

## SECTION 2 TRAUMA AND THIS SEASON OF CRISIS



### *Editor's Introduction*

**T**heological educators have long understood that many of our students come to ministerial training carrying within their bodies, minds, and spirits the impacts of trauma. Through didactics, workshops, reading, and presentations of case studies from our work with students, we seek to further our own education on trauma and how it impacts learning. We understand how crucial it is to consider the power and effects of trauma as we work to foster healthy, relational learning communities.

But what if those learning communities are being formed in a time of crisis, in a time when every member, including the educator, is processing some degree of trauma? In this section, five writers explore this question, beginning with Beth Naditch's aptly titled article "Building the Airplane in the Air: Trauma-Informed Clinical Pastoral Education during a COVID-19 Summer."

In the face of the pandemic's disruption to the Hebrew SeniorLife CPE program, Naditch and her colleague Reverend Mary Martha Thiel created and supervised an advanced unit of CPE with a specialty focus on the pandemic and telechaplancy, doing so without the benefit of advance planning in a time of national and international trauma. Naditch offers us the insights she gained through supervising an innovative CPE program on trauma-informed care.

Danielle J. Buhuro and Jeremy Gilmore share with readers Buhuro's SELF theory, a social justice education theory in CPE supervision. The acronym SELF reminds educators to address, in order, the "Social Needs," "Emotional Needs," "Life Meaning and Purpose Needs," and "Faith Needs"

of African American students. The authors argue that, while many theological educators have been trained to begin their supervision of students with an emphasis on faith questions and concerns, African American students need educational environments that focus first on their social needs, followed by their emotional and then life meaning needs. Buhuro and Gilmore share a number of ideas and resources with readers so that they may take this theory and directly put it into practice in their settings.

In "The Growing Edge: Clinical Pastoral Education in the Midst of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter Protests," Patricia Wilson-Cone explores some of the racial, theological, and power dynamics present in the CPE unit she supervised in the midst of the COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter protests. With curiosity, authenticity, humility, and vulnerability, Wilson-Cone presents this CPE supervision case study with particular focus on her relationship with a student who challenged her. She finds wisdom and power in Howard Thurman's call to "look well to the growing edge . . . [when] all around us worlds are dying, and new worlds are being born; all around us life is dying, and life is being born," and she invites us to do so as well.

In "Ministerial Formation through the Lens of Suffering: A Theological Reflection on Trauma-Sensitive Pedagogy," Sung Hee Chang challenges some popular understandings of crisis: that crisis can be handled methodically, that it can be a time for developing crisis-management skills, and, most importantly, that there is some opportunity to be found in the experience. She reminds readers that "we should acknowledge that traumatized people in times of crisis are in need of clinical attention and care. Without knowing what stage of disease they are in, we cannot serve them realistically." She goes on to outline what "trauma-sensitive" pedagogy, in place of the well-accepted term "trauma-informed," looks like and how it can foster resilience and courage in those we seek to teach and serve.

Finally, in "Let a Brotha Breathe and Grieve: Promoting Healing among Black Men and Youth Who Are Grieving through Honoring-Based Practices," Allen Eugene Lipscomb shares the findings and implications from his 2018 narrative inquiry study of the grief and healing experience in the words of Black men and youth. In his research, Lipscomb asked the following questions: What has your experience been with significant losses in your life? What role did your race and gender play in relation to your loss experiences? What does healing mean to you? At the heart of his research and this article are the words of the Black men and youth. As Lipscomb

states, the participants' stories "tell us the meaning [their] experiences have had in their lives in relation to family and community, contributing to a unique perspective on Black male grief in America."

While it is likely that for quite some time to come all of us as theological educators will have to continue to build our educational airplanes while we are flying them, these five authors offer us valuable theoretical and practical wisdom on how we may more gracefully keep our students and ourselves moving through space and time.

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Editor