take place naturally in each developmental phase and take on a character appropriate to that phase.⁴¹

It becomes vital to the group for members to subgroup around what resonates in them and for us all to be attuned to one another. Through their own initiative and through my guidance and encouragement throughout the unit and IPR, the students actively choose what to explore; they have the responsibility not to leave another member alone as a one-person subgroup. A difficulty arises for me in using Agazarian's theories when students primarily present content in their participation in IPR (such as storytelling without reflection on emotion). In these cases, I try to use the subgrouping to reflect whatever they have presented, and I encourage the students to subgroup around an attitude, idea, or experience.

My supervisory role has two primary facets. First, I am the one who builds (or co-builds) the scaffolding to the students' zone, as well as the one who engages in Dialogue with them.⁴² Educationally, I play the role of supervisor and group leader. Part of my goals with these roles is to help students develop a functional relationship with me as an authority that encourages their authority.

Case Example. When the group was still forming and was in the Flight Phase, N started a subgroup saying that he felt alone. I recognized the tendency for a group at this stage to have the social defense of creating an identified patient to "work on" as a means for them to flee from their own exploration, and N was willing to play that role. So, I asked if there was anyone else in the subgroup of feeling alone, and O joined N's subgroup.

They explored each other around their similarity of feeling alone and discovered some unknown differences: N felt afraid when alone and O felt sad. While other group members could identify feeling alone at times in their lives, at the time of this session they felt other feelings more, and they formed a different subgroup. The students were able to use the subgroups as ZPD in which they increased their self-awareness and deepened their ability to connect emotionally with one another.

CONCLUSION

Several themes unite my theoretical approach to supervision. First is an acknowledgement of the legacies we inherit. Theologically, Lurianic mysticism asserts that our current world has inherited suffering from a primordial breaking of Creation. Family Systems Theory speaks of the multigenerational patterns of the systems into which we are born or that we join. Vygotsky discusses the impact of culture in shaping our thinking, behaving, and learning.

A second common theme is that people exist both as individuals and as part of systems. Luria's Creation myth implies that our actions have impact beyond us. Jewish thought has offered the idea that when people study, the *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence, dwells with them. Edwin Friedman has written that when a person makes a change in one realm of life, it will impact other realms as well. Vygotsky has identified the social and cultural context as the most significant context for learning.

Third, the realms between two people, between people and their environment, or between people and God are real. Buber calls it the "between;" Agazarian calls it the "group" or the "subgroup;" and Vygotsky calls it the "zone of proximal development." Within the reality of this space exists the potential for relationship, healing, learning, and development.

Fourth, it is vital for one to take responsibility for one's self. Theologically, one is called to respond to suffering. In the Jewish tradition, this is done through observing the mitzvot, commandments, which include visiting the ill and comforting the bereaved. Buber identifies one's call to be in service of Dialogue with others (and the Other). In Family Systems Theory, the move toward greater self-differentiation is the move toward taking greater responsibility for one's own functioning without over-functioning. Educationally, I challenge the students to take responsibility for

their learning, which (in my application of Vygotsky) involves partnering with me and their peers in identifying their zones of proximal development and in building scaffolding to one another's zones. According to Agazarian's theory of group process, group members have the responsibility to join their peers' subgroups in authentic ways, responding to them without abandoning other members of the group.

Finally, the supervisor's role is two-fold. Scharff and Scharff describe serving as both the environment mother and the object mother, creating space for supervision as well as engaging in relationship within that space. Jewish mysticism describes one emulating the attributes of God through *tzimtzum* (retreat) and through *Shekhinah*, Divine Presence. Encounter between people in CPE creates a zone in space and time that opens up the possibility for learning and growth.

NOTES

1. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Proper Names*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997).

2. Zahara Davidowitz-Farkas and George Handzo write, "Having been created in God's image, it can be said that all human beings are sacred texts, our stories and beliefs open to the multilayered task of study and investigation," in Zahara Davidowitz-Farkas and George Handzo, "Using Religious Resources in Clinical Ministry," in *The Guide to Pastoral Counseling and Care*, ed. Gary Ahlskog and Harry Sands (Madison, Conn.: Psychological Press, 2000). Also see the discussion of a similar idea, Anton Boisen's concept of the living human document in Charles Gerkin, *The Living Human Document: Re-visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1984), 37–38.

3. Maurice Friedman, *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 139.

4. Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim: Later Masters* (New York: Schocken Books, 1948), 277.

5. See Pirkei Avot 3:3.

6. There is some theological difficulty in understanding God as both a partner in Dialogue and as the *One Who Dwells* in Dialogue. One response to this comes from Jewish mysticism: The Tree of Life identifies different attributes of God, with the *Shekhinah*, God's Presence, being the first attribute humans encounter and serving as the gateway to God's other attributes. This dilemma can also be understood through human analogy: in the personality section I describe the role of the supervisor as simultaneously the "environment mother"—the one who establishes the space of relationship—and the "object mother"—the one with whom one relates personally within the space.

7. Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (New York: Collier Books: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1965), 16.

8. Friedman, *Martin Buber*, 89.

9. During a time of particular distress in my life, one traditional midrash that comforted me described God tearing the waters on the second day of creation—similar, I imagined, to a tailor cutting fabric. The waters cried out, and God wept; their shared pain was necessary in order to create water and sky, the human realm and the heavenly. Here, suffering is not the result of human sin; rather, it is part of the blueprint of the primordial creation. Creation involves—requires—pain. Despite its theological difficulties of suffering, pain, and destruction, this world also contains love, relationship, meaning, and creation. (Mishnat Rabbi Eliezer, 76, as quoted in Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Torah min ha-shamayim be-aspaklaryah shel ha-dorot*, vol. 1 (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Soncino Press, 1965), 90–91. In English, see Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Heavenly Torah: As Refracted Through the Generations*, tran. Gordon Tucker and Leonard Levin (London, U.K.: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005).

10. Though Isaac Luria did not write down most of his teachings, they were recorded in Hebrew by his student Hayyim Vital. A significant academic source for Luria's teachings in English translation is Gershom T. Scholem's *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1946), the classic English-language academic introduction to Jewish mysticism.

11. The Rev. Beth Glover learned this teaching directly from Edwin Friedman, and, in turn, taught it to me.

12. *Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Avodah Zara 3b.*

13. *Tikkun* can also be translated as “repairing,” “fixing,” “liberating,” and “mending,” each with its own significant nuance of difference.

14. Friedman, *Martin Buber*, 139.

15. Jill Savege Scharff and David E. Scharff, *The Primer of Object Relations Therapy* (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc., 1997), 3–4.

16. Scharff and Scharff define internal objects as “pieces of psychic structure that formed from the person's experiences with the important caretaking person in early life,” (ibid., 5). Object relations “refers to the system of in-built parts of the personality in relation to each other inside the self. These are expressed in the arena of current relationships by which the original intra-psychic constructions of object relations are further modified,” (ibid., 4, see also 33–37).

17. Ibid., 39.

18. Ibid., 57–58. Transitional space existing internally and externally can be likened to a two-fold understanding of the theological concept of *tzimtzum*. God retreating in order to create space for growth can be applied to an individual and mean a “psychic space” within one's self, in both supervisor and student, where growth takes place. Interpersonally, it can mean the space people make for each other to develop their own selves. See Estelle Frankel, *Sacred Therapy: Jewish Spiritual Teachings on Emotional Healing and Inner Wholeness* (Boston, Mass.: Shambhala Publications, 2004), 28.

19. Scharff and Scharff, *Primer of Object Relations Therapy*, 52–53.
20. Michael E. Kerr, "Chronic Anxiety and Defining a Self," *Atlantic Monthly* 9 (September 1988), 35–58. Also see Murray Bowen, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1994).
21. Scharff and Scharff, *Primer of Object Relations Therapy*, 64. A similar concept is expressed by Yvonne Agazarian in her *Systems-Centered Theory*, which states that there are three realms of systems: the individual, the group-as-a-whole, and the subgroup.
22. Edwin H. Friedman, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, (New York: The Guilford Press, 1985), 19.
23. Kerr, "Chronic Anxiety and Defining a Self," 40.
24. Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 27.
25. Some feminist theories, such as Carmen Knudson-Martin, have critiqued the concept of differentiation, claiming that it reflects the Freudian concept of male development seeking to achieve separation (from the mother), as opposed to female development which seeks relationship. Others hold that differentiation is very different from the psychoanalytic concept of separation, but the language of Family Systems Theory falls short and does not adequately discuss what healthy emotional connectedness does look like. See Carmen Knudson-Martin, "The Female Voice: Applications to Bowen's Family Systems Theory," *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 20, no. 1 (Jan. 1994): 35–46.
26. Homeostasis, or balance, is "the tendency of any set of relationships to strive perpetually, in self-corrective ways to preserve the organizing principles of its existence," (Edwin Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 23).
27. *Ibid.*, 35. The concept of triangles is different from Object Relations Theory and Martin Buber's thought that emphasize the dyadic relationship.
28. Friedman writes, "The logic of this theory suggests that this way of thinking can be applied to any symptom, emotional or physical, and it fits equally well with all family members (parents, grandparents, spouse, or child) and in any culture (black or white, Jewish or Christian, Western or Oriental). Because it is transcultural, the theory may be rooted in protoplasm itself; nothing could be more fundamental to the characteristics of ecumenicity," (*ibid.*, 19). See *Ethnicity and Family Therapy*, 2nd ed., ed. Monica McGoldric and others (New York: The Guilford Press, 1996).
29. Esther 1:9–12.
30. *Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Megillah* 12b. I first learned this midrash from my twelve-year-old students, when I taught Hebrew School.
31. Lev Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, ed. Michael Cole and others (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 6.
32. *Ibid.*, 89.
33. *Ibid.*, 84, 86. The existence of the zone of proximal development reminds me of Maurice Friedman's concept of the Dialogical Process and his reference to the Buberian concept of the "ontology of the between." Learning and development take place through

relationship, and the “space” between people has a reality to it. See Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 152.

34. Vicki Kellman, *Jewish Family Retreats: A Handbook* (Los Angeles: The Melton Research Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1993), 12.

35. I am thankful to the Rev. Peter Yuichi Clark for offering me this metaphor.

36. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society*, 7.

37. The Rev. Beth Faulk Glover, ACPE Supervisor, who learned it from her teacher Rabbi Dr. Ed Friedman, taught this to me.

38. Rev. Glover gave the example of a parent-child relationship: In the beginning the parent takes responsibility for herself as well as the child. As the child grows, the parent seeks to maintain emotional closeness while making space for the child to grow, explore, make decisions, and take responsibility for his decisions and actions.

39. Yvonne Agazarian, “The Phases of Group Development and the Systems-Centered group,” in *Ring of Fire: Primitive Object Relations and Affect in Group Psychotherapy*, ed. M. Pines and V. Schermer (London, U.K.: Routledge, Chapman and Hall), 37.

40. W. R. Bion, *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 127–128.

41. Agazarian writes that defenses “inhibit the inherent system drive toward the goals of survival, development, and transformation of living human systems,” Yvonne Agazarian, *Systems-Centered Therapy for Groups* (London, U.K.: Karnac, Second Publishing, 2004), 301.

42. See Maurice Friedman regarding the Dialogical Process in his work *The Healing Dialogue in Psychotherapy* (New York: Jason Aronson, 1985). I draw my understanding of my psychological roles and functioning from the following: “The psychosomatic partnership begins with a physical holding-and-handling relationship between mother and infant. The oval envelope drawn around mother and infant signifies the environment function provided by the mother’s holding—the arms-around relationship. Within this envelope, mother and infant have a direct object relationship—the intense I-to-I relationship, communicated in words, gestures, gaze, and physical exchange—out of which the infant constructs its internal objects,” Scharff and Scharff, *Primer of Object Relations Therapy*, 43.

Call for Essays for *Reflective Practice*, Volume 29
Theme: Forming Religious Leaders In and
For a Diverse World

Every faith tradition is faced with the task of preparing leaders who are equipped to work effectively in richly diverse contexts. What are the unique challenges and possibilities about ministerial and religious formation today? How does each faith tradition enhance and impede responding positively to diversity? What does it mean for the process itself when formation occurs in a diverse or interfaith context? Beyond continuing to attend to our own social location, what must we learn about responding to religious and cultural difference in order to live and lead authentically and peaceably in diverse contexts? What present assumptions about formation need to be challenged in order that future religious leaders will be prepared to lead in changed and changing contexts? Send essays to Herbert Anderson, editor, at handerson@plts.edu by December 1, 2008.