

Teaching Spiritual Care Online Using Online Spiritual Care Chats

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Verbatim case studies have been a time-honored learning tradition in pastoral care dating back to the 1930s, when the Reverend Russell L. Dicks, a chaplain at Massachusetts General Hospital, required his chaplain interns to reconstruct their pastoral care conversations, reflect upon them, and present them in case study seminars.¹ In learning how to teach spiritual care in an online format, I wanted to make verbatim accounts of spiritual care conversations the primary vehicle of learning. I decided to give each student two learning partners with whom they would have a sequence of three hour-long online chats based on fictional role-plays. In one partnership, students functioned as spiritual caregivers; in the other, as careseekers. The purpose of this paper is to describe how I used these partnerships and online chats and to explore how well they worked.

CREATING FICTIONAL ONLINE SPIRITUAL CARE CASE STUDIES

In a course on multicultural spiritual care, I used fictional case studies based on short stories from *A Celestial Omnibus: Short Fiction on Faith*.² The person

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role-playing the careseeker selected the story and created the scenario in which he or she engaged in a spiritual care conversation. I have used short stories and films in similar ways in my writing and teaching. Usually I imagine what it would be like to parachute into the story and engage the protagonist in a spiritual care conversation.³ All of the stories in *A Celestial Omnibus* lend themselves to these kinds of embellishments.

The short story, "Love Medicine,"⁴ is about a Chippewa young man named Lipsha, known on the reservation for his healing touch. This story was used effectively in a learning partnership in which an African-American female student played the role of Lipsha having a conversation with a Methodist pastor, Eric, visiting the reservation. Eric encounters Lipsha as he is walking down a road. Here is an excerpt from their first online spiritual care chat:

Eric: "Hello, my name is Eric Strader. How are you today?"

Lipsha: "OK. Mr. Eric, what are you doing here on the rez?"

Eric: I'm on a sabbatical from my life, taking time to breathe deep. I've been staying down the road and am connecting with the divine differently. I'm sorry; I didn't catch your name.

Lipsha: "Yeah, well. You may call me 'brother' or 'friend'..."

Eric: "Tell me about your life, brother."

Lipsha: "Well, you're new around here. So, since your visiting, maybe you can talk 'bout who you are and where you're from. We seem to get a lot of Anglos comin' to the rez wanting to 'save' us. Or, some folks are just seekers."

Eric: "Thank you for being honest. I will not lie, I am a Christian, but I don't believe in saving people. In fact, part of my education at seminary focused on how the church and government structures had treated Native American peoples, treated them badly. I wanted to come here as a way of connecting with another people."

Lipsha: "Yes, Mr. Eric. I am glad to hear that you're not here to shove your ways on us...I'm headed over to visit my grandma down the road... My grandpa recently went to the other side, and I don't know how to move forward."

Eric: "I'm sorry. Please accept my condolences his physical presence is no longer here..."

Lipsha: "He is a strange man. I spoke to him last night in my dream. I saw him laughing, and teasing me."

Eric: Was that pleasing to you?

Lipsha: "I now realize that maybe he is where he wishes to be. I believe he will guide me, and help me. He is an elder, and my ancestor."

Eric: "I assume you have great respect for the presence of your ancestors. How is your grandmother doing?"

Lipsha: "I saw her yesterday. We are very close. She has made some interesting comments lately. So, I do think that she speaks to grandpa sometimes... Grandpa had some mysterious ways about him....So much to cope with here as our ways have been disrupted. He was wounded from so much despair here, and maybe he needed to find ways to escape."

Eric: "I can understand that."

Lipsha: "Do you visit your grandparents?"

Eric: "Not as much as I should..."

Lipsha: "Oh, they are missing you and concerned about you...This is an important part of our ways, is to honor our elders. They have much wisdom, and desire to share this."

Eric: "And we should receive it from them."

Lipsha: "I have much to learn still. I wish to see the outside, and work hard to keep our traditions for the next generation."

Eric: "Traditions are important and I hope the Anglo world doesn't force you to love them."

Lipsha: "So, you know some 'skins' on the outside? I would like to speak to some other brothers my age."

Eric: "I'll get them for you. Would you be interested in walking this road again tomorrow?"

IMPLEMENTING AN INTERCULTURAL APPROACH TO SPIRITUAL CARE

In this assignment, Eric was implementing an intercultural approach to spiritual care, based upon Lartey's intercultural paradigm of spiritual care⁵ that values contextual, multi-perspective, and authentic participative approaches to spiritual care.⁶ Lartey uses the term "intercultural" to push spiritual caregivers beyond recognition of diverse cultures to a critical awareness and engagement with that which is "other" in careseekers.⁷ I use the term "intercultural spiritual care" in order to clarify the ways in which students are comparing their religious tradition with the tradition of the careseeker. Students use the following three guidelines⁸ as they implement an intercultural approach to care in their online conversations.

1. First, students need to be mindful of the dangers of imposing their religious beliefs and practices onto those seeking care. This can happen in subtle ways: when they look for commonalities, universalize their beliefs and practices, or assume others believe and practice their religious faith in similar ways. In order to counteract this intuitive tendency to universalize, they need to pay attention to differences, which is a way of respecting and valuing what is unique in the careseeker.
2. Next, students need to be theologically accountable.⁹ They need to use their theological education (formal and informal) to reflect critically upon the

ways they are making sense of the careseeker’s beliefs and practices in order to be able to set aside these frameworks temporarily in order to see anew the unique aspects of the careseeker’s beliefs and practices, especially the embedded beliefs and practices that surface in life-threatening experiences when irrevocable losses are often experienced. When students are able to step outside of their usual theological frames and enter the religious world of the careseeker, especially his or her embedded beliefs and practices, a relationship of trust is more likely to be established, opening up the possibility of collaboratively engaging in a process of exploring the benefits and liabilities of the careseeker’s beliefs and practices. Paradoxically, caregivers do all of this complicated theological self reflection in order to set aside their theological framework and step into the religious or spiritual world of a careseeker.¹⁰

3. Finally, a bridge needs to be built between the caregiver’s religious world and the religious/existential world of the careseeker. Once this trust is established and this bridge is built, both the caregiver and careseeker are more likely to recognize and creatively work with the jarring moments in their spiritual care encounter, moments of “alterity”¹¹ that open up new ways of knowing and experiencing the sacred. I have described this interaction using an action-reflection action method of theological reflection, paraphrasing the way pastoral theologian, Loren Townsend, describes this method in figure 1.¹²

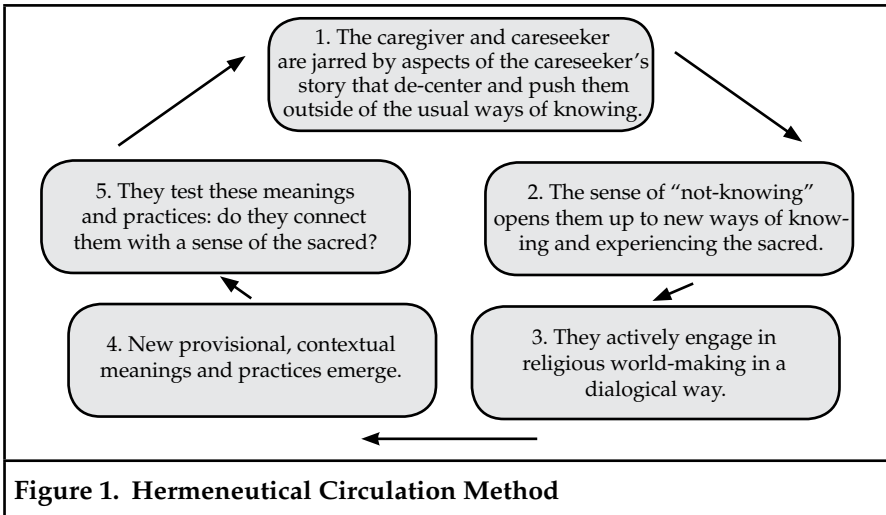


Figure 1. Hermeneutical Circulation Method

REFLECTING THEOLOGICALLY ON THE CARESEEKER’S SPIRITUAL MEANING-MAKING

In reflecting on their first verbatim, students articulate how they are theologically making sense of the careseeker’s spiritual practices and meaning-making, using these steps:

A. Free association

Think about the spiritual caregiver's narrative. Let yourself mediate on the story, letting it "roll around in your mind while asking the open general question, "What theological, spiritual, religious themes pop into my mind as I simply sit with this [story]?"⁴³ Write down the theological, biblical, or literary stories, themes, images or pieces of music (like hymns) that come to mind.

B. Critical reflection

How does this theme or image help you make theological sense of your careseeker's experience? How does it fit the careseeker's experience; in what ways doesn't it fit? If you were to engage in further critical reflection on this theme or image, how would you do this (for example, would you use biblical critical methods, or a particular theologian to think further about this theme)? If so, write a paragraph on how you would use these readings to think further about this theme or image. You may need to think beyond your pastoral care courses in order to retrieve travelling knowledge gained in other courses that are part of your degree program, like courses on the bible, theology, ethics, and church history. For example, if you have found Susan Nelson's five paradigms⁴⁴ for understanding suffering⁴⁵ helpful, how might you use these paradigms to think further about the image, story, or theme? If there is a biblical critical method you have used in the past, how would you use it to think further about a biblical image? In answering these questions, describe the process you would go through to use these second order ways of reflecting on your image, theme, or story.

C. Preparing for the second conversation

Having identified and elaborated a theological theme/image that helps you, you are going to try and set aside your own ways of making sense of the careseeker's experiences in order to step into the careseeker's religious/existential world and hear the particular and unique meanings he or she creates. Describe a spiritual practice you can use just before your second conversation that can help you not impose your theology on the careseeker. This spiritual practice will help you come with an open heart and mind ready to be jarred by what is new and unexpected.

After their second conversation, students go through the following steps to identify both the theological meanings they were predisposed to hear, based on their reflections in their first assignment, and also what was unexpected. They analyze their verbatim conversations using the following steps. First, they highlight in **bold** anything the careseeker says or implies about her or his religious/spiritual beliefs, practices, or images of God that they were expecting to hear. Second, they highlight in **bold and underline** anything the careseeker says or implies that is unexpected or jarring. In re-

flecting on the conversation, students focus on the jarring moments and describe how they gained new insight into the careseeker's life, and spiritual practices or meanings. They also use second order theological language to reflect upon what they have learnt, using class readings. Finally, students also identify any provisional theological claims or ways of connecting with God/a sense of the sacred that seemed to emerge in the course of the conversation, especially in the jarring moments. They reflect on how they might build on these in future conversations and in planning care.

Below are illustrative excerpts from two spiritual care conversations based on the story, "Mr. Green."¹⁶ In this story a Roman Catholic Vietnamese woman immigrates to New Orleans with a parrot, Mr. Green, which her Confucian grandfather gave her, his only grandchild, before he died. In many ways Mr. Green represents her grandfather: his anti-Catholic and sexist prejudices and his commitment to stay behind in Hanoi in order to honor the spirit of his ancestors.

She has cared for this parrot ever since her grandfather's death sixteen years ago. When her parrot becomes aged (ninety-one years old by her reckoning) and cranky, he starts methodically pulling out his feathers. He begins to imitate the way her grandfather coughed before his death. Mr. Green intones the words, "Not possible" in her grandfather's voice over and over again. She tries medical remedies to no avail. For the first time, he bites her hard and she bleeds. Finally, she decides to end the parrot's life and she quickly twists his neck, the way she was taught to kill birds prepared for dinner by her mother. At the end of the story she describes going to daily Mass at her church in New Orleans, which has a Mass celebrated in Vietnamese. The story ends with this description:

I sit near the back and I look at the section where all the old women go. They take Eucharist every day of their lives and they sit together wearing their traditional dresses and with their hair in scarves rolled upon on their heads and I wonder if that is where I will finally end up, in the old women's section at Mass each day. No one in my church will likely live as long as a parrot. But our savior lived only thirty-three years, so maybe it's not important. There were women around Jesus when He died, the two Marys. They couldn't do anything for Him. But neither could the men, who had all run away.¹⁷

In using this story to construct a fictional role-play, a Korean male student role-played this woman, whom he named Lanko (she has no name in the story). His learning partner, Ken, role-played the priest of the parish. In these conversations, Lanko visits her parish priest to talk about the religious

struggles she experienced when her parrot seemed to be near the end of his life.

Following are excerpts from the first conversation between Ken, a Roman Catholic priest in New Orleans and Lanko, a forty-year-old Vietnamese woman in his parish, who regularly attends Mass:

Lanko: "When I was 24, my grandfather passed away...The parrot, Mr. Green, was left to me."

Ken: "I am sorry; that must have been painful for you. Did receiving the parrot of your grandfather help you to feel close to your grandfather after his death?"

Lanko: "Strangely enough, it seemed like Mr. Green relied on me, and I relied on Mr. Green...Several weeks ago, Mr. Green began to show what my grandfather showed in his last days...he began to resemble the cough my grandfather did before he died..."

Ken: "I can tell that this has been a very difficult time for you."

Lanko: "I loved my grandfather. I always missed his love, his touch, and his warm words..."

Ken: "It sounds like you had a very close relationship. [Your grandfather's] passing, and the sickness of Mr. Green must have been very difficult for you."

Lanko: "I decided to release them from pain and from wandering."

Ken: "Mr. Green and your grandfather's soul?"

Lanko: "Yes. It seemed like they wanted it...I could not bear to see them or all of us being hurt and painful, so I helped Mr. Green to be free from this world."

Ken: "Lanko, I am sorry."

Lanko: "I pray for my grandfather's soul, and my ancestors' souls."

Ken: "Praying for others' souls, and our own, is a good way to pray."

Lanko: "I see many old women praying and attending the Eucharist every day, wearing their traditional dresses and with their hair in scarves rolled up on their heads."

Ken: "Ah yes, they are the women who come regularly. It is good that you are attending regularly too."

Lanko: "I wonder what will happen to my soul as a Catholic, and to my grandfather's soul as a Confucian. I realized I also innately have the Asian traditional spirituality."

Ken: "There are many ways of being spiritual, and being Catholic does not mean you cannot honor your Asian spirituality. While the Catholic Church has doctrine and teachings, I personally feel that we must al-

ways apply these teachings and doctrines to our own lives, our own situations."

Lanko: "I am glad to hear that. I feel very safe, being comforted..."

Excerpts from the second conversation with expected comments in **bold** type and with jarring themes **bolded and underlined**, as follow:

Ken: "When we talked last, you were telling me about your grandfather, and about Mr. Green, the parrot."

Lanko: "**I am trying to be in peace with the confusion I have been experiencing.**" (I expected this, as this theme of confusion was in our first conversation).

Ken: "Can you tell me something about that?"

Lanko: "**When Jesus died the disciples couldn't do anything.**" (This was unexpected and jarring...She feels helpless, as the disciples were over the death of Jesus.)

Ken: "The disciples were not able to prevent the death of Jesus; that is true..."

Lanko: "**His death makes me wonder about many things like death, soul, spirit.**" (I was expecting to hear this theme: "her confusion about death and her grandfather's soul and spirit.). "**After all, Mr. Green cannot be the place for my grandfather's soul. I know it. I just loved my grandfather, and just wanted to respect my grandfather.**" (I was expecting to hear this theme of respect and love for her grandfather.)

Ken: "Mr. Green was a way to feel spiritually connected to your grandfather. I know you were very close to him..."

Lanko: "**And I am trying to accept the mysteries of living and death...meeting and parting...Our religion is more about our living, isn't it?**" (I find it unexpected or jarring that in the midst of her confusion she is able to make this connection to how her religion can be life-giving.)

Ken: "This sounds like you are working hard at gathering meaning from this."

Lanko: "You know, sometimes, **death seems to make people think living anew.**" (Again, this is unexpected because it is a change from the questions about spirit and soul, to an affirmation of living.)

Ken: "Do you feel you are living anew?"

Lanko: "**Maybe because I cannot do anything about death, that realization seems to allow me to see my living as more precious**" (This is unexpected because she seems to be embracing life here, which is a change from questioning death.)

In his reflections on this conversation, Ken elaborated on the ways that the jarring moments offered opportunities in further conversations to build upon the provisional contextual truth claims that emerged in this conversa-

tion: "our religion is more about our living;" "death seems to make people think about living anew;" seeing "my living as more precious." These affirmations seem to be provisional truth claims that have emerged for Lanko in the course of her spiritual care conversations with Ken. In addition, her participation in the Eucharist seems to be a faith practice that connects her more deeply with God in life-giving ways. Her reference to the women at the cross seems to indicate that she is moving towards an understanding of how women's ways of caring and knowing God are life-giving. She may be at long last coming to terms with conflicts about her faith and gender identity caused by her grandfather's rejection of her as a girl and a Catholic. This second conversation gives us glimpses of the kind of spiritual practices and meanings being co-constructed by Lanko and Ken on the bridge of trust between their religious worlds.

EVALUATING SPIRITUAL CHATS AS AN ONLINE TEACHING STRATEGY

There are obvious drawbacks to doing spiritual care conversations in an online format. There was no use of body language or visual cues about the careseeker's social location (such as gender, race, ethnic, age identity, etc.). Some students are more likely to disengage emotionally or, in one instance, became too emotionally immersed in the conversation. Disengagement came through in the ways in which caregivers had trouble getting onboard with the story line and into the flow of the conversation. Emotional fusion became an issue in one partnership, when the student seeking care became increasingly angry when her partner did not respond in the way she thought he should. She had created a character with intense needs, which made her emotionally reactive in ways that overwhelmed her partner.

There were numerous advantages to using online chat spiritual care conversations for verbatim case studies. First, students worked with the actual, rather than a reconstructed, transcript. Second, the transcript was available immediately, which meant they could move on to doing their reflections without the delay of reconstructing a transcription. Third, students had a few seconds to stop and think about how they were going to respond. They had the opportunity to concentrate without distractions (either internal or external). Fourth, they could use detailed feedback about what they had actually said as they prepared themselves for their second and third conversations with the same careseeker. Fifth, the teaching team could assess the differences between (1) students who needed to learn skills and who

were able to change in subsequent conversations after getting feedback, and (2) students who either had situational or personality dynamics that made it difficult for them to change over the course of three conversations. For example, one student experiencing situational limitations had not been able to clear his schedule to keep up with the weekly assignments. He was trying to “wing it” in his online conversations without having done the readings, assignments, and the group discussions. Another student experiencing personality-style limitations took charge of the first conversation where she was the caregiver and subsequently received detailed feedback from the teaching team about the need to ask open-ended questions and use a listening/following style so that the caregiver could tell the story in her own words, at her own pace. She continued to use a directing and informing style of communication in subsequent conversations. She was not able to change her “take charge” stance, which seemed to have been hardwired from her previous career as a health care administrator.

Overall the students and the teaching team felt that the advantages of using transcripts from a series of online conversations outweighed the disadvantages of using a reconstructed verbatim from a single face-to-face caregiving encounter. In my twenty years of teaching the introductory course on pastoral care, I was able to give much more detailed feedback than I ever had in previous courses and the students were able to demonstrate how they used feedback. The quality of clinical learning was comparable to the kind of learning possible in clinical pastoral education or clinical supervision of pastoral counseling in which sessions are tape recorded.¹⁸

The illustrations of how students used fictional characters from short stories to role-play online spiritual care chats suggest ways that the time-honored practice of learning pastoral care through verbatims can be adapted creatively to online teaching. The advantage of using short stories to construct role-plays is that the artistry of the stories provides multi-layered narratives that often capture the ambiguity of religious faith. When students step into the religious worlds of characters like Lipsha and Lanko, they need to draw upon both theological and intercultural empathy. They need to find ways to move beyond theological literacy to theological fluency¹⁹ as they imagine being a Chippewa young man combining Chippewa and Catholic traditions or a Vietnamese Roman Catholic woman finding spiritual solace in the Eucharist at her New Orleans parish. They are more likely to avoid becoming re-immersed in their own life stories by playing a role of someone so different from themselves.

It is both an advantage and disadvantage for students providing care to know ahead of time the narrative complexity of the careseeker's religious world. Unrealistically, caregivers know all about the struggles that careseekers are experiencing. For example, Eric knows ahead of time the tragic circumstances of Lipsha's grandfather's death. Ken knows all about the deaths of Mr. Green and Lanko's grandfather. One way to limit this kind of omniscience is to have students role-playing the careseeker pick from a wide range of stories and not disclose to their partners the narrative source of their role-play. The challenge of doing this is that it's often difficult to find stories that portray faith crises; the sources for such stories are limited.²⁰

Overall, I found the use of short stories as role-plays an engaging and lively way to create case studies, especially for beginning students who might not have had many opportunities for spiritual care conversations. Having students read each other's verbatims and reflections when they had access to the narrative richness of the role-playing, offered them several ways of learning about intercultural spiritual care. After a year of teaching spiritual care in online formats, I am excited about the possibilities of using fictional verbatims, especially in online teaching contexts where students may not have access to real-life opportunities for spiritual care. I invite readers to experiment in this venue. I hope that we can share our experiences and learn together about how to teach spiritual care in an online format.

NOTES

1. J. Russell Burck, "Verbatim," in Rodney J. Hunter, ed., *Dictionary of Pastoral Counseling and Care* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990), 1300–1301.
2. J. P. Maney and Tom Hazuka, eds., *A Celestial Omnibus: Short Fiction on Faith* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1997).
3. See Carrie Doehring, "Chapter 9," *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2006), 143–163.
4. Louise Erdrich, "Love Medicine," in Maney and Hazuka, eds., *A Celestial Omnibus*, 197–216.
5. Emmanuel Y. Lartey describes three ways which Western and non-Western practitioners of pastoral and spiritual care relate to each other: globalization (the exporting and importing of Western models of pastoral care), internationalization (attempts at dialogical engagement that continues to see Western practices as normative), and indigenization (non-Western models and practices are re-evaluated, re-adopted and utilized in pastoral practice). See Emmanuel Lartey, "Globalization, Internationalization, and Indigenization of Pastoral Care and Counseling," in Nancy J. Ramsay, ed., *Pastoral Care and Counseling: Redefining the Paradigms* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 87–108.

6. Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2006), 11.
7. Pastoral theologian Kathleen Greider helpfully distinguishes among (1) multiculturalism (the coexistence of multiple cultures), (2) cross-cultural interaction across acknowledged cultural differences and (3) interculturality (“...engagement by a multicultural population in cross-cultural communication characterized not only by careful differentiation and measured collaboration but also by vibrant interrelatedness and, ideally, day-to-day cooperation.”). See Kathleen J. Greider, “From Multiculturalism to Interculturality: Demilitarizing the Border between Personal and Social Dynamics through Spiritual Receptivity,” *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* 22 (2002): 41. See also Kathleen J. Greider, “Soul Care amid Religious Plurality: Excavating an Emerging Dimension of Multicultural Challenge and Competency,” in Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner and Teresa Snorton, eds., *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 293–313.
8. Carrie Doehring, “The Practice of Relational-Ethical Pastoral Care” in Marina Riemsdagh, Roger Burggraef, Joseph Corveleyn, and Axel Liégeois, eds., *After You: The Ethics of the Pastoral Counselling Process* (Leuven, Belgium: Uitgeverij Peeters, in press).
9. Carrie Doehring, “Theological Accountability: The Hallmark of Pastoral Counseling,” *Sacred Spaces* 1 (2009): <http://www.aapc.org/sacredspaces/185> (Last accessed June 3, 2009).
10. The term religious world has been coined by William Paden, *Religious Worlds: The Comparative Study of Religion*, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994). It describes each person’s religious faith as a compilation or bricolage of multiple religious and spiritual symbols, beliefs, and schema, all generated out of the web of relationships in which they are embedded.
11. Elaine Graham was one of the first pastoral theologians to describe pastoral practice as an encounter with alterity: “Through pastoral encounter with others, participants will experience the paradox of familiarity and otherness which situates them within, and draws them beyond, the present and immediate. Can we regard authentic pastoral practice, therefore, as that which draws us into encounter with the ‘Other’, towards a deeper understanding of our own identity-in-relation? The process of going beyond the situated and concrete in the encounter with the Other may also serve as a metaphor for the human experience of the transcendent. It speaks of an encounter with transcendence and authentic faith occurring at the very point of loss of certainty and self-possession: divine activity and presence encountered in the mystery of alterity.” See Elaine Graham, *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty* (New York, NY: Mowbray, 1996), 206–207.
12. Loren Townsend describes this method of theological reflection as hermeneutical circulation: “Hermeneutical circulation begins (step 1) when counselor and client are drawn into a therapeutic story and ‘jarred’ by the client’s experience and its relational meaning. Both client and counselor experience the limitations of their understanding (step 2) and turn to conversations with theological sources outside the counseling relationship (step 3). These would include conversations with faith traditions, theological principles, biblical stories, behavioral sciences (as common human experience), and others’ personal experience. These conversations broaden horizons (step 4) and present new options that can widen the scope of action in counseling (step 5).” See Loren Townsend, *Introduction to Pastoral Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 140.

13. Pamela Cooper-White, *Shared Wisdom: Use of Self in Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press), 74.
14. See Susan Nelson, "Facing Evil: Evil's Many Faces, Five Paradigms for Understanding Evil," *Interpretation* 57, no. 4 (2003): 398–413. Nelson describes five ways of understanding suffering: (1) a traditional moral theology which, in life-limiting embedded theologies often formed in childhood, emphasizes God as judge and individual sin as the punishment or consequences of wrong doing; (2) redemptive theology, which retrospectively sees how new life can come out of suffering; (3) eschatological theology in which life-giving moments of grace and compassion offer hope for the future; (4) theologies of lament and protest against the irrevocable losses of radical suffering; (5) theologies of ambiguity about how tragic suffering arises from our embeddedness in complex relational webs of life-enhancing and life-limiting/abusive power (often these theologies use process theological ways of understanding God's power). I use her article as an introduction to theodicy.
15. Ibid.
16. Robert O. Butler, "Mr. Green," in Maney and Hazuka, eds., *A Celestial Omnibus*, 40–48.
17. Ibid., 48.
18. Wilson describes a clinical teaching strategy of having students do face-to-face spiritual care conversations (called virtual visits) with volunteers instead of reconstructions of past conversations. The virtual visits were observed by others sitting behind a one-way mirror and could also be videotaped with permission. See Douglas R. Wilson, "Virtual Visiting Seminar Replaces Verbatim Seminar in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)," *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* 58, nos. 1–2 (2004): 95–100.
19. Carrie Doehring, "Theological Literacy and Fluency in a New Millennium: A Pastoral Theological Perspective," in Rodney L. Petersen with Nancy M. Rourke, eds., *Theological Literacy for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 311–324.
20. I have also used stories from C. Michael Curtis, ed., *God Stories* (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1998).