

Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry

Established with the support of the North Central Region, ACPE and the Central Region, AAPC
Published in cooperation with the Journal of Pastoral Care Publications
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Indexing and Abstracts

Articles are indexed in *Religion Index One: Periodicals*; book reviews are indexed in *Index to Book Reviews in Religion*. Both indexes are published by the American Theological Library Association, Chicago and are available online through BRS Information Technologies (Latham, NY) and DIALOG Information Services (Palo Alto, CA).

ISSN 0160-7774

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Table of Contents

Symposium: Supervision in Light of September 11

Introduction	
Mychal Springer and Paul Steinke	3
Buddhism and September 11: It's Not Easy Being Human	
Trudi Jinpu Hirsch	6
A Few Jewish Thoughts on CPE Supervision After September 11, 2001	
Jeffrey M. Silberman	13
The Tears of God Are the Meaning of History: September 11 and Pastoral Supervision	
Paul Steinke	18
Lessons from September 11: What the World Trade Center Tragedy Taught Me About Teaching and Caregiving	
Yvonne Valeris	29
A Non-U.S. Citizen's Perspective: Tragedy, Patriotism, and the Effect on CPE	
Anke Flohr	36
The Impact of September 11, 2001, on My Life and on My Supervisory Style	
Charles F. Berger	40
One Man's Understanding of Pastoral Supervision After September 11	
Stephen Harding	48

Articles

Zen Buddhist and Christian Co-Supervisors: A Reflection on CPE Supervising in an Interfaith Environment	
David J. Larsen	54
Is Multifaith and Multicultural CPE Supervision Possible?	
Nina C. Davis	60

Field Education

Theological Education in a Protestant Canadian Context

Introduction
Abigail Johnson, Stuart MacDonald, Shelley Davis Finson66
With All Your Heart, Soul, and Mind: Deepening Theological Reflection
Abigail Johnson70
Theological Field Education and Leaving Christendom: Initial Reflections
Stuart MacDonald84
Systemic Injustice of Heterosexism in Theological Education
Shelley Davis Finson95

ACPE Theory Papers

Position Papers for Certification in Supervisory

Clinical Pastoral Education

Preface
Renovating the House that Freud Built: A “Self-in-Relation”
Theory of Personality Development
Learning to Sew Versus Being Taught to Cook: A Relational Approach to
Education Theory for Supervisory CPE
Tending the Fields: A Pastoral Theology of Taking and Giving Care
Amy Greene108

AAPC Theory Paper

The Liminal Space of Pastoral Counseling Supervision
Kathryn Wood Madden135

Vignettes

Martha & September 11
John Bucchino152
Vignette
Laura Waters Jackson154

Book Reviews

The Supervisory Relationship: A Contemporary Psychodynamic Approach,
by Mary Gail Frawley-O’Dea and Joan E. Sarnat
Review by Lallene J. Rector157
Faith and Health: Psychological Perspectives,
edited by Thomas G. Plante and Allen C. Sherman
Review by Patricia Murphy160

SYMPOSIUM

SUPERVISION IN LIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 11

Introduction

MYCHAL SPRINGER
PAUL STEINKE

Supervising in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, challenges us to resist the temptation of returning to normalcy. At times, the articles in this symposium evoke the day itself so powerfully that they were difficult for us, the editors, to read. The articles serve as a reminder that the shock of the day and feelings connected to it cannot be minimized.

We are living and working in a new reality, in which evil can jump out of the darkness to terrify us, even destroy us. We have been and continue to be surprised by evil acts and the intent to inflict more. Almost two years after September 11, we remain vulnerable in a way that we could not have conceived of prior to that day. We share and live in that vulnerable space with our students.

Theologically, we have no reason to be surprised by the resilience of evil. Having come of age in the decades following the holocaust, we have had as much evidence as we need for the human capacity for evil. We are also attuned to the human desire to bracket that knowledge as if we live with the assurance of safety.

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Our pastoral supervision has always challenged us to open our hearts to the suffering of people in the real world.

We are honored to serve as editors for these articles by our esteemed colleagues.

The immediacy of September 11 is evoked in the first three articles. Trudi Hirsch, a Buddhist monk and supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Beth Israel Medical Center, a HealthCare Chaplaincy affiliate, captures the transition from a beautiful fall day to the horrors downtown. She shows us the struggle to find a place in this new world as a Buddhist monk. She is prepared and unprepared. Her Buddhist discipline provides spiritual epoxy to the world shattering around her. Zen offers ballast: Be a light to yourself, and do the best that you can. Rabbi Jeffery Silberman, a CPE supervisor and director of Pastoral Care at Beth Israel Medical Center, a HealthCare Chaplaincy affiliate, provides a prophetic voice. He is angry and enjoins us from pretending our anger is something else. He encourages us to stay with our anger and let our anger lead us. He seems to suggest that our anger can lead us to re-evaluate our work as teachers and pastors. And finally our anger leads to the realization that “we cannot succumb to prejudice, fear, or hopelessness.” Paul Steinke, CPE supervisor and director of Pastoral Care and Education at New York University Medical Center, a HealthCare Chaplaincy affiliate, had his “cup half full” emptied once and for all. He finally realized you cannot be an inveterate optimist in such a dangerous world. He grapples with the theological meanings of pastoral supervision after September 11, using a paradigm suggested by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Bafflement, suffering and a sense of intractable ethical paradox “challenge our sense that ‘life is comprehensible.’”

The next two articles revolve around the supervision of students during and after September 11. On that day, Yvonne Valeris, a CPE supervisor at Brooklyn Hospital Center, a HealthCare Chaplaincy affiliate, was supervising two Muslim students. She struggled and learned from the push and pull, distance and proximity dynamics operating in the CPE group and in her supervisory alliances. Yvonne, like many supervisors with student groups, needed to keep functioning through the crisis. Only later did she have time to tend to her own crisis. Anke Flohr, a CPE supervisor at Pohai Nani Good Samaritan Hospital was a non-American citizen supervising a group of non-American citizens on September 11. She depicts the crisis of outsiders living with their own memories of brutality discovering a place for themselves amidst the patriotic outpouring in the days that followed September

11. Could the common endeavor of learning and doing pastoral care draw together these vulnerable strangers?

The last two articles recount the learnings of two men who ministered to rescue workers in the aftermath of September 11. Charles Berger, a CPE supervisor and manager of chaplaincy at Palmetto Health Richland Memorial Hospital came to New York with the Red Cross. He leaves his home in South Carolina when most people were hunkered down with their families. His ministry is at the Medical Examiners Office, which processed all the bodies and body parts. The poignant stories of working “DMORT” that Charles recounts seem like the smoke rising from the ruins. He depicts the powerful aftermath of the tragedy in which he makes up ministry as he goes along. When he returns to supervising students, he brings along some of that new ability to create as he moves along. Stephen Harding is chaplain at the Jacob Perlow Hospice of Beth Israel Medical Center. His nightly ministry to the rescue workers at Ground Zero tested his mettle, not just as a minister, but as a man. His CPE mentors had been women. Now he is mentored by the men he serves. He accesses his manliness by ministering to macho rescue workers. Out of this experience Stephen arrives at some profound ideas for ministering to men.

We dedicate this symposium to those who died on September 11, 2001.

Buddhism and September 11: It's Not Easy Being Human

Trudi Jinpu Hirsch

When training as a monastic under Roshi John Daido Looi, I would often hear him say, “It is not easy being a human.” What I believe he meant by this was that being human contains the entire universe, which includes all feelings and thoughts at any given moment. As we try to understand and make sense out of the myriad events of our life, especially September 11, we tend to grab onto anything that gives us the feeling of solidity or safety—trying to make the next unknowable moment known to us. But life teaches us again and again that it is continuously changing; there is nothing to cling to.

During that Tuesday in September 2002, two Buddhist quotes stayed with me. In the first quote, Guatama Buddha advises against ignoring the suffering we see: We must find ways to be with the suffering; we will, thereby, awaken others and ourselves to its reality. In the second, the Buddha is dying and advises to be a light onto oneself and to do one’s best. These two statements carried me through

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September 11 and have given me the strength to begin to reflect on what actually happened in and around me.

Being a Zen Buddhist Priest, chaplain, and supervisor for the Beth Israel Medical Center, I felt a strong responsibility to write about this day from a Buddhist perspective. In reflecting on what a Buddhist perspective might mean, I realized that this called for an authentic and honest portrayal of the day as well as “being and fully embodying” each moment as it arrived.

Here is my story.

I woke up early, particularly aware of how perfect the day was—sun, mild breeze, a fall day that you wanted to be awake for. I remember feeling good, even before my ritual Starbucks stop on way to a downtown staff meeting scheduled for 9:00 A.M. Now that I think about it, I don’t know why I was across the street on Fourteenth at the bus corner. Ah yes, the crowds—so many upturned faces with hands over their mouths and chins at a forty-five degree angles. Something “big” was happening. Being curious I rushed in, lining myself up for a view that still has not yet found a home in my mind.

I remember having an internal dialogue that went something like this: What the hell. Is that a plane? No, well just the tail end of a plane. What’s it doing sticking out of a building? Wait, planes don’t get stuck in buildings. Wow. Could a pilot have misjudged? It must have been in trouble and flew into the building by accident. Wow. Look at all that smoke.

My mind had taken it in and was trying to connect this image to all previous images in its filing cabinet. I thought of Godzilla, and I was participating in the crowd of people looking up, horrified. Then I heard Bart Simpson say, “Geez, this is cool.” I thought, “Wait till I tell Bugs,” who is my husband, Mark. Then for a while I stayed with Hollywood images, taking refuge in the no-mind of a couch potato. This wasn’t real; how could it be? Slowly the voices around me began to annoy me. I looked down at my watch and realized I was late for the staff meeting. A quick look back showed the building surrounded in black smoke.

My appointment carried me toward the Spiritual Care office where CB and rabbi JS were. I was the bearer of “hot news” and wondered how to convey it. I decided to tell the facts, thinking that it had been a mistake and not the rumors I had begun to pick up from the voices in the crowd. I wanted to sit down, as if exhausted from a full days work.

Everyone went into action. Phones: “CB, you stay here and write down the messages.” Another staff member, who just arrived, a little sheepish at being late, was told to “go down and see what’s happening.” What about me? What would you

like for me to do? The response was, “Go down to the ER, and see if you are needed there.”

The use of the word “ER” seemed to make the picture of what I’d imprinted in my head come to life. I think it was the first time I realized that there were people in that building, and of course they might be hurt—or dead. It was much later that these people would have names and faces; some of them I knew.

As I made my way down the stairs, I passed through various conversations and heard about the second building. I felt more distant from my feelings. “Oh, another building hit by a plane. I don’t get it!” There were a few floating TVs around, and the images all seemed to repeat like an old film caught on the reel. There was considerable activity in the halls, on the floors, like a beehive with an intruder. I stopped to marvel at the fluidity and focus of units, wondering where I fit, what I could do. Beds were rolling into the auditorium making way for the “victims.” That was another word that represented the before and after of a usually horrible event. The victims. The victims. What was happening? I asked a few people if I could help, but there was no time for “help,” only time for action. I felt out of rhythm and useless and meandered into the ER waiting area where a small crowd of mixed professionals, families, and patients had their eyes glued to TV sets, repeating once again the shot of the buildings collapsing and the crowd frantically running away from an avalanche of white and dusty powder grabbing for their heels. My eyes were glued too, waiting to hear this was a mistake, a very bad mistake. I looked around and noticed there were a few patients dealing with their personal disasters right here next to me in this very room. I saw a man with a leg amputated, a woman with one of those hats that disguises the loss of hair from chemo, and a mother with a young daughter with something growing out of her head. It seemed that everyone looked diseased or crippled. I felt as though I’d been hit by a stun gun.

I also felt very simple-minded. I stopped thinking and just opened to everything around me. The feeling I picked up was of hushed fear, as though a secret was about to be revealed. I felt my ears stretched toward the newscaster. Waiting, watching, waiting, watching. There was a certain comfort in being mesmerized. I snapped out of it and tried again to be useful, but there were only a few around me to console. I remember thinking, “Caregivers are those who care for others in order to care for themselves.”

As I passed through the auditorium, there was a feeling of excitement and impatience. Everyone was ready, but the “guests” weren’t arriving. The excitement began to wane as it slowly became apparent that survivors were few. In our minds,

we all began to realize that there was not going to be a huge intake of patients, only a few. My God, only...a...very few.

I felt a wave of sorrow sweep over me and immediately pushed it away. Buddhism would teach to “be the sorrow,” but I had things to do. Being the sorrow would have to be put on hold for later. “Later” was three weeks after that.

I returned to the chaplaincy office requesting further solid instructions. I asked if I should head uptown to the north branch of the hospital. I was the only chaplain at that hospital, and I wondered if they could use me more than downtown. I was told to do just that and to stay connected by phone if possible. The phones were presently tied-up. CB was busily involved answering phones and taking notes.

I walked out to the bus stop where just two hours before I had witnessed the tail of the first plane. Now it was an ominous ashen smoke that swirled in and around where the buildings had been. The air smelled of death and burnt rubber. I tried to breathe shallowly, wanting to inhale in as little as possible. I focused on the practical, and wondered if I would have trouble getting uptown. I was prepared to walk the 70 blocks, but to my surprise a bus appeared. I felt normalized as if doing what I always do: bus stops, get on, grab a seat, stare out the window, reflect. Everyone was informing those who hadn’t heard. The stories were similar, but the responses varied.

What was I feeling? Surely I must feel something. I replayed what I heard and what I saw, but there was no feeling, only a crib-note summary. I commended myself for being able to function in a crisis, but that didn’t get rid of the gnawing feeling in my stomach. I flashed to a Twilight Zone story of an ordinary man who tried to convince the stewardess that there was a horrible creature eating the fuselage of the plane, but everyone thought he was crazy. How could I help? The blind leading the blind. Hey, stop that talk. I have training and experience. I will need to take my authority. I felt called by duty, but my insides were calling for tears.

Off the bus. Most of the uptown street people seemed unaware that the world had dramatically changed. I went into the hospital, and dropped my bag off in the office. I listened to the sixteen messages and didn’t dare tune into my e-mail. Some messages were from previous students who were volunteering to help. I felt relieved that there was so much that I needed to do to respond to these calls. I remember thinking that chaplaincy was what was needed more than anything else, and this would put us on the “hospital map.” I remember feeling that my responses to the situation seemed distant and cold, and that I should be feeling such and such.

I should be responding more like—Like what? Like what? No answer was coming to me.

I ran down to the ER. Incredible quiet. I visited the few patients, and we all seemed to go over the scene again and again. Questions buzzed around: Did you know anyone who worked there? Did they discover who was behind this? It was on leaving the ER that I first thought of my own family. My husband was upstate. Did he even know? He would think that I was uptown and out of trouble. Damn. My brother-in-law works in those towers! I later found out that he had called in for a teleconference meeting at 9:00 A.M. and was uptown when it happened. He was in phone communication with his staff as the plane hit, hearing the last cries for help from some of his staff. The emotional anguish of this burns continuously.

My mind jumped to a far away memory of an old friend of mine who worked on the ninety-ninth floor as a psychotherapist. Doing some fast calculations, I came to the decision that he must have retired years ago. Even so, was he alive? I hadn't thought of him for years. No, I don't want to call and find out.

It's amazing to watch the interconnecting links in the mind. How one thought triggers so many others, and how one loss connects to all our losses. This was happening to the patients too. They were connecting to all their previous fears and anxieties, and I listened and concentrated on being there for them as a chaplain. Some were comforted in a strange way by this catastrophe, which seemed to put their present predicament into perspective; others thought the world was ending, that Armageddon had finally arrived. Others hypnotically watched the TV sets hanging from their ceilings. The repeated nightmares of these events played over and over as I traveled from room to room.

I was paged to a staff member who had just found out that her fiancé—they were to be married the following week—was on the floor that was hit. She was lost in grief, and I stayed with her till she was able to get medical help. I tried to feel what it must have been like for her to realize that—but I couldn't go there, not now. I had too much to do.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in a wave of various visits, all melted into one thick and horrendous stew. I finally went back to the office, felt the door close behind me, and sat down, looking blankly out the window at the buildings. The sun was still bright; the air still clear. I felt that my mind was trying to hold onto an overwhelming amount of paradoxes. Zen Buddhism had prepared me for this: "Don't get caught in the words and ideas that describe it...be the"—No! No time to "be the." Things still needed to be done.

But things were quieting, and I felt weary. I called downtown, and JS recommended that I go home. What else could be done? I didn't argue. I felt a desperate need to escape from the hospital, from my responsibility as a chaplain, from myself, and from the truth of all that I'd seen and heard and been part of. I felt guilty about leaving. "If not me, then who?" rang in my ears, but I answered, "Someone else, please!"

The ride home felt very long. I had images of Auschwitz and of war movies, and Godzilla was still furiously destroying buildings. I don't think I saw anything out the window. People must have been killed. How? Burnt alive? Jumping to their death? Blown up? Asphyxiated? I went through a variety of possibilities, trying to put myself in their shoes, but to no avail. I was glad to be away from the hospital and relieved when I turned the key into my sanctuary. My room was filled with religious objects and paintings. These "things" comforted me. After a while, I sat by the phone wondering why no one from the hospital was calling me. I felt myself get annoyed that I wasn't being asked to return. Feelings revolved around wanting to get away and wanting to be called. The sound of a jet out the window was deafening my ears. I wanted my husband to be with me. I wanted to be taken care of. I wanted to be soothed. There was no one, and the lines were dead. I fell into a restless sleep.

Next day at the hospital, I had a meeting with social work. A special service was to be prepared for Friday. I galvanized my energies. I wanted to offer a good service, to bring us together as a community in pain. I worked hard on this service trying to lift up the fears we had, as well as our hopes in prayer, candles, music, and song. It seemed that the whole hospital came out for this. I continued to offer a service each week for a dwindling number of the staff. The priests from St. Joseph's were wonderful, and the community found solace in the services. I offered staff support groups, which felt especially helpful for dissolving some of the fears and tensions that were around. There had recently been staff cuts, which made September 11 recede for a while in the difficulties of present events and worries.

My own existence seemed to be one of perpetually responding to others until a night about three weeks later, when I was at the Zen temple located on Varick and Houston. Enkyo Sensei was offering a "Mondo"—interactive questions and responses to a given theme, which this particular evening was September 11. I remember sitting and listening to the personal stories of that day from different members of the community and learning about the deaths of their various friends and relatives, most of whom lived around that neighborhood. As I sat there on the floor, I felt my body become tense; fear and panic arose as if I couldn't listen to

another story. I had reached my limit! I started to sweat, and, if I hadn't been so disciplined, I would have bolted out of the room. Each new voice made my need to escape that much more pressing. Right after saying the last vow, to "save all sentient beings," I rushed out. I made my way through bodies as I rushed towards the door. A woman whom I had cared for as she had journeyed through the death of her partner stopped me at the door and asked if I was O.K. I broke down crying, saying that I couldn't take another story. It was all too much. I collapsed into her arms, and she consoled me as I had consoled her just a few months earlier. It was the first time I had let myself feel, and I cried and cried. When I was composed enough, I took the subway home.

On the train there, were two scrawny looking down-and-out guys singing, "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine." They stared out into faces that were half receptive and half indifferent to their presence, but I heard them. Then they said, "Come on. It doesn't hurt to smile. Does it?" And I smiled and gave them some change.

A Few Jewish Thoughts on CPE Supervision After September 11, 2001

Jeffrey Silberman

At 8:45 am on September 11, 2001, I was about to convene a staff meeting at my hospital, Beth Israel in lower Manhattan. I went to a nearby grocery store to buy a cake to celebrate the arrival the week before of Pastor Connie Bonner, our new supervisory resident, and my own one-year anniversary in my position as director of Spiritual Care.

I noticed a crowd across the street and walked over to see what the excitement was about. It was then that I saw the effects of the first jet hitting the towers.

A few minutes later, when I returned to my office, the hospital went into disaster alert mode. I deployed my staff throughout the facility to minister to the needs of the patients, staff, and victims. I spent my time going from the floors, to the makeshift triage area outside, to the emergency room, to the command center. I answered telephones from those seeking news of their family and friends, counseled staff, encouraged my chaplains, watched television, listened to the radio, and tried to take in what was happening.

All day, hearing the news reports, I recall imagining the worst about the numbers of people who had died. Thankfully, I was wrong about the numbers.

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There is no Jewish perspective on supervision after September 11, 2001. This is an angry response. This is also my opinion as a Jew. I assent further that there is no unique Christian, Muslim, or Buddhist perspective on supervision after September 11, 2001. This is my opinion as a supervisor for nearly 20 years and is my perception of the flood of stories, sermons, and reports that have flowed since that terrible time. These implications include issues such as how we cope with this loss, how we relate to people who are different from ourselves, and what we say when someone asks about God's role in this tragedy.

There is unquestionably a personal response to the enormity of the loss. This is definitely my experience as one who works in lower Manhattan. My hospital was the third closest to Ground Zero. We had patients and staff who looked out of their windows in the hospital and saw the towers collapse. I was talking with a group of nurse's aides in an empty patient room on the ninth floor after the second plane hit. What a shock. What an unbelievable sight.

We were not alone. This was an event that affected the lives of Americans of all faiths and in all lines of work. Television images of the towers on fire, the images of the smoke and soot covering police, fireman, EMT workers, and citizens who found themselves near to Ground Zero when the buildings came down—these images grabbed every one of us. Healthcare staff in all New York hospitals heard the news and saw the shocking pictures in living color and then waited for the multitude of victims who never came.

Then, there were the days, weeks, and months of watching and waiting, digging and searching, hoping and praying that the news might be good; there was so little good news. All the heroes—rescue workers, family members, chaplains, and the ones who cut metal, shoveled concrete, and sifted rubble—felt a need to do something, to try, help, and care.

What does this have to do with CPE supervision? Nothing and everything. Many chaplains, including my staff, went to the Family Assistance Center, to the morgue, back to Ground Zero again and again, doing their share of the painful process of recording, confirming, comforting, and counseling. This defines for me the core of professional chaplaincy. This is what supervisors teach to seminarians, clergy, and lay people who enroll in our programs for clinical pastoral education. However, we can do no more or less than anyone else in any other profession. I do not believe that we could, either then or now, teach someone how to cope with an event of this magnitude. It is not part of the CPE canon to prepare students to face what we faced. I doubt that I could add anything more now, even though I have sat through countless hours of disaster training and preparation for a nuclear,

biological, or chemical catastrophe. What do I tell new CPE interns: “Be prepared”?

During the recovery stage, there were firemen who fought with police in New York about who was supposed to do what and when. The battle was, in effect, who lost more and who cared more. This seems silly. Everyone lost and everyone cared. Supervisors recognize and identify emotions in a crisis. We facilitate and listen to the grief and fear. We look for and celebrate hope. This was also my experience.

What does it have to do with being Jewish? For me, the same answer seems to apply. In the Jewish community, numerous important questions were raised about the events of September 11. Many Jews died in the tragedy, among the Christians, Moslems, Buddhists, and others. I am told that when it became clear that there was no escape for those on the top floors, some Jewish men jumped out of the windows in hopes that their bodies would be found. In that way, they expected to make it possible for their wives to confirm their deaths and be able to remarry. The problem was, in many instances, their bodies were still not found. Jewish law requires some evidence of one’s death to be confirmed. The dilemma of observant Jews was, and in some ways, remains great.

Another particular Jewish concern that emerged in the wake of the disaster centered on the Jewish practice of reciting from the Book of Psalms. When a Jewish person dies, there is a *shomer* (watcher or guard) who watches over the body until burial. This practice was compromised by the uncertainty of death and the many anonymous body parts that were recovered. While in normal Orthodox practice, a male is designated as the *shomer*; the complications of the World Trade Center collapse and the difficulties in identifying bodies and body parts led to a rabbinical decision that allowed women to recite the Psalms. Dozens of young Orthodox women read Psalms around the clock for weeks at the New York City medical examiner’s morgue for the victims.

Of course, in a very narrow way, for me there is another “Jewish” concern. I work in a Jewish hospital. Our public and accessible building is a possible target for another terrorist seeking to destroy more lives. When I hear the news of another terrorist bombing in Israel, I wonder, “When will they find their way to Beth Israel?” Buildings with Jewish names, synagogues, the Brooklyn Bridge, any New York City site, are all potential targets for a desperate and confused young Palestinian or other angry, misguided person.

What have I done differently as a supervisor since September 11, 2001? In one sense I hope that I have done very little different. I like to think that I am sensitive to stress and pain, which at times seems to pervade the lives of everyone

who lives in New York. The noise, pollution, traffic, crowds, cramped living quarters, subways, buses, constant emergency sirens. All of the things make up daily existence in Manhattan and affect all our students in CPE. In their defense, many New Yorkers thrive on the intensity of life here, but when, in CPE, we try to get people connected to their feelings, much of the layered struggle begins to surface. The struggle after September 11 was to pay attention to a range of horrible feelings that filled us with fear, anger, grief, pain, loss, and hopelessness. The people who felt each of these feelings needed time and space to experience them, name them, and claim them. Every person, every CPE student, needed to work through these feelings at their own pace and in their own time. It has not come easily, even now it is far from complete.

Personally, I have been angry since September 11, 2001. I have tried to speak about it, which helps at times. I have tried to recognize when it affects me as a person and supervisor: sometimes I have been successful. I have been acutely aware of my fear while spending time with my two young children when they asked questions about what happened. Fortunately, it seemed to pass quickly for them, certainly much quicker than it has for me.

Will things ever be the same in CPE supervision after September 11? I don't think so. How can any of us in New York go about our work and our lives and not react when we hear an emergency vehicle siren. Each day I ride the train to work, a train that travels through a tunnel under the Hudson River into Pennsylvania Station. News reports have repeatedly told us that the safety features of the tunnel are inadequate to deal with an incident such as a terrorist attack on the train while it is in the tunnel. Consequently, when the train comes to a sudden stop, as it often does, I wait expectantly for the announcement about the cause of the delay. Usually it is simple congestion, but I anticipate with fear the day when the conductor's report will be different.

As a supervisor, I must monitor my own internal dialogue. I do so in my roles as husband, father, friend, chaplain, educator, administrator, and human being. When September 11 comes up, I would rather not face all of the feelings that I have and would prefer to dismiss them as irrelevant to the present moment, but I know that I cannot. I want to move forward toward the next task on my list, but I cannot ignore what I feel and how feelings about events of that time still haunt me and many others.

I am also reminded, what seems like every day, of the terrible, ongoing terrorism in Israel. There is a link, real or imagined, in my mind between what happened in New York and what is happening in Israel. Two days ago, as I write

this, a bomb went off in a cafeteria at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. A dozen college students died, and many others were seriously wounded. For me, as a Jew, this is not a remote incident. I have cousins who attend college in Israel. This is real, and it stirs my anger and pain again and again with each new incident.

September 11, 2001, had become a focal point of a new American patriotism, which bothers me deeply. I'm not anti-American; I led services of hope and prayer in the weeks that followed September 11, and we sang *God Bless America* at each one. As a child of two Holocaust survivors, I am truly grateful that this country welcomed the remnants of my family who escaped Nazi Germany. However, our love of this country does not mean that we must vilify others, even those who hate us and who act to harm us. They do not need to be demonized to lift up our values, culture, or country. This notion runs counter to all that I have learned and taught in CPE about encountering other people.

If there is something important that we as CPE supervisors can do after September 11, it is to remember these principles: We meet people where they are, value them as unique human persons, attempt to build bridges between one another to serve the greater good and God. I have no illusions about the mentality of those who attacked this country on September 11, 2001, and those who followed suit in October with the anthrax mailings: they were angry and wrong and killed many innocent people. In addition, they disrupted and irrevocably altered the lives of millions of people in New York City, the United States, and around the world, which has pained me more than I can admit.

However, we cannot succumb to prejudice, fear, or hopelessness in our personal or professional lives. The task before us is to rebuild, not just the structures that were destroyed, but the values that we cherish. I need to focus on the relationships that I can affect in my life and work—to not continue that effort would mean that I cannot live my life or do my job. I believe that our job as CPE supervisors is now more important than ever.

The Tears of God Are the Meaning of History:¹ September 11 and Pastoral Supervision

Paul Steinke

Has September 11 changed the way we do pastoral supervision? What lasting influence will that day's destruction have on our work as supervisors of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), as contextual education directors, or as pastors? The common wisdom seems to be that the world changed that September morning. Whether you watched the dreadful event on television or from a hospital window you knew our country would never be the same again. But my immediate experience that September provided few clues to the day's effects on pastoral supervision.

My fall unit students arrived September 10 for a week of orientation to the curriculum and to the New York University (NYU) Medical Center. Five minutes after the second plane hit, the students were dispatched to their assignments, which we had planned to orient them to later in the day. I hurried to the emergency room. The NYU disaster plan was up and running in less than thirty minutes. For the next

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three days, morning, noon and night, we met with the volunteer chaplains from other hospitals to review our coverage. We shared the unspeakable stories of ER patients and of families filing missing person reports at the New York City Medical Examiner's Office, part of the NYU complex.

As the dust literally settled, the CPE program settled down to the mundane of interpersonal relations groups, writing verbatims and complaining about being on-call. Patients referred to September 11 less and then not at all. What surprised me the most was that the CPE peer group that had worked side by side through the worst disaster on American soil since the Civil War did not bond like I expected it to. Isn't it the conventional wisdom that danger draws people together? My neighborhood in Brooklyn certainly seemed closer than ever. The CPE group seemed distant and only occasionally became "a work group." What was going on here? Was the anxiety around starting a CPE unit coupled with the genuine fear of losing one's life pushing the students into themselves and away from each other? Were they holding on to their inner cores for dear life? Was their supervisor doing the same?

In November 2001 at the certification commission, a subcommittee was reviewing my presenter's report. Bob Grigsby said, "Paul, do you realize September 11 is written all over this report? Look at the explosive language. Look at the rage." So possibly the students were dealing with a more than usual impaired supervisor. I have never cried more openly or prayed more fervently with any group of students. Too much? The supervisory alliances were not strong with one exception. A twenty-five-year-old, Haitian-American, Pentecostal woman pastor, former shot putter and hammer thrower at NYU, connected with me and visa versa. She was also the only student from whom I could hear pastoral concern on those ragged days and jagged nights. Why? Could it have been that she hailed from a menacing country and was acquainted with danger?²

My supervision of CPE students that fall of 2001 didn't seem to answer the question whether September 11 changed the way we do supervision. I couldn't get my mind and heart around the big picture. How could I reflect on this disaster in relation to my vocation? Six months after September 11, the NYU Medical Center Symposium, titled "The Apocalyptic Imagination: Daydreaming in an Era of Nightmares," began with this introduction of the symposium's purpose: "to understand the complicated relationship between trauma, fear, and mastery at the heart of all creative endeavors." What a great description of Clinical Pastoral Education. Could September 11 be normalized as just one more trauma among many traumas? That seemed to minimize and even denigrate my own experience

of those tumultuous events. Did September 11 change the creative endeavor of CPE?

How could I get far enough away from the event to see what it might mean for pastoral supervision? A model for thinking through the question presented itself in the anthropologist Clifford Geertz's *The Interpretation of Culture* in the chapter, "Religion as Cultural System." Geertz begins with Susanne Langer's idea about chaos in *Philosophy In a New Key*: "Man can adapt himself somehow to anything his imagination can cope with; but he cannot deal with chaos."³ The threat of a chaotic event, like September 11, according to Geertz, is that it lacks "not just interpretations, but interpretability."⁴ Chaos destroys meaning and, like suffering, destroys language itself. The three points where chaos threatens to break in upon us and destroy meaning are (1) bafflement, (2) suffering, and (3) a sense of intractable ethical paradox. In Geertz's view, these three dynamics challenge our sense that "life is comprehensible." Thus, the destruction of the twin towers raises the specter that life has "no order, no emotional form, and no moral coherence."⁵

I. BAFFLEMENT

The terrorism of that day cries out for explanation. Nothing satisfies. On one side are the breast beaters who claim that such attacks were inevitable because of the way the United States treats the rest of the world. On the other side are the Falwells and Robertsons who tie the destruction to America's romance with their definition of evil. The short war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan seemed to provide some understanding of the event. We were going after the bad guys. But the old Manichean division of good versus evil doesn't prove satisfactory. September 11 baffles us. Geertz called this phenomenon "analytic impotence."⁶

My experience of the chaos of that day—people covered with white ash streaming into the ER, the dark cloud covering the end of Manhattan Island, the rumors of planes crashing into buildings all over the United States—cast me adrift in a world that was now absurd and incoherent. Walking the dogs in the early morning on the twelfth, I came across a neighbor who said, "after yesterday you can be sure of one thing Paul, the money grubbing days of the nineties are over." I was speechless. Thousands of innocent people were dead, and the meaning of the event is economic? Months later I attended a theological conference in which the

keynote speaker claimed that we in New York City had burned through this destructive event to “pure compassion,” unlike the rest of the country. They weren’t in our rarefied state yet. We were to understand that September 11 had already been transcended, the Big Apple transformed. Bafflement reigns!

The destruction of the World Trade Center by Al Qaeda terrorists continues to elude understanding. There is no simple cause and effect. Can theology provide meaning? The introit for the liturgy for the Second Sunday in Lent this year included the phrase “in thee have I trusted, let me not be confounded.” The tumult of September 11 confounds our best efforts at understanding. What does it mean? We know by faith that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Yet, during those hours when we feared for our lives, it didn’t seem anyone was in charge. We raised the same question of meaning many hospital patients ask: Why me? Why did God allow this to happen to us?

What meaning can be attached to that day? My reaction to the day was not untypical. We ministered to the patients in the ER till early afternoon, and then to the patients on the floors who had witnessed the event from their windows. At the end of the day, I went to the first church I could find open for worship. The priest at St. Monica’s preached a pastoral sermon in which he gave no easy answers to the day’s events. He gently encouraged us to stay connected to the faith community, to gather strength at the Lord’s Table, and to pray for the dead, their families, and our own safety. The faith community, “a place where God is forming a family out of strangers,”⁷ may be where our bafflement is eased, contained, and enacted through the liturgy. For Christians, the church—not the denominational bureaucracy, but rather the local gathering of the people of God—is the locus of safety, a landscape of meaning connecting baffled folk to an often baffling God and to one another. Walter Brueggeman has said somewhere that “hurt is hope’s home.”⁸ And for the Christian, hope’s home is the community gathered around word and sacrament. Pat answers of the “What Me Worry?” variety exacerbate bafflement. Holding on to each other for dear life in the community of faith gives us a place for our bafflement to be heard, shared, and eased for a few moments. We can offer up our confusion to God, and pray that we not be so confounded.

A couple of weeks after September 11, I heard Martin Marty speak. He encouraged us to look at the “thickness” of the texts and subtexts surrounding that fateful day. I remember thinking no more business as usual, no more cursory readings. The layers of debris would be painstakingly sifted. It occurred to me to reread Boisen’s *Out of the Depths*. My practice as a pastoral educator needed, somehow, to be deeper. It needed to start with the void, with darkness, with the

depths. “Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord.” Meanings and understandings needed to grow out of cries of pain.

II. SUFFERING

The suffering that comes with a chaotic event like the destruction of the World Trade Center destroys meaning. Life was somewhat comprehensible when we drank our coffee that morning. By 9:30 A.M., all hell had broken loose. Around 1 P.M., someone in the ER remarked that we hadn’t had a new patient in thirty minutes. A giant swell of silence engulfed the room. A nurse blurted out, “Oh my God, they are all dead!” The brute senselessness of inexorable pain was palatable. How many were dead? 10,000? 20,000? Were our own lives in danger? Now we know many more were rescued, but 1,700 people were vaporized. A pastor told me he did a funeral in which the remains in the coffin consisted of a thumb. The unspeakable suffering of burying parts of loved ones or having no bodies to bury at all is insufferable.

Suffering of such magnitude leaves us speechless, bereft of meaning. Religion should help us to comprehend the world. Geertz elucidates the issue:

As a religious problem, the problem of suffering is, paradoxically, not how to avoid suffering, but how to suffer, how to make of physical pain, personal loss, worldly defeat, or the helpless contemplation of other’s agony something bearable, supportable—something, as we say, sufferable.¹⁰

In the Christian religion, suffering and loss are placed in the context of the gathered community’s worship. In the liturgy, the faithful receive “a vocabulary in terms of which to grasp the nature of [his] distress and relate it to the wider world.”¹¹ We desperately need words and images when suffering is about to drown us. Suffering renders us mute.¹² Or as Elaine Scarry puts it, suffering destroys language: “Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human makes before language is learned.”¹³

Who shall hear the groaning of people doubled over in suffering? The psalmists who offered their laments to God raised this question in the worship of Israel. The poems of lament cut through the sentimentality and niceness of modern culture to the raw wounds of suffering people:

I have suffered your terrors and am in despair.

*Your wrath has swept over me;
your terrors have destroyed me.*

*All day long they surrounded me like a flood;
they have completely engulfed me.*

*You have taken my companions and loved ones from me;
the darkness is my closest friend.¹⁴*

As Walter Brueggeman says, the lament psalms, which he calls the psalms of disorientation, remind us of “the resilience of darkness.”¹⁵ Our students and we visit people engulfed in the dark anguish of disease everyday. On September 11, the darkness of smoke and debris pouring from Ground Zero symbolized the very power of darkness visited upon our city. Stricken people need a vocabulary. What Geertz says of the Navaho *sing*, a ceremony that provides a context in which suffering is alleviated, could be applied to Christian and or Jewish liturgies:

Clearly, the symbolism of the sing focuses upon the problem of human suffering and attempts to cope with it by placing it in a meaningful context, providing a mode of action through which it can be expressed, being expressed understood, and being understood, endured.¹⁶

The pastoral care of the sick practiced by chaplain interns in Clinical Pastoral Education could be understood as a kind of *sing*, a ceremony not so much for healing the sick, but for sustaining them. The chaplain gives attention to the suffering expressed by patients, creating a context in which the pastoral alliance can emerge. In the sacred space of the pastoral relation, stories of suffering line the walls like mortar fastening bricks. The pastoral caregiver assists patients to access their religious/spiritual resources in order to discover the meaning of what has befallen them. The pastoral encounter is a kind of liturgy. Emily Dickinson begins one of her poems with the line, “After great pain a formal feeling comes.”¹⁷ In the liturgy of pastoral care, the patient and chaplain provide a language as they engage in an antiphonal versicle and response rehearsing the darkness.

The thick darkness spilling over peoples lives since September 11 calls for attention to the depths of human misery, not easily alleviated by the current transformational theories now in vogue. The possibility theorists give too much attention to the solution and not enough to the broad, deep, and enduring grief of parents whose children vaporized that fateful morning. Gregory Orr, the Virginia poet, at age twelve killed his brother in a hunting accident. His poem *After Death* captures the grief that has followed him is entire life:

*I heard the front door close
and from my window saw*

*my father cross the moonlit lawn
and start up the orchard road.*

*Then I was with him,
my mittened hand in his,
and Peter, my brother, his dead son,
holding his other hand.*

*The way the three of us walked
was a kind of steady weeping.¹⁸*

Lets hope that the new adult learning theorists, which our supervisors in training will be reading in the next decade, will be seeped in “a kind of steady weeping,” will begin with “gnawing wounds that never sleep,” and will recognize “how long the mourners’ bench upon which we sit, arms linked in undiluted friendship, all of us, brief links, ourselves, in the eternal pity.”¹⁹ What a difference such a learning theory would make. The emphasis on transformation leads to outcomes without process. What September 11 makes clearer than ever is that we need to operate out of theories and theologies that account for the tragedies at the heart of human life. Anyone read Freud lately? Seward Hiltner?

Down in the depths the answers are few, the mourners bench long. The embrace of other people, in whose suffering we recognize our own, holds us together however briefly. The context for that embrace in the Christian tradition is the holy space of the people of God at prayer where we practice “a kind of steady weeping.”

III. INTRACTABLE ETHICAL PARADOX

The destruction of the World Trade Center by terrorists destroyed our sense that the world is ordered. Geertz wrote, “Inexorable pain, and the enigmatic unaccountability of gross inequity all raise the uncomfortable suspicion that perhaps the world, and hence man’s life in the world, has no genuine order at all.”²⁰ Moral impotence is no stranger to pastoral caregivers and their teachers. In the hospital, the least educated to the most sophisticated patients are expressing the injustice of their plight. September 11 raised “the disquieting sense that one’s moral insight is inadequate to one’s moral

experience.”²¹ The moral questions raised by September 11 were not only the universal existential ones, but also the smaller, local ones.

In my old Italian neighborhood, Brownstone Brooklyn, lives the largest Arab population in New York City. Two American-born young Arab men from the hood—one Lebanese, the other Palestinian—opened Zaytoon’s, a first-rate Middle Eastern restaurant on the corner of my block. Teddy is a Mets fan and Jack, like myself, a Yankee fan. Waiting for my take-out is always a wonderful razing of the Met fan by the two Yankee fans. After the fateful day, Zaytoon’s closed for several nights because of threats. Neighborhood people started posting letters on the front door, urging Teddy and Jack to not be intimidated and to reopen the restaurant. I was working long hours at the medical center those days and didn’t stop by Zaytoon’s. A couple of weeks went by. I was walking the dogs and there outside the restaurant was Jack.

He stopped talking to the people he was with, looked over at me plaintively. “Is everything alright between us?”

I rushed over to him, embraced him. “We’re brothers. So sorry I haven’t been around to support you.”

In the depths, our clinical pastoral vocation does not begin with the transformation of individuals. It begins with relationships. Our forefathers and foremothers knew this. Has anyone read Harry Stack Sullivan lately? As we thread through our relations with patients, colleagues, students, supervisors, loved ones, family, and even God, we discover a fabric strong enough to bear us.

IV. AFTERTHOUGHTS

Has September 11 changed the way we do pastoral supervision?

If that event has driven us to the depths, than it may have. If we have rediscovered the thickness of our rage and the depth of the darkness in a pile of rubble, we may have altered the way we supervise.

At the heart of our vocation as pastoral caregivers and pastoral educators is the long look into the abyss of suffering and death, “its demonic awfulness.”²² We still flinch. We also will find a way to keep looking. The word “risk” has become a cliché in Clinical Pastoral Education. “Courage” is a word that better conveys what we are about. It takes courage to continue looking into the depths. We owe

that looking to our patients and to God. Wounds do not have to heal. As a Christian, it has always been a great mystery to me that Jesus still had wounds after his resurrection from the dead. We tackle the problem of meaning everyday in Clinical Pastoral Education as we parse with our students “the meaning inherent in the sufferer [himself].”²³ We define God as love. At the center of that love is a God who suffers. “By his wounds we are healed.”²⁴

Since the destruction of the towers, life and death seem more of a piece to me. Maybe that just comes with my age as life and death draw closer together. There are fewer easy answers, more questions. The disorientation of that fateful day lingers. And for me, I say let it. In the absence of orientation, there is my wife, my children, my neighborhood, my CPE colleagues, and a God who descended into hell, and a God who ascended into heaven with wounds in tact.

NOTES

1. Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Lament for a Son* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 90. Woltrstorff’s twenty-five-year-old son died in a mountain climbing accident. He records his grief in fragments and unfinished thoughts like grief itself. Like the psalmist, no moods, no words are minced.

2. Madison Smartt Bell, *All Souls’ Rising* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996); Bell, *Master of the Crossroads* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001). Bell’s two novels about Haiti’s violent origins depict the horrors of slavery that have never subsided in Haiti.

3. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 99f; Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957).

4. *Ibid.*, 100.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, 108.

7. Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Alien* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1995), 87.

8. Walter Brueggemann, *The Psalms and the Life of Faith* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995); *Praying the Psalms* (Winona, Minn.: St. Mary's Press, 1995); and *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1984). In Walter Brueggemann's books, the author uncovers the power of the Psalms to shape reality and to unmask the easy answers of modernity and the tragedies of every day. The lament psalms cry out to be used by chaplains at the bedside of suffering people. Of Brueggemann's six books on the Psalter, these three would seem indispensable to the pastoral caregiver.

9. Psalm 130:1 RSV.

10. Geertz, *Interpretation*, 104.

11. *Ibid.*, 105.

12. Dorothy Soelle, *Suffering* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 73 f. This describes the speechless numbness that accompanies suffering.

13. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford, 1985), 4f.

14. Psalm 88:15-18.

15. Brueggemann, *Message of the Psalms*, 51f.

16. Geertz, *Interpretation*, 104f.

17. Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Boston: Little Brown, 1960), no. 341. In another poem, Dickinson suggests the suffering and loss are accompanied by some solemnities. See no. 1078: "The Bustle in a House/ The morning after Death/ Is solemnest of industries/ Enacted upon Earth."

18. Gregory Orr, *The Caged Owl: New and Selected Poems* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Cooper Canyon Press, 2002), 119.

19. Job 30:17; Peter DeVries, *The Blood of the Lamb* (Boston: Little Brown, 1961), 246.

20. Geertz, *Interpretation*, 108.

21. Ibid., 106.

22. Wolterstoff, *Lament*, 69.

23. Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *New Elucidations* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1979), 257. In the chapter, "Fragments on Suffering and Healing," Von Balthasar provides a discussion of the sufferer, the minister to the sufferer, and how they are joined.

24. 1 Peter 2:24.

Lessons from September 11: What the World Trade Center Tragedy Taught Me About Teaching and Caregiving

Yvonne Valeris

The September 11 terrorist attacks taught me, more than anything else, to listen more conscientiously to my students, my peers, and myself. The tragedy taught me to be more attentive to the dynamics within the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) group, to foster a better working alliance with a multicultural religious group of Muslims and Pentecostals, and to be less anxious with my Muslim student. This paper explores this learning process through events that resulted from September 11—events that ultimately led to personal and professional growth.

Just after September 11, I took over a CPE group midway through its unit. The group included one Middle-Eastern, Muslim man and three Caribbeans, who included two men, one Muslim and one Pentecostal, and one Pentecostal woman. The Muslim from the Caribbean, D—, was a convert to Islam and dressed in Muslim garb. He talked about his faith with every breath, and as a result the two non-Muslim students believed he was trying to convert them to Islam. In contrast, the Muslim from the Middle East wore western clothing and did not discuss his faith in every class. The two Evangelical students, J— and L—, and the converted Muslim, D—, always communicated, while the Middle Eastern Muslim, Z—, communicated far less; he remained on the group's margin.

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Z— had a way of appearing and then disappearing from the group. He would enter class as soon as it was about to begin and leave immediately at breaks. This behavior stood out for me more than anything else in the class did. I noticed that, as I wondered about his behavior, images of the World Trade Center (WTC) attack came into my mind. These images made me anxious, and I even wondered about my own safety. As a result, I became suspicious of Z—'s sudden disappearing and reappearing.

While Z— was out of sight, the other three students, including the converted Muslim, carried on as if he was not a part of the group. I felt dissatisfied with their ability to converse easily in his absence; even when in the group, Z— remained passive, unless I brought him into the group dialogue. I wondered whether they had avoided him because of his Middle Eastern characteristics and how much that had to do with the World Trade Center tragedy. One of the objectives in the Standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education indicates that peers have to utilize each other for their learning.¹ Clearly, they were not utilizing Z— to learn. The group dynamic blocked growth. I realized this had to change if they were to grow.

Keeping in mind that supervision aims for personal growth in the professional role, I worked on three areas of supervisory reflection to catalyze this: (1) administrative oversight, by maintaining the welfare of patients together with the hospital's support services; (2) therapeutic focus by working on supervisee behavioral changes to increase personal effectiveness; and (3) working alliances by fostering stronger dynamics between the supervisee, peers, and supervisor. Together, these three methods, each of which require periodic attention, make learning possible and the process as a whole work.²

Of the three dimensions, I decided to focus on working alliances. I explored the students' perception of each other and the supervisor, and I offered my perception of each student. The perceptions were revealed first in written form and then communicated verbally to the particular person with opportunity for feedback from each person. This proved fruitful in creating a greater expression of thoughts and feelings between the students and resulted in significant learning.

This work resulted in Z—'s peers demonstrating more enthusiasm for sharing their perceptions of him. L— shared that she was irritated with Z—. After I learned that he did not understand the irritation, I suggested that he ask L— to explain. This started a conversation between both of them, which later included the group members. She explained that she felt angry with him for elevating his value above theirs by his giving long introductions when answering questions. The other

Muslim student, D—, shared his impatience with Z— for not getting to the point quicker. And J— expressed his frustration with Z— for speaking in long paragraphs.

Z— became defensive. He responded by stating that he reads a lot of philosophy, science, and religion. D— commended him for his reading, but noted that Z— needs to be more self-aware and know when he is pushing his peers away from him. Finally, Z— stated that he had not realized that his behavior distanced him from the group, and since all of his peers had said the same thing, he agreed that he needed to reflect on his behavior. From this exchange, the students gained insight into their attitudes and behaviors in the group.

Although focusing on the working alliance shed light on the disconnectedness between Z— and the other three students, I still felt anxious about the supervisory relationship between him and me. I wanted to discuss my anxiety with Z—, but the following week he phoned in sick. I responded with the administrative dimension of the supervisory reflective process, and I notified the patient care manager about Z—'s absence. The patient care manager said that she missed Z—. I explained that he was sick and offered to take any referrals if she had them.

The following week he showed up for individual supervision and explained that he had had the flu. Then I noticed an intense expression on his face that made me anxious. My mind flooded with images of the terrorist attacks of September 11.

I felt anxious about sharing with Z— what was going on with me in the moment. So I utilized the least threatening of the reflective supervisory processes—the administrative dimension. I asked him how he was moving toward achieving his learning goals. He said something to the effect that the supervisor should tell him what he needed to learn. I asked him to help me understand what he meant. He shared a story about Hagar and Ishmael, and the well that was dug to supply water for the dying Ishmael. I asked him how we could dig a well together in order to water our supervisory relationship and help move him to achieve his learning goals. He was shocked by the question.

Then I shared my feelings of anxiety and suspicion of his appearing just as class was about to start and then disappearing just as the breaks began. I modeled sharing feelings with him as a way to help him open up more and to move the supervisory relationship to a deeper level.

It turned out that the horrific disaster of September 11 and my own ignorance of Islam had colored my anxiety and suspicions. Z— disappeared and reappeared frequently because, as a faithful Muslim, he needed to cleanse himself with water

and pray five times a day. It turned out that he too had felt anxious about rushing in and out as quickly as he did. I told him that I felt so relieved to understand his behavior in light of his values. As a result, I learned that being open with my thoughts and feelings deepens the supervisory relationship and replaces fearful assumptions with reality. Specifically, I realized how much the WTC tragedy had impacted my relationship with Z—.

In light of this, I thought of the parallel process.³ Since I had felt anxious with Z—, I realized that there might have been a patient who felt the same, that is, whose perceptions had also been colored by the terrorist attack on the WTC. Z— had never mentioned any difficulty with patients, so I asked him whether he encountered any rejection by patients since September 11. He wanted to know why I asked him that question. I told him that I was curious to learn of any barriers to achieving his learning goals. Z— laughed, and his laughter echoed uneasiness, perhaps even shame. He said that only one patient had told him that since Z—'s G-d could destroy so many people on September 11, he would not need a pastoral visit. Z— went on to say that he understood the patient's misconception and that the staff had recommended that he educate the patient on the principles of Islam.

Z— then taught me something. He explained that one individual's actions do not represent an entire race or group of people, that the WTC was an extreme case of Islam, and that not all Muslims are the same. One month after the class terminated, Z— phoned to find out how I was doing and to tell me that he knew I would not reject him. He even voiced his desire to take another unit of CPE under my tutelage.

In the context of the supervisory relationship, the terrorist attack of September 11 had created a bond between Z— and me that furthered our growth as professional caregivers.

The terrorist attack and my experiences afterward also taught me that a CPE supervisor must remain in the loop of the hospital activities and educate staff on the value of pastoral care. While doing live supervision with a CPE student in the pediatric unit, the house cleaning lady, Emelia, told me to go see Maria, a patient care assistant who works in the nursery. She told me that Maria had not spoken with anyone since the attack on the World Trade Center. The cleaning lady pleaded, "Please, please see Maria."

My student and I visited the nursery together, and this gave the student the opportunity to observe and critique my pastoral care. The student and I introduced ourselves as the hospital chaplains to the head nurse at the nurses' station and asked to see Maria. She directed us to the room where Maria was working. I knocked on

the door in which Maria was standing and staring. The student and I introduced ourselves to Maria, and I told her that Emelia had asked that we see her. Maria immediately said that she did not want to talk. Nevertheless she did not walk away. Suddenly, her face flushed, and her eyes grew red and teary.

“I am wondering about the pain, Maria,” I said.

She pulled up two chairs and said, “Come into this other room. It is clean.”

I took a third chair for the student, and we followed her into the room. We sat together in a circular position. Maria lamented. She had lost the second of her two daughters who worked on the forty-third floor of the World Trade Center. She shared that they went to the movies the Saturday before the attacks. Upon leaving the movies, they went into the subway, and the daughter kept playfully hiding behind the pillars; she would come out from behind them and wave good-bye and laugh. She did this while they waited for the train. After riding the train, they had to take a bus to their home.

As her daughter was boarding the bus, “she waved goodbye again,” Maria said. “I have never seen her so playful.”

On the Tuesday of the attacks, Maria was home watching television when she saw the news about the attack on the WTC. She rushed to her window and saw the WTC on fire. She rushed to the phone and called her daughter, but there was no answer. At this point in her telling of the story, Maria buried her face in her hands and bent over. Maria said that every day she runs into her daughter’s bedroom to see if she is there.

“Nothing,” she cried.

She explained that family members were coming in from Florida for a memorial service. “How can I have a memorial service without a body?” she said. “I was planning on retiring in a few months, but I have to put my retirement on hold.”

I affirmed her pain and then asked if God was present with her in her loss. Maria kept silent. I explored the meaning of the silence. Maria stated that she ‘prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed,’ asking God to send her daughter back home, but God did not answer her prayers. Then she rose from her chair. I remained seated and felt broken, and the student claimed feeling broken as well.

Maria came up to me, hugged me, and said, “Thanks for listening. You are the first person who did not tell me to move on with my life. All my friends and the psychotherapist told me that my daughter is dead, and I must move on with my life. How can I move with my life when I lost a part of me? Thank you.”

Upon leaving the room, she turned around, looked at me and said, “I remember you. You talked about pastoral care at the annual employees’ orientation. Thanks for listening to me.”

I felt saddened by Maria’s story because I love my own daughter. On the day of the terrorist attack, my daughter phoned me from her university and said, “Mom, I am so scared. The faculty are crying, and the students are scared, and everybody is phoning home.”

Since September 11, I have had many disturbing emotions— fear, powerlessness, numbness—and sleepless nights. I became fearful of any noise that I could not give meaning to and felt that a terrorist might be hiding out in my room. I was always on foot patrol. I was always on high alert. I was always looking for something that I felt weary in my body and spirit. As a pastoral caregiver, I was experiencing what McCann and Pearlman call vicarious traumatization, including intrusive thoughts and painful emotional reactions.⁴ This weariness impacted my work. Could I be present in an empathic way with my students and others? I myself needed a pastoral caregiver and a teacher.

In order to help heal myself so that I could be available to my students and others, I entered psychotherapy. In therapy, I learned that, by working with people wounded by the WTC attack, I had experienced changes in my own thoughts—imagining that disastrous things might happen to me. As a result, I realized my fears were irrational. I was able to process my disturbing emotions in therapy and find ways to soothe myself.

In addition to therapy, I was able to empower myself by enrolling in a bereavement class. Interestingly, although there were thirteen members in the class, they were all women, and I was the only Black. The class was open to both genders, but only women had signed up for the course. This class provided a community for me to discuss the effects of terrorist attacks on my own person and to become more aware of my own history of trauma. From this I learned the enormous value of community in the healing process. Within this community experience, I discovered something fascinating about individuals: Each of us in our own way was undergoing trauma. This I experienced through race.

I realized that I wasn’t alone in my ethnic difference and that the other members of the group were fellow companions who were also traumatized by the WTC disaster. These women had their own personal history of trauma as well as their own stories of aloneness. But it was in the context of community that we learned to recognize and heal our individual traumas because we realized each of us was not done. In this respect, the terrorist attacks brought us together for a very

rich healing experience and taught me the value of personal healing within a community.

The terrorist attack provided an impetus for tremendous personal and professional growth. It taught me to be more attentive to how trauma and media imagery can affect the relational dynamics among my clinical pastoral education students and myself. Z— and the CPE group were a community in which anger and fear, loss and bereavement, played an important role. My own bereavement community provided the support I needed to do my supervision. CPE supervisors need someone to help heal their loss.

NOTES

1. Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc, "Objectives of Clinical Pastoral Education Programs," in *The Standards[©] of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education 2002* (Decatur, Ga: Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc, 2002), section 240.5, 8: "To utilize individual and group supervision for personal and professional growth and for developing the capacity to evaluate one's ministry."

2. David A. Steere, "A Model for Supervision," in *The Supervision of Pastoral Care*, ed. David A. Steere (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), 76-84.

3. Rudolf Ekstein and Robert S. Wallerstein, *The Teaching and Learning of Psychotherapy* (New York: Basic Books Inc, 1958), 177-199.

4. Lisa McCann and Laurie Anne Pearlman, "Vicarious Traumatization: A Framework for Understanding the Psychological Effects of Working with Victims," in *Essentials Papers on Posttraumatic Stress Disorder*, ed, Mardi Horowitz, MD (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 512.

A Non-U.S. Citizen's Perspective: Tragedy, Patriotism, and the Effect on CPE

Anke Flohr

In fall 2001, the clinical pastoral education (CPE) residency year at Pacific Health Ministry, a multisite CPE center in Hawai'i, began during the first week of September. Christian students from Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, Hong Kong, and the U.S. East Coast had come together to learn. They were anxious and eager. Knowing how important it is to use this anxiety and eagerness in a constructive way, I focused on establishing a trusting atmosphere with many opportunities to meet and relate with each other. This week of orientation allowed group members to become familiar with the each other, the program structure, the clinical context, and with Hawai'i. The students began to grapple with the multicultural context. The importance of having established this trusting relationship became abundantly clear on the morning of September 11.

Six different countries, primary languages, and cultures comprised our group. I liked this diversity and used it as a bridge to my international background and my

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enthusiasm for cross-cultural learning. Initially I made myself transparent by sharing my own story as a cultural transplant, encouraging the students to look toward the richness of this group's diversity and inviting the students to share their lives and interests. Through this process, I introduced my understanding of CPE as a "journey of discovery." Yet, from the beginning, it was clear that language barriers impeded mutual understanding. My ability to identify with culture shock and language struggles was particularly useful at this point. To encourage more interaction, I asked each student to bring in something that was important to them and their life story. I offered a piece of the Berlin Wall, my life story, as a metaphor about relationships and boundaries. The concreteness of this bit of rubble encouraged talking within the group. The initial anxieties started to settle down.

Then September 11 happened. The fears and pain were overwhelming. We were all separated by thousands of miles from loved ones and from our own countries.

The student from the Philippines separated from his wife and two children agonized, "Will I ever see my wife and kids and family again?" The phone lines to the countries of our origin were often busy and inaccessible.

"I feel stuck here in the middle of the Pacific," the student from the U.S. East Coast wept. "In this crisis I want to be with my family. I have several friends who work in the twin towers. New York is part of me. How will it be when I go home? I feel so cut off." But no airplanes were flying.

The student from Indonesia, whose husband and two children were in Indonesia, was shocked that something like that could happen in the United States. The news reports evoked memories of the many terrorist attacks in Indonesia. She was familiar with pictures of brutal and ongoing destruction in her homeland. Terror was part of her daily life. "The events of 9/11," she said, "have cost personal suffering to me as a human being. No matter where I happen to be living I consider that place to be my home, so I feel for the victims of this attack just as I would feel for the members of my own family."

The student from Hong Kong described her reactions with these words: "I was totally at a loss. How fearful it was for me to associate the tragedy of my mother country, Mainland China, on June 4, 1989, in Beijing. A horrible bloodshed. The yelling of the university students being attacked and killed are still ...in my mind. I felt paralyzed." She struggled finding words in English to articulate her thoughts and feelings. "It was hard for me as a second language speaker to share all my feelings," she said. "How much I want to be home and be understood."

The student from Japan was scared by the local newspaper headlines—"Another Pearl Harbor"—and by many Hawai'ian residents' immediate response that September 11 reminded them of that fateful day in 1941. She said, "As a Japanese I felt uncomfortable with this parallel." She, looking at the history of 1941, feared a similar dynamic of emerging racism in the United States. "I started to wonder about the information which I got through the news program. I started to check the internet news and information, looking for a wider vision to see the situation of the world and the tragedy of 9/11," she continued. Beyond these personal situations the rising American patriotism and threat of war were especially scary for those on student visas.

Before the morning ended, I recognized the need to change the curriculum. Group meetings were increased in frequency. Time for prayer and my presence in the hospital with the students became my priority. To create a safe place for the students to share—in any language—I also shared my own feelings and vulnerability. As such, I modeled emotional availability and spiritual leadership as the students struggled to balance their own fears and their professional responsibilities in the midst of personal and national crisis and chaos. They were torn with wanting to go home, being physically and emotionally exhausted, and needing to respond to immense pastoral responsibilities. The CPE group became a "home" for all of us since none of us had any family on the island. More rapidly than any previous CPE group we moved toward cohesiveness. The events of September 11 necessitated that much of the early supervision be done in group. During week four, my work became more individualized.

Following the terror attacks I felt, just like the students, vulnerable and afraid. Being a "legal alien," I felt lost amidst the sudden outpouring of patriotism. This American patriotism fascinated and scared me at the same time. As a post-World War II German, I have difficulties with any such expression. I was, however, amazed at its uniting power in the states and how quickly a nation could bind together and care for each other in such meaningful ways. My staff colleagues were very much a part of this process of finding a new understanding. Likewise, the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) Pacific Region Annual Meeting later that month was an important time of reflection and processing feelings. I found colleagues who appreciated cultural diversity, listened to my fears and those of other international citizens, who were courageous in exploring unpopular issues, and provided time for spiritual support and healing. In the middle of our shaken world, it was clear to me that the ACPE community is truly my professional home where I belong.

This is exactly the acceptance and learning that I hope to provide to students when they encounter the world as a frightening place—whether that is the hospital amidst CPE learning, or a world and nation dealing with a crisis. In the fall resident group, I supervised using my creativity to provide a place for honest conversation to help terrified international and American students find the courage to be ministers to others while living with their own fears. It was a time for all of us to affirm our place, our feelings, and finally our calling to ministry. It was a time that extremism, racism and prejudice—walls that I talked about during orientation—raised their ugly heads. These walls finally gave way to discovery, learning, collegueship, and a renewed call to ministry.

The Impact of September 11, 2001, on My Life and My Supervisory Style

Charles Berger

He compares the work of God in the world, where Jesus Christ is present, to a “floating crap game” and the church to a confirmed gambler whose “major compulsion upon arising each day is to know where the action is.”¹

The tragic loss of life in and around New York’s World Trade Center, at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and in a Pennsylvania field has in some way touched all of our lives. Yet, on that Tuesday morning, I could not have guessed how much this tragedy would come to affect my life and my supervision of clinical pastoral education (CPE) students. In this article, I draw a brief picture of the arena of my ministry, reflect on my time ministering to disaster workers in New York in mid October 2001, and then consider how those events have impacted me, both personally and professionally.

As a CPE supervisor, I had trained to serve on the Red Cross Spiritual Care Air Incident Response Team in New York. After the tragedy, the Red Cross called me to serve for two weeks in New York City. Following orientation at the Brooklyn

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Red Cross office, I was assigned to the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT) at the morgue at New York University Medical Center (NYUMC), which houses the city coroner's office. This was the reception center for all bodies and body parts taken from Ground Zero and from the landfill sight on Staten Island, where debris was being hauled from Ground Zero. In both places, fire and police department personnel, along with personnel from the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the New York Port Authority, were combing through debris looking for any human remains. At DMORT, there were some 75 professionals from the above agencies, plus members of the DMORT team. This team included people from all over the country: morticians, anthropologists, dentists, DNA specialists, and anyone who could assist in identifying remains. By the time I arrived, the results of DNA samples were beginning to come in; matching could take place with DNA provided earlier by families seeking their missing loved ones.

Remains were kept in refrigerated trailers lined side by side in a parking area across from NYUMC on the Bellevue-Hospital side of the street. This area was known as the Memorial Garden, where flowers and messages were placed on the side of one trailer draped with cloth to indicate it held remains of police and fire service personnel. The devastation of Ground Zero included in part or total some thirteen buildings on over sixteen acres and the lives of more than 2,800 persons, of which twenty-three were police officers, 343 were firemen, and thirty-seven were Port Authority officers.

In addition to the refrigerated trailers, there were make shift areas constructed for each of the main services, as well as a chapel open for all and the Salvation Army food station, which served meals round the clock. The whole area was patrolled by state police officers, from all over the state, who each donated a week at a time to secure the area.

It was to this community of seasoned disaster workers that I was assigned to minister. In addition to providing pastoral care to the staff working there, my job was to support and debrief the volunteer clergy of all faiths, including Christian, Muslim, and Jewish, who were offering pastoral care to this sight twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Since 80 percent of fire and police were Catholic, we held daily mass at noon. When the remains of service personnel, fire or police, were brought in, the police captain in charge would usually line us up on both sides of the street and call us to attention as police, both on motorcycles and in cars with sirens sounding and lights flashing, escorted the ambulance carrying the body into the receiving area. The body was wrapped in an American flag and was lying on a sled used to pull the remains from the disaster area. As we remained at attention,

officers saluting and civilians with hands over their hearts, the sled was placed on a wheeled gurney. The flag was removed and folded in military fashion and usually handed to the captain. On two occasions, family members were present, so when identification of the body was confirmed, the flag was given to them. At this point, those ordained clergy present were invited to step forward to offer a silent prayer. Usually, if the Catholic priest was present, he was the lead clergy, and the rest of us supported him. Following the prayer, the body was moved into the makeshift morgue where identification procedures began. One day, a Catholic bishop offered noon mass. Soon after, a police officer's body was brought in. When prayer was requested, the bishop insisted that we all stand along side him as equals and, like him, place our hands on the body bag as silent prayers were offered by all of us. His model changed the procedure from that moment on. The most overriding impact this experience had upon me was to validate the energy I was giving to the formation of pastoral caregivers.

But my reflection should begin in the early morning of that September 11. When I learning that a plane went into the Pentagon some five minutes distance from my daughter's home in Arlington, Virginia, I immediately phoned her. Anxious, I voiced my concern about her safety. With amazing calmness she reassured me that she was all right and that she had gotten safely home from work before the city shut down the Metro and all bridge access. She went on to say that she had decided to stay put rather than flee the city whose traffic already was approaching gridlock. Prior to this incident, my wife Carolyn and I had received Red Cross training and were committed to assist in the event of a tragedy. Both of our children were out of the house establishing their own homes elsewhere, my son in Seattle and my daughter in Arlington, so when the call came in for help the issue was first of all the safety of our children and those we loved and then how we could rearrange our schedules to comply with the Red Cross's requirement of a two-week commitment.

Because there was some excitement about going to New York City, I questioned my motives. I had never been in the city of New York. Was my excitement based in some self-serving interest in adventure? Was it responding to my need to be needed? I became aware again how much my call to ministry and, I suspect, the divine call of many of my students are influenced by self-serving interest along with nudgings of the Spirit. Yet, that wasn't the whole picture.

At age thirty-two, I had been blessed to discover an area of ministry that I thoroughly enjoyed, namely clinical pastoral education. I loved the challenge of students and how we could engage one another's resistance to hopefully discover

ground for learning. In many instances, our lives were changed through this process. I wanted to give something back and satisfy a curiosity of whether what I had been teaching about now for some thirty years was, indeed, portable and relevant.

However, once I learned my assignment was New York City, I became ambivalent. Was what I brought to this crisis sufficient or even applicable? The taking of initiative, the power of presence, the being attentive to where needs were both in others and myself, the dealing with the brutal reality and holiness of death, the trying to sense where God was at work—all seemed at times to be adequate with students, patients, families in my shop in South Carolina. Would these be sufficient in New York? Indeed, was it arrogant of me as an itinerant caregiver to even go to New York? My work with patients suffering from complicated grief told me of the magnitude of loss people would be facing through this tragedy. And yet the call had come to somehow be of help, so I went not sure what I would be doing, nor sure what real needs I would be facing, or how much I was walking into harms way. Nevertheless, I was committed to give what I could, so I went.

Ministering at the city morgue was not an easy assignment. Every day, I met service personnel anxiously wondering if this would be the day their dead colleague would be brought in. Officers returning from Staten Island voiced anger and fear that their work there was compromising their health due to gases rising from the landfill. Some found the wait intolerable. Needing to do something, one officer was selling tee shirts to help families of the police who had suffered a loss. These men and women worried about their families and questioned their vocations for putting them daily into harm's way. And then there were the hours of walking, waiting, wondering how or if I could be of help in what at times felt like a foreign land. There were moments when I wanted to go home, feeling it mattered little what I was about. And all of this was taking place on a side street where one was constantly surrounded literally by the smell of death.

Each night I went "home" to an empty room, needing to let go of the day before sleep would come. I got in touch with my own mortality, with how fragile life is, and with how much my family meant to me. It was clear all heightened defenses probably could not prevent another attack that might harm my family. In those lonely moments, I called my wife and each of my children. It helped a lot to talk with them about my experiences and to be renewed by our mutual love and support for each other. An unexpected comment from each of my children—"I'm proud of you dad!"—did much to revive my spirits. I found myself reflecting on things I planned to do in the future—some that I would never get to and others that

were manageable if I acted now. In December, Carolyn and I arranged to have our children Kevin and Jennifer join us for Christmas in Cancun. Though an expensive event, it proved to be a special and enjoyable time together. Since then, we have made trips to Seattle and Washington. I took sailing lessons and completed twenty weeks of dancing lessons with my wife. I may look into joining a community choir, and that book I've always wanted to write just might get started. This experience has helped me realize how important it is to confront my own death. Life is precious, and the years I will spend on this earth are numbered. Embracing death helps me embrace life.

The tension between family and ministry is always present. The call of God to minister always takes me away. Though it has been difficult, I have made an effort not to bring work home. I have found it easier to say "no" to demands, though I am mindful that I am at home as I write this article. I am now more concerned with how training is impacting the family life of my students and equally frustrated at how best to address this in some meaningful way. I am mindful of my need to be needed; that need requires constant management. I am painfully aware of how unaware I am of my needs and am working on that discerning process.

I experienced a meaningful moment in New York City with a fire marshal with whom I had become acquainted while waiting for remains to arrive. This particular day, he was assisting in folding the flag. I heard a fire chief was being brought in and shared this news with him. He told me it was not a chief but his fire marshal friend and buddy. With tears in his eyes, he told me he was worried that he would not fold the flag correctly. My heart went out to him as I put my arm around him. I told him his presence was most important to his friend and his friend's family; whatever way he folded the flag would be fine in his buddy's eyes. In the end, he folded the flag well. That day, I was the only clergy present to reach out and touch that dust-covered bag in silent prayer. When the captain nodded for me to pray, I was stunned. No words seemed to come to mind. The weight of the fire marshal's grief and the weight of loss symbolized by the odor of death permeating that sight seemed to snuff out all thoughts. Even though no words were spoken out loud, I questioned what words voiced in silence would be adequate. This young man was cut down in his prime. I was angry that this was all done in the name of god. And I was angry with God that such senseless pain and suffering was so much a part of this world. Thirty years of ministry had not prepared me for this holy moment. I still do not recall what bumbled words I offered. Yet, somehow they were sufficient. My friend gave a look of thanks. I was deeply touched as he

followed the remains of his buddy, most of which were only dust in a yellow fire suit, as they were moved from table to table midst the work of the DMORT team.

I was reminded that I send my students to these holy moments of suffering and death. My work with complicated grief always moves me to instruct them whenever possible to help families speak those things necessary to let the loved one go, allowing the moment of death to be a holy one. This tragedy, however, came without warning. While helping people speak is important, in times like this, incarnating caring presence and being the sign of God's presence in the holy moment are equally valuable. Even the mumbled words that feel so inadequate somehow prove to be sufficient. How valuable to stay with the awkwardness and clumsiness midst the swirling feelings of anger, helplessness, loss, and grief. How valuable to stand your ground with those in deep sorrow so they do not have to experience it alone. My time in New York reconfirmed the value of what I am doing as a pastoral educator. What happens in those moments of grief and loss can give or deplete life, depending on how the living deal with the loss. The impact of this moment came out in a comment I made to one of my students last week. His tendency was to fix things, often acting out of his anxiety. I invited him to just sit with his anxiety next time and to see what it might teach him about himself and those he served.

Another incident took place while I was talking with a police inspector. An older officer joined us and began recollecting how killing an officer used to elicit fear because the act ensured a death sentence; now, in some sections of the city, there was no fear of such a killing. The older officer recalled a recent incident where an officer was assassinated while he waited in his car on a stake out. The older officer said he was not sure why there needed to be chaplains around. It was one of those times when I almost found myself agreeing with him midst my struggle to understand my role. These men needed to talk and that seemed to help. My role? Well, it was to be a good listener. When the younger officer teared up, announcing one of his buddies was lost in the twin towers, the older officer changed the subject and told a joke. I interrupted and observed, "It still hurts doesn't it?" The younger officer nodded, brushing away the tear. Once the older officer left, he poured out his heart for over an hour.

Working with people familiar with death meant there was a certain defendedness to death's brutal reality. One was not easily admitted to this community of professionals who dealt with death on a regular basis. I was constantly put off, dismissed, and joked with during my attempts to connect. I learned again the importance of earning the right to be heard. This came only by

hanging out with them, sharing life with them, and being a presence with them. To do this, I realized again how important it is to have some clarity of identity as to who I was as a pastor. In spite of the older policeman's assessment, I felt there was a place for me in this critical drama. Experiences from the past helped to inform this. The newness of this situation for me, however, had made me unsure of how I would fit in. The situation with the old and young policemen reminded me how valuable it was to tell one's story. The older officer needed to tell his story of moving from a time of somewhat professional safety to one of clear uncertainty. The young officer's teary announcement of recent death may have been too much for the older officer; thus he fended the emotion off by changing the subject and adding humor. Although it angered me that he so quickly left what might have been a sacred space, it also reminded me how differently people approach the difficult topic of death, especially when it might be a reflection on their own death. Again I realized that such situations are not about me and how I might handle the experience but are about being sensitive to others and their style of coping, a style that is often expressed differently by different generations. This awareness has carried over in my work with students. While I am not afraid to walk into the theme of death with students, I am now more sensitive as to how I walk or sit or stand.

Yet, I am taking the risks. This is an important change I have brought with me from my New York experience. I now choose to ask the more difficult questions. I invite students into places that are risky for both of us. Recently, I helped a student deal with his father's death from several years ago. As a result, his feelings changed, he was able to sleep undisturbed at night, and he became a better pastor, husband, and father. Since New York, I seem to sense the urgency in life, and I am more apt to seize the moment. This was present in curriculum design with my fourth-year residents. My colleague and I approached the students saying we were going to co-create curriculum design with them; they had to negotiate who was to be their individual supervisor. Having always wanted to approach interpersonal relations group from a Tavistock model, I lobbied for and got the concept into our unit curriculum design. For me it has been a joy working with this new style. Since New York, I find myself more active. I am now more apt to voice and run on hunches. I am willing to risk throwing out a comment even when I badly miss the mark. I risk more and, thus, use more of self as an active part of my supervisory style.

My experience in New York has been a wake up call to reevaluate my life and my ministry. It has confirmed that what we teach in CPE is still relevant in these changing times. I am aware that insight takes time to filter down into behavior. I

am recommitted to my role as an educator and pastoral caregiver and know we must do more to underscore the value of pastoral care. I believe September 11 has in some measure changed all of our lives. For we now are forced to redefine normalcy with the constant threat of terrorist attacks. I suspect the impact of this experience will continue to transform my life and my work for some time to come.

NOTES

1. Harvey Gallagher Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 125-126.

One Man's Understanding of Pastoral Supervision After September 11

Stephen Harding

At Ground Zero, I learned more about men and how to care for them than I had learned in five years in seminary and seven years as a chaplain. In this article, I share what I learned about men, how we function, and how men provide care. Then I look at the implications of these lessons for pastoral supervision and pastoral care, in terms of how I supervise the chaplain interns at Beth Israel Medical Center's Jacob Perlow Hospice in New York City.

Two of the issues that chaplains and interns wrestle with are acceptance and authority. The issue of acceptance by other men is a defining moment in any man's life. It was so for me one night at Ground Zero, and that moment affected my approach to pastoral supervision and pastoral care.

For a long time, I had been seeking for adult men to accept me and what I do. This acceptance of me as an adult was something my father could not provide and something that had been left unfulfilled by my ordinations to deacon and priest in the Episcopal Church. Somehow, I had always felt intimidated by male authority figures and had reacted to them primarily by getting angry and/or withdrawing into

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myself. Now, here I was at Ground Zero as a chaplain for the uniformed personnel and recovery workers. Oddly, I felt at home here, perhaps because of the clear delineation of responsibility, perhaps because of the clarity of my function: to be a priest to many people in a time of great need.

One November night at Ground Zero, I was brought on site at 12:30 A.M. to say prayers for the bodies of two firefighters. Standing on the dirt construction ramp, feeling the earth under my feet, in the hush of the devastation, surrounded by a circle of firemen, I said the prayers for the reception of the body¹ and led the procession through the honor detail to the ambulances, where I said additional prayers in the presence of firemen and other members of the uniformed services. Afterward, several of the firemen came over and thanked me for doing a good job.

These prayers and their acceptance of me as priest served as my initiation rite into the world of adult men. These were the men who had gone into the towers before they fell. These were the men whose friends and brothers' bodies I blessed. These were the men who unknowingly presided at my initiation rite into their company. Their confirmation of who I was and what I was doing deepened my authority and gave me the freedom to exercise it on behalf of a greater good.

Since that night in November, I have accepted the responsibility to act out of my own convictions and authenticity; in biblical Greek, the word for authority is *exousia*, or acting out of one's essence or core. The doubts of what I should do have been removed, and I have moved into a deeper level of authority in my ministry to the dying and in my supervision of interns. Since that night, I have been paying attention to the difference between how men provide care to each other and how care is provided to and by men in the hospice and hospital where I work.

In serving at Ground Zero on a weekly basis, I was privileged to talk with hundreds of men—firefighters, police officers, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel, members of the military, and construction workers. I gained a new understanding of men from talking to them from my new perspective as an adult man who belonged in their company and who understood his role as their chaplain in a deeper way. These men were all initially focused on the urgent mission of rescuing as many people as possible, and then they were focused on the enormous task of recovering bodies and clearing the site of destruction. Ground Zero was organized around these two missions, and everyone working there had a function that helped achieve both objectives—under budget, ahead of time, and without a serious injury.

Over and over again, I heard the words: “We are doing this in order to help bring closure to the families.” “Whatever we can do to help the families, we are

going to do.” Firemen, police officers, EMS, medical examiners, and construction workers independently repeated these words. Underlying their words was a sense of participating in something much greater than any one individual could imagine. The sense of participating in an event of this magnitude ensured that most egos were put aside. Also, because of the heroism of the firefighters, police officers, EMS, and the hundreds of ordinary people who died while helping others survive, we wanted to live up to their example, to not let them down.

Being present with men who felt so deeply connected to something greater and seeing how the tasks at Ground Zero were completed by each man or each group as part of a larger team gave me an appreciation for how men work together and the best characteristics of adult men. Men connect with each other through shared tasks. Men demonstrate trustworthiness in each other by *doing*, by fulfilling their function well. As David Halberstam writes in his book, *Firehouse*, “The firehouse, like the military, is based on doing little things right, because if someone does not do the little things correctly, then he probably won’t do the big things correctly.”² In the context of a firehouse, if he won’t do the big things correctly, then he imperils not only the enterprise, but also everyone else’s safety. Moral: if someone doesn’t do the little things right, the person is not to be relied on.

Men are a function-based gender. We are goal-oriented, task-oriented, and we work best if we understand how our function contributes to the common goal. Actions are much more important than words in demonstrating care and concern. At the respite centers, I noticed that if one man had a particularly rough time, his coworkers or partner would make certain that he wasn’t alone and would sit in silent solidarity with him. Workers would bring bottles of water to their coworkers still on site. Everyone looked out for everyone else and was ready to provide support as soon as it was needed.

Adult men have made the shift from being self-referent to being generative and creative, usually with an experience of death or new life, and have shifted into a wider perspective that allows them to work for a greater good than their individual needs. Authenticity and honesty are two key attributes of adult men.

Being part of the recovery effort at Ground Zero taught me how men care, how they “translate the feeling of empathy and compassion into an action of caring.”³ The action at Ground Zero was to remove the wreckage in order to find the dead, which was also the shared task, the goal, and demonstrated the men’s depth of care and compassion for the families of the dead and the dead themselves.

My initiation into the world of adult men and seeing how the men at Ground Zero functioned gave me a model and the courage to claim my own way as a man

of providing supervision to the chaplain interns at my hospice. Even though I have been supervising field-site seminarians for five years, I have felt, until now, tentative in my approach. My standards of comparison were two peers, both women, who were in my clinical pastoral education (CPE) classes when we were students. Both women are now fully trained, accredited, insightful, and supportive Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) supervisors. Before September 11, I felt that I was doing things differently than they were. We had similar skills and techniques, but my approach was subtly and at times very different from their approach. I now think that this difference in approach is gender based: women provide care and supervise in a way that is authentic to who they are as women. As a man, my approach to supervision and care is fundamentally different.

From having been involved at Ground Zero, I have claimed, and am still claiming, my male approach to supervision. Since December, I have become more consciously aware that my approach as a supervisor is function based: My goal for my interns is for them to become good chaplains to the dying and their families. My function as field-site supervisor is to provide my students with the space to learn and to grow, and to share what I have learned about caring for the dying.

What I have learned since September 11 is that my approach is how most men do things. In my function as supervisor, I may not express direct personal concern for my interns, which they may interpret as distance, aloofness, disapproval, or hostility. My concern for them as people, however, comes through in the context of our shared tasks of caring for the dying and of their learning how to become good chaplains. In working together, we build trustworthiness on both sides, and this relationship may lead to deep bonds and emotional intimacy.

This approach is different from how women provide supervision or demonstrate care. My two ACPE supervisors were both women and were kind, for the most part gentle, and clear about the areas that were my “growing edges.” Each of my supervisors established some direct connection with me that was personal. In spite of the sometimes difficult lessons, I was learning with them about being a chaplain, I always felt that each of them saw something in me that they liked and that they valued about me as a person. I felt that they cared about me, about what I was doing, and about what I was struggling to learn. In an indescribable way, I felt cared for as a human being. The notion of space and room to grow was secondary to the concern about my growth, and it was that sense that I had of being seen and that someone actually cared about what I was trying to learn that got me through many difficult moments of chaplaincy training.

To me, this is the essence of women's care: to care about an individual person in a direct way so that they feel personally supported and sustained in their situation. Women tend to provide care that is direct and personal, and that involves much more self-disclosure. Men may not be as comfortable with this approach, thinking, "anyone can talk, but what do your actions tell me?"

I am certainly more at ease as a supervisor when I provide care by creating an environment for the individual to perform their share of the task, and by creating the space for the individual to reach their fullest potential. Rather than becoming caught up directly in their journey of self-discovery, my underlying assumption about my interns is that they are competent adults who know their own process and the stages of their journey best. Rather than telling them what to do, I feel that I need to create a shared, collegial space for them to be able to have their own experiences generated through their visits. They need to explore their own issues and wrestle with their own fears—less as students and more as people who are engaged in our shared task. In the hospice, this space for shared ministry is the context of being with the dying.

I find that in providing this shared space for them, there are at least two overlapping functions: one is the shared task of their becoming a better chaplain; the other is a shared function of ministering with the dying. Throughout the fulfillment of these two tasks, my intent and focus are only secondarily on them as individuals. My primary task is to accomplish both of our shared goals: fostering better chaplaincy and caring for the dying. My concern for them as human beings is present, but my concern for them comes through over time as we work together, secondary to the accomplishment of our shared tasks.

I trust my interns to know what they are doing and to say what they need to grow. Where mentoring is requested, it is within the context of providing them with the freedom to explore themselves. When guidance is requested, I try to demonstrate my own trustworthiness and to demonstrate as much authentic honesty as I can, so that they will learn how to do it for themselves. I am ready to intervene and guide as needed, but I believe my interns will get further if they complete their share of the task.

Before September 11, I did not have the confidence or the awareness to provide supervision as a man that I have now. The way I supervise my interns after September 11 feels more authentic, and I have learned that this way, coming out of my own authority, is an acceptable way to supervise. It is different from how women supervise, but it is no less valid. In the pit at Ground Zero, my function as a priest was to bless remains, to bless individuals, to reassure, to sanctify, to be a

sign of God's presence even in the midst of destruction. Eventually, I realized that my function as a priest at Ground Zero was to provide a presence to the men that I can only describe as fatherly. I was able to fulfill their expectations of "the father," and my prayers gave voice to some of what they were feeling through their actions, and sanctified their recovery efforts.

Moving to pastoral supervision, I think that there needs to be a balance between the male and female approaches in supervising interns. I think that everyone needs the space and support to feel the freedom to grow, and I think that everyone needs to feel that spark of connection that one is cared for, nurtured, and that someone sees and values the struggle that one is engaged in. I don't know if being a father to my interns is the way to go. I do know that my way of supervising as an adult man is viable and complex, and that without my experiences at Ground Zero, the way of adult men would not be as open to me and as authentic.

NOTES

1. Church of England, *The Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 466.
2. David Halberstam, *Firehouse* (New York: Hyperion, 2002), 41.
3. Sam Keen, *Fire in the Belly* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 180.

ZEN BUDDHIST AND CHRISTIAN CO-SUPERVISORS: A REFLECTION ON CPE

Supervising in an Interfaith Environment

David J. Larsen

My first contact with Nina Davis was via a phone call, when she asked if she could complete a quarter of clinical pastoral education (CPE) with me. She had introduced herself as a Zen Buddhist. Because I had worked hard to integrate my belief in God and Jesus Christ with the supervision of students, I was not sure how she would fit with my theological stance as a Christian. What would it mean to have a Zen Buddhist in the group? How would this impact the life of the group, and how would it impact my own supervision? In the end, Nina did three quarters of CPE at my center, the last of which in an advanced status. Following that, she served as Acting Level One supervisor for two quarters.

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EXPLORING CHRISTIAN DEFINITIONS OF CPE

Should I have been surprised that I thought of CPE as exclusively Christian? The 1999 Manual for the Australia and New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ANZACPE) provides these definitions:

Clinical Pastoral Education (C.P.E.) is (professional) education for pastoral ministry involving personal and pastoral identity development. C.P.E. takes place in a setting where the student exercises a pastoral ministry, which becomes the focus for learning. Under the supervision of an accredited supervisor the student contracts to enter a self directed learning process involving an action/reflection model. Supervision takes place both individually and in small groups...Supervision in the context of Clinical Pastoral Education is one expression of the Gospel's call to "set people free" and takes place both individually and in small groups. Supervision (1) includes the development of the use of self and the acquisition of professional skills and the integration of both in the art of Pastoral Care [and] (2) emphasizes the creative use of interpersonal relationships by attending to all dimensions of learning and growth, e.g. (spiritual, cultural, psychological).

I appreciate that this definition is not particularly Christian except in the latter half where it talks about expressing our freedom as Christians. However, I had been used to thinking that CPE was exclusively a Christian organization and was there for Christian people. Indeed Nina challenged me when she asked, "Who says that CPE is exclusively Christian?"

After meeting Nina and entering into a supervisory relationship with her, my perspective changed. Whether a person is Christian or Zen Buddhist, it is possible to use the CPE methodology train pastoral care persons. CPE began from a Christian perspective, but the method of action reflection that is used in the CPE process is one that covers many disciplines that may or may not be necessarily Christian. In this context, the terms "pastoral" and "spiritual care" are used as inclusive, rather than exclusive Christian, terms.

So what were the challenges in this unique combination of traditions? My first challenge was to give a person of the Zen Buddhist conviction an adequate training in pastoral work. I think I accomplished that very well. But then came the next challenge: Can a Zen Buddhist give Christians adequate supervisory experiences for their Christian ministry? The corollary to this question for me is: Could I accept a Zen Buddhist as my pastor, as the one who cared for me in my need? From my observation of Nina's supervision I know that she would direct me to the faith that I claim to be mine. The validity of that faith would be challenged,

as it is regardless of whether I have a Zen Buddhist or a Christian pastor. But I know that Nina's focus would be for me to trust the God in whom I believe. To come to terms with God and to be at peace in my inner being would be the aim. From where I stand today and from my experience with Nina as a co-supervisor, I have no problem in answering that I would accept such a Zen Buddhist as pastor. But how did I get to this position?

An important issue for me is to know what I believe and to be able to express my beliefs in my life and in my supervision. As I thought about this paper, I thought it would be good for me to be able to define what a Christian is. The first article of faith about God in the Lutheran Book of Confessions reads:

Our churches teach with great unanimity that the decree of the Council of Nicea concerning the unity of the divine essence and concerning the three persons is true and should be believed without any doubting. That is to say, there is one divine essence, which is called and which is God, eternal, incorporeal, indivisible, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. Yet there are three persons, of the same essence and power, who are also coeternal: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And the term "person" is used, as the ancient Fathers employed it in this connection, to signify not a part or quality in another but that which subsists of itself.

So while these words come from a Lutheran confession, they give me some expression as to what I think it means to be Christian. I cannot answer for other Christians, but this gives a satisfactory definition for myself. They go together with a lot of other words to express what I believe about God. I am also aware that there is an exclusive element about Christianity, especially expressed in the words of John 14:6, which has Jesus saying, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." This can be expressed in the desire of the Christian person to convert the other. Nina sometimes jokes that she knows it is my wish to convert her to Christianity. In our associations, we have discussed this aspect, and it is not an issue between us. We have reached an agreement that we accept each other and the experiences each has had in their own lives, especially in relation to God or the Other.

CPE IN AN INTERFAITH ENVIRONMENT

In working as a co-supervisor, I need to accept the stance of Nina as a Zen Buddhist while at the same time knowing what I believe. Nina has challenged me when she felt I was using my religion in an ingenuous way. I will illustrate this from supervisory experiences.

During one of our co-supervisory quarters, we had eight students. We conducted the quarter as a unit and supervised four students each. All the students declared themselves Christian. Thus, Nina was the only non-Christian. I did not experience this as a deterrent, but I will leave Nina to comment for herself on this aspect.

My trust of Nina was put to the test when she supervised one of my parishioners. There was some apprehension on my part because my parishioner would have further insight as to who I am. I had never had a parishioner in one of my CPE groups. My apprehension was quickly dispelled as Nina guided this student to be in touch with her feelings and enabled her to grow as a pastoral caregiver. It was in her supervision of this person that Nina challenged me with regard to our collegiality. Nina felt that this student would look to me for the Christian interpretation and for my approval and, thereby, view Nina as being a second-class supervisor. It brought to the surface my judgmental attitude toward non-Christians. This attitude was there in reality without my being particularly conscious of it. I accepted what Nina said, and the matter did not come up again during the quarter.

I think that one of the benefits about our supervisory relationship and the alliance we developed is in the fact that we each accept the differences between us. We have been honest with each other as we sought to tease out the differences involved in our faith stances.

I have also appreciated that in supervising Nina does not assume patients believe in God. Nina tells the students to ask patients who God is for them, so that the pastoral visit can be relevant to either the patient's faith or the emptiness that may be there. I recognized in myself the tendency to assume that people have some concept of God and that this is the same God in whom I believe. I have become aware that to enter the interfaith scene is to face the reality of my own faith.

I think Nina and I have been challenged by the way we cared for each other and became aware of the framework in which we view things. I hope that we have

accepted each other but not so inclusively that the differences have become useless and meaningless.

There is, however, the possibility that I become so inclusive that the sharpness of my Christian faith is blunted. I appreciated Nina's comment to me that I, as a Christian, do not "load my stuff" onto her. I feel that I have managed to do this by accepting her supervision of the students in a positive way. I recognized the temptation within myself to control the supervision of the Lutheran students, in particular. However, I feel that I have been rewarded by simply leaving the supervision to be done by Nina. I have admitted to myself and to Nina that I felt that she helped her students in a way that I would not have been able to. There was objectivity about her supervision that did not include Christian baggage. I needed to remember that I was her supervisor, and I needed to retain my objectivity in my supervision of her.

Nina has also sought to understand what it means to be a Christian so that she can challenge the students to connect what they are doing with their faith. I appreciate this.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is not only possible but also enjoyable to supervise in the same arena as a Zen Buddhist. I accept that I have not been challenged in a similar way by being asked to supervise someone not of the Christian faith, although I have sometimes wondered what some of the students did believe. The challenge I have experienced is supervising people who vary in their faith stances, and accepting where they are. The enriching part for me is accepting patients, regardless of their faith, and helping students give good pastoral care to these patients, care that relates the faith that they do have, and care that helps them live or die. It is not my task to convert or to give people faith. In my understanding, this is the Holy Spirit's work.

Supervising in an interfaith situation has brought to the surface some of my judgmental attitudes. I have come to realize that it is legitimate for a person to have a non-Christian stance and that this stance is not inferior to mine. While I am happy being a Christian, I have no right to be arrogant toward those who do not take the same faith stance as myself.

Supervising in an interfaith situation demonstrates the unity of purpose in the diversity of life. The unity of purpose is to give good pastoral care to suffering ones

in the world. There is a diversity of life, of religions, and of faiths within which we need to work. To set people free is still the realistic goal for supervisors. For me, the aim and goal is to help the patient find her own freedom and peace of mind and heart. Working with a Zen Buddhist has not been a divisive experience, rather an inclusive one of acceptance. There is a mutual seeking of the truth, even though there may be diversity in what we each believe to be the truth. There is satisfaction in discovering those elements that are true for all humankind and in helping suffering ones learn to live with life's challenges.

**ZEN BUDDHIST AND
CHRISTIAN CO-SUPERVISORS:
A REFLECTION ON CPE**

**Is Multifaith and Multicultural
CPE Supervision Possible?**

Nina C. Davis

This question is intended as an open-ended inquiry. By identifying some of the issues that I have faced in a multifaith and cross-cultural supervisory alliance, I hope to challenge supervisors' attitudes, beliefs, and values in support of the supervisory process.

David Larsen, an Acting Level Three supervisor, has supervised me as a student and more recently through my first year (two part-time CPE units) as an Acting Level One supervisor. David is Australian and Lutheran. I am an American of a Zen Buddhist tradition, and my CPE students have all been Australian and Christian. To contextualize my paper, I'd like to begin by telling a short story from the Buddhist

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tradition. Then, I'll attempt to highlight some significant experiences of the multifaith and cross-cultural supervisory alliance that I have experienced during the past year.

ZEN BUDDHIST CHARACTERIZATION OF MENTORING

The following story captures for me the direction of the Zen Buddhist tradition. The story demonstrates the mentor-like quality of supervision as well as a sense of the absolute commitment that both the supervisory alliance and spiritual care seems to demand.

One day a monk named Purma came to the Buddha and asked if he could teach and spread the Dharma in the land of the Sronaparantakas. "The Sronaparantakas are a hot-tempered people," responded the Buddha. "In all likelihood they will curse and insult you with angry, abusive words. How would this be for you, Purma?"

"Even if they do all these things, I shall think them a good and kind people. After all, they did not strike me or hurl objects at me!" "What if they do strike you and throw rocks at you?" "Purma replied, "I shall nevertheless think them good, for they did not club me. And even if they club me, they still have not killed me." "What if they kill you, Purma?"

"Then I shall think of them kindly, for they will have delivered me from this suffering world."

"Very well, Purma, I give you permission to dwell and teach in the land of the Sronaparantakas."

One day soon after his arrival there, Purma met a hunter. The man saw the shaven monk and decided to kill him right away. Purma opened his robe in order that the hunter could accurately aim his arrow and said, "Dear Sir, I am here in your country on a difficult mission. Aim here!" "This man has no fear of death," thought the flabbergasted hunter. "I can not kill such a brave and kind man." The man was so moved that he sat down and listened to Purma's teachings. Over the next few months thousands of fiery

Sronaparantakas were won over by the loving kindness, compassion and extraordinary fearlessness of the monk named Purma who had come to live among them.¹

CHALLENGES OF CPE IN A MULTIFAITH CONTEXT

I have identified three significant challenges that have emerged for me during the CPE supervisory process in a multifaith, cross-cultural context: (1) recognizing the impact that my personal and spiritual issues have in the supervisory relationship; (2) understanding and translating what I term as “Christian religious language” into a common spiritual language that I use to facilitate communication; and (3) identifying the apparent need for exploration and expression of CPE students’ faith tradition and relationship with God, specifically as those beliefs are played out in students’ pastoral encounters.

(1) Recognizing the impact that my personal and spiritual issues have in the supervisory relationship

I tend to be verbally assertive, direct in articulating my observations and opinions, and at times insensitive in how I reflect my perceptions. These tendencies naturally have roots in the American culture in which I was raised as well as in the psychopathology of my family of origin. During my first unit as a trainee supervisor, David recognized these tendencies as being blocks in developing a trusting supervisory alliance and recommended psychotherapy as a means of developing my self-awareness. Simultaneously, my need to deepen my spiritual practice led me to meet and continue my ongoing formal training with a new Zen teacher. The significant learning that arose out of this awareness was that regardless of my cultural beliefs and difference of spiritual faith, the foundations for a trusting supervisory alliance seem to rest in the supervisor’s capacity to genuinely care for those they supervise, by addressing the supervisor’s own personal and spiritual issues and by developing the necessary skills to facilitate the supervisory process.

(2) Understanding and translating what I term as “Christian religious language” into a common spiritual language that I can use to facilitate communication.

Historically, CPE has been a Christian-based method of training Christian ministers, pastoral caregivers, and chaplains. Perhaps there are some who continue to believe that this is true or that CPE should remain as a Christian organization. As a CPE student, I needed to constantly translate Christian religious language so that I could communicate with my supervisors. As a trainee supervisor, it was recommended to me that some study of Christian theology would assist me in understanding some basic Christian beliefs and facilitate familiarization of Christian religious language. I attended a course on the Gospels offered at the University of Queensland, which I didn’t find particularly helpful in addressing my

specific communication needs. Instead, the model established by David in his supervision of me has been more helpful in learning and utilizing appropriate language to communicate with CPE students as issues as arose in their pastoral encounters.

David has manifested his religious beliefs in his supervision of me as a student and as a trainee supervisor. David has demonstrated his Christian values and beliefs over and over again, not only to facilitate my awareness and growth, but also with each student he supervises. I am reminded of the biblical passage in James (2:17-20): “So faith by itself, if it has no works is dead. But some one will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.”

Again, I feel that another tenant for supervision, regardless of one’s faith or culture, is dependent on the supervisor’s capacity to integrate her own spiritual and religious beliefs and the ability to communicate these beliefs in support of the student’s development in both words and action.

(3) Identifying the apparent need for exploration and expression of students’ faith traditions and relationships with God, specifically as those beliefs are played out in students’ pastoral encounters.

CPE students initially seem to have struggled with the fact that I came from a different faith orientation than their own. In each unit that I have co-supervised, I have sensed an unspoken anxiety; students wondered if I would be able to understand them and where they stood in their beliefs, and if I could then facilitate their growth as their self-awareness deepened throughout the unit. Naturally, there were parallel issues here for me as well.

My commitment to my CPE students was to recognize where they were in their pastoral and faith development as evidenced during their oral and written work. My awareness of each student’s growth seemed to deepen as I realized the students’ assumptions. For example, many CPE students assumed that their patients believed in the same God that they did. Often they reacted in their verbatims in two extremes: by ignoring the patient’s relationship with God or by telling their patients what their relationship with God should or shouldn’t be. This rang alarm bells for me, so I have tried to explore who God was for the students and at times found a somewhat confused and, what I would term, incomplete image and experience. Again, I discovered that this seemed to be less of an issue of faith and cultural differences but was more dependent on the supervisor’s capacity to confront his own faith biases and cultural assumptions in order to facilitate exploration of a student’s faith beliefs and cultural expressions.

In the CPE supervisory context, multifaith and cross-cultural issues, as previously mentioned, are brought into sharp relief. They seem to be, however, evident in any supervisory relationship. Recognizing one's impact of personal and spiritual issues is an elementary consideration in any supervisory alliance. Communicating in spiritual language seems to be as difficult for those of the same faith and cultural background as those of differing faiths and cultural backgrounds. And lastly, the parallel process of exploring student's relationships with God and their faith beliefs, as they explore their patient's beliefs, seems to be equally challenging regardless of faith traditions and cultural orientation.

So why has CPE been predominately Christian and what are some of the assumptions and beliefs that may act as obstacles in widening the CPE faith and cultural base? Recently I had coffee with a colleague at the Catholic hospital where I work. He spoke about some of his family's faith issues by genuinely expressing his concerns about those who had "left the flock." In particular, he spoke of a niece who had become Buddhist. Then he looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and said something to the effect that, "she was into navel gazing, but she needs to get out into the world and function!" Did this colleague touch upon a common assumption that Buddhism is only inwardly focused?

It is interesting to note that, in a literature search through ATLA (American Theology Library Association), for multifaith and cross-cultural articles in pastoral supervision, I was able to access only a dozen miscellaneous articles, none of which seemed to specifically address issues of multicultural and interfaith supervision. Of the dozen or so articles, one article explored racial and gender differences and the impact they had in the supervisory process. In their article, "Racial and Gender Myths as Key Factors in Pastoral Supervision," Eugene Robinson and Miriam Needham write about some of their struggles in their supervisory relationship. The article's summary states that it:

Explores the various dynamics activated when a black male supervisor and a white female supervisor are part of a CPE team. Uses the notion of racial and gender myths as a way to understand such a relationship. Claims that it is exceedingly important to train culture and gender conscious supervisors and that such training can lead to significant racial and gender learnings having implications beyond the CPE context.

I found that some of the suggested strategies are relevant to my topic. In particular, the authors suggest that:

If possible, do not put any single person of a gender or a cultural category in a peer group without at least one other person of that category present in the group. If this is not possible, then the intentional support of the supervisor is

very important. However, the immediate concern should be the ratio within the group and the attempt to enable a student to have at least one other like himself or herself in the group.²

Throughout my CPE experience, as both a student and now as a supervisor, I have had the somewhat isolating experience of being the only non-Christian in every group in which I have participated. Had it not been through the skillful means of the three supervisors who intentionally acknowledged my faith and cultural differences, I wouldn't have written this paper.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH IN CPE

In conclusion, it would seem that the supervisory process is a significant part of a supervisor's spiritual journey in that the supervisor is required to integrate his own faith and cultural issues by transcending his own personal biases and religious assumptions. It has also been my experience that a functional supervisory alliance seems to be dependent on the acknowledgement of both the commonalities of the human experience as well as a healthy respect for the differences of individual faith beliefs and cultural expressions.

It is my hope that one day, faith tradition or cultural orientation will not be the deciding factor as to where students chose or are chosen to do a CPE unit or as to how supervisors determine to run their units. It is my hope that CPE programs will eventually offer an integrated faith and culturally based approach that would include in its foundation the primary components of trust, acceptance, and containment all of which allow for cultural and religious differences to compliment rather than compete with any pre-existing models of supervision. It is my hope that as the demands of training non-Christians in the art of spiritual care begins to dawn in Australia, that the ANZACPE model will embrace the opportunity for growth. And lastly, it is also my hope that there may come a time when we won't need a paper to explore faith and cultural differences in the CPE supervisory alliance. But instead CPE will inherently be a cultural and multifaith model of training those in the health care community in their spiritual and religious care of others.

ATFE PAPERS

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN A PROTESTANT CANADIAN CONTEXT

Introduction

ABIGAIL JOHNSON
STUART MACDONALD
SHELLEY DAVIS FINSON

Theological field education is a contextual discipline. Therefore, I am pleased to introduce three articles written by theological field educators in the Canadian context. This is something of an achievement firstly because field educators in general often find it difficult to write and secondly because these three articles provide the Canadian context.

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The reasons that field educators are often find it difficult to write are relevant to the enterprise of theological field education and perhaps the theological enterprise as a whole. Field educators are often designated as administrators of programs with little expectation of research and publication. As a result, rich experiential learning and qualitative research is lost. As part of the Association for Theological Field Education (ATFE), we are poorer for the lack of a corpus of knowledge that can inform, challenge, shape, and reshape our discipline. This lack of research and publication is also detrimental to theological education as a whole because field education often stands as a unique androgogical enterprise in contextual and experiential learning. There is much that theological field education can contribute to the teaching and learning within theological education as a whole.

In addition, theological field educators find it difficult to write because their full-time positions often combine areas such as pastoral studies or dean/director of basic degree studies. Competing time commitments, professional needs, and discipline conflicts place research and writing within field education on a back burner.

As mentioned above, that these articles provide a Canadian context is unique. As Canadians, we comprise perhaps 10 percent of the North American population of theological field educators. Yet, we hold a place of pride within ATFE both in joining colleagues nationally and somewhat internationally, and in holding distinct a sense of our Canadian history, geography, and polity. The Canadian context has shaped us as individuals and as a society, and certainly informs our work in the discipline of contextual education and ministry.

We have an identity, however, based in conflict. Publisher Conrad Black has stated that “Canada enters the millennium with no real rationale as a country...Canada is the only substantial country in the world with no cultural, linguistic, or tribal homogeneity nor any distinct revolutionary, ideological, or geopolitical tradition to give it an organizing principle.”¹ Prolific writer Pierre Burton, who has devoted his life to lifting up Canadian history, culture, and identity, would disagree. “We *have* a distinct identity....I’ve been exploring that identity for most of my career.”²

One of the key aspects that has shaped our identity as Canadians is our geography. We are a people stretched from sea to sea with a vast northern area inhospitable except to the hardest aboriginal people. We are people of maritime, prairies, mountains, urban, rural, diversity of language, and culture. Northrop Frye, Canada’s greatest literary critic, has said, “The question of Canadian identity, so far as it affects the creative imagination, is not a ‘Canadian’ question at all, but a

regional question.”³ Regions have created intense communities, steeped in local history and heritage, rich in pride and distinctness. However, regionalism has often fractured our attempts at unity and has created tension in federal politics.

Part of our struggle within Canadian history has been bringing unity to diversity. Building a national railway system was a significant political achievement. Tensions between unity and diversity have forced conversation with one another that have shaped our sense of being multicultural. Joe Clark, one of our youngest prime ministers, recognized the richness of our diversity when he said, “In an immense country, you live on a local scale. Governments make the nation work by recognizing that we are fundamentally a community of communities.”⁴ In union with a regional diversity, we have intentionally embraced cultural diversity. With all its aches pains, stretches, and strains, Canada has embraced a notion of multiculturalism. Denise Chong, a Canadian-born economist of Chinese heritage, suggests that: “Canadian citizenship recognizes differences. It praises diversity. It is what we as Canadians choose to have in common with each other. It is a bridge between those who left something to make a new home here and those born here.”⁵

Whether we can agree on a definition of Canadian identity or whether we hold fast to an illusory dream of identity, we theological field educators in the Canadian context believe we bring something distinct to the field education conversation. We gather as a Canadian Caucus of Theological Field Educators (CCATFE) to celebrate, support, and challenge one another to greater achievements in an educational enterprise of which we are proud. These three articles are an achievement both because, as field educators, we have written about our experiences and because they lift up insights arising from our Canadian context. This does not mean that there is little here to inform the larger discipline of theological field education or the larger theological education enterprise. On the contrary, the questions raised, challenges offered, and insights gleaned make a substantial contribution to our discipline.

To begin the process, in the first article of this series, I look at the task of theological reflection. Although theological field education is seen as the place where students apply theory or gain ministry skills or assess competency, I strongly believe that the task of the field educator is to instill a love for and discipline of theological reflection. Looking at theory and practice, I offer concrete suggestions for deepening the process of theological reflection. Realizing that theological reflection is an art, it is hard to become prescriptive or pedantic about engaging a creative process. Yet, it is possible to approach the teaching task in such a way that

students catch a glimpse of theological reflection as a spiritual discipline and a habit of the heart.

Stuart MacDonald next challenges us to view our context with new eyes as he invites us to take seriously leaving Christendom. Or perhaps Christendom has already left us, and we are still in denial as more and more congregations are dwindling. Various fix-it solutions are being offered in an attempt to shore up a church structure that may be in the process of dying. In encouraging us to look at our context realistically, MacDonald discusses the pressures this puts on field education by looking at placements, assessment, learning goals, and competence. There are implications for how theological colleges converse with judicatories and what expectations the church has for theological education. MacDonald leaves us with two pressing questions with which we, as field educators, need to engage one another. Let us pick up the challenge to face our challenging context and begin to converse about the implications for contextual learning.

MacDonald invites us into a renewed examination of our context, whereas third author, Shelley Davis Finson, draws us further into contextual questions that not only bring us face-to-face with often-termed “invisible” students but also challenge us to make justice and love a concrete reality for lesbian, gay, and bisexual students. Finson clearly examines the way that theological schools have discriminated against students through process, policy, curriculum, and a conspiracy of silence. From that place of challenge, Finson offers us concrete possibilities for transformation throughout the whole theological education enterprise.

I commend these articles to theological field educators in the ongoing challenge of contextual education for ministry. They are a gift from a Canadian context that offers diversity in perspective yet unity in a desire for further reflection on our discipline. While they arise from a particular context, they raise questions that have a larger application. May they inspire further conversation in the days ahead.

With All Your Heart, Soul, and Mind: Deepening Theological Reflection

Abigail Johnson

INTRODUCTION

Theological reflection lies at the heart of practice and process within the discipline of theological field education. It is an essential component of field education programs, raising them above simply the practice of ministry skills to the praxis of reflection upon ministry issues in conversation with theology, Bible, history, and pastoral studies.

Theological reflection is not only an important component of field education as a course of study, it is also an essential life-long ministry skill and spiritual discipline. Theological reflection as a practice within field education is essential because it:

- Helps to make connections between faith and life
- Develops an understanding of pastoral identity

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- Encourages clarity of ministerial role distinct from other helping professions
- Becomes a “habit of the heart” or spiritual discipline
- Encourages distinction of different “theological worlds,” ours and others
- Increases the ability to hear implicit theology in events and conversations.

Having said that, I find the task of encouraging student practitioners to theologically reflect and to deepen their theological reflection challenging. Some students find the open-ended explorative process frightening as they look for absolute pastoral answers and theological surety. Some students approach theological reflection as a course requirement that becomes redundant after the course ends. Some find the process to be invigorating and stimulating yet, like an exercise program, discover that it is hard to maintain the discipline to exercise despite the benefits. While it is not possible to develop prescriptive methods that assure the outcome of theological reflection, there are ways to encourage students to dig a little deeper and find that the process of reflection is part of their journey with God. In this article, I will outline aspects of the process of theological reflection and suggest some ways to deepen that reflection.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN THEORY

Theological reflection is not new. In one sense, it is practiced in each sermon when the scripture text is reflected upon in light of the contexts and experiences facing a particular faith community in a moment in time. While there is no written history of the practice of theological reflection at present,⁶ I suggest that the practice of action and reflection as a theological process is ancient. Jesus embarked on this practice as he reflected on the daily lives of fisher folk and villagers, farmers and tax collectors. He combined this reflection with scripture, tradition, and reason as he drew people closer to God. In addition, he reflected on his own actions and experiences in light of his sense of relationship with God and others. As a result, there were times when Jesus found himself at odds with the received tradition of his day. At one point, a woman challenged Jesus to change his theological position. Typically, he pushed at traditional theological understanding in order to bring his message of God’s love as liberating news to many who felt rejected and ostracized by their tradition. Consequently, the received tradition of the Christian church arose as the fruit of theological reflection. This was a process that continued in the early

Christian church as Jesus' followers tried to make sense of their leader's crucifixion and resurrection in light of their hopes for a valiant, triumphant liberator.

The Protestant tradition continued this practice of action-reflection. Luther posted his ninety-five theses in order to engage in a reflective conversation with others. He was engaging in an action-reflection process by drawing on his experiences of the church as well as the politics of his day. Although Luther's original intention was not to start another church, the outcome of his theological reflection created an ethos of a protesting church, a reforming protest from within—a process of theological reflection.

While the practice of theological reflection is not new, charting this practice as a theological and theoretical method is distinctly new. With his text *Blessed Rage For Order*,⁷ theologian David Tracy critically reflects on contemporary theologies through the lens of what he names a modern plural and secular world. Finding these various theologies lacking in the face of modern questions, Tracy proposes a revisionist model that attempts a correlation between the two sources for theology: common human experience and Christian texts. He offers five theses for a revisionist model, as follows:

1. Two principal sources for theology are Christian texts and common human experience and language.
2. The theological task will involve a critical correlation of the results of investigating these two sources.
3. A principal method of investigating common human experience and language can be described as a phenomenology of the "religious dimension" present in everyday and scientific experience as well as language.
4. A principal method for investigating Christian texts is a historical and hermeneutical investigation of these texts.
5. To determine the truth status of the results of one's investigation into the meaning of both common human experience and Christian texts, the theological should employ an explicitly transcendental or metaphysical mode of reflection.

The first two theses follow one from another. If the two principal sources for theology are common human experience and Christian texts, then it follows that a critical correlation of these two sources needs to take place. In thesis three, Tracy wrestles with the nature of common human experience. He is concerned with continuing a search in "contemporary theology for an adequate expression of the religious dimension of our common experience and language."⁸ Tracy uses the philosophical term "limit" to examine the religious dimension of human

experience. By limit, Tracy refers to situations of angst and mortality, as well as situations of intense joy and ecstatic expression. With this definition, it becomes only the extraordinary that is worthy of the term “religious.” It is this limit analysis that Tracy uses to:

suggest how religion continues to operate in our common secular lives as an authentic disclosure which both bespeaks certain inevitable limits—to our lives and manifests some final reality which functions as a trustworthy limit—of life itself.⁹

While I appreciate Tracy’s quest to work within a philosophical discipline to describe his thesis, rather than limiting religious experience to the extraordinary, I want to expand the horizon of “religious” to include all experiences of life. The ordinary *is* extraordinary. That we live, breathe, walk and talk, think and laugh, deduce and create, and daily find the courage to continue living the ordinary life is totally extraordinary.

My desire to expand horizons of religious experience in our everyday lives relates to my starting point for theological reflection: current experience. Unlike Tracy, I would suggest that experiential food for theological reflection is not limited to a crisis event that raises questions of our mortality, or an ecstatic event that reveals grace. I suggest that this experiential food is also seemingly mundane actions, such as caring for a family: washing clothes, preparing daily meals, being a listening presence, cleaning, and re-cleaning in an endless cycle. It is the reflective ability to search for the religious or, in other words, to declare the extraordinary nature of ordinary living that is the theological task.

As theses four and five outline, Christian texts are the foundation of Christian tradition and, therefore, provide the dialogue partner with human experience. This dialogue takes place as a critical correlation between these two different expressions. Tracy addresses the task of critical correlation most clearly in his anticipatory suggestions toward praxis for a revisionist theory. As Tracy suggests, praxis is “the critical relationship between theory and practice whereby each is dialectically influenced and transformed by the other.”¹⁰ The sense of the possibility of mutual transformation is the essence of theological reflection. It is not possible to predict the outcome. Perhaps our pastoral actions will change. Alternatively, perhaps our theological constructions will be deconstructed and reconstructed.

When Tracy was writing in 1975, he found liberal and liberation theologies, or as he called them eschatological theologies, lacking in their ability to critically reflect on the very Christian symbols that inform praxis. In addition, Tracy challenged the praxis disciplines to develop a critical social theory through

interdisciplinary conversations drawing on the theory and disciplines of theologies and social sciences. I believe Clodovis Boff took up that challenge in 1987.¹¹ Boff examined the relationship between theology and social sciences, theology and sacred scripture, and theology and praxis. He looked at the construction of a theoretical platform for theological, pastoral, and political practices.

Boff worked in an environment that called for a radical political shift. While he did not reject a pastoral approach, he sought a horizon that was wider and more radical, not simply a practice of faith:

I wish to extend (them) throughout the spectrum of the praxis of faith, with emphasis on the *political* practice of faith...a Christian practice of politics.¹²

Boff engaged in an action-reflection process called liberation theology, where “liberation is a kind of ‘horizon’ against which the whole tradition of the faith is to be read.”¹³ He offered the challenge of reflecting on how our declared theology operates in practice, or what we believe is lived in how we behave. The integration of belief and behavior becomes for Boff a “normative” theology:

What is called for...is a confrontation of stated intent with actual results, and then the application of the outcome of this confrontation as point of departure for the construction of a “normative” theology.¹⁴

Boff describes the theoretical foundations for a liberation theology, yet it is not a useful textbook for most people who seek to engage in theological reflection as a daily practice.

James and Evelyn Whitehead agree with the theoretical proposal that theology is the correlation of Christian texts with common human experience. But they have the concern that “ambiguity and disagreement abound concerning the meaning, content, and theological weight of each.”¹⁵ In addition, they feel that in order for a theological reflection model to be effective:

it will also be imperative to describe a method which is *performable* (that is, a method that can not only be appreciated, but practically used by a range of ministers) and which issues in pastoral decisions and ministerial strategies.¹⁶

Thus they outline their method as a correlation between three sources: tradition, cultural information, and personal experience. Tradition is “that information we draw both from Scripture and from Church history concerning a specific pastoral concern.”¹⁷ Cultural information is data collected from our culture that influences the particular pastoral issue being reflected upon. Personal experience is the source of information available from an individual person or faith community. In the Whiteheads’ model, they place emphasis on the personal pole as the initiator of reflection:

Initiating reflection at the pole of experience reverses the theological proclivity to begin its reflections “at the beginning” (Scripture and early Church history) and work forward. Such reflections have a way of not reaching the present, of not coming to terms with the contemporary experience of faith.¹⁸

Beginning with experience reflected upon in light of tradition and culture, the Whiteheads outline their correlative process of attending, assertion, and decision as a method for theological reflection. The primary stage of attending is seeking “out the information on a particular pastoral concern that is available in personal experience, Christian Tradition, and cultural sources.”¹⁹ It is an activity of gathering and listening. Assertion is the place of naming insights that have arisen from attending. Decision is the movement “from insight through decision to concrete pastoral action.”²⁰

The Whiteheads’ model does not exist in isolation. Other models have emerged to suit various contexts. Another model is the hermeneutical circle that is dialectic between personal experience and scripture/tradition, where each is affected by the other in an ongoing conversational process.²¹ In addition, there is the pastoral circle model that engages a particular pastoral concern in conversation with social analysis, as well as theological, faithful, and pastoral questions.²² From the Protestant tradition, there is the method developed by John Wesley called the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. This method engages scripture, tradition, experience, and reason in an interdependent conversation.

While theological reflection models have a variety of movements, all models have one characteristic in common. They are prompted by contextual experience. The term “theological reflection” describes a process of intentional critical reflection on experience, a desire to seek meaning from experience. Methods may vary, yet all of them have similar characteristics or movements such as the following:

1. *Attending* to a particular moment that raises questions or issues. Attentiveness means describing the experience from a personal perspective as well as from the perspective of others, including naming feelings.
2. *Analyzing* that moment with frameworks, such as sociology, psychology, history, art forms, economics, and theology. Analyzing moves people from a description of the experience to a deeper exploration of the issue.
3. *Interpreting* and drawing insight from the analysis. This movement is similar to the Whiteheads’ concept of “assertion.” Interpreting is the moment when the reflector draws insights and interpretations from the analytical process.
4. *Acting* upon insights gleaned from the critical reflection process whether through change of activity or confirmation of activity.

While reflection, in general, is part of the ongoing moments of thinking, feeling, and interpreting life events, theological reflection involves a distinct critical process. What makes this reflection theological in nature is the intentional exploration of God's activity or God's presence in specific life events. What makes this intentional exploration both a joy and a struggle is the diversity of images of God. Joy arises in the discovery of a multifaceted God, bound with us in an ever-renewing relationship. The struggle lies in discerning God from a variety of images within specific life experiences.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN PRACTICE

Killen and de Beer strongly state that "things which don't shift and grow are dead things."²³ They assume that the desire or urge to reflect is a normal human process because our natural impulse is to find meaning in the events of our lives. But beyond the urge simply to reflect, as field education practitioners, we want students to engage in theological reflection because it is a way for us to see the presence of God's spirit in the events of our lives. It is a process of bringing together the conversations in our heads about our lives with our beliefs, faith, and tradition. In field education, it is important that students become more aware of how they theologically reflect. It is that increased awareness that will deepen the practice of reflection.

Our church tradition offers us a rich and faithful testimony to the ways God's spirit has been at work in the world over centuries, yet the kind of questions raised by our present day context do not give us easy answers that can be applied in every situation. When we engage in theological reflection, we cannot assume where we will end up because it is a process that is open and flexible. In the end, theological reflection may confirm our beliefs or challenge us or clarify what we have been struggling with in our lives. In any case, theological reflection will certainly expand both how we understand our own experience and how we understand the religious tradition.

Killen and de Beer talk about two extremes that may limit the ways we engage in theological reflection: certitude and self-assurance. These are two ends of a spectrum. Both positions share a lack of openness to shift in assumptions and views. In terms of certitude, Killen and de Beer are not suggesting that we shouldn't have any belief system. Instead, they challenge us to be open in our

reflection; if we simply hold on to what we believe, even in the light of life challenges, we are out of step with ourselves. Further, “when we apply absolute rules to situations, we avoid having to look deeply at the situation and the people involved.”²⁴ In that sense, certitude can border more on ideology, rather than theology.

Killen and de Beer also challenge the opposite extreme: self-assurance. They are not talking about the self-assurance that gives us confidence and poise. They are talking about a rigid stance that will not risk being challenged by new points of view or information, particularly from faith and church tradition. This type of self-assurance often comes from a place of insecurity, fear, and mistrust. “Fed up with the frailty and fallibility of our contexts, we may decide to trust only ourselves, our own experience, how we think and feel now, in each new situation.”²⁵

Killen and de Beer suggest that the “standpoint of *certitude* costs us our experience in order to possess the tradition. The standpoint of *self-assurance* costs us the richer meaning and understanding that the Christian tradition has to offer in order to make our current thoughts, feelings and desires primary.”²⁶ What’s the alternative to these two extremes? Obviously, an open exploration through theological reflection offers us the opportunity for “thoughts, feelings, images and insights that arise from the concrete events of our lives to be in genuine conversation with the wisdom of the entire Christian community throughout the ages.”²⁷

Within theological reflection models, there can be any number of questions to encourage reflecting theologically. Basic questions among others that might be used to encourage theological connections are:

1. Where is God for you? Where is God for others?
2. What biblical stories or images come to mind?
3. What theological themes or concepts come to mind?
4. What church traditions or global traditions inform the issues?

Where is God?

The opening question “Where is God for you?” allows a simple starting place for a student to name the movement of God’s spirit in the event. It is a way to enter theological discussion from a more personal place rather than the oft-felt abstraction of theological language. Adding a question such as “Where is God present or absent in this situation?” also encourages students to recognize the gaps in their theological construct.

The partner question “Where is God for others?” challenges students to think about differences in theological perspective. As we wrestle theologically, we need to be aware of our own theological world as the framework of how we understand God and God’s activity in the world and in relation to creation. When asking the straightforward theological question “Where is God in this situation?” it is important not simply to reflect our own worldview, theological framework, and desires. We could ask where God might be for each of the people in a situation and have very different answers.

Each of us is entitled to our own faith and theological world. Yet as ministers we have a particular role as leaders in our congregations. We may have our own personal faith and theological outlook, yet as leaders we are called to be sensitive to the faith and theological outlook of others. This distinction is important in the lives of students who are moving from a personal call to an identity as a minister who encourages faith-filled responses to God’s call within community. Being able to step outside our own theological world into the world of another is not only a theological discipline but also a pastoral discipline.

What Biblical Stories or Images Come to Mind?

I have found that encouraging students to make biblical connections is challenging. Students tend to have little biblical background. Biblical courses assume a base knowledge of the Bible from which to plunge into biblical analysis. Therefore, after doing several theological reflections using favorite biblical passages, students have exhausted their repertoire. Students tend to find it difficult to make connections between a situation and a particular passage unless the text relates explicitly to the experience. In addition, students typically choose passages that confirm and support the theological thesis presented rather than choosing passages that challenge the thesis.

One way to increase biblical knowledge and to enable connections is to use the lectionary readings for each week. A student can read the four texts on a Monday and go about their field education work seeing their experiences through the lens of those texts. This is a liturgical and sermon-writing discipline, yet it also offers life to theological reflection.

I encourage students to find texts that both support and challenge their theological and pastoral position. For instance, a student who consistently used the theological idea that God does not give us any more than we can handle was encouraged to consider that, bowed down by pain and despair, we might cry out “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” Exploring the Psalms helped her to hear the fear, anger, agony, or shame within pastoral encounters. It helped

her to realize that God is able to listen to the full range of our feelings and respond in love.

In terms of challenge, we may find ourselves on the opposite side of God's agenda. A student working in the "Out-of-the-Cold" program, an outreach to street people, heard Jesus' call to care for the "little ones" as a challenge to his life of relative wealth. He acknowledged the life of privilege and power he led and wrestled with the prophetic condemnation of those who ignored the widow and the lame. Drawing on texts that call us to feed, clothe, visit, and release the captive, gave a different lens to view social activism and political policy.

Examining the ways we conceive of God, whether immanent, transcendent, or incarnate, helps to develop awareness not only of the variety of ways we personally think about God but the ways biblical writers and people throughout our Christian tradition have grappled with this biblical God who is revealed and continues to be revealed in our lives. This opens up the idea that the Bible is a collection of books with such variety that some texts may have more weight than others. Some texts may even comment on another. Thus, in grappling with biblical texts in light of experience, a hermeneutic of suspicion begins to become more than an academic discipline and more of a pastoral practice.

What Theological Themes or Concepts Come to Mind?

Even after taking theological courses of one kind or another, many theology students have difficulty drawing on the theological language and concepts that they have learned. I begin by asking them to fill several newsprint sheets with theological words and concepts that they know. From initial moments of silence come a few tentative offerings. Then the flood occurs as they realize the richness of vocabulary they have learned.

After collecting these words, I encourage them to refer to this list as they reflect, asking them to search for the theological words and themes that are present in seemingly mundane events. Often the barrier is that there are no explicit theological words used in most pastoral situations. Students need to learn the skill of translation, translating the language of daily cares and joys into explicit theological language. It is like building a bridge between two worlds of language. For instance, a terminally ill woman shared with a student, "I'm afraid to die." She felt she had not done all that she could with her life and was worried about mistakes she had made. While she did not use theological language, in translating, we can hear her wondering about what awaits her after death, judgment for instance. We hear her need for God's grace and reassurance of God's forgiveness.

Initially, the student may not make theological connections at the bedside. These connections may arise only from intentional written theological reflection or from the class discussion that follows. However, as skill increases, the connections will happen more quickly, more automatically. After eight months of weekly theological reflection, a student declared with a mixture of joy and amazement, “I can’t even watch a movie or go to the grocery store without thinking theologically!”

Developing facility with theological language as part of theological reflection is an important part of ministerial identity because a minister:

- Stands in a value framework of a Christian perspective
- Offers a safe place to confess, open up, share anguish, be consoled, be rescued, be taken to task, and be restrained, encouraged, and blessed
- Becomes a doorway into a faith group or denomination
- Makes connections between tradition and life situations
- Is a theologian
- Offers a religious or moral perspective
- Is a Holy person and keeper of the faith symbols
- Is a counselor in religion, theology, faith, and Christian life.

For these reasons and more, access to theological language and ideas is essential to the art of ministry.

Identifying Pastoral Themes

Aside from a list of theological words from which to refer, a more in-depth framework for identifying theological themes would be helpful. The following adaptation of Pruyser’s model of how to identify pastoral themes offers a template to reflect upon events and situations.²⁸

Awareness of the Holy: All of us have a sense of what is holy or deeply important to us. It may be the God of Christian faith or another faith. We may not have a faith, believing that God does not exist. Yet, whatever is at the core of our being, our values, whatever we give supreme importance is what we hold sacred or holy.

- What is sacred or holy? What offers a feeling of bliss or awe? What is revered or idolized? What are the gods of this person?

Providence: Each of us has a sense of providence, a sense of where we can count on care and protection now and in the future. Some people have this sense in

abundance whereas some people who have been hurt are cynical about where they might find care and protection.

- What is the divine purpose toward us? Why? Why me? What is God's will? Am I worthy of help? Where is hope? Does God owe me specific benefits?

Faith: Regardless of whether we are Christians or not, we have faith in something. Where we place our faith shapes who we are and how we act and react in situations.

- What does this person have faith in? Is their faith in God, self, other people, or experiences? How does the Bible fit into faith and beliefs?

Grace or Gratefulness: Grace is a sense of kindness, beauty, gift, and receiving something for nothing. It is our sense that we can feel worthy of receiving favor and goodwill from God and from others.

- Does this person feel worthy of grace or forgiveness? Do they feel they need to earn this grace? Do they feel God ever smiles upon them?

Repentance: Repentance is a sense of regret for actions taken. Sometimes, repentance is an important part of taking responsibility for hurts inflicted. Sometimes, repentance is taking the blame for others. There may be a movement from repentance toward greater well-being or perhaps forgiveness.

- Is this person an agent in their change? What is their awareness of sin? Is there a movement to take responsibility for actions? Or are they too ready to shoulder all the responsibility and become a martyr?

Communion and Community: This is a sense of being in communion with God and others, a sense of community whether at church, within family, or with friends. It is a feeling of being supported or perhaps a feeling of isolation. This sense can be connected with the service of Communion where we remember Christ's death and resurrection and gain greater communion or community with God.

- Does this person feel lifted up or isolated? Would it be helpful to look at community support or discuss the sense of alienation? Is this person close to an individual or to a group or a larger community?

Vocation: This is a sense of purpose to our life and work that validates our existence. It may be centered in a sense of God calling us to particular work or just a sense that we are more attracted or gifted for some other area of work.

- What is frustrating or satisfying about what the person does? Is there a realistic sense of what's going on within this situation? What does the person want to do with their life?

I encourage students not to be afraid to use the tools of the trade. In a pastoral conversation, this is a time to offer blessing, to pray, and to speak the words of God's grace, gathering the thoughts and words of the person into requests for God's blessing, guidance, love, support, and care. If students are uncomfortable with spontaneous prayer, they can write a few simple prayers or blessings and memorize them.

What Church Traditions or Global Traditions Come to Mind?

From the personal and interpersonal, we move to the communal. Asking questions that connect us to our church tradition encourages both a historic connection and a connection to church reports, documents, and polity. This is an important movement in a church that values congregational decision-making, yet combines that with an interdependent relationship with levels of the Church.

Within a congregation or institutional community, a minister is "theologian in residence" and the person who explicitly frames the Christian tradition. We are the "teaching elder" offering opportunities through our questions for people to theologically reflect on events in their lives. It is important not only to practice theological reflection, but to teach and encourage theological reflection with others because it:

- Helps us to make connections between life and faith
- Encourages us to hear God's spirit at work in life events
- Gives us a better sense of Christian identity
- Develops an awareness of theological assumptions in events
- Offers a process of daily spiritual discipline.

We do not live in an age where one person has all the information necessary within a community. It is important that a community be a learning community able to reflect on who it is, what it is doing, where it is going, and why. This raises the question of what kind of leader we are in relationship to our congregation or institution. Thomas Hawkins suggests that styles of leadership are changing in a world that embraces change as the status quo. Leadership styles of the past are no longer sufficient and, thus, require a new awareness, a different orientation:

Church leaders traditionally gave attention to teaching Christians the proper doctrines and beliefs. In the emerging information era, they [need to] equip Christians with tools and strategies that allow them to learn continuously by reflecting on their everyday ministry experiences.²⁹

This means making the tools of theological reflection accessible to the gathered community so that all God's people can theologically reflect. This means taking an awareness of God's activity into all areas of life, and into local communities. It means viewing world events and relationships to other cultures and faith groups through a continuous theological lens.

CONCLUSION

Jesus theologically reflected in the wilderness in order to clarify and discern his relationship to God and his sense of ministry. He continued to theologically reflect as he healed, preached, taught, forgave, ate, and wept with people. His life, crucifixion, death, and resurrection demands fresh theological reflection in each generation as we discern our sense of relationship to God and new directions for ministry. Theological reflection is the heart of field education, a heart that needs to beat strongly offering life to our students and to the church.

Theological Field Education and Leaving Christendom: Initial Reflections

Stuart MacDonald

Context matters. As theological field educators, we are very conscious of the importance of context. We ask students to consider how the context of their ministry shapes the questions they have and offers new insight into theological issues. We encourage colleagues teaching disciplines like theology, history, ethics, and biblical studies to think about how the context changes the issues that students face. We ask ourselves in our institutions and in the church to consider the same question. As Canadian theological field educators, we often note the differences between our context and that of our friends and colleagues in the United States. “That wouldn’t work here,” we sometimes say, “because our context is different.” Context is foundational as we gather at events like the ATFE Biennial. Ironically, the attempt to deal with context in the theme presentations at the latest Biennial

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(Boston 2001) made me conscious of one overarching context that seems to be missing from most of these discussions—the collapse of Christendom.³⁰

On the one hand we know better, while on the other hand we talk as if the church still has a privileged place within society. Perhaps this remains true for our American colleagues (a point that warrants further discussion but which I'm willing to concede for the moment), but it certainly is not true for us in Canada. The overall decline of the role and authority of the church in contemporary Canadian society is only too real.

Leaving Christendom has a profound implication for theological education in general and for theological field education specifically. My argument will be simple: these changes in context are putting pressure on theological field education to change its way of thinking. In some cases, theological field educators are being asked to shift the primary focus in their placements from education to more practically focused training or practicums.³¹ In other words, where we might want to discuss learning goals, our constituencies will demand that we deal with issues of competence and preparedness. In some of our theological colleges related to denominations, which have mandatory internship, this pressure might not be as significant, but for others this is an area of discussion and tension. In order to help us see how this changing context may affect theological field education, we must begin by briefly discussing the massive and ongoing changes that suggest we are in the midst of a process best be described as “leaving Christendom.” Three important observations need to be made about this process: how extensive this process is; how the debate around its solutions has become intensely ideological; and how the uncertainty and turmoil create practical issues that have a direct impact on theological education in general and theological field education in particular. Some initial thoughts as to the implications for theological field education will close the discussion.

CHARTING THE CHANGE IN CONTEXT

It has been difficult for Canadian Protestants to move from the naïve optimism of the 1950s when mainline denominations expanded into the suburbs, through the self-examination of the 1960s, the malaise of the 1970s, and into a realization that a significant shift has occurred in the place of organized religion within Canadian society. Awareness of this shift comes and goes and has been expressed in different

ways. Sometimes, it is a simple awareness that not as many people seem to be attending church as in the past. Within this awareness, it is often noted that the young people seem to be noticeably absent. Over the last thirty years, the most noticeable change has been how the word “young” has expanded in meaning. Where it once meant people primarily in their twenties, it now seems to mean everyone under fifty. Somehow this leads churches to panic, looking for almost any solution to the problem, however it is perceived. Change the music. Change the hour of worship. Change the liturgy. At other times—or even the same time—denominations and congregations often respond as if nothing has changed, as if they still held a privileged place within society and within people’s lives.

Several events in my own denomination’s experience illustrate these fluctuating emotions of panic and denial. In some ways, the Presbyterian Church in Canada’s decision to double itself in the 1980s was an example of both. Inspired by the explosive growth of Presbyterian churches in Korea, the proponents of the idea dreamed that it could happen in Canada. Little thought was given to the different contexts of the two countries. A simple solution was proposed; it failed. Another key moment happened several years later when Knox College, the largest theological college in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, hosted Loren Mead of the Alban Institute at a pre-convocation workshop and gathering. The event was remarkably well attended with both clergy and lay people involved in vigorous discussion. About halfway through the event, something became clear: some of those who had signed-up for the event ceased to participate. “Why?” I asked a friend who had dropped out. The answer: having read Mead and heard him speak before, there seemed to be little new offered. At the same time, I encountered others who argued against the basic premises that Loren Mead was proposing—the idea that we were in the midst of a significant paradigm shift. As they saw it, everything was fine with their particular congregation. Maybe if others did what they were doing, with new ways of greeting people, or initiating this new program, all would be well. A crucial division developed between those for whom this was old news and those who were arguing whether the news was even accurate. The denomination continues to struggle with whether there is a significant crisis, or whether all we need is a simple solution.

Timidly, uncertainly, and sporadically the church has occasionally noted that our place in our culture has changed. Some have embraced the language of “paradigm shift” given to us by Thomas Kuhn and applied to the church context by Loren Mead, and argued that the changes we are witnessing are dramatic. At the same time, many of the solutions put forward as the answer to our problems are of

a minor nature. Small groups (inspired by Willow Creek or the writings of William Easum), changes in the music program, the hiring of youth workers—these and other “solutions” have been proposed. Not coincidentally, the number of books on the subject of church survival, the child of church growth, has exploded. It has been difficult over the last few years not to become involved in discussions of the merits of William Easum’s *Dancing with Dinosaurs*, Tom Bandy’s *Kicking Habits: Welcome Relief for Addicted Churches*, Marva Dawn’s *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, and a variety of similar books. In one year, 1997, three books on the subject of church health and survival were published in Canada alone: Bandy’s *Kicking Habits*, Don Posterski and Gary Nelson’s *Future Faith Churches*, and James Taylor’s edited work *The Yes Factor: New Life and Renewal in Sixteen Churches*. In the search for “how to” solutions, the reflections of Canadian theologian Doug Hall—in particular his brief and wonderful *The End of Christendom and the Beginning of Christianity*—has been neglected.

The signs are there if we will only notice them. The church is experiencing a massive transition in its place within society and culture. Tacit support from the state can no longer be taken as a given. While we may be too close to clearly see all that is happening, the change is real and far-reaching. The term “postmodern,” often used in theological colleges, may be significant in noting some of the philosophical aspects of this change. At the same time, there are other equally significant changes that are better captured by speaking of either moving into a post-Christendom era or by saying that we are leaving Christendom. Three important observations need to be made. First, the crisis is real, deep-seated, and further along in Canada than in the United States, a fact which is only noteworthy because in Canada we often have to use American data. Second, the crisis has become increasingly ideological. And third, the practical results in terms of such things as levels of conflict within congregations are extremely serious.

The problem we are facing is not new although awareness of it may be more recent. For example, the established church in Scotland, the Church of Scotland, moved from growth to decline in the first decade of the twentieth century.³² Reginald Bibby’s statistics in *Fragmented Gods* indicate that decline has been with us in Canada since at least 1925; research is difficult a year beyond this, given the establishment in that year of the United Church in Canada, drawing from the Methodists, Congregationalists, and most of the Presbyterians. For example, while Bibby’s Table 1.1 shows an increase in actual members in the Presbyterian Church in Canada (those who didn’t join the United Church) from 163,000 in 1926 to 201,000 in 1961, this represents only a minor increase in those on the membership

role at a time when the Canadian population was expanding rapidly. As a percentage of the population, Presbyterians have slowly declined from 1.7 percent of the Canadian population in 1926 to 1.1 percent before the 1960s began.³³ The long-term nature of decline needs to be noted and considered. The problem is also universal to Western Christendom, affecting all countries and almost all denominations—Roman Catholic, Orthodox, mainline Protestant, and evangelical Protestant. Discussions of the problem rarely take this fact into account. While local factors matter and may affect the pace of decline, the fact that Methodists in New Zealand, Anglicans in Australia, and Baptists in the United Kingdom are all in similar circumstances should alert us to the scale of the problem. Decline has been most extreme in Europe, including Great Britain, and has affected the United States less dramatically to this point in time. Yet the real issue does not seem to be an abandonment of the church based on a loss of belief, but rather on a decline in participation. This is demonstrated by Bibby’s statistical data on Canada.³⁴ One of the most telling comments comes from Loren Mead, reporting on similar findings related to mainline churches in the United States:

Most of these drop-outs did not drop out primarily because of something the religious institution was doing or was not doing. Rather it is as if the church somehow slipped off their radar screens. It ceased to be important to them.³⁵

Evidence from a variety of sources and countries supports this conclusion. Both the large scope and length of time in which this problem has been developing are largely ignored in most conversations or discussions of church decline. Instead, the arguments have become ideological in nature, focusing around two mutually exclusive arguments: the church has not been relevant enough and thus has declined; or church decline is the result of abandoning the core elements of the faith in order to be relevant. Since the immediate post-war period, commentators have been advocating that the church move in this or that direction as they began to sense the significant changes that were already occurring within the institution. Canadians will remember the impact of Pierre Berton’s *The Comfortable Pew*, as well as other denominational responses such as the United Church of Canada’s *Why the Sea is Boiling Hot* and Joseph McLelland’s wonderfully entitled Presbyterian rejoinder *Why our Pond is Lukewarm*, all of which argued for the church becoming more relevant to a changing world. Recent examples of the “relevance” camp include John Shelby Spong’s *Why the Christianity Must Change or Die* and John Cobb’s *Reclaiming the Church: Where the Mainline Church went Wrong and What to do About It*. The “return to orthodoxy” camp found voice in Dean Kelley’s very influential book *Why Conservative Churches are Growing* and has continued to

advocate its position, including Thomas C. Reeves's *The Empty Church: Does Organized Religion Matter Anymore*. Usually these opinions on both sides of the issue have been personal or reflective, not based upon hard data. The debate continues.

This intense ideological quarrel has allowed churches to remain in a state of denial of the crisis. Each of these books offers a relatively painless and simple solution to the change that most of us fear and the loss of its place of privilege in society that the institutional church in particular fears. For all the arguments, neither school can really answer the question: If we did this, would things return to the way they were? Instead, symptoms are often confused with causes, causes are ignored, and we are sold an ideological program. Kelley's thesis in particular has come under scholarly critique, and some interesting results have emerged. What is clear from this research is that the popular argument—"if we became more conservative, we would grow"—is based upon wishful thinking, not reality.³⁶ The same can be said of those who argue for relevance rather than a return to orthodoxy.

Given this slowly growing awareness of a serious problem and the various ideological solutions that have been proposed, it is no wonder that individual congregations have been affected. There are fewer people. There are less young people and children. The children of elders have stopped attending, and they really don't want to talk about it. The groups in the church that were once vital seem to limp along with the same people in leadership, and nobody seemingly wanting to take over these positions and maintain the organization. What has gone wrong? It is easy in such situations to look for the cause of the problem and propose solutions, to fight over the priorities and direction that a congregation should take. Intense conflict has become the experience of many congregations over the last two decades. Sometimes this conflict is between members, but more and more, it is between clergy and laity. Increasingly there is a feeling among many congregational ministers and judicatories that particular congregations simply could not handle one more conflict with a clergyperson; should such a conflict erupt, the results would inevitably be a loss of financial viability. The pressure to ensure that competent clergy, indeed exceptional clergy, are placed in such congregations is very real. This has a direct affect upon expectations for theological education in general, and theological field education.

It is within this context of leaving Christendom that the church looks to theological colleges as the educators of future ministers. Sometimes the situation affects curriculum: "If only you offered a course in this topic," we are told, "the church's problems would be solved." The ideological divide can intrude into areas

such as classroom teaching or even faculty appointments. Theological field education is not immune to pressures that arise out of our context. Increasingly we are experiencing tensions related to these changes. We can see these tensions in the different goals and objectives that can be voiced between colleges and church, between our accrediting bodies and our judicatories.

THE PRESSURES ON THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION

I would like to give a bit more background on my specific context, then note the areas where I have seen these tensions growing, namely in terms of the goals and objectives of theological field education, the choice of placement, and the means of assessment. This list is intended to be illustrative, not comprehensive.

In my particular context—theological field education director at a theological college of the Presbyterian Church in Canada—the vast majority of our students are Master of Divinity (M. Div.) students preparing for congregational ministry. Students for ministry in our denomination do not have a mandatory internship component to their preparation for ministry. As comprehensive as the denomination's attempts are to prepare students for ministry, the simple truth is that many of them come from different denominational backgrounds (another shift in our context) or even a limited church background. Even if they have grown up in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, there are no guarantees they have exercised leadership prior to coming to theological college. The obvious result—theological field education carries an enormous amount of weight in terms of the individual student's preparation for ministry. One final word to explain the dilemma. Upon graduation, most students will be ordained and move into small congregations, which average fewer than 100 members, as the sole minister. There are no denominational educational or skills-based requirements beyond graduation, and few presbyteries (the judicatory with responsibility for all ministers in its bounds) have active mentoring programs. In a wonderful move, our denominational office responsible for ministry is beginning a pilot project dealing with the first five years after leaving theological college.

As one can see, a great deal can be expected of theological field education. In theory, a student might move into congregational ministry with the four required credits of theological field education being their only experience of leadership in the Christian community. One of the crucial aspects of this process is assessment.

What determines if a student passes or fails? If the student passes, does this mean that they are now competent to be a minister? Or, is it an indication that they have learned something—specifically the goals that they have set out in their learning covenant? And who sets these goals? Shouldn't there be mandatory goals for all students doing congregational placements? There are some common ones, but students do have latitude beyond these goals.

Among theological field education colleagues, we seem to assume education is the vital element. One method of evaluation that I've seriously considered implementing is a method of negative assessment. Students fail if they choose not to do certain things, such as hand the learning covenant in on time, attend classes, and so on. As someone who is tired of the endless reminders, I greatly sympathize with any who have implemented such an approach. This method also has sound professional goals, namely that those going into leadership in the church should be responsible enough to look after such details as paperwork. At the same time, I wonder what we miss when we move into using negative assessment as a model.

My friends and colleagues who serve in active congregational ministry are becoming increasingly demanding. What needs to be assessed, they insist, is competence. They are the ones who deal with the conflicts in congregations as members of presbytery. During the painful experience of being part of the removal of a recent graduate from a congregation, I found it difficult to ignore or brush aside the poignant questions of a minister from that presbytery as to how this person could graduate or pass field education. These colleagues ask me to assess, not whether the student has learned something, but whether they have significant gifts or capacity for ministry. It is the context of a church in crisis that drives these questions.

Assessment seems to me to be one of the most obvious and vital areas where this has an impact. In denominations where students have other requirements, it may be ameliorated somewhat, but it is still something we need to consider. The 1996 Association of Theological Schools Standards (ATS) ask us to think of the entire M. Div. curriculum in terms of preparation for ministry, specifically to consider an individual student's "personal and spiritual formation" and her "capacity for ministerial and public leadership."³⁷ How are we making this happen? In one sense broadening these responsibilities into all areas of the curriculum may be helpful, but one can't help wonder if, in practice, even more will be asked of the theological field education program as the one place where these skills are most obviously tested. How will we assess these items, if the student themselves have not put anything in their learning covenants that relate to these areas?

The kind of placements that students do is another area where our context of leaving Christendom seems to be having an impact. To pose this as a question, are we preparing leaders for yesterday or tomorrow? One of the areas I have struggled with is placement in congregations doing “cutting-edge” ministries. One immediate and obvious difficulty is trying to distinguish between “cutting-edge” and “trendy.” For all of the discussions regarding small-group ministries in our denomination in Ontario over the last five years, very few of these models have been effectively introduced. Yet, I have had students express an interest in working with congregations trying to establish these models. In addition, I have had supervisors suggest to me that because they were experimenting in this area their congregation would be the best placement available. On the other hand, one can question whether any student should be in such a non-traditional placement. It is the responsibility of the theological college to determine appropriate placements. Apart from the obvious issues around boundaries, the point is raised as to whether students should be learning creative new models, or simply going somewhere to learn how it’s always been done. Perhaps that is stated somewhat harshly, but occasionally the choice seems that stark and because the stakes are so high, given the experience of decline, some churches are reluctant to allow any kinds of options.

Do our own standards reflect this change in our context as we move out of Christendom? I value the guidelines on supervision that came out of the ATFE Biennial Consultation in 1993 at Austin, Texas, but some strike me as assuming a stability in what we are doing that is no longer present. For example, I have a running disagreement with a colleague who is in congregational ministry. He firmly believes that if the judicatory is to do its job in assessing whether a student is ready for ministry, it must see the theological field education reports. I counter this argument using the position taken by ATFE that these documents should be confidential, I feel only sympathy for what is being said. Perhaps being a denominational college affects my judgement. At the same time, shouldn’t we be working with judicatories? Or, is it that their expectations of theological field education and ours in the theological college are contradictory? Given the crisis in which we find ourselves as we leave Christendom, this contradiction has to be dealt with. One solution would be to advocate, in my particular context, for a mandatory internship program outside of the theological college. But, what does that say about theological education in general and theological field education specifically, if we are not capable of dealing with these issues?

ACTION IN THE NEW CONTEXT

I have suggested that one of the aspects of our context that matters profoundly, but which we seem reluctant to name, is the decline of the position of the church in Canada. I prefer to call this “leaving Christendom,” and agree with Doug Hall that we are leaving, and should do so intentionally.³⁸ Panic and denial seem the more prevalent reactions to what I have argued is a universal experience of Western Christendom. This is a context that we need to talk more about as theological field educators, in terms of assessments, placements, professional standards, and other issues. My prayer is that we will help students prepare for the dramatic changes that are in store for us as Christians in Canada over the next century. We can do this, not only through theological field education but also through the entire curriculum. There is no going back, nor is staying in the present an option. The future, as always, is unknown, frightening, and where God waits for us.

Is there any action that we should take? My own thoughts are still at an initial stage, but I would suggest two simple courses of action. First, I believe we need to begin talking openly about this change of context, about leaving Christendom. What will it mean for us to live in a culture where we are only one religious choice among many, where we have no special status, such as having our holidays observed or receiving special tax breaks? This is a situation those of us who have come from a European background have not experienced in over 1000 years. More to the point for theological field educators, the institutional structures or congregations that we now live in and worship in were designed within a Christendom ideal. How will they function in a new reality? These are questions we need to consider.

Second, I believe we need to speak clearly to our colleagues about what we can and cannot do in theological field education. For those in the theological college itself, we might want to suggest that we cannot be expected to bear the entire weight of judging a student’s “capacity for Ministerial and Public Leadership,” to quote again the language from the new ATS standard for the Master of Divinity. The entire curriculum must ensure that this standard is met. If our primary focus in theological field education can be more appropriately situated as helping people grow in their own “personal and spiritual formation” we need to stress this, both inside the academy and to our various church constituencies. This will raise other questions about where and how we ensure that our Master of

Divinity graduates will be effective as ministers, or our graduates of other programs will be effective in other areas of ministry.

In a post-Christendom context, these are questions we must embrace. We cannot afford to avoid them. But theological field education alone cannot solve these issues. Part of the frustration at times may be that theological educators are being asked to solve and come to grips with these issues, without any recognition that this is not what their job is about. But the frustration of those demanding something else from theological field education comes out of this new context, out of the realities of a situation where Christendom is slowly fading into the past. We need to talk about this clearly, rather than talking past each other. Numerous other issues may require our attention, but for now tackling these two issues could be an important beginning.

Systemic Injustice of Heterosexism in Theological Education

Shelley Davis Finson

INTRODUCTION

During the past twenty years, our churches have been embroiled in a discussion of homosexuality. Several denominations have had discussions within their judicatory structures in order to address what particular stance, both theologically and structurally, the denomination would take in terms of homosexual persons in their midst. To date, the issue around homosexual persons seeking recognition in ordered ministry has been the thorniest component of the debate.

This paper presents an open dialogue on the relationship of theological schools to lesbian, gay, or bisexual students who participate in the life and work of these schools. This dialogue is essential if theological schools are to model

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openness to diversity and differences within theological education. Included in this paper are concrete examples of ways to address institutionalized heterosexism. This paper also provides suggestions for revision of curriculum that includes the experience of homosexual persons. Central to the intention of the paper is the need for justice and love concrete in the relationship of theological schools to homosexual students, their partners, and families.

The impetus for this work arose from my preparation to co-lead a working group at the ATFE on the historically invisible student. The work began with the following questions:

- What are some of the experiences of lesbian, gay, and bisexual students engaged in theological education?
- What are the structural/systemic dimensions of that experience?

Working with these questions, I incorporated insights from my analysis gained from dialogue with lesbian and gay students and readings during my sabbatical time at the Episcopal Divinity School, as well as insights gained at the ATFE meeting.

For several years now, adult education theory has provided an understanding of what makes a viable learning context. For instance, we know that adults need to have past experiences honored and that they thrive when they feel respect and affirmation along with challenge. Educators also know that context is fundamental to learning. Consequently, when we examine the experiential context of lesbian, gay, and bisexual students in theological schools, it is important to investigate the structural conditions of their lives. Many heterosexuals as well as homosexuals do not understand the rich diversity within the homosexual community.

Because structural analysis is a hopeful task, I believe the context of learning could be altered when structures are challenged and changed. I begin this work by asking, “In what way does the structure of our theological schools, including curriculum, boards, and policies, work against the spiritual and theological development of homosexual students?”

Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual Experience in Theological Schools

Identifying oneself as homosexual means facing a catch twenty-two situation. When the concerns or issues of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are named they are usually seen as different and yet, in order for the needs of homosexuals to be heard, it is essential that the differences be identified. Because of homophobia and heterosexism, a homosexual person’s whole life is exceptional. It is a life lived in a climate of nonacceptance and frequent hostility. The following are some

identifiable circumstances that create tension and/or pain for lesbian, gay, and bisexuals in theological schools.

Often when homosexuals ask for “space” or recognition in their schools, they are accused of creating divisions or of making heterosexuals feel judged and/or guilty. When speaking or teaching of their lived experience as a gay, lesbian, or bisexual person, it is often viewed as one-sided and lacking in objectivity. In order to talk about their relationships, homosexuals have to “come out,” and this usually means dealing with another person’s homophobia or their uneasiness in knowing how to relate. Being forced to hide one’s real self means needing to be alert at all times so that the truth is not revealed. Homosexuals find ingenious and creative ways to speak about their lives in order not to contribute to their own invisibility, while at the same time needing to speak in such a way that does not land them in trouble. Students, whose identities include not only a sexual orientation that is “different” but who are part of other racial or cultural groups, often experience several layers of discrimination.

Normative status is granted to heterosexuals, even to those who do not seek or expect it. How does this happen and what would change look like if homosexuals were also granted normative status?

POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Institutional policies and practices, which assume that students are heterosexual, sustain heterosexual privilege. Administratively and socially, heterosexual students, faculty, and staff fit the system, while others do not. For example:

- Written forms call for the name of a husband or wife.
- School gatherings encourage spouses to attend.
- Financial aid does not recognize the family status of same gender partnerships.
- Dormitory designations, such as men/women, co-ed, and married/family, do not project a readiness to accommodate and affirm same gender partnerships. Some housing policies actually discriminate against homosexuals.
- Student handbooks seldom identify resources such as restaurants operated and frequented by other homosexuals or news outlets and bookstores that carry cultural materials of interest to gay, lesbian, and bisexual people.

- Recruitment policies often do not express openness to gay, lesbian, and bisexual students.
- Student services need to provide infrastructure and supportive resources that are diverse, inclusive, and not implicitly geared to the requirements and expectations of heterosexual students.
- School publications and catalogues could make the presence of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people on campus more visible.

COUNSELING

In institutional social contexts where homophobia and heterosexism is experienced, lesbian, gay, and bisexual students need access to counseling services that are consciously and explicitly lesbian/gay/bisexual positive. Other points of interest include the following:

- Usually, no openly lesbian/gay/bisexual counselor is available for students and/or their families.
- Often information that is essential for both heterosexual and homosexual students about safe sex and about AIDS is not made available.
- Most student health services tend to be oriented toward the traditional family configuration, thus making health services less approachable for homosexuals, with or without children.
- In order to provide relevant pastoral care, the unique experience of lesbian, gay, or bisexual students from other ethnic minority backgrounds would need to be understood.
- The prevalence of homophobia and heterosexism in church and society means that, for many homosexuals, coming out presents enormous challenges. More often than not, pastoral care and counseling personnel have inadequate understanding of what is involved when people discover themselves to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual, or of how to support persons in the process of coming out. This would also apply to both pastoral caregivers and spiritual directors.

LITURGY

In seminaries and theological schools, liturgies are usually informed by, and oriented to, heterosexual life experience. Inclusivity would not mean divorcing liturgical practices from the heterosexual world, but finding evenness in representations of images for God and for a variety of persons, including homosexual persons. Some examples are:

- References to the particularities of bisexual, lesbian, or gay experience are rare or nonexistent. Within the predominantly heterosexual faith community, even the presence of family members of lesbian and gay persons is discounted or overlooked. Prayers that recognize the prevalence of AIDS, violence towards homosexuals, and the covenanting of same gender relationships could go a long way toward making the lives of homosexuals visible. Such realities indicate the need for pastoral inclusion of the experience of those who identify themselves as homosexual and their partners, relatives, or friends who likely occupy one of the pews.
- In corporate worship, liturgies rarely engage the community in explicit acknowledgment, confession, or repentance of and intercession for the continual physical and psychological abuse that many gay, lesbian, and bisexual people experience.
- For lesbians with a feminist consciousness, being constantly bombarded with exclusive male language in community worship reinforces the centrality and maleness in our culture and can be soul-destroying. Because the call for inclusive language, images, and themes in liturgy heightens anxiety in many faith communities, this controversial agenda needs to be pursued with sensitivity. An educational process would be essential because interpretations of “inclusiveness” differ and evolve. However, in communities where open discussion and dialogue already exist, where inclusive language is at least an option if not yet the norm, there exists hope for those who seek life-giving liturgies.

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

In analyzing the place of homosexual persons in theological schools, what stands out most glaringly for some is their connection to others at the school. Should the student share the secret with colleagues and, therefore, place the colleagues in

positions of both power and dilemma? To hear the secret would raise concerns of inadvertently bringing the homosexual person out. What would one say when asked about the sexual orientation of the peer? The conspiracy of silence weighs heavily on everyone because the homosexual person could well be disqualified and dropped from the candidacy process. For this reason, many prospective candidates for ordered ministry choose not to disclose a partnered, homosexual relationship. Faculty is placed in an untenable position when required to make reports to church judicatories regarding students whom they know to be homosexual. They too must decide whether to participate in the “lie” or bring the student out, a result that may have disastrous consequences for the student’s future ministry. This situation is exacerbated where denominational policies specify that full-time personnel must be married or celibate.

Other potential problems include the following:

- Employment or housing may be in jeopardy for homosexual students that are open about their sexual orientation. This becomes even more of a problem if an individual expects to have the relationship affirmed.
- Support is hard to find in the context of a theological school when students have to remain silent about things that are of importance to them. On an emotional and/or spiritual level, forced silence is not healthy for anyone.
- Many homosexual students live in fear of being exposed, hated, or at the least, discounted. Homophobic response means that students are forced to expend energy in focusing on reactions to their homosexuality rather than on the academic tasks at hand.
- Students who “pass” in order to fit in give up their identity and an opportunity to be part of the gay/lesbian culture. Students who are out and bear the consequences may feel resentful of their “closeted” colleagues who remain safe. In fact, students who are out may intentionally bring out those who have made the choice not to disclose their sexual orientation.
- When your life is being debated, having to sit silently and let others speak for you instead of advocating for yourself is not life giving. It sometimes feels like being unfaithful to one’s self and being complicit in one’s own oppression. Being out and speaking out means discovering one’s own true self, one’s qualities and gifts, and finding a voice.
- In most theological schools, teaching and administrative personnel who are themselves lesbian or gay are usually not out. It is only by chance or luck that a homosexual finds out who is “safe.” More often than not, people learn the hard way where and in whom homophobia still exists.

CURRICULUM

Given the current climate of debate in all of our churches concerning the ordination and commissioning of non-celibate lesbian, gay, and bisexual students, it is difficult but essential for theological schools to provide safe opportunities for discussion in a non-coercive context. The probability of the presence of homosexual students who feel unable to identify themselves as such must be recognized.

Below are some additional comments on the curriculum:

- Most curriculums only rarely and randomly include lesbian, gay, and bisexual issues.
- For some time now, it has been understood that the classroom is a political space, where all socially located speech is political speech. The impact of this reality on the lives of lesbian, gay, and bisexual students means that entering the discussion often results in criticism, rejection, expulsion, and even physical threat to their person.
- Today's curriculum requires students to take their social location seriously. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students usually find themselves outside of the dominant culture's heterosexual family values of husband/wife/children. In the classroom, students are asked to speak about the community in which they were raised and the role their "home" church played in the formation and nurture of their spiritual life. Due to the risks involved, homosexual students are unlikely to disclose any part of their journey toward consciousness of their sexual orientation.

TRANSFORMING THE CLASSROOM

The following are suggestions as to how courses might begin to articulate and address the experience of gay and lesbian students and, thereby, create the opportunity for discussion of homosexuals' experiences in the classroom:

- *Biblical studies* courses could raise questions that address those texts that hitherto have been used to condemn the lives of homosexuals. In a more positive vein, these courses could be intentional about directing students to an understanding of the ways in which other texts support openness and inclusion of homosexual persons as created in the image of God.

- *Ethical studies* courses ought to identify those areas of “right relationship” where standards of justice and love are the goals for a Christian ethical stance toward homosexual persons.
- *Historical studies* courses could offer the chance to inquire into the past record of the Church’s relationship to homosexuals. This could include identifying the times and places where the Church has opened its doors, as well as closed them, to homosexual persons. The courses could also trace the history of various movements and groups that have struggled for justice for homosexuals both within society and the Church.
- *Theological studies* courses could acknowledge that critically conscious gay and lesbian people bring to the task of theology a qualitatively different perspective from those who are “at home” in the dominant culture. The perspective would incorporate the stance of the outsider, of one who has been alienated. It would raise questions that stem from an intimate knowledge of heterosexism and how it functions within theology. The introduction of queer theologies, namely the voices of lesbian, bisexual, or gay theologians, could also add to the range of theological perspective provided for all students. Also, an emphasis on the doctrines of Creation, Call, and Ordination convince us that the Spirit is at work in and through the lives of both homosexual and heterosexual people. Homosexuals should not have to work at self-justification by asserting that they have a right to be homosexual.
- *Supervised theological field education.* Students entering a field education situation face the real possibility that their assigned churches are unprepared to receive homosexual candidates for ministry. Those responsible for placements of students need to be conscious of the theological climate of individual settings to avoid placing homosexual students into potentially hostile environments. Supervisory and lay education committees need to provide opportunities for supervisors to share their questions and attitudes toward homosexuality and homosexual students. Where a theological school has adopted a nondiscrimination policy on sexual orientation, the policy could be used in the selection process for supervisors and their training, as well as in identification of field settings.

Field education integration seminars could also grant all students the opportunity to reflect on their experience of providing pastoral care to homosexual parishioners and their families, as well as to heterosexual parishioners who may be struggling with the existence of homosexuality.

Field education sites are usually the contexts for students to develop their ministries and learn about HIV, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, and drug and alcohol addictions, as well as to develop the skills for ministering with bisexual,

lesbian, or gay persons. Discussion and learning is limited when information on these topics is not made available in the classroom.

- *Pastoral studies* courses focus on preparation for ministry. Students are expected to be open and authentic and to journey in community with other students in the context of Christian faith. Education in pastoral theology requires critical self-reflection on who we are and with whom we are in relationship. The agenda that is pursued within a theological community is both personal and political. Many students undergo major changes when they engage this process seriously. Changes may occur in their personal relationships, or they may decide to live life in radically new or more authentic ways. For some, the experience of engaging in theological and biblical studies can be the catalyst for their coming out process.

Within pastoral studies courses, the coming out process could be presented in the context of material related to adult development. In classes related to the family, for instance, we could acknowledge the effects of homophobia and heterosexism. For example, the difficult experience lesbian/gay/bisexual people have when they come out to their families could be explored. This coming out process calls for the ability to respond pastorally to relatives with diverse reactions. Pastoral care and counseling in such circumstances requires all students to identify and come to terms with their own sexual feelings, including their feelings toward homosexuality. Being homophobic, just as being racist or sexist, ought not to be normalized or excused.

We have been socialized to believe that one way of being is more natural than another. Cultural traditions have taught us that in race and gender the white male is naturally superior, therefore it is essential that pastoral courses enable students to identify the socially constructed nature of deeply rooted beliefs and attitudes toward those who are different. Because the world is generally unreceptive to homosexual persons, heterosexual students entering ministry in and for the world could profit from dialogue about how their gay/lesbian/bisexual colleagues could be supported. Heterosexual ministers might be asked to bury the son of a parishioner who has died of an AIDS-related illness, or to carry out a Covenant of Blessing ceremony for a homosexual couple, or to listen to the sister of the lesbian who just moved in with her partner to make a home. Such pastoral encounters could be colored by hate, even if the feelings aroused are rationalized as “loving the sinner and hating the sin.” A caregiver who lacks the necessary understanding and compassion should be advised to refer homosexual persons (and/or their relatives) to another caregiver.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

- A. Course texts and readings need to address the experience of homosexual persons, their history, and contributions to the work of theology and the subject of theological education. Classroom discourse needs to acknowledge the fall-out and backlash that befalls self-identified lesbian/gay/bisexual people or persons thought to be homosexual.
- B. Assignments could provide opportunities for students to explore issues encompassing heterosexism and homophobia.
- C. Course options could include work on queer theology, eros and theology, and other emerging topics.
- D. Embodied pastoral resources need to be available, i.e., in the person of an out lesbian woman and an out gay man, rather than expecting one individual homosexual person to provide pastoral support to both male and female students.

The liberation of homosexual people from oppressive structures and practices within theological education could benefit everyone and challenge all to work toward a homophobic-free environment.

SUGGESTED READING

William Countryman, *Gifted by Otherness: Gay and Lesbian Christians in the Church* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Morehouse, 2001).

Joretta L. Marshall, *Counseling Lesbian Partners* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1997).

Robert Nugent and Jeannine Gramich, *Building Bridges: Gay and Lesbian Reality and the Catholic Church* (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third, 1992).

Michael Riorden, *The First Stone: Homosexuality and the United Church* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990).

Maurine Waun, *More than Welcome: Learning to Embrace Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Persons in the Church* (St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice, 1999).

NOTES

1. John Robert Columbo, *Famous Lasting Words: Great Canadian Quotations* (Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 2000), 262.
2. Desmond Morton and Morton Weinfeld, *Who Speaks for Canada: Words that Shape a Country* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1998), 284.
3. *Ibid.*, 234.
4. *Ibid.*, 268.
5. *Ibid.*, 330.
6. While not a history as such, Robert L. Kinast, *What are they Saying about Theological Reflection?* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000) is a comprehensive survey of theological reflection.
7. David Tracy, *Blessed Rage For Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975).
8. *Ibid.*, 48.
9. *Ibid.*, 109.
10. *Ibid.*, 204.
11. Clodovis Boff, *Theology and Praxis: Epistemological Foundations* (New York: Orbis Books, 1987).
12. *Ibid.*, 4.
13. *Ibid.*, xxix.
14. *Ibid.*
15. James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry* (New York: Seabury Press, 1983), 11-12.
16. *Ibid.*, 12.

17. Ibid., 13.

18. Ibid., 17.

19. Ibid., 22.

20. Ibid.

21. The term “hermeneutical circle” was first used by Rudolph Bultmann in *History and Eschatology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1957), although he did not describe the methodology that developed with later theologians.

22. Two examples of the pastoral circle are described in: Donald Capps, *Pastoral Care and Hermeneutics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) and Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice* (New York: Orbis Books, 1983).

23. Patricia O’Connell Killen and John de Beer, *The Art of Theological Reflection* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1994), vii.

24. Ibid., 7

25. Ibid., 10.

26. Ibid., 13-14.

27. Ibid., 18.

28. Paul W. Pruyser, *The Minister as Diagnostician: Personal Problems in Pastoral Perspective* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

29. Thomas R. Hawkins, *The Learning Congregation: A New Vision of Leadership* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997).

30. “Christendom” has a variety of definitions. For the purposes of this paper, I would argue Christendom exists when Christianity is the assumed religion of the culture with a place of privilege. Within Christendom, it is assumed that every member of society is a Christian—or should be—apart from small religious minorities. It is also assumed that the state will reflect Christian values, however defined, in legislation and all government actions. The addresses were entitled “Revolution: Changing Church and Theological Education” and were presented by Harvey Cox and Rebecca S. Chopp at the Biennial in Boston, January 17-21, 2001.

31. I use “practicum” to mean those kinds of work experiences where what is evaluated is competency. For example, in education, student teachers must practice teach in a classroom. If they are not successful, they have to leave the degree program. There is a clarity here that is sometimes missing in theological field education.

32. Callum Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), Chapter 3, 61-65.

33. Reginald Bibby, *Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada* (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1987), 14-15.

34. Ibid. The first chapter is entitled, “The Great Canadian Attendance Drop Off.” The first of Bibby’s Ten Findings in *There’s Got to be More! Connecting Churches and Canadians* (Winfield, B.C., Canada: Wood Lake Books, 1995), 15-18, also relates to attendance decline as key.

35. Loren Mead, *Transforming Congregations for the Future* (Bethesda, Md.: Alban Institute, 1994), 16.

36. David A. Roozen and C. Kirk Hadaway, eds., *Church and Denominational Growth* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1993). The introduction gives a valuable summary of the debate.

37. ATS Standards 1996, A.3.1.3, A.3.1.4.

38. Douglas John Hall, *The End of Christendom and the Future of Christianity* (Harrisburg, Penn., 1997).

Position Papers for Certification in Supervisory Clinical Pastoral Education

Amy Greene

PREFACE

In the three papers presented here, I hope to give a clear outline of my working theories of personality, education, and theology, particularly as they relate to supervision in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). The three papers reflect my firm belief in the interdependence of all things. This central idea informs my reflections in the specific categories.

In the case of personality theory, I use the work of Abraham Maslow as a starting point. Maslow believed that all humans should be free to develop their potential—free of sex-role and other stereotypes—and that all humans are naturally inclined toward growth and realizing their full potential. I also rely heavily on the work of the women at the Stone Center. These women psychologists and

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psychiatrists argue, through what they call the self-in-relation theory, that the more interdependent qualities and experiences of females must be taken seriously to form a developmental theory that is more inclusive of all humans. They argue that much needs to be added to traditional wisdom about the development of persons because males have written the overwhelming majority of literature on the subject about the male experience. What this has meant is a bias toward autonomy and a linear view of progress and growth that is not necessarily consistent with either feminine experiences and/or values, or with biblical themes of cycle and renewal. In this paper, I use the image of renovating a house, with Freud and others as the basement, Maslow as the den where I spend a great deal of time, and an added sun porch where the women writers bring new warmth and light to the subject.

In the education theory paper, the interplay between student and teacher is explored through the lens of reciprocity. The importance of choice and initiative for real learning is stressed. This is not to suggest that there are no requirements for what the students need to grasp and demonstrate in order to be evaluated and given credit. But it is to argue that what is coerced or pushed upon a student will have less lasting value than what the student is allowed to grasp. I use the analogy of learning to sew v. being taught to cook. I talk about my childhood experience of learning to sew by becoming intrigued with my mother's ability and passion in that area. On the other hand, the pressure to learn to cook was fraught with anxieties that made me resist learning. In the supervisory relationship, as well as in the group experience, I believe that we can have hopes but not agendas for the students. Agendas will backfire. Again, the relationship between the two individuals helps to create (or not) a learning environment. It is never simply a student's "resistance" or "inability to trust" that is entirely to blame for a stale process.

My theology is also one of interdependence. I am most at home in the realm of the liberation theologies, specifically as a Christian feminist. This means that I believe the damage done to both men and women by the worship of patriarchy is in need of healing. In this paper, I use the image of tending a garden to talk about the reciprocal nature of giving and taking care. I take the so-far limited dialogue between the liberation theologies and pastoral theology and expand it to try and ensure that care of self, care of others, and care of God end up in equal balance. I try to show that our ability to care for (as opposed to indulge or pamper) ourselves is directly related to our ability to care for others and God. I suggest that God is in fact in need of our care, not simply the other way around. In this way, I also argue that parent is interdependent with child, teacher with student, supervisor with supervisee.

I hope my papers make clear my belief that an understanding of power as power-over needs to be reconstructed to make way for power-with, so that health may flourish.

Renovating the House That Freud Built: A “Self-in-Relation” Theory of Personality Development

Amy Greene

In searching through various theories of personality development to find where I am most comfortable, I feel a bit like Goldilocks looking for the right place to lie down. “This one’s too hard.” (Freudian determinism is too rigid.) “This one’s too soft.” (The human growth potential movement at its extreme is too naive regarding sin.) I keep hoping to find the one that’s “just right” and get some rest from my jaunt through this house that Freud started to build and so many others have since renovated and added onto.

I like the house metaphor (would Jung approve?) because it makes clear that I don’t intend to tear anything down. I’m simply aware that many other rooms have been added and more are being built. Freud may be the foundation, but he is not the whole house. I find that there is wisdom and usefulness in each room. Just as in an actual house, no one room in my theory is adequate for all occasions. Some are, of course, more appealing than others.

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The room I spend the most time in is the one built by Abraham Maslow, whose theory of “self-actualization” was not about individualistic accomplishment but deeper relatedness to the whole human family.¹ But it, too, is an older room, and I find that I must run out onto the sun porch of the “self-in-relation” theory being more recently worked out by feminist writers of the last two decades, such as Carol Gilligan, Judith Jordan, Jean Baker Miller, and Nancy Chodorow.² I have no doubt Maslow would have found himself at ease on this sun porch, for his own work is consistent with the ideas they express and his last published works were beginning to show many of the same themes. I like to imagine that even Freud would have developed the nerve to come onto the porch and answer to these women for his “damaged goods” notion of female self-awareness.

I don’t spend all my time between Maslow’s room and the sun porch, though, because there’s wisdom in all the other rooms, as well as Freud’s basement and Jung’s attic. However, for the purposes of this brief look at my theory and how it relates to supervision in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), I’ll run back and forth between the sun porch and the Maslow den.

My theory of personality development is inextricably bound to my experience as an assertive female, which is utterly consistent with Maslow’s belief about our essential, biologically based, inner nature—that it is pretty much a given. He, however, did not include sex-role stereotypes in this biologically based understanding. As a post-Holocaust Jew, he was probably well acquainted with the dangerous potential of oversimplifying “biological determinism.” Rather, his was a belief about the inner essence of a person in regard to longings, talents, and predisposition. His was a gender-neutral idea about the essential qualities of a person—the primary impulses. Some of my earliest memories are of having my own impulses thwarted with the admonition, “You can’t do that—you’re a girl.” Yet, I believe many of those impulses—towards action, mastery, “aggression” (as Freud understood the life force), and expression, to name a few—are no more inherently “male” than “female.” I believe that before we are born, due to genetics at the very least, we have certain personality traits—such as introversion or extroversion—that will either be reinforced or suppressed based on a number of other variables. These variables can include cultural ideas about gender, birth order, and family secrets (stopping in the family systems room); historical context; cultural mythology; and even nutrition (recent research suggests neurologist Freud would have approved). Maslow says this “inner nature” can be discovered, not formed. I would add, as would the self-in-relation writers, that this self is then affected positively or negatively in its quest for discovery based on conditions

outside its control. How it reacts and adapts will further ease or complicate its search for a state of well being.³

Had I never become a mother, I might have remained convinced that personality is mostly the result of “nurture” over “nature.” I attributed most of my own personality to what I knew about my upbringing. Then I bore and gave birth to two sons. One is quiet, sweet, and calm, and was so even in the womb; the other is restless and roiling, and was even in the womb. One likes to take his time; he was born several weeks late. The other was impatient and pushy; he is photographed on my chest at less than twenty-four-hours old, holding his head up and uttering something at me. One is emotional and connected and related to everyone and everything around him, but, alas, he is not the “feminine” one; he is the more aggressive, the more likely to lose his temper. The other is more passive about relating, waiting for others to initiate, expecting that what he needs will come, which it mostly does. Alas, he is not the “feminine” one either; he is logical, not given to displays of emotion, driven to understand how things work and to make them do so. One carried a doll for as long as he needed her; one, at nearly 13, still sleeps with his pink “blankie”—and will simply dismiss as benighted anyone who mocks it.

So my sons have convinced me that certain personality traits pre-date our birth and enculturation and are independent of gender. In a sex-role-stereotyped household, each of my boys would have had to relinquish certain behaviors and traits to receive affirmation. As it stands, they have been free to develop in their own particularity. On the other hand, I know that for most of us, our post-birth experiences are deeply rooted in gender expectations. This means that many of the developmental theories that place “autonomy” and “individuation” at the pinnacle of growth are problematic for me and many other women—as well as for more instinctively relational men. Female experience is overwhelmingly different from male experience in the context of cultural expectations. I know this more keenly than ever because I recently lost my mother. Her absence has left me painfully aware that nothing in my life—not society, my family, the church, my education, the mythology of my culture, not a thing—prepared me for how to live without her. I got no help finding my way to leave her, outgrow her, or outlive her. I do not mean that I cannot function without her advice or approval. In fact, most of my life I have done just that. I am talking about something much more unconscious and archetypal, something so huge that I cannot yet define it. But males have a different experience: boys are taught, for good and for ill, that one of their main tasks in life will be to grow up and separate from their fathers—even to “kill” them in the

language of myth. Girls are given neither the edict nor the permission to find their own ways to selfhood at the expense of their connection to others (firstly to mother). We cannot even cause our mothers to have a bad day without suffering guilt, let alone kill her off. In fact, we must swim against a tidal wave of cultural expectation if we are to separate from our mothers, or anyone else for that matter.⁴ Those females who do set out to find their places in the world struggle with more guilt and ambivalence than their male counterparts, because, as the old saying goes, “A son’s a son ‘til he takes a wife, but a daughter’s a daughter all of her life.”

Therefore, the self-in-relation theory is an important corrective because it takes into account that women’s development may not have—or even want—total autonomy as the goal. Much of the language of individuation is biased in ways that hurt men as well as women, often leading to a glorification of isolation and emotional cutoff. In the introduction to their book, *Women’s Growth in Connection*, the Stone Center women write: “One of our and other women’s central critiques of existing developmental theory concerns the common notion that development evolves through stages of ever increasing levels of separation and spheres of mastery and personal independence. This theory emphasizes ‘the separate self,’ an autonomous, self-sufficient, contained entity. A Western bias of individualism and a ‘Lone Ranger’ ethic of meeting challenges underlie most psychological theories of the self.”⁵

I believe that most humans, male and female, are born with an “inner nature” that is driven to connect—to give and receive love. This aspect of human nature is not caused by our gender, race, or culture, but rather is later enhanced or thwarted by it. Other aspects of each person’s unique inner nature either thrive or perish based largely on whether their environment is adequate for those particular needs. Someone with an artistic temperament born into a highly regimented and conformist environment is going to suffer and struggle to nourish that part of her. Someone whose basic drive is the nurture of young lives will be ridiculed if he is born in a culture of machismo, and his gifts will go unused. Each person is formed by a complex interplay between nature and nurture.

In the supervisory process, then, I see my role as one of helping the student find out the most she can about that inner nature and about the uniqueness of her story in its own particular context. I try to act as midwife, assisting in the birth of deeper answers to the questions: Who am I? Whose child am I? What culture shaped me? What do I believe about the world? About God? Where did I get these ideas and assumptions and how do they aid me in, or restrain me from, being a healing presence to others, particularly to those in crisis situations? I believe, with

Maslow, that healthy persons will want to grow, but I also believe that growth is painful at times and that people will often resist it (Freud). I also believe that realities caused by injustice and oppression—corporate sin, if you will—complicate or impede our ability to choose growth and health.

Because I believe so firmly in the total uniqueness of each person, I believe that each supervisory relationship is a new one. In this regard, I am at home with the existentialists, because our particular existence is the starting point for everything else. Some models of development can be too linear and too mechanistic to account for this uniqueness. (I don't spend too much time in the Erikson "stages" room for this reason; though I think the construct is useful, I'm of the belief that all "stages" can and do—and should—remain a part of us.) I believe that each student will bring me something I've never heard of before, will teach me something I have no experience with, will invite me to broaden my world view. If I can stay conscious enough of my own fears to put them aside when I see new territory ahead, I can let the student's experiences guide us down new paths. To avoid meandering aimlessly for too long, I simply trust my instincts. If I sense the student is trying to lure me away from something important, I will express my feelings and offer to own my role in the diversionary tactic: Am I doing something, verbal or otherwise, to make you want to avoid going down this road? Am I completely off the mark in my hunch that there is something you are avoiding? I'm wanting to trust that you have a reason for going down this other trail, but I'm getting restless. Can you give me a hint about where we're going? Of course, I may be asking these questions internally rather than externally, depending on the situation.

My own style of supervision is based largely on my experience of good supervision, which is much like helping someone learn to ride a bike. As I had done with my children in teaching them this new skill, I experienced my supervisors to be metaphorically running alongside me, willing to let me wobble and even fall, but not willing to stand by sadistically while I rolled in front of a dump truck. While they were quite different from one another in style and personality, they were all "hands off" enough to let me get my balance, but "hands on" enough to spare me unnecessary frustration or injury. I think this is the same balance required in the midwifery metaphor. The midwife has skills and experience—not to mention perspective—that the birthing mother does not have, but the task is ultimately the mother's. The midwife's power and knowledge are essential but not controlling, in stark contrast to the high-tech obstetric model of birth, where the mother is virtually inconsequential to the enterprise.

I think it is essential that the supervisor be able to hold this hands-off-hands-on balance to provide what Maslow calls the “unneeding love”⁶ necessary for positive personality development. This is essentially the same thing as Rogers’ “unconditional positive regard.” If I am annoyed or frightened by a student, it is my job to use consultation with other supervisors to find out why. If I simply blame it on the student, I am missing an opportunity for growth for both of us. As much as I hate this fact, I know it to be the case that uncovering the source of my agitation will tell me more about myself than about the student. If I absolutely dislike a student, I am under moral obligation not to supervise her, at least not until I understand the source of my strong reaction. I do not mean that I must want to befriend, or be fond of, each one. If I do not feel a generally positive regard for the student, I cannot hope to enter her experience, and I am unlikely to engender her trust enough to get at her “inner nature.”

If I can help to create a “safe enough” environment, and if the student is able and willing to trust, the true work of supervision can happen. In this case, the student is able to draw on past experiences, as well as new ones, in order to expand his horizons and ability to offer care to persons with vastly different experiences. In this safe-enough environment, the student can begin to look at personal convictions and see where limitations exist to connecting with others, both as peers and as recipients of pastoral care. The biggest block to learning seems to come from anxiety. But this does not have to be bad news.

I am trying to grow toward believing, along with Rollo May, that “anxiety comes only with freedom.”⁷ If this is true (and I hope it is), anxiety is the harbinger of potential growth and change. That does not mean it is always pleasant or welcome. I haven’t yet met a soul who is glad to say, “I’m feeling anxious.” But as I learn to embrace my own anxiety as a side effect of freedom, I can hold it within the context of my other emotions. Then I can offer the same hope to my students when they experience anxiety. If I cannot manage my own anxiety—if I see it only as a threat to be avoided—I will give off that message to my students, and they will resist further growth in my presence, knowing, on at least a subconscious level, that I cannot “go there” with them. I will model for them that anxiety is bad—that growth is too scary. This is highly relevant for CPE because in chaplaincy and pastoral care, it is essential that we be “big enough” to contain the full range of human emotion if we are to be a healing presence to persons in the crucible of suffering.

This way is more unsettling than one that views human development as something that is completed upon arrival at adulthood and that shuns “childish”

emotions, such as disappointment, fear, and rejection. It requires a willingness to stay open to the full range of human emotion, to be impacted by someone's rage without feeling the need to quench it—to be willing to help clear a spot for it to burn out safely. It means allowing ourselves to feel sadness and loss without rationalizing it away. This is empathy and human connection and, I believe, is essential to continued growth. This is where I (and Maslow and the sun-porch women) part ways with the glorified notion of the autonomous "self." Maslow saw truly self-actualized people as the most altruistic and magnanimous of all.⁸

A personality theory that requires deep empathy from the supervisor may seem frightening and may seem to set the supervisor up to be swept into all sorts of emotional storms. It may raise flags for those concerned about boundaries and "codependency." Though these issues are legitimate insofar as they address the issue of over-identification, they can often become camouflage for the supervisor who does not wish to become known—who wishes to hide behind the authority and mystique of the role. Certainly worse things have happened, and learning can still happen—for the highly motivated student. But I contend that the experience will be more productive when it is mutual and reciprocal. I believe this two-way nature is inevitable anyway; it is simply more useful when acknowledged. It is the third law of Newtonian physics that "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." As in nature, so in human interaction—the supervisor is affected by the student and vice versa. A student cannot be simply "defensive" or "seductive" or "resistant" independently of the supervisor's reactions to him or her. (I don't mean, of course, that it is the supervisor's fault or that the supervisor can cure any ills. I mean that some fear or limitation in the student has been met by another fear or limitation in the supervisor, causing the disruption.) Human interaction, by definition, is always working both ways.

In the "self-in-relation" model, this back-and-forth flow is more explicitly acknowledged. Empathy is seen as the goal of human interaction and is not resisted or denigrated as weak. According to Stone Center writer Judith Jordan, empathy "always contains the opportunity for *mutual* growth and impact" (*italics mine*). This is a different model from the idea of a giver and a receiver as two distinct categories. It is riskier and messier than old models of relating because the lines between teacher and student, helper and helped, "big one" and "little one" begin to blur. The ramifications reach far and wide—extending into my education and theology theories as well.⁹ The self-in-relation model works well in CPE, which was founded upon principles of dynamism—of attempting to heal the artificial breach between mind, spirit, and body. Supervision using a self-in-relation model

goes beyond the mere intellectualization of good ideas about pastoral care and toward a fuller development of the whole person. A self-in-relation model includes all forms of learning and growth, whether psychological, spiritual, or intellectual. It lets me keep the whole “house” of developmental theory intact, while renovating it to suit my own experience. It allows me the sun porch—where I find stories of women and men that resonate with my own—but keeps me connected to the historical wisdom through the “big house” of historical psychology, where I can browse from room to room. It allows me the chance to sort through the belongings in the house, trying on old clothes, wearing some of them, spending time in the attic when I’m feeling dreamy (or not getting anywhere with my primary theories). But with the sun porch added on, I know there’s a place for me and for my particular gifts of relatedness and reciprocity.

NOTES

1. Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Penguin Arkana, 1971), and *Toward a Psychology of Being* (New York: Viking, 1960).
2. Judith Jordan et. al, *Women’s Growth in Connection: Writings from the Stone Center* (New York: The Guildford Press, 1991).
3. Maslow, *Farther Reaches*.
4. Jordan, *Women’s Growth*, 232.
5. Ibid.
6. Maslow, *Farther Reaches*.
7. Rollo May, *The Discovery of Being* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1983), 164.
8. Maslow, *Farther Reaches*.
9. Jordan, *Women’s Growth*.

Learning To Sew Versus Being Taught to Cook: A Relational Approach to Education Theory for Supervisory CPE

Amy Greene

My best friend, whose daughter is my godchild, recently asked if I would teach “our” Sarra how to quilt. After thinking a moment, I responded, “I don’t know how to teach it. I only know how to do it.” Undaunted, my friend said, “Well, how did your mother teach you to sew?” Again I thought and finally replied, “She didn’t teach me. I just learned.”

I learned to sew by watching my mother sew, and I watched mainly out of my own curiosity—not out of any sense that she wanted me to. Of course, I vaguely remember times when she explicitly demonstrated something to me or answered a question. But my overwhelming memory of learning to sew was that the desire came from me—that I was terribly intrigued by my mother’s magical ability to turn scraps of fabric and lace into beautiful dresses for herself and for me. I remember being impressed by the awe others expressed when beholding her creations.

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My clearest memory is one of standing on the back rung of the dining chair in which my mother sat to sew. I would peer over her shoulder, watching her hands deftly feed the chalked, cut, and pinned pieces under the tan-colored Singer's presser foot. It was through watching her hands that I later knew what to do with mine. My desire to learn sprang purely out of my own sense of wonder at what she was able to do and my own desire to imitate her skill. Had she tried to teach me, I probably would have resisted.

By contrast, I do remember quite vividly my mother trying to teach me to cook—or rather to persuade me that I needed to learn. I remember the urgency with which she would try to convey the importance of my acquiring such a skill. To her, it was very nearly a matter of life and death. I remember her saying (whether in jest or not, I'll never know), "But no one will marry you if you don't learn to cook!" This anxious fervor on her part is probably the single biggest factor in my refusing to learn; I had some sense of an ulterior motive—a "hidden agenda," as we say in clinical pastoral education (CPE)—a sense that her anxiety was more related to her own concerns than to mine.

This analogy from my childhood is the clearest way I know to keep myself on track with my theory of education when supervising students in CPE. I have no problem getting excited about the "CPE way" of learning. I am always at risk for being a zealot because I love it so much; it has proven to be the most holistic way I've found of learning about myself in ways that reinforce my strengths while helping me seriously examine my weaknesses and blind spots. My biggest problem is making sure I do not say too much or do too much—some have put it in terms of "taking over the student's process" or "doing the work for the student." Some of this is dissipating as I gain experience. However, I will always be more challenged by the dependent and resistant students than by the ones who test me to see if I am really "in charge." This is where the wisdom of transference and counter-transference saves me. If I am getting worked up, overly excited or annoyed, I can take that as a clue that I am beginning to "teach cooking" rather than doing my own "sewing." If I am getting anxious about convincing a student of something, I take that as a sign that something in me, rather than in the student, needs attention. What is it I'm resistant to learning? What is it I'm anxious about? What is it I don't want to know just yet? Why do I think this student's well being (rather than my own) depends on this information? When I notice that sense of urgency in myself, this image of "needing to cook" v. "loving to sew" is helpful. I know firsthand that the "convincing" model does not work and also backfires, making the student even more resistant because he will sense on some level—as I did with cooking—that

the urgency is not about him. If it really is for the student's "own good," I will be able to offer it freely and allow the individual to take it or leave it. My authority will not be contingent on the acceptance of my ideas.

This analogy applies directly to supervision in CPE. I know how it feels to be "trying to teach a student how to cook" when she doesn't want to learn; it is absurdly futile. When I tap into my own enjoyment, however, I believe the effect is a contagion. The student watches me "stitch" together the pieces of his experience, checking out all the while, "How does this look?" "Should we move this piece over here?" Critical to this metaphor is the fact that the pieces to be included are entirely his own. When I begin to want to add my pieces—no matter how lovely—I have to stop myself. My role is to demonstrate "how to stitch one's own pieces," not "how to stitch just like I do." As supervisor, my task is to take the pieces the student brings to me and begin stitching them together, not in a way that shouts "this is how you tie the pieces of your own learning together," but simply by enjoying the task myself; until the student gets intrigued and picks up the needle and thread too.

If I continue to delight in making connections between my beliefs and my experiences, in learning more about who I am and what makes me tick, and in finding ways that I hinder myself and others because of old, unresolved issues—only then can I "show" rather than "tell" the student how to do it. When these tasks become more dutiful than delightful, my teaching loses relevance for the student who really wants to learn.

Plenty of students want me simply to tell them what I want so they can give it back to me. I resist doing so because they will not learn as much in such a disempowered state. Some students will be slow to get curious enough to pick up the needle and thread themselves. With these, I wait, because I believe they all want to learn at some level—even if they don't consciously know it yet. Therefore, I'm open for any level of interest. I will usually ask, if I sense resistance, "What is this about that you seem so uninterested in your own life (and learning and ministry)?" Then the student is faced with the responsibility of freedom. It is my hope that they will then feel empowered to ask themselves these questions, rather than simply feeling shamed by an authority figure who has expectations of them. I believe such shame is based in old power-imbalances and causes persons to resist their own growth. I try to hold students accountable for their own learning without using shaming tactics, because I know shame shuts people down rather than opening them up. I try to lead with my curiosity rather than my judgmentalism, which isn't always easy for me.

This brings me to the thinkers and theorists whose work is foundational to my own. I will never forget the liberating effect of my first reading of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. This was, while being a treatise on education, actually my best introduction to liberation theology. Freire's thesis was that education (theological or other) when viewed as a commodity to be dispensed from on high down to lesser beings is a tool of oppression, but that true education should be reciprocal and liberating. Education, he argued, should mean more awareness of choices. The image that stood out in my mind from his book was that of the pitcher and empty cups. He said that a theory of education that sees the teacher (read supervisor) as the pitcher (full of knowledge, information, etc.) which then pours its contents into the awaiting (empty) cups, i.e., the students, is a demeaning and dehumanizing one that does not empower anyone, including the teacher.¹ Other educators who affirm these principles and whose work informs my own are Malcolm Knowles and Ellen Langer.²

This theory of mutuality and empowerment in education works well within the various components of the CPE program. It can be most easily illustrated and understood in the context of individual supervision, at least insofar as I have presented the "sewing lesson" analogy. But the principles extend easily to the supervision of groups as well, especially if the group is seen as a whole and not as a set of cohabitant individual supervision(s). The group, as a whole, is an interdependent web where give and take are constant and multidirectional. It is difficult to give my theory of group process its full due within the confines of an already limited theory of education, but I will attempt to hit the main points clearly and succinctly. There are many helpful guidelines for understanding groups within the literature of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, most notably the joint efforts of Yvonne Agazarian and Richard Peters. Their book offers a clear outline for understanding the "bigger picture" of what goes on in groups—how they develop, some typical "stages" that a group leader can expect, how family and other systems get unconsciously recreated and layered into what is going on. Agazarian and Peters are particularly helpful in spelling out the dynamics of the visible and invisible groups.³ Their discussion clarifies the supervisor's role (not to mention duty) to be capable of maintaining awareness of "what is going on" at many levels simultaneously. I am relieved to note that even these highly experienced group leaders say they prefer co-therapy because, in short, two heads are better than one. I say "relieved" because I prefer co-leadership of groups in CPE, but can manage alone (just as I can parent singly if I have to, but much prefer to share the task with my husband). A great function of groups is that they can recreate family-of-origin

situations to give “corrective emotional experiences” or to recreate power/authority dynamics that can be experimented with—that is to say, the story can be re-enacted with a different outcome. (Mama will not die if I assert my own needs; dad cannot debilitate me by withholding his blessing, etc.) While these experiences may not have as deep an impact as when they occur in the therapeutic setting, one cannot rule out that possibility.

While psychotherapeutic models offer us much that is helpful in understanding what happens when people come together in an interpersonal, open-agenda encounter, they should not be used to the exclusion of pastoral models, especially given that CPE supervisory training is not the same as group-therapy licensing. Too much harm can come from mistaking the interpersonal relations group (IPR) or open agenda group experience with group therapy. There are several critical distinctions that we dare not overlook, at risk of causing real harm, especially in the realm of working with persons who have experienced abuse. Even for those who are conscious of and working towards healing of their own abuse, the experience of some group therapy approaches in the CPE context can be harmful and can backfire—causing further resistance to real learning as well as possible therapeutic setback. A significant difference between the therapy group and the CPE group is that, in therapy, the group members’ exposure to each other is generally completely limited to the group hour; they do not even socialize (at least most therapists agree this is best for optimal benefit), and they most certainly do not attempt to work together as peers and colleagues. Within the confines of a therapy group, members are free to experiment with new behaviors without exposure to any real retaliation. (I have had this experience and highly recommend it, particularly for those dealing with trust and authority issues). Furthermore, within, the context of clinical pastoral education, we do well to take some of our understanding from the concept of community—if not exclusively Christian, then at least informed by the best of it: holding one another accountable, speaking the truth in love, etc. The boundaries that are possible and even desirable for optimal effect in a therapy group are well nigh impossible to achieve in CPE. Unlike therapy, CPE groups are expressly designed for critiquing one another’s work. The Objectives (specifically 240.4 in Standards, 2000) ⁴ make this plain: “to accept and utilize the support, confrontation and clarification of the peer group for the integration of personal attributes and *pastoral functioning*” (italics mine).

The supervisor must be clear that she is not a therapist and is not subject to the same strictures, or freedoms, as the therapist. Likewise, the supervisor has her own unique set of responsibilities. Firstly, group supervisors should set the

standard for ethical and moral sensitivity to all members. This means setting an example that makes clear that abusive behavior will not be tolerated in the interest of “honesty”—that each person will take responsibility for his own feelings, even those stirred up by the comments and behaviors of others. Secondly, group leaders should facilitate good communication with certain basic skills, such as encouraging “I” rather than “you” statements; fostering the expression of feelings rather than thoughts; and requiring that members respond to one another directly, particularly while in disagreement. Thirdly, supervisors should regularly urge members to focus on what is happening with the group-as-a-whole (Is someone being scapegoated, deified, excluded? If so, how and why?), and how the group relates to the learning issues the individuals are working on.

My theory of group, therefore, is that the group experience is interdependent with the other learning components of the program and should be evaluated—by the supervisor as well as the student—for how well it supports the expressed learning goals. Just as individual quilters come together for a quilting bee, so the group works toward something that is of one piece. My group theory also holds that the level of trust and workable intimacy that is achievable in the group can go no deeper than the level of trust and workable intimacy between co-supervisors—even if only one is in the room. If rivalries cannot be dealt with between supervisors, they will manifest within the group and will dominate the process or cause stagnation or “fixation” as Agazarian and Peters define it.⁵ Just as a family’s health is directly related to the health of the dominant adult relationship (marriage between parents or a single parent with peer support well in place), so the health of the group is significantly impacted by the relationship of the supervisors to the group members and each other.

The education process, whether one-on-one with the supervisor or with the group, is deeply subjective and conditional. These themes are present in the work of my secondary educational theorist, Parker Palmer. My first introduction to Palmer’s work was “To Know As We Are Known,”⁶ which, as the title implies, focuses sharply on reciprocity and mutuality. He talks plainly about education as a two-way endeavor. I do not mean that supervision is a time for mutual sharing or “equal air time” (nor would Palmer suggest this is what he means by mutuality). Rather my self-in-relation theory (as described in the personality theory paper⁷) requires an understanding of the importance of the supervisor’s receptivity as well as generativity. Likewise, the student must be seen as a generator as much as a receiver for real learning to take place. If the lines are firmly drawn (i.e., the supervisor believes only he or she is the generator and the student the receiver),

nothing of lasting value will transpire. The student may learn to “fake it” long enough to satisfy the supervisor’s ego-need, but any true learning will be unlikely. Palmer continues his learning theory in his more recent book *The Courage to Teach*, where he calls for even greater flexibility and openness in the teacher. He challenges teachers with the most experience and expertise to be the most open to learning. How else can they hope to point the way?⁸

If there are “top-down” considerations (and surely there are whenever one person has evaluative power over another), they should be dealt with from a standpoint of higher responsibility rather than higher privilege. Too often, the “top” is seen as the perch from which a teacher/supervisor is free to behave however he likes. I believe just the opposite is true: the person with the power is all the more obliged to act altruistically—in the other’s best interest. The onus is on the supervisor to create an atmosphere of safety and trust; this atmosphere something the student cannot simply choose to create by her “ability” or “willingness” to trust. I think supervisors establish an atmosphere of trust by, first and foremost, trusting their own power. If a supervisor is aware of his power and trusts it, he will not feel any need to dominate or manipulate. He will be able to see each student as an equal—even so far as the evaluative power goes—and develop a relationship of mutual commitment to the student’s learning process. My theory of education in CPE also holds that the supervisor has some responsibility for offering, if a student requests, some basic instruction or “how to” at the outset—to offer basic sewing rules, if you will, for those who ask. CPE is billed as a training experience and is obligated to offer practical information. Students come into Clinical Pastoral Education hoping to hone their pastoral care skills. I believe they have the right to expect practical help with such skills. I also believe there are certain rules not up for grabs, that cannot simply be left for the students to discover on their own. This is where my analogy of learning to sew has to be clarified. I do not mean that students can be left alone to learn only what they want to learn. This would leave them and the persons to whom they are asked to minister at risk for real disaster. I have an obligation to outline certain parameters within which they should then express their freedom. To return to my sewing metaphor, I had to learn which rules of sewing were hard and fast, and which could be interpreted. The proof was in the garment: Did it look OK or not? Could I wash it without its falling apart? Would I want another seamstress to look closely at the seams? In the same way, it is my duty to help my students understand some of the basics of pastoral care, such as not “evangelizing.” Once the parameters are clear, they are freer to develop their own pastoral identity and style. This is neither “taking care of” students nor limiting

their freedom. On the contrary, giving them a sense of support and enclosure makes them freer to try out their own unique approaches.

Finally, students have the right not to be treated as analysands. Ministers who come into CPE expecting practical help with becoming more effective pastoral caregivers have the right to resist any violation of the educational contract without receiving a negative evaluation. While all good learning is potentially therapeutic, CPE supervision is neither therapy nor analysis and should be practiced by persons who understand this. But this should not imply an avoidance of intimacy. On the contrary, good CPE should increase intimacy with self, others, and God. It can be as therapeutic as therapy. But the goal of CPE is not therapy—it is pastoral education.

NOTES

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2. Malcolm S. Knowles, et al, *The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing Company, 1998). Ellen J. Langer, *The Power of Mindful Learning* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997).
3. Yvonne Agazarian and Richard Peters, *The Visible and Invisible Group: Two Perspectives on Group Psychotherapy and Group Process* (London: Karnac Books, 1981).
4. Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, *The Standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education* (Decatur, Ga.: Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, 2001).
5. Agazarian and Peters, *The Visible*.
6. Parker Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known: A Spirituality of Education* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983).
7. Amy Greene, "Renovating the House That Freud Built: A 'Self-in-Relation' Theory of Personality Development," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* 23 (2003): 111-118.
8. Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).

Tending the Fields: A Pastoral Theology of Taking and Giving Care

Amy Greene

“Mine is a faith that mothers both self and others, for I can only love others to the extent that I love myself.”¹

Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Ghanaian theologian

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Jesus of Nazareth, Matthew 22:37-40

My theories of education, personality, and theology—as they relate to the subject of supervisory Clinical Pastoral Education—are all deeply dependent upon the same basic principles. These are mutuality, reciprocity, and interdependence. The hierarchical shackles of giver and receiver, parent and child, teacher and student, minister and flock member, or supervisor and trainee must be broken. If all these relationships are to foster growth—ostensibly the goal of each of them—these

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relationships must be mutually beneficial in the moment of their most intense interchange. This mutual benefit occurs not merely “in principle.” In other words, it is not simply, “It makes me feel good to know I’m a good mother,” but rather, “My children help to make me a good mother.” My theories of education, personality, and theology fit well into my “Theory of Everything,” which is that any good interaction is a mutual, reciprocal, and interdependent interaction. Just as the development of the personality is a dynamic, two-way process between a child and its primary nurturers, and as education is a dynamic give-and-take between student and educator, so is theology the interplay between the divine and the human—including the divine within, or “God within.”

My theology is primarily that of Christian feminism,² which encompasses the liberation of all persons from all forms of oppression, the interdependence of all persons with each other and creation, and the responsibilities implicit in freedom. I am also becoming more at home in the world of pastoral theology, though I have found it to be too focused on the individual and not as thorough in addressing systemic issues. At its best, pastoral theology includes “liberation” as a metaphor for healing of old wounds, fears, and other hindrances to growth. So with one foot in liberation theologies and the other in pastoral theology, I have found myself on a boundary where very little formal dialogue between the two exists yet. One outstanding and notable exception is Larry Kent Graham’s book, *Care of Persons, Care of Worlds*. In this book, Graham seeks to “correct the individualistic bias in pastoral theology.”³

His work is a godsend to me because he articulates so well the conversation that needs to take place between the overly privatized world of therapy/pastoral care and the public world of sin, injustice, and political realities that must be addressed if persons are to feel empowered. His book is the product of his own grappling with these issues. He understands family systems analysis and uses it as a guide to social analysis on a much grander scale. He sees this widening of the lens as essential to helping individuals in pain. He writes, “The prophets did not separate the personal from the public. They saw the *organic interconnection* between the individual and the community. For them, the political and the cultic were joined, and there was no fundamental distinction between the secular and the religious” (italics mine). Where Graham’s work leaves me on my own is in the realm of self-care. He rightly notes that too much emphasis has been placed on the individual’s pain and suffering, to the neglect of addressing systemic causes and effects.⁴

However, I will argue that care of self is essential to the “care of persons and worlds” that he advocates. Furthermore, I will argue that care of self happens best, though certainly not exclusively, in the caregiving relationships themselves. This goes against most of our thinking about any form of giving: teaching, parenting, or ministering, to name a few. For brevity, we’ll focus on supervision. We are taught that when we are supervising, we are dispensing something that we are in possession of and must refill at a later date, somewhere else. While it may be true that we need support and replenishment and should not “use” our students for our own ego needs, it is also true that the recipients of our care do give something in the interchange. If we cannot receive, or are too afraid to receive, from our students during the act of supervision, then we are more at risk of burning out, or worse abusing our power, because we do not recognize the process as a potential source of energy. We don’t allow the process to make us feel good about what we’re doing. I believe this is rooted in a self-loathing that is religiously based but actually anti-biblical and anti-God. We deny the presence and activity of the divine within us, which can only mean we will find it hard to see it in others.

Again, I believe renewal both inside as well as outside the relationship is needed. If we can keep ourselves open to the possibilities within the supervisory relationship, we can find a level of intimacy that will foster growth in both parties. If we stay aware of the inside/outside dichotomy, we can stay close while also maintaining distance; we can get close enough to feel another’s deepest emotion and yet remain distant enough to avoid taking over their experience or reacting out of our own. I cannot help reacting when I know I must examine more closely, with supervision or consultation, what has been stirred out of dormancy in me. Even in this fashion, the student, if I will allow it, is “helping” me. Certainly many have talked about the goal of good supervision to be the achievement of mutuality, but I suggest that there should be reciprocity from the beginning, even while moving toward a sense of mutuality (in the sense of peership).

For many reasons, I have chosen the metaphor of tending the fields in order to talk about interdependence in the care of self, others, and God. I am asserting that God needs us, perhaps as much as we need God. But I should make it explicit that by “us,” I mean the whole human race, not simply Christians, North Americans, or educated elite. I believe God needs each and every person, no matter what their religion or lack thereof, who will listen and attend to the divine within themselves and others and in all of creation. If my first two papers focused on images of the home, my theology takes me out into the wider world. In the book *Inheriting Our Mothers’ Gardens*, from which the opening quote is taken, several

women theologians from around the world contribute articles using the gardening metaphor.⁵ Were I to add my own voice to this collection, I would have to break the cycle a bit and use the model of my Appalachian grandfather's subsistence farm.

Subsistence farming and the larger category of sustainable agriculture give us many tenets that are applicable to sustainable or subsistence caregiving. Again, I include the self as among the recipients of care, though I agree with Graham wholeheartedly that therapy and pastoral counseling have been too individualistic. He writes, "The unrestrained philosophy of expressive individualism undergirding the human services industry erodes the theoretical and functional level considerations of an *organic connection* between personal welfare and public order. The pastoral and the prophetic are fractured into competing claims"⁶ (emphasis mine). I couldn't agree more, but I want to be careful to avoid running to the opposite extreme of leaving the self off the list of "recipients of care." I'm not talking about elevating individualism, but rather of emphasizing self-in-relation (see my personality theory paper⁷). Too much real damage is done by ministers and caregivers who refuse to recognize their interdependence. In the idolatrous thinking of hierarchy-preservation, the self is on a quest "onward and upward," where it will be independent of the need of others. This could not be further from my goal.

To think about interdependence, I look to the example of my Pa Hayes' life and work. His plot of land was small and his access to additives and machinery was limited. Therefore, he knew how to work his land in a way that would not deplete it—because his life literally depended upon the land and upon his not abusing it. I think of him often as I reflect on myself and my students as renewable but not infinite resources. The good farmer knows he and his land are interdependent—each equally in need of what the other has to offer. What does this model offer to us as supervisors and why is it so threatening?

What the model has to offer is an understanding of ourselves as irreplaceable. Too many ministers and others in the caring professions resist self-care with a kind of sadistic zealotry. These "caregivers" are, I believe, time bombs waiting to go off. They may appear to be unselfish and saintly, but I contend that if they cannot receive care, they cannot really give it either. They are giving something shallow and superficial that will eventually disintegrate. They will burn out because they have over planted their own soil and have refused to honor their own limitations. Self-care requires rest, the equivalent of letting certain fields lie fallow in order to restore the nutrients in the soil. Those who cannot stop pushing themselves—who are overly dependent upon being needed—will find their reserves one day completely exhausted.

I am coming to a firm conviction that the measure of one's ability to love others is that person's ability to truly love himself. I must make it absolutely clear that I am not talking about self-indulgence. Too often our culture mistakes self-care and self-love with selfishness, greed, and pampering. This could not be further from what I intend. I am arguing that if care is genuine, it will, by its very nature, be compelled to include self, others, and God. In fact this could be the acid test: "Does my care extend to include others, God, and myself?" Jesus repeats the first and second commandments to his disciples, stressing these three aspects—that love of God, love of self, and love of neighbor are inextricably bound up in each other. "Love your neighbor as yourself" means "Love your neighbor *to the extent that you love yourself.*"⁸

Why is this so hard to hear and why does everyone immediately want to argue against self-care? One reason for this resistance is that people often mistake self-care for self-pampering. These two concepts have been used interchangeably for so long that we can scarcely tell them apart. They are like two plants that look similar and have grown too close to each other; their roots entangle, and we find it nearly impossible to separate them. Separate them we must. Self-pampering is a weed that needs to be pulled out of the garden, while self-care is a crop that could not only feed many but replenish the soil as well. Another reason people are resistant to self-care is that it goes against everything we have been taught—at least in most of Christianity—about putting God and others first. Another source of resistance to self-care, and perhaps the thorniest, is the responsibility it implies. If we take self-care seriously, we will have to do unpopular things, such as: set limits that may frustrate others; ask forthrightly for what we need from others, even if we are denied or scorned for asking; find alternative sources when others can't or won't meet our needs; and accept bigger responsibilities once our needs are met.

The kind of self-care I am arguing for is inextricably bound up with care of others and care of God. My theology is at odds with the culture I live in, which has no clue about this interrelationship. The culture of self-indulgence that I live in misses the mark completely. This nation owns more than others and consumes more than others and yet feels more unfulfilled and dissatisfied than others. Real self-care, just as real care of anyone or anything else, requires discipline, giving what is needed rather than what is simply craved at the moment. This involves everything from what we eat, to how we rest, to what we feed our minds. Just as a good parent would never dream of giving a child only candy, even if that's what the child wanted, so a self-caring person cannot give herself only the objects of

momentary craving. Care requires deep thought and assessment—soil analysis, if you will. What is really needed here?

In the same way, I believe that God is in need of our care, particularly if we define care as “heedfulness, attention, thought, mindfulness, consideration.” What if we’ve completely missed the point by assuming that God wants our “worship” to be a kind of enthusiastic fan-club display? What if attending to the divine within ourselves (God-the-immanent) makes the Creator of the Universe (God-the-transcendent) happy? What if God needs us? I happen to believe this is the case. It is at least implied in the creation accounts that God’s motivation for creating humans, both male and female, in the divine image, was out of a sense of wanting to be in relationship. I believe God wants to be the recipient of our love and concern, not just our fear and obedience.

In the theologies of many women and “third-world” theologians, God is very much on the side of the oppressed, wanting all people, not just the privileged few, to experience freedom and bounty. This requires each person to see himself as the “beloved,” as a friend and partner with God in the making of creation. From what I understand of process theology, this is an essential component. German theologian Dorothee Soelle’s “creation theology” makes the claim that creation is ongoing, and that humans are a totally essential factor in how it will turn out—that we are “co-creating” with God at all times, not simply functioning as cogs in a machine set up long ago.⁹

This takes me back to the mutuality of the supervisory relationship, as well as to the reciprocal nature of good pastoral care. Helping students see the ways in which they receive as well as give when they are serving in their various clinical sites is a challenge. They have been indoctrinated to believe that “help” is a one-way street, that they are called upon to be the bearers of help, or of the divine, or of “care.” There is great resistance to seeing themselves as recipients, partly because they’ve been taught to think that they should not receive anything—that it would be selfish. This is true to an extent. They should be cautious about “using” persons who are in crises or in pain to shore up their own sense of worth or value. They must be on guard against spending time only with people they like or from whom they feel overtly affirmed. But they can learn, if they are willing to risk being recipients, that the apparently obvious recipients (i.e., students in the case of supervision) have given a gift back by their very openness. Chaplains like to talk about “bringing God into the room,” which always alarms me. “Perhaps you bring a *reminder* of God,” I counter. “But only if it is reflecting back off the divine in the other person.”

Perhaps an example will make it clearer. A student of mine recently presented a verbatim in which he had talked to a young woman in the psychiatric ward. She was deeply depressed and had attempted suicide. After pursuing her and intentionally making himself available to her in a nonjudgmental way, she was able to reveal to him an abortion many years earlier that she had never discussed with anyone. She had carried guilt and unmourned loss for years. My student later learned that she had not told anyone else on the treatment team, all of whom agreed it was a huge breakthrough in her treatment. My student felt humbled and amazed, but when I asked what he had received from her, he was terribly resistant, as if it would have been wrong somehow to receive from her. "I think she is the one who received," he repeated, when I suggested that he had gotten something as well. He would not allow himself to even fully consider the question. Finally I said, "Do you mean to tell me that when you learned that she had told no one else on the team about the abortion, but then somehow trusted you enough to lay that burden down, that it was not a gift to you? that it had no impact on you? that it did not affirm your sense of being drawn more deeply into this type of work?" He looked surprised. "Oh yes, of course," he virtually shouted. "I felt all those things."

My theology of giving and taking care, then, is well illustrated in this interchange between my student and a patient. If he will permit himself to embrace the care he received from the patient in the form of her trust and openness, he can perhaps begin to see his own way toward a "sustainable" approach. It is not to suggest that he go in search of this type of encounter in order to affirm himself (I urge him to seek affirmation with peers and supervisors and within himself). And it is not to suggest that this level of benefit or care occurs in each and every patient/chaplain encounter. But to deny it when it happens is to cheat ourselves of an experience of mutuality that is potentially empowering. My students resist talk of self-affirmation, and they resist asking for it. "But think of how much energy we spend asking for it indirectly and ineffectively," I reply. There are nods all around. I believe we must be able to affirm ourselves, to be sure, but we learn how by being affirmed (or at least confirmed) by others.

I am not suggesting that I "use" my students to affirm my abilities or identity as a supervisor. I try to go about that from several sources—peers, supervisors, and self-evaluations. But I would be a complete liar if I denied that the best affirmation of all is when a student has an "Aha!" experience in my presence. I am a supervisor only insofar as a student or students give me the gift of opening themselves to the relationship. A supervisor is only a supervisor in relation to students. It is the

presence of crops that make a farmer, or confirm that he is one. Without the fruits of the field, he is just a man with a hat.

In the work of being and becoming a supervisor, I try to hold in balance care of myself, my students, and God. In doing so, I hope to stay mindful that none of the three entities that Jesus commanded us to love—God, others (community), self—is left out of the equation. After all, he stated that everything else hangs upon our ability to grasp this very interconnection.

NOTES

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AAPC PAPER

The Liminal Space of Pastoral Counseling Supervision

Kathryn Wood Madden

Of Mere Being

The palm at the end of the mind,

Beyond the last thought, rises

In the bronze décor.

A gold-feathered bird

Sings in the palm, without human meaning

Without human feeling, a foreign song

You know then that it is not the reason

That makes us happy or unhappy.

The bird sings. Its feathers shine.

The palm stands on the edge of space

The wind moves slowly in the branches.

The bird's fire-fangled feathers dangle down.¹

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OF SUPERVISORS, COOKS, AND GARDENERS

As academic dean of the Blanton-Peale Institute, one of the oldest and largest training institutes for pastoral counseling, much of what I do is a form of supervision—supervision of faculty, of curricula development, of course syllabi, and of pastoral counselors in training. I am the elder of many of those I supervise, but many are also my seniors. My methodology of supervision reflects the rich and varied environment in which I work.

I have found it helpful to think of both the training institute and the supervision room as a kind of liminal space, in which transition takes place from one state of being to another. In both settings, an ongoing initiation rite leads to the formation and the maturation of pastoral psychotherapists. Elders (faculty or supervisors) guide neophytes (students or supervisees) on the journey from eager but raw potential to wise ability. When these neophytes are in the liminal space, they are on the journey, but not there yet. As Victor Turner has said, neophytes are “betwixt and between.” They are “neither living nor dead from one aspect, and both living and dead from another. Their condition is one of ambiguity and paradox, a confusion of all the customary categories.”²²

Significantly, the training institute itself has been transitioning through a liminal space of its own for the entire two years of my tenure. I stepped into my initial role as director of training in the aftermath of a complete change of administration and faculty. Corporately, we have shared a space of transition from one state of being to another. We have been betwixt and between—neither the thing we had once been, nor the thing we are seeking to become.

At the beginning, I strongly believed we needed to introduce more order and structure into the program, as well as a higher academic standard. Yet, a heavy-handed, dogmatic approach would have exacerbated the problem for many of the second- and third-phase students who remained emotionally invested in the departing faculty and administration. So I learned to modify my approach to meet the emotional needs and learning interests of the upper-level students.

As a state-licensed clinic, our clientele is as diverse and broad as the city of New York. Our residents hale from various faiths and cultural backgrounds. One program that I coordinated and led from the beginning aims to broaden the exposure of this even diverse group of residents to the multiplicity of cultures and faiths they would encounter as therapists in their New York City environment. This program is a joint effort between Blanton-Peale and the Interfaith Center of New

York. The first year, representatives of the various faiths and cultural communities—Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Native American, among others—visited our institute each month and made presentations to groups of all phases and faculty. Respondents from the psychotherapeutic perspective made complementary presentations. We have decided to make these multicultural, multifaith seminars an ongoing and integral part of our training program, in the belief that “the rich diversity of human beings and religious traditions is itself a testimony to the way the Spirit uses the particularity of personhood...no matter how we differ from one another, each is a brother and sister in the Spirit.”³

My methodology of supervision has been distilled and refined in this vessel of transition and diversity. Like a cook stepping in to take charge of the preparation of a meal that is already in progress, I learned to add a little of this, dilute a little of that according to “taste,” according to what is needed. Like a gardener getting ready to introduce new plants into the garden, I have come to know that I first “must consider the composition, condition, and needs of the soil,” and that only “after understanding the nature of the soil, will [I] know which plants thrive in it.”⁴

A MATRIX OF SUPERVISION

The supervision of pastoral counselors, or any kind of coaching and mentoring for that matter, requires a supportive, as well as a challenging environment from the supervisor, coach, or mentor. Laurent Daloz, in his book *Effective Teaching and Mentoring*, visualizes this process as a matrix that I have replicated below:⁵

As represented in the lower-left quadrant of the graph, low support and low challenge results in stasis; the supervisee does not grow. Too much challenge with too little support can lead the supervisee to retreat, as seen in the upper-left quadrant. A high degree of support with little challenge will lead to confirmation of the therapist and, perhaps, to the heightened potential for some sort of growth. It is clear from Daloz’ matrix, however, that growth is actively encouraged only with an appropriate balance of both support and challenge.

Within this matrix of growth, I believe the content of supervision needs to focus on the distinct yet complementary goals of a two-pronged methodology: (1) education, and (2) facilitating the therapist-client relationship. Supervisees must also be aware of the ethical implications of the work they do and must adhere to the code of ethics of their chosen certifying body.

Education

Supervision, then, involves a component that complements the supervisee's classroom instruction in the theory and method of becoming a therapist. This complementary education may be conducted through didactic teaching, suggested readings, or the discussion of theoretical concepts. The advantage of this clinical instruction, beyond the classroom, is that it is individual and application-specific. In supervision, the therapist has the opportunity to see how theories illuminate, or do not illuminate, certain aspects of work with the client. Theory provides an illuminating framework for clarifying the understanding of therapeutic issues such as resistance, transference, and countertransference, as they are reported in the moment of the supervisory session.

The supervisee must have a good enough understanding of the theory and method of becoming a therapist. This is true of any therapist undergoing supervision, but especially true of those that I work with who are still students at the training institute. The therapy room is the place they put the theory of the classroom into practice, or push against it. It is the place where theoretical learning is molded into practical understanding and becomes personal method.

It is, then, appropriate to discuss theory in the supervisory setting, but it is not enough. Of the two, it is perhaps the lesser of the goals of supervision. Drawing from Michael Fordham's observations about therapists-in-training, Jungian analyst James Astor has said that the supervisor-supervisee relationship must operate on the level of dialogue and collaboration, as well as on that of teacher-student. I concur with an approach to supervision that "encourages mutuality" and that is "both clinical and didactic."⁶

Facilitating the Therapist-Client Relationship

The second, and perhaps more important, goal of supervision is to facilitate the therapist-client relationship.⁷ This is the soil from which healing grows forth. I am not the client's therapist, but I can help till the soil of the healing relationship. How is this done? One way is to consider—not as a therapist, but as mentor—the supervisee's characterological structure that may or may not present an obstacle to the therapeutic relationship. If obstacles are present—a strong countertransference, for example—the supervisor may suggest a particular focus for the supervisee's own therapeutic work to clear away the obstacle from the path of the client.

Another important issue, possibly but not necessarily related to character, is what I have come to call "the window of anxiety." It is only natural that therapists-in-training will have a certain amount of anxiety. This window of anxiety can be so open that an alliance with the client cannot be formed. If the frame cannot be held,

the work of healing cannot begin. If the window of anxiety is too low, there is no growth, no motivation; as in Daloz' lower left quadrant, there is stasis.

A large part of my role as supervisor of pastoral counselors-in-training, then, is to facilitate an awareness of the dynamics of projection and interjection, of transference and countertransference, and of the window of anxiety within the therapist-client relationship and within the supervisor-supervisee relationship. In this capacity, I do not see my role as simply to make insightful pronouncements to the supervisee from the "Mount Olympus" of pastoral counseling truth. I would rather be a facilitator of the therapist-client relationship by building a collaborative alliance with the therapist-in-training and by helping her to uncover her own insights rather than by giving them myself. I may serve as a mirror, reflecting back to the therapist her own struggles in order for these insights to emerge. Reflection, in and of itself, is not enough. I will be supportive but challenging, with the goal of helping the supervisee achieve solid growth in her practical skills as a therapist.

Successful supervision takes place in an environment of support and challenge. This is the ground upon which the journey through liminal space to maturation begins, proceeds, and culminates.

Ethical Considerations

I am in a leadership role in a training institute that has recently been reaccredited by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. All residents are required to take our course "Professional Ethics and Professional Practice." In it, the residents examine the codes of ethics of, for example, the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy vis-à-vis considerations of confidentiality, managed care, child protection, sexual appropriateness, and maintaining strong boundaries against extending relationships beyond the therapeutic frame. All trainees, educators, and supervisors are bound by the codes of ethics of their chosen certified body.

As a supervisor, I am vigilant about possible ethical violations that may occur overtly or covertly in the therapeutic relationship and that can negatively impact treatment. I have found it necessary, at times, to recommend that phase-inappropriate or immature residents either terminate their residencies or do what is necessary to work through issues that could hinder and possibly even harm the treatment of clients. A passive or merely supportive stance in the face of red-flag issues would be, in my estimation, a violation of ethical standards and would also place the institute in legal jeopardy.

THREE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT IN SUPERVISION

In this section, I will focus upon the process of guiding therapists through the developmental stages of supervision, giving examples from my work with a variety of supervisees.

In his book *The Supervision of Pastoral Care*, David Steere refers to the “developmental sequence of learning in supervision,” articulated by Loganville, Hardy, and Delworth.⁸ The three stages they identify—stagnation, confusion, and integration—parallel the stages of transition of neophytes through the liminal space, the space characterized by Victor Turner as “a confusion of all the customary categories.”

While it is helpful to think of the developmental process in distinct stages, life is never quite as neatly tied up in a package with a bow on it as that. In the real world, these stages can happen at different times for different supervisees. Some supervisees can cohabit multiple stages or drop back from one to the next. Some are unequipped to go beyond the first or second stage, and thus they cannot proceed to the full maturation required of pastoral counselors. With this caveat, I do find a form of stage theory useful to the understanding of the process of learning and development.

Stagnation: Unconscious Incompetence

Before I entered the field of pastoral psychotherapy, I worked for a time as a communications trainer, helping corporate executives become effective public speakers. My role model and mentor in this field was Bert Decker, author and founder of a leading national consulting and training firm. Drawing from the learning theories of Abraham Maslow, Decker referred to the early stage of development of a new skill as that of “unconscious incompetence” or a lack of awareness. At this stage, we don’t yet know that we don’t know.⁹

The stage of stagnation, as David Steere explains, “is characterized by the naïve unawareness of the beginning trainee who is unlikely to realize that the issue even exists.” It is not uncommon in this stage for supervisees to “think they are functioning perfectly well because of a lack of awareness of all that is involved” in pastoral counseling. They may also be “frozen into old patterns of thought and behavior” and may be prone to a “false sense of security.”¹⁰

A male supervisee who I worked with for five months, exhibited a desire to help clients with concrete needs, but was unable to comprehend much of what goes into insight-oriented therapeutic work. When I first started working with him, I

noted that his clients were regularly missing sessions, sometimes 2 or 3 weeks in a row. This was because he was unable to provide a strong and clear therapeutic frame and establish a working contract with them. Yet, he failed to see a problem in this and had difficulty in getting beyond surface conversation in therapy. He seemed to equate the sessions that exhibited lively dialogue as the only ones in which therapy occurred.

He wanted to supervise with me because he identified me as a good, empathetic mother figure, but he conflated empathy with a permissive environment that would enable him to remain in denial of his own resistances. To move him beyond the comfortable levels of his stasis and confirmation required challenges to his assumptions. Paralleling his own resistance, his clients' resistances seemed to be more in control of the sessions than he was as a therapist. When we explored how the therapeutic contract should be more than just relational and supportive and that the frame needed to be in place for the good of the work, he was unable to receive this.

Another resident, a female, with empathetic listening skills and an ability to provide a quasi-supportive environment for many of her clients, also had issues with regard to the treatment contract and to the frame of the therapeutic relationship. Additionally, she exceeded the brackets of the window of anxiety and spilled forth ever-expanding quantities of anxiety, a tendency that was counterproductive to developing an analytical perspective in the treatment room. On one tape she brought into supervision, I noted how the interaction between therapist and client sounded overly familiar and inappropriate to the treatment frame. The informal chatter represented her extreme anxiety, and her flooding stood as a giant obstacle to establishing an appropriate therapist-client alliance and a safe-enough supervisor-supervisee alliance.

Having established with her a ground of support for our supervisory work, I was able to successfully challenge her tendency to be overly familiar with her clients. She took this to heart and became more present and reflective in client sessions. This was a substantial change from what initially sounded on her tapes like two friends in emotional exchange. Her receptiveness to change after an initial period of unawareness of the problem moved this supervisee out of stasis—what Steere et al. refer to as stagnation—into the next phase of development. Once there, she encountered the uncomfortable uncertainty that comes with learning a new skill.

Confusion: Conscious Incompetence

The next stage of learning is that of conscious incompetence. You come to know that you don't know. Your assumptions are overturned, and everything you do begins to seem awkward and clumsy. Here, you enter the state of betwixt and between, the state of transition between stasis and growth. You are no longer where you were, but aren't yet where you are going.

As Turner said of neophytes in the liminal space, they are "neither living nor dead from one aspect, and both living and dead from another."¹¹ Likewise, a supervisee in this stage of development is in a condition of ambiguity and paradox, almost like trying to find his way through a new land that exhibits what Turner calls "a confusion of all the customary categories."

Steere et al. call this the stage of confusion that is characterized by "instability, disorganization, erratic fluctuation, disruption, and conflict." The supervisee is aware now that something is wrong but may "fluctuate between feelings of failure or incompetence and feelings of great expertise or ability." She may attempt to shift blame for the newly recognized problem onto the client or the supervisor, who may no longer be regarded as "the magical, all-knowing figure of stage one" but now "as an incompetent, inadequate figure who has failed to come through in stage two." Steere makes it clear that this is an important development and is a "sign of growth rather than impending doom."¹²

A third-year resident I supervised from the Harlem Family Institute, an inner-city training center, provides an excellent example of the confusion stage. A lay Catholic, pre-med student, he worked primarily with African-American youth in Brooklyn, mostly from broken homes. His strength as a student, a very bright and inquiring theoretical mind, proved to be of little help in establishing an alliance of trust with these kids. He had difficulty both in being present to them and establishing appropriate boundaries.

When I began working with him, he was especially frustrated over not being able to control the frame of one of his teenaged clients. She began to skip their sessions as their work focused more upon her painful situation at home with her mother and her mother's drug-addicted male companion.

My supervisee blamed himself for these missed sessions, wondering what he was doing wrong. He let the countertransference lead him. He would look for her in the school hallways, asking her friends if they'd seen her. He beat himself up for somehow not providing the empathetic container that he felt his client so needed. I offered the practical suggestion that he speak with the girl's sixth-period teacher and ask to meet with her specifically to resolve whether or not they would continue

their work. The meeting was arranged, and the girl told him that she had decided not to continue a second year because of “a class she wanted to take instead.” She said she had liked working with him so much, but had been afraid of hurting his feelings. From his confusion and frustration, he began to see how vulnerable he was to taking a client’s actions personally and blaming himself. He realized that her termination had less to do with his skill as a pastoral counselor and much more to do with the client’s own psychodynamic limitations at the time.

Whether the therapist is able successfully to make the transition through this liminal space is dependent upon not only the supervisor’s guidance, but also the readiness of the supervisee to receive this guidance and mentoring.

The female resident mentioned earlier, predictably, had difficulty as she moved into the liminal space of transition. She had developed a negative transference to certain authority figures at the institute. I was exempt from this projection as long as I stuck to my role of a supportive presence in her training. Toward the end of our first term together, when I moved into a more challenging but necessary stance with her, this changed.

The success she achieved in adapting to new ways of working—in being more present and reflective in her session, rather than overly familiar—was countered with disruption and rage at the institute and also at me as her supervisor. For this resident, negotiating the confusing betwixt and between liminal space will depend upon her ability to receive not only the challenges necessary for growth, but also the support system that is there for her. This hinges upon her ability in her own therapy to lower the window of anxiety that she had brought into the therapist-client and supervisor-supervisee relationships, as well as her ability to deal with her negative transference toward all authority figures.

Sometimes the boundaries of the developmental stages are blurred, or transitions through them happen quickly. Potentially, a gifted supervisee can proceed from the stage of unawareness to being conscious of his immaturity as a therapist with a little psychological upheaval, provided that he is characterologically mature.

As an example of this, I offer the story of one resident, a female, who chose me as her supervisor in her first year at the institute. At the beginning of our work together, I had an image of her as stiff and somewhat armored—both bodily and methodologically. In accord with a relatively high window of anxiety at the beginning of her training, she was very directive in her client sessions. She was also, at that time, somewhat defensive in response to my observations of her, demonstrating a lack of awareness of certain problems or issues. During one session, I commented on an interpretation she had made to one of her clients,

asking what it might have been like to withhold the interpretation at that stage of treatment. Resistances kicked in, and she became defensive with me for suggesting that she had “done something wrong.”

The resident, however, displayed a readiness to enter the liminal space and embarked on the next stage of development, realizing that to grow she must change. She had chosen me as her supervisor saying, “I want depth.” She plunged into the cauldron of transition with the openness of a student who is willing to let nothing stand in the way of learning the skills necessary to the job.

Within several months, she began to develop a truly comfortable and professional working alliance with her clients. She responded to my supportive challenges to explore their more latent issues as she began to sustain longer, more in-depth treatments. For example, I helped her become aware that some of her “growing edges” included examining her own countertransferential tendency to feel that she had let a terminating client down in some way. In fact, there was probably nothing she could have said or done that would have made a particular client stay in treatment or act other than he did because of his own psychodynamic issues.

Our supervisory relationship deepened and grew over those few months, and we mutually agreed that I would continue to work with her the next year as Supervisor in Depth (SID).

Integration: Competence—Conscious and Unconscious

After the skills have been acquired and integrated into practice, the trainee enters the phase of competence. At first, this competence is maintained with conscious effort, like a pianist who remembers the fingering of a Chopin *etude*. Later on, when the fingering is transcended, true music can be made in the moment of playing at the level of unconscious competence.

This level of integration is characterized by David Steere as a stage of “reorganization, new cognitive understanding, flexibility, and personal security based on an awareness of our insecurities and an ongoing process of monitoring our important issues in supervision.”¹³ After the supervisee has a good enough mastery of theory, of his window of anxiety, of self-doubts, and of other characterological issues that provide obstacles to the therapeutic relationship; after the supervisee develops the capacity to elicit insights from the client rather than imposing them; and after the supervisee weathers a few storms of client crises without undermining his confidence as a practitioner, it can then be said that he has entered the developmental stage of integration. For this to happen, the supervisor will have

provided a supportive enough container of safety, while at the same time, offering needed challenges along the supervisees' growing edges.

When a supervisee reaches such a state of integration, we begin to see interesting, creative, sometimes profound things happening. Lately I have been observing a multi-pronged, parallel process occurring between the in-depth supervisee mentioned above and one of her clients, the supervisee and her therapist, and the supervisee and me around the issue of death and dying. One of her in-depth clients has AIDS, and a person very close to her in a mentoring and therapeutic role is dealing with a life-threatening illness. Additionally, within the space of the past two years, I have lost four people—including two family members—who were very close to me. There has been much to grieve, feel, and process for both of us.

Because of my supervisee's faith and her healthy alliances, this has not been a time of disintegration for her, but one of deepening and of finding meaning. The window of anxiety is present but not debilitating, and actually has enhanced the work toward depth. Death and the feelings surrounding it have been held consciously in our supervisory relationship when these feelings come up. The alliance of safety between us gives us the space to acknowledge death and the images it produces. Openly, we can acknowledge in a collaborative and mutual way, the deep feelings we have for those both of us work with, love, and grieve.

This supervisee has learned to be sensitive to the effect on the therapeutic relationship of overprotecting her client with AIDS, especially at a time when he is in great need. She cares for him deeply, and she thinks there is a part of her client that knows this. For now, she believes that he is more comfortable not hearing this from her. She feels that revealing this to him might "destroy the delicate process by which he can come to know it for himself."

I have encouraged her to be attuned to her feelings of helplessness in the countertransference. She cannot prevent the death or change the consequences, so we have worked on how she must deal with her client's helplessness in terms of real feelings in the present tense. This is not the normal situation one usually encounters in therapy of having the possibility of "turning a life around." He may possibly die, so her challenge is to stay with what is going on now, fully hearing what is going on in the room, and what may be scary for him and for her. She is learning to stay with him in the present tense: present to his fears and his faith.

This is depth. It may not be the way she expected to find it, but what better therapist to help a client through this passage than someone honestly open to the journey and the depth of human feeling and experience? She has developed the

groundedness and elasticity as a therapist to help her client to be safe with his feelings at this intense and scary time.

Entering the stage of integration connotes, on one hand, the arrival at the culmination of a journey through the liminal space of transition. On the other, it signifies that the therapist has sufficiently opened herself up to the process of continuing growth and an awareness that, in many ways, the journey has just begun. At this level, a supervisee experiences “cognitive understandings, a sense of direction for the future, and an emergent realistic view...of themselves and their competencies.”¹⁴

It is at this level of growth that the therapist can truly begin to integrate, not only the theoretical and practical in a way that is personal and uniquely her own, but it is also the level at which new depths into the spiritual beckon to be engaged.

IMAGES OF SPIRIT

The methodology of both my clinical and supervisory work is founded on the belief that spirit underlies the entire psychological process. The working of spirit both grounds and informs the psychotherapeutic encounter and endows pastoral psychotherapy with a distinct methodology based upon deep, personal experience.

I have learned, from both spiritual direction and analysis, that often when needed most a symbol or image will be presented—perhaps through a dream, prayer, or other vessel—which will help heal or provide understanding. I have seen this happen with my clients, my supervisees, and myself. Two important symbols or images have recently emerged that have aided my understanding of the working of spirit in and through the psychological process.

The Labyrinth

The first image is one I see every day. It is the symbol that my training institute, Blanton-Peale, has chosen to signify the journey of psychotherapy—the image of the Labyrinth. There are many labyrinths, but the one we use is taken from the medieval Cathedral of Chartres. In addition to representing the spiritual journey, as it has for centuries, it also represents the journey toward psychological and spiritual wholeness, which is a journey into the depths of the psyche, to its source, and back again.

It is a wonderful image that depicts the processes of spiritual direction, therapy, and supervision of therapy. We begin on the surface and wind our way along a sometimes confusing path. We are, like Dante, often “lost in a dark wood.” A guide can help us, but we must walk the Labyrinth ourselves. Ultimately, we reach the core, discover for ourselves the mysteries or at least learn that there are mysteries to be discovered, and work our way out again, transformed. It is a journey to the place where, as Ann Ulanov tells us, we come to know the difference:

between being healthy and being a person who is fully alive, between being able to function and feeling real, between living without too much mental distress and living with a sense that life is worthwhile...Our ability to develop a self and feel its reality depends without question on our psychological development. But what religious traditions tell us is that psychological development is not enough to give us a sense of being real and fully in touch with life.¹⁵

As counselors and therapists, we are drawn to a calling that is open to the religious and spiritual dimensions of life. For we know that this “primordial religious experience” that we meet on the journey to the center of the Labyrinth:

wells up from a profound depth that exceeds the reach of reason and imagination, making itself unmistakably known as that sense of the unknown that, for better or worse, deeply marks our lives. In primordial religious experience we have the conviction...that we have been made present to ourselves through a strong sense of presence of the Unknown...Whatever its vehicle, the hallmark of primordial religious experience is seriousness, the certainty that something of basic importance for our whole life has happened...Out of this kind of experience comes our sense of being a real person, really alive.¹⁶

The Abyss

The second symbol that presented itself to me the past few years is that of the Abyss. This image welled up out of my unconscious after my friend and fellow-therapist Kathleen Ford was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Her death was followed a month later by that of my mother who, having been rushed to a hospital with excruciating abdominal pain, died twelve hours later from an undetected myocardial infarction. A year-and-a half later, my spiritual director of eight years, Barry Ulanov, developed a cancer. One month after Barry’s death in April of 2000, my father died in his sleep, having recovered enthusiastically for a brief fourteen hours from an amputative surgery.

I have learned to live with both emptiness and fullness. The image of the Abyss represents to me both the fear of the unknown and the support I have found in the act of relinquishing to that unknown, which is a form of kenosis or emptying. It is like the image of the Empty Tomb. There is emptiness and a consequent fullness upon seeing the Risen Christ—before there was the Fullness, there was first the Emptiness.¹⁷

As the popular song lyrics go, “Everybody wants to get to heaven, but nobody wants to die.” We too often jump to the happy ending of the story and forget the incredible loneliness and despair of the apostles and of Christ himself as he hung on the Cross. We too easily forget the further despair of Mary Magdalene when she reached the tomb on the third day to find the stone rolled away and the body of her Lord, whom she had come to anoint, gone. We too easily forget that Dante’s trip up the high mountain to Paradise led by Virgil started in the depths of the Inferno.

Holding the feelings of fear, despair, and emptiness—without rushing to provide a happy ending—when our clients, our supervisee’s clients, or we are faced with the Abyss is a hard, but deep, spiritual lesson. My in-depth supervisee mentioned above has become more aware of her own longings to explore how a relationship heals, if and when it heals, and how to distinguish relationship from spirit. She asks if it is her relationship with her clients, something else, or both that is the healing factor. As she observes and holds the “bottoming out” of her client, it feels to her like a kenosis. She realizes that her client must experience for himself the grief of a lifetime of losses. At the same time, she can acknowledge the underlying primordial feelings—more hers than his at this point—that come with facing death. To her, this work feels like Lent: it is very sad. Together, she and the client prepare to face the Empty Tomb and ask the question, “Who is God, or who does God become when one is dying?” How will her client reconcile and come to terms with who God is? What are the inevitably religious questions he will ask? What will she pray for when there are no miracles?

This is where the relationship between my supervisee and her client sustains, but there is something more. As they head toward rock bottom, they find a God of minimum protection and maximum support, a God of incarnational presence at every level, a God of, in her words, redemption.

She has been blessed to guide someone through the liminal space between life and death, he is blessed to have her with him as she learns to hold in tension those feelings of emptiness and fullness, and I have been blessed to hold these

feelings with her and to witness the incarnational presence that emerges from the essence of the Trinity as it pours forth through human spirit.

ONE FOOT IN HEAVEN

When my mother died suddenly and unexpectedly a week before Christmas in 1998, I tearfully asked Barry [Ulanov] “Where is my mother?” Even after nine years of seminary training, eight years of spiritual direction, and numerous classes and tutorials in scripture and theology, it is still quite possible to be humble. After all, Augustine asked similar questions. Barry thought for moment and because we were near the end of our time said, “Let’s talk about this next week.” When I returned the next week, Barry’s response was, “Your mother knows that she is known. And she has personal identity.” Initially, I was caught off-guard. I had “where.”¹⁸

I have entitled this paper the liminal space of “pastoral counseling supervision.” In a larger sense, however, we are all betwixt and between, all passing through the liminal space—transitioning from birth, through life, to death and beyond—with one foot in heaven and one on earth. Our calling as pastoral counselors provides an opportunity to engage the deep issues that we, our clients, and our supervisee’s clients confront along the journey. Our calling integrates the disciplines of religion and psychology in a new age where the once distinct boundaries of each are blurring. We are uniquely positioned, perhaps like no other mental health professionals in an era of Health Maintenance Organizations and short-term therapy, to deal with the greater questions of meaning that the liminal space of life presents to us all.

Straddlers of the fence between psychology and religion, we seek to engage head-on—and to help our clients, our supervisees, and the clients of our supervisees engage head-on—the sometimes elusive and deeper truths of “mere being.” Part psychologist, part theologian, part poet, we learn to help others wrestle, because we too have wrestled with life’s abysses and to remain open—absolutely open—to the “palm at the end of the mind,” which “stands on the edge of space.” Rising “beyond the last thought” is our clarity. As “the wind moves slowly in the branches” and as “the bird’s fire-fangled feathers dangle down...the bird sings”¹⁹ and we, too, are free.

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Martha and September 11

John Bucchino

The fall extended unit of clinical pastoral education (CPE) at New York City's Lenox Hill Hospital started on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. At 8:46 A.M., the first plane hit tower one. Thick black smoke billowed uptown, raising ominous fears in New Yorkers.

Five of the six CPE students, the group slated to begin a new unit, came to the hospital early. Instinctively sensing a terrible tragedy unfolding, they wanted to help in any way they could. Their instinct was right. At 9:07 A.M., a plane hit the second tower. Given the gravity of the situation, I postponed the unit's start day. I left a voicemail message for Martha, the sixth student not present who had done a previous unit with me.

Sixty-three injured people walked in recounting the chilling scenes they had witnessed while being in the proximity of the towers. Their cuts and abrasions reminded me of Martha. I thought to myself: She's probably not here because she's working at the hospital closest to the site of the attack. I wondered if she was hurt. Did she get my message? Where was she?

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A week went by before Martha returned my call. Her crackling voice reflected tiredness and heaviness of heart. She didn't think she would be attending CPE. However, I was surprised and grateful when she showed up on the new starting date.

Martha's sunken eyes, ashen skin tone, and bent shoulders spoke clearly of the horrors she had witnessed. The group began introductions. When it was Martha's turn, she spoke about not knowing why she had come to CPE. She then proceeded to tell her story of dealing with exhausted staff members and families who were looking for lost relatives all week. On September 11, every person Martha encountered at her hospital was covered with ash. They were all eerily united in looking like human ghosts.

Martha related how she had helped an anxious Latino family locate their grandfather, who while running from the disaster had had a heart attack. With Martha's help, they found him in the morgue. While the family cried inconsolably, Martha listened to their sorrow and joined them in reciting the rosary by his side.

Though exhausted, Martha felt responsible for personally letting the CPE group know why she no longer would be coming. She felt her life would no longer be the same. Incredibly, Martha mirrored our deepest fears: "How could our lives ever be the same again?"

Beyond conscious choice, we all knew the reason for our needing to be in CPE at this time. More than fulfilling a requirement or learning about roles or even developing pastoral skills, we needed to express our solidarity in our shared experience of shock and outrage. We thanked Martha for her courage in "just showing up." She had empowered us to "show up" with each other and with all affected by this event.

September 11, 2001, contextualized the rest of CPE for that unit. We explored issues of power in the face of human sin and tragedy. We explored assumptions in our theologies about a powerful God. At the end of the unit, I received this theological reflection from Martha: "I am beginning to see that social and political analysis is part of responsible pastoral care and bearing witness to the powerless."

Martha's story reminds me again as a CPE supervisor, to never underestimate the gift a student might bring by "just showing up."

Vignette

Laura Waters Jackson

The prayer breakfast had just ended when we got the news. It had been a long morning already. We, five new chaplaincy residents, introduced ourselves, trying to sound confident, to the clients of the Milwaukee retirement center where we would spend the next nine months. Unlike the clients, we were a carefully diversified group—Catholic and Protestant, liberal and conservative, women and men, Generation X and Baby Boomer—and I, at least, was privately wondering if I really belonged here. At my Unitarian Universalist seminary, I had found myself on the far right wing when I mentioned God in a sermon or described myself as Christian. My classmates here spoke fluently of their Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, and Evangelical identities. At the prayer breakfast, Phil from housekeeping led us in singing “Washed in the Blood of the Lamb” before I even got my Dixie™-cup of orange juice. What had I gotten myself into? Our commissioning service had spoken eloquently of the many parts that make up the Body of Christ. I was feeling distinctly like an elbow.

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As the breakfast broke up, I could hear my youngest classmate shouting politely, “I said ‘It’s very nice to meet you.’” I hurried back instead towards the resident office. The television downstairs stopped me cold. Staff was gathered around a screen showing two towers, one damaged. While I watched, an airplane—surreally—hit the other. I stumbled to the office to tell the group. As we sat stunned, we began to hear rumors of the Pentagon crash and another thwarted hijacking. And, first, we prayed. Together, we prayed to God for the suffering of the victims and their families, for the safety and wisdom of our nation, and for the souls of the hijackers. We took turns speaking aloud the prayers of all of our hearts. We prayed aloud our grief for so much loss, our rage at human evil, our fears of war, our compassion for the grieving, our support for the rescuers, and our longing to be of use and to find healing.

And then—at least, this is how I remember it—my supervisor stood up, tossed five hymnals on the table, and said, “Have the worship service ready by 11 A.M.” And left the room.

In my working life before seminary, I had worked in offices, in restaurants, in stores. When the Gulf War began or tragedy struck my community, after the initial shock, my job was to go back to entering data, filing, taking lunch orders, or ringing up sales. My experience of paying work was that it required a disconnect between heart and body. But today, the world had stopped. Disaster had struck. And my job—my job—was, first, to pray, aloud and with others, bringing our fears and hopes to God, and acknowledging them to ourselves and each other, and then, immediately, to lead our new community in prayer as well.

I was in the right place.

The service that the five of us wrote that morning, we led again for the afternoon shift, and again the next day at another site. By the third time, we were working together like a Broadway company. Twenty-third Psalm, Lord’s Prayer, Benediction. We closed, every time, with “America the Beautiful,” and argued between times about which lines we found most moving. The youngest, thinking of the firefighters, wept when she sang of heroes who loved “mercy more than life.” The ex-cop held out for “patriot dream,” while the ex-peace protester was grateful for “confirm thy soul in self-control.” But we all sang all of it, every time.

We were in this together.

But would our service truly serve God and the gathered community? We were becoming a cohesive working group. But were we chaplains?

The residents’ response—to all of this—was hard to measure. That first evening I had hovered near the television room, hoping to minister to those who

were troubled enough to stay up and watch the news. After some polite confusion, I discovered I was trying to chaplain the Yahtzee group, which was carrying on business as usual. Some residents couldn't hear to get the news, couldn't see the pictures, couldn't get to the lobby, or couldn't understand or remember what had happened. Others shrugged, "I lived through Pearl Harbor; I'll live through this." The new chaplains agreed that the hardest part of this crisis was finding anyone who wanted to talk to us about it.

But they came to the services. In wheelchairs, in walkers, on the arm of a caregiver, the residents filled the pews of our center's chapel. They recited the twenty-third Psalm along with us. The ones who could no longer speak rocked back and forth in rhythm with the Lord's Prayer. They prayed. They listened to the reading of Scripture. And when we sang, they sang. But the single sound that I will carry with me from that whole experience is not of music, or of voices. It is the sound I heard behind me as I stood in the front row of that chapel and prepared to sing "America the Beautiful."

The sound was the scraping of dozens of walkers and wheelchairs being shoved aside. In a chapel where every hymn is sung sitting down, where worshippers need help to enter and leave—the congregation spent the entire first verse rising to its feet, or trying. Those who couldn't stand sat up taller in their wheelchairs. And they sang. And we, through tears, sang with them, asking for blessing on our country, and on our new ministry together in this place.

***The Supervisory Relationship: A Contemporary Psychodynamic Approach.* Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea and Joan E. Sarnat. New York, London: The Guilford Press, 2001.**

This volume addresses various dimensions of the supervisory relationship within a contemporary psychodynamic context. In a review of literature addressing clinical supervision of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, Frawley-O'Dea and Sarnat, both psychoanalytically trained psychologists, observe a relative paucity of attention to this central dimension of training. Especially lacking is a "unified model of the supervisory relationship built on contemporary relational theoretical paradigms of the mind and of psychoanalytic treatment." The purpose of this volume is to provide just such a model.

The authors offer an astute analysis of the practice of supervision, noting that supervisors, with varying degrees of consciousness, often "do unto others" as they have been done unto. Specifically, the paradigm of supervision tends to reflect the theory of mind and treatment held by the supervisor. Four models of supervision (in addition to the one they propose) are carefully delineated and systematically compared and contrasted on a number of variables. Strengths and limitations are described. The models are generally categorized according to the degree of emphasis in the supervision on the patient or on the therapist. The authors identify the classical model of supervision, the ego psychological, the self-psychological, and the object relations model.

In describing a relational approach to supervision, Frawley-O'Dea and Sarnat note several characteristics of contemporary trends in psychoanalytic theory: serious attention to a postmodern view, the inclusion of constructivist philosophical concepts, and the impact of feminist theorizing. Gone is the idea that a supervisor holds exclusive, certain, expertise and objectivity. "The supervisor who presents himself as a source of unchallenged expertise and objectivity, or as above psychological conflict and irrational processes, is living a lie." Rather, supervision is embedded in the dyadic relationships of patient and supervisee/therapist, supervisee and supervisor, and sometimes supervisee/patient and supervisor/analyst. Truth is perspectival and alternative positions on clinical material are welcomed as equally possibly valid. This epistemological view is the pivotal point around which most of the authors' claims revolve. If the reader can give assent to shared, co-constructed notions of truth and authority, then the rest follows. The shift in concepts of power and authority that attend contemporary, psychodynamic perspectives is at the heart of the book. Much of the remainder is devoted to a careful elaboration of

power and authority issues in the forms of mutuality, asymmetries, and negotiations of power, egalitarianism, evaluation, sexual boundaries, and the influence of gender.

Frawley-O'Dea and Sarnat discuss the provocative concern about teaching and/or treating in the supervisory relationship. The question about how much attention should be given to the supervisee's own psychological dynamics has historically functioned as one delineating characteristic of theoretical camps. From a relational perspective, the authors suggest that there may be times when temporarily "treating" the supervisee is the most helpful teaching vehicle. However, specific assumptions must guide such a decision. Therapeutic consideration of a supervisee's counter-transference dynamics are always subordinated to the primary goal of learning and professional development; the supervisee determines the extent of such "treatment," and the supervisor must be willing to make analytic disclosures about his or her own self. A further consideration of regression and a bid for its legitimate inclusion as "regression-in-the-service-of-learning" challenges more traditional views of supervision that have tended to exclude regression as a helpful, even necessary, component of the supervisory experience.

The issue of self-disclosure on the part of a therapist or supervisor is another variable that has functioned historically to divide therapeutic perspectives. Self-disclosure is a thread running throughout the book and an important component of the relational approach. The dynamics surrounding it are well illustrated in several clinical vignettes dealing with case conference leadership, individual supervision, and parallel process observations. In fact, the approach to parallel process is yet another dynamic with classical underpinnings (i.e., something that is one-way, and originates with the therapist/supervisee) that is given a relational re-interpretation. The authors helpfully elaborate "symmetrical" and "asymmetrical" varieties of parallel process, adding their own version of what Freud might have called "the everyday psychopathology of parallel process."

Sensitivity to the range of issues in supervision is demonstrated again in the discussion of the role of the professional community context in which the supervision takes place. The views of the community regarding "treatable" pathology, the way a community may or may not welcome dialogue among theoretical perspectives, and the ways in which a community does or does not support the supervisor and supervisee in upholding professional standards and values all function to form a "holding environment"—or not. Here, Frawley-O'Dea and Sarnat are optimistic, perhaps too generously, about how many training

institutes and organizations are in theoretical transition, expanding definitions of treatability and acceptable treatment modalities, and serving more diverse geographical and professional constituencies. “These efforts to democratize psychoanalysis reflect postmodern shifts regarding decentralization of power and the value of multiple voices and perspectives.” There is a theoretical revolution afoot with all of these implications, but in a way similar to the religious-like, dogmatic conflicts cited earlier in the volume, there remains in areas of the country a great deal of resistance to these relational ideas.

Even so, this volume is to be highly recommended for those interested in a relational approach to supervision, both individual and group. Its strengths include excellent clinical illustrations throughout the book, careful review of the literature, a very systematic and thorough consideration of variables related to supervision, and consistent attention to the connection between understandings of treatment and supervision, especially the notion that what is therapeutically mutative is also relevant to effective pedagogy. While the audience addressed is ostensibly secular, those involved in training and supervising for ministry contexts will recognize values that undergird process, feminist, and liberation theologies. From such a vantage point, the only real critique to be offered is the lack of attention to race and class as specific influences in the supervisory experience. However, Frawley-O’Dea and Sarnat’s work is already offered in a spirit that would welcome consideration of these additional variables. Finally, the volume is to be commended for its recognition of the complexity of doing effective supervision. The authors conclude:

How does one teach a supervisee to surrender to experience, to subject that experience to thinking and understanding, and then to relinquish thinking and understanding if they stand in the way of the therapeutic moment?...We embed our teachings in our own way of “being” and “doing” within supervision. We do not take the supervisory process for granted, or ignore it, but rather recognize it as the center of so much of what we want to teach.

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***Faith and Health: Psychological Perspectives.* Edited by Thomas G. Plante and Allen C. Sherman. New York: The Guilford Press, 2001.**

Faith and Health invites the reader into the discussion by health professionals about the role religion and spirituality play in contributing to better health. Both those who agree with the research in this field and those who oppose the validity of current studies find voice in this work, with chapters from some of the best-known representatives of the field.

After an introductory chapter, the four sections of the book include the topics of faith and health in the general population, in special populations, clinical implications, and the debate about the research in general. Besides offering a taste of the better research in faith and health, the first section also provides a discussion of possible causal paths with an excellent figure that makes the material comprehensible to the average reader. In this section, as in the rest of the book, insightful questions are raised about current, problematic research methods. A consistent concern is the way religion is measured without accounting for possible confounds, such as personality or psychology, that are known to be linked to health. A brief review of instruments for assessment of religion and spirituality concludes this section.

The next two sections offer a flavor of the role of spirituality for both specific health concerns—cancer, HIV/AIDS, tobacco, alcohol use among the young, and mental illness—and the clinical implications of including spirituality in practice. This latter section addresses assessment, types of intervention, along with ethical concerns, and an example of the views of specific professionals with regard to the introduction of spirituality into healthcare practice.

The last section provides arguments of some vocal dissenters. This offers the knowledgeable reader an opportunity to see some of the flawed reasoning of these alarmed scientists, along with noting some valid points. A discussion of the state of research with its strengths and weaknesses follows. A chapter focusing on improved methods rounds out the book.

The work has much to offer. It is fairly accessible to the reader not skilled in statistics. At the same time, it is a helpful supplement to the library of those engaged in this field of study. On the other hand, it does not provide the same rigorous critique as *The Handbook of Religion and Health*.¹ This is particularly evident in the section on assessment tools. Also, some chapters include references to studies in journals with less rigorous peer review, providing potential fuel for the critics. The editors' skills, however, in bringing the reader

into the current state of the debate and of the quality of research in faith and health make up for any weaknesses.

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NOTES

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Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry

The Goals of the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* are to preserve and extend the field of supervision and training in ministry formation through the written word; to encourage potential authors to become published contributors; and to enrich and expand our understanding and practice of supervision and training in ministry by including new participants and perspectives in our critical reflection on this work. Only articles related to these goals will be considered for publication.

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