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Editorial Policy

The Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry has changed its name and its editorial location. It is now *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, and the San Francisco Bay Area is its new editorial home. As we seek to continue the work of this Journal under a new name, we are grateful for all the people in Chicago and elsewhere who have supported *JSTM* since it began in 1977. It was founded to foster critical reflection and writing on supervision for ministry in clinical pastoral education and pastoral counseling. Over the years, *JSTM* expanded beyond its original clinical context to include supervised field education and formation for spiritual direction. Changing the name to *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry* solidifies this ongoing determination to provide a framework for reflection on supervision for a range of practices, in a variety of contexts, and from different faith traditions. Replacing 'training' in the title with 'formation' embodies a change that has been taking place for some time in the preparation of women and men for ministry. A new mission statement supports these changes:



***Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry* is a journal that seeks to understand, expand, and promote theory, learning, and reflection in the practice of supervision and formation in various ministries from diverse ethnic and religious perspectives.**

Good practice relies on constant reflection, and the capacity for critical self-reflection is an essential dimension of any *habitus* for ministry and religious leadership. Supervision remains the central practice that is reflected on in this Journal. However, when formation is added to supervision, the practice is expanded to include many more ways by which people are educated in the practice of religious leadership and ministry. As we hope you will discover in Volume 27, words like “coaching” and “mentoring” and “directing” are also being used to describe the work of preparing and sustaining people in ministry.

Each time another context or discipline has been added to the conversation about supervision, the task of holding together the increasingly rich diversity of theoretical perspectives and ministry practices becomes more complicated. As an Editorial Board, we are committed to that dialogue. We hope that readers will learn from reflection on the practice of supervision and formation in ministry by engaging with disciplines and contexts quite different than their own. We are determined to enhance the richness of reflective practice through soliciting articles from a variety of religious and ethnic/cultural perspectives.

Reflective Practice is both old and new, particular and general, familiar and strange. Putting new wine in old wineskins is never easy. For that reason, we solicit your ideas and critical comments about the direction of this Journal. And of course we hope you will support this endeavor and submit for publication your reflective practice in supervision and formation.

The Editorial Board
Spring 2007

SECTION I

A NEW LOOK AT FAMILIAR WORDS: FORMATION, SUPERVISION, MINISTRY

Words are wondrously elastic and imprecise. Words accumulate unintended meanings through diverse usage or because the context modifies the original meaning. And sometimes words are supplanted by other words because the practice changes. The three words that describe the particular practices on which this Journal intends to reflect illustrate this messy reality. Formation, as Claire Wolfeitch observes in the opening essay, carries multiple meanings depending on the context. Within a religious context, however, she understands formation to be a deeply human process transformed by the divine with four foci: human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral. The reader will find her discussion of formation within a pluralistic context to be illuminating.

As Stu Plummer's reflections on his own journey as a supervisor suggest, both the purposes and the methods of pastoral supervision in a clinical context have changed dramatically in the last half decade. Supervision, as he understands it now, is about re-formation whereby role identity is achieved and congruity between self and function is fostered. Plummer's articulation of an ethic of supervision is worthy of serious consideration because it begins with respectful collaboration between the supervisor and student. In field education, mentoring has replaced supervision as the common term even though wide diversity of practice remains. Emily Click has written a candid appraisal of the complexity of forming and supervising supervisors in the field education context.

The essay by Faustino Cruz, SM, explores the dynamic interaction between our definitions of ministry and the diverse contexts in which ministry is practiced. In order for ministry today to be a sign of God's liberating action in the world, it must practice genuinely intercultural conversation particularly with those who have remained outsiders from within. The learning for that kind of ministry must itself be collaborative and respectful of diverse and dissenting voices. The meaning of the word ministry is transformed by that commitment.

Herbert Anderson
Editor



Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

Creation and Newness of Life: Reflections on Formation

Claire E. Wolfteich

As Benedict of Nursia witnessed the tumultuous decline of the Roman Empire in the sixth century, he founded a monastery high on an Italian mountainside in Monte Cassino and wrote a rule of life to guide the community. The monastery, he wrote, was to be a “school for the Lord’s service.” The monks would learn how to live their faith as they learned how to live in community, rooted in prayer. Seven times during the day and once in the middle of the night, they would gather to say the Divine Office, singing psalms and reading Scripture. As Benedict considered idleness to be “the enemy of the soul,” he specified that the brothers should devote regular time each day to prayerful reading (*lectio divina*) and to manual labor. In this way, the monks would contribute to the common good and live a rhythm of prayer and work (*ora et labora*). When a guest came to the

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monastery, they were to treat him like Christ; hospitality was to be their special virtue. Benedict placed the monastery under the prudent care of the Abbot, a spiritual Father, who was to “so arrange everything that the strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from.” The monks learned practices of obedience, discernment, humility, simplicity, silence, and compassion. As they progressed in the monastic life and in faith, they would “run on the path of God’s commandments, their hearts overflowing with “the inexpressible delight of love.”¹

Benedict’s Rule shaped monastic life for centuries and continues to guide religious communities in the Roman Catholic tradition today. While it need not be a template for all forms of spiritual life, the monastery on the hill of Monte Cassino does prompt me to wonder about what guides our “school[s] for the Lord’s service” today. How are persons formed in faith and service? What central practices and convictions lie at the heart of formation for ministry?

The answer, of course, varies depending on context and our understanding of formation. The word “formation” carries multiple meanings and, to some persons, need not connote anything religious. Most broadly formation is the process by which we develop as human beings, including our moral, emotional, and intellectual capacities, habits, and dispositions. We are formed in a variety of ways—both constructive and destructive—by a range of influences. As the authors of *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* point out, even persons unformed in religious traditions may be deeply formed by popular culture, family, and regional subcultures. This can present challenges, as cultural and family formation at times may be resistant to religious formation.²

In a religious sense, formation denotes learning a way of life carried by a tradition, embodied in a faith community, cultivated through practices over time. Formation is not limited to psychological, emotional, intellectual, or moral development. Nor is it simply a human project of education. Formation is the process whereby we become fully human, a process that involves most centrally the human spirit, created and called and sustained and transformed by the divine.

Theological schools are one context of formation that intersects with other formative spheres in people’s lives. Schools of theology engage students in study of the Scriptures and tradition, in theological reflection, in the development of skills to critique, assimilate, and integrate ideas, and in

training in the arts of ministry. Some provide a quasi-monastic experience of community, regular prayer, and accountability to a spiritual director. Others see themselves more as centers of learning and research with a mission that can be of service to but is not identical to that of the church.

A word about my own context may be helpful. I teach in a university-based school of theology with historic connections to the United Methodist Church. The student body and the faculty are diverse. In one class of mine, mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, evangelicals, and a Russian Orthodox student sit around the table together. Their vocations vary considerably too. Many are preparing for ordained ministry or for teaching. Some will go on to non-profit administration or social work or law. Some are seekers, exploring belief systems and struggling to articulate their own convictions. The faculty also is diverse—largely Christian with a strong Wesleyan contingent, yet also including faculty from a range of religious backgrounds. A Roman Catholic, I am charged with directing the pastoral and spiritual formation program. How do we do formation in such a pluralistic context?

CONTOURS OF FORMATION

As I have reflected on the practice of formation, I have arrived at the following convictions. First, I do not think it is terribly helpful to write generically about spiritual formation without reference to the particularities of our faith traditions. Certainly, people in a variety across faith traditions speak of “spirituality” and engage in spiritual practices. Dialogue among persons of different traditions and in some cases even shared spiritual practice is important and formative. Many people also understand themselves as being on a spiritual journey though they do not identify with any particular religious tradition. Understanding what they mean by “spiritual” also is important. And yet, I would resist a generic understanding of spirituality detached from theology and particular faith traditions. And so, in this article, I will focus on Christian—and at times more specifically on Roman Catholic—understandings and practices of formation.

Second, formation is not primarily about the formation of ministers. The primary meaning of formation has to do with God’s work of bringing persons into being and in bringing us to a new birth, new life in Christ.

Ministry—and formation for ministry—follows upon that primary creative awakening and reawakening.

Moreover, I do not restrict my understanding of ministry to the ordained ministry. Laypeople too are called to ministry in the church; the “Holy Spirit empowers all with the various gifts and ministries for the building up of the Body of Christ.”³ I also do not understand ministry solely in terms of work in the church, but rather consider the activities of laity in the ordinary spheres of family, work, and political life as, potentially, ministry. Here I draw from the Second Vatican Council image of laity as leaven in the world: “They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven.”⁴ In understanding “formation” too exclusively as training for ordained ministry, seminaries reduce the more fundamental, creative sense of the word “formation” to technical professional training. They also neglect a whole dimension of the ministry of Christians and risk sending out ministers who cannot appreciate or nurture in their parishioners a powerful sense of the lay vocation.

FORMATION AS CREATION

In the Hebrew Bible, formation cannot be understood without the root sense of creation. God is the Creator, the one who forms the world and each human being. In the second creation account in Genesis, the Lord God “formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.”⁵ God’s spirit or breath is literally the source of Adam’s life. Psalm 139 speaks of God’s wonderfully intimate work of creation: “For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.”⁶ For the prophet Jeremiah, God’s knowledge of him precedes even his coming into being; the Lord God says to him: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...”⁷ The prophet Zechariah attests to the God who creates the whole world and the human being. God is the One who “stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the human spirit within.”⁸ The human being is seen as the handiwork of God, like clay in a potter’s hands. Awareness of God as the One who forms, as the Potter, necessitates a degree of humility:

“Shall the potter be regarded as the clay? Shall the thing made say of its maker, ‘He did not make me’; or the thing formed say of the one who formed it, ‘He has no understanding’?”⁹

It is worth noting that some people today resist the language of “formation” because they object to “the metaphorical implications of people as lumps of clay, passive and more or less infinitely malleable, plastic to the will or power of some superior shaping force...”¹⁰ And yet, the biblical text conveys a powerful understanding of God as that superior shaping force, as the Creator. This understanding of formation actually puts all human efforts at formation in perspective. Any human effort at spiritual formation—as important as it may be—follows upon the work of God. The point is not the passivity of the person but rather the awesome gift of life given by the Creator, whose imprint remains on God’s handiwork.

NEW CREATION AND LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

The New Testament refers to God as Creator but also points our attention to a new creation, the birth of the Christian. This entails transformation, a radical dying and new birth. As Paul writes to the Christian community at Rome: “we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”¹¹ To walk in newness of life could be described as the goal of Christian spiritual formation. It is accomplished by Christ’s own death and resurrection, most fundamentally. And yet, human beings play a role as midwives or even mothers in this process of new creation, as Paul writes to the Galatians: “My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...”¹² Formation here has both an active and a receptive element—the hard labor of the disciple works for and awaits Christ’s own birth within a person.

As Christ is formed within, the person dies to worldly life and cleaves instead to life in the Spirit. The Epistle to the Romans describes Christian formation as a kind of transformation and renewal: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”¹³ Life in the Spirit bears fruit in love,

joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.¹⁴ From a Christian perspective, spiritual formation cannot be understood as a purely individual matter. Spiritual formation is inherently ecclesial; life in Christ means life in Christ's Body.¹⁵

Throughout Christian history, spiritual teachers have offered wisdom about how to foster growth in the Spirit. They responded to their own particular social contexts as well as to the promptings of the Spirit. In the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, for example, as Christianity became first tolerated and then proclaimed as the official state religion of the Roman Empire, men and women left towns and cities of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine for the desert. There they lived in stark asceticism, eating sparsely, spending hours in solitude, engaging in rigorous self-examination. They saw the life of the Spirit as a kind of spiritual warfare, a real encounter with demons within and without. Prayer armed them in this struggle. To be formed in the spirit was to labor and struggle in the desert and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow in purity of heart, humility, and discernment. Only through such spiritual practice were the abbas and ammas able to offer a "word" of life to people who sought them out for guidance.¹⁶

As monasticism grew in the Middle Ages and religious life became elevated as the more perfect way of life (an idea reinforced by the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century), spiritual formation of laypersons suffered from neglect. Protestant Reformers sharply critiqued this spiritual hierarchy; Luther, for example, famously asserted the priesthood of all believers. It was in this context that the Roman Catholic bishop Francis de Sales wrote his *Introduction to the Devout Life*, intended to correct centuries of inattention to the spiritual formation and vocation of laypersons: "almost all those who have hitherto written about devotion have been concerned with instructing persons wholly withdrawn from the world or have at least taught a kind of devotion that leads to such complete retirement."¹⁷ Devotion, de Sales counseled, does not require separation from the ordinary contexts of daily lay life. Rather, one can love God with the whole will in any vocation, and one should express devotion differently depending on one's call. A bishop cannot be a cloistered monk, nor can a widow with children enter a convent. "What is the use of building castles in Spain when you have to live in France?" he asked a laywoman with whom he corresponded, noting the human tendency to imagine some other way of life as more holy than the path one walks, to yearn for another house rather than allowing oneself to

be formed in the place where one lives.¹⁸ Every sphere of life can be a place for devotion, for the love of God enflamed by the will. Following upon Salesian spirituality, then, I would say that formation entails learning to pay attention to one's context of life, to grow in love of God in that place, and to cultivate the practices integral to one's vocation. Formation in this sense, of course, is not limited to those preparing for ordained ministry.

SUSTAINING PASTORAL EXCELLENCE

The history of Christian spirituality is replete with diverse models of spiritual formation. Traditional practices and insights, sometimes adapted to new contexts, continue to form Christian communities and individuals. If biblical understandings of formation and traditions of spiritual guidance teach anything, they teach us to recognize the limits of our work, as important as it may be. God is the one who forms, whose spirit breathes life into a person. Radical newness of life flows from the same God, in Christ, through the working of the Holy Spirit. We are called simultaneously to toil as in childbirth for a new creation and, as in labor, to wait and wait upon an event not fully our own.

Indeed, this is a problem in ministry requiring constant reflection: how to engage and disengage, work and rest, speak and listen. The work of forming persons in faith or, hearkening back to the conciliar description of the lay mission, sanctifying the world from within is mighty work. It is never finished. It calls for everything that you can give. It is intrinsically meaningful. And thus, it is easy to feel justified in throwing oneself into it without pause.

In the busyness of this important work, however, we can forget that the work is not altogether ours and, sadly, find our own spirits untended and even deformed. Perversely, ministers at this point can become an obstacle to the very work they cherish.

For the past five years, I have co-directed a project called *Sustaining Urban Pastoral Excellence* at Boston University School of Theology.¹⁹ We have worked with nearly 100 urban pastors from across the United States. The project offers pastors a structured integration of spiritual renewal, sabbatical, study, and community. Pastors apply in teams of four and cove-

nant to meet bi-weekly over a period of six months. As they gather every other week, they support one another in spiritual growth, accountability, and reflection on their ministry. The communities forged through these small group meetings have been invaluable to some pastors, who particularly appreciated a safe space where they could meet without fear, competition, or puffing up. Together the groups crafted a question to study over their time together; the questions arose from their own particular contexts of urban ministry. Study provided a focal point for their meetings, integrated with prayer and other spiritual practices. As part of the project, pastors also took a funded sabbatical of four to eight weeks long. One pastor did a forty-day retreat in solitude in the Colorado mountains. Others journaled, practiced daily prayer and Bible study, and sought spiritual direction. Many relished the freedom to worship in the pews—not as pastor—in congregations other than their own. Some found it important to take the time to reconnect with family, to restore relationships neglected. They described a great sense of renewal from their sabbatical, which we framed in terms of Sabbath practice. Reflecting in the space of the Sabbath rest, many found that their work habits were out of synch with their message of Christ’s saving power. As one pastor put it, he had made work in ministry an idol. He had to learn how to stop, to detach at times, to say “no” to some demands. It was not just a problem of time management or boundaries. It was more deeply a problem of identity. He had become his work and needed to recall who he was simply as himself before God. This was both a frightening and an exhilarating proposition.

FORMATION FOR MINISTRY

Spiritual formation is not just about cultivating any spiritual practice. It is about entering into those practices that witness to and reveal to us the God who has formed us and transforms us. To send people into ministry without that primary sense of God’s work of formation in us is fruitless or even destructive. The practices integral to formation for Christian ministry are those that reflect and bring us to knowledge of the God who forms and transforms—practices such as prayer, study, Sabbath keeping, self-examination, discernment, and works of justice and mercy. I would argue that

practices carry epistemological horizons; we grow in knowledge through what we do. Practices witness to our beliefs about God and ourselves; simultaneously they form us, bringing us to know that God and our own vocations more closely.

The practice of Sabbath, for example, brings one back to awareness of God as Creator. For six days God created, and on the seventh day God rested. The Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel writes: "The art of keeping the seventh day is the art of painting on the canvas of time the mysterious grandeur of the climax of creation..." Sabbath both affirms the dignity of our labor and puts our work in perspective. God is the Creator—not us. And while we are called to work, we are not called to be slaves to work. Indeed, Heschel frames Sabbath in terms of freedom and liberation: "The seventh day is the exodus from tension, the liberation of man from his own muddiness."²⁰ Too often in theological education, the pressures of academic life and the structure of our curricula do just the opposite: we form ministers who do not know how to stop working, who do not know how to say "no" to another demand on their time, who lose a sense of awe and mystery and joy in their faith.

If spiritual practices yield understanding or knowledge of God, as I argue that they do, they belong squarely in the center of theological education for ministry.²¹ One of the difficulties in formation today is the common separation of spirituality and theology. Theological education often perpetuates this unfortunate split, which dates back to the Middle Ages. Theology is seen as intellectual work; spirituality is seen as an affair of the heart. Spiritual formation is added to the curriculum or placed outside the classroom in worship and retreats, rather than understood as the core of what theological education is all about. The compartmentalization has several negative repercussions. It forms persons to imagine that spiritual practices are one more thing to add to their studies, rather than integral to the doing of theology. It contributes to a "dumbing-down" of spirituality and vagueness in how we talk about it. Spirituality becomes unhinged from specific traditions and faith communities. Theological reflection on the other hand can feel distanced from live questions, experiences, and practices. Students may go out without the spiritual grounding needed to sustain their work in ministry. Of course, scholars have wrestled with this problem. In his book *Theologia*, for example, Edward Farley calls for a recovery of the notion of theology as *habitus*, a "habit of the human soul," as

an antidote to the unfortunate separation of theory and practice, theology and piety, in theological education. Theology as *habitus* would be a kind of sapiential knowledge, in which the practice of faith was integral to the search for knowledge of God.²²

It is this integrated sense of theology and spirituality that needs to infuse formation for ministry. Spiritual formation does not happen on the side, after the hard work of theology. It is, rather, essential to learned ministry and intimately related to intellectual formation. Roman Catholic understandings of formation may be helpful here. Catholic formation for both ordained and lay ministry typically differentiates among four kinds of formation: human formation, spiritual formation, intellectual formation, and pastoral formation. Each dimension of formation, though, is interconnected. Spiritual formation is the core, building upon the psychological and emotional development of human formation as grace builds upon nature. Moreover, study enhances spiritual formation, and spiritual practices also yield understanding of God: "There is a reciprocal relationship between spiritual and intellectual formation. The intellectual life nourishes the spiritual life, but the spiritual also opens vistas of understanding..." Spiritual formation in turn provides the foundation for pastoral outreach. The integration of the four dimensions of formation occurs in and through spiritual formation: "Since spiritual formation is the core that unifies the life of a priest, it stands at the heart of seminary life and is the center around which all other aspects are integrated."²³

PLURALISM AND FORMATION

Can such an understanding of spiritual formation hold even in pluralistic contexts of theological education such as my own? I think this is both possible and vital, though challenging. Spiritual formation must be at the center of the formation of ministers as it must be at the heart of ministry itself. While it would be inappropriate to impose a Benedictine monastic way of life as the one framework for formation in a university-based school of theology, we can invite students into the Benedictine rhythm of work and prayer and study, each mutually interconnected and infusing the other. While we would not put all of our students through an Ignatian thirty-day

retreat, or insist that they all participate in Wesleyan-style class meetings, we can affirm the value of such structured means of prayer, reflection, spiritual direction, and communal accountability. Teaching about the desert fathers and mothers can invite students to consider the place of prayer and silence and discernment in their own lives, in the sparseness of their own deserts. When we work with students preparing for careers in law or social work, we can invite them into rich understandings of the lay apostolate and engage them in practices to help sustain them in distinctive lay vocations.

Still, questions remain. What exactly does “spiritual formation” mean in a context where we cannot name in common that into which we hope to be formed? Imagine, again, my classroom of Protestant and Roman Catholic and evangelical and Orthodox students. Add someone who would not necessarily identify herself as Christian. Put them together in a pastoral and spiritual formation group that meets weekly. What sort of formation happens in such a context? Certainly we come to the discovery of difference, and identities can be sharpened and clarified and challenged in that discovery. Surely we learn from the struggle to really listen to what is other. As we try to create safe space and a language for shared prayer across those differences, we may come to profound insights about the mystery of God. All of this is formative; I would say that it is a kind of spiritual formation and certainly good preparation for religious leadership in pluralistic contexts. And yet, at the same time, formation in such a pluralistic context can seem rather distant from the faith communities and traditions in which spiritual practices are rooted. At best, it is incomplete. At worst, it reduces spiritual formation to a conversation.

Denominational seminaries can presuppose (for the most part) a shared core of belief and practice. Thus, for example, Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS), the official seminary of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, clearly understands formation as Christo-centric and ecclesial. Pointing to Ephesians 4:1–13, the seminary asserts that “formation is always about Christ: ‘until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.’...At CTS every formation activity is about Christ—it’s to Christ, in Christ, for Christ, and with Christ.” The stated goal of the seminary is “to be a community of faith that allows Christ to form you into His likeness so your ministry will do the same for others.”²⁴ The challenge

here will be for ministers so formed to learn ways to navigate pluralism. How will they learn to engage people with diverse understandings of God?

The University of Chicago Divinity School, on the other hand, is situated in a much different context. Part of a major research university, the Divinity School understands itself as a center for the cross-disciplinary study of religions. According to the Dean: "Chicago reflects only one orthodoxy: that the rules of evidence and argument must discipline conversation, and that such rules are especially important when the topic is religion." The Master of Divinity program is called "ministry studies," rather than formation.²⁵ The challenge here is how to root students in tradition-specific spiritual practices and to bridge the gap between spirituality and theology. How does one move from studying about ministry to cultivating the practices essential to sustaining excellent ministry?

CONCLUSION

As we reflect on formation for ministry, such questions need to be pursued. Formation cannot be done without attention to context. Nor can formation be emptied of theological content. Rather, formation is integral to the doing of theology, even in pluralistic contexts. Most fundamentally, our work in formation should reflect the mystery and creativity of the God who forms us, receptivity to the Christ who is formed in us, and life in the Spirit who sustains us.

NOTES

1. Timothy Fry, ed., *The Rule of St. Benedict in English* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982). Passages in quotations are from Prologue, nos. 45, 49, ch. 48:1 and ch. 64:19.
2. Charles Foster and others, *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2006), 102.
3. U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Coworkers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2005), 7.
4. Pope Paul VI, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium* (Boston, MA: Pauline Books, 1965), no. 31.
5. Gen. 2:7 NRSV.
6. Ps. 139:13.

7. Jer. 1:5.
8. Zech. 12:1
9. Is. 29:16.
10. Foster et al, *Educating Clergy*, 125–126, footnote 1.
11. Rom. 6:4.
12. Gal. 4:19.
13. Rom. 12:2.
14. Gal. 5:22.
15. Rom. 12:5, 1 Cor. 12:12.
16. See (Sr.) Donald Corcoran, “Spiritual Guidance,” in Bernard McGinn and others, eds., *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 444–452. See too Thomas Merton, trans., *The Wisdom of the Desert* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1998).
17. Saint Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life* (New York: Image Books, 1989), 33.
18. Wendy M. Wright and Joseph F. Power, O.S.F.S., eds., *Francis de Sales, Jane de Chantal: Letters of Spiritual Direction*, trans. Peronne Marie Thibert, V.H.M., (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 112.
19. The Lilly Endowment generously funded this project with a grant as part of its Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program. My co-director is Dr. Bryan Stone. The project is now a part of the Center for Practical Theology, which I also co-direct with Bryan Stone.
20. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1951), 16, 29.
21. On this point, see, for example, Craig Dykstra, “Reconceiving Practice,” in Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley, eds., *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education*, 45. Dykstra argues that through participation in practices “we may come to awareness of certain realities that outside of these practices are beyond our ken” (p. 45).
22. See Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983), 31.
23. USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, fifth ed. (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2006). Quotes are from nos. 136, 115. On formation for lay ecclesial ministry, also described in terms of human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation, see USCCB, *Coworkers in the Vineyard*.
24. See Calvin Theological Seminary’s Web site: <http://www.calvinseminary.edu/>.
25. See letters from Richard A. Rosengarten, dean, and from Cynthia Lindner, director of ministry studies, on Web site for University of Chicago Divinity School: <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/>.

Lessons Learned Along the Way: One Supervisor's Theory Journey

Stuart A. Plummer

My clinical exposure began during field education at Princeton Theological Seminary in the mid 1950s. The setting was Presbyterian Medical Center in Philadelphia, a medical-surgical facility rich with opportunities for service and education. I quickly became enamored with the clinical setting and the action-reflection model of learning I encountered. After seminary, I became assistant minister of a Presbyterian church in urban Baltimore, Maryland. In that position, I was able to maintain a connection to a clinical setting as a member of the visiting clergy staff at The Johns Hopkins Hospital, where I visited patients one afternoon a week. At the same time, I enrolled in a part-time graduate program in theology and psychiatry at the School of Theology, Temple University, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

During a second year in the parish, I realized that I did not wish to continue my ministry in that setting, but I was decidedly unclear about

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

what I wanted to do. I decided not to pursue the graduate degree in pastoral theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, and instead was accepted in a two-year chaplain residency in clinical pastoral education at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, DC. In the late 50s, St. Elizabeth's was a federal psychiatric hospital with approximately 8,000 inpatients and a 400-bed medical-surgical facility utilized by our patient population. It was an accredited center of the Council for Clinical Training, Inc., one of four certifying and accrediting agencies that preceded and later formed the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.

Clinical pastoral education at St. Elizabeth's Hospital meant immersion in the world of acute and long-term mentally ill persons. It included exposure to psychiatric theory, the interface of psychiatry and religion, and the deeper needs of individuals. The program at St. Elizabeth's understood clinical pastoral education as an extension of theological education within health care. Supervisory clinical pastoral education at St. Elizabeth's included: reading psychiatric, supervisory and learning theory; reviewing applications; doing admissions interviews; supervised supervision of theological students engaged in a part-time clinical orientation course from seminaries in the greater Washington, DC, area; and finally supervised three students involved in what was then called a Basic Unit of clinical pastoral education during the summer of the second year. I was fortunate to be part of a well-developed curriculum for supervisory education during a creative time in the history of clinical pastoral education.

This essay traces my theory of pastoral supervision from that creative and often conflicted era in clinical pastoral education. Pastoral supervision and the theory that informs it—within the context of clinical pastoral education—continue to evolve and develop. Pastoral supervision is dynamic rather than static and includes at least an implicit theological anthropology, affirmations about how adult learning occurs, and a model of the mind that utilizes psychodynamic propositions about human beings. My perspective on pastoral supervision has also been significantly shaped by an ongoing interest in psychoanalysis. That interest began during my chaplain residency at St. Elizabeth's and included personal experience in individual psychotherapy. In Denver, it continued by means of both informal and formal involvement with faculty of the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Colorado School of Medicine and the Denver Institute for Psycho-

analysis. This interest in psychoanalysis culminated when I became a research candidate (non-psychiatrist) at the Institute.

THEORY JOURNEY: EARLY SIGNPOSTS

While I was at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, a new book initially published in 1958 by Ekstein and Wallerstein on *The Teaching and Learning of Psychotherapy* very soon became a major source for pastoral supervision.¹ While the text was intended for psychiatric residents and others preparing to become psychotherapists, we readily adapted it to the context of pastoral supervision. My colleagues and I were introduced to concepts such as learning problems, problems about learning, and parallel process. The model espoused was based upon ego psychology and, at the time, seemed insightful and relevant. It continued for some time to be a foundational component of my theory of pastoral supervision.

The Ekstein and Wallerstein model regarded the supervisor as an objective expert and the supervisee's difficulties as the focus through confrontation, clarification, and interpretation of his issues. At the time, supervisory colleagues in clinical pastoral education frequently confronted a student's coping mechanisms by means of an aggressive, angry verbal assault. In its harshest, most intense expression, this supervisory confrontation was sometimes referred to as "surgery without the benefit of anesthesia!" The particular focus of confrontation in pastoral supervision was often a student's presumed problem with authority. Ernie Bruder, a brilliant and abrasive pioneer pastoral educator at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, was fond of saying, only partly facetiously, that "if a student doesn't have an authority problem, he will after he works with me!" The focus thus was on the oedipal phase of psychological development, and early pre-oedipal experience was essentially ignored. As a result, pastoral supervision at that time emphasized questions of competition, power, guilt, assertiveness, and aggression, and paid little attention to issues of self-esteem, shame, or narcissistic injury.

Only years later did I begin to understand the limits and inadequacies of the Ekstein and Wallerstein model. The structure of the supervisory relationship was hierarchical, parental, and often patriarchal, and the assumption was both inadequate and incorrect that every problem resided in the

supervisee. Furthermore, their model was inattentive to the impact of early experience, especially trauma and abuse, on a student's self-esteem and capacity to learn and to provide care to others. The change in my perspective resulted from analytic education with an emphasis on early psychological development, my experience in psychoanalytic supervision, and ongoing pastoral supervision of chaplain interns and residents at Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center in Denver, Colorado.

Eventually, by the last 1970s, I determined that the primary task of pastoral supervision includes, but goes beyond, the development of professional identity and competence as spiritual caregiver that was the dominant approach to clinical pastoral education in the Boston area. My perspective was, at the same time, less ambitious than the focus on freedom and transformation of the self that was emphasized in pastoral supervision in the New York City area. The Institute of Pastoral Care and the Council for Clinical Training, Inc. had competing philosophical and pedagogical emphases, and they tended to define themselves organizationally over against one another. Instead, my educational goal was simultaneously both more foundational and more modest; namely, pastoral supervision is about reformation, whereby identification with a role is achieved, and internalization results in a congruity or, if you will, an integrity of self and function.

THEORY JOURNEY: THREE VISTAS ALONG THE WAY

The growing participation of women in clinical pastoral education in the late 1960s and early 1970s had a very positive impact on the theory and practice of pastoral supervision. Not only was a gender imbalance addressed, but a feminine perspective was also introduced into the teaching-learning matrix that enhanced a communal dimension of learning in contrast to the male emphasis on competition and power. Women brought to the theory and practice of pastoral supervision a variety of interests, including: feminine authority as compared and contrasted with that of males, early developmental experience and difficulties, competition from a feminine perspective, and an inevitable anxiety inherent for a student to the regressive pull of a maternal transference. Of the several female voices that contributed to my evolving theory of pastoral supervision, I wish to note in particular, Maxine

Glaz, my late wife, pastoral educator, and former seminary professor of pastoral care. She contributed in important ways to my understanding of the impact of early trauma and abuse—for good and ill—in the lives of spiritual caregivers and students in clinical pastoral education.²

The second vista affecting my theory of pastoral supervision came as a result of psychoanalytic education during which I was introduced to the writings of Hans Loewald in *Papers on Psychoanalysis*.³ He was a psychoanalytic theorist who modified, re-defined and expanded many of Freud's initial concepts. Though Loewald frequently used traditional psychoanalytic language, he more often than not radically altered the language's meaning. For example, he suggested in an early paper, "Ego and Reality," that, within the so-called structural model of the mind, the ego has a primary synthetic, integrative function rather than a defensive function in relation to reality.⁴ Hence, it is not, as Freud had affirmed, ego over against reality viewed as hostile. Rather, between the danger of loss of object-relationships and the danger of a loss of ego-reality boundaries, the ego pursues its course of integrating reality.

Loewald also affirmed that the relationship between infant and mother—and father increasingly as well—is the initially undifferentiated psychological reality out of which drives emerge as a consequence of attachment, development, relatedness, and differentiation. He not only re-defined classical psychoanalytic terms and concepts, but also became a foundational theorist contributing to the reemergence of relationality as a primary paradigm in contemporary psychoanalytic literature. His work became a major part of Stephen A. Mitchell's final book *Relationality: From Attachment to Intersubjectivity*, along with the writings of John Bowlby and W. R. D. Fairbairn.⁵ The work of Loewald and others was central in moving me toward a more relational model of pastoral supervision.

The writing of Heinz Kohut was a third vista that changed my understanding of pastoral supervision.⁶ Many colleagues in clinical pastoral education began to adapt the concepts of self-psychology to the context of pastoral supervision. Empathy was paramount to this model, in which the supervisor was viewed as an objective expert and also as someone capable of empathic error. The supervisor's focus was a student's self-states and self-object needs, and empathic responsiveness to a student was an essential part of the supervisory relationship. Although my theoretical perspective continued to emphasize the contributions of Loewald more than Kohut and

self-psychology, I became increasingly attentive to issues of self-esteem in supervisory work with a student. Mirroring became an important, explicit component of my supervisory theory and practice. In part, I sought to establish and maintain a learning alliance in order to enhance a student's curiosity and pleasure in learning within the inherently stressful and anxiety-provoking clinical setting.

More recently, books by Frawley-O'Dea and Sarnat and by Jacobs, David, and Meyer have influenced my theory of pastoral supervision.⁷ Frawley-O'Dea and Sarnat affirm a supervisory-matrix-centered (relational) model. In this context, "matrix" is a complex interpersonal reality out of which something else develops. The supervisor is seen as an embedded participant rather than an objective expert, and the focus is on relational events and themes, including regressive experiences, in the full supervisory matrix. Their model is drawn from attachment theory and relationality as a paradigm within contemporary psychoanalytic theory. Patient, student, and supervisor are each involved in the co-creation of meaning that occurs simultaneously. Within the supervisory matrix, any of the dyads, for example, patient-student, student-supervisor, (patient-supervisor) is available for review, discussion, and exploration. While the relationship between student and supervisor remains asymmetrical, this model is more participatory and mutual. For example, a problem does not by definition belong to the student, but may reside primarily with the supervisor.

Psychoanalytic theory has been foundational in the evolution of my theory of pastoral supervision. I am very aware that my theory journey has been atypical and different from many supervisory colleagues. There are numerous models available for theory building, including: family systems, Jungian theory, behavioral, and cognitive, to name only a few. Each pastoral educator will select a psychological model that has theoretical appeal, allows for theory congruence, and is effective in supporting her goals for pastoral supervision. For a variety of reasons psychoanalytic theory appealed to me, seemed to offer in-depth hypotheses about human development and complexity of motivation and behavior, and suggested freedom within an unconscious determinism.

THEORY JOURNEY: CONTINUING REFLECTION ON SUPERVISION

Supervisor as Colleague in Quest.

Changes in health care, for example, new technologies, rising acuity levels, shorter inpatient stays, an end-of-life treatment focus, have impacted both spiritual care and pastoral supervision. Patient relationships are inevitably shorter in duration, more crisis-oriented, and focused on the present with minimal opportunity to develop ongoing relationships. A student in supervision may have only one opportunity to “connect” with a patient, establish a relationship, and co-create meaning. As a result, the clinical material available for reflection and in the supervisory relationship is immediate, brief, likely crisis-oriented with little, if any, personal history. This reality has important implications for the possibility of significant pastoral relationships and the development of theoretical and clinical competence as a pastoral educator. Understanding deeper human needs is more difficult when most caregiving encounters are immediate and crisis-oriented. There are also significant losses to the learning of student, supervisor, and individuals learning to become pastoral educators.

As I continue to gain supervisory experience and as my theory evolves and deepens, I regard a pastoral educator as a “colleague in quest,” committed to a student’s learning, to the articulation of questions for which adequate answers may well be lacking, to overcoming learning blocks and inhibitions, and a recovery of curiosity and pleasure in learning. I thus affirm with Frawley-O’Dea and Sarnat, and in contrast to Ekstein and Wallerstein, that learning is a natural expression of an innate human curiosity rather than about conflict resolution, though certainly conflict is frequently present in any effort to learn.

Anxiety is intrinsic to clinical work as a caregiver, whatever one’s professional discipline. It is inevitable in any effort at self-observation and reflection, to new self-awareness and understanding, to being affectively present and responsive, and to new behaviors and self-definitions personally and professionally. Thus, part of the supervisory task is to support a student in his effort to manage, titrate, and tolerate that intrinsic anxiety. Retrospectively, a model of pastoral supervision espoused by various colleagues as I began my professional career was a so-called stress model—namely, raise the anxiety index of a student by whatever means and obser-

ve the response. Happily that supervisory model is no longer as popular, though it certainly continues to be practiced.

Supervision and Psychotherapy.

Throughout my years as a pastoral educator, the similarities and distinctions between supervision and psycho-therapy have been an ongoing subject of interest, theoretical discussion, and debate. To what extent are supervision and psychotherapy parallel yet different interpersonal processes? Could they be, in some instances, interchangeable? Good supervision is therapeutic broadly speaking, though it is not psychotherapy. Individual psychotherapy is dyadic, while supervision is always at least triadic: the patient is continually a focus for a student and a supervisor. Nonetheless, a student and supervisor do develop a dyadic alliance based upon trust, mutual respect, a shared curiosity to understand, and a willingness to engage in "meaning making" together. It is essential that a student feel sufficiently safe in this alliance, certain that his privacy will not knowingly be compromised.

A supervisor utilizes psychodynamic understandings to assess a student's learning needs (keeping in mind the patient's needs) rather than to address, much less focus upon, a student's unconscious conflicts as these may manifest themselves in either the clinical setting or supervisory conversation. To identify is one thing, to explore is quite another. For instance, it is appropriate to note empathically the inability of a student to act on repeated indications from patients who wish to acknowledge feelings pertaining to impending death, and it is even appropriate to wonder if psychotherapy for the student might be appropriate and helpful. However, to focus on what in the student's early experience has caused this inhibition can be intrusive, perceived as a violation of personal privacy, and the crossing of a boundary. We have moved beyond the model of Ekstein and Wallerstein that emphasized a student's counter-transferential difficulties as the primary focus for learning.

The Ethical Dimension of Pastoral Supervision.

The theory and practice of pastoral supervision is an ethical enterprise. It has always been so, at least implicitly. This ethical dimension is based upon an assumption about persons as ends rather than means, and on the conviction that actions have consequences. What I have in mind includes, but goes beyond, a code of professional ethics. A code is by definition

problem-oriented, negatively focused, and ultimately insufficient. In recent years, our attention and understanding have of necessity been enhanced because of both the complexity of relationships between a student and supervisor and the unfortunate frequency of formal complaints filed against pastoral educators. Thus, I believe we need to articulate anew an ethical norm that is true to the values of clinical pastoral education, relevant to the complexity of settings within which our educational programs are offered, pertinent to the students with whom we teach and learn, and consistent with supervisory integrity. I therefore propose an ethic that applies to different persons in different situations in different ways rather than a neo-Kantian ethic that applies to all persons in all situations in the same way.⁸ An ethic for pastoral supervision is contextual and relational, neither absolutist nor relative. Furthermore, it is an ethic that acknowledges the multiple, sometimes competing and conflicting considerations (including our own unconscious) that each of us must contend with and that can interfere with our capacity to see and act.

There are, however, some common features of a supervisory ethic. First is a duty to avoid harming others—the duty of non-maleficence. I state it negatively instead of focusing on beneficence since it seems to me relatively easy to do harm with very good intentions. A second common feature pertains to truth telling that is essential to trust between persons. This is not to confuse honesty with confession, nor does it mean that one is obliged to say everything she knows. About the work of supervision, we are obligated to speak truthfully. Promise keeping is a third component of a supervisory ethic. An ability to trust another's future actions is essential to any collaborative relational effort such as pastoral supervision. A fourth facet focuses on the autonomy of others. A student is an end, never a means to an end, no matter how noble that end might be. Having previously noted non-maleficence, I wish to note positively beneficence, meaning to honor the other, so long as I maintain a healthy skepticism about my own "good intentions." Finally, I want to affirm the principle of justice understood as reciprocity, especially between supervisor and student. Reciprocity pertains to a mutual, shared, joint commitment to the task of spiritual service and learning.

I presume that my theory of pastoral supervision will continue to evolve as long as I practice the clinical art. That theory is informed by my commitment to reflect upon practice utilizing theological anthropology, the

insights of psychodynamic theory, and a growing awareness of the ways individuals learn. I have been privileged to participate in this important relational endeavor, and am grateful to patients who were always both my explicit and implicit teachers, to mentors who were my explicit teachers, and to students who were both my teachers and colleagues in quest.

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8. I am indebted to Paul Lehmann, teacher and friend, for introducing me to a contextual ethic. His text, *Ethics in a Christian Context* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), was foundational for a generation of theological students at Princeton Theological Seminary, Harvard Divinity School, and Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Call for Essays for *Reflective Practice*, Volume 28
Theme: Formation and Supervision in the Presence of Fear

Fear touches every dimension of living today: personal, spiritual, communal, social, global, and environmental. Fear makes strangers into enemies, intensifies vulnerability, traumatizes communities, makes uncommon victims, creates new patterns of coping, and isolates people. How does living in the presence of fear affect the work of forming and supervising for ministry? How can our work begin to transform the social and theological structures that harbor violence and generate fear? Send proposals or essays to Herbert Anderson, editor, at handerson@plts.edu by December 30, 2007.

Supervising Supervisors: Challenges in Theological Field Education

Emily Click

The teachers who engage students at their most crucial stages of formation for ministry are mostly invisible within theological education. They are theological field education (TFE) supervisors. Even though they are important to the overall theological education enterprise, these supervisors usually work without pay and with little formalized recognition or appreciation. Yet the significance of their pedagogical influence during the master of divinity (M.Div.) program can hardly be overstated. The ways supervisors in field education shape students may integrate with, overrule, conflict with, or in some cases, redeem what students are learning during their M.Div. programs.

In this essay, I explore the problems, challenges, and opportunities inherent in these valuable, but oft unstudied learning relationships. The focus

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

is on the double task of supervising supervisors in field education as well as supervising students in the practice of ministry. The hiddenness of theological field education is unavoidable in one sense because it occurs removed from the centers where academic study takes place. The invisibility of supervising for ministry is problematic, however, because critical issues arising in field education are seldom considered in relation to the whole task of forming for ministry.

During a four-year study of theological field education (from 2000–2004), I spoke with directors of field education (henceforth referred to as field educators in this essay) at over thirty theological schools. Although the supervisory relationship was only one aspect of this study, it clearly dominated the energies and concerns of many field educators that I interviewed. Four issues of supervision dominated my conversations with field educators:

1. The role of supervisors and their place/purpose in the theological education enterprise is not always clear either to supervisor, the field educator, or the student.
2. Field educators struggle to develop and continue to foster capacities among their supervisors for engaging students in the formational tasks of preparation for ministerial leadership with little or no authority to require training in supervisory competence.
3. Problematic behavior by supervisors, students, or others with whom the student relates may lead to a crisis in the supervisory relationship. Sometimes the crisis is precipitated by the power differential built into the supervisory relationship.
4. Field educators are often required to balance competing interests among constituencies that relate to the theological school as an institution. Supervisors, for example, might be selected not by the field educator but instead by an ethnic group, by a judicatory leader, or some other authority in the student's life. Sometimes supervisors have agendas that compete with the field education program's goals and purposes, and field educators or their students find themselves in a difficult position trying to navigate these differences.

SUPERVISING SUPERVISORS
DEFINING TERMS VARIOUSLY DEFINED

There is general consensus that in order for a ministry engagement to qualify as field education, it must involve some component of supervision. This practice is reinforced by the general guidelines of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), which indicate that the supervisory relationship is an integral requirement for the M.Div. degree. Those standards state clearly that an M. Div. curriculum must include supervised ministry experiences and that those supervisors must be trained. The language of the ATS standards allows for a range of ways to apply these guidelines, but these guidelines have resulted in near uniformity across widely diverse settings for theological education: students will work with someone who is assigned to reflect with them on a regular basis on the practice of ministry.

The language used to describe the relationship that enables that experience of reflection, however, is not uniform. The term "supervisor" is no longer universally used. Some prefer the term "mentor," while others use other phrases. In this essay, I will use the term "supervisor" to refer to this role of oversight in formation for ministry. Beyond the terminology, there is also significant variety in what is meant by supervisory responsibility or purpose. The supervisory role is embedded in the context of a learning partnership. The field education department itself constructs the partnership in order for the student to engage in the tasks of ministry and then reflect on that experience while doing ministry. Most programs expect that students will reflect on the practice of ministry with their supervisor for one hour each week.

This description covers the usual understanding of when and how often supervisors meet with students, but there is little or no uniformity in understanding the purposes for these meetings. Many programs specify that such meetings should focus on theological reflection although even that term also has many meanings. Suffice it to say, this is seen as a crucial task of the supervisory relationship, and for many, though not all, programs, the supervisory relationship is the primary location for students to learn to do such reflection. Beyond this widespread emphasis on theological reflection, there are many schools that specify that supervisors are mentoring their students or teaching them leadership. Still others emphasize spiritual direction or acculturation into the professional and spiritual or

theological norms of their denomination as the focus of the supervisory relationship.

Most often, supervisors are ordained ministers, usually serving as pastors in the same congregations that provide the ministry setting for the student's field education placement. There are notable exceptions to this generality. Often, laypersons engage in the most significant supervision and interaction with students, sometimes in an officially designated supervisory role, and sometimes in a less formalized role. A significant minority of M.Div. students—for instance, some at the Harvard Divinity School—are engaged settings that are either not congregational or sometimes not explicitly Christian. For example, we have a program that prepares students to teach religion in secondary schools. Most often in that program, supervisors are public school teachers. Others work in hospital settings with chaplains or administrators as their supervisors. Thus, it is imperative to recall that there is no singular paradigm for who the supervisor is, and it would be inappropriate to assume that supervisors are always clergy or always serving in a church setting. Diversity in the identity of supervisors as well as significant differences in understanding the work of supervision add complexity and creativity to theological field education today.

TRAINING AND SUPPORTING COMPETENT SUPERVISORS

Conversations among field educators often focus on the necessary but elusive responsibility to train and support supervisors and then monitor the ongoing quality of their work. Field educators are concerned with developing the best ways to identify and recruit outstanding persons to mentor their students. The process of identifying supervisors is usually rather ad hoc. Field educators must rely on supervisors' availability, geographical proximity, and denominational appropriateness to the particular students involved. Most field educators are concerned that these realities in selecting supervisors do not necessarily produce the most outstanding mentors for students.

Field educators in many settings have therefore developed programs to train supervisors that represent varying levels of rigor. In some cases, supervisors must take a yearlong course in order to qualify to take on stu-

dents. In other settings, new supervisors enroll in one course that might be a year long, a semester, or just a few meetings, while continuing supervisors take another course or engage in another type of support group. Sometimes supervisors are invited to come to the institution for a one- to three-day orientation. In a few programs, the word "training" is used to connote that instructional resources have been distributed, usually via the mail, to supervisors whose responsibility it becomes to read and learn the material.

Most field educators have developed their own methods of training supervisors. Some field educators emphasize educational theories of learning or development. Others review emotional dynamics of relationships in order to help supervisors understand the complicated nature of the relationships in which they will become involved with students. Many include some kind of training or information about sexual abuse and how to keep relationships clear of unhealthy dynamics of dual roles. In a few programs, the field educator engages in some one-on-one mentoring to teach in the context of actual relationships. Here field educators attend meetings of supervisors and students to observe as well as coach them in these relationships.

Critical Issues.

There are several problems that can be identified in relation to training of supervisors. Field educators often express frustration with the lack of participation of supervisors in the required training and with the inability to hold them to the obligation. Sometimes supervisors simply are unwilling or unable to participate, but there is another, developing reality within field education. This is the growing use of distance learning, which places not only students but also their supervisors at such a geographic distance from the theological school that training them requires new approaches and tools.

The inability to prepare supervisors for the important formation work they do is the source of considerable frustration for field educators. The conundrum is something like this. If the placement of students is limited only to those supervisors who have been trained, there will not be enough supervisors for the students. Moreover, it is not always feasible or even advisable to deny placements where supervisors have not been formally trained. Placing a student with an untrained supervisor, however, may leave the student vulnerable to participation in a problematic relationship. It also puts the school at risk. Because of the hiddenness of field theological

education, it is easy for schools of theology to overlook their obligation to support adequate supervisory training until the matter comes to court. Most field educators eventually adapt their expectations to live with this conundrum by setting requirements that simply cannot be fully enforced.

It is my hunch that few senior administrators or faculty at theological schools realize the extent of work that field educators do in educating and supporting field education supervisors. In some ways, this work with supervisors is something like an unfunded mandate. Field educators want to train supervisors not just because the ATS mandates such training, but also because they are keenly aware that supervisors can do significant harm when they are inadequately informed about the nuanced dynamics of working with students. It is the field educator who receives the phone call from the student reporting a supervisor's apparent indifference, negligence, or harassment. Similarly, it is the field educator who works strategically with supervisors who find they are working with problematic students. The handling of these types of problems is not visible enough to others within theological education.

The lack of institutional support for training and maintaining competent supervisors is both a systemic problem and an opportunity. The problem is that the theological school functions as well as it does partly because of the unrecognized work of field educators who engage in underfunded work with supervisors. The systemic problem remains hidden as long as field educators are the only ones who worry about sending vulnerable students to under-trained supervisors. One might ask why such invisibility persists when field educators, at least, suspect that their work with supervisors does far more than just keep the field education program running smoothly. For me, the question is this: Whose responsibility is it to address this invisibility and who might benefit from developing more formal structures to support and integrate the significant work field educators do with field education supervisors?

A Modest Proposal.

The task of preparing supervisors for their critical work with students is an opportunity for schools of theology and ministry. Working with supervisors could be claimed by these institutions as part of the work of development or alumni relations. Institutions might want to attend to the links between training supervisors and developing congregational relation-

ships. Field educators work with supervisors in ways that are largely invisible and sometimes lack the support and understanding of the rest of the institution of theological education. However, the opportunity exists to develop some synergy between training supervisors, maintaining relationships with alumni, and listening to key constituencies not only in order to develop financial relationships, but also to call upon the wisdom of the wider community to inform the evolving organism of theological education. This work will require agility on the part of field educators, who must develop new tools in relation to shifting dynamics between institutions and their constituencies in order to integrate the concerns of field education with other institutional concerns.

INTERVENING WHEN CRISES OCCUR

Another issue of concern for field educators is the necessity for intervening in problematic supervisory relationships. Field educators generally know that in a program with forty to fifty students, at least one situation will arise in which either the supervisor has major concerns about the student's functioning, or the student has a problem with the supervisor's ways of relating to the student. In such situations, usually the field educator receives a call for help and a request for some form of intervention to either resolve the issue or to remove the student from the problematic setting. This places the field educator into a role for which there are few resources and limited institutional understanding.

In spite of the lack of formalized training for field educators in mediating conflict, most field educators must perform such mediation on a regular basis. There are no published resources that specifically treat how field educators should intervene, and there are no professional guidelines that would indicate standards for when and how such intervention should take place. Many field educators have developed their own policies and procedures, which they may have published in their handbooks for field education. Since each field educator actually mediates only one to four times per year, to rely solely on their experience is insufficient to draw conclusions about best practices.

Field educators may begin the mediation in these problematic situations with the student or with the supervisor or in three-way meetings. Such intervention calls for excellent counseling skills and self-differentiation on the part of field educators. In my own experience, I often find that once I enable the supervisor or student to articulate their concerns, the student and supervisor both report that they had been previously unable to fully discuss the specifics of their problems. Once those concerns are named, I help them develop strategies for adapting to the likelihood that such behaviors might continue, and how to develop a useful repertoire of responses. However, the reality is that such intervention is rarely named as part of the field educator's job description, and there is little attention paid to how field educators, supervisors, or students learn through these experiences.

A Pattern for Mediating Conflict.

When I speak to field educators, I hear general agreement that mediating conflicts in field education calls for their greatest skills. A student might call in sick more often than a supervisor thinks is professional and appropriate in the pastoral role. We may begin by discussing general norms for absence in the profession, what the expectations are for communicating problems, and how one is supposed to arrange for coverage when absence cannot be avoided. When I moderate such discussions, usually supervisors discover that their expectations had been unexpressed and assumed, and most students discover they had not taken the initiative to inquire about how they should handle situations in which they could not follow through with their responsibilities. In such cases, often the candid conversation, combined with clear agreements about how such situations will be handled in the future, is sufficient to re-establish a basically functional supervisory relationship.

At the present time, there is much anxious conversation among field educators about legal liabilities of institutions for potential problems with supervisors, students, or both. For example, there is no uniformity of background checking for whether or not supervisors or students have been involved in either legal or church polity difficulties. This article is not the place to treat such concerns in detail. However, it is important to acknowledge that these potential legal concerns add both to the importance and the

complexity of training, supporting, and intervening in supervisory relationships.

WHEN THE CONFLICTS ARE WIDER OR BIGGER THAN SUPERVISION

Sometimes, the supervisory relationship contains the potential to exacerbate or help resolve conflicts that exist within the wider institutions of the church, the theological school, and society. For example, a theological school has taken a stand for social justice from an evangelical perspective; a student finds a placement in a congregation that offers significant financial and high profile support to the school but does not agree with the school's stance. The field educator is in a crucial role to interpret and balance the apparently conflicting perspectives of the congregational setting and the student's classroom experiences. The field educator also could do significant harm to the public relations of the school by refusing to place students in a setting that the field educator judges to be in conflict with core principles of the theological school. The question remains: Who works out these potentially conflicting priorities?

On occasion, I have found myself juggling the values of ethnic minorities to select their leaders and develop new congregations with my core beliefs that students should be able to learn in environments where they could explore their leadership potential without such high levels of pressure. Sometimes students who recently immigrated to the United States have been tapped by their communities to start congregations and to serve as the solo pastor. The students often want to continue in that work for their field education. I assume it is almost always best for students to work in an established congregation with a mentor on site for their first ministry experience. Yet, those immigrant groups could sometimes ill afford to let their carefully selected leaders leave their congregations in order to learn in established and often not ethnically consistent settings. In fact, students often felt that they might have more difficulty developing their voice as leaders if they were removed from the familiar settings of their own immigrant cultures. There are trade-offs between working within one's own community, where one can be encouraged to develop one's voice and do

important ministries establishing congregations, and the potential value of functioning as a learner in a less familiar setting.

As an outsider, I have sometimes observed what I felt to be possible exploitation of students, which I found it difficult to name, let alone address. An immigrant student might, for example, be promised the legal support needed to get a permanent visa if they would work in a particular congregation. This made it difficult for the student to feel she had a choice about where to serve during her field education experiences. Yet if I can not find other ways to help students like this to address their very real needs of legal support for working with the immigration service, how can I insist that they move to a congregation I feel would be more suitable for their learning?

Finding Appropriate Learning Contexts.

We can broaden our understanding of the realities of every ministry setting by using complex moments such as the one described above to see more clearly where students cease learning and shut down or where students are less free than we want to think all people should be. In the example I gave above, it is important for citizens of the host country to pay attention to the real dynamics that immigrants face in every aspect of their lives. It is also an opportunity to examine how the pedagogical values we cherish may actually be wedded to circumstances of privilege that are not available to all people equally. By paying attention to apparently irresolvable conflicts, we may discover deeper levels of understanding.

One year I decided to leverage my role as the field education director, which I sometimes embodied as the one who sets rules and enforces standards, to learn more about a particular student group's experiences. I had a large number of students from one ethnic immigrant group. I decided to stop trying to get them to follow my rules, and instead to just listen to them tell me what their needs were. I offered them hospitality respectful of their culture, and explained to them that I had decided to spend a year attending to their experiences, without making any effort to enforce my existing rules. I interviewed them and took careful notes. I discovered, quite to my surprise, that there was amazing diversity in their own understanding of the demands of their culture. Previously, I had misheard them, thinking they were telling me that there were uniform expectations and demands of them in their culture. Instead, I began to hear them describe in vivid detail the

same kinds of inconsistencies within their culture that I knew to exist in many cultures, including my own. At the same time as they had been trying to accommodate my previously inflexible rules, they were also negotiating inconsistent demands within their own ethnic community. This helped me to move beyond a limited characterization not only of their situations, but also of the life challenges of all students.

This example shows how what we might label as a problem in supervision might instead become an opportunity if we simply change our orientation to the problem. This is true of ethnic situations, such as I describe, but it could also be true in the earlier named problems when ministry settings do not carry the same theological perspectives or social orientations as the school. Field educators are well positioned to listen and attend to the deepest issues and the complexity in naming and addressing those concerns.

RETHINKING THE POWER DIFFERENTIAL

The power differential between supervisor and student is often the occasion for misunderstanding and conflict. Supervisors often have tremendous influence in the ordination process, and their recommendations can make or un-make a student's future professional direction. Sometimes this can be of relatively minor concern, especially when the supervisor understands its reality and knows how to negotiate the issues that relate to power differential. However, the power differential can become a problem when supervisors use their power in ways that are at best unfair and at worst are unethical, immoral, or illegal. When a supervisor, for example, wants a student to do something that the students should not do—whether it be a polity issue, such as presiding at the table alone or performing a wedding unsupervised, or something of a major ethical level, such as engaging in a sexual relationship—it is extremely difficult for the student to overcome the power imbalance in order to address the issue. Students may have difficulty recognizing the dynamics that place them in an obligatory situation. Or students may have difficulty speaking because of threats, open or veiled, of retaliation.

While in my experience such situations are fortunately extremely rare, it is important to acknowledge that field educators are on the front lines of assisting students in addressing power-related issues. On the occasion when a supervisor attempts to require a student to engage in unethical or immoral behavior, it is crucial that the field educator be available to assist in extricating the student from the relationship. Once again it is important to name the institutional and systemic aspects of such problems. Field educators are in the position of placing students with or removing students from supervisors whose own denominations or professions are often unable to monitor the standards of their practitioners. It is difficult to operate without accurate information, and such information can sometimes literally be unavailable to the field educator. The field educator may have to make a decision to back a student's perception of a situation without being able to fully determine what has occurred. It simply is not always possible or advisable to conduct a thorough investigation, but field educators must err on the side of protecting students.

One might find, for example, that a student reports that his supervisor is showing up late for crucial events, like funerals, is forgetting names, and is slurring her speech. The student is receiving complaints from parishioners about the supervisor's functioning. The student asks the supervisor what is happening, and the supervisor denies there are problems in their functioning. The supervisory sessions begin to focus on the supervisor's anxieties and concerns and diverge from any theological reflection or concerns the student might have. The student turns to the field educator with these issues. The field educator must decide what actions if any to take.

The field educator does not know the accuracy of the student's reporting. They do not know if the supervisor is suffering from health-related concerns, such as a developing brain tumor, or from alcoholism, or from a personality disorder. The field educator does not know if the congregation is aware of the extent or the nature of the problems. It is unknown whether or not denominational officials are already involved or if they have any idea what is happening. The amount of information that the field educator does not have makes it difficult for the field educator to move forward in ways that minimize harm to the congregation, the supervisor, and the student. While the field educator might gather some additional information, in the end some decision will need to be made, including the decision

to do nothing, and it will be based on inadequate and potentially false information.

Once again this problem contains potential opportunities. The field educator can, for example, reflect with the student on how leaders often have to make decisions when they have inadequate and potentially inaccurate information. The field educator can use the opportunity to inform the student how leaders engage in adaptive problem solving, and can set the student up to partner in making the difficult decisions arising from the complex relationship in which they find themselves.

I have explored several problems field educators talked to me about in their relationships with supervisors. There is a general lack of clarity about precisely what we expect of supervisors and how to engage them in the work most effectively. Field educators struggle to maintain adequate standards of training and monitor the quality of supervision. Field educators must navigate their entangled relationships with varying levels of support and sometimes incompatible constituencies. They must pay attention to the uneven power dynamics with the supervisory relationship. Each of these problems can be explored for its institutional dynamics, and then may also lead us to envision new opportunities for growth as educators, scholars, and practitioners.

Ministry for a Multicultural Church and Society

Faustino M. Cruz

How is our understanding and practice of ministry in the United States informed, formed, and transformed by the multicultural context in which we minister? To address this question, clinical pastoral education supervisors, Christian educators, field education directors, and others who serve in faith-based professions should critically engage with the following:

- a. Retrieval of memory, acknowledgment of history
- b. Identity and belonging
- c. Developing symbiotic relationships
- d. Intercultural communication
- e. Embracing difference with empathy, making-meaning in connectedness
- f. Collaboration
- g. Reflective practice—immigration as a *locus theologicus* toward right action

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

RETRIEVAL OF MEMORY, ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HISTORY

The longtime residents of Siler City, North Carolina, have been coping with culture shock. Their small, homogenous, rural town has experienced one of the most radical demographic shifts in their recent history. They identify at least three significant marks of such a dissonance-producing “abnormality”:

- a. The entrance sign leading to the local hospital is the bilingual *Entrada/Entrance*.
- b. More than forty percent of the student population at Siler Elementary School is Hispanic.
- c. About eighty percent of the workforce at the two poultry plants is from Mexico, Nicaragua, and other countries. U.S. immigration observers maintain that the influx of newcomers especially into the nation’s rural South has been straining schools and social services. This phenomenon has forced human resource agencies to rethink their ways of dealing with citizens, forever changing the old idea of “what a southerner is.” This on-going culture shock felt at different intensities across the country challenges us to acknowledge history.

Remember James Russell Lowell praising Emma Lazarus, who gave the Statue of Liberty an American meaning and a reason for its existence in her poem *The New Colossus*.

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!*

Lazarus renamed the statue the “Mother of Exiles.” The essence of this icon of freedom whose beacon-hand gestures unconditional welcome to the world inspires the United States to regard itself as an inclusive nation of immigrants. Despite this nation’s fundamental conviction to advance inclusion, U.S. immigration policies and anti-immigrant sentiments have historically raised vital questions of belonging: Who are welcome, and to whom should the door be shut?

The era of restriction from 1924–1964 effectively extinguished the “lamp beside the golden door” and refused passage to “huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” quoting Lazarus again. However, in 1965, the

U.S. Congress passed the Hart-Cellar Act that provided passage particularly to middle-class professionals from less developed Asian and Latin American countries. With the arrival of the largest wave of mass immigration since the period of Great Migration (1880–1924), the United States recovered its notoriety as a nation of immigrants. Concomitantly, it has faced new and pervasive social, economic, political, and religious challenges, as it becomes one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse societies in the world.

The current population of the United States closely resembles that of the 1850s. While the Great Migration during the nineteenth century came primarily from Europe, the largest groups of immigrants today are Hispanics and Asian Pacific Islanders. From 1990 to 2000, roughly two-thirds of the population growth originated from Blacks, Asians, Native Americans, and Hispanics. These minority groups have increased at more than six times the rate of non-Hispanic whites. Nearly one resident in ten is foreign-born, and about one in every four belongs to a racial or ethnic minority group. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that, by 2015, minorities will comprise one-third of the population, a mix that is already found among children.

Although the country has historically problematized race relations as a “Black-White issue,” Roderick Harrison of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies argues that the on-going growth of Hispanic and Asian Pacific Islander population radically transforms race relations into a multicultural issue. While twenty-first century U.S. society seemingly views ethnicity as a “mere consequence of diversity,” it still proves to be an on-going social construction that demands careful analysis. Therefore, the aggregate impact of reweaving the political, social, and religious fabric of the United States through immigration is undeniably unpredictable. These historical insights raise significant pastoral challenges.

First, ministers are impelled to engage critically their various perspectives of ministry and the diverse contexts in which ministry is practiced. This means that their definition of ministry should reflect the daily struggle and survival of the communities with which they proclaim, celebrate, and serve. Secondly, they should develop more fully the ability to affirm, challenge, and transform these perspectives and practices in light of the Word of God. Thirdly, drawing from this theological reflection, they should imagine a plausible metaphor for how they, as reflective practitioners, could

effectively negotiate their identities and affiliations within and beyond their comfort zones.

IDENTITY AND BELONGING:
NEGOTIATING ETHNICITY IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

When new nation states emerged as a result of attempts to decolonize Africa and Asia in the 1960s, sociologists used the term “ethnicity” to encourage “the positive feelings of belonging to a cultural group.” Ethnicity presupposes a shared culture and a real or putative common ancestry. The *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* lists some of the common features of ethnicity that are found in multiple combinations within an ethnic group:

Common geographic origin; migratory status; race; language or dialect; religious faith or faiths; ties that transcend kinship, neighborhood, and community boundaries; shared traditions, values, and symbols; literature, folklore, and music; food preferences; settlement and employment patterns; special interest in regard to policies; institutions that specifically serve and maintain the group; an internal sense of distinctiveness; and an external perception of distinctiveness.¹

Since then, the term “ethnicity” has also implied “total hostility and genocide toward neighboring [ethnic] groups,” as evidenced by the proliferation of ethnic cleansing in many parts of the world.² Psychologists assert that the impulse to develop a sense of belonging and historical continuity with an ethnic community is a basic psychological need, which evokes deep unconscious feelings. Therefore, they caution that persons who ignore, alter, or denounce their ethnic identity—by assuming a new name or rejecting their familial and social roots—will seriously jeopardize their well-being.³

Writing on the politics of self-identification, Becky Thompson and Sangeta Tyagi claim that subjects of diversity must overcome the pressures that lead to cultural amnesia. One way of addressing this dilemma is by retrieving their subjective memory of trauma and collective histories of domination. What should immigrants and persons belonging to minority groups do to achieve this? Within the creative spaces of a community of memory, they must analyze critically the following:

- The names they use to define themselves
- The perceptions about race they acquired as children
- The influence of social movements in molding and shaping their intellectual, political, and artistic works
- Their patterns of conversation and negotiation amid multiple identifications and belonging
- The challenges of participation in conservative political times
- The future possibilities of identity constructed upon a principle of inclusion rather than on exclusionary standards—denial, dismissal, or making others alien⁴

As a nation of immigrants, the United States has struggled to negotiate ethnicity, particularly when difference or otherness disrupts its dominant construction of the “American way of life.” One concrete way to embrace diversity more fully is by developing symbiotic, intercultural relationships.

DEVELOPING SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIPS

The prefix “inter-” denotes positionality: between/among, within, or in the midst of. It also signifies mutuality and reciprocity. The term “intercultural” performs these functions by forging comparisons, exchanges, cooperation, and confrontation among ethnic affiliations. In a pastoral context, intercultural refers to a ministerial environment of mutual acculturation, collaboration, and communication. While the term “multicultural” typically stands for, in general usage, a relationship between majority and minority members of a community, “intercultural” defines a symbiotic relationship among all the different enclaves regardless of their position of power or privilege.

For instance, in education, this means dismantling institutional practices that paralyze teaching and learning for marginalized groups. This argument reflects Carter Woodson’s grief over the mis-education of Black students who were taught European civilization to the exclusion of any content that legitimized their African roots. This paradigm shift requires a comprehensive curriculum that draws from the different linguistic, epistemological, and cultural perspectives that participants bring with them, “in convergence” with the mainstream educational framework. This principle intends to critique any form of academic elitism or colonial persuasion—a “hidden curriculum” that presumes the superiority of U.S. edu-

cational theory and practice over any other academic/formative culture in which international students may have been socialized.

Among the multiple intelligences that Howard Gardner identifies, linguistic intelligence—I think therefore I am—as well as logical-mathematical intelligence are privileged in a traditional learning environment over spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, naturalist, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences.⁵ Consequently, field education students are still primarily assessed—in other words, graded—based on how well they write synthesis projects or how clearly they present case studies orally. This raises a serious formational question for some Asian and Latino students with limited English proficiency. Some of them have culturally grounded, well-integrated interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences; they deeply empathize with the persons with whom they minister and have a reflective “self-understanding in connectedness.” Those with well-developed musical and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences preside gracefully and creatively at worship services. Their meaning-making system is not dependent solely on what we commonly regard as literacy skills. In today’s academic climate that requires seminaries and schools of theology to create a “culture of evidence,” measure outcomes, and close the loop to remain accredited, promoting intercultural ways of knowing and habits of being are absolutely essential.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

A rudimentary requirement for fashioning symbiotic relationships is intercultural communication, a method whereby cultural variables play a primordial role in the communication process. Carley Dodd writes:

Not only must we trace culture’s socializing patterns on each person, but recognize and respect how culture’s imprint accounts for differences in communication style, world-view, and personality. All too often, experts find messages and relationships halted, because one or both people in the relationship are not sure how to respond to a person who is perceived as dissimilar.⁶

Being perceived as different, *gaijin*, *haole*, stranger or “other” is a counter-intuitive experience. The psychological dissonance or shock that such encounter produces impels humans to see the familiar urgently and to negate the different disparagingly. Culture shock disarms and numbs; it

induces a sense of "I am out of control." To cope with losing control, an inexperienced American in the Philippines might appeal to U.S. standards as benchmark to prove that everything Filipino is inferior to "what I left back home." Inferiority, then, indisputably becomes the inscrutable cause of one's dis-ease. A quick panacea for such dysfunctional response consists of things or relationships that can relocate or reconnect uprooted sojourners to their familiar cultural space; seemingly, it may be as frivolous as a trip to Starbucks or a serendipitous meeting with a compatriot at a department store.

For many neophyte travelers, the experience of spatial and psychological dislocation not only triggers culture shock but also an intense repugnance to being "other." This occurs because most citizens of industrialized societies have developed an awareness of otherness that corresponds to "them" or "anyone who is not like me." On the contrary, some citizens of colonized countries or developing economies have personified otherness. They have internalized marginality (in other words, being in between) by identifying the center of power and privilege as "the one I would like to be but will never become as good as." When they migrate to nations of the North, many suffer from being outsiders, even from within. Moreover, receiving cultures are prone to imposing aggressively dominant values, traditions, and moral languages upon newcomers. This compulsion stems from a fear of losing their cultural identity and boundaries to the heterogenizing effects of intercultural encounters. Anti-immigrant sentiments are rooted in the fear of being a minority among minorities.

The effectiveness of intercultural communication, both verbal and non-verbal, depends on its ability to mitigate the counter-intuitive and dissonance producing effects of intercultural encounters by challenging stereotypes, discrimination, and prejudice. Intercultural communication aims to equip persons with the essential conceptual framework and practical skills to counter or reverse the human proclivity toward ethnocentrism. One path to consider is embracing difference with empathy.

EMBRACING DIFFERENCE WITH EMPATHY, MEANING-MAKING IN CONNECTEDNESS

There exists a human potential for apathy and hate toward the stranger. In order to negate the negative, humans must harness "a politically miracu-

lous power that broadens perspectives and stimulates consciousness." This dynamism not only accommodates or tolerates, but also "transcends private interests and the antagonisms they breed." Benjamin Barber creatively defines this power as empathy.⁷

Nel Noddings examines the notion of empathy in the context of caring. She asserts that empathy is the ability to apprehend the reality of the other. To understand, she argues, is to become a duality: a person receives the other person into oneself—seeing and feeling with the other in the sense of "engrossment." To empathize is to place oneself in the other's shoes, as mothers quite naturally feel toward their infants. Empathy propels humans to transcend their individualism and recognize their neighbors' experiences of survival and struggle, as well as their accomplishments and victories as a plausible future for themselves.⁸ According to Noddings:

When I look at and think about how I am when I care, I realize that there is invariably this displacement of interest from my own reality to the reality of the other.... To be touched, to have aroused in me something that will disturb my own ethical reality, I must see the other's reality as a possibility for my own.... When we see the other's reality as a possibility for us, we must act to eliminate the intolerable, to reduce the pain, to fill the need, to actualize the dream.⁹

Thus, empathy differs from the act of analyzing another person's reality as "objective data," which requires a concrete response or the "power of projecting one's personality into, and so fully understanding, the object of contemplation."¹⁰

Empathy invites the knower to be one with—yet separate from—the known. It motivates the knower "to imagine and be sensitive to the interior life of others." This union is effectively expressed in a language of intimacy.¹¹ Therefore, the duality that Noddings speaks of ultimately assumes a unitive rather than a dichotomous relationship between the knower and the known.

Empathy emphasizes the significance of contextuality and relativity of knowledge construction. The knower must possess the ability to "understand that answers to all questions vary depending on the context in which they are asked and on the frame of reference of the person doing the asking."¹² To affirm a person's reality as a possibility for oneself has significant ramifications.

Jane Van Galen argues that while most educators generally serve the best interest of their students, there are those who misread the behaviors of

students of color, the economically underprivileged learner, and female students who come from diverse cultural contexts and social locations.¹³ To illustrate, some Asian students would never look in their supervisor's eye as a gesture of respect for elders or persons of authority; they fold their arms when being spoken to as a sign of attentiveness; and they do not speak unless given permission, in recognition of the teachers' wisdom. Professional ministers from dominant cultures have misconstrued this comportment as passivity, indifference, or even lack of maturity, as "folded-arms" in some western cultures may even indicate passive aggression. A woman spiritual director from an upper middle-class, urban, European American background might struggle in relating with a religious priest who grew up in a tribal community in the highlands of Thailand.

To diminish the possibility of conflict, Van Galen demands a more critical analysis of the lives of the students, a reflective reading of and inquiry on their cultural, economic, and social and religious narratives.¹⁴ This component is imperative because educators tend to interact inconsistently and divergently with students whom they perceive as different on the basis of class, race, ethnicity, gender, or physical disability. For instance, ministry supervisors might lower their assessment standards for students who speak with a heavy "foreign" accent, equating limited language proficiency and intellectual ability. Generally, ministers and educators are more comfortable engaging with students whose social locations closely resemble their own—which for the most part characterizes the profile of the dominant culture.

Furthermore, Van Galen cautions against the limits of compassion in facilitating diversity. She refers to situations wherein "caring" conceals the marginalization of female and minority students, and mutes the "disruptive voices" that expose the pervasive "unpleasantness," which characterizes the lives of many underprivileged students.¹⁵ A "culture of niceness" ensues and assumes a neutral stance on conflicts; it pretends that they do not exist or that they will die a natural death.

Making meaning in connected ways can be extrapolated from the lowland Filipino acute sense of *pakikipagkapwa-tao* (care of neighbor), and its corollary *damayan* (attentive expression and reflexive sharing of suffering and loss). These connected ways of knowing strengthen a person's propensity to understand more fully the reality of another (*unawa*). In union with other ways of knowing, they collectively constitute genuine wisdom: intellect as power of knowing (*pag-iisip*), reason (*dunong*, *katwiran*), judgment

(*hatol*), comprehension (*talino*), and intelligence (*kaalaman*). This convergence affirms the unitive essence and performance of empathy as dynamic “knowing in relatedness.”

Mary Brydon-Miller makes a similar argument. She asserts that in the Zambian language Chewa, as in other African languages, the word *nzelu* (intelligence with compassion) basically means understanding and performing right action or fusing wisdom and intelligence. She observes that persons with *nzelu* purposefully behave in a manner that insures the safety and welfare of others in the community. On the other hand, Zambians condemn those who are “simply intelligent” and regard persons without *nzelu* as dangerous.¹⁶

Similarly, in Filipino epistemology, “to know” implies the ability to discern acutely what others feel for the purpose of sharing the same feelings with them. This construction of knowledge represents what intercultural psychologists call social intelligence. Thus, to be *manhid* (apathetic) translates to a serious psychosocial dysfunction.¹⁷ In some societies, the cognitive expressions of intelligence (for example, literacy, memory, and the ability to process information efficiently) are inherently futile unless they are intended for the common good and the transformation of the community. Thus, Japanese society demands this moral dimension of knowing, whereby cognitive performance must be nurtured together with an empathic dimension. Knowledge is understood as serviceableness, responsibility, perseverance, politeness, and obedience.¹⁸

In the words of an anonymous English author, empathy means “to see with the eyes of another, to hear with the ears of another, and to feel with the heart of another.” Whether expressed as attentive love or maternal thinking, empathy is a deep structure in the development of connected ways of knowing. Ministers and all those in helping professions must discover how persons could develop empathy, particularly by promoting opportunities for collaboration.

COLLABORATION

Collaboration engenders a humanistic approach to ministry; it encourages active participation and inclusion. In education, collaborative approaches

liberate adults from the still dominant pedagogical method that gives teachers absolute control over learning. In most cases, students are impaired by their inability to read and write, making them non-literate or inarticulate. Collaborative learning initiates learners into the skills of “conversation in relatedness.” Persons learn to recognize diverse and dissenting voices, to distinguish proper occasions of utterance, and to acquire the intellectual, affective, and moral habitus appropriate to conversation. Kenneth Bruffee refers to these actions as “sharing our toys”—the books, ideas, beliefs, ways of life, and cultural milieu that adult learners must share in associated life to make meaning about themselves and the world in which they live.¹⁹

In educating diverse learners, certain principles should be followed:

- Validate each learner as an active participant and decision maker in the learning process
- Build relationships for empathic communication
- Enable learners to reclaim suspended narratives, set goals, and assess their gifts and needs
- Legitimize intercultural perspectives
- Realize mutual accountability among all participants

Collaborative learning provides intercultural learners with a strategic space for associated life, a place of convergence for persons coming from diverse socio-cultural and economic backgrounds who negotiate multiple local and transnational affiliations. It recognizes the experiential knowledge of every member of the group, making each one an active subject of one’s learning. It facilitates conversations across linguistic, epistemological, and cultural boundaries. It creates a locus for performing right action for transformation.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: IMMIGRATION AS A
LOCUS THEOLOGICUS TOWARD RIGHT ACTION

Religious historians claim that not much has been written on immigration as a *locus theologicus*. Speaking at a 1999 symposium that shaped the U.S. Catholic bishops’ pastoral statement *Unity in Diversity: Welcoming the Stranger Among Us*, Philip Gleason presents his argument. He asserts that no one has done a systematic study of the intersection between U.S. immigration

and inter-group relations history and the history of the U.S. Catholic church in the twentieth century, even with existing interdisciplinary research that touch upon these disciplines.²⁰

Other scholars present similar claims. Jay Dolan laments that many of his colleagues have dismissed the relevance of immigration in the study of American religious history. Documenting the Catholic Church's encounter with race in the twentieth century urban north, John McGreevy stresses that despite the fact that U.S. Catholics used religious languages to recount their social history, most historians still minimize the relevance of religion. He observes:

Religion frequently ends up at the bottom of the list of variables presumed to shape individual identity, as an ethical afterthought to presumably more serious matters of class, gender, and ethnicity. Churches as institutions—along with local stores, schools, and recreational facilities—receive an occasional acknowledgment, but the emphasis is on organization, not on how theological traditions help believers interpret their surroundings.²¹

Leonard Dinnerstein and David Reimers argue that the dialectical relationship between religion and immigration warrants a more systematic analysis, since religion was the primary source of conflict between immigrants and native-born Americans especially before the 1860s Civil War era:

More precisely, the key battles were fought over American objections to Irish Catholics. The underlying issues revolved around the American belief that Roman Catholicism and American institutions, which were based on Protestant concepts, were incompatible. In this view, if Catholics took over America, the pope in Rome would rule and religious and political liberty would be destroyed.²²

Timothy Smith emphasizes that immigration was indisputably a "theologizing experience" for European immigrants. He contends that they sought religious meaning in the "mysteries of individual existence and the confusing agonies of anomie," inspired by some of their ancestors in faith: Abraham fleeing the land of his ancestors; the exodus of Israelites into the wilderness with Moses; and Jeremiah imploring the exiles who wept by the rivers of Babylon to make the God of the past the hope of the future. Smith also maintains that religion was a key element in the process by which immigrants—who were strangers to one another and lacked a collective national identity—molded themselves into relatively coherent groups, each with its distinctive sense of peoplehood. He states that in developing a

sense of belonging, immigrants relied heavily upon the renewal of their religious faith and commitment that concomitantly informed their decision to migrate and pursue the promise of self-actualization in the new land.²³

David Power reiterates the importance of religion for developing immigrant ethnic identity and also legitimizes immigration as a *locus theologicus*. Religion, he explains, enabled new settlers to acculturate more fully in a new social order; it provided them with a framework with which to self identify and experience social and cultural rituals of belonging. Neither religion nor identity of origin prevented Europeans from becoming Americans. Power illustrates how traditional or popular Catholicism affirmed and mediated an immigrant's primary identity (Irish, German, Polish, or Czech) with one's secondary loyalty (United States), resulting in the formation of double or even multiple identities rather than the demise of the former.²⁴

Focusing on the psychological implications of religion for understanding immigrant experience, Oscar Handlin writes that religion as a way of life effectively became radically relevant because it was one element from the immigrants' cultural origin that could seemingly be re-rooted into a new social location:

As peasants at home, awed by the hazardous nature of the universe and by their own helplessness, these people had fled to religion as a refuge from the anguish of the world. Their view of their own lives had generated a body of conceptions and of practices that intimately expressed their innermost emotions. It was not only that they held certain theological doctrines; but (also) their beliefs were most closely enwrapped in the day-to-day events of their existence. The specific acts of being religious were the regular incidents of the village year. Their coming needed no forethought, indeed no consciousness.²⁵

Immigrants were determined not to allow migration to sever their relationship with their church in the homeland. Handlin writes that "letters from the other side brought news of the place and the people; letters from this side brought gifts to embellish the building, and sometimes requests for counsel from the priest." Immigrants were committed to "bring their churches to the United States" and "to reconstitute in their new homes the old forms of worship." However, as Handlin points out, immigrants also realized that the church of the homeland could not be irreducibly reconstructed and implanted into the soil without facing political, cultural, and ecclesiastical limitations, challenges, and conflicts.²⁶

Lastly, Jay Dolan recognizes religion as a salient feature of immigrant life, and identifies immigration as the *locus theologicus* that transcends denominational boundaries. He points out that immigration inspires historians to “emphasize aspects of our past that may have gone unnoticed” and “call for explanations where none was thought necessary before.” Dolan regards the church as one of the “keepers of culture.” He believes that church art, architecture, theology, and devotional practices have been a valuable source of information for the study of religion and for how to make such life “human.” His interest focuses on the religious behavior and mentality of nineteenth century immigrants. Drawing from historical data generated outside the institutional church—letters written by immigrants to their family and friends in the old country—he establishes a comprehensive profile of early Irish immigrants.²⁷

In reading the letters, Dolan immediately finds a striking difference between the religion of Catholic immigrants as articulated in prayer books and rituals and what is found in their letters. The letters reveal a very plain religion centered in a God who cares about people. On the other hand, the prayer books and rituals developed by clergy communicate what Dolan calls the Catholic ethos—a belief system grounded in sin, authority, ritual, and the miraculous. Although letters cannot be the only resource used in searching for the religious world of immigrants, the behavior of the people at church-sponsored rituals cannot absolutely express their religious sensibilities either. Scholars should then utilize other viable sources including prayer books, sermons, rituals, hymns, and diaries.²⁸ As David Power puts it, the history of the Catholic immigrants cannot be told simply as a history of diocesan institutions and rituals, such as liturgical practices, schools, hospitals, or parish organizations. For these reasons, scholars and practitioners should work assiduously to reclaim immigration both as text and context of theological reflection, within and among the many publics of theology and ministry.

Regardless of how common religious experiences are codified, transcendent realities, according to David Tracy, possess a public rather than a private character. Thus, scholars must communicate any classic expression of a particular ethnic religious experience in “ways that draw from the language, heritage, and traditions of particular cultures.” This idea implies that any critical theological reading or reflection on immigrant religious experience must include: the ways in which parents passed on the faith; the

vocabulary used by the people to speak to God, Christ, Mary, human life; and the enigmatic expression which goes under the generic heading of popular devotion.²⁹ This method of communicating religious experience is significant for bridging a critical gap between those who have the power and those who do not, to construct, interpret, and apply knowledge. It deliberately draws from (a) the religious knowledge that local community members construct themselves using their indigenous and cultural resources and (b) the religious knowledge that ecclesial authorities generate and declare as canon.

Today, new immigrants continue to leave their homes in search of security and freedom: security from armed conflict, violence, human rights abuses and poverty; and the freedom to realize their personal potential, to participate in the governance of their country, and to express their individual and collective identity.³⁰ For many immigrants, the quest for security and freedom foreshadows what Edward Schillebeeckx calls "negative experiences of contrast."³¹ To those who seek passage, immigration engenders a traumatic experience of "separation from country of origin, homeland, roots, culture, home, memory or childhood." It inflicts a "wound which will remain open, an exile without return."³²

This open wound is further deepened when some receiving nations view immigration as "the intrusion of others, as an invasion of their house, their territory, their economic sphere, and also the heart of their imagination and their hopes." As William H. A. Williams observes, "almost no one comes to America for the joy of interacting with other races and other faiths. Nor do many native-born Americans rise in the morning praying that they may hear one more accent, see yet one more strange face."³³ Reflecting on global migration through the lens of the Holocaust, Dietmar Mieth proposes that our common human experiences of Auschwitz, which allow us to remember conversion events "out of the negation of the negative," must inspire us to change our attitudes toward migrants and refugees.³⁴ This call to conversion must be grounded in the mission of a church to declare "no" to the world as it is.

Inspired by the desire of the early Christian communities to further the ministry of Jesus, the church becomes a visible and concrete manifestation of God's saving action in human history. Through liturgy and worship (ministry of Word and sacrament), the confession of faith, and engagement in reflective practice, the church remembers and proclaims its under-

standing of how God is encountered in history as Creator, Revealer, and Spirit. The church reinterprets the initial memory of Jesus in a manner relevant to its changing context and structure of meaning: past (memory), present (reflection), and the community's constant effort at human betterment (praxis) toward the future.

Therefore, for a church to serve more fully as a sacrament of God's revelation and liberating action in the world, it must become genuinely intercultural. This vision poses the challenge for communities of Christian faith:

- To reclaim immigration as a *locus theologicus* and as a narrative of negative experiences of contrast, and to interpret it in light of the Christian message
- To enable diverse immigrant communities to participate in knowledge construction and the retrieval of dangerous memory, using their cultural and indigenous resources for educating religiously
- To promote acute consciousness of the relationship between the religious experience of the faithful and the religious experience of the institutional church
- To facilitate interdisciplinary and intercultural conversations on the salience of religion, ethnicity, and immigration in the lives of early immigrants to America, of those who have recently sought passage, and more importantly, of those who have remained *outsiders from within*
- To integrate intentionally the various insights and understandings gained from this critical engagement into the curriculum (purpose, content, method, and environment) of theological education and ministerial formation

This right action is rooted in a universal mission: to promote the inherent dignity and protect the inalienable human rights of all persons and to advance the integrity of creation.³⁵ It is essential to the memory, reflection, and praxis of the people of God. Performed in the U.S. church and society, it is undeniably informed, formed and transformed by a particular multicultural context—an unfinished tapestry shaped by the dynamic shifts and movements of traditions, customs, faith expressions, and ways of knowing within and across its borders.

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SECTION II

VARIATIONS ON THE THEME OF FORMATION, SUPERVISION, MINISTRY

The aim of this first issue of *Reflective Practice* is to explore alternative understandings of supervision and formation and examine the implications of those changes for preparation in and for ministry. The study of mentoring among Episcopal priests by David T. Gortner and John Dreibelbis produced some startling and challenging conclusions on the qualities necessary for being an effective mentor, the nature of a mentoring relationship, and the most beneficial time to be mentored for the sake of strengthening pastoral leaders. John Martinson's essay on coaching adds another metaphor to the mix with a practice that is much more goal driven and directive than traditional models of supervision. Susan Fox has brought coaching into field education in a way that deepens the collaborative bond between student and supervisor.

The focus on "direction" in the essay on spiritual direction by Susan Phillips has implications for all aspects of formation and supervision in ministry. She reasserts the primacy of God as the One whom we seek and respond to in and through all caring and forming relationships. The report by Marsha Cushing on research in supervision among mental health disciplines provides useful criteria for evaluating pastoral supervisors. One alarming report suggests that thirty-three to fifty percent of supervisees are likely to encounter truly harmful supervision. Disregarding the power differential in the relationship and providing little support for supervisees' autonomy and sparse confirmation of their strengths are among the ways harm is done. This report makes the proposal by Gary Gunderson on "the leading causes of life" (our *Special Symposium* that appears later in the journal) all the more critical for the work we do. Building connections, fostering coherence and agency, offering blessing, and sustaining hope are ways to counter harmful supervision.



Herbert Anderson
Editor

Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

Mentoring Clergy for Effective Leadership

David T. Gortner
John Dreibelbis

Are mentors really necessary for effective religious leadership?

Clergy mentorship is upheld as an important part of the vocational formation and training of religious leaders early in their careers. But there has been little in the way of systematic study, evaluation, or direction of the mentoring enterprise. Aside from anecdotal accounts, it is difficult to trace the influence of mentors on their protégés, to determine whether or not this influence exceeds other influences on personal and professional development, and to identify the ways mentors interact with their protégés. It is even more difficult to determine the best practices of mentors in fostering the development of strong religious leaders—or, conversely, to assess what unquestioned patterns and practices in clergy mentoring serve to maintain a status quo of ordained ministry.

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

Researchers and authors have devoted considerable attention to mentorship and coaching in a variety of fields, including business, journalism, law, social action, science, and the arts.¹ According to these authors, nothing can replace the impact experienced from the “highly personal learning process”² that allows protégés to explore and test new skills, immerse themselves in the field, and embrace a vocational identity with the help and guidance of a mentor or coach. Experience with a mentor is at least equally instructive as classroom instruction, and one finds consistent laments across various fields about a perceived disjuncture between what is taught in schools of “training” and what is actually required to do the work. For example, Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Damon, in their study of the field of journalism, asserted that methods of work embraced by top journalists were “solutions that journalists have worked out either on their own or with peers or mentors. We did not find a single instance of a strategy learned from a school of journalism, a training program, or a book or manual.”³ They go on to assert that “excellence is generally transmitted from one individual to another through lineages of mentors and their apprentices.”⁴ This sounds reminiscent of the historic guild system, in which apprentices and journeymen entered into periods of intensive commitment and supposedly close working relationships with guild masters.

Learning with a mentor is a qualitatively different experience than traditional academic learning. In part, this is due to differences in types of knowledge. Academic patterns of higher education tend to emphasize semantic knowledge,⁵ focusing on definitions, broad constructs and theories, and abstract relationships. Mentorship provides more concrete *in vivo* education and training, focusing on tacit and procedural knowledge in direct relation to specific situations of the work itself.⁶ The process involves a much closer unity between specific practice and abstract reflection, with a mentor offering her protégé opportunities for new insight through questions posed and different perspectives offered. Yes, mentors can serve as role models to protégés. But mentors also train their protégés in field-specific habits of what Donald Schön calls “reflective practice”⁷ through mutual review and evaluation of plans, actions, and outcomes. Sharon Parks asserts that this is how leaders are formed and develop best practices: through a kind of Socratic approach to instruction by mentoring leaders who offer genuine presence in how they interact.⁸ Mentors demonstrate and model to protégés a deeply internalized vocational identity that shapes

their interactions, thoughts, and practices. The best mentors are quite intentional about their roles; as put succinctly by Johnson and Ridley, the strongest mentors “select protégés carefully, invest significant time and energy in getting to know their protégés, and deliberately offer the career and support functions most useful for their protégés.”⁹ In this way, the mentoring relationship becomes an important way of transmitting the traditions of the field, the standards of practice for someone in the field, and the ideals and values that form the integrity of the field.

Mentoring, however, has its limitations. If a field is at the forefront of new social or technical development, mentors are by necessity the leaders in the formation and training of people for their vocation. But if a field is not keeping abreast with social and technical changes, then mentors can end up inducting protégés into a system of meaning and practices that no longer has the same merit, influence, or application. Gardner and colleagues found such challenges facing journalists, who relied heavily on mentors but who then found themselves challenged in new and unexpected ways by transitions in the field.¹⁰

In terms of schooling and mentorship, the processes of education and training of clergy do not differ from other fields. Seminaries, divinity schools, and Bible schools all focus principally on imparting semantic (or theoretical) knowledge.¹¹ Experience with mentors, on the other hand, involves getting a real picture and living enactment of what could remain as otherwise idealized or non-concrete images of the work of religious ministry and leadership. Students are introduced to more tacit and procedural approaches to learning in clinical pastoral education and supervised field education—unfortunately uneven from setting to setting. Some graduates are hired by or placed into congregations where there is a senior pastor or a large staff—and some of these graduates may experience very positive direct mentoring, while others may have very poor experiences of laissez-faire neglect or over-active meddling by supervisors. And others are hired or placed directly into solo pastoral leadership positions, without the benefits of the modeling, mirroring, and mutual reflection that can happen with a mentor. Are the benefits of having a mentor really that important?

In our five-year study of clergy leadership and congregational vitality, we explored how various educational, formational, and training experiences contributed to effectiveness in clergy leadership. Our research has given us insight into the experiences of mentoring, the general qualities of clergy

mentors, and the types of learning from mentors, as reported by clergy protégés later in their ministries. Along with evidence of clear models of clergy mentoring, we uncovered patterns that demonstrate a strong relationship between mentorship experiences and the subsequent habits and practices of clergy protégés when they stepped into more advanced positions of congregational leadership. While this research was conducted within a single religious denomination, we suspect that there is much that we would find echoed in other denominations and religions, and that points to some unique elements in the mentoring of clergy.

OUR STUDY

Starting in 1999, we began an ambitious two-phase study of clergy leadership in the Episcopal Church.¹² We began the study like Diogenes with our lamps lit, in search of effective leadership in congregational ministry, eager to uncover the qualities and competencies that contribute to congregational vitality.

In Phase I, we asked peers and judicatory leaders in seven dioceses across the country to nominate Episcopal priests who were senior pastors, who had either contributed to positive change in their congregations (“effective” clergy) or played a part in negative change in their congregations (“struggling” clergy).¹³ We then had our interviewers conduct in-depth interviews with 66 of these priests.¹⁴ Our semi-structured interviews covered topics such as initial impressions formed during the search process, decision-making, collaboration and conflict in the congregation, creativity in ministry, theological reflection on congregational life, and various approaches to communication and networking in the congregation and surrounding community. We also asked at length about the priests’ experiences with mentors and seminary.¹⁵

After nearly a year of preliminary analysis of these lengthy interviews, and initial examination of 151 supplementary interviews that we conducted with lay members, staff, and non-attending town residents in each of the locations, we had some clear ideas about what made our “effective” clergy stand out, and what contributed to the struggles of our “struggling” clergy. We began Phase 2 with a more ambitious search. We created a 20-page survey questionnaire from published inventories and

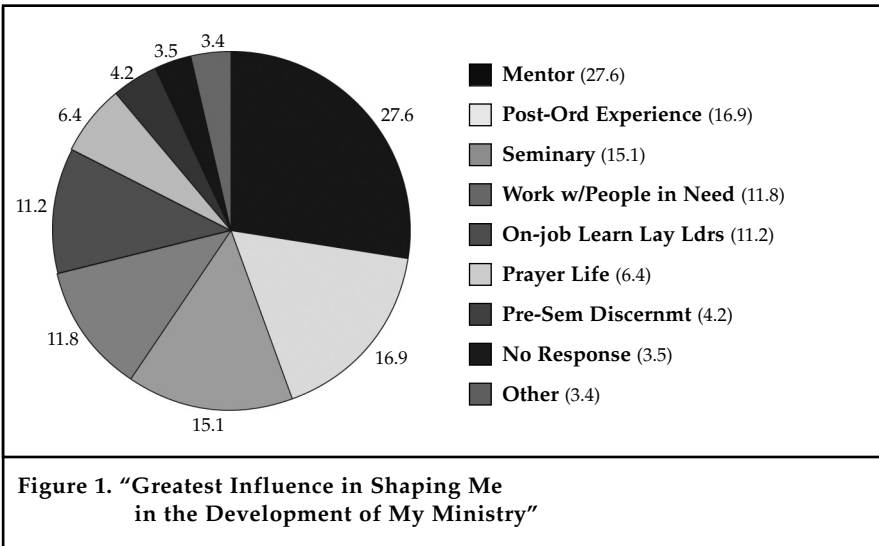
from questions we designed based on our interview findings, including a two-page section on experience with mentors. We mailed the survey to priests serving as senior pastors in over 1,500 congregations of varying size and vitality across the country—and we received 456 completed surveys, for a 30% return rate, from clergy of all ages, from all dioceses throughout the country.

In this article, we focus almost entirely on priests' responses to survey and interview questions about their experience with mentors. Our findings highlight the importance that Episcopal priests give to their experience with mentors in shaping their vocational identities, practices, and skills; the significance of post-seminary and post-ordination mentoring; the strengths of the mentoring process; and the ways in which mentors often fail to pass on some key skills and competencies that contribute directly to clergy effectiveness, thus unwittingly perpetuating systemic Church-wide patterns that maintain a status quo in the ethos of ordained ministry.

MENTORS: KEY TO PASTORAL IDENTITY

As we have noted elsewhere, our priests were not entirely glowing in their descriptions or ratings of seminary experience.¹⁶ While they considered the quality of education quite good, and the personal value generally high, they were not nearly as positive in how relevant they considered seminary education to their day-to-day ministry. This, combined with our sense that much of congregational leadership and pastoral ministry developed through tacit learning and procedural knowledge, left us with a question, "How then do clergy learn how to act effectively as leaders and ministers?" In the survey, we asked our priests a simple question: "What was the greatest influence shaping you in the development of your ministry?"

As figure 1 shows, the single greatest influence on development of ministry named by over one-fourth of Episcopal priests was a relationship with a mentor (27.6%). This was followed in frequency by post-ordination training and experience (16.9%), direct work with people in need (11.8%), and on-the-job learning from lay leaders and parishes (11.2%), resulting in a total of 67.5% of priests who chose various forms of tacit learning as the greatest contributors to their vocational development.¹⁷



This alone suggests the need for denominational leaders to focus more attention on mentor relationships and post-ordination training—and for seminaries to enhance their educational aims by working in partnership with congregations and mentors on clergy continuing education. But then, how important are mentors in particular?

Most Episcopal priests (80.7%) reported having mentors who contributed significantly to their personal growth, skill development, and vocational clarity (only 8.1% reported they had no such mentor, and 11.2% did not respond to this question). Most also reported having more than one mentor, with an average of 3 to 4 important mentors contributing to their vocational development.

To evaluate the most basic impact of mentorship experience, we compared priests who had significant mentors to those who did not have (or mention) mentors, on other behavioral and attitudinal measures from our survey.¹⁸ Priests without significant mentors were less likely to receive any education in decision-making, thus developing idiosyncratic and untested approaches to leadership in decision processes. These priests indicated less tolerance for adaptive work¹⁹ that required minor or incremental changes, instead preferring to attempt sweeping innovations in a congregation. They saw themselves as less self-reliant and more dependent in their work temperament,²⁰ gravitating particularly to being talkative and seeking company, but not seeing themselves as self-confident or decisive.

In contrast, priests who had significant mentors were also more likely to seek out other clergy and laypeople as confidants—thus less likely to attempt a “lone ranger” approach to ordained leadership. They also engaged more frequently in reflective spiritual practices, such as meditation and retreats. In preaching, they more frequently spoke about their own personal experiences as well as recent national or international events, thus showing greater attentiveness to helping people connect Christian faith and daily life in the world. Furthermore, clergy who reported having several significant mentors saw themselves as more assertive as well as cooperative in their approaches to conflict resolution, and they were more likely to form networks with clergy and laypeople in their local communities, beyond congregational and denominational boundaries.

These patterns suggest that mentoring contributes to priests’ skill in systematic reflection on decision-making, willingness to seek counsel from others, effective networking, spiritual self-care, and practical and personal proclamation of the Gospel. More basically, mentoring helps priests become more self-reliant and less dependent in how they approach their ministry and leadership.

Who are these mentors? As seen in figure 2, over half of our priests with mentors (55.3%) identified parish priests (55.3%) as their most significant mentors. An additional 29.1% selected other significant church leaders—bishops, pastors, seminary teachers, and spiritual counselors—resulting in a total of 84.4% whose mentors were other religious leaders. A

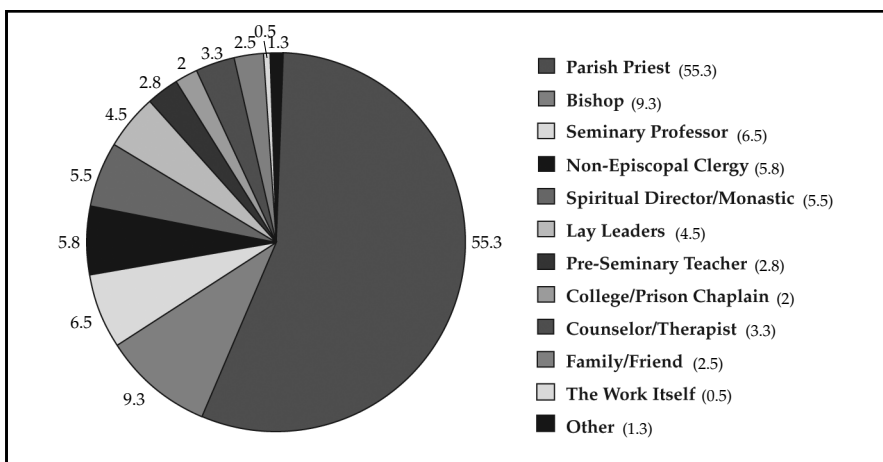


Figure 2. “Who Was Your Most Significant Mentor?”

small percentage (4.5%) reported that lay leaders and parishes mentored them. Two clergy stated that the work itself was their primary “mentor” (0.5%). The remaining respondents to this question reported that pre-seminary teachers, bosses, counselors, and family members were their most significant mentors (9.6%). We found similar patterns among the 66 priests we interviewed in depth—but with 75% of the effective priests talking about parish priests as their most significant mentors.

Most priests with mentors encountered their most significant mentors after ordination (55.2%), in their first ordained jobs, or during seminary (13.0%), typically in parish internships. However, nearly one-third of priests (31.9%) indicated that their most significant mentorship experience occurred before seminary. At any time period—pre-seminary, seminary, or post-seminary—senior priests and pastors were the most frequently noted mentors. Patterns with our 66 interviewed priests were similar—but struggling clergy never talked about post-seminary or post-ordination mentors.

The relationships and roles summarized in table 1 indicate that the most significant source of encouragement and mentorship for clergy are other clergy—usually more advanced in age and years of ordination. Senior clergy (relative to inductees) play an essential role in recognizing priestly and pastoral potential in individuals, fostering and developing ministerial skills, and transmitting the norms, values, and goals of the vocation through word and example. Most responding clergy understood the above question as related to the development of pastoral skill and identity *once they had made the decision to pursue this vocation*. Interestingly, the struggling clergy, who otherwise indicated signs of underdevelopment and lack of key leadership competencies, identified as their mentors the people who helped them “discern” a call to ministry and begin to pursue a priestly vocation; they did not talk about people who helped them further develop and refine their competencies and personal qualities for effective leadership. This raises questions: Are there distinctly different types of mentoring? What happens in clergy mentoring? And are there differences between clergy that might be indicative of how they enter into mentoring relationships?

Relationship with Mentor <i>(survey, n=456)</i>	Priests with any mentor (%)	Priests with senior pastor as mentor (%)	Priests with senior pastor mentor, post-ordination (%)
A parent	14.6	12.0	9.8
A supervisor	14.8	15.4	15.9
A colleague	36.6	40.2	49.2
A friend	34.0	32.4	25.0
Relationship with Mentor <i>(interviews, n=66)</i>			
Relationship with Mentor <i>(interviews, n=66)</i>	Priests (%)	Effective Priests (%)	Struggling Priests (%)
A parent	27	19	64
A supervisor	23	24	27
A colleague	24	25	0
A friend	23	32	9
Table 1. Tone of mentor-protégé relationships (survey and interviews)			

THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

In interviews we asked about the quality of priests' mentor experiences. Some questions were drawn from a larger study of mentorship conducted by Gardner and colleagues in a variety of disciplines.²¹ Questions included frequency of contact, overall nature of the mentoring relationship, key skills and norms learned, qualities most noticeable in the mentor, and qualities that the mentor saw and evoked in protégés. We repeated several of these questions in a truncated form on the survey.

Mentors spent varying amounts of time with the clergypersons in their "tutelage." Interviewees reported a range from monthly to daily contact, and we found no differences between effective and struggling clergy in amount of contact with mentors. But relationships tended to be close. Sometimes the families of mentors and protégés were also involved in the relationship. About one-third of the relationships were conducted entirely

or largely in superior-subordinate work-structured roles, such as clergy to Bishop, student to professor, or rector to assistant, with little spillover to more informal interaction. A few of these relationships involved extensive time and some stages of development, so that the protégé became part of the mentor's family—or the mentor was seen as substituting for a parent who had died and helping the subject “grow out of needing a daddy.”

For instance, George, a struggling priest from the Midwest, said, “My father died when I was 14. And so, from then on, I selected a ‘Daddy,’ until Dean Norman, and after he set me on my course in life, I didn’t need no ‘Daddy.’ So that was kind of the part he played in my life.” His mentoring priest, a dean at a cathedral, apparently had a very open-door policy and familial relationship with his protégé. As a young man seeking his career path prior to seminary, George experienced from this mentoring priest many parental qualities, for instance, being invited every Saturday to his home for dinner with his family, and visiting him once at the restaurant where he worked. What George experienced was a substitution for a missing parent: “I was still looking for a father figure, I think. He was able to offer me that, but to free me from that need at the same time, so I could become ‘Daddy.’” The mentoring and encouraging priest was still seen by George as having superior qualities, such as greater intelligence, a stronger temperament, and more courage.

A few other priests—mostly struggling—experienced this more parental model of mentorship at a young age. Phillippe, another struggling priest, experienced a significant intervention by a priest when he was eleven years old. This intervention, which provided Phillippe with a sponsoring family while his natural family was in another country, profoundly shaped his vocational aspirations.²²

The experience of a benevolent parental figure can be profoundly comforting and strengthening during the ordination process when individuals can feel intensely vulnerable and pushed into a regressive posture. Beverly, an effective priest from the West Coast, recalled her experience at seminary of “Papa,” an older priest who “adopted” a number of seminarians. “He was our father, and of course we called him Papa, and he just let us know he cared about us, and he let us know that there was somebody there that cares for you. In a White institution, that was so important to us.” Beverly went on to describe some qualities she believed she had in common with Papa:

I think two things that Papa and I had in common, that's pride in our heritage, of not being ashamed that we are Black just because other people put us down. We had that in common. Well, I can name you three. Truth-telling. I'm a truth-teller, Papa is a truth-teller. You know, sometimes it doesn't, you know, go over that nicely, when you tell the truth. But in the end it's always the best. Papa and I had that in common. In the thing about caring for people, in showing the care. Those of the three things that we had in common.

Other priests indicated a very different kind of relationship and set of experiences with their mentors. These protégés were given assignments and set loose with "freedom to fail." The mentors did not noticeably hover over their protégés' work; yet, each priest recalled that when some turning point or difficulty surfaced, the mentor interacted with him or her to great positive effect. Janet, an effective priest from the South reflected on the ways in which her mentor helped her gain perspective on her perceived "failures:"

We had three services, and I preached the first service and it was a horrible sermon. I hated it. I said afterwards, "This sermon is a mess, and I'm going to see if I can work on it." So I went and messed with it a little and then I came back and preached it again. And it was no better. It was awful. And I was standing in the sacristy before the third service and I said, "Oh! I don't want to preach this sermon, it's so horrible. I can't stand to think about preaching this again." And Karl said, "Janet, it's not that bad, number 1. And number 2, remember, even the league leading hitter only bats 300." And so it was, you know, this wonderful perspective that you know the world's not going to rise and fall with this sermon, and neither are you. It may not be your best effort, but it's not that bad, so go out there and do it again.

In this kind of mentorship relationship, priests' anxieties about acting autonomously and "getting it right" were addressed by their mentors through humor, perspective-taking, and objective evaluation linked to overall affirmation of their ministries. The mentors were not described as attempting to assuage their protégés' anxieties by becoming more parental.

Interestingly, in the survey, only a small percentage of priests experienced their mentors primarily as a parental figure. A large majority (particularly among priests indicating post-ordination mentorship) experienced mentors more as colleagues or friends. Barry, a Southern priest, described this kind of relationship: "He was more of a colleague that happened to be a mentor. It goes back again to valuing what you are able to do, challenging

to do things you didn't think you could do—and delighting when you did it." Thus, for most priests, the relationship felt collegial or peer-like. This was also true for effective priests from our interviews who spoke more frequently of their mentors as colleagues and friends than as supervisors or parental figures. But it was not true for struggling priests. They never described their mentors as colleagues and rarely as friends, instead expressing the tone of the mentoring relationship nearly exclusively as parental.

LEARNING FROM MENTORS

Many of the effective priests we interviewed made clear that the mentor relationship often went beyond simple transmission of standards of practice or traditions of Christian ministry. For these priests, their mentors *inducted* them into deeper meanings of the priestly vocation, in a way that coupled theological reflection on the actions of ministry with deep personal formation. Jerome, an effective priest from the Midwest highlighted the ways his mentor (whom he described as a supervisor) helped shape his own personal identity as well as professional identity and practice:

Six months after I had been there...it was rough working with those kids in Metropole. I was very disillusioned and was ready to resign. Girard had been [senior pastor] for long time...but he was in Corton at the state university several days a week to teach, and so he invited me to ride to Corton with him. Corton's about a three-hour drive from the church, and so he talked with me on the way, but mostly he let me talk. And then he said, "Well, you know, you are an idealist. Maybe you need to go work somewhere in a foreign country or something." Then he started naming the names of lay people in the parish: "You know they have been involved in this ministry for long time. Why don't you talk to them and ask them what it is that keeps them going? And then you do what you have to do." And I have used that example in sermons...and I remind myself to look at the laity who have been constant in their witness, and then ask myself, "What is it that keeps you going?"

This example demonstrates the informal but intentional process of mentorship. The mentor makes a direct investment in the new priest's professional development. The mentor directly names a potentially hindering trait in the young priest and encourages personal reflection—without being pejorative. And the mentor suggests an appropriate learning exercise—one that will facilitate tacit knowledge development through focused conver-

sations with leading lay people in the congregation. The protégé internalizes this exercise, so that it becomes integral to ministry and self-reflection.

Juan, an effective priest on the East Coast, talked about how important it was that his mentor gave him “areas of ministry to oversee” and then “enough rope to run with it. He never watched over my shoulders.” Juan’s mentor was neither over-protective nor territorial, but was Socratic, inviting Juan’s reflection on the practice of ministry. “What we would do was to reflect on why something worked or didn’t work. He never would jerk the rope and tell me you can’t do that...I could just run. But there was accountability built into the system. Boy, what a good way to learn!”

Rick, an effective priest in the Midwest, also had a mentor who invested deeply in his professional as well as personal development—perhaps with a bit more intensity. Rick responded with similarly intense loyalty:

Jack used to say, “As a rector, you always need to be looking for future leadership.” I think he saw in me a future leader. He took me to lunch once a week and we would use that time for whatever I wanted to talk about. We would share about books we were reading. He got me this job here...He let me fail. He encouraged me. He looked out for me, and protected me, but also exposed me. And I backed him to the hilt. There were times, you know, when people would try to drive a wedge between the two of us and we just never let it happen. So, he was very good for me. I am who I am today in the ministry because of Jack more than any one person. More than any professor. More than any friend. More than anybody.

What struck us in these examples was the depth of personal investment these mentors seemed to have in their protégé’s development. For many (but not all) of our “effective” priests, mentors went beyond a kind of laissez-faire method of mentoring by modeling—these mentors were quite intentional in their practice of (1) empowering their protégés to attempt new things, (2) pushing their protégés to perform in new areas they had not yet tried, (3) allowing them exposure to people’s criticism but not letting them dangle in the wind, (4) reflecting on events and experiences in a way that invited new insights, (5) providing some interpretation that allowed for new perspectives to emerge, and (6) inviting their protégés to attempt new patterns of thought and behavior. Our priests also noted how their mentors frequently opened up to them about their own challenging situations in day-to-day ministry, inviting mutual reflection on those situations as well.

Unfortunately, these priests also noted how their very positive experiences were markedly different from the experiences their peers had in their first clergy positions. These experiences of peers (and in some cases, prior experiences of our priests with other supervisors) were clearly non-mentoring or anti-mentoring experiences,²³ in which supervisors closely watched their protégés, kept tight reins on their freedom and creativity, became anxious when their protégés succeeded, defended territorial domains of ministry, or simply let their protégés hang themselves. Juan talked about how most of his classmates' bosses (senior pastors) watched them carefully and did not give them much freedom. "One classmate had to turn in his sermons to [the senior pastor] every time before he preached. Geez, I mean, I'd die." Juan found this quite different from his own experience. "With Greg, it was a whole forming process. Greg wasn't trying to create me into a little Greg. Greg was trying to help me create Juan as priest."

The most ideal descriptions of mentors from our priests paint a picture of self-differentiated leadership and instruction—where mentors value truth-telling and mutual learning above either affection or control, where they enjoy another's competency rather than perceived it as a threat. The strongest mentors seem to be able to strike a delicate balance in self-differentiated mentoring between engagement and detachment, investing energy into their protégés' development without attempting to create echoes—or improvements—of themselves.

For Rick, the picture was more mixed: "Maybe Jack tried to make me too much into his image...and maybe he should have let me fail a little bit more." That kind of mixed experience emerged in many of our interviews. Some mentors invested themselves not only in their protégés, but also more complexly in the success of their protégés. Investment from these mentors seemed to our priests to come with an expectation of return, in the form of protégés becoming copies of their mentors.

Other mentors erred on the side of less investment. Mark, one of our effective priests from the South, said that his mentor was not very good at offering feedback. "Because he's such an introvert—it was like pulling teeth to get feedback from him, especially in the negative. So if he had been able to give more feedback, that would have been great...but he really mentored by example." Here, the problem seemed to be related to over-concern with warmth and friendliness on the part of the mentor, resulting in a withdrawal from opportunities to offer helpful—if at times painful—feedback.

The balance of self-differentiated mentoring is difficult, but not impossible. Janet gave us one of our richest descriptions of a powerful and quite ideal mentor-protégé relationship that began with her mentor's motivation as well as her own incentive.

Karl was highly motivated that I would have a good experience. So I was the beneficiary of a lot of energy from him. But I'm also a person who thrives on reflection—I think about "What was going on there?" So it was sort of a happy circumstance. He was pretty introverted, so it was a costly thing for him to work in that way with me. But it was something he hadn't done before...and so he sort of made a commitment to himself that he was going to do it this time.

If he had seen some interaction or knew about some situation he would say, "What's going on with that? How did you feel when that happened? What do you think's going on there? Let me give you a little more of the background." He, of course, knew all the history of everybody. And so, one of the things he did for me was to show me that it wasn't about me: sometimes these things would just happen. And we would laugh about the people who thought he was wonderful, thought I was awful, and vice versa.

He was very affirming. When he hired me he told me he would preach 2 weeks out of 3, and I would preach every 3rd week. And after about 6 months he told me that he was feeling very challenged by my preaching, that I was really a very fine preacher, and that I was probably a better preacher than he was. And he had decided that we were going to alternate. So he was extremely generous about my participation, and he seemed to enjoy that I did well, rather than feel threatened, which was the more typical reaction of some of my classmates in their first positions.

And what has been effective for my training is people who are real, and who are willing to share their success and their failures. For example, I went to see a woman in the hospital... and boy did I get an earful! Turns out she and Karl had fallen out with each other fifteen years before. After the visit, I told Karl, and he said, "Well I suspect you got an earful. About half of it is true and half of it isn't." And he was just very honest about the mistakes he made in their relationship, and how he would have done things differently.

So, [I have been influenced best by] people like Karl, looking not to get you to do things how they do them, but to get you to get an new insight, or a new direction, or a new thought, new approach. People who spark your own creativity.

WHAT WAS AND WAS NOT LEARNED

In both interviews and surveys, we asked priests to identify what they learned, focusing on the core leadership skills we explored in the rest of our interviews: how to frame or take perspective on situations, deal with conflicts, build lay and community networks, use communication strategies, and reflect theologically on situations, as well as general pastoral and worship skills. In the interviews, effective priests more frequently noted “skill learning” in several areas from their mentors than did struggling priests—especially in how to frame situations, deal with conflict and build networks. When we asked priests on the survey to rank their top three areas of learning from mentors, we found that, similar to struggling priests, the general survey sample of priests rarely indicated learning how to deal with conflict or build networks. Table 2 contains the results from our survey.

Skill	Ranked 1st (%)	Ranked 2nd (%)	Ranked 3rd (%)	Total (%)
<i>Analytical skills</i>				
How to take perspective on situations	30.1	20.6	14.1	64.8
How to reflect theologically	19.8	14.6	8.9	43.4
<i>Commonly expressed clergy skills</i>				
How to offer pastoral care	15.4	14.4	11.9	41.7
How to lead worship	10.6	10.3	8.4	29.3
<i>Leadership skills</i>				
How to deal with conflict	6.0	10.8	14.4	31.2
How to build networks with people	9.2	8.4	11.9	29.5
How to use communication strategies	3.5	6.2	13.6	23.3
<i>Other skills</i> (including prayer, teaching, identity)	6.6	2.1	3.8	12.5
1 Includes all valid responses (n=369). Original interviewees were exempted from completing this part of the survey.				
Table 2. What was the greatest skill-learning from your most important mentor?¹				

Nearly 65% of priests with mentors indicated that they learned from their mentors how to take perspective on situations. More than 43% gained further skill in theological reflection, another form of “perspective-taking.” Both skills require an ability to step beyond the immediacy of situations, extract core themes, and connect these themes to other situations and ideas—abstract analytical skills well-suited to people who favor intuitive modes of information-processing. Next in importance were some of the most common skills expected of clergy: pastoral care and leading worship. Nearly 42% of mentored clergy indicated learning skills in pastoral care, and 29% learned how to lead worship.

Clergy were less prone to indicate learning skills associated with effective leadership: conflict management, networking, and communication skills. These areas were marked least often as primary areas of learning. Over 31% indicated learning from mentors how to deal with conflict—but only 6% ranked this as their most significant learning. Less than 30% of mentored clergy learned how to build networks. And less than one-fourth learned how to use communication strategies.

These findings suggest that clergy’s experiences with mentors tend to reinforce a standard of a “gentlemanly parson.” Clergy develop skills in abstraction and in religious functions expected of the role, contributing to the general ideal of the ordained minister as a “kindly and wise religious friend.” Thus, while mentor experience is central to how clergy develop vocational identity and competency, it may often result in perpetuating what we have found to be a commonly accepted clergy ethos—one that might have been more effective in a time when church attendance was more normative and congregational maintenance was a primary vocational aim. It seems that many typical clergy mentors help instantiate in their protégés a model of ministry that they themselves inherited.

We doubt very much that clergy mentors are aware of what they are not teaching or passing on. But systems of habitual thought and action in any denomination contribute to an ethos that shapes how people talk about, select for, and train for ordained ministry. Along the way, some key elements of leadership training get neglected. Thankfully, some mentors have been attentive to passing on and fostering such skills in their protégés, as we found among effective priests.

Our findings from the survey confirm what we were beginning to see in our interviews: there are indeed some strong relationships between the

skills and qualities learned from mentors and clergy's judgments about their own temperaments and competencies. The following are worth noting: (1) Priests whose mentors taught them how to build networks were themselves more extroverted, assertive, and innovative in their ministry—and less ecclesiastically conformist—than priests for whom this was not a major learning. They scored higher on self-confidence and lower on cautiousness, and they reported more time networking across their judicatories and finding confidants for personal reflection. Incidentally, these priests' congregations grew at a higher rate as well. (2) Priests who learned from mentors how to take perspective on situations were also more self-reliant than those who did not indicate such learning, as well as more innovative and less conformist in their approaches to work. They were also stronger networkers in their judicatories. (3) Priests who learned communication strategies from their mentors were more innovative than their peers who did not indicate this kind of learning. They also saw their congregations in a more positive light, as being more open to change and more stable in the midst of change. Incidentally, they also had higher compensation packages. (4) In contrast, priests who reported primary learning in worship leadership from their mentors were themselves more introversive and cautious, but less emotionally responsive, less assertive and cooperative in conflict management, and less decisive, self-confident, and innovative, than their counterparts who did not see worship as a primary mentor learning. They saw their churches as less open to change and less active, and their congregations grew at a slower rate (or declined). (5) Similarly, priests who learned pastoral care from their mentors were less innovative and more ecclesiastically conforming, less assertive and more avoidant in conflict management, and less decisive—although they were more frequent in time spent with confidants. Interestingly, priests who learned from mentors how to deal with conflict did not differ significantly from those who did not learn conflict skills from mentors.

These results point to the major influence mentors may have on priests' development of habits that, in time, become integral to priests' self-perceptions and vocational temperaments. Active skill-development in inter-parish and community-wide networking—a focused and somewhat detailed set of skills learned best through tacit processes—is not widely recognized by clergy as a significant area of learning from mentors. But, when it is learned from mentors, it helps foster greater self-confidence and an

ability to be definitive and determined. In contrast, even though pastoral care was a frequent learning from mentors, it did not engender confidence or determination in protégés.

So, while mentoring may be one of the most fruitful and important contributors to clergy development, it can also end up maintaining an ethos of clergy non-assertiveness. But the minority that benefits from more decisive, network-savvy, and reflective mentors is more likely to become more decisive, assertive, and self-confident in their own practices of ministry—departing from the general clergy norm through processes of tacit learning, mutual reflection, imitation, and internalization—to the greater benefit of congregational vitality and mission.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The results presented in this article point to markers of effective clergy mentors. Effective mentors have integrity—a faith that has a “rubber-meets-the-road” quality, where goals, words, and actions are consistent. They engage in reflection-in-action, and are able to describe what they are doing and to do what they prescribe. They are sufficiently self-differentiated to engage intently in a mentoring relationship while detaching from self-reinforcing outcomes. They teach, train, and model some of the more nuanced skills—like building networks, conflict resolution, and communication strategies. They use humor, anticipation, and other forms of perspective-taking that are markers of psychological maturity.²⁴ And they encourage protégés’ autonomy, moving the relationship toward greater collegiality and a mature form of the mirroring relationship that Kohut called “twinship.”²⁵

Mentoring is a two-way street, and will be most beneficial to protégés who bring certain qualities and frames of mind to the relationship. These include a willingness to challenge and be challenged; an ability to seek after leadership qualities in mentors; a passion for ministry and a deep intrinsic motivation to become as strong a minister as possible; and a focus on vocational development rather than on parental replacement.

A note of caution...Mentoring will likely become a fad in church circles as it has in some business and professional circles. Such relationships

are largely unplanned, though they do depend on contiguity—mentor and protégé must come to know each other somehow and experience each other sufficiently to make judgments of trustworthiness, and the supervisory relationship may be the most natural place for such a relationship to unfold. But people—pastors included—cannot become mentors simply by deciding to do so or by designation as part of an organizational plan. A process of evaluation and training is essential to more effective mentoring that does not simply replicate the dominant pattern of clergy non-assertiveness and emphasis of calmness and kindness over self-confidence and assertiveness. The qualities identified by priests in our study can serve as initial benchmarks to check whether a person who wishes to be a mentor is in fact able to do so.

NOTES

1. Examples include Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Good Business: Leadership, Flow, and the Making of Meaning* (New York: Viking, 2003); Howard Gardner, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and William Damon, *Good Work: When Excellence and Ethics Meet* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); Harvard Business Essentials, *Coaching and Mentoring: How to Develop Top Talent and Achieve Stronger Performance* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2004).
2. Robert Witherspoon and Randall P. White, *Four Essential Ways That Coaching Can Help Executives: A Practical Guide to the Ways That Outside Consultants Can Help Managers* (Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership, 1997), 5.
3. Gardner and others, *Good Work*, 205.
4. *Ibid.*, 216.
5. “Semantic knowledge” is a term from cognitive sciences and the study of memory. Since Endel Tulving first published his research in 1972 (E. Tulving and W. Donaldson, eds., *Organization of Memory* (New York: Academic Press)), researchers have noted distinctions between semantic memory (organized systems of knowing, e.g., “A mammal is warm-blooded and generally gives birth to live young,”) episodic memory (information specific to distinct events, e.g., “I remember my dog having puppies”), and procedural memory (embodied knowledge of how to do things, e.g., “I know what to do in case of a breach birth of a calf”).
6. Robert J. Sternberg and Joseph A. Horvath, eds., *Tacit Knowledge in Professional Practice: Researcher and Practitioner Perspectives* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999).
7. Donald Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 1983).
8. Sharon Daloz Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2006).
9. W. Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley, *The Elements of Mentoring* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), xv.

10. Gardner and others, *Good Work*.
11. Of course, these schools have increasingly focused on helping students develop skills for using and applying their knowledge—but the approach remains largely constructivist in its pattern of moving from abstract principles to situational application.
12. Our research project, *Toward a Higher Quality of Christian Ministry*, was undertaken through funding from the Lilly Endowment under their Capacity Building program, 1999–2003.
13. We recognized the need for a contrast group, so that when we compared the interviews we would be able to tell what qualities and competencies truly distinguished effective clergy leaders.
14. This was a “double-blind” study: both priests and interviewers were unaware of the process of nomination, particularly of the categories of leadership. But post-interview ratings by interviewers of the priests they interviewed confirmed original peer nominations with 93% accuracy.
15. Key findings on clergy’s assessments of their seminary education have been published in John Dreibelbis and David Gortner, “Beyond Wish-lists for Pastoral Leadership: Assessing Clergy Behavior and Congregational Outcomes to Guide Seminary Curriculum,” *Theological Education* 40 (2005): 25–49.
16. Dreibelbis and Gortner, “Beyond Wish-Lists.”
17. Only 15% of priests selected seminary education and training as the most significant contributor to their vocational development, and a mere 4% chose pre-seminary vocational discernment as most important.
18. All comparative results from the survey and interviews discussed in this article are statistically significant ($p < .05$ or $.01$).
19. M. Kirton, “Adapters and innovators: A description and measure.” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 61 (1976): 622–629.
20. Melany Baehr, *Temperament Comparator* (Chicago: Pearson Performance Solutions, 1961).
21. Gardner and others, *Good Work*.
22. It is worth noting that research in vocational formation in the Catholic Church has pointed to two significant influences on young men’s choices to become priests: their mothers and their parish priests (see E. C. Kennedy and V. J. Heckler, *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Psychological Investigations* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1972)).
23. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi came to call these “experiences of tor-mentors” (personal conversation, University of Chicago, 1999).
24. George Vaillant, *Wisdom of the Ego* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
25. Heinz Kohut and Arnold Goldberg, *How Does Analysis Cure?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

Coaching Religious Leaders

John P. Martinson

Coaching is emerging as a valuable resource for supporting religious leaders. A number of characteristics of coaching contribute to its value: a personalized one-on-one relationship; focus on the leader's immediate challenges as well as long-term goals; the explicit purpose of promoting success in ministry; and the conviction that every leader has the ability to perform more effectively. Coaching is rooted in confidence that religious leaders become more effective when aided by the assistance of another who is skilled in the art of coaching. Having long known the value of coaching in competitive sports, we now know its value for all sorts of human endeavors, including organizational leadership.

I have chosen to use the phrase "coaching leaders" to distinguish it from other forms of coaching that tend to focus on skill development. Following a brief review of the roots of coaching and an introduction to the fundamentals of coaching leaders, I will contrast coaching with counseling, mentoring, and supervising—other important forms of support for religious leaders.

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

SPORTS: COACHING THE ATHLETE AND THE ATHLETIC TEAM

World-class athletes depend on coaches to develop their ability to compete at a high level. This is true for individual sports, such as gymnastics, track, golf, tennis, and bowling. It is also true for team sports, like baseball, basketball, football, hockey, and soccer, where coaching not only builds individual skills but also enables skilled athletes to play well together. Many of us who have participated in individual and team sports know first-hand the value of a good coach.

We also know from the experience of professional athletes that it is not the coach's athletic ability but rather the coach's coaching ability that makes her or him effective. Tiger Woods, named Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year for 2006, is a good example. His coach could never become as good a player as Woods. However, his coach knows how to spot strengths and weaknesses in Tiger Woods' swing and suggest corrections that raise his game to a new level.

While the coach does not need the same raw athletic ability, the coach does need considerable knowledge in the athlete's sport. The effective coach brings demonstrated knowledge of how performance looks at the highest level. The coach also brings the ability to detect subtle differences between the athlete's present performance and that performance in its most refined form. The effective coach must also be able to communicate coaching instructions in a way that the athlete is able to incorporate into superior performance. This often means addressing both the athlete's outer world of observable physical performance and inner world of emotions and attentiveness.

CORPORATIONS: COACHING THE EXECUTIVE

The earliest pioneers in corporate coaching recognized the contribution of coaches to the performance of top athletes. These pioneers became interested in what coaches might provide their executives and ultimately their corporations. Emerging opportunities for corporate coaches led to the development of programs to prepare people for careers in coaching. Two of the largest and most respected programs for training coaches, CoachInc.com and the Coaches Training Institute, were both formed around 1992.¹ The International Coach Federation (ICF), the world's largest worldwide resource for business and

personal coaches, was formed in 1995. The growth of this organization reflects the rapid growth of corporate coaching. Today ICF has 2,266 accredited coaches and over fifty accredited training programs. The volume of literature on coaching has kept pace. Studies of corporations like IBM, Ernst & Young, and Marriott Marquis Hotel in Atlanta report very positive results through coaching. Additional evidence of the value of coaching is cited in excerpts from a series of articles quoted in "Working Resources." Articles from such respected magazines as *Fortune*, *The Princeton Business Journal*, and *Business Week* all report highly positive returns from coaching.²

While corporate coaching has its roots in sports coaching, its nature and emphasis is quite different. Sports' coaching requires an in-depth knowledge of the specific sport being coached whereas corporate coaching does not depend on an in-depth knowledge of the corporation or responsibilities of the leader. This is not to say that basic understanding of organizations and leadership functions is not valuable. It is. Being overly familiar with the professional world of the executive, however, reduces the coach's ability to ask curious questions and increases the coach's vulnerability to responding more as a mentor, in other words, to become more instructional. Effectiveness as a corporate coach, in contrast, is primarily dependent on mastery of basic coaching skills, such as careful listening, asking helpful questions, reframing, providing a place of accountability, and supporting and celebrating successes.

CHURCH: COACHING THE RELIGIOUS LEADER

The church has recently begun to explore the value of coaching for strengthening pastoral leadership. Ministers committed to being effective leaders have sought the help of professional coaches to assist in their professional development. Many of those who coach clergy have themselves served as parish pastors and understand the unique challenges of ministry. In the process of working with individual coaches, these clergy discovered for themselves the value of this one-on-one relationship. They, in turn, have encouraged colleagues to consider working with a coach. *Clergy Coaches*, a resource I work with, has trained "peer coaches" to work with clergy. These coaches are experienced, well-respected pastors who make themselves

available to pastors wishing to work with a coach. One of our goals is to promote coaching as a valuable resource for supporting re-ligious leaders.³

Many denominations and their leaders have now incorporated coaching in the development of parish programs and support of religious leaders. An Internet search reveals the broad use of coaching in the church. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) uses coaching as a primary resource in the support of new pastors through their Lilly-Endowment-funded Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Program.⁴ The School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University uses coaching in its broadly ecumenical pastoral leadership program.⁵ The Hollifield Leadership Center, with center directors from the Baptist tradition, offers Valwood Christian Leadership Coaching.⁶ Evangelical Christian traditions have strongly embraced coaching as reflected in the number of education and training resources coming out of these traditions. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) uses coaching in the support of leaders in an evangelism program called "Natural Church Development" and also uses pastors with basic training in coaching to support mission pastors.

Leadership coaching in the church is similar to executive coaching in corporations. In fact these coaches often gain their coaching education and training from the same programs. The first criterion for coaching religious leaders is a sound understanding of coaching principles and demonstrated abilities in coaching skills. The second criterion is a foundational understanding of church polity, congregational dynamics, and the unique challenges of leading a religious community. Some church-based coaching resources expand this criterion by claiming that pastoral experience is necessary, and so recruit and train only professional religious leaders. As with corporations, the one potential drawback of having a deep knowledge of the working of the church is reduced curiosity; knowledge can reduce the coach's ability to ask curious questions and increases the coach's vulnerability to responding more as a mentor.

In the development of *Clergy Coaches*, we concluded that there were a number of advantages to recruit and train coaches who had substantial experience in religious leadership. We have found that clergy have greater confidence in coaches who know from their own experience the challenges religious leaders face. This includes experience with confidentiality, the uniqueness of church systems, the patterns of lay leadership—which can be positive or destructive—and the need to nurture followers who can also lead. These advantages outweighed the disadvantages of being overly familiar with ministry.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF COACHING LEADERS

Coaching leaders is, at its core, a one-on-one relationship in which a leader seeks the assistance of a coach to further develop leadership abilities and to think through complex leadership challenges as well as long-range goals. The coach brings to this relationship a strong commitment to the leader's agenda along with a thorough understanding of a coaching process and highly developed coaching skills. John Whitmore, in his book *Coaching for Performance*, stresses that underlying all coaching is the belief that people possess more capability than they are expressing. "Coaching is an intervention that has as its underlying and ever-present goal the building of other's self-belief, regardless of the task or issue... Coaching is not merely a technique... It is a way of managing, a way of treating people, a way of thinking, a way of being."⁷

Coaching begins with the belief that the person being coached has all the needed knowledge and ability. The goal of coaching, therefore, is not to teach—not to provide new knowledge—but rather to help the leader discover new ways to think about and address issues, to discover new more effective ways to lead. It is in the dynamic give and take between the coach and the religious leader that these new possibilities emerge. Rochelle Melander, in her book *A Generous Presence*, emphasizes the central importance of the coaching relationship. She writes "The power of coaching is never in the expertise and wisdom of the coach or the readiness or tenacity of the client. The power exists when the client and coach come together in relationship. The power grows in the connecting that happens between them."⁸ This relationship helps the leader get in touch with dreams, understand more deeply their life choices, and be aware of their core values so they might live more fully in ways that honor those values. As Susan Clark put it, "Especially as I coach executives, the client and I really focus on their values and decide how much they want those values to come to life and what they will do or not do to cause that to happen... Coaching helps leaders get in touch with the parts of themselves that hold them back from being the truly magnificent human beings they were born to be."⁹

The coaching process begins with developing a clear vision for the future—where the religious leader wants to be some day in relation to long-term professional goals as well as specific leadership challenges. This is

followed by a clear assessment of where the leader is currently in relation to these long-term goals and/or immediate challenges. The differences between future goals and current reality define the gap through which the leader wants to move. To move through this gap, the leader needs to create a strategy for achieving the goals, identify both internal and external barriers to implementing this strategy, determine resources needed to be successful and a way to gain these resources, implement the strategy, and measure progress. The process is not linear but cyclical as a discovery at one stage may necessitate moving back to a previous stage of consideration.

The coach assists the leader in moving through this gap by listening carefully to everything the leader says and asking open-ended questions that help the leader think of important issues in new ways. Listening and asking are two critical skills of the coaching relationship. A key ingredient to this conversation is genuine curiosity. It is here where knowing less about the leader's specific work can be a benefit; not knowing the nature of a given leadership challenge opens the possibility for fresh questions that can lead to new forms of thinking. In addition, the coach will reframe, encourage, challenge, hold accountable, and celebrate the successes of the leader. The coach is not a teacher in the sense of having superior knowledge and experience to impart to the leader. Rather, the coach is the facilitator of a process that enables the leader to draw more deeply from his or her own wisdom.

A brief example of an initial coaching conversation may be helpful to illustrate this process of exploring the gap between future goals and the present reality. In this example RL = Religious Leader and C = Coach.

- C: I look forward to our conversations. When we talked earlier you said that you were not very happy in your present ministry and needed help thinking through what you could do. Is that accurate?
- RL: Yes it is. I am just not feeling much enthusiasm.
- C: Before talking more about your present ministry I suggest we spend some time exploring your hopes for the future. Does that sound O.K.?
- RL: That sound good to me.
- C: So looking ahead, what would you like to be able to say about your ministry if we were to talk five years from now?

- RL: I would like to say that everything is going well, and I am enjoying myself.
- C: What would be happening in your ministry that would tell you that everything is going well?
- RL: My first thought is that the congregation would be growing instead of dying. It would be a place with energy, a place that members enjoyed being part of and actively supported.
- C: Sounds a lot more fun than where you are at now. Would you say more about just what would be enjoyable about leading such a church?
- RL: Well, I would enjoy being able to develop plans for new ministries and be able to make them happen—and to work with members who were enthused about we were doing.
- C: Having a sense of accomplishment sounds important. Would you say more about how accomplishments are important—what it does for you.
- RL: I often don't feel very competent as a pastor. I know intellectually that it is hard to do much where I am at but that doesn't take the feeling away. I think some successes would restore a lot of confidence.
- C: I sure understand your wanting to have some successes. Anything else you would like to say about your ministry in five years?
- RL: Well, this doesn't have to do with my ministry, but I would like to say that the rest of my life is good—that I have a good marriage and great kids and we enjoy our time together. I also wish I could tell you about hobbies I am enjoying—which I am not doing now.
- C: I think it does have something to do with ministry. I know how demanding serving a congregation can be and how it can take you away from both family and important interests. I am hearing you would want to have a balanced life and not be solely focused on the church.
- RL: That's right.
- C: Lets switch and talk more about your present ministry. I know you don't have much enthusiasm. Tell me more about what it is like.

- RL: In many ways, it is the opposite of what I just described. I am serving a small rural congregation that is losing members and struggling financially. The members aren't very interested in new ministries. There is also more conflict than I would have ever imagined and some pretty difficult people. I know they are worried about their future, and for many, life is just difficult.
- C: It certainly sounds very different than what you would like in ministry. I can understand how it is difficult to develop ministries that would give you a sense of accomplishment and why you would experience little joy. How about the rest of your life?
- RL: I suppose the good part is I don't feel overwhelmed with demands. I do have time with my spouse and family—more than some of my colleagues. The most difficult is that we don't have friends in the area and frankly don't have money to travel. My salary is not very good and my spouse has not been able to find work. I don't fault the church for that. It is just the reality of this community.

The conversation continues as the clergy coach explores with the religious leader the present situation, the absence of friends, the desire to move, and the leader's desire to be a good pastor.

- C: Maybe you need two goals—one goal being to be as good a pastor as you can for the people you are serving now and the other to prepare yourself for your next call.
- RL: That feels better to me.
- C: Let's begin then with your present call. What might you do to be a better pastor where you are at now?
- RL: Just having a plan for the future will help me be a better pastor. I wouldn't feel as trapped or as hopeless. I would probably have more energy.
- C: That sounds good. What else?
- RL: More than anything they want someone who will care for them, who will take time to visit them. I just need to focus more on what they need and not on what I want to do or think the church should be doing.

The coach focuses on positive dimensions of the present ministry: What might be done to improve the situation while at the same time preparing for the desired future?

- RL: When you say that, it occurs to me that there are advantages to where I am at now. I just need to identify those advantages and make use of them.
- C: That is exactly what I am thinking. We need to stop soon. Before we do, it would help me to have a sense of what was most helpful in our conversation and then think a little about where we might take this conversation next time.
- RL: Our conversation helped me think both/and. I can both focus on being the best pastor possible for the people I am now serving and begin preparing for a future call. That leaves me feeling less guilty about thinking of a future call. It was also helpful to hear myself talk about where I would like to be in five years. I became more aware of what is important to me.
- C: That seems like a good start. May I make a couple of suggestion for next time?
- RL: Yes, please do.
- C: My suggestion is that we first pick up on any additional thoughts you have, and then create a plan for making the changes you want in your present ministry and look carefully at anything that would get in the way of that plan—anything outside of you and any internal barriers that could get in the way. That may be all we can accomplish in our next conversation. If so, in our following conversation we could do the same for your future call.
- RL: Sounds good!

Over time, this coach would work with this religious leader to establish concrete, measurable goals, and serve as a source of accountability to those goals by keeping track of the goals and asking about progress. When progress is not made, the coach would explore with the leader barriers, again both internal and external, that prevented the leader from achieving the goals. When the goals are achieved the coach is there to celebrate with the leader. It is worth repeating that this is not in practice a linear process but rather a process that continually circles between various elements of the coaching conversation.

FROM PARISH MINISTRY TO PASTORAL COUNSELING TO COACHING

My journey began as a young parish pastor greatly enjoying parish ministry but feeling overwhelmed and inadequate by requests for individual and marriage counseling. The desire to build my knowledge, skill, and confidence in counseling led to graduate work and clinical training in pastoral counseling and psychology. My intent to continue in parish ministry changed when I was offered the opportunity to develop pastoral counseling within the chaplaincy department of a local hospital. This new position provided the roots of my move into organizational leadership. With the growth of our pastoral counseling services my position evolved into half-time administration. This was followed by a full-time leadership position as executive director of a pastoral counseling agency in the Washington, DC, area and introduced me to the challenges of leading a larger organization.

This movement into broader leadership responsibilities also introduced me to the value of working with a coach. Around 1980, I began meeting with William Smith, a professor at Luther Seminary who invited me to talk with him on occasion. This began what has become a 27-year relationship with Bill as my coach, mentor, and guide. While in Washington, DC, I had the opportunity to work with Ed Friedman. Over the three years that I worked with Dr. Friedman, I learned about systems (for example, anxiety, triangles, and multi-generation transmission) and basic cornerstones of effective leadership (for example, self-differentiation, clear communication, non-anxious presence and staying connected). This understanding of systems and leadership principles has provided an additional framework for coaching.

In 1998, I was offered the opportunity to return to Minneapolis to direct what is now the Ministerial Health and Leadership Resources of Fairview Health Services. My work, initially focused on pastors who were encountering difficulties and expanded to include support resources with the creation of *Clergy Coaches*.

My basic training in coaching was through Corporate Coach U, a program of CoachInc.com, located in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. CoachInc. has educated more than 11,000 students and graduates from fifty-one countries. I participated in a Corporate Coach U four-day program designed to

train coach trainers in the core competencies and skills of coaching. The Coaches Training Institute (CTI) has also contributed significantly to my understanding of coaching. CTI-trained coaches have provided coaching for both ELCA leaders and leaders at Fairview Health Services. While not identical, the two schools agree on the fundamental principles of coaching.

COACHING AND COUNSELING

Coaching and counseling religious professionals have much in common. They both begin with the agenda of the religious leader. They are based on a common set of core knowledge and skills. Expectations and competencies outlined by ICF are very similar to expectations and competencies for pastoral counseling: meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards; establishing goals (reasons for meeting); the abilities to listen carefully, ask helpful questions, and offer helpful comments (observations and intuitions); and the goals of increasing awareness, designing actions, tracking progress, and providing a place of accountability.

The two differ, however, in their fundamental assumptions regarding the religious leader. The counselor assumes the leader comes with personal issues that reduce his ability to lead effectively. The counseling process is designed to help the leader address the cognitive, emotional, or medical problems, as well as life stresses that are diminishing leadership capacity. The coach, on the other hand, assumes that the pastor comes with the innate ability to provide effective leadership. The coaching process is, therefore, designed to enable the pastor to access those abilities by thinking of leadership challenges in new ways, creating more effective strategies, and developing new leadership behaviors.

Counseling conversations usually begin with a careful assessment of where a person is in terms of mental and emotional resources, sources of support, and the strength of primary relationships. Increasing self-knowledge, reducing defenses, developing more effective coping mechanisms, treating anxiety and depression, and resolving conflict in primary relationships are common goals. When such issues are resolved but job-performance issues remain the counselor may encourage the religious leader to work with a coach. Coaching conversations are designed to help the relig-

ious leader move through the gap separating current realities and future goals, both immediate and long-term, by developing greater leadership capacity. The coach will note internal barriers that get in the way of more effective leadership. If the internal barriers are more complicated, however, the coach will encourage the pastor to consider counseling.

The frameworks for coaching and counseling are also significantly different. The coaching framework is typically less intense. Much coaching today is done over the phone in half-hour conversations. It is common for these conversations to be every-other week, or even less frequent.¹⁰ Pastoral counseling is primarily face-to-face conversations of fifty to sixty minutes. These conversations are usually weekly in the beginning and move to every other week only when the counseling relationship has been established and the issues brought to counseling have become less intense.

COACHING AND CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Clinical supervision is in many ways similar to coaching. Supervision, like coaching, is often a one-on-one relationship. It is designed to help the person being supervised improve self-understanding as a platform from which to develop her performance. Both coaching and clinical supervision use similar skills including careful listening, raising helpful questions, offering constructive feedback, and providing support. The coach brings to the coaching relationship knowledge and expertise in the art of coaching along with a good understanding of leadership principles. The supervisor brings to the supervisory relationship knowledge and expertise in the art of supervision along with a good understanding of counseling principles.

There are also several differences. One difference is in the specificity of the knowledge each brings. The coach may or may not have knowledge in the particular business of the person being coached. The supervisor, on the other hand, brings considerable knowledge and skill in the counseling or pastoral care area in which he is supervising. The clinical supervisor, for example, is always a skilled clinician.

A second difference, related to the first, is that supervision is often focused on the development of a specific skill, such as pastoral care or pastoral counseling; it may even be focused on a specific counseling theory or

practice. By contrast, coaching is often focused on broad leadership goals and a variety of leadership challenges.

A third difference is in the nature and framework of the conversations. Clinical supervision is usually face-to-face and often includes a more hands-on review of the supervisees work, for example, reviewing tapes of counseling sessions. Coaching is often over the phone and seldom includes direct evidence of the religious leader's behaviors as a leader.

A fourth difference is the responsibility each assumes for the quality of the work of the person being supervised or coached. The clinical supervisor, particularly one who works within an institution, may assume considerable responsibility for the quality and trustworthiness of the counseling the supervisee is providing on behalf of the institution. Whether an internal or external supervisor, the supervisor will be concerned over any breach of the code of ethics. The coach is much less likely to assume this level of responsibility.

COACHING AND MENTORING

The words "coaching" and "mentoring" are often used interchangeably. In the early development of *Clergy Coaches*, we were uncertain which word more accurately defined the resource we were developing and so for some time used the term "clergy coach/mentor program." One reason these terms are difficult to differentiate is that, like the word "coach," the word "mentor" is used in at least two distinct ways.

In one use, the word identifies the responsibilities of one person assigned to orient a new employee to the organization. This assignment is often made based on experience and expertise. The goal of mentoring is to help the person get to know the culture of the company, provide assistance and support with the person's responsibilities, and help the person become productive more quickly.

In the other use of the word "mentor," the term is bestowed on a person by someone who holds that person in high regard and has learned and has grown through her relationship with the person. In this use of the term, one cannot choose to become a mentor. The title is given based on the esteem of another person. That person may have had a coaching, counsel-

ing, or supervisory relationship; may have learned from the mentor through workshops, books, or articles; or may have grown personally simply from observing the mentor's life.

The preceding article in this journal by David Gortner and John Dreibelbis offers additional insights into this form of mentoring.¹¹ Gortner and Dreibelbis' research provides valuable information on who pastors identify as their mentors. One obvious conclusion from their research is that anyone in a significant and potentially influential relationship with a pastor has the opportunity to mentor that pastor. Their discussion, however, notes that mentoring can be negative as well as positive. This understanding does not limit the term "mentor" to someone who is admired but simply defines mentor as one who has a significant influence on another—for better or for worse.

While both mentoring and coaching relationships are in a position to provide advice and guidance, to challenge, to hold accountable, to support and to celebrate—there are also important differences. A coach is qualified by virtue of his coaching knowledge and skills. The mentor is qualified by virtue of her knowledge of a particular field of endeavor, professional success, and the respect of others. This difference in qualifications significantly influences what each brings to the relationship and what makes that relationship valuable. The coach's contribution to the religious leader is realized through the coaching process: careful listening, asking helpful questions, goal setting, brainstorming, holding accountable, support, etc. The mentor brings demonstrated effectiveness as a pastoral leader and knowledge of how the church functions at congregation, judicatory and national levels. This experience and knowledge is primary in that the mentor's value is in what she can teach the religious leader about pastoral leadership and the working of the church.

Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, in their book *Primal Leadership*, make the following statement: "Working with a mentor who knows what you are trying to do, and with whom you share your aspirations and your learning agenda, converts the mentor into a coach."¹² The article by Gortner and Dreibelbis suggests that the opposite is also true: a coach who is influential in the life of a pastor has been a mentor to the pastor. Within this broad definition of "mentor," the pastor-coach relationship becomes one of several defined relationships capable of providing a mentoring experience.

LEADER AS COACH

The field of coaching exists today in two distinct forms linked by a common philosophy, body of knowledge, and set of skills. In the first form, which I referred to above as “coaching leaders,” a skilled coach, often professionally certified, works with a leader who wishes to provide more effective leadership. In the second form, which I refer to as “leader as coach,” a leader draws on the philosophy, knowledge and skills of coaching in creating a framework and methodology for leadership. James Flaherty, in his book *Coaching: Evoking Excellence in Others*, writes “Coaching is a way of working with people that leaves them more competent and more fulfilled so that they are more able to contribute to their organizations and find meaning in what they are doing.”¹³

Corporations have come to recognize this second value of coaching. Just as executives perform at higher levels when working with a coach, every employee performs at a higher level when coached. This led to the recognition and development of coaching as a paradigm for leadership. Executives with supervisory responsibility appear to be most effective as supervisors when their supervision is based on a coaching model. Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee listed coaching as the second most important style of leadership. They write: “Even though coaching focuses on personal development rather than on accomplishing tasks, the style generally predicts an outstandingly positive emotional response and better results, almost irrespective of the other styles a leader employs.”¹⁴ The application of coaching principles to organizational leadership has become the fastest growing area of coaching. Leaders in increasing numbers have been learning the principles of coaching and applying these principles to their supervision of staff.

Hierarchical styles of administrative supervision are results oriented. The framework for the supervisory conversation is the tasks that need to be accomplished to reach the desired goals. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to accomplish these goals through the employee. Therefore the supervisor must instruct, guide and motivate the employee. This supervision might include setting explicit goals and timelines, pep talks, providing detailed instructions on how tasks are to be accomplished, defining consequences if goals are not met, and providing rewards if goals are exceeded.

The “leader as coach” is a particularly powerful model for religious leaders. This model’s goal of each person serving in areas of genuine interest

and fully using their God-given gifts is highly consistent with the value the church places on each of its members. The further leadership goal of connecting the interests and gifts of each member with the vision of the congregation is again consistent with the church's commitment to the individual. The leader who functions as a coach strives to help everyone experience success in their ministries. It is also a leadership model that goes beyond the congregation in supporting members who strive to live out their faith through their vocations and in their communities. The "leader as coach" is finally a particularly powerful model for supervision of ministry and teaching ministry skills.

NOTES

1. The Web sites for these organizations are, respectively, <http://www.coachinc.com/> and www.thecoaches.com/.
2. Working Resources, "Coaching Success Stories in the Media," <http://dwp.bigplanet.com/workingresources/coachingsuccessstories>.
3. The organization's Web site is at <http://www.clergycoaches.org/>.
4. Bob Wells, "Riding the Roller Coaster of New Church Ministry," Duke Divinity School, Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Web site, <http://www.divinity.duke.edu/programs/spe/articles/200605/ministry.html>.
5. Seattle University, The School of Theology and Ministry, "Pastoral Leadership Program," <http://www.seattleu.edu/theomin/plp.asp>.
6. Hollifield Leadership Center, "Valwood Coaching: What is Valwood Christian Leadership Coaching?" <http://www.hollifield.org/valwood>.
7. John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance: Growing People, Performance, and Purpose*, 3rd edition (Clerkenwell, London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003), 18.
8. Rochelle Melander, *A Generous Presence: Spiritual Leadership and the Art of Coaching* (Herndon, VA: the Alban Institute, 2006), 42.
9. Susan Clarke, e-mail message to author following her review of a draft of this article, February 12, 2007. Clarke leads the coaching resources for Fairview Health Services.
10. This is not always the case as coaching can also be face-to-face and may at times be more intense
11. David T. Gortner and John Dreibelbis, "Mentoring Clergy for Effective Leadership," in *Reflective Practice*, no. 27 (2007): 62–82.
12. Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston, MA: Harvard Press, 2002), 165.
13. James Flaherty, *Coaching: Evoking Excellence in Others* (Boston, MA: Butterworth Heinemann, 1999), 3.
14. Goleman and others, *Primal Leadership*, 60.

Coaching Conversations

Susan Fox

Attempting to provide a concise definition of coaching is akin to making a functional snowball from very dry snow; the contents simply refuse to stay in one neat “deliverable.” Yet there is no question that coaching is finding its way into a variety of contexts, as clearly evidenced by John Martinson’s helpful tracing of the discipline’s evolutional path elsewhere in this issue of *Reflective Practice*.¹ Within the distinct contexts, coaching principles have proven to be consistently adaptable in meeting the needs of the organization, group, or individual client. This flexibility can be illustrated in Martinson’s identification of two distinct forms of leadership coaching: coaching leaders and leader as coach.

While both forms of leadership coaching have implications for theological education in general, and for supervision specifically, this brief article will concentrate on coaching leaders. In particular, I will explore the potential benefits of utilizing coaching techniques in the supervision of seminary interns.

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

COACHING AND SUPERVISION IN FIELD EDUCATION

I discovered coaching quite by accident about seven years ago. Having always been interested in pastoral and vocational counseling, I began exploring options for continuing education. A conversation with a therapist-turned-coach introduced me to this appealing new discipline that, like counseling, had roots in psychology and was centered on powerful relationships. Through the International Coach Federation (ICF), I discovered that a variety of coaching programs were available and easily accessible. While continuing my work as a field educator, I enrolled in and completed a two-year comprehensive coaching program.

Shortly into the coaching training, I found myself approaching my work as field educator differently. Most significant, I noticed that the manner in which I framed conversations with students both in and out of the classroom shifted. Rather than my typical *modus operandi* of functioning by proactively offering input, I frequently moved into one more closely resembling that of a midwife, a facilitator of process. Coaching provided me with a framework for the relational process of supervision.

TRANSLATING COACHING INTO THE SUPERVISORY PROCESS

The adaptation necessary to translate coaching skills into powerful tools for field education site supervision is dependent upon our particular understanding of the role of the supervisor and the goal of supervision. A key area of consideration is the nature of the power dynamic that exists in a given supervisory relationship. Within the varied expressions of theological education and the differing approaches to site supervisors, we find relationships ranging from hierarchical to peer. For coaching to be effective, the relationship must be comfortable enough for trust to develop between the student and supervisor, but distinct enough for the coaching conversation to challenge the student's existing paradigms or mental models.² This delicate balance is aptly captured by Carl Rogers' concept of "person-centered" values.³

A person-centered climate, the foundation of coaching, includes the following values from which are derived all other aspects of the coaching relationship. People:

- Are inherently motivated to grow and develop
- Are naturally creative, resourceful, and either have the answers or are capable of finding them
- Are approached holistically, as mind, body, spirit
- Are accepted and prized for who they are; they do not need to hide parts of themselves to be acceptable.

SUPERVISION AS COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP

A second fundamental feature of coaching is its collaborative foundation, which is established at the onset of the relationship. From a field education perspective, this is closely related to the covenantal nature of the learning/serving agreements commonly utilized in our programs. Oftentimes the agreements drawn up between the supervisor and student are concerned more with what will be done in supervision; the distinctiveness of the “collaborative” coaching perspective, in contrast, focuses on how they will be in relationship with each other. Applied to a field education supervisory setting, a collaborative climate might include these understandings:

- The relationship is an alliance co-created by student and supervisor.
- The supervisor is not reactive. She will not judge the student for voicing opinions different from her own or for making a decision that differs from the one she might like the student to make.
- The supervisor provides suggestions for the student’s consideration that may be accepted, rejected, or adapted.
- The student and supervisor may negotiate learning processes until the student feels they are appropriate to the goal at hand.
- The supervisor invites the student to identify anything that is not working or that does not feel right in the relationship.

Clearly, some of these foundational coaching principles are not new to supervision in field education and analogous concepts may be found in recent literature. Kenneth Pohly, for instance, in *Transforming the Rough Places*, discusses the dynamic nature of good supervision. He writes:

Participants...[recognize] each other as responsible persons who bring unique resources to the encounter. Supervisors usually have more education, experience, and status than their supervisees. However these are not "advantages"; good supervision does not occur because of any personal superiority *but rather because of a superior process.*"⁴

COACHING PROCESS AND THE SUPERVISORY CONVERSATION

Supervision, at its most basic, is a conversation. We hope that appropriate learning and formation result of supervisory conversations. When these conversations are at their most productive, students might even find themselves thinking in new ways, deconstructing and reconstructing cognitive, social, or theological constructs.

Coaching suggests that deep listening is the first step in the coaching conversation. The coach must tune in to the client by diligently seeking to understand the client and her environment. What are the values being expressed by the client? What choices is she making? How does the client describe herself? Where does she seem confident? Where does she seem unsure? Is there negative self-talk? How does the client describe the people with whom she relates? Where is there resistance? What comes easily to the client? What challenges the client? What is the client not saying?

The coach continually attends to clues about the client that will, together, provide a more unified view of the person. As the coach's understanding of the client deepens, so does the opportunity to build rapport. From a strong foundation of rapport, trust generally follows. When these relational aspects are in place, coaching moves to the next level; the coach and client are ready to engage in processes that lead to growth and development toward the client's goals.

POWERFUL QUESTIONING AND THE REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

The essential coaching tool for prompting deep learning is the powerful question. Leaning heavily on the tradition of Socratic questioning, powerful questions are distinguished from ordinary questions in terms of the do-

main of the potential answers: regular questions tend to move someone to seek an answer in a particular direction (“What is the lectionary text for this week?”). A powerful question (“How could you make it better?”) is expansive and provides multiple avenues for exploration. In addition, powerful questions:

- Evoke clarity, action, discovery, insight, or commitment
- Open channels of creativity
- Challenge existing paradigms
- Stop people in their tracks
- Either forward the individual’s action or deepen the individual’s learning.

Lobbing a powerful question into the midst of a supervisory or a classroom conversation is an effective pedagogical technique that can take the discussion below the surface. It can also be threatening or discomfiting, so care should be taken in both the delivery and the responses (verbal and non-verbal). “Why” questions, though potentially effective, should be asked with care so that the questioned person does not feel like under attack.

Appropriating a few basic coaching principles can increase the effectiveness of powerful questions in supervision. First, ask: What is the most important question I could ask the student to move her forward? A related notion to keep in mind is that the response you are seeking from the student is, “That’s a good question!” An excellent resource for exploring coaching in general and powerful questions in particular is Whitworth and other’s *Co-Active Coaching: New Skills for Coaching People Toward Success in Work and Life*.⁵

Having all the answers—or questions—is not the responsibility of the supervisor. This is one of the most helpful coaching principles that I have adapted for field education. Indeed, sometimes the best approach is for the supervisor to elicit the powerful question from the client: What is the most important question I could ask you now? What is the most challenging question I could ask you now? What question are you hoping I don’t ask?

Brockbank and McGill describe the use of questioning to “recover lost structures,” a process employed to help clients recognize that a particular statement is missing something important, is a generalization, or is distorted.⁶ An example of recovering a lost structure is reflected in this sample supervisory exchange:

Student: The lay committee is unreasonable.

Supervisor: How is the lay committee unreasonable?

The Brockbank and McGill book is an excellent resource for exploring the application of powerful questions as a means of furthering reflective thinking.

SUMMARY

Coaching theory states that the power of coaching is in the dynamic relationship between coach and coachee. If this is true, then applying coaching theory and skills to the supervisory relationship can enhance and deepen the supervisory process. The addition of coaching techniques might be as simple as being intentional about creating a climate of collaboration between supervisor and student, integrating powerful questions into supervisory conversations, or tuning in more carefully to the student by activating specialized listening skills.

NOTES

1. John P. Martinson, "Coaching Religious Leaders," *Reflective Practice*, no. 27 (2007): 83–98.
2. Anne Brockbank and Ian McGill, *Facilitating Reflective Learning Through Mentoring and Coaching* (London: Kogan-Page, 2006), 15. Brockbank and McGill explore the related idea of challenging a "prevailing discourse," which they define as "a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements, etc., that in some way together produce a particular version of events, person, or category of person."
3. Carl Rogers, *Freedom to Learn for the 80s* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing, 1983), 82.
4. Emphasis mine. Kenneth Pohly, *Transforming the Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision* (Franklin, TN: Providence House, 2001), 82.
5. Laura Whitworth, Henry Kimsey-House, and Phillip Sandahl, *Co-Active Coaching: New Skills for Coaching People Toward Success in Work and Life*, 2nd ed. (Mountain View, CA: Davies-Black, 1998).
6. Brockbank and McGill, *Facilitating Reflective Learning*, 216–217.

Considering “Direction” in Spiritual Direction

Susan S. Phillips

At our first spiritual direction meeting several years ago, David said, “I want you to be directive with me.” That was a surprise. People are often wary of the term “spiritual direction.” Even spiritual directors are uncomfortable with the word “director” and have tried other terms: friend, companion, guide, soul mate.

I told David my view that spiritual direction is, indeed, directive, but primarily through the direction of attention, not teaching, admonition, or issuing directives. It had taken me years of immersion in spiritual direction and wrestling with the term before I arrived at the view I offered to David.

David responded, “I need someone I can tell anything to and have a solid, honest response come back at me. I don’t want you to toss pillows to cushion the impact when I fall or bump into hard realizations. And I don’t want you to hold back when you disagree with me. What I most fear is self-delusion; I can’t have you colluding in that,” he declared. “I want a spiritual *director!*”

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

When students in supervision ask about the meaning of direction, I give them a poem by Billy Collins, entitled "Directions," in which the narrator offers to direct another person in a solitary walk along a path, the beginning of which is familiar to both of them. The director asks a series of questions that begin with the phrase "you know." "You know the brick path in back of the house...?" the narrator begins, telling the other of a path, and, beyond it, woods. And farther still, "you know the small footbridge," followed by a steep hill and a ridge where it might be good to stop and take in the view. From that ridge in the late afternoon, it's possible to see sunlight shining into the woods, and the director-narrator reflects on how hard it is to speak of what happens in us as we watch the play of light on the earth and think of our place in this world of time and space. The poem closes with these lines:

*Still, let me know before you set out.
Come knock on my door
and I will walk with you as far as the garden
with one hand on your shoulder.
I will even watch after you and not turn back
to the house until you disappear
into the crowd of maple and ask,
heading up toward the hill,
piercing the ground with your stick.¹*

Collins conveys a sense of directive companionship on a solitary journey. The listener can accept the other's offer, or not; begin that journey, or not. In spiritual direction, metaphors and images of the spiritual life abound, and journey imagery runs deep in our hearts and the literature of our faith. Like the narrator-director in the poem, spiritual directors offer directive accompaniment to those who journey. My own journey has benefited greatly from spiritual directors and supervisors who have been willing to point out places along the trail, anticipate what I might encounter, and encourage me to attend to the quality of the light.

The life of the soul is opaque, and much of what we glimpse is by analogy, parable, metaphor, image, icon, story, ritual, and symbol. This is true in secular professions that work with the psyche, as well as in religious practices of soul care. Classical psychoanalytic theories have been called "large scale explanatory metaphors, or symbolisms...our pluralistic... articles of faith."² The field of spiritual direction also is constructed of meta-

phors and images that express our faith and inform our practical work with people.³

Two metaphors, candle and staff, guide my work as a spiritual director and supervisor of directors. They are two common objects that have held layers of meaning for thousands of years. Each image informs the art of spiritual direction and, like any metaphor or image, is a viewing lens that reveals some aspects of reality, while obscuring others. Metaphors are freely mixed in the work of spiritual direction as in Scripture to great benefit.⁴ In this essay, these metaphors will be examined in terms of how they inform our understanding of “direction” in spiritual direction.

CANDLE

The very act of lighting the candle is prayer.—David Steindl-Rast⁵

The creation stories in Hebrew and Christian Scriptures direct our attention to the light that shines in the darkness. A spiritual director, by word and presence, directs attention and bears witness to that holy Light, in its various real, yet mysterious, dimensions.

Remembrance.

“We light the candle as a reminder that God is with us.” Those words and the lighting of a candle mark the beginning of all my direction and supervision sessions (with the permission of the directee or supervisee). That is the opening directive. We watch as the flame grabs hold and zips down the wick, wobbles on encountering the wax, and slowly, steadily remounts the wick with growing breadth and light. Hope is engaged by the wobble, the flame’s triumph not yet certain. Sometimes, on breezy days, the floundering on the wax is prolonged. Once the flame flares, the directee or supervisee often meets my eyes, nods, smiles, and takes a deep breath. God is with us, indeed.

Throughout the hour, the candle directs our attention toward God. We turn again and again: remember, repent, relax, retreat, renew, return. Like the narrator-director in Collins’ poem, the spiritual director invites attention to and familiarity with the light, and so does the spiritual director. The director doesn’t know how the light appears to the traveler, but knows something about the light itself and its customary activity in the world.

As a supervisor of spiritual directors-in-training and a consultant to colleagues, I am in a privileged position to view them as they accompany others. I get to see, secondhand through the director, the expression of welcome, the careful awareness of the other's hesitations, hopes, and needs, and the personal experience of grace that comes through attending to the other person. It is as Jesus said, "You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for."⁶

One director who consults with me has told me how she prays in her office in advance of every meeting with a directee. Before the directee arrives, the director lights a candle. The visual symbol of the flame directs her heart and mind toward God, reminding her that God is there. When the directee has arrived and is comfortably settled, the director lights another candle, so the directee experiences the kindling of the light. After the closing moments with the directee, in which that second candle is extinguished and the directee exits, the director sits with the still burning candle that preceded the guest's arrival. While the other has disappeared from view, the candle remains holding the other in awareness and prayer.

Presence.

Before speaking light into the world, "God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water."⁷ The light comes into the darkness and chaos and directs our attention to God who is already there. Genesis claims God's spirit hovered over this creation like a bird hovers in the air over its young in the nest.⁸ God hovers—active, constant, lively, caring—sending light to direct our attention to holy Presence. The spiritual director bears witness to this affirmation of faith.

New spiritual directors sometimes forget the significance of the relational context of spiritual direction. Recently, Naomi, a spiritual director, said to me, "What should I say to my directee about the sin she is considering?" The directee, Ann, had come to spiritual direction committed to talk about her temptation to become involved with a married man. Naomi came to me in supervision wondering what her ethical responsibility as a Christian director was in this situation.

I asked Naomi to tell me about the conversation with the directee. "Well, Ann looked shaken. All color drained from her face as she talked about meeting this man secretly for meals and drives around town. They

hadn't touched each other, but she felt she was on the verge of that and of falling in love. She trembled as she spoke to me."

"Tell me about your experience as Ann spoke to you," I said.

"I really felt sad for her. I could see she was suffering. I didn't want to hurt her by saying something that sounded judgmental. But I also felt as though it was a test for me! I felt responsible as her spiritual director to direct her away from sin, and the destruction her actions could bring. I was torn between just listening to Ann and empathizing with her feelings, on the one hand, and, on the other, shouldering my responsibility to guide her toward the right decision."

"It sounds as though you were moved by her conflict, her pain. You also experienced some of your own conflict and pain," I said, surfacing the parallels in Naomi's and Ann's experiences.

As spiritual directors, we are affected, touched, disturbed, and perhaps even healed by those we care for. Carl Jung once observed, "it often happens that the patient is exactly the right plaster for the doctor's sore spot."⁹ As supervisors, we are directive in helping directors notice the sore spots that are significant for their work with directees, and trust they are exploring all their vulnerabilities with their own spiritual directors. Sitting with Naomi, I was aware of the candle flame, the persevering reminder of the One who knows all sore spots and right plasters.

We experience God as we are able. Sometimes, as spiritual directors and supervisors, it is easy to lose track of God in the conversation. Sometimes, God is encountered indirectly, in our feelings or in our longing for God in the absence of God's felt presence. The Christian Reformer John Calvin expressed this theological truth very simply: "God is never seen as he is, but gives manifest signs of his presence adapted to the capacity of believers."¹⁰ As a spiritual director, Naomi sought to embody God's presence through her capacity for compassion and concern toward Ann. Without telling Ann what to do, she directed the conversation toward the experience of love, and the desire to be loved, affirming the goodness of love in a "long, loving look at the real."¹¹

Naomi reported: "What's just dawning on me as we speak is that Ann brought this topic to spiritual direction. It wasn't like a friend talking to a friend. I am her *spiritual director*. It was courageous of her. Before she followed her inclinations and really became involved with the man, she brought the situation to light in front of my eyes and before God. Ann

wanted to do that, to side with that holy inclination. There was that opening toward God even before she stepped into my office, and she did break off her meetings with the man, by the way. Thank God! But she did that out of her own desire to live honestly before God, and not because of what I told her to do."

This director, on reflection, remembered that God "hovered over" the directee before she came to the office and brought the difficult issue to light with her director. Naomi made a similar discovery in our time together: God was present in her meeting with Ann. And God was present when we spoke. And present when she left. The candlelight shines within the environment of God's real presence.

Warmth.

Many people who come for spiritual direction come from religious backgrounds devoid of the warm-heartedness of the Gospel, and have been scorched by (supposed) divine light. Some have been exposed to variants of psychotherapy that favor the searing dissolution of personal illusion, family systems, and social conventions. Nearly three centuries ago the Puritan preacher and theologian Jonathan Edwards warned against light without heat:

As, on the one hand, there must be light in the understanding, as well as an affected fervent heart, where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in that heart; so on the other hand, where there is a kind of light without heat, a head stored with notions and speculations, with a cold and unaffected heart, there can be nothing divine in that light, that knowledge is no true spiritual knowledge of divine things.¹²

Spiritual direction seeks "true spiritual knowledge of divine things," and, therefore, must bear the marks of both heat and light, which, in harmony, direct us toward God.

In my supervisory work with religious counselors who have undergone various forms of psychotherapeutic training, it has often seemed the supervision process employs the blazing torch of emancipatory reflection, rather than the more mellow light of hermeneutical reflection. Philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer cautioned against "emancipatory reflection," which leaves us isolated and extracted from the social understandings and practices that allow for life-constituting meanings and relationships.¹³ The aim of hermeneutical reflection is not deconstruction, but rather the illumination and construction of meaning and relationship.

“God is a sun and shield”—caring and relational in directing our attention to truth.¹⁴ Scripture tells us that we are beloved of God. Experiencing this truth, in spiritual direction or elsewhere, ought to generate both heat and warmth. The seventeenth century contemplative monk Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection claimed that remembrance of God, for him, was warming and inflaming, sometimes setting him on fire so that he danced and sang.¹⁵ We heat-seeking beings notice God’s presence in the experience of warmth, loving-kindness, and the spark of joy. Light is not the only force that directs our attention toward what is real. We also discern life by registering warmth, and noticing and choosing life is crucial for spiritual growth.

Corona.

A lighted candle casts a skirt of light like the corona of a star. A directee recently drew my attention to that by saying this: “When I come here, I feel I’m held in a circle of light before God’s presence.” As directors and supervisors, it’s significant to consider ourselves as resting in that circle, and maintaining it for those who join us there. In that moment, we are a small but beloved part of wider spaces of grace.

Naomi was surprised when her directee Ann first mentioned her attraction to the married man. Up until that point, she had heard only about Ann’s relationship with her husband. Ann was a woman of regular prayer and devotional practices, church participation, and lifelong habits of turning to the Bible and God for guidance. Ann was as surprised as Naomi, her spiritual director, by the growing longing she felt for forbidden love. They wondered together how that desire related to Ann’s longings for God.

In supervision, Naomi talked with me about her temptation to teach Ann the prayer practices of *lectio divina* or particular prayer practices that would help her resist the temptation. “I guess I feel safe with the teaching. I know these prayer practices are good, and time-tested, and I use them myself,” Naomi said.

“In considering teaching Ann the prayer practices I realize I feel I’m seeking what is safe, tried and true, spiritually legitimate. As I speak, I’m questioning that escape to safety.”

Naomi’s feelings were familiar to me, and I told her so. I, too, have stumbled through the wilderness of others’ pain and my own worries and strivings. But I also know how, as Collins writes, “the sun strobes through the columns of trees,” and I sensed that in Naomi’s dawning realizations as well.

When I asked Naomi the way her mind had gone to God in the midst of her anxiety about Ann's conflict, she said this: "Yes, I remember my mind turning to God and suddenly remembering God was there in that room with the two of us. And remembering that Ann's relationship with God was what led her to talk to me about this. That was a comfort to me." She paused and sat still for a while, continuing to study the play of the flame, the edge of the candle's corona touching her hand.

After some time of silence Naomi said, "I'm aware of my own longing to make Ann feel content, and aware of my own feelings of insufficiency. Yet I also, right now, feel a lot of peace about this. I see that the thought of the prayer practices was a way of subduing my own discomfort. I don't feel that discomfort now. I feel like I can rest in God in the honesty of Ann's experience." She smiled, "I hope I can."

Naomi changed as she studied the candle, relaxing her posture and speaking more slowly. I felt my own breathing slow in the open space we shared, as my own urges to know, teach, and control subsided.¹⁶ Supervision in spiritual direction (as in other practices of caring for psyches) enables us "to create clearances in which fresh forms of thinking and dreaming may emerge."¹⁷ I direct people in that clearance, which I understand to be the broad space of God's grace "in whom we live and move and have our being."¹⁸

As Naomi and I met in the candle's circle of light during the months of her work with Ann, the imagined imperatives to "do the right thing" and have "the answers" were cleared away, and the "ache" to satisfy longing—akin to Ann's unrequited desire—was experienced. Spiritual direction avows the light—its remembered accompaniment throughout a life, its immediate presence, its loving warmth, and its corona that undergirds and surrounds. Each aspect directs our minds and hearts toward the one who is the Light of the world.

STAFF

Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.—Psalm 23:4 KJV.

Shepherd imagery abounds in Scripture. The twenty-third Psalm is one of the best-known pieces of spiritual writing, yet spiritual authorities today are more apt to adopt business and political models of leadership rather

than those of shepherding. The shepherd image is rich in meaning for the practice of spiritual direction, especially with respect to the subject of how spiritual direction is directive.

Care.

The staff image comes close to the interpretation of “direction” that repels many of us—that of certitude, judgment, and punishment. However, the metaphorical staff that we carry is not the proverbial “big stick” of menacing power.¹⁹ As spiritual directors we speak gently and use the shepherd’s staff of guiding care. With the staff, the shepherd points the way, rescues sheep out of hazardous pits by lifting them with the crook, fends off predators, removes obstacles from trails, clears a sheltered space for eating, and ushers the sheep into the fold at night.

Shepherding and spiritual direction are practices of care, “of constant, individualized and final kindness.”²⁰ The shepherd kindly directs the sheep to safe pastures. Many who come to spiritual direction have encountered the big stick more than the staff. Spiritual direction’s staff of caring attention—guiding, rescuing, pacing, protecting, sheltering—can surprise directees, and even disappoint those who hope for a teacher, mentor, or coach. However, the staff of spiritual direction is, first and foremost, a tool for directive caring.²¹

Naomi wanted to support Ann in doing the right thing, and staying on the true path. Our faith asserts that there are right and wrong paths, and people coming for spiritual direction rightly expect to be helped in this kind of discernment. This is not the same as saying directors are responsible for the directees’ decisions, or that directors know what is right for another person. Like the guide in Collins’ poem, the spiritual director cares about the other finding the path, shares relevant knowledge, and promises to “watch after...and not turn back” until the other is out of sight.

Martin Buber called this “confirmation,” which is built on and goes beyond acceptance. It has to do with accepting how the person is now, and “accepting the whole potentiality of the other,” that is, “the person he has been...created to become...as far as we can grasp.”²² This includes recognizing and working with the “polarity” in people, which makes a person seek another who will offer help against what in the self is contrary to life, to reality, to how that person was created. Buber wrote that we seek another whom we trust not only as trustworthy, but also as confirming that “the world can be redeemed. I can be redeemed.”²³ This is what the staff

conveys: There is "a soil" (Buber's words), a path, a way ahead that is true and right. Growth isn't just about becoming larger, stronger, independent, and separate. It's about choosing life. It is this directional staff that Naomi offered to Ann in spiritual direction.

Pace.

A staff helps establish pace, and pace enables awareness. When the walking rhythm keeps changing on a hike, a lot of energy is spent thinking about the next step and foothold. The staff, like spiritual direction, helps us direct our path. Once a pace is established, attention can be directed outward to the world. On a long hike, the rhythm is like music underfoot providing vigor and lift.

The staff of direction offers a pace in several ways. There is the pace within the session. In supervising trainees, aided by guidelines created by San Francisco Theological Seminary's Diploma in the Art of Spiritual Direction program in which I teach, I attend not only to what the director and directee said in a session, and what the director thought and felt, but also to what the two bodies in the room communicated. Often a session is reported as beginning rapidly, with back and forth conversation, which gradually slows and focuses. I hear about postures relaxing, deeper breathing, tears, softness of face. Time elongates in the contemplative space. People as they take their seat opposite me often sigh and say, "It feels so good to be here," and the tension leaves their bodies. Spiritual direction, at its best, allows people to step out of the demands of scheduled life, lower defenses, and slow down to a contemplative pace. As the staff extends the directive reach of the shepherd's arm, so the staff in spiritual direction, through pace, constructs a temporal frame in which director and directee can focus on grace.

Another aspect of pace is that of meeting regularly. With new spiritual directors, I sometimes witness (and remember in myself) a hesitancy to encourage regular meetings. The thought is that this relationship is Spirit-led, and we will wait to hear from the Spirit about setting an appointment. The regularity of meeting, however, creates an anticipated port in the storm. The anticipation extends hope and an invitation to prepare, which consists primarily of noticing one's spiritual life. Regular meetings work against self-delusion, and allow ordinary, recent experiences to be reflected on in direction.

As with spiritual direction, regular supervision or consultation grants the director the heightened attentiveness offered by a rhythmic hiking pace. As I see people for spiritual direction during the course of a month, I am aware of thoughts and experiences that would benefit from reflection with

another, and I note them to bring to my consultant. Spiritual direction is one of many caring professions practiced in collegial isolation. Teachers are with students, and colleagues seldom witness their work. Psychotherapists are similarly unobserved by peers as they provide care for their clients. So, too, spiritual directors work without benefit of the assessment of their peers, and without the inspiration and correction that would come from seeing other spiritual directors' exemplary practice. The reflective practice of regular supervision/consultation allows the director to see what is possible, good, and excellent in the work, cultivates professional identity, commitment, and community, and directly confirms the director in God-honoring practice.²⁴

There have been occasions when I have supervised a director, brought that experience to my own consultant, and known that she has consulted with her consultant. Circles of care direct attention toward God's work in the lives of those for whom we care. At those moments, it is as though the community that is usually invisible is suddenly illuminated. Prayerful attention to others' spiritual lives is the focal concern that creates the community, and the discipline of supervision guards the health of the director, the work, and the community.

Protection.

When John, a consulting colleague, found himself in a difficult ethical situation, the words of the twenty-third Psalm reverberated in his mind. John works at a church, and his directee, Harriet, works at another church in the community. Harriet told him of a serious breach in ethical behavior (but not requiring reporting) that had been inflicted on her by a former pastoral colleague and supervisor, a person John knows professionally. We devoted several closely scheduled consultation sessions to John's work with Harriet as he struggled with this knowledge and responsibility. How was he, a shepherd, to tend to this particular sheep? How was he, a shepherd, to hold a fellow shepherd accountable to the ethical imperatives of the practice?

As we spoke about the situation and its various concerning aspects, I kept returning to John's spiritual experience. One night on the phone he told me that God had brought the twenty-third Psalm to mind, specifically the line, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"The rod and staff protect the sheep from predators!" John said, "And that's what I feel I'm challenged to do here. I want to make sure this person doesn't contact Harriet, my directee, and I want to do what I can to see that

he doesn't behave inappropriately with other junior colleagues. I need God's rod and staff." As we spoke, it became clear that John was feeling God's gently directive shepherding action in his life as he went through new and treacherous (for reasons of confidentiality, care, and collegial relations) terrain. He was exquisitely attentive to his directee's experience, and she trusted him with the task of speaking to the person who had acted against her.

The conversation with his directee's former superior was not an easy one, but, in preparing for it and in the midst of it, John felt the steady pressure of God's staff leading and comforting him, enabling him to remain calm and focused in the work of wielding the rod and staff to protect his directee and others. There was every indication that John's words were heard and heeded. As he did this rod and staff bearing work, John knew I was bringing the situation to my consultant whose steady clarifications, ready accessibility, and directive wisdom formed a shepherding staff for my comfort and guidance.

Shelter.

The twenty-third Psalm is often employed at the end of life. We teach it to children, and read it when people die. It also can speak to those of us in the responsible, work-filled years of midlife. Many of the directees that I have seen over the years have referred to some part of that psalm, some treasuring the shepherd himself, some drawn to the still water, but most quote the verse about the table that the shepherd prepares. The Psalmist declares, "You prepare a table before me in the midst of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows."²⁵ I have heard people repeat these words as declaration, demand, plea, or surprised exclamation. Scripture directs us to stop, attend, receive, and drink. The staff blocks the entrance to the fold at night, for the sake of rest and restoration.

There is power in the imagery of shelter and nourishment, coupled with the forthright recognition of the presence of enemies. Those enemies might be interior—in the form of memories, wounds, fears, shame, hatred, self-accusations, temptations, guilt, unrequited hopes, or haunting regrets—or be they may be exterior enemies that lurk and linger. There's a home base quality to arriving at that verse, as though God, staff held aloft, shouts, "Safe!" as one slides into the waiting sanctuary of the table. In supervisory work, we offer a safe place in which the other can examine her ministry as a director, be cared for in that, and regard the role and responsibility from a reflective distance.

As John addressed the ethical situation that had surfaced in his directee's story, the dominant image for many days was of God, the shepherd, guiding, encouraging, and guarding him with the staff. As the process moved ahead, and the crisis diminished, I asked about images of God, directing his attention to the Spirit's continuing movement. "What's strong with me now is the sense of God preparing a table for me in the midst of my enemies," John said, and we talked about his feelings of arriving there, and the nature of the enemies.

Then I asked about the table. John said, "The image I have is of the table being out in a field, or maybe even right there in the middle of the path, blocking the way, stopping any further so-called progress until the connection is made." John was directed to stop, rest, cease, and pray. It was a Sabbath movement, following days of hard work.

As John prayed with this image in his home, he sometimes put his hands and forehead on the smooth, broad floor in his office. He smelled the wood, and felt the stability of the surface. It reminded him that God prepared a safe, nurturing place for him in the midst of the clamor and crisis of the recent work he did for the sake of, and at the request of, his directee. John said he was to stop at that table in the field until "the connection is made." It brought to my mind the story of Elijah who fled to the desert after a torturous ordeal. He rested, and an angel brought provisions of food and drink. The angel roused him from his exhausted sleep saying, in an exceedingly directive manner, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."²⁶ The connection was made in a protected space of nourishment and care.

The staff guides, paces, comforts, and guards sanctuary in the work of spiritual direction. Ultimately the staff is in God's hand, just as God is the ultimate Director. Yet we who practice the art of spiritual direction and supervision are God's under-shepherds, wielding a directive staff as best we can for the sake of those we tend.

CONCLUSION

Though spiritual direction is a gentle art of accompanying another, spiritual direction is directive. It is so by God's grace, as the candle is alive by virtue of the conferred spark, and the staff takes action in the shepherd's hand. The candle image conveys remembrance, the light and warmth of understanding

presence, and attentive accompaniment and care. The staff symbolizes such spiritual direction qualities as guidance, protection, pacing, and shelter. These images clarify the ways in which spiritual direction directs eyes, ears, hearts, minds, hands, and feet toward God and God's action in and through ourselves. These images encourage us to take up the authority and responsibility vested in the roles of spiritual director and supervisor, while surrendering inflated aspirations and burdens. For us in our roles as directees and supervisees, they reassert the primacy of God as the One whom we seek and respond to in and through these formal care-receiving relationships. We trust that through this graced art, the Light of Light will direct us, as we are and care for "the people of [God's] pasture, and the sheep of [God's] hand."²⁷

NOTES

1. Billy Collins, *Sailing Alone around the Room: New and Selected Poems* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2001), 51–52.
2. Robert Wallerstein, former president of the International Psychoanalytic Association, wrote that the theoretical perspectives of psychoanalysts "are but our chosen explanatory metaphors, heuristically useful to us, in terms of our varying intellectual value commitments...in making sense of the primary clinical data of our consulting rooms." In "One Psychoanalysis or Many," *International Journal of the Psychoanalytic Association* 69 (1988): 16–17.
3. The seminal work on supervision in the field of spiritual direction is Maureen Conroy's metaphorically titled *Looking into the Well: Supervision of Spiritual Directors* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1995).
4. For example, two dominant metaphors of the spiritual life mingle in Ps. 1:1,3 (NIV): "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked... He is like a tree planted by streams of water." The spiritual person walks and is planted.
5. David Steindl-Rast, *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer: An Approach to Life in Fullness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 57.
6. Mt 5:7 in Eugene Peterson, trans., *The Message*, translation of the New Testament (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1993).
7. Gn 1:1–2 (JB).
8. See note 1c on Gn 1:2 in Alexander Jones, ed., *The Jerusalem Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1966).
9. C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, recorded and ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Vintage Books, 1963) 134.
10. Quoted in: J.K.S. Reid, ed., Calvin: *Theological Treatises* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1964) 269.
11. Walter J. Burghardt, "Contemplation: A Long Loving Look at the Real," *Church* (Winter 1989): 14–18.

12. John E. Smith, *A Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 101.
13. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. and ed. David E. Linge (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976), 42.
14. Ps 84:11 NRSV.
15. Brother Lawrence, "Third Conversation," in *The Practice of the Presence of God*, trans. Sister Mary David (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 75.
16. As Mary Rose Bumpus aptly puts it, "Ultimately, supervision requires of us a respectful unknowing, a willingness to remain within God's Hidden Mystery." In "Supervision: The Assistance of the Absent Other," *Supervision of Spiritual Directors*, ed. Mary Rose Bumpus and Rebecca Bradford Langer (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2005), 14.
17. Thomas H. Ogden, "On Teaching Psychoanalysis," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 87 (2006): 1069.
18. Acts 17:28.
19. Theodore Roosevelt at the beginning of the twentieth century suggested that the United States, in its international relations, adopt the West African proverb: "Speak softly and carry a big stick." See E.D. Hirsch Jr., Joseph F. Kett, and James Trefil, "Big Stick Diplomacy," in *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, 3rd ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002).
20. Michel Foucault, "Pastoral Power and Political Reason," in *Religion and Culture: Michel Foucault*, ed. Jeremy R. Carrette (New York: Routledge, 1999), 138.
21. Caring attention is essential to all care-giving relationships and has been called, variously, unconditional positive regard, trustworthiness, and beneficence. For the Christian spiritual director, its source is God who "is love...and lives in us." Carl Rogers used the phrase "unconditional positive regard"; Sigmund Freud wrote about the necessary trustworthiness of the analyst (lay or medically trained); medical ethicists write of beneficence; and the Gospel claims "God is love...and lives in us" (1 Jn 4:8,12).
22. From a 1957 dialogue between Martin Buber and Carl R. Rogers; see Martin Buber, "Appendix" in *The Knowledge of Man: A Philosophy of the Interhuman*, ed. Maurice Friedman (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 182.
23. Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 183.
24. For an excellent articulation of the need for reflective practice in caring professions see Anna E. Richert, "The Corrosion of Care in the Context of School," in *The Crisis of Care: Affirming and Restoring Caring Practices in the Helping Professions*, ed. Susan S. Phillips and Patricia Benner (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1994), 109–122.
25. Ps 23:5 NRSV.
26. 1 Kgs 19:7 NIV.
27. "Morning Prayer" from *The Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (New York: Seabury Press, 1953), 9.

Clinical Supervision Research in Psychology: Possible Contributions to CPE Supervision

Marsha Cutting

While supervision in training for ministry has not been the subject of extensive research, the study of supervision for trainees in mental health disciplines has been expanding rapidly. This research has focused on identifying factors that promote or undermine effective supervision and has noted the harmful effects of poor supervision. A recent study of clinical pastoral education (CPE) supervision found results similar to those reported by trainees in mental health disciplines.¹ Thus, it seems reasonable to consider how the research done in psychology clinical supervision might inform supervision in training for ministry and, in particular, in CPE. Responding to Strunk's call for a greater cross-fertilization and Lester's caution about not keeping up with advances in the social sciences, this article describes five areas of supervision research that seem relevant for CPE and

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The author currently is conducting a study of productive and unproductive field education experiences. She seeks to interview either students or supervisors who have been involved in a field education experience that was particularly productive or unproductive within the past three years (but at least six months ago). She would appreciate any help that might be offered in locating students or supervisors who would be willing to take part in the study. Further information is available by contacting the author at the address listed above.

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other supervised training for ministry and suggests possible directions for collaborative research.² The five areas are: (1) the components of good and bad supervision, (2) the supervisory relationship, (3) the incidence of problems, (4) conflicts in supervision, and (5) specific factors related to problematic supervision.

In writing this article, the author reviewed current quantitative and qualitative supervision research that is indexed in PsychInfo, an abstract database for psychological literature. It should be noted that this is something of a moving target, since the field is growing fairly rapidly. Also, supervision research is not without its problems (indeed, there is no perfect research), as Ellis and others document.³ There is, however, substantial agreement around the core themes discussed in this article.

THE RESEARCH—COMPONENTS OF GOOD AND BAD SUPERVISION

Supervision research explores trainee descriptions of good supervisors, along with other areas. The authors of one early study, Worthington and Roehlke, reported that their participants described good supervisors as being pleasant and personable, supporting supervisees' attempts to experiment, and providing useful training.⁴ Other authors have found that good supervisors tended to self-disclose, allow for mistakes by supervisees, and work to facilitate an atmosphere of experimentation.⁵ Conversely, in a review of several supervision studies, Watkins characterized bad supervision as lacking in empathy and support; inconsistent in following supervisees' concerns; rigid; lacking in praise and encouragement; lacking in collegiality; and focusing on evaluation, weaknesses, and deficiencies.⁶ Such supervisors were experienced as failing to instruct and as closed, sexist, or lacking in respect for individual differences.

In one of the few studies to contrast what he called typical and problematic supervision, Unger found that typical supervision was marked by good collaborative working relationships, trust, support and openness.⁷ Supervisees attributed their increased skills and confidence to the supervisor's favorable personality characteristics, such as flexibility, enthusiasm, concern for the supervisee, and permitting supervisee autonomy. Ethical problems were few. On the other hand, problematic supervision was mark-

ed by a power imbalance and the failings of one member of the supervisory dyad. Conflicts existed around differences in areas like gender and theoretical orientation; problematic ethical issues were noted, little learning occurred, and at least one member of the dyad experienced a decrease in confidence and enthusiasm. In a study of group therapy trainees, Murphy and others reported that trainees who had a positive supervisory experience used descriptors, such as "empathic," "technically helpful," "recognized my position," "didn't make me feel chastised," and "made sense of my negative feelings."⁸ In contrast, trainees who had negative supervisory experiences described their experiences as "felt attacked," "not listened to," "unempathic," "talked above my head," "whatever I did was wrong," and "felt like pressure."⁹ The authors noted that with only one exception, trainees consistently rated a supervisor consistently either positively or negatively. In summary, supervisees who experience empathy and support tend to have positive experiences, and supervisees who feel attacked and unsupported tend to have negative experiences.

THE RESEARCH—THE RELATIONSHIP AS CORE

More recently, research has focused on the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee—the supervisory alliance—as the core of supervision.¹⁰ Ramos-Sanchez and others found that supervisees who described negative experiences typically had weaker supervisory alliances than those who reported positive experiences.¹¹ A strong supervisory relationship serves as the foundation for positive experiences because a relationship characterized by empathy, a sense of affirmation, and a nonjudgmental attitude allows a supervisee to tolerate the anxiety engendered by the challenge to his skills. Worthen and McNeill found that in good supervision events, the supervisors were seen as empathic, nonjudgmental, validating, nondefensive, and willing to examine their own assumptions.¹² These supervisors helped their supervisees, often by self-disclosure, to normalize the difficulties they experienced and to overcome self-imposed limitations. Because the supervisees felt comfortable and accepted, they did not need to engage in self-protective behaviors and could be open to input from their supervisors. As a result, the supervisees experienced increased confidence,

a capacity for dealing with complexity, and increased ability to conceptualize clients, and they looked forward to implementing new learning. In contrast, in negative supervisory events, the supervisory alliance typically lacked mutuality, trust and confidence, and was marked by incongruent tasks and goals.¹³

Although much of supervision research has focused on the views of trainees, Burke and others asked both supervisees and supervisors to rate the working alliance between them and found that both members of the supervisory dyad gave similar ratings of the alliance.¹⁴ They did note that the ratings of the supervisees were less stable and tended to vary, depending on what had happened most recently in supervision. The authors ascribed this to the fact that supervisees were more vulnerable and had less power in the relationships and thus were more likely to be reactive to the process. Heru and others found that supervisees and supervisors tended to agree about boundaries for the supervisory relationship; the only area of disagreement was that supervisees were less likely to consider discussion of sexual fantasies appropriate.¹⁵ One of the few other studies to focus on supervisors rather than supervisees found that supervisors experienced affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses to countertransference and that the sources of the countertransference consistently included both unresolved issues on the part of the supervisor and elements of the trainee's interpersonal style.¹⁶ In summary, supervisees and supervisors tend to evaluate the supervisory alliance similarly, and a strong supervisory alliance enables students to make the best use of supervision.

THE RESEARCH—INCIDENCE OF PROBLEMS

Researchers also have studied the incidence of problematic supervision experiences. In one study of psychiatric interns and residents, 58 percent reported educational neglect, and 50 percent reported emotional neglect by their supervisors.¹⁷ Among clinical psychology graduate student respondents, 38 percent experienced conflict with their supervisors.¹⁸ The incidence of problematic supervision has not been widely studied, but the editors of the *Journal of Counseling Psychology* decided the problem was important enough to warrant a special section on the topic in 2001. Having

reviewed several studies, Ellis suggested that 33 to 50 percent of supervisees "are likely to encounter truly harmful supervision" and that such supervision causes 7 to 10 percent of supervisees to leave the field.¹⁹ Ellis distinguished bad supervision from harmful supervision. In bad supervision, "the supervisor is unable or unwilling to meet (the supervisee's) training needs as an emerging professional counselor or psychologist." Harmful supervision, on the other hand, results in psychological, physical or emotional trauma, or harm to the supervisees or the supervisee's clients.²⁰ More recently, Lovell and Crafti have argued that even bad supervision can psychologically harm supervisees.²¹ Ellis also noted the variety of terms in the literature that refer to bad supervision, including "lousy," "unethical," and "ineffective."²²

In a study of senior psychiatric trainees in Australia and New Zealand, Foulkes found that, while trainees rated supervision as the most useful part of their training, from 45 to more than 90 percent were not satisfied with the quality of their supervision.²³ This variation was related to the type of training (dynamic, family, group, and so forth). The percentages of respondents who felt they did not get enough supervision time ranged from 60 to 87 percent, again depending on the type of training. Some of the study participants reported having found private supervision in order to supplement that which was otherwise available to them. The idea of supervision as a valued commodity, however, is supported by a study in Britain, where the British Association for Counselling mandates supervision for its members, regardless of experience level and qualifications, and where respondents saw supervision as a support for themselves and appeared to value it greatly.²⁴ In summary, while trainees value supervision, supervision experiences that go badly can be harmful to them—a finding that has not been generally acknowledged.

THE RESEARCH—CONFLICTS IN SUPERVISION

Reflecting the growing evidence that many trainees have highly negative experiences in supervision, a section in the 2001 *Journal of Counseling Psychology* focused on conflicts in psychotherapy supervision. The two major articles in the section were qualitative studies of conflictual

supervisory relationships from the perspective of the trainees. In detailed interviews of a national sample of thirteen master's and doctoral trainees who had reported supervisory experiences that they considered harmful, Nelson and Friedlander concluded that role conflicts and power struggles characterized most of these relationships, and dual relationships, even subtle ones, created much confusion and disharmony.²⁵

Nelson and Friedlander found that negative supervisory experiences were marked by disagreement about what should take place in supervision, power struggles or role conflicts, supervisees who experienced their supervisors as angry at them, and supervisors who denied responsibility or were irresponsible. Supervisees also felt a lack of support or powerlessness, and many developed self-doubts and experienced extreme stress or fears. The authors also found that supervisees typically attempted to address the problem with their supervisor, got support from others, including partners and peers, and took a variety of perspectives on the problem. Although the conflicts that Nelson and Friedlander examined typically were not resolved, trainees often reported gaining useful knowledge or a strengthened sense of self from having survived the conflict, and they felt validated to learn that others had had similar experiences.

To support their qualitative data, Nelson and Friedlander administered the Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity Inventory and the Supervisory Styles Inventory (SSI) to their participants prior to their interviews.²⁶ As expected, results showed that most participants (twelve of thirteen) had high scores for role conflict, role ambiguity, or both. Also as expected, most participants (85 percent) rated their supervisors low on the SSI's interpersonal sensitivity and attractiveness scales. These findings were consistent with and provided validity support for Nelson and Friedlander's qualitative themes, which indicated that most supervisees who had harmful supervisory experiences reported nonsupportive relationships, often characterized by ambiguous expectations and conflict due to dual roles.

The other major article in the *Journal of Counseling Psychology* special section reported that counterproductive events in supervision were characterized by supervisors who dismissed the supervisee's thoughts and feelings or were perceived as unempathic.²⁷ This sample of thirteen trainees, all students in counseling psychology graduate programs, reported experiencing negative thoughts about themselves, their supervisors, or the supervisory relationship. Typically, they felt uncomfortable, unsafe, or

upset; some also felt angry, frustrated, annoyed, anxious, nervous, shocked, confused, undermined, invalidated, or unsupported. The counterproductive events tended to weaken the supervisory relationship, although only temporarily for most supervisees. To sum up, it appears to be important for supervisors to be aware of the power differential in supervision and to be aware that conflicts place students at a particular disadvantage.

THE RESEARCH—SPECIFIC FACTORS RELATED TO PROBLEMATIC SUPERVISION

Supervision researchers also have looked at specific factors related to problematic supervision, including multiple role relationships, role conflict, role ambiguity, and neglect or lack of investment by supervisors. Slimp and Burian reviewed the literature on the negative effects of multiple role relationships experienced by psychology interns and made recommendations for agencies to address this problem, such as establishing ethics committees to formulate policies regarding dual relationships.²⁸ Dual relationships are, of course, a virtually unavoidable part of CPE, given that the same supervisor typically functions as a trainee's individual supervisor, group supervisor, and interpersonal process group facilitator.²⁹ In fact, in a recent study of CPE supervision, when interviewees were asked to specify whether they were referring to group supervision or interpersonal process group, it proved difficult for them to do so, because they seemed to combine the two when talking about their experiences.³⁰ Dual relationships also may be a problem in field education, where the director of field education may also teach classes that include students she has placed in field education settings. The Association for Theological Field Education has provided funding for a study of productive and unproductive field education experiences that the author currently is conducting.

In empirical studies of role conflict in supervision, Friedlander and others and Olk and Friedlander addressed the problem that supervisees face when they are expected to discuss personal issues affecting their work with clients, but also are expected to function as competent trainees whose performance is being evaluated by their supervisors.³¹ These studies defined role ambiguity as "lack of clarity regarding the expectations for one's role, the methods for fulfilling those expectations, and the consequences for

effective or ineffective performance," and role conflict as "fac(ing) expectations requiring behaviors that are mutually competing or opposing."³² These ambiguities and conflicts are associated with work-related anxiety and performance, job dissatisfaction, and perceived harm in supervision.³³

In an examination of experienced psychologists' recollections of their predoctoral internship, Wulf and Nelson found a lack of investment by supervisors, little support for supervisees' autonomy, and little confirmation of their strengths.³⁴ Supporting these results, Magnuson and others interviewed eleven experienced counselors and identified professional apathy as one of six major contributors to poor supervision.³⁵ The other contributions were a lack of balance among the elements of supervision, developmentally inappropriate supervision, intolerance of differences, poor modeling of professional or personal attributes, and lack of training.

In addition to affecting supervisees and clients directly, problematic supervision can affect clients indirectly, when, for example, supervisees do not disclose clinical mistakes to their supervisors.³⁶ One study of 108 doctoral- and masters-level therapists in training found that 44 percent of the participants reported having made clinical mistakes that they did not report to their supervisors, generally because of concerns about impression management.³⁷ In general, supervisees did not report the mistakes because of the belief that the information was unimportant or too personal or because they had negative feelings about the nondisclosed information; a poor supervisory alliance, impression management, and deference to the supervisor were other reasons for nondisclosure.

A British study of disclosure by counselors (44 percent of whom were trainees) in supervision found that the extent of disclosures was positively related to the quality of the supervisory working alliance. Counselors were likely to disclose more in individual as opposed to group supervision, when they had the opportunity to choose their supervisor, and when supervision was separate from their work setting.³⁸ The items least likely to be disclosed related to sexual feelings about clients, negative and positive feelings about supervision, and personal feelings about the supervisor. In summary, multiple role relationships and role ambiguity are likely to lead to problems in supervisory relationships. A lack of investment also can create problems, and difficulties in the supervisory relationship may negatively affect the quality of care that clients receive.

SUPERVISION RESEARCH WITHIN CPE?

In volume twenty-four of the *Journal of Supervision and Training for Ministry (JSTM)*, Mary Wilkins discussed theory paper writing within CPE and offered a model for reintegrating experience and theory.³⁹ What was striking about the article to this writer, a psychologist, was its lack of attention to the growing body of supervision research. Wilkins hinted at a reason for this omission when she referred to the “war against academia” waged by CPE in its formative years.⁴⁰ Certainly accounts of the beginning years of CPE indicate that it was intended to be a corrective to the overly intellectual approach available to clergy in the early-to-mid 1900s, lacking as it was in practical training.⁴¹ Seminaries, however, now include courses in practical theology and integrate theory and practice through field education. The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) requires a similar integration of theory and practice by requiring that supervisory candidates write position papers. Most recent issues of the *JSTM* have included at least one set of these papers, which typically have referred to psychological theories. Less often, the authors have referenced supervision theories, but they virtually never have reflected any awareness of supervision research. In fact, of the nine ACPE theory papers published in the last eight volumes of *JSTM* that included theory papers, only one made any reference to supervision research and that reference cited only to a single article.⁴²

O'Connor has stated that research is a neglected area in CPE (though with notable exceptions) and urged supervisors and trainees to be more involved in doing research.⁴³ I have some concerns about this, as I reflect upon the four statistics courses, the research design course, and the two assessment courses that were part of my doctoral level training in psychology research, along with my involvement in six faculty-led research projects and my own dissertation research. In spite of this training, and in spite of having taught a doctoral level research design course, I am well aware of how much I still do not know about research. I have concerns about the quality of research done by people without significant training in research methodologies. The complexity of supervision research in particular has been highlighted by Ladany and Muse-Burke, who argued for attention to 129 supervision variables under 10 categories, such as supervisor characteristics, trainee characteristics, client characteristics, supervision process, counseling process, and supervision outcome.⁴⁴ They also have

critiqued existing psychology research in supervision, finding significant shortcomings, highlighting the challenges faced by those with significant research training.⁴⁵

CPE faces additional challenges if it tries to conduct supervision research. Good empirical research grows out of a science culture, and CPE, with its roots in the humanities culture of theology, is largely a stranger to research. Doing research is connected to reading about research, and there is little evidence that such reading is a significant part of the life of CPE supervisors or trainees. *JSTM* theory articles ignore the important work done by authors such as Fitchett and VandeCreek.⁴⁶ As part of a humanities culture, CPE tends to look for information in books (and not books containing the results of empirical research), as a glance at the notes for the average *JSTM* article will confirm. For example, in volume 24, roughly seven times more books than articles were referenced. In a science culture, professionals look to journals of empirical research more than books because these journals contain the latest research. It may well be that the journals where supervision research is published (for example, *The Clinical Supervisor* and *Counselor Education and Supervision*) are not known to CPE supervisors, much less available to them. Perhaps the first steps toward encouraging more interest in CPE supervision research might involve seeking out supervision research in fields such as psychology, social work, and psychiatry, and then exploring opportunities to work collaboratively with researchers in those fields. I am clear that my own dissertation research on positive and negative supervisory experiences in CPE would not have been possible without the cooperation of two CPE supervisors. Collaborative research on CPE supervision could make a valuable contribution.

Because supervision has been studied more from the standpoint of the supervisee than the supervisor, one logical direction for further research would be to study supervisors' experiences of positive and negative supervision. Perhaps not all supervisors work equally well with all supervisees. Given that the same study showed that the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory (SWAI)⁴⁷ is effective in identifying strong supervisory working alliances in CPE students, it could be useful to administer the SWAI to a large group of CPE students. One could then use the results to identify supervisors who have students reporting both strong and weak working alliances and interview the supervisors to explore their experience in working with the different students. Of particular interest would be the

question of whether their evaluation of the supervisory alliance matches that reported by the students; there is a supervisor form for the SWAI that could be used for this purpose. This could speak to the question of whether supervisors are not aware of problems in the alliance or are aware of problems and not sure how to address them. It could also be useful to know, in the cases of alliances that the supervisors evaluate as problematic, how early in the relationship they were aware of difficulties and what, if anything, could have improved the alliance.

Additional areas for possible future research are the factors that distinguish CPE supervision from therapy supervision, including whether CPE and therapy training programs attract different types of people or whether students in each have different expectations of supervision. It also could be useful to study the longer-term effects of positive and negative CPE supervision, especially for those who drop out.

HOW MIGHT SUPERVISION RESEARCH IMPROVE SUPERVISION IN TRAINING FOR MINISTRY?

The existing supervisory research does suggest some ways of improving supervision experiences. In an analog study, which did not take the supervisory alliance into account, Stevens and others found that training in supervision was correlated with responses to a videotaped counseling session that were less critical, more supportive and less dogmatic.⁴⁸ They argued that experience alone did not seem to contribute to supervisory development. Whitman experimented with offering new supervisees a one-session orientation to supervision that covered such things as characteristics of good supervisees and good supervisors, supervisory contracts, addressing supervision problems, parallel process, and professional in contrast to personal issues in supervision. Trainees rated the session 4.6 out of 5 (mean score), on a scale where 1 = not helpful at all, and 5 = extremely helpful. In Australia, Clarke experimented with an instrument by which trainees rated their supervision and training experiences, concluding that it could be useful in identifying areas of training and supervision in need of improvement.⁴⁹

In general, supervision research highlights the importance of the supervisory alliance. The one study of positive and negative supervisory

experiences in CPE supported this, as well as suggesting that the negative experiences tended to become problematic quite early in the supervision process.⁵⁰ Therefore, it may be important for CPE supervisors (and perhaps other ministry training supervisors) to seek consultation as soon as they become aware that problems may be emerging in their relationship with a student. The isolated nature of many CPE sites and the fact that many have only one supervisor may make this difficult, but the extra effort might prevent significant distress for supervisees and supervisors. Given that supervisees in the CPE supervision study identified personal differences in the areas of religious outlook, age, culture, gender or sexual orientation from either the supervisor or the rest of the group as contributing to their difficulties, supervisors may wish to exercise particular care when such differences are part of a supervisory relationship.

CONCLUSION

The existing research in clinical supervision has much to offer supervisors involved in training for ministry, including awareness that supervision can be either ineffective or harmful, and that harmful supervision can have lasting effects for the supervisee. It offers supervisors significant possibilities for improving supervision and opportunities for collaborative exploration to learn more about factors specific to CPE supervision.

NOTES

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33. Respectively: Friedlander and others, "Effects of Role Conflict," Olk and Friedlander, "Trainees' Experience of Role Conflict," and Nelson and Friedlander, "A Close Look at Conflictual Supervisory Relationships."
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SECTION III

FORMATION AND SUPERVISION: TO WHAT END, FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

Integration is widely used and variously understood in the work of formation and supervision in ministry. Larry Goleman provides a foundation for thinking about “integrative formation” and developing “bridging pedagogies” between seminaries and other clinical, field-based sites of pastoral formation. This essay is must reading for everyone engaged in practice-based learning for ministry. In order foster “soulful leadership” through clinical supervision, Teresa Snorton advocates with considerable passion for a greater emphasis in supervision on developing a mature spirituality, a comprehensive understanding of leadership, and the skills for boundary leadership. The essay by Rein Brouwer from the Netherlands makes the provocative claim that burnout among clergy is more a theological question than a psychological one. One implication of that thesis is this: How does our formation and supervision help students accept human finitude as the fundamental distinction between humanity and God for the sake of a healthier ministry?

Jan de Jong reports on translating clinical pastoral education from its western origins to a South African hospital context in which 70 percent of the patients are HIV infected or have AIDS. From Australia, Neil Sims provides a framework for training in supervision. Theological reflection, he argues, is the distinctive characteristic of pastoral supervision. Like integration and leadership, theological reflection is a common concept in formation and supervision with many meanings. In the book review section, there is a review of a new book by John Paver, another Australian, who proposes that theological reflection is at the center of pastoral supervision. His understanding of theological reflection bridges the personal and the professional in order to effect integration of theological insight and practice. That is why we do the work we do.



Herbert Anderson
Editor

Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

Practices of Integration in Clergy Education

Lawrence A. Golemon

I heard often heard my seminary professors say that “ministry was one of the three classic professions in early America”—alongside law and medicine. I wasn’t sure this was the most promising comparison, considering that eighteenth century lawyers wore horsehair wigs and doctors at that time were still bloodletting. Nevertheless, I accepted the school’s model of the “learned ministry” as my professional goal, which I translated, correctly or not, as “take as much Bible, history, and theology, as possible,” and let field education, a CPE internship, and my first parish fill out the rest. I thought “integration” was about forming a theological worldview and habitus that would inform my ministry practice as I matured. I had no delusions about being prepared practically for the congregations I would serve upon graduation, but I was surprised to learn that most churches and judicatories expected specialized skills—like public

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speaking, counseling and administration—as the mark of a seminary graduate.

The public demand, since World War I, for technical know-how has placed a strain on the education of clergy and the other professions.¹ As the academy defines the intellectual foundations of professional education, it creates a pull toward disciplinary proficiency and expertise. As the public demands more skills, it creates a pull toward practical disciplines and field-based learning in the curriculum. Some professional schools, like law, have largely ignored the pull toward practical know-how by relegating professional skills and identity formation to the law firm or agency internship. Still other schools, like medicine and nursing, incorporate clinical rounds and sometimes-lengthy internships as the capstone of their professional training. Seminaries have been somewhere in the middle, trying to bridge intellectual foundations with practical training, especially since the Feilding report in 1966, but often in an uneasy marriage.²

In 1999 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching began a cross-professional research program to explore the teaching and learning practices of professional schools in law, engineering, medicine, nursing, and the clergy. Although a sister organization, the Carnegie Corporation, had funded studies of theological education before, this was the first time the Carnegie Foundation chose to explore clergy education. It did so because it believed the interdisciplinary, humanities-like education of pastors, priests, and rabbis might offset the technical specialization that had taken over other professional schools. When I joined the clergy study as a researcher, the leaders of other studies were saying, “We are looking to the clergy study to help us understand how integrative formation takes place in professional education.”

For three years, the “clergy team” at the Carnegie Foundation, explored the teaching practices and institutional cultures of eighteen seminaries in Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish traditions. We surveyed and spoke with faculty, students, alumni, and administrators at these schools, and we made site-visits to ten of them. Our primary research question was to identify how the teaching and learning practices of these seminaries “shape the pastoral, priestly, or rabbinic imagination,” in ways that integrate professional knowledge and skills with moral integrity and religious commitment. The “pastoral imagination” is a term we borrowed from Craig Dykstra, who understands it as a “way of seeing and interpreting the

world...that informs and shapes everything a pastor, priest, or rabbi does."³ By using pastoral, priestly, and rabbinic imagination, we wanted to see how seminary education shapes the thinking, acting, and being of the clergy in an integrated way.

Four significant findings of our study, now available as *Educating Clergy*, include (1) the fourfold signature pedagogical framework, (2) the "three apprenticeships" of clergy education and the formation of practical reasoning, (3) the power of alignment or cohesion between an institution's mission, culture, and pedagogies, and (4) the importance of educating for practical reasoning.⁴ These findings involve characteristics of clergy education and values that reflect "best practices." Each of these findings has important implications for defining the meaning and practices of "integration" in clergy education and for developing what I call "bridging pedagogies" between seminaries and other clinical, field-based sites of pastoral formation. To help connect the Carnegie study to field-based, clinical, and parish-based sites for ongoing pastoral formation, I will draw upon *Educating Clergy*, my earlier experience as a clinical pastoral education (CPE) resident, and my involvement with the Alban Institute's recent study of transition into ministry programs.⁵

THE FOURFOLD SIGNATURE PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

All of the Carnegie studies in professional education were charged to identify the "signature pedagogy" that marked that form of schooling.⁶ Compared to the case-study method of legal education, or the clinical rotations of medical schools, the "signature pedagogy" of theological schools was more complicated, in part due to the range of religious traditions and institutional types. Seminaries covered dozens of Protestant traditions, distinct diocesan and religious order traditions in Catholic priestly formation, Eastern Orthodox traditions, and four distinct Jewish traditions. After some time, we identified "four pedagogical intentions" of clergy educators for student learning that shape their teaching practices: interpretation, formation, contextualization, and performance. How these four pedagogies interact—both within and beyond the classroom—is one of the keys to effective integration in seminary education.

Pedagogies of interpretation challenge students to engage sacred texts, historic and living documents with critical and linguistic skill and with questions they bring in order to find their significance for a certain “horizon” of meaning: be it historical or contemporary, local or global. Teaching the practice of interpretation involves the development of critical thinking in relation to a community interpretation—like the church or synagogue. We identified pedagogies of interpretation through our observations and in conversation with various discussions of interpretive practice and critical thinking in religious and adult education, theology, and rabbinical studies.⁷

Pedagogies of formation guide students into the spiritual practices of a tradition in order to nurture an awareness of the divine, practice holiness, and shape their pastoral leadership. Formation can be taught through intentional means—like worship or spiritual direction—but it can also be shown or modeled by professors through the transparency of their own religious questions and commitments in the classroom. We identified pedagogies of formation from our observations and in conversation with Jewish and Christian writers who call for formation and teacher transparency to be more central to seminary teaching.⁸

Pedagogies of contextualization develop student awareness of the ways that local settings, cultures, and structures influence religious communities, traditions, and clergy practice. Teaching contextualization brings about a deeper understanding of contexts, creative encounters with them, and transformative practices that can change them. We discerned pedagogies of contextualization again through observation and in conversations with recent discussions of contextual theology, globalization, Jewish education, and transformative education.⁹

Pedagogies of performance develop complex pastoral skills and judgment through the reenactment of clergy roles and tasks—*in* ways that demonstrate increased competence according to set standards of excellence. Performance-practice becomes more intuitive and adaptive as students rehearse a given role or script, as they develop their own style of enacting it for a community, and as they internalize the purpose or inherent good of the practice. We identified pedagogies of performance through observation and in conversation with performance/practice, liturgical, educational, and game-theory literature.¹⁰

Some theological educators might expect these pedagogies to be neatly apportioned into distinct areas of the curriculum, but as they work with the

case studies in the book, they find it to be otherwise. Professors in the foundational disciplines like Bible, theology, and history were as much engaged in various combinations of these four pedagogies as those in the practical or ministerial fields. Most Bible, history, and theology courses for example have a primary context for interpretation in mind, be it historical or contemporary, and often they shape a course that includes fundamental issues of ministry practice or formation: including the skills of exegesis, issues of theological reflection, and forms of pastoral practice. Even the most “practical” courses—like liturgics, homiletics, or pastoral counseling—include numerous interpretive, formative, and contextual moves.

Do these signature pedagogies extend to field-education, clinical, congregation-based formation programs for ministers? If so, how are they changed? Pedagogies of interpretation address the “classic texts” of CPE founders, like Boisen and Cabot, along with a host of literature in pastoral theology and psychology. However, most interpretive practices in field-education, clinical, and congregation-based programs are not text based, but focus on the “living human documents” of their practice, as Boisen claimed. This focus on studying living subjects that are constantly re-writing their own lives blends interpretation with ongoing authorship, like a pastoral Web blog written by multiple parties. Likewise, pedagogies of contextualization are probably transformed in clinical, contextual, and field education to embrace a more radical “participatory epistemology,”¹¹ whereby subjects co-construct knowledge with others and by means of tacit knowledge embedded in the world and context around them. Learning a living context is more kaleidoscopic, shifting and negotiated than case study or textbook reflections.

Pedagogies of formation and performance are extended and transformed by clinical, contextual, and field-based education as well. In these settings, pastoral identity and authority are being tested and honed by everyday encounters in ministry. The clinical or contextual educator must help the new pastor to coordinate the internal dialogue of one’s vocation and spiritual gifts with the external dialogue about how others respond to one’s ministry and role. The daily pressures of ministry life now test the developing habits of spiritual discipline and practice. Performance-practice shifts radically from the learning lab and role plays of seminary to the high-stakes of direct impact upon patients, parishioners, and others. The gravitas and responsibility of ministry practice shift the focus of skills-

development from personal and professional enhancement to life-altering interventions and effectiveness.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, THE THREE APPRENTICESHIPS,
AND CLERGY EDUCATION

As part of a cross-professional study at the Carnegie Foundation, we were asked to formulate categories of research, pedagogy, and pastoral formation in ways that would communicate with and learn from other professions. This intentional cross-professional translation and comparison was unusual in the history of theological education research,¹² and it put us at somewhat at odds with some of the guiding premises of the Basic Issues Research of theological education in the 1980s and 1990s.¹³ We did embrace one of the basic findings of that research: that curricular fragmentation was enhanced by the academic specialization of theological education in a growing alliance with the modern university, but we realized this was true of all forms of professional education.¹⁴ What troubled us was Farley's analysis that the "clerical paradigm" and its reliance on the fourfold curriculum of Bible, history, doctrine, and practical was chiefly at fault. While his analysis was on target for the skills-based, "professional competence" model of clergy education dominant at the time, Farley wrote, it did not account for the variety of ways that mainline, evangelical, Catholic, and African-American schools had adapted the fourfold structure, often in integrative ways that obviated academic specialization and avoided a "functionalist" view of the profession.¹⁵ So we needed a broader understanding of "professional education of the clergy" than the "clerical paradigm" would allow. In one sense, we sought to return to a more classic understanding of the professions as the "pursuit of [a] learned art in the spirit of public service."¹⁶

We found that broader framework of professional education in the "three apprenticeships" developed by William Sullivan in the course of the Carnegie studies.¹⁷ When we examined how the four pedagogies were utilized by clergy educators, we observed that they were addressing, often unconsciously, the cognitive, practical, and normative apprenticeships of professional education in their own context. In other words, schools and

educators seeking greater integration tried to shape seminarians in the requirements of intellect, skills, and identity they deemed important for the clergy profession.

The cognitive apprenticeship identifies the vast theoretical knowledge required in Scripture or *Talmud*, theology, history, and supporting disciplines like philosophy and the social sciences. Students must do more than become versed in these fields, however, as clergy educators also want them to develop an integrative “way of thinking” that many in the recent Auburn survey identified as “theological thinking.”¹⁸

The practical apprenticeship begins with the acquisition of basic skills from across the curriculum—like historical-critical exegesis in Bible to active listening in pastoral care. Then it draws students into complex, multi-skilled professional practices—like preaching’s movement from textual understanding to rhetorical address, or pastoral counseling’s movement from active listening to spiritual conversation and council.

Finally, the normative apprenticeship shapes individual students into the habits, dispositions, and values of the profession, so these habits become authentically their own. The intentional formation of students into the self-engaged practices of loving God, neighbor, congregation, and world are part of many seminaries’ formational goals and strategies. This final educational movement toward the normative apprenticeship, often called “pastoral or rabbinical identity,” seals the threefold apprenticeship as the formation into a comprehensive way of knowing, doing, and being in the world that marks a given profession.

The apprenticeships framework builds upon the kinship of professional and liberal arts education by reorienting the acquisition of knowledge toward something other than its reproduction and advancement, as graduate departments do. Professional schools, like the classic liberal arts, educate students for the sake of building citizenship and service, which includes the formation of students’ intellect, character, and capacity for judgment in relation to public life. As Sullivan puts it: “...this use of the classic techniques of the humanities to bring normative knowledge to bear on practice situations gives professional education of the clergy its distinctive pedagogical ethos.” He continues, “At the center of this pedagogy is the idea of formation,” which goes beyond the acquisition of facts or cognitive tools to engage “a process by which the student becomes a certain kind of thinking, feeling, and acting being.”¹⁹

Data from students and alumni of the schools we researched suggest that the most “formative” courses are those that are intentional about the three apprenticeships. We asked a select group of students and alumni from the participating schools to identify a course that was “important in their formation for ministry,” and they chose ones from across the curriculum: from *Bible*, *Talmud*, and theology to practical theology, homiletics and pastoral care. They also identified the following characteristics of their learning in that “formative” course to include at least one, and often several of the following: (1) a new-found awareness of self, God, or others, (2) a deepened sense of spirituality or faith, (3) the development of a new ministerial competence, and (4) developing a framework that informed their ministry. There are indications of all three apprenticeships at work here: an intellectual framework for ministry, growth in practice-based skills, and a fundamental change in awareness, accompanied by a deepened sense of spirituality.

The students and alumni also identified characteristics of the professors who taught these formative courses. The professor usually demonstrated one or more of the following: (1) affirmed and supported student learning, (2) created an atmosphere of openness and respect, (3) integrated and made relevant the course material, (4) was passionate and knowledgeable about the material, and (5) modeled ministry through own actions. These characteristics represent the ability of formative teachers to shape teaching and learning as a social practice that draws students into all three apprenticeships, often by means of their own teacher transparency. Professors, who show passion for their subject matter and model some aspect of faith or ministry practice in their work, were often intentional about how to use their own transparency as part of the implicit syllabus of the course. Indeed, these students affirmed what Parker Palmer claims: “you teach who you are.”²⁰

I believe the framework of the three apprenticeships can inform field education, clinical, and congregation-based formation for ministry in two important ways. First, the framework provides a conceptual rationale for understanding these settings of “formation within practice” as necessary components of pastoral formation. In other words, we might say that seminaries move from their emphasis on the intellectual apprenticeship toward the basics of a skills apprenticeship, while raising the future horizon of pastoral identity and norms. Practice-based education, however, makes its

priority the formation of a strong pastoral identity from within ministry practice, develops greater skills, and adapts intellectual learnings to that end.²¹ It makes sense, in this framework that one's ability to orient pastoral knowledge and skills toward serving others will become more apparent and intentional as one learns to "feel" like a pastor in ministry and claim that new and tested identity.

Second, the three apprenticeships clarify that field education, clinical, and congregation-based formation programs are not primarily about skills development that supplements or remedies the seminaries' emphasis on academics. Seminaries can teach basic pastoral skills, and many of them do it with remarkable success. What they cannot do, however, is shape pastoral identity from within practice as a "real minister"—acknowledged and affirmed by parishioners, patients, or other staff as a member of the clergy. That pastoral and professional identity must be shaped, I would argue, within a practice-based program if it would be done with intentionality and among experienced practitioners that embody the norms of the wider clergy profession.

PRACTICAL REASONING IN CLERGY EDUCATION

To orient the cognitive, practical, and normative apprenticeships toward the formation of clergy practitioners, clergy educators are re-examining the place and meaning of "practical reason" in their strategies of teaching and learning. This concern intersects with two ongoing conversations in theological education: (a) the use of action/reflection pedagogies in ministry, clinical, and field education courses, and (b) the rise of practical theology as a distinct field. We discovered a mode of practical reasoning used by clergy educators that was somewhere between the experiential learning of clinical pedagogies and the methodological focus of many practical theologies.²² This pedagogical formation of practical reasoning is more like the pragmatic inquiry of Dewey, which considers theoretical or disciplinary analysis as a crucial "moment" in the movement toward constructive engagement with a complex situation.²³ In other words, we found that good clergy teaching, like good clergy practice, is inherently

reconstructive of inherited paradigms of knowing and doing in theological education.

The Dreyfus model of expertise, which identifies five stages of formation in the mastery of any practice, helped us to describe how clergy educators utilize practical reasoning.²⁴ Contrary to the epistemology of “theory-practice” pedagogies—which stress the application of comprehensive theories to all practice situations—and contrary to “action-reflection” pedagogies—which stress beginning with concrete examples and then abstracting the relevant rules, the Dreyfuses identify a pedagogy in “practical reasoning” that follows a series of stages that move from ruled-engagement, to adaptation, to developing judgment.

According to the Dreyfus model, students begin as “novices,” eager to learn as many of the formal rules and frameworks for practice that they can, which for seminarians might include an outline of Christian doctrines, a rhetorical analysis of rabbinical Midrash, of the stages of grief in pastoral care. At some point they become “advanced beginners” who begin to notice features of the context that are not anticipated by the rules—like the distinctive grief of losing a newborn, and make adjustments to formal learnings. When complex situations begin to overwhelm these adjustments of formal learning, “competent practitioners” begin to develop analogous reasoning from one experience-adjustment to the next, so they can develop a goal or plan of action in a new situation. At their best, seminaries produce students somewhere between the advanced beginner and competent practitioner stages, as we shall see. The more advanced stages of Dreyfus’ framework take shape years beyond formal schooling: the “proficient practitioner,” who learns to assess new practice situations through holistic analogy or intuition, and the “expert practitioner” who makes these internalized, intuitive judgments a way of life.

Key to the movement from novice to competent practitioner and beyond is the development of analogical thinking between ruled-knowledge (or theory) and complex situations, and the adaptation of knowledge for engaged judgment or action. A number of clergy educators in our study developed their teaching practice, in part, to draw students into this practice of analogical thinking and theoretical adaptation. For example, a professor of Scripture (Bergant) asked students to read a biblical passage in terms of what lies “in front of the text” in terms of our own cultural assumptions, what lies “behind” a text historically, what lies “within” it

theologically, and what lies “in front of it” this time in terms of contextual implications today.²⁵ At each of these levels, analogical thinking between reader-background, historical, theological, and contextual “meanings” is required. A teacher of *Talmud* (Lehman) guided students through careful linguistic, grammatical, and redactional readings of the *Talmud* in order to identify and join the debate of various rabbinical traditions of interpretation.²⁶ The students learn analogous thinking between the grammatical and logical construction of a text, the distinct rabbinical traditions and contexts of interpretation, and the contemporary debate in the classroom or synagogue, as they adapt and “join in” the rabbinical conversation in the present context. Similarly, a professor of liturgy (Fragomeni) coached students in the critical study of Eucharistic texts, their own embodiment of the text’s meaning in gesture and voice, and the purposive use of that performance practice in relation to a given community of worship.²⁷ In doing so, he develops analogical comparisons between liturgical rubrics, bodily gestures, intonation of voice, sacramental action, and serving, all for the sake of helping students choreograph liturgical enactment with a clear purpose. One professor of a theological reflection course (Rossi) that runs concurrent with field education modeled personal comportment and transparency in relation to prayer practice in a way that invited students to draw analogies between a prayer practice, the professor’s embodiment of it, and their Eastern Orthodox tradition, so they might adapt these toward their own prayer practice.²⁸

The development of analogical thinking and knowledge-adaptation, then, is indispensable for the formation of practical reasoning among clergy. All of the disciplinary areas contribute to this process, but the question remains do they do so with “critical thinking” as the goal—“stepping back” from a complex situation to better understand it—or do they move on to the goal of practical reason, re-engaging that complex situation with an informed judgment or plan of action. Again “participatory knowing” becomes a mark of practical reasoning at work. Students may begin with a clear cut “method” of inquiry or questions, but as they engage this process repeatedly, with increasing levels of complexity in situation, theoretical frameworks, and analogical links, they develop an adaptive “practice” that allows them to form their own judgments and action-plans in changing situations. This understanding of practical reason as shaped through an ongoing practice of teaching and learning is what

distinguishes this view from the earlier, “theory-praxis” model—as the roles of theoretical analysis, analogy, and adaptive thinking become more and more complex as the practice develops. In other words, practice does not simplify or water down theory, but instead learns to selectively engage it in an increasingly complex movement of analogical thinking, analysis, and adaptation for the sake of forming professional judgment or action.

In field education, clinical, and congregation-based programs, pedagogies of practical reasoning have the chance to move beyond basic “rule acquisition” and adaptive play to truly engaged forms of “reflection-in-action,” as Donald Schön claims.²⁹ This kind of practice-based reasoning become increasingly adaptive where conditions of ongoing supervision, peer reflection, and self-reflection are practiced. Practice-based education has the distinct advantage of encouraging levels of entrepreneurship and improvisation among new pastors, as they create ministry interventions, programs and practices over a period of time, with the opportunity for ongoing feedback and reflection upon their impact. They can also create conditions of success whereby the “teaching community” of the hospital, congregation, or ministry setting embraces creativity and failure as opportunities for growth. Only with such careful feedback, self-reflection upon practice, and the space for adaptation will new pastors develop the art of practical reasoning as an internalized, even intuitive capacity they can carry with them for life.

These three key findings—the signature pedagogical framework, the three apprenticeships of clergy education, and the importance of practical reasoning—form the heart of our research in *Educating Clergy*. We hope that our discussion of these findings will generate a new conversation about what seminaries do best, how practice-based programs of learning continue and complete their work, and how all the institutions, communities, and instructors in clergy education can form new patterns of collaboration.

NOTES

1. William Sullivan, *Work and Integrity: The Crisis and Promise of Professionalism in America* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005).

2. Charles R. Feilding and others, *Education for Ministry* (Dayton, OH: American Association of Theological Schools, 1966).

3. Craig Dykstra, "The Pastoral Imagination," in *Initiatives in Religion* 9, no. 1 (2001): 2–3, 15.
4. Charles R. Foster and others, *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2006).
5. An Alban Institute Special Report, "Becoming a Pastor" (forthcoming Fall 2007).
6. Lee S. Shulman, "Signature pedagogies in the professions" in *Daedulus* 134, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 52–59; and 134, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 52–59.
7. Cf. M. Lehman and J. Kress, "The Babylonian *Talmud* in Cognitive perspective..." *Journal of Jewish Education* 69, no. 1 (2003): 58–78; Mary Elizabeth Moore, *Teaching from the Heart: Theology and Educational Method* (Philadelphia, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998).
8. Cf. Wendy Rosov, "Practicing the Presence of God: Spiritual Formation in a Rabbinical School" (doctoral dissertation, School of Education, Stanford University, 2001); U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Program for Priestly Formation for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops United States of America (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2001); Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998); and Charles Wood, *Vision and Discernment: An Orientation in Theological Study* (Decatur, GA: Scholars Press, 1985).
9. Cf. Seymor Fox, Israel Scheffler, and Daniel Marom, *Visions of Jewish Education* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Paulo Friere, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*, trans. P. Clark (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998); Robert Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology Between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997); David Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen, *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989).
10. Cf. Terry Atkinson and Guy Claxton, *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the Value of Not Always Knowing What One is Doing* (Buckingham, UK: Open University Press, 2000); Paul Fairfield, *Theorizing Praxis: Studies in Hermeneutical Pragmatism* (New York: Peter Land, 2000); Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Richard McCall, "Do This: Liturgy as Enactment" (doctoral dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, University of California, Berkeley, 1998); Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, trans. A. Jackson (London: Routledge, 1992).
11. Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), and more recently Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind* (New York: Ballantine, 1991).
12. The Brown and May study (1936), the Feilding study (1966), and the Liebman study (1968*) advocated more use of teaching methods from other professional schools: including case studies, specialized electives, clinical education, and supervised field work, but they did not re-examine the purpose and pedagogies of the foundational disciplines (Bible, theology, history) in light of professional formation goals. William A. Brown and Mark May, *The Education of American Ministers* (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1934). Feilding, *Education for Ministry*. C. S. Liebman, "The Training of American Rabbis" in *The American Jewish Yearbook* 69 (1968).
13. Edward Farley defines the "clerical paradigm" as a functionalist approach to ministerial education in "The Reform of Theological Education as a Theological Task," in *Theological Education* 17, no. 2 (1981): 93–117, and in *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1983). It was embraced by most Basic Issues authors in the theological arena (Kelsey, Chopp, Banks, Gilpin) although some historians found it too

dependent on an implausible “Schleiermacher legacy” in U.S. theological education, cf. Glenn Miller, *Piety and Intellect: The Aims and Purposes of Ante-Bellum Theological Education* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990).

14. The university-based fragmentation of academic fields in theology is well told by Farley in *The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church and the University* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988), and David Kelsey in *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993).

15. This argument is detailed in Foster and others, *Educating Clergy*, 237, 254–55.

16. Roscoe Pound, *The Lawyer from Antiquity to Modern Times* (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1953), 5; quoted in William May’s *Beleaguered Rulers: The Public Obligation of the Profession* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2001), 14.

17. Sullivan, *Work and Integrity*, 207–210.

18. Barbara G. Wheeler, Sharon L. Miller, and Katarina Schuth, *Signs of the Times: Present and Future Theological Faculty* (New York: Auburn Seminary’s Center for the Study of Theological Education, 2005), 25–26. Available at http://www.auburnsem.org/study/publications_details.asp?nsectionid=2&pageid=3&pubid=11.

19. William Sullivan, “Introduction” in Foster and others, *Educating Clergy*, 10.

20. Palmer, *Courage to Teach*.

21. This contrast grew out of a consultation of Lilly-funded Transition into Ministry program directors in Indianapolis, November 2006.

22. Don Browning’s *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991) exemplifies practical theology’s concern to establish itself as a field through a distinctive methodology. See our brief discussion of this literature in Foster and others, *Educating Clergy*, 260–262.

23. Sullivan, *Work and Integrity*, 244.

24. Hubert Dreyfus and Stuart Dreyfus, with Tom Athanasiou, *Mind over Machine: The Power of Human Intuition and Expertise in the Era of the Computer* (New York: Free Press, 1986). Discussed in Sullivan, *Work and Integrity*, 246–250, and developed by Patricia Benner and others in nursing education: *Expertise in Nursing Practice: Caring, Clinical Judgment, and Ethics* (New York: Springer, 1996).

25. Foster and others, *Educating Clergy*, 59–60.

26. *Ibid.*, 76–80.

27. *Ibid.*, 159–161, ff.

28. *Ibid.*, 110–116.

29. Donald A. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987).

Ministry as Soulful Leadership: Implications for Supervision

Teresa E. Snorton

Ministry is a journey that begins by being “called” through a personal, sometimes intense, experience or through the actions of an organized religious group or community. Seminary students are often surprised to discover that by responding to that call, they have signed up for a life-long journey through largely uncharted waters. Education and formation for ministry is actually a preparatory period for developing the personal insight and awareness, professional skills, and the fortitude to deal with this unfolding, unpredictable, lifelong journey in ministry.

As I have watched seminarians and ministers at various stages in this journey, at least three elements seem critical in this process. These elements all center around the concept of leadership: (1) equipping the self to lead, (2) understanding leadership, and (3) knowing what is required to lead in

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a complex and often uncaring society. Shelves of bookstores and libraries are well stocked with books promoting a variety of approaches to leadership. But what I hope to describe in this article is a particular kind of leadership—soulful leadership—that is distinctive to the work of ministry.

EQUIPPING THE SELF TO LEAD

The formal academic dimension of seminary education teaches a variety of theological, biblical, historical and practical concepts in order to equip the mind of the minister/seminarian. Field education, internships and clinical pastoral education are programs of praxis within theological education directed toward the development of the self in preparation for ministry. By placing the student in real-life ministry situations, the student is compelled to examine his own history, assumptions, biases, preferences, strengths and weaknesses for engaging with persons. The emphasis is on self-awareness, purging the self of unhelpful behaviors, using consultation, receiving feedback non-defensively, all resulting (hopefully) in an enhanced level of self-monitoring and self-supervising capability on the part of the student. Unlike the typical classroom course, the emphasis of these clinical experiences is on affective or emotional competence.

Along side conceptual learning and intuitive reflective practices, there needs to be a parallel emphasis on the spirituality of the minister. Equipping the self to lead from a position of spiritual maturity is critical to the development of soulful leadership. In the past, it could be assumed that a candidate for ministry came out of a life-long and well-formed relationship to the church and church practices that had fostered her own soul development. Today, it is less likely that those who come to study theology have been deeply formed in a particular church tradition. Furthermore, the distinction between religion and spirituality that has emerged in the culture means that students for ministry may be very religious without a well-formed spirituality or they may declare themselves to be spiritual but not very religious.¹ Because of this phenomenon, what emphasis should be placed on the spiritual/soul development of new ministers/leaders?

Luther Mauney identifies four aspects of spirituality: an awareness of the transcendent; a sense of belonging; a sense of meaning; and a means of creativity.² Our awareness of the Transcendent not only provides a validation for religious behavior, but it is the way to affirming that the self is loved by the Transcendent, that the self has something to be thankful for, that the self is forgiven, and that with help it is possible to transcend one's particular circumstances. A deep and abiding awareness of the Transcendent in life is the result of faith and in turn faith fosters a sense of transcendence in life. Without a solid spirituality grounded in the Transcendent, the new and emerging pastoral leader will constantly be plagued (and often overwhelmed) by a sense of worthlessness, hopelessness, helplessness, and feelings of inadequacy. The formation process should help the emerging leader become embedded in this foundational awareness, so that the question of the soulful leader changes from "why did God allow this to happen?" to "how is God in the midst of this and what does God want me to do?"

A second aspect of spirituality that is an important part of the formation process is a "sense of belonging." Each person, and certainly every soulful leader, needs to have a place, a community, a relationship in which there is a profound, unquestionable level of acceptance. Most seminarians that I talk to feel this kind of belonging is most possible in the relationship to the Transcendent, and sometimes possible within the church or a marriage. Many are cautious about relationships because they carry the wounds of disappointments from family, church, and romantic experiences. We also hear stories of ministers whose marriages fail, who neglect their families for the sake of the church, or who report not really having any close friends. Emmanuel Lartey warns against this kind of "emotional paralysis" that closes one off from the world of belonging while engaging in pseudo-intimate encounters that vicariously provide the minister/leader with a false sense of connectedness.³ An underdeveloped "sense of belonging" is a spiritual deficit. The formation process is a prime place for minister/leaders to begin to strengthen their ability to engage in, maintain, and above all experience community and sustaining relationships.

The third aspect of spirituality, a sense of meaning, is the context for cultivating purpose and hope in one's life. Without this sense of meaning, purpose, and hope, the sense of "non-being" referred to by Paul Tillich is inevitable.⁴ A sense of meaning undergirds individuals with beliefs that

help prepare and sustain them through change and loss. In the summary of Gary Gunderson's book *The Leading Causes of Life* found elsewhere in this journal, Gunderson lists coherence as one of the causes of life.⁵ We need beliefs, rituals, and community to help make sense of life and to order experience in meaningful ways. Coherence is also about fit, the conviction that who we are and what we do has meaning and purpose beyond us.

The fourth and final aspect of spirituality is a means of creativity. Many seminarians think of the practical, clinical experiences of their theological education as a time to practice someone else's techniques. The temptation to think of ministry as rehearsed and mastered methodologies offers a false sense of confidence that is rarely ever a reality in ministry. Of course, each of us must be guided by the wisdom and knowledge of accrued generations of experience, yet in the ministry moment, it is our own creativity that is central. One must have a personal sense of worthiness in order to see oneself as a co-creator in the "divine-human" encounters of ministry.

Those who are teachers and supervisors of seminarians, pastors, and leaders should take the time to critically examine our curricula for the presence of intentional activities that enable the learning minister to equip herself at the soul level with these four aspects of spirituality.

UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP

In addition to a sturdy developing spirituality, the seminarian needs a constructive understanding of leadership. An intentional focus on the concept of "leadership" in the formation process is another way to create soulful leaders. This begins with awareness that there are different kinds of leaders. Being an institutional leader, where one is appointed to a specific position, does not guarantee pastoral authority. I often advise my students: the moment you say, "because I am the pastor," you should know you are in trouble. Institutional leadership merely gives us access to the context in which we are to serve. It does not grant us any real privilege beyond the reserved parking space (at the church) or the name badge (in the hospital).

The ability to lead from a defined role depends on followers who respect the role enough to comply with the desires of the person in that role.

Seminarians who come from traditions in which leaders are democratically chosen might find themselves in a similar situation by relying on the external definition of leadership. While the elected leader is chosen by a specific group of persons to represent the whole, the leader who then continues to see the election itself as evidence of being embraced as a leader is limited. Elected leaders must always struggle with the tension of representing their own beliefs and values with those beliefs and values of those being represented.

Beyond institutional and elected models of leadership are two kinds of leadership that must also be understood by the pastoral leader: political leadership and relational leadership. Political leadership is achieved through power and influence. Relational leadership is earned through interpersonal trust. Emerging leaders must understand how to recognize the political leadership of others, how to engage in dialogue with leaders of this kind, and finally how to accrue and appropriately use political power within their own sphere of ministry. In clinical pastoral education, both the verbatim and the interpersonal group setting are common tools to assist the student's discovery of his leadership style.

Relational leadership skill is one that is easily nurtured in the clinical setting as well. It was always gratifying to me as a Protestant chaplain when I was accepted and embraced by non-Protestant families because of the relationship I had established. A comprehensive understanding of relational leadership is important because the traditional models of leadership continue to heavily influence current day perceptions of what a leader should be. In contrast to models of leadership that regard the role of leader as rigid, coercive, authoritarian with power based on strict adherence to policy and procedure, more progressive models embrace flexibility, participation, and inclusiveness as values, with power based on principle and relationship.

The shepherd model of leadership that has been used historically in pastoral care is illustrative of relational leadership. "Pastoral care derives from the biblical image of shepherd and refers to the solicitous concern expressed within the religious community for persons in trouble or distress."⁶ This image lifts up characteristics—such as patience, watchfulness, a willing disregard for the comfort of the self for the sake of the other, and

creative energy—as primary in the caring ministry. In traditional African cultures, the notion of leadership is also intertwined with the concept of relationship. One is understood to have leadership due to blood/kinship (consanguine leader), due to the law/covenant (affinity leader), or due to marital bonds (conjugal leader).⁷ In other words, one can only be regarded as leader because one is in relationship.

For the minister in formation, it is important to learn that leadership does not occur in isolation; it is an interdependent endeavor. In true relational leadership, no one person shoulders all the responsibility for leading. There is a sharing of leadership and a division of responsibilities. Any relationship in which care is the focus follows a similar principle. One of my first CPE supervisors said it this way: “never do for a patient what he or she can do for themselves.”⁸ Relational leaders see themselves as models and fellow sojourners, not as the “head” of the other members of the body. Teaching emerging pastoral leaders the skills of relational leadership is as urgent as teaching them how to pray, how to preach, and how to function in a crisis.

LEADING IN A COMPLEX AND OFTEN UNCARING SOCIETY

Notions of spirituality and relational leadership take on even greater significance when we consider the postmodern era in which seminarians and new ministers begin their journey. Institutions no longer hold authority in and of themselves. Postmodernism transfers authority for leadership from the institution to the relationship by challenging objective knowledge, ontological certainty, and universal claims to truth.⁹ Moreover, the dynamics of pluralism and diversity have reshaped many of our basic understandings of concepts like the family, health, and transcendence. To lead in this complex context, one must be able to maintain a sense of self (with a foundational spirituality), engage in authentic interpersonal connections (relational leadership), while at the same time navigating the waters of an ever-expanding universe in which certainty is elusive and boundaries are less clear.

In response to this new complexity of worlds in which we minister, Gary Gunderson proposes that we need to form what he calls “boundary

leaders" who are willing to live and learn where secular meets religious, public meets private, and subcultures meet each other. "A major challenge for religious communities today lies in harnessing the commitment and energy of religious people to address larger society issues."¹⁰ This notion of boundary leadership goes hand in hand with my understanding of relational leadership. Of the boundary leader, Gunderson says this:

They live amid an unusually broad network of relationships...but they weave...that vast assembly of friends, acquaintances, and personal connections into a hub of information, emergent vitality, and powerful agents for change... They frequently link one part of this complex web of relationships to another in ways that are unpredictability wise.¹¹

If we take this idea of boundary leadership seriously, then one of the tasks of the pastoral leader is to attend to the social networks that become the webs in which transformation might occur for a congregation or for a family in crises. With old ideas about leadership in mind, the first question one is likely to ask is "What can I do to help?" With this new vision of relationship leadership at the boundaries, the first question is "Who else can help?" Concepts of belonging and community, as well as a clear sense of purpose that is other-focused rather than me-focused, become the foundation for relationship leadership out of which these new questions emerge.

One of the more intriguing ideas put forward by Gunderson is that "boundary leaders are adapted to the margins, to the space on the edges, to the land between. They experience those margins as a gift that enables them to midwife community change."¹² The leader spoken of here is not one of the crowd. Issues of conformity, pleasing others, and staying safe must first be resolved. The ability to become transparent and to be one's authentic true self, informed by a sense of meaning and aware of one's own creative abilities, is a prerequisite. Formation experiences need to assist the emerging pastor/minister to see how self-awareness is a necessary platform for effective leadership on the boundaries.

Moving closer to the margins is the equivalent of living fully with an awareness of transcendent possibilities while at the same time being rooted in an acceptance of what is real in the present. "Those with the gift of marginality are hard to surprise. Their hope protects them from cynicism, but marginality protects them from naïveté."¹³ In today's society, the need for cultural competence and sensitivity is also vital. "Boundary leaders move across the boundaries between tribes because they live on the edge of their

own tribe."¹⁴ When developing cultural competency skills, comfort with "marginality may place [a boundary leader] in a position to recognize more easily the stranger next door."¹⁵ Differences (in race, ethnicity, religion, and so forth) are perceived as opportunities rather than as threats, enabling the soulful leader to recognize, to appreciate, and to respond pastorally in the midst of such differences.

Gunderson's notion of marginality is coupled with the concept of vulnerability as another critical characteristic of the boundary leader. Because of boundary leaders' tendency to dwell in the margins of the social strata among the vulnerable, boundary leaders often become marginalized as well. Their willingness to challenge the status quo and embrace difference usually comes with a cost. "If they find a church at all, many find themselves in small (marginal) congregations with few resources, little respect from their denomination, curiosity from their communities, bouncing along on the bottom ranges of the middle class."¹⁶ Yet, Gunderson asserts that is this very vulnerability that is the key to the boundary leader's relevance and resilience:

"They expect uncertainty and are not frightened by it. They do not expect it to go away, so they do not fear a long and uncertain path walked with an uncertain and unlikely group of people. They expect to be wounded, because they have been before; but they also expect the wounds not to be fatal to themselves or to the hopes that draw them forward. Thus they are not surprised when a project experiences trouble or even breaks into pieces. They have seen disarray before and recognize it as a step toward order."¹⁷

It is not hard to see that girded with a mature spirituality, including a clear sense of meaning and purpose, the boundary leader's priority is for the common good and not personal comfort.

A third quality lifted up by Gunderson is that of imagination. This concept is identical to that of creativity, one of the four aspects of spirituality. When thinking of the boundary leader, it is the imagination that "makes it possible for webs of transformation to emerge out of chaos...and boundary leaders tend to have a store of unfilled dreams that feed imagination."¹⁸ Gunderson cautions that imagination is not a personal virtue, but rather a quality that is nurtured and encouraged. When intentionally cultivated, the leader is equipped to use imagination to link the respective needs of people and structures into a meaningful system of mutual care and concern.

Theological education in the field and the clinic is perhaps the richest opportunity for students and emerging pastoral leaders to cultivate both a mature spirituality and skills for boundary leadership. Soulful leadership is a useful metaphor for the convergence of these two critical dimensions of ministry today.

SOULFUL LEADERSHIP AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPERVISION

We need a new metaphor because supervised ministry, field education and clinical pastoral education are preparatory experiences for ministry in a world vastly changed from when those methodologies were first developed. Both method and context have changed. While a primary objective is still preparation for parish or congregational ministry, other critical arenas for soulful leadership have emerged in today's culture. Within the megachurch context, one must not only know how to lead in the general congregational context, but also how to create and lead small groups effectively within the congregation. The communities where people live have been redefined by urban sprawl requiring religious leaders who know how to lead large and small groups in public spheres. The workplace and the marketplace are contexts for soulful leadership at the margins. Public tragedies, disasters, and calamities have brought the need for ministry outside the walls of traditional institutions (churches, hospitals) into the streets where multiple entities see themselves as care providers. Legal and public contexts where discourse about justice and civil rights issues reside demand the prophetic voice of the soulful leadership.

Soulful leadership is not just about having the required academic background and the clinical experience. It is more than just knowing how one feels about a particular person, place, and thing. It is more than just recalling the conversation for the verbatim. It is even more than non-defensively receiving feedback and critique from one's peers and supervisor. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, "spiritual care [what I am calling soulful leadership] does not want to bring about competence, build character, or produce certain types of persons."¹⁹ Rather, soulful leadership is where "being" and "doing" meet. That integration of being and doing is the ultimate objective of clinical education. For Bonhoeffer, that integration occurs when the

promise of God's graciousness is heard and lived. The demands of ministry in a post-modern world mandate that it become a more intentional focus of our supervision with students rather than just an assumed by-product.

Soulful leadership is the means by which we will begin to see a retrieval of the Transcendent in human life. No other discipline has the expertise for this discourse regardless of their interest in things spiritual. The Transcendent is the first language of ministry. For other disciplines, it may be their second language. Praxis education must teach pastoral leaders to value this responsibility to speak the language of Transcendence. In addition, soulful leadership challenges lingering dualisms of body and mind or the cognitive and the affective. If we affirm the idea of personhood as a bio-social-spiritual unity, then the curricula in both the academy and the clinic should strive to balance the cognitive and affective. Finally, soulful leadership "builds bridges between the human and divine in order to keep soul alive in times not hospitable to the soul."²⁰ It is a reaffirmation of the place of mystery and transcendence in the human journey to God.

In order to foster soulful leadership through clinical supervision, a greater emphasis must be placed on developing a mature spirituality, a comprehensive understanding of leadership, and the skills for boundary leadership. While there is still great value in the action/reflection model, we must make sure that emerging pastoral leaders have the foundational requisites upon which to do responsible reflection. Students who lack basic personal awareness and those who are still too wounded cannot make full benefit of the rigor of a practical or clinical experience where they are confronted with the complex issues of the day. So, along with examining our curricula, we should also be examining our admission criteria, and determining the core competencies required prior to admission into the field or clinical context.

Teaching about soulful leadership in the clinical context (1) assumes the uniqueness of each spirit/person, (2) does not presume shared values, (3) has an inclusive perspective, and (4) understands the experience of others as "valid." Supervisors and clinical faculty must first equip themselves for this kind of supervision. Becoming multi-culturally competent is non-negotiable. Continuing education is a must. Exposure of the self to new educational theories is a mandate. Our "sacred cows" and "idols" must be abandoned when they are not useful or relevant. "When care [leadership] is rooted in soul, the relationship begins on common ground and moves

away from the isolating power of personal pain to wider commitments of responsibility and accountability in this world."²¹ As we teach students to move into the wider world and to the margins where people are hurting, our teaching and supervision must mirror this idea by remembering that our teaching is not just about preparing a student, but it is also our ministry and our commitment of responsibility and accountability to the world.

NOTES

1. Spirituality "is the personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning and about relationship to the sacred or transcendent, which may or may not lead to, or arise from, the development of religious rituals and the formation of community." Koenig, McCullough and Larson, *Handbook of Religion and Health* (New York: Oxford Press, 2001).
2. Luther J. Mauney (unpublished paper, department of patient counseling, Medical College of Virginia, Richmond, Va.), referenced in Christopher Bowers, "Spiritual Dimensions of the Rehabilitation Journey," *Rehabilitation Nursing* 12, no 2 (March–April 1987): 90.
3. Emmanuel Lartey (lecture, First African Presbyterian Church, Lithonia, Georgia, March 2004).
4. Paul Y. Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1952).
5. Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, "Leading Causes of Life," *Reflective Practice* 27 (2007): 203-217.
6. Liston Mills, "Pastoral Care: History, Traditions, Definitions," *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, ed. Rodney Hunter (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1990), 836.
7. Lewis H. Morgan, *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1871).
8. Clarence Barton, ACPE supervisor, retired from Central State Hospital, Louisville, Ky.
9. Nancy J. Ramsay, *Pastoral Care and Counseling: Redefining the Paradigms* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2004), 6.
10. Gary Gundersen, *Boundary Leaders: Leadership Skills for People of Faith* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004), backcover.
11. Ibid, 83–84.
12. Ibid, 83.
13. Ibid, 88.
14. Ibid, 84.
15. Laurent A. Parks and others, *Common Fire* (Boston: Beacon, 1996), 3.
16. Gundersen, *Boundary Leaders*, 87.

17. Ibid, 93.
18. Ibid, 97.
19. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Spiritual Care*, trans. Jay C. Rochelle (Minneapolis, MD: Fortress Press, 1985).
20. Herbert Anderson, "Whatever Happened to Seelsorge?" *Word and World* 21, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 41.
21. Ibid., 40.

**Call for Essays for *Reflective Practice*, Volume 28
Theme: Formation and Supervision in the Presence of Fear**

Fear touches every dimension of living today: personal, spiritual, communal, social, global, and environmental. Fear makes strangers into enemies, intensifies vulnerability, traumatizes communities, makes uncommon victims, creates new patterns of coping, and isolates people. How does living in the presence of fear affect the work of forming and supervising for ministry? How can our work begin to transform the social and theological structures that harbor violence and generate fear? Send proposals or essays to Herbert Anderson, editor, at handerson@plts.edu by December 30, 2007.

“The Zeal of Thine House Hath Eaten Me Up:” Practical Theological Reflections on Burnout Among Pastors

Rein Brouwer

For some years now, burnout has been a topic of growing concern in Dutch society. About ten percent of the population in the Netherlands report complaints associated with burnout. That makes burnout a national mental health problem. It is also a socioeconomic problem because people experiencing burnout stay home from work. Over time, burnout may even lead to occupational disability. Burnout is generally understood to be an adaptation disorder in the workplace resulting from an inability to balance the demands of work with other life options. According to experts, it can take up to two or more years to recover from a severe burnout. Society runs the risk of losing a substantial part of its young and productive workforce, predominantly women in their thirties, who drop out and leave the socioeconomic arena, some for good.

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

Burnout is an occupational hazard for Dutch pastors as well. Pastors suffer from an overload of work pressure, organizational conflicts, and lack of support, often culminating in extended periods of stress and burnout. Recent research into the size of the problem and the specific determinants of burnout among pastors has been designed within a framework of occupational psychological discourse. That makes burnout a medical and/or psychological issue for which people need treatment. It is possible, however, to interpret burnout among pastors as a theological question as well. From this perspective, burnout is seen as the destructive side to a constructive commitment to the cause of God—hence the title of this essay. Pastors need to recognize and learn to deal with this unhealthy dimension of their profession. Pastoral supervision can be beneficial to this. An important part of this supervision is handling the theological root to burnout. When pastors do not distinguish themselves from God, they end up acting as if they are responsible for the realization of God's salvific work.

BURNOUT AS AN ADAPTATION DISORDER

Burnout is an adaptation disorder. At the core of this syndrome is the inability to balance the demands of work with the rest of life. Burnout is measured with an inventory that is based on its definition, which consists of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, occupational indifference, and diminished competence.¹ When Dutch Roman Catholic or Protestant pastors are compared with other caretaker professionals in the Netherlands, results show that pastors are not that different when it comes to burnout. Dutch pastors are slightly more emotionally exhausted; they are somewhat more distant or indifferent, but they feel a bit more competent than, for example, health care workers. Recovery from, or the prevention of, burnout is related to mitigating extreme psychological fatigue, enhancing the involvement with people at work, and fighting feelings of imperfection in the work situation.

In general, causes of burnout are connected to both personality and work. According to research among Roman Catholic priests and non-ordained lay pastors, emotional stability as a personality characteristic can help prevent burnout.² Other preventive influences are the capacity in handling conflict and an active coping style. On the other hand, an idealistic at-

titude toward work has a negative effect, especially when related to a problem in keeping boundaries. Religiousness, or what researchers define as a "receptivity as religiousness," correlates positively with diminished distantness and enhanced competence. Trust and sensitivity typify the attitude to life in this variable. Almost all Roman Catholic pastors who were questioned mentioned that they experience the presence of the Divine and that faith orders their living. Interestingly, this intrinsic religiousness correlates positively with the personality characteristics used in the research: extroversion, kindness, an orderly work style, stability, and intellectual sincerity.

When we look at the work conditions, this research corroborates what we know from other studies: the most influential factor leading to burnout is work pressure. Next to this, emotional burdening is a crucial factor, followed by role obscurity, the expectations of parishioners, and the conflicts that present themselves in the work environment. Autonomy, that is the freedom to set the work pace and to determine the work content, is an important resource protecting against burnout. Pastors experience negative energy when they are held responsible for things they cannot influence. When psychological stressors are viewed as the cause of burnout, it is not surprising that the remedy consists of adequate coping strategies. This research among Roman Catholic pastors in the Netherlands shows that strong religious affiliation keeps a pastor committed to his work, and a strong personal spirituality keeps him from falling into cynicism and from depersonalizing parishioners.

In 2005, research among conservative Reformed ministers appeared, with specific attention to existential interpretation and to the meaning of life.³ Loonstra and Tomic also measure burnout with an inventory based on the three components of exhaustion, mental distantness (occupational indifference), and declining competence. What is remarkable in this research is that "existential motivation" is explicitly valued as a determinant of burnout. The study proposes three reasons for this. Firstly, what is valuable to us coheres with our existential motivation. Our values are derived from what we consider to be valuable. If, however, our existential motivation fails us, our values and intentions become unrealistic and clash with the unruliness of reality. Secondly, as a consequence of cultural changes like individualization and unrealistically high professional expectations, burnout becomes more and more a social problem. Changes in motivation cohere with changes in culture. This means that changes in motivation are also related

to burnout. Thirdly, God calls ministers. The researchers refer to this as an “ideological definition,” which requires a large measure of pastoral independence. This autonomy or independent agency is rooted in existential motivation.

Existential motivation is measured with an “existence scale.” This scale is an operationalization of the existential analysis of Victor Frankl. It consists of four dimensions: self-distance, self-transcendence, freedom, and responsibility. The research results verify the hypothesis that stronger existential motivation means less liability to burnout. That is why the researchers argue for the strengthening of existential motivation in the education of ministers. It is important that ministers are motivated professionals, and that they make their choices and decisions from an autonomous center. The research report does not say anything about the respondents being asked for their belief in God’s presence and agency, what might be considered as a significant element in the Reformed tradition of faith. Moreover, conservative Reformed ministers probably would be rather surprised to find that their faith is qualified as an act of ideological definition.

In current research, burnout among pastors is exclusively regarded as a psychological, work-related disorder. There is some interest in the function of religion as a variable, but this is described in concepts like “religious coping,” “existential motivation,” and “receptivity,” which are not central to the faith experience of pastors. Research on burnout among pastors is of limited usefulness because it is executed *etsi deus non daretur*—living without the working hypothesis of God’s existence. To theologians, this is a reduction of the life-world of believers. Theologians reflect on what believers say about God and develop theological conceptions from the practice of believers.⁴ The variables in the research on burnout are not derived from the life-world of pastors. For example, in the conclusions drawn from the study of Roman Catholic priests, there are no references to the Roman Catholic tradition as an explanation for the unique religious profile of the respondents.

My point is this: it is important in research of Christian professionals to include how they have been moulded for everyday life by Christian spirituality. A more distinct conceptualization is needed to honor the idiosyncrasy of the faith of respondents. These concepts can be derived from theological writings, but it would be even better to develop them from qualitative research on the lived spirituality of pastors.⁵ In the following section, I

will probe the work of the practical theologian Manfred Josuttis to determine the essence of Christian spirituality and how that perspective contributes to a theological interpretation of burnout that does justice to the lived faith of pastors and other religious leaders.

DISCONNECTED FROM THE REALITY OF THE HOLY ONE

The work of German pastoral theologian Manfred Josuttis provides a foundation for a theological interpretation of the pastoral profession, in general, and burnout among religious leaders, in particular.⁶ Although the work of Josuttis is most known in Europe, the framework he presents makes it possible to do justice to the objective reality and sovereign power of "the Holy One" in any context. Religious symbols and rituals represent and open up the reality of the Holy One, whose presence transcends the rational and the subjective. All contradictions and conflicts that characterize the pastoral profession are enacted in the space of a "reality that can be experienced as attractive and deterring, as destructive and gladdening." From that phenomenological approach, Josuttis takes the experience of the Holy One serious as a constitutive fact, and he tries to think through the consequences of this reality experience for the pastoral profession. This perspective also helps to understand the phenomenon of burnout in religious leaders.

Manfred Josuttis has drawn on the work of philosopher Hermann Schmitz to develop a perspective on emotions and sensations that is transpsychological, transmental, and transpersonal. Feelings, according to Schmitz, are spatial atmospheres that originate outside of us and are, therefore, not simply intrapsychic factors and subjective mental processes. "Subjects like the spirit of God and the joy in God and the peace of God, are not mind frames, invoked by the persons concerned, but powerful atmospheric information. The reality of divine power manifests itself notably in these data, in physical and emotional ways."⁷ Feelings are not just called for from within; feelings are "spatial atmospheres that surround us" and that we detect through bodily sensations. So we will say we are caught by emotions, overcome by sadness, possessed with anger, swept off our feet by love.

Josuttis found in the phenomenology of Hermann Schmitz a way to grasp the powerful agency of the Holy One as a reality that takes hold of us from outside. The phenomenology (of religion) offers Josuttis a frame, which enables him to do justice to the "objective reality and the sovereign power of the Holy One in human life and faith." Religious symbols and rituals represent and open up the reality of the Holy One who transcends the rational and subjective. Within that reality, pastors are mystagogues, spiritual guides, who lead people to the hidden and forbidden zones of the Holy One. Besides that, pastors are themselves religious symbols, with all the ambivalences attached to it. A religious model of reality fits a religious occupation.⁸ From that phenomenological approach, Josuttis takes the experience of the Holy One seriously as a constitutive fact and thinks through the consequences of this reality experience for the pastoral profession generally and for burnout among clergy in particular.

As a maladaptive response to the pressures of leadership in a religious reality, burnout may be understood as a religious disorder. Being a pastor is often understood as a commitment with unremitting demands and expectations leading to exhaustion and breakdown. This process can be interpreted as the evaporation of personality. Through the pressure from outside, enhanced by the fear of loss or the need for power, a pastor can lose himself in the total dedication to the others or to a cause. Besides this, pastors are weighed down with the oppression of a superego that often makes it impossible to judge their own achievements positively. According to Josuttis, pastors are vulnerable to burnout when they lose their balance. At the end of the day, when a pastor oversees it all, he or she can get addled with the numerous fragments in which his professional existence is divided.

Psychotherapeutic coping strategies aim, according to Josuttis, at augmenting the individual power to deal with work pressure and stress. A pastor who can differentiate between self and others is better equipped to handle the demands of people work. For this, becoming aware of one's own body is helpful. So does spirituality that has its niche in the human heart. In the biblical tradition, the heart is the place where divine agency is exercised. The heart can be filled with egoism, and it can be ruled by the dictate of a legalistic altruism. But the heart can also be caught and changed under the influence of the Holy One. That is why the conversion of the heart has always been of the utmost importance in the Christian tradition. In the heart, the dictate of the law makes way for the power of the Gospel.

Responding to the agency of the Holy One means a fundamental reorientation to the force or presence of God. The pastor who enters this world through silence and prayers undergoes a process of "pneumatic incarnation" of "sanctification"; negative forces are expelled and replaced by positive energies. This spiritual inhabitation changes a person gradually. Josuttis recognizes the affinity between spiritual methods and therapeutic models. The reason for this affinity is that the therapeutic field has adopted and secularized pastoral models. Theology, however, should take back these models and radically reconnect them to their religious roots: finding one's soul leads to liberation from sin. A spiritual method distinguishes itself by the difference in worldview and in the interpretation of reality. This distinction is translated in the disparity between spiritual exercises and secular therapies. In addition, Christian spirituality is also about attuning to the "merciful inhabitation of the holy Name."⁹ It essentially changes the relations with people and powers. On the other hand, where a human being is disconnected from the reality of the Holy One, burnout is looming.

BURNOUT AND PROPHETIC ANTAGONISM

The reflections of Josuttis on the pastoral profession are imbued with the theological calling to be "different" and to represent in that way the difference of God. Being called—to have a calling—is of fundamental importance to the ministry of the pastor. He shows how the role of the Protestant minister is marked by the opposition between the expectations of the faith community and the calling of the pastor to be different, even to oppose those expectations. Pastors are different. This statement is a declaration—"they are different"—but also a resolution by the pastor—"I want to be different." From the side of the members of the faith community, however, it is often a demand—"we want you to be different." It even functions as a reproach—"you are different from us, and that is why we keep you at distance." Being different forces the pastor into some sort of gymnastic split. The relation between the self and the others is a fundamental strain in the pastoral profession; it is a "ceaseless underground battle" or latent opposition between the pastor and the

others.¹⁰ Pastors need to handle the tension reflectively. They need to bear the stress of being different and make it fruitful for the sake of a church and a society that are constantly subject to tensions and antitheses.

Pastors believe in a God who operates in life. Recent sociological research into images of God among predominantly Dutch Protestant pastors reported that five out of six pastors have experienced God themselves. Practically all pastors talk about God in personal imagery. Five out of six pastors believe in a God who is present with every human being personally or who controls life. The reality and concreteness of God's presence in the spirituality of pastors justifies the formulation of research variables and items that acknowledge this transcendental dimension of the pastoral life-world. This may result in questions about the experience of God, about the agency of God (Do you experience God's power to change?), about the transcendence of God (Do you visualize God as a force coming from outside?), about the meaning of spiritual methods (Do you experience God while praying/meditating?), and so forth. The specific formulations of items are only suggestions. What is at stake is a way of framing items and questions that give credibility to the faith of pastors or religious leaders.

The work of Manfred Josuttis provides a framework for the theological interpretation of the pastoral profession in general and burnout among pastors in particular. The theological understanding of burnout leads to three propositions: (1) God is a real energetic power and concrete presence; (2) opening the "heart" to the agency of God is a spiritual coping strategy that diminishes burnout; and (3) understanding the pastoral profession as pervaded by the antagonism of the prophetic mission to criticize the existing situation, on the one hand, and satisfying the expectations of the members of the faith community, on the other, emphasize the relation between burnout among pastors and the tensions between mandate and needs. I add a few remarks to these propositions.

In short, my assumption regarding the significance of a theological interpretation of burnout among pastors is based on the following links: (1) pastors believe in a God who influences their lives and work; (2) when the pastoral profession is positioned in God's force field then there is a theological dimension to burnout; (3) while the tensions of the profession are related to the mandate of God, it can be assumed that burnout has something to do with the prophetic task to which pastors are called.

Burnout among pastors is more than a disorder; it can also be the outcome of serving in the force field of the Holy One. The prophetic character is connected to the occurrence of burnout. Exercising the prophetic calling can be seen as "zeal" that "eats one up."

CONSUMING ZEAL

As the Gospel of John tells the story, Jesus is under tension from the beginning. Jesus visits the temple in Jerusalem. He finds the moneychangers and the sellers and with a whip made of rope he chases them out and scatters their money on the ground. His disciples witness all of this. They remember the words from Psalm 69: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."¹¹ John the Evangelist stages Jesus' actions against the background of the psalm and with the hindsight of Jesus' violent death. John quotes the part of this psalm of lamentation in which the poet phrases how he is insulted and disgraced and blushed with shame. His relatives treat him as a stranger. The righteous one who stands up for God's justice gets isolated. That is what happens to Jesus, according to the evangelist. Jesus is zealous for the cause of God with a prophetic anger. But, the same zeal will eat him up, burn him out. The zeal for God is a sacred cause that is able to set loose forces of destruction. Violence is not a stranger to the life of Jesus.

Prophets and apostles who were killed because of their religious zeal shape Christian tradition. Following in the footsteps of Jesus, Paul, Peter, and numerous saints became martyrs. There were also martyrs who tormented themselves, like ascetics, anachorites, hermits, pillar saints, flagellants, and sufferers of religious anorexia and melancholy. This can also be interpreted as religious violence, but then as violence directed towards the self instead of the other. The burning zeal turns not only against another person, but it can also turn violently inwards and harm the zealot. It is too simple to put this phenomenon away under the label of "religious pathology." That covers only one aspect of this self-directed religious violence. Only when we understand that some believers sincerely believe that self-chastisement will bring them closer to God can we comprehend that a therapeutic treatment does not suffice. There is a theological root to this sort of behavior and action.

The same applies to burnout among pastors. From a practical theological perspective, it can be assessed as an expression of religiously inspired violence that makes the agent a victim. Burnout is understood here as getting consumed or eaten up while being zealous for a good cause. Of course, burnout is of a different order than incarcerating, chastising, or starving oneself because burnout is not regarded as intentional self-infliction. Still, I do consider burnout to belong to the category of religiously legitimized violence. Burnout is the result of an accumulation of work pressure, the signals of which the body and the mind receive long before it develops into an affliction. It is possible that these warnings are not recognized. More plausible is that they are not taken seriously or ignored. The intention of doing a good job and meaning something for someone can be so powerful that a professional can live in denial about his physical and psychological condition. Idealistic pastors with high expectations especially run the risk of this occupational hazard. Preventing burnout requires an awareness of the choices that lead to burnout and the need to make conscious decisions to handle things differently.

Burning out is inherent to a profession that stands in the tradition of prophets, martyrs, and religious zealots. Burnout is more than just a psychological disorder requiring cognitive therapy or psycho-education. There is a religious dimension to it. It goes hand in hand with the vocation to dedicate oneself completely to the cause of God, personally and professionally. In itself this is not unhealthy or abnormal, just as ambition, aspiration, or endeavor are not abnormal to artists, sportsmen, and explorers. Although the violent, destructive defect lies always in wait, just as it is with the aforementioned occupations. Polar explorers, for example, suffered from frostbite. Throwing-related elbow injuries are not uncommon entities among baseball pitchers. And violinists can end up diminished from a repetitive strain injury. These afflictions are occupational hazards. The same goes for burnout among pastors.

It is part of the theological competence to make a clear distinction between good and evil, between God and humankind. Yet, in distinguishing the constructive from the destructive, the healthy from the pathological, the theologian cannot do without the pastoral psychologist. That is why it is important to integrate in pastoral supervision the ability to make theological distinctions while reflecting on professional experiences. Formative and consultative supervision must be focused on a number of things: the de-

velopment of professional identity; the clarification of role obscurity; dealing with conflict and defense; the enhancement of self-differentiation and assertiveness; handling work pressure; communicating with colleagues, volunteers, and the church hierarchy. But sound judgement and behavioral change are not effected without the art of theological discernment.

WANTING THEOLOGICAL DISTINCTION

A theological interpretation puts burnout in the ambivalence that comes with the ambiguous character of the Holy One. God's presence works liberation. The power and spirit with which the believers are fulfilled motivates them to be devoted to freedom and salvation for humanity and creation. On the other hand, when believers can lose themselves in God's mission to the world, they may gradually be lost and consumed. That happens when they fail to make the distinction between gospel and law, between promise and order, between God and themselves. When believers in general and pastors in particular forget about this distinction, it is easy to conclude that they themselves must realize the good and make the promise. The result is that human work coincides with God work and the gospel becomes the law.

Pastors who are open to the influence of God are vulnerable to a number of burnout factors, but they also possess some powerful resources that protect them against burning out. Everything stands or falls with managing the ambiguity of the Holy One. This requires theological competence. Being a pastor in the force field of the Holy One is by definition an ambiguous existence. Theological competence helps to understand that there is ambiguity in God with regard to violence. Violence must have a place in God because evil cannot be left unpunished; righteousness must prevail. To keep man from exercising violence, we should faithfully hand over violence into the hands of God. Violence is a part of God, but only in the dimension of eschatological judgement. That means that violence is postponed, deferred. God's judgement, however, is not an empty concept. The judgement of God is about seeing justice done and about the deliverance from evil. Pushing aside those who stand in the way of the reinstatement of justice is a detail of God's judgement. "God's eschatological act of setting things straight (and not metaphorically or in a visionary sense, but conceived as realistic) is the only

convincing theodicy: God sets all things right!”¹² De Kruijf locates religious violence in God’s final judgement. It took place at Golgotha, in the suffering of Jesus, and it will finally proceed at the Last Judgement. Hence, Jesus is regarded as the one zealot of God who vicariously got eaten up, burned out, in order that we shall never need to burnout from zeal. We are not obliged to direct religious violence inspired by God’s mandate on others or on ourselves. The judging God is also the One who calls pastors to a prophetic existence, living on the edge, facing the danger of burnout. But at the same time, Jesus, eaten up through the zeal for God, already accomplishes this judgement.

Eventually, burnout among pastors is more a theological question than a psychological one. From theology, we learn to make a distinction between humanity and God. At the core of that distinction is the acceptance of human finitude. Can I live with the fact that I cannot change everything, solve every problem, make everybody happy, be everything to everybody? A pastor is limited; he is not God or the Messiah. A pastor is called to lead people to the hidden and forbidden zones of the Holy One. Can she be thankful for being who she is? Can he rejoice in not being God? Josuttis emphasizes that pastors need to accept their limitations and need to balance their idealism with the theological reality of not being God, in order to stand the professional tensions. Spiritual methods are the appropriate way to exercise this theological distinction. The pastor does not make the Kingdom come, but prays for its coming. In prayer, we give voice to the difference between God and ourselves. Only in prayer can pastors stand in the force field of God—praying we do not burn out.

NOTES

1. To measure burnout, Dutch researchers use the Utrecht Burnout Inventory, an adaptation of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI is recognized as the leading measure of burnout. It incorporates the research that has been conducted since its initial publication in the 1980s by Christina Maslach, Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Berkeley. The MBI surveys measures three aspects: (1) feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by work; (2) an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of service, care, or instruction; (3) feelings of competence and successful achievement in work.

2. J. Z. T. Pieper and others, ed., “Verterend vuur. Over burnout in het basispastoraat” [Consuming Fire: Burnout in the Pastorate], *Utrechtse Studies* (Zoetermeer, 2007).

3. B. Loonstra and W. Tomic, "Werkdruk, zingeving en burn-out bij predikanten in orthodox-gereformeerde kerken" [Work Pressure, Motivation and Burnout Among Ministers in Conservative Reformed Churches], *Psyche en geloof* 16 (February 2005): 66–81.

4. J.A. van der Ven, *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach* (Leuven, 1998); F. G. Immink, *Faith: A Practical Theological Construction* (Grand Rapids, MI: 2005).

5. J. Tennekes, *Onderzoekers en gelovigen. Kritische kanttekeningen bij de sociaalwetenschappelijke bestudering van het christendom* [Researchers and Believers. Critical Remarks at the Social Scientific Study of Christianity] (Kampen: Kok, 1999).

6. Continental Protestant practical theologians recognize Manfred Josuttis for revitalizing pastoral theology. In the 1980s, he published, *Der Pfarrer ist anders. Aspekte einer zeitgenössischen Pastoraltheologie* [The Pastor is Different. Aspects of a Contemporary Pastoral Theology], 3rd ed. (München, 1982/1987), and *Der Traum des Theologen. Aspekte einer zeitgenössischen Pastoraltheologie 2* [The Dream of the Theologian. Aspects of a Contemporary Pastoral Theology] (München, 1988). In these books, he presented a new design for pastoral theology. Pastoral theology discusses a specific dimension of practical theology: the tensions and the nodal points where the pastor's problems are most pregnant. Josuttis defined contemporary pastoral theology as the scientific reflection on the conflict zones localized at the crossroads of the professional, religious, and personal problems of the pastoral existence. After working for years at the contours of his pastoral theology, Josuttis stated in 1996, in his *Die Einführung in das Leben. Pastoraltheologie zwischen Phänomenologie und Spiritualität* [Introduction to Life. Pastoral Theology Between Phenomenology and Spirituality] (Gütersloh, 1996), that his outline lacked a valid foundation. Such a foundation is necessary for a more realistic description of the pastoral profession. During those years, Josuttis realized the significance of a phenomenology of religion as an approach that can do justice to the "substantive reality and the free acting power of the Holy One." All contradictions and conflicts that are characteristic of the pastoral profession are enacted within the realm of a "reality, which can be experienced as attractive and deterrent, destroying and gladdening."

7. Manfred Josuttis, *Die Einführung in das Leben*, 113.

8. Manfred Josuttis, *Segenskräfte. Potentiale einer energetischen Seelsorge* [Blessed Powers. Potentials for an Energetic Pastorate] (Gütersloh, 2000).

9. Manfred Josuttis, *Religion als Handwerk. Zur Handlungslogik spiritueller Methoden* [Religion as Handicraft. The Logic of Acting in Spiritual Methods] (Gütersloh, 2002); Manfred Josuttis, *Heiligung des Lebens. Zur Wirkungslogik religiöser Erfahrung* [Sanctification of Life. About the Working Logic of Religious Experience] (Gütersloh, 2004).

10. Josuttis, *Der Traum des Theologen*, 12–36.

11. John 2:17 Authorized Version.

12. Gerrit G. de Kruijf, "How Violence Disappeared from God" in *Rethinking Ecumenism. Strategies for the 21st Century*, ed. Freek L. Bakker (Zoetermeer, Utrecht: 2004), 49–60, 58.

Toward Indigenous CPE: A Mini-CPE Program at Grey's Hospital, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal

Jan de Jong

How does clinical pastoral education (CPE)—which found its origin in a predominantly male, white, and liberal Protestant North American environment—flourish today in different parts of the world? Although CPE originated in the United States, can it be successfully transferred to different cultural contexts? Could it take a different form in another part of the world? Recently James Kamau Mereka reported on a workshop, “Principles of Indigenous CPE,” led by John deVelder at the REM Invitational 2006 in New York.¹ Mereka, a chaplain resident at Harris Methodist Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, is from Kenya. He stated that, “there is a need to ‘scrap away’ the cultural baggage of the ‘American’ CPE when doing CPE with minority cultures within [the] USA or in countries outside the USA.”² The meaning of the word “indigenous” is taken from the Webster dictionary as “having originated in and being produced, growing, living, or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment.”

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This article is a contribution to the ongoing conversation on indigenous CPE, reflecting on my personal experience as a supervisor in a three-week CPE program that was conducted in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Here an attempt is made to inculturate CPE in a South African context. The purpose of my article is to share with the reader what my experience of doing supervision in South Africa was like and what I learned from it, especially with regard to indigenous CPE. This article will include: (1) a description of the clinical setting, the students, the groups, the supervisors, and the curriculum; (2) a description of two critical issues that emerged during the program—language and HIV/AIDS; and (3) an evaluation of the three-week process in the South African context in light of the five principles of indigenous CPE proposed by deVelder: language, culture, sensitivity to student's religion and values, sensitivity to student's psychology, and sensitivity to student's learning style.³ Hereby I will make use of two concepts used in Black Africa that have impact on CPE: theology of ubuntu and the process of palaver.

CLINICAL SETTING, STUDENTS, GROUPS, SUPERVISORS AND CURRICULUM.

This three-week CPE program took place between August 14, 2006 and September 1, 2006 at Grey's Hospital in Pietermaritzburg under the auspices of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education in South Africa (ACPESA), which was established in 1976. Dr. Edwina Ward, a certified CPE supervisor and instructor of pastoral care at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, developed this three-week module of CPE in South Africa. The program, which is now in its thirteenth year, draws students from St. Joseph Theological Institute (STJI) in Cedara and the School of Religion and Theology of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in Pietermaritzburg.

The Clinical Setting.

Grey's Hospital is a community hospital of 500+ beds that provides tertiary health care for the people of the Western half of KwaZulu-Natal.⁴ The head of nursing told us that 74 percent of the patients at this hospital are HIV positive and have HIV-related complications. The hospital's emergency room and clinics are very crowded. In the walk-in clinic, anyone can be test-

ed for HIV without cost.⁵ Connected with the hospital is a large family clinic where HIV patients receive treatment.

The Students.

Twenty-two students had signed up for the course, eight students from UKZN and fourteen students from STJI. Geographically, eleven were from South Africa, two students from Angola, two from Zimbabwe, two from Zambia, and one each from Namibia, Malawi, Tanzania, the Philippines, and Mexico. The group included six women and sixteen men. There were a great variety of cultures and languages in the group. All the students would receive academic credits from their institutions upon successful completion of the program.

Supervisors and Groups.

The students were divided into three groups, and each group had their own supervisor for group seminars and individual supervision. A Zimbabwean Lutheran pastor, a Zimbabwean Catholic sister, and I supervised the groups. This was my second year as supervisor in this program. My group consisted of eight students, four from South Africa and one each from Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and the Philippines. The six men in my group were all from the same Catholic seminary. The two women were Lutheran laywomen. We met every day for one and a half hours in small group. We had the opportunity to share briefly our life histories. The other group meetings were taken up with verbatim presentations and group processing. The development of the group process was complex. Language was an issue. Even when we spoke English, each one of us spoke it with a different twist. I will discuss this more later in this article. There were also the usual resistances to learning because CPE was a mandatory requirement from the seminary. In addition, some seminarians felt pressure because they were facing an important test at the seminary in the week following CPE. As to be expected, the six seminarians from the same seminary knew each other fairly well and so had the tendency to be kind to each other and to protect each other. The two women who were not schooled in formal theology felt threatened by the theological language of the seminarians. Of course, these issues did not get completely solved in the three-week program because of a lack of time. As a supervisor, I tried to find my way through the different levels of communication originating from different cultures. In the last few days, some of these barriers lifted. There grew a mutual inclusiveness and

cohesion up to a certain level as may be expected in such a short program. One of the main issues the students raised was their fatigue; many felt overwhelmed by the intensity of the clinical setting and the amount of information that had to be absorbed in a period of three weeks. This demonstrated one of the limitations of the program in comparison with the usual eleven-week program in the United States.

Curriculum.

The curriculum consisted of thirteen hours of didactic seminars, twenty hours of small group sessions with verbatim analysis, two and a half hours of one-on-one supervision, seven hours of worship and prayer, and thirty hours of ward visits. The total credit hours given for this CPE module was 120. The didactics included a variety of topics, such as first visit, the spirituality and dynamics of patient visiting, listening skills, the difference between a social visit and a pastoral visit, rejection and anxiety, the stigma of HIV/AIDS, role play of a family with AIDS, spiritual assessment, the ethics of the end-of-life care, death and dying, the grieving process, self-esteem, and anger. A social worker was invited to speak about the department of social services.

TWO CRITICAL ISSUES

Two critical issues emerged for me as supervisor: (1) language, which, according to deVelder in the above-cited article of Mereka, is the key to everything including emotional expression and cognitive patterns; and (2) the omnipresence of HIV/AIDS among the patients, which casts its shadow over the clinical context of the CPE program.

CPE and Language.

The morning devotion comprised many African languages. The didactics and seminars were held in English. Verbatims and other reports were written and presented in English. Yet, for several of the students English is a third language. Each African speaks their native language. In addition, in some African countries French or Portuguese is the national language that is taught in grade school. How does one express one's inner feelings and convictions in a third language? CPE stresses the development of listening

skills in order to enter the patient's world. We learn to listen to our own feelings and the feelings of the patients. Some African languages have only a few words to express a feeling such as sadness, while English has many words to express different shades of this feeling. One can imagine the mix of reactions in the individual student, in the group, and in the supervisor, when dealing with feelings. It is like learning a new language, this time the language of feelings. My native tongue is Dutch. When I went up for certification as a CPE supervisor in the late seventies in the United States, a committee member asked me: Do you feel in English? One needs to have a thorough control of a second (or third) language before one can express feelings in that language and move beyond the level of intellectual concepts. In one of our group seminars, we spend a considerable amount of time studying the different expressions of feelings in the English language, not unlike a seminar on feelings offered for a first unit CPE student in the United States.

What also surprised me was that initially many students appeared to be very uncomfortable visiting patients whose language they didn't know. Many of the patients at Grey's hospital speak Zulu. Students who were not from KwaZulu-Natal were now faced with a fourth language. After some time, most students learned to speak a few words of Zulu. This was also a time to teach the students the value of non-verbal communication and body language, such as gesture and touch.

Sometimes it seemed the tower of Babel all over again. However, through the confrontation with a variety of languages our worldview was broadened and opened to new horizons. As a foreign-born supervisor, I needed to be extremely alert to the ways my students expressed themselves and to pay attention to the "African logic" of their way of thinking. Sometimes I found myself at a complete loss in a conversation, and I had no clue where it was going. We were searching together a sentinel leading to mutual understanding. It is clear that I as a supervisor could not take anything for granted and had to be constantly willing to be corrected for not having understood my student correctly. Of course, the other side was valid as well: how did the student perceive what I said and did? Language is indeed the key to everything including emotional expression and cognitive patterns. After three weeks of group seminars some degree of a common understanding had developed. We can compare this with the

process of palaver, an African way of communication and solving conflicts. I will elaborate on this in a later section of my article.

CPE and AIDS.

Given the fact that more than 70 percent of the patients at Grey's Hospital are HIV infected or have AIDS, the question arose: How will our CPE students interact with patients who are HIV infected? Reading the students' application materials, which included an autobiography, I was struck by the fact that most applications mentioned a death of their young parents, a brother, or a sister.⁶

One of the three supervisors on staff, a Lutheran pastor from Zimbabwe, was an experienced chaplain doing a master of theology study on the topic of HIV and AIDS. In his presentations to the group on the issues of HIV and AIDS, he explained some of the medical information about AIDS and AIDS treatment. Anti-retroviral drugs do improve a patient's life, provided that sufficient nutrition is given and the patient follows the medical regime faithfully. In his talks, he stressed two factors: (1) AIDS does not kill. AIDS enables other diseases to kill you. (2) Everybody is living with AIDS. He stated bluntly: "I am living with AIDS." The chaplain then shared that he and his wife had adopted three orphan children into their family in Zimbabwe. The youngest girl died a year ago. The stigma of AIDS affects not only individuals but also families, churches, and local communities. The treatment plan of HIV/AIDS patients should include the whole family, including the extended family, said the chaplain. This is a challenge to the churches. The chaplain gave a report on a research project that was done among thirty-five Lutheran women with AIDS. None of them are attending church services. Because of the stigma of AIDS, they did not experience the church as a safe place. Why this stigma of AIDS? When someone is known as to be HIV infected, the first questions that come up are: How did you get it? Bad needles? Bad sex? The stigma character is so strong in Southern Africa because it is connected with the taboo of sex. One is ashamed to deal with sexual issues in the African society.⁷

This was most powerfully demonstrated one morning when the whole group became involved in a role-play session. The title of the role-play sounded simple: "The Duma family calls you in for help."

The scene: The parents, Mr. and Mrs. Duma, are in their sixties. Two of their children, their son Bongani (forty-three years old) and daughter

Thandi (forty years old) are married. The youngest son, named Siphoh, is thirty-two years old. He has revealed to his family that he is coming home from Gauteng for the weekend because he has something serious to talk about. He had secretly told his brother that he thinks he is HIV positive. The role-play starts with the family assembling in the home kitchen ready to welcome Siphoh. The mother, sitting on the floor, is ecstatic that her youngest son is coming home. Siphoh and his brother enter the family room and the drama unfolds. After being greeted and welcomed back, Siphoh tells his family that he has something important to share with family. His mother thinks right away that he has found a girl friend and that he may be getting married in the near future. Instead, Siphoh proceeds to tell the family the truth: he is HIV infected. The family is stunned by the news! The father is furious and wants to disown his son. He says that he will not have a gay man for his son. He threatens to throw Siphoh out of the house because he thinks that all in the family may catch the virus and die. The mother blames herself because Siphoh was always her favorite son and so perhaps she didn't teach him about proper behavior. The Borgani feels guilty because Siphoh had confided in him the truth that he had contracted HIV/AIDS, but he had just left the young brother to fend for himself in Gauteng. His sister is ashamed, worried about her reputation as a nurse, and is concerned about the dangers to her own family. Once the scene is on the way, the pastor, Rev. Mthethwa, visits the family. Of course, walking into this upset family, the pastor is confronted with a tough challenge. The mother is willing to listen to him, but the other family members and Siphoh himself feel overwhelmed with guilt and shame. This particular role-play ended with an overwhelming sense of sadness as each of the family members left the scene going their own way and leaving Siphoh alone. They were unable to be supportive of one another. There was an overwhelming sense of isolation and alienation. The play ended with a cry from the father to reach out to the youngest son with care. But it was not heard.

The role-play that took about twenty-five minutes stirred a great variety of reactions and feelings both in the actors and the spectators. After the role-play, we spent about one hour processing our feelings and perceptions. What is the role of the pastor and of the church in this crisis in the family? It would take a lot of caring, expertise, and skill to bring this broken family together. On the one hand, we might be overwhelmed and powerless in the presence of this family. On the other hand, we might all be

deeply affected by the reality of this disease. The pastor was encouraged to take the leadership role in the family by using the traditional palaver process to resolve the conflict in the family. I will say more about palaver in the next section of my article. Further exploration of the role of the father in a traditional African family was also needed.

Delving further into the issue of HIV, I encouraged students to write a verbatim or critical incident report on a visit with a patient affected by HIV. Only two students responded to my request. The first student expressed his attitude before the visit quite clearly: "I don't want to scare the patient or to show that I am afraid." In the actual interview, the student allowed the patient, through his non-judgmental approach, to express her fear that her upcoming surgery might be complicated by the presence of AIDS in her body. The second student reported a visit to a thirty-two-year-old woman who was seven months pregnant. Her husband had died three months before. She underwent multiple tests, including the HIV/AIDS test. The woman was anxiously awaiting the results of the tests. The chaplain provided a meaningful presence through her listening attitude.

These examples illustrate the perplexity of medical care in this community hospital where almost three-quarters of the patients are HIV infected. It is an unsettling experience. Nationwide, the number of South Africans suffering from AIDS killed in one year is 360,000. There is still a stigma connected with AIDS. Currently an estimated 5.54 million South Africans are HIV-positive, about 16 percent of the population.⁸

TOWARD INDIGENOUS CPE

This three-week program is an attempt to develop an indigenous CPE. I will assess our program by using the five criteria for indigenous CPE as described by deVelder.

Language.

As I indicated earlier, throughout the program, we were confronted with the issue of language. I became aware of how crucial it is to develop a common language to express feelings and convictions. Staying connected with one another requires patience and above all humility. Students and CPE su-

pervisor are engaged in a mutual process of learning. This reminded me of what in Africa is called the palaver process, alluded to above. "Palaver" comes from the Latin word *parabola* and means "word" or "parable." Through the exchange of words and listening, the community is established and conflicts are resolved. This process brings healing and reconciliation.

Bénézet Bujo speaks of three genres of palaver: palaver in the praxis of healing, the family palaver, and the 'supra-familial' or administrative palaver.⁹ In each of these genres, the exchange of feelings and ideas plays an essential role. These different modes of palaver serve as a model for what in traditional CPE is called group process. Although the palaver process is often used when a conflict has arisen in the community, it seems to me that palaver can also function as a tool in the CPE group process, especially when conflicts have arisen. In this three-week program, we did not use the palaver process explicitly, but the palaver mindset functioned as an implicit background for the group seminars.

Culture.

A significant aspect of Black African culture is expressed by the word "*ubuntu*."¹⁰ *Ubuntu* says a person is a person through other persons. I am because we are. I am a person through other persons. This culture is essentially different from the Western culture based on Descartes: "I think, therefore I am." It is not the fact that we can think that makes us human; rather, it is being part of humanity that makes us human. *Ubuntu* theology sees community rather than self-determination as the essential aspect of personhood.¹¹ This *ubuntu* theology emphasizes the community as primary over the individual because the individual can exist only in community. The meaning of life is essentially communal in nature. This emphasis differs from the Western mindset that stresses self-fulfillment and self-determination. This *ubuntu* perspective provides an African anthropology and theology that serves as a basis for the CPE learning process. It also, however, challenges the self-centered approach and demands a more communal or collective approach in CPE. From this perspective, the Western-styled CPE could be enriched.

Sensitivity to Student's Religion and Values.

The above-described attitude of *ubuntu* and palaver necessarily includes sensitivity to and respect for each student's religion and values, the starting

point being humanity and community. As Desmond Tutu says: "A person with *ubuntu* is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are."¹²

Sensitivity to Student's Psychology: Individual and Community.

Because of the primacy of community in Black African philosophy, I was challenged to bracket my individualist approach to supervision and to trust the wisdom of the group. It affirmed what I had learned in supervisory training to trust the process and be open to surprises. I was surprised many times how creative the students were in engaging in the group process because of their experience with *ubuntu* and palaver.

Sensitivity to Student's Learning Style.

The learning style of the CPE students was therefore communal and experiential. Because of the language factor, the learning was sometimes tiring and exhausting. There was, however, a general willingness and concern for the sick and for each other—based on the African worldview of *ubuntu*.

CONCLUSION

The results of the three-week program are difficult to measure in outcomes. These few statements are based on my personal impressions:

1. The students became more comfortable ministering in a hospital and ministering to patients with AIDS.
2. The students learned basic skills of entering the world of the sick person:
 - The skills of listening to the patient's story
 - The skills of identifying feelings in themselves and in others.
3. The students learned to pray together and lead prayer in an ecumenical context.
4. Most participants were affirmed in their desire to become ministers and gained confidence in their pastoral capacities.

5. Some participants decided to continue their search of their calling to ministry with the help of their spiritual director or counselor.

Three weeks is a short period—especially for a supervisor who is used to working with 11-week units of CPE. Given the shortage of supervisors, however, this three-week program has produced results that would not have been achieved without it. This program is a creative response to the need for clinical pastoral education in South Africa. The students have received a taste for the clinical setting and its complexities, and they have learned about ministry to the sick and their families. Coming from different nations we experienced a common bond. Both students and supervisors left feeling enriched. We experienced *ubuntu* and palaver as fertile ground for developing indigenous CPE in (South) Africa.

NOTES

1. James Kamau Mereka, "REM Reflection," *ACPE News* (Spring 2006):15–19, 16
2. Mereka, "REM Reflection,"16.
3. I am grateful to John deVelder for lending me the outline of his presentation "Principles of Indigenous CPE" at the REM Invitational 2006 (New York).
4. Description is according to the hospital's Web site is at <http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/greyshospital.htm>. In 2003, the hospital established an Ethics Committee. On its Web page one finds an ethics essay on the four principles of bioethics: autonomy, non-maleficence, and beneficence, and justice, principles well known in the United States through Thomas L Beauchamp and James F. Childress's *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 5th ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001). The ethics essay: Jim Muller, "Ethics and Ethics Committee," Grey's Hospital, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health, Ethics Committee, <http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/ethics/essay.pdf>.
5. I took the HIV test just to experience the anxiety connected with taking it.
6. Another cause of death reported in many autobiographies is car accidents. Death is very present in Southern Africa. It seems to be accepted as a fact of life.
7. About the stigma of AIDS, see the informative paper by Gillian Patterson, "AIDS Related Stigma: Thinking Outside the Box: The Theological Challenge," the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland, 2005, <http://www.e-alliance.ch/media/media-6250.pdf> (also available in languages other than English at http://www.e-alliance.ch/hiv_resources.jsp).
8. South African Newspaper *The Witness*, August 30, 2006, p. 1.
9. Bénézét Bujo, *Foundations of an African Ethic: Beyond the Universal Claims of Western Morality* (Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa, 2001), 67–97. The author deals with palaver mainly from an ethical perspective as source for the discovery of moral norms.

10. The word comes from the Bantu languages spoken in southern Africa and is related to a Zulu concept—"umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu," which means that a person is only a person through their relationship to others.

11. See, for example, Michael J. Battle, *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1997).

12. Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 31.

Anchor Points for Training in Supervision

Neil Sims

“Picture a large net under a high wire,” writes Frances Ward. “Supervision is a bit like a safety net that offers the security that is necessary for challenging learning to happen.”¹ This image of supervision is helpful and stimulating. Supervisees and supervisors may feel like tightrope walkers trying to stay on this narrow path and fearful of falling. At times, they may be confident in the skills they have learned. They may focus on the path ahead and complete the task without needing the net. It is still good to know that the net is there. At other times, they know they have already fallen. These are teachable moments when they face what went wrong and explore what is holding them—what that support means. At those times, they do need the time out, where they are not busy walking, but are lying back in the net, resting or preparing to resume the walk.

Ward develops our thinking further in declaring that the safety net requires anchor ropes to suspend it. She provides seven anchor points for the practice of supervision.² This article adapts her idea of supervisory

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anchor points as key dimensions to supervisory training in the context of ministry. The anchors provide a theoretical underpinning to the training of supervisors, and I provide them in my course “Supervision as Ministry” taught at the Brisbane College of Theology.³ Mandatory supervision of ministers will be much more readily accepted when those ministers recognize such supervision as part of the ministry of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, participating in the ministry of Jesus Christ.⁴

ANCHOR 1: LOCATING SUPERVISION WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Theology of Supervision.

There have been a variety of approaches to a theology of supervision.⁵ Two Greek words in the New Testament point to how supervision may be embraced as ministry—*episkope* and *paraklesis*. In its meaning of “oversight,” *episkope* is literally the same as “supervision,” “the act of seeing over.” In the history of the church, oversight has been consistently linked to apostolicity and unity. The responsibility of those in positions of oversight is to continue in the apostles’ teaching, and to preserve “authentic *koinonia*, in which unity does not threaten but promotes diversity, and diversity does not endanger but enhances unity.”⁶ Andrew Dutney adds another dimension:

In Christian history, *episkope* or oversight came to carry a sense of supervision from a position of superiority. But the term is better understood as conveying a sense of focused, directed, sustained attention coupled with responsibility for care; the kind of attention that a shepherd gives to the flock (1 Peter 5:1–4). As Ian Fraser has put it, “Those appointed to special positions have to give concentrated energy to the well-being of the church. No higher status is implied.”⁷

Paraklesis means “being alongside.” The supervisor has the task both of overseeing (or seeing from the outside) the supervisee’s ministry, and also of being the one alongside. Thus, supervision is one ministry within the body of Christ that participates, through grace, in the ministry of Jesus Christ, the primary *episkopos* and *parakletos*, “the One called alongside.”

There is a tension here between these two concepts; the former may suggest authority over (though the definition above is about focused attention and care), while the inference of the latter is more one of equality.

In some cases, the supervisor does exercise an evaluative role, while still seeking to be a colleague called alongside. How power is exercised and mutually understood is a vital issue that often needs mutual exploration. Thirty years ago, Wayne Oates, writing about pastoral supervision, used John's record of the words of Jesus to his disciples as a model for his understanding of it: "I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father."⁸ On occasions, supervisors may offer all their wisdom and experience to their supervisees from a position of oversight. The supervisees may need to learn to practice accountability within the Christian community. At other times—perhaps more so when the supervisees have learned to take greater responsibility for both their ministry and their learning—supervisors will want to be alongside their colleagues as partners in the one ministry. Both *episkope* and *paraklesis* express something of the meaning of supervision. The former is often the perspective when the supervisee is beginning to learn about ministry, while the latter is the more relevant perspective for the more mature supervisee taking more responsibility for the quality of his ministry.

Central to the Christian faith is the God who comes alongside individuals in community, not just momentarily, or for a short time. God makes a covenant with people in "steadfast love that endures forever."⁹ Through Christ, God draws people into his Church, this new covenant community, a sign of God's presence and purpose. Here, disciples of Christ are accountable to one another, and each has gifts from God for the good of all. Here, God has called some to a ministry of oversight, of which supervision is one expression, a ministry enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Wes Campbell says, "*Pastoral supervision* involves the leadership and discipline required to keep the church faithful to the Pastor/Shepherd/Ruler who calls it. Those who are called to be 'pastors' or 'ministers' in the church have the task of directing the church to the one who calls, feeds and protects it—the Pastor who was crucified by and for the world."¹⁰ Ministry is first of all about God's activity in the world. Secondarily, it is about God's gracious invitation to us through Christ in the power of the Spirit to share in that ministry.

Definition of supervision.

Against this background, my operational definition of supervision is:

A God-given ministry or service recognized and encouraged by the body of Christ. It is a supportive “coming alongside” one or more people in a covenant for the supervisee’s learning in ministry. As this personal growth takes place, increased self-awareness, ministry skills and theological understanding are integrated into the supervisee’s ministry praxis, for the good of others and the glory of God.

ANCHOR 2: LEARNING FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

While the understanding of supervision as oversight has its roots in the early Christian tradition, other helping professions—psychoanalysis, social work, and counseling—have adopted supervision as a practice within the last century or so, though that practice has been far from uniform.¹¹ The church has learned from these other disciplines. For example, within the Uniting Church in Australia, the development of its Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice seems to have come more out of the field of the secular helping professions than out of the theological heritage of the church.¹² Through this Code, the church has found a way to demonstrate to the wider community that it is addressing the community’s concerns about such things as sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy. Let me illustrate some of the thinking about ethics from other helping disciplines that is valuable for supervision in the ministry context.

Ethics in Supervision.

Just as the church speaks of ministerial and theological formation of its ministers, the social sciences speak of ethical formation of their practitioners—which goes beyond the practice of certain ethical behaviours to the being of the professional. Scaife writes that professionals must take an ethical stance in all of their practice, not simply in their direct work with clients, because the “practitioners’ own individual understanding of what is ‘right’ or ‘fitting’ is likely to exert a significant influence on their practice.”¹³ This is part of her total professional development. “The ethics of supervision are informed by many sources. Therapists have a primary duty of care for their clients but when making ethical choices also need to consider themselves, their work organizations, their profession and indeed the

society whose understanding and trust defines the role.”¹⁴ The ethically formed supervisor then acts as a model to his supervisees. One dimension of this is the continuing development of one’s competence as a supervisor through education, training, and experience. Another is that supervisors themselves should be under supervision. It should be noted that codes of ethics, which have become “the essential underpinning of professional practice,” are “not necessarily a sufficient guide in themselves” because teaching compliance with a code may stifle ethical discussion, reasoning, and competence.¹⁵ Ideally, the ethical formation of a supervisor precludes the need for a list of ethical questions and/or principles, though many writers offer them.¹⁶

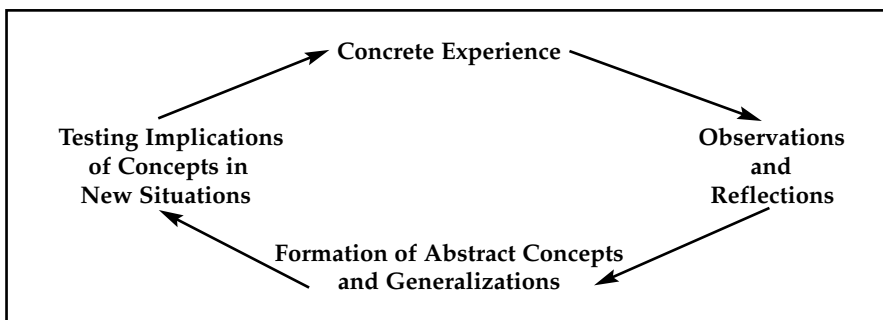
While the Church will value this wisdom about supervision from the social sciences, it will critique this wisdom from disciplines such as ethics from the standpoint of its own critical discourse, namely its theology.

ANCHOR 3: USING ADULT EDUCATION PROCESSES

“Action-reflection learning” is a term commonly used to describe the learning process taken up in a supervisory relationship. Learning by doing is central to much professional education and much adult learning. For adults, experience raises many questions that they often pursue in search of some resolution. Reflective learning involves exploring our experiences holistically. “When students experience reflective learning in fieldwork, they gain confidence in responding to the unpredictable nature of practice.”¹⁷ In writing about the supervisory relationship, Ward prefers the term, “reflective practitioner” to the term, “supervisee.” While the latter may suggest one’s position under the supervisor, the former describes clearly what is expected of this person—both action in the ministry context and reflection on that action.¹⁸

Kolb’s Learning Cycle.

Wolfe and Kolb offer a “theory of experiential learning” that shows “how experience is translated into concepts which, in turn, are used as guides in the choice of new experiences.”¹⁹ This process is familiar to many field educators and supervisors.



Here, “learning is conceived of as a four-stage cycle. Immediate concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection. These observations are assimilated into a ‘theory’ from which new implications for action can be deduced.”²⁰ Wolfe and Kolb suggest that it is difficult for anyone to do all four stages well. “In the process of learning, one moves in varying degrees from actor to observer, from specific involvement to general analytic detachment.”²¹ There are two continua here—the abstract-concrete and the active-reflective. As we develop our approaches to learning, “each of us in a unique way develops a learning style.”²² Each of us tends to favor one of these four stages of learning. When one of them is ignored, minimized, or over-emphasized, learning is distorted and practice is undermined. All four learning stages are needed for a person to be effective. Therefore it is appropriate to assist supervisees to discover their strengths and weaknesses in relation to each stage, and where they will particularly benefit from the assistance of others.

Later, Kolb spells out the learning strategies and learning environments that have been incorporated into the following table:²³

LEARNING STRATEGY	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	PRIMARY MODE
Concrete Experience	Emphasizing Personal Experiences	Feeling or Getting Involved
Reflective Observation	Understanding Concepts	Watching
Abstract Conceptualization	Preferred Logical Thinking	Creating Ideas
Active Experimentation	Applying Knowledge and Skills	Making Decisions and Doing

Paver observes, “Supervisors and supervisees with different learning styles can run into difficulty, but on the other hand recognizable learning styles can be both creative for supervisor and supervisee.”²⁴ The particular learning strengths of the supervisor may assist the supervisee and vice-versa. Paver names the concerns for those who have low scores (on the Kolb Learning Style Inventory) at any one of these four stages:

For example, a supervisee who scores low in concrete experiences is likely to have a difficult time engaging in the practice of ministry. If the score in reflective observation is low, he or she may engage in the practice of ministry, but not begin to generate questions or notice patterns—in ministry. Low scores in abstract conceptualization mean that he or she is not likely to focus his or her ministry around principles, but work from a more hit-and-miss methodology. Low scores in active experimentation may mean the person can have an experience, but not have much motivation to make decisions for the practice of ministry.²⁵

ANCHOR 4: SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

A Learning Covenant Defining the Student's Assessment Tasks.

A learning covenant is a standard dimension of a supervisory relationship, a reference point for all the supervisee's learning about ministry. The supervisee initiates it, and the supervisor agrees to it. It gives intentionality and focus to the learning process by describing goals, objectives, and related ministry tasks. It also places some boundaries around the desired learning. The supervisee takes responsibility for her goals in this self-directed process.

While a supervisor is popularly regarded as having authority over those supervised, the concept of covenant reminds us of the priority of the relationship. Gary Pearson sees the supervisory relationship as a covenantal one:

Contracts are based on responsibilities; covenants are based on relationships. Contracts define boundaries and bind; covenants provide for growth and becoming. Contracts are legalistic and enforceable; covenants focus on accountability and redemption. Our use of the term *covenant* is intentional. It has grown out of our covenantal relationship with God. God's covenant with us colors and shapes our understanding of our covenanting with each other.²⁶

Similarly, Pohly writes that “Covenant making—is an experience of gift between the covenanted partners.”²⁷ Prior sees the supervisory relationship as a pilgrimage together: “Here is a relationship to be characterized not only by mutual and reciprocal expectations of enhanced ministry outcomes, but of a deepening of the lives of faith of both partners or ‘companions on the journey’.”²⁸ Within this covenantal relationship, the grace of God may be expressed and received.

Let me illustrate this approach from within the course I teach, *Supervision as Ministry*. Trainee supervisors prepare a learning covenant where they nominate (for the semester-long unit) their goals, objectives, and related assessment items. The format of this covenant includes:

- A brief statement of the student’s call to ministry
- The minister’s approach to ministry—values and/or mission and/or vision
- The person’s gifts and liabilities for ministry
- Several goals for their learning from this course, with sub-goals for each
- The specific items proposed for assessment (arising out of their goals), their word count for each item, and their due dates

This document becomes the first assessment item. It is very important that this brief document has integrity.²⁹

The criteria for the remaining assessment items are as follows:

- *Supervisory experience*: There will be a piece of written critical reflection of a supervisory session in which the trainee supervisor was engaged either as supervisee or supervisor. This is to be presented to the class.
- *Critical reflection on the literature on supervision*: Evidence will be presented of critical engagement with the literature. This should include implications for the person’s own practice either as a supervisor or as a supervisee or as both.
- *Theological framework*: Participants will offer their own theological framework for supervision.
- *Evaluation*: There will be a written summary of the key dimensions of the person’s approach to supervision, other learnings from the course, and a description of areas for further personal learning.

Within this framework, trainee supervisors have a lot of flexibility to nominate and tailor the assessment items according to their ministry needs. In

practice, students have submitted a wide variety of papers related to different theological emphases and diverse contexts. This is truly self-directed learning.

ANCHOR 5: STUDENTS CONTRIBUTE THEIR OWN LEARNING TO THE CONVERSATION

Students, especially adults, do not come to a course devoid of previous learning. Students value the opportunity to contribute to the classroom interaction from their own experience. New learning is embraced when it can be connected with previous learning. The learning covenant is designed to build on the learning the student has already achieved. People learn much more by participation than by simply listening. This is especially valuable where the students are willing to be vulnerable with one another, acknowledging both their prior learning and the limits to that learning.

Experiencing Supervision Together.

Within a course on "Supervision as Ministry," it is logical to include significant time for the practice of group supervision, where participants take it in turns to present their experience of being in a supervisory relationship. As evidence of their prior reflection, students present a written report to their peers. The report includes the context of the supervisory relationship, a description of part or the whole of a supervisory session, reflection, including theological reflection, on the process, and the implications arising out of the reflection for one's praxis.

Within the constraints of the *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*, which includes confidentiality provisions, students demonstrate a willingness to learn together, to listen, and to ask questions. The group works to assist the presenter in learning about the ministry of supervision. Each student's ministry context is taken seriously.

Pregnall and Hampton offer three models of presenting supervisory case studies.³⁰ (1) Tape presentation and discussion: This includes a segment of supervision of no more than ten minutes, a verbatim transcript, and a one- to two-page introduction. (2) Written case study: This is similar to the suggested outline above. (3) Role play of supervision: The presenter brings in a one-page written description of his relationship with the student. The group clarifies this relationship with the presenter. A member of the group volunteers to role-play the student in what would be the next supervisory conference. With the

presenter out of the room, the group assists the volunteer to set the 'student' role. Then the role-play is engaged in. The supervisor may play the role of her student in a second role-play. Normal procedures for role-plays, including the debriefing of participants, are followed.

Similarly, students could actually supervise each other in small groups in class, followed by a debriefing and mutual learning from the perspectives of the supervisors, the supervisees, and the observers.³¹

Mary McMahan, from the discipline of school guidance and counseling, offers a framework for presenting an issue for supervision as opposed to a case:

- *Brief description* of the issue including onset, duration, frequency, intensity, relevant contextual information.
- The nature of *my involvement* to this point, and *my interpretation* of this issue.
- Effects this issue is having on me *personally*, and *professionally*.
- My personal reaction to the *content*, the *individuals* involved, and the *process/progress* of this issue.
- *What I am hoping to get out of this supervision*.³²

Issues for trainee supervisors may include such things as remaining focused on the supervisee's concerns rather than being "hooked" into one's own agenda, or working with a supervisee who is of different gender, culture, or theology, or a combination of these.

Student-led Discussion of Readings.

For the course I teach, students are each provided with two books: the *Course Input* and *Readings*. For each class session, students read the appropriate section from each book and reflect on the associated questions. They take it in turns to lead the discussion of the set reading material and so bring their particular worldview to the task. Those already involved in supervisory relationships automatically relate what they are reading to their own experience. Students come to the class with a conversation already going on inside them between their experience and the thoughts of others. Because the students minister in diverse contexts, the conversation becomes multi-layered, enriching and engaging. The students leave with more to reflect upon.

ANCHOR 6: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION: THE LANGUAGE OF SUPERVISION

In the course I teach, in all ministry supervision, and more generally in ministry itself, theological reflection is central to best practice. “The characteristic of pastoral supervision which sets it apart from all other types of supervision is its theological perspective.”³³ This reflection is the language of supervision as ministry. If we are about the shaping of supervision as ministry, then our dialogue must be open to the presence and action of the God who calls us to share in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Stone and Duke lament that “many pastors are tempted to discard the theological template altogether in favor of a secular template—that they think is more contemporary.”³⁴ They may then fail to discern the activity of God in the society as a whole. “Learning a religious vocabulary reminds us of who we are and of the communities to whom we are accountable. By claiming the theological categories of those communities, we set our issues of ministry in the context of the continuing struggle of God’s people to be faithful.”³⁵

What is Theological Reflection?

There are many overlapping definitions of theological reflection. Pyle says, “Theological reflection occurs when the events of life are examined through the eyes of faith, in order to integrate experience and faith.”³⁶ Pohly, from the perspective of narrative theology, writes that theological reflection is “a way of thinking about the God/human relationship so as to bring the narratives of human experience and the narratives of God’s activity into dialogue with each other.”³⁷ Humans endeavor to make sense of their experiences, and supervision as ministry seeks to assist supervisees to make theological sense of their ministry experiences.

The Purpose or Function of Theological Reflection.

It is very valuable for us to understand how theological reflection functions for us. Brett Morgan gleaned the views of students and ministers being supervised using a method called phenomenography.³⁸ The concepts identified in his analysis, going more deeply from one level to the next, were theological method as:

- Method
- Means to develop insight
- Means to inform action
- Consistent thinking
- Critical activity

Theological reflection could be seen simply as a tool for learning, as a way of increasing one's understanding, as a guide to action, as a guide to acting with integrity, and as a way to examine, confirm, and/or challenge one's life presuppositions. (Note that each of the five conceptions includes all of the conceptions preceding it in the list above.)

All of Morgan's conceptions are reflected in the purposes of theological reflection in supervision described by Colin Hunter:

- "Seeking to 'discern the continuing presence and action of God'³⁹ and to understand experience from the perspective of the Christian Gospel;
- Telling a good story.⁴⁰ The story of the experience interacts with the story of the supervisee, and, in supervision, makes 'faith connections'⁴¹ with the Christian story.
- Helping the supervisee integrate new insights and understandings into her/his operational theology;
- Identifying and implementing a pastoral response. It is not enough to attribute meaning to experience. Theological reflection has as its ultimate goal a further action that has integrity because it is based on reflective inquiry;
- Identifying the core values and beliefs that lead to the innate responses of the supervisee to the experience; and
- Exploring those core values and beliefs and critiquing them using the resources of the Christian tradition and of cultural information available from the sciences and social sciences."⁴²

"Regular theological reflection forms us. It helps us be transformed by the renewal of our minds so that we can discern God's will (Rom. 12:2)."⁴³ Such transformation affects our whole being. Consistent with this idea, Myers writes, "The critical test of any method of theological reflection *in ministry* is not simply the quality of the insight to which it leads but the quality of the ministerial action which is its fruit."⁴⁴ This includes the quality of the supervision offered when that supervision is recognized as a ministry.

CONCLUSION

When training in supervision includes these six anchor points and so:

- 'Grounds' that supervision in the Christian tradition

- Receives and critiques wisdom from the practice of supervision in other disciplines
- Uses adult education processes, including action-reflection learning
- Encourages trainee supervisors to take responsibility for their own learning through the preparation of a learning covenant
- Welcomes participants' life experiences in their learning with others
- Calls for engagement in theological reflection that opens students up to the presence and activity of God

then that training will assist participants towards the practice of authentic supervision in ministry.

NOTES

1. Frances Ward, *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision* (London: SCM, 2005), 4-5.

2. Ward, *Lifelong Learning*: "Learning to Read the Signs of the Times: Ministry in a Changing World," "What Kind of Learning? Developments within Theological Education," "Learning to Play: The Interplay of Theology," "Learning to Listen: The Practice of Supervision," "Learning to Write: The Living Human Document," "Learning to Learn: Good and Bad Resistance," and "Learning to Cope with the Downside."

3. See the course outline at <http://www.bct.edu.au/outline.php?CourseCode=E|74044> (Brisbane College of Theology, Griffith University School of Theology, Australia).

4. Ministers of the Uniting Church in Australia are required to have regular, professional supervision.

5. For example, theologies of supervision have been centered on the model of Jesus in training his disciples (Kenneth Pohly, *Transforming the Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision*, 2nd ed. (Franklin, TN: Providence House, 2001)), the concept of vocation (Julianne Hallman and George Sinclair), the Trinity, and the 'go-between' God (Frances Ward, *Lifelong Learning*).

6. Chris Budden, "Episkope: Issues for Discussion" (North Lake Macquarie Congregation, Australia, unpublished paper, May 15, 2001)

7. Andrew Dutney, "Background Notes on the Polity of the Uniting Church" (Uniting Church, Adelaide, South Australia, unpublished paper, 2003), 4. Ian M. Fraser, *Many Cells, One Body: Stories from Small Christian Communities*, Risk Book Series (Geneva, Switzerland: WCC Publications, 2003).

8. Wayne E. Oates, "Pastoral Supervision Today," *Pastoral Psychology* 24, no. 228 (Fall 1975): 209-222.

9. See Psalm 136 NRSV.

10. Wesley Campbell, "Theological Rationale for Pastoral Supervision" in Uniting Church in Australia, *Supervision: Train the Trainers Resource Workshop* (Melbourne: Ministerial Education Commission, 2002), Appendices 2.2, 6.

11. Tim Grauel, "Professional Oversight: The Neglected Histories of Supervision" in *Supervision in the Helping Professions: A Practical Approach*, ed. Mary McMahon and Wendy Patton (French's Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia, 2002).

12. Uniting Church in Australia, *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice* (Sydney: Ninth Assembly, 2000).

13. Joyce Scaife, *Supervision in the Mental Health Professions: A Practitioner's Guide* (East Sussex, UK: Brunner-Routledge, 2001), 122.

14. David Axten, "The Development of Supervision Ethics." In McMahon and Patton, *Supervision in the Helping Professions*, 106.

15. Lynne Briggs and Raylee Kane, "Ethics in Fieldwork" in *Fieldwork in the Human Services: Theory and Practice for Field Educators, Practice Teachers and Supervisors*, ed. Lesley Cooper and Lynne Briggs (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2000), 139, 141.

16. While the following questions are of secondary importance, still they offer some useful perspectives: "What will do the most good? What will do the least harm? What is fair and just? What is empowering, extending choice for others? What is prohibited? What is obligatory?" (David Axten and David Massey, *Just Choices? The Ethics of Counselling* (Brisbane, Australia: Lifeline and Queensland University of Technology, 1997), video resource and workbook, 4.) Similarly, Scaife (*Supervision in the Mental Health Professions*, 125–126) offers five ethical principles as a basis for decision-making: autonomy ("individuals have rights to freedom of action and choice"), beneficence ("actions taken should do good, using knowledge to promote human welfare"), fidelity ("being faithful to promises made"), justice ("ensuring that people are treated fairly"), and non-maleficence ("striving to prevent harm"). When in doubt about the right course of action, "it is always advisable—to consult with another and to document the conversation that took place" (Scaife, *Supervision in the Mental Health Professions*, 130). Briggs and Kane add a sixth principle, veracity, or truthfulness, which is foundational to a trusting or good working relationship and which also requires the practice of informed consent, making sure students have all the information necessary to their functioning ("Ethics in Fieldwork," in Cooper and Briggs, *Fieldwork in the Human Services*, 227).

17. Gwen Ellis, "Reflective Learning and Supervision" in Cooper and Briggs, *Fieldwork in the Human Services*, 227.

18. Ward, *Lifelong Learning*, especially chapter 4.

19. Donald M. Wolfe and David A. Kolb, "Career Development, Personal Growth, and Experiential Learning," in *Issues in Career and Human Resource Development*, ed. J. W. Springer (Madison, WI: American Society for Training and Development, 1980), 128.

20. Wolfe and Kolb, "Career Development, Personal Growth, and Experiential Learning," in Springer, *Issues in Career and Human Resource Development*, 128.

21. Wolfe and Kolb, "Career Development, Personal Growth, and Experiential Learning," in Springer, *Issues in Career and Human Resource Development*, 129.

22. Wolfe and Kolb, "Career Development, Personal Growth, and Experiential Learning," in Springer, *Issues in Career and Human Resource Development*, 130.

23. David Kolb, *Experiential Learning as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984). The primary modes have been added to Kolb.

24. John Paver, "Learning Styles," in Uniting Church in Australia, *Supervision: Train the Trainers*, Appendices 1.5, 2.

25. Paver, "Learning Styles" in *Uniting Church in Australia, Supervision: Train the Trainers*, Appendix 2.
26. Gary Pearson "Designing a Learning Covenant" in *Experiencing Ministry Supervision: A Field-Based Approach*, ed. William T. Pyle and Mary Alice Seals (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1995), 50.
27. Pohly, *Transforming the Rough Places*, 121.
28. Robin Pryor, "Contract or Covenant" in *Uniting Church in Australia, Supervision: Train the Trainers*, Appendices 1.3, 1.
29. When it comes to the decision about what one's goals might be for learning about one's ministry, the pastoral supervision guidelines of the Uniting Church in Australia suggest six broad areas for consideration: personal growth; practical ministry skill; theological reflection; pastoral identity and leadership; personal formation/creative expression; and professional identity and development, in *Uniting Church in Australia, Pastoral Supervision: Introducing a Process of Reflection on Ministry Experience* (Melbourne: Ministerial Education Commission, 2001), Appendix. Supervisors of Uniting Church ministerial agents may assist them in reflecting critically on what will be their focus in their continuing education.
30. William S. Peggall and Elizabeth E. Hampton, "Training Field Education Supervisors," *Theological Education* (Summer, 1975); also found in *Theological Field Education: A Collection of Key Resources*, vol. 1, ed. Donald F. Beisswenger, Tjaard A. Hommes, and Doran McCarty (Kansas City, MO: The Association for Theological Field Education, 1977), 172-175.
31. Personal communication from John Chalmers.
32. Mary McMahon, "Structured Peer Group Supervision by Email" (University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, unpublished paper, Appendix 2). Italics added.
33. John Foskett and David Lyall, *Helping the Helpers: Supervision and Pastoral Care* (London: SPCK, 1988), 43.
34. Howard W. Stone and James O. Duke, *How to Think Theologically* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996), 42.
35. Jeffrey H. Mahan, Barbara B. Troxell, and Carol J. Allen, *Shared Wisdom: A Guide to Case Study Reflection in Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993), 75.
36. William T. Pyle, "Theological Reflection," in Pyle and Seals, *Experiencing Ministry Supervision*, 110.
37. Pohly, *Transforming the Rough Places*, 154.
38. Brett Morgan, "What are we looking for in Theological Reflection," *Ministry, Society and Theology* 13, No. 2, (November, 1999), 6-21.
39. James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*, rev. ed. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1995).
40. Michael H. Taylor, *Learning to Care: Christian Reflection on Pastoral Practice* (London: SPCK, 1993).
41. Regina Coll, *Supervision of Ministry Students* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992).

42. Colin Hunter, "The Purpose of Theological Reflection" in *Supervision: Train the Trainers*, Appendices 3.2, 14. I have taken the liberty of changing the order of his points.

43. Patricia O'Connell Killen and John de Beer, *The Art of Theological Reflection* (New York: Crossroad, 1994), 83.

44. J. Gordon Myers "Decision-Making—Goal of Reflection in Ministry," chapter 7 in Whitehead and Whitehead, *Method in Ministry*, 99. Emphasis is Myers'.

**Call for Essays for *Reflective Practice*, Volume 28
Theme: Formation and Supervision in the Presence of Fear**

Fear touches every dimension of living today: personal, spiritual, communal, social, global, and environmental. Fear makes strangers into enemies, intensifies vulnerability, traumatizes communities, makes uncommon victims, creates new patterns of coping, and isolates people. How does living in the presence of fear affect the work of forming and supervising for ministry? How can our work begin to transform the social and theological structures that harbor violence and generate fear? Send proposals or essays to Herbert Anderson, editor, at handerson@plts.edu by December 30, 2007.

Special Symposium

Leading Causes Of Life*

**Gary Gunderson
with Larry Pray**

The following summary is presented with the approval of Gary Gunderson and Larry Pray for use exclusively in *Reflective Practice*. We are very grateful to them for permission to present this summary of their book. In summarizing this book, I have attempted for the most part to stay with their language. Following the summary, there are three reflections from the perspectives of pastoral counseling supervision, theological field education, and clinical pastoral education. Each author was asked to consider the implications of using *The Leading Causes of Life* as a framework for pastoral supervision. — *Herbert Anderson, Editor*

How do we talk about spiritual dynamics in the health of individuals and communities? For the moment, suspend the problem of talking to other disciplines and focus on talking among ourselves—those responsible for nurturing the capacity for spiritual nurture. What is our most

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*Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, *The Leading Causes of Life* (Memphis, TN: The Center of Excellence in Faith and Health, Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare, 2006).

Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

useful vocabulary? What is our link between grammar and logic? What is our embedded change theory? The twenty-first century clinical context offers an abundance of opportunities to see the contribution that skilled spiritual care makes to the healing, resilience, and reconciliations of people and their families.

Because all of the professional colleagues with whom we work and talk are defined by the problems they are competent at solving, it is easy for a spiritual care person to be drawn into talking in a similar way. Even those most grateful for the gifts of technique and technology, however, notice that nearly all of the clinical logic is focused on pathology. Our language fails us because for the most part spirituality is not a problem to solve but a complex, rich well of resilience and life to be experienced. There is something more.

The theory of the leading causes of life has emerged out of this challenge in discussions with hundreds of colleagues working in public health in the United States, Africa, and Europe through the networks of the Interfaith Health Program of Emory University, inside large scale healthcare at Methodist Healthcare in Memphis, Tennessee, and in the small church pastoral setting of Big Timber, Montana, where Pastor Larry Pray works. The idea is deceptively simple and thus radical in giving a new framework for many things we know but forget in the buzz of pathologizing. Professionals accustomed to arcane complexity will be a bit surprised to see we distill the causes of life to only five: connection, coherence, agency, blessing, and hope. We have found in the process of developing them across several years and many thousands of miles that those five are evocative enough to keep life from collapsing into premature simplicity. In order to condense the book into a few pages, the editor abstracted the grammar of *The Leading Causes of Life* without the stories that give vitality to the book. You will need to add your own stories. We all have stories about life and who has more stories than those of us who do spiritual care? What we need is a language that gives a framework for telling them. That's what *The Leading Causes of Life* offers. We hope they help.—Gary Gunderson, Author

LEADING CAUSES OF LIFE — SUMMARY

Life has a language.

*The Leading Causes of Life*TM are no more and no less than a guide to the core structure of that language. We diagram its sentences, underline its

verbs, listen to its nuances, and trace the way it shapes the stories of our lives. We have observed that the language of life can be pinned down to five causes: connection, coherence, agency, hope, and blessing. We had to define those five words that at first glance seem so easy to define.

We wrote about connection, grounding that word not just in the social milieu, but in the world of ideas and the healing presence of mountains, rivers, and roads as well.

We wrote about hope to release that word from wishful thinking. Hope does not escape circumstance. Hope transcends circumstance.

We wrote about blessing to encounter its power when we look beyond the gentle tones of "God bless you." Blessing is not the end but the beginning of a conversation with life.

We wrote about coherence to name our relentless desire for belonging, the search for an authentic voice in each of our lives, and to emphasize that its power can be used for life or death, depending on the choices we make. Coherence is a restless horse that needs to be harnessed.

We wrote about agency to reclaim it from its institutional use. Say "agency," and most of us think of government. When we write about agency, we recognize it as the capacity to act, the fact of change that happens, happens again, and then keeps on happening in all of our lives.

We have written this so that our own lives can be about life.

STUDY DEATH NO MORE

Two years ago, I shared the platform at an academic meeting on disparities held in Milwaukee. David Williams, a preeminent University of Michigan sociologist, named the evil of racial disparities so completely that death filled the space in all its malevolent power. Faced with the glacial weight of racism across the generations, what could I say next? It was so clear to me that if death defines our efforts, it wins every damn time. Why are we even surprised? As you know, a lot of people aren't surprised. They don't expect to win and, thus, don't even show up to fight the big ones: race, class, greed, and environmental erosion. Why would they if death is going to get the last word?

I junked my planned speech and decided that I wasn't going to talk about death any more. I moved to the podium humming to a recycled

Baptist spiritual myself, “I’m going to study death no more. I’m gonna study death no more. I’m gonna lay my body down, and study death no more.” For the first time, I spoke about being accountable to life, and I noticed ten minutes into the speech, that people’s posture changed. I’ve seen the same hopeful change every time I’ve had the chance to talk since.

Our imagination is so filled with resisting death that we hardly know what else to think about. Fear crowds everything else, leaving no room in our imagination, no logic other than simple resistance, and no virtue other than tenacity.

What do you think about when you study death no more?

That’s the question that has set me on a journey toward life. I’ve wondered if there is any way to think about life with the precision and rigor that we use when we try to postpone death. Are there causes of life to organize our thoughts and guide our actions?

In health science, it is a very big claim to say that something is a cause. It says, “This is what is really going on here. No matter what you wish or hope for, this is what causes that.” It is in some ways a religious claim. So it is a really big question I found myself asking: Are there causes of life that can be known just as concretely as causes of death?

LIFE AT THE CENTER

If you focused on life and brought its discussion into the center, you’d find five vital *Leading Causes of Life*TM that show up. If you took all the marginalized congregations, you’ll find the same five. If you look at the most successful efforts to do anything with kids in the toughest neighborhoods, jails, or jungles, you’ll recognize the same five, again: hope, coherence, agency, connection, and blessing.

Death is simple compared to life. Although there are hundreds of thousands of names for it, basically something stops working. The breaking is simple; that which is broken—life—is highly complex. Life is complex because it has many moving parts that exist in exquisitely rich relationships with each other. We live in connections; we thrive in webs of meaning that make reality coherent; we thrive in our capacities to work together on things that matter; we thrive in our experience of giving and receiving blessings across generations; and we thrive as we are drawn toward hope.

Connection, coherence, agency, blessing, and hope create space for each other, and jointly create the space in which life thrives. It works great.

The most basic thing to get right in life is the question. It increases the odds a great deal if you hang around people with a history of asking great questions. And the question only leads toward life if it is in the language of life. We are not saying that life should help us connect; that it should have meaning; that it should be hopeful; that it should be a blessing and that it should lead to action. We are saying that it actually does all five. We have noticed that life happens when these five leading causes are present and that their absence contributes to the void so many of us feel. We have seen that churches thrive when they connect with a mission, when their members and friends learn how to “neighbor.” We have seen institutions gain new life when they spend time building relationships; we have seen healing move to a higher level when it builds the relationship known as trust between doctor and patient, hospital and community. We need a life logic that is simple and compelling—more powerful than our lethargic moral inertia. We need a theory that could be scribbled on the back of a business card, even under pressure.

WHAT’S A CAUSE?

The first task of a theory is to help us understand what is going on. It is helpful to notice that one thing is associated with another (like bad smells to disease); but to actually say that the smell caused the disease is a very big step. This ill-informed idea, called “miasma theory,” was held for centuries until germ theory fought its way through and, finally, allowed the extraordinary gifts of infectious disease prevention. Until the theory changed, practice couldn’t. To say “this causes that” certainly sounds scientific, but it can also be considered close to a religious claim. The vocabulary of faith weaves humility into its most profound observations of causality.

Cause matters. It aims our choices, refines our fears, and justifies our hopes. It tells us what to do. So, it’s wise to go slow when we start linking things together. This is the danger of having just a little bit of knowledge, just a smidgen of theology, just a few books on nation-building in Iraq, or just a few opinions on neighborhood-building in Memphis.

WHAT IS LIFE?

What causes the kind of life that generates life? What kind of life creates the possibility of more life? This is far more interesting than death, which simply disrupts or breaks down. Life fills up emptiness, weaves together broken pieces, and moves simplicity toward festival. We want to look for human life not because it is entirely separate from the life of animals or glaciers, but because it is interconnected. Humans are distinctly, if not uniquely, conscious of being conscious. This is why, technically, we are *sapiens sapiens*—knowing knowers. We want to focus that double consciousness on the causes of human social life, which generates the adaptive process of thriving.

To understand a life phenomenon, you have to look for not just a different list of things, but a different kind of list. The more we know, the more we appreciate the thriving, oddness going on. The oddness of life is neither good nor bad; it's just unexpected and curious. An imagination that is tuned to life sees vital connections, upward spirals, and pregnant couplings where deduction only counts and weighs until boredom makes us blind.

We look for causes of life that:

- Generate more life and are not exhausted by it
- Adapt and encourage ever more adaptation
- Create ever more complex connectedness

Our curiosity leads us to look for these causes in the spaces in between us and in the history of lives that proceed our own. Life causes life in this sense.

Life moves toward complex human connection and away from simplicity. The causes of life we seek enable such movement. If the spiral toward complex life turns back onto itself and recoils from the diversity around it, it begins to die as its energies are wasted on its fears. A living community as a whole is the only true shepherd of this slender balance toward life. It takes a village to raise a village.

No one person managed to live anything that we'd recognize as a life, except for relatively brief and lonely passages. One of the apparent exceptions is people living in monasteries, which we tend to regard as spiritual warriors. They prove the point by their need for rigorous training, tight discipline, and frequent failure. The rest of us humans find our lives amid the

tumble of complex relationships that can be distracting, inconvenient, but are utterly vital. Either way, it is in our connections that life emerges and is sustained. From birth to death, the rest of us are almost never alone. It is life in relationships, or no life at all—at least for us humans. Sea turtles can go way out to sea for years on end, wandering all over the Atlantic, but return to the same beach they saw as a hatchling to lay eggs and start the cycle over. Much of what we count as pain, shame, and struggle are an insatiable, if sometimes inept, search for vital relationships. We need each other.

The causes of human life that we seek result in generativity, complexity, adaptivity, and society. Such life generates more complex life that allows us to adapt and thrive. The causes of death disrupt that kind of life, ending it in some cases, or leading to conditions of less than human existence. Human life works really well, and is capable of astonishing resilience and recovery. *The Leading Causes of Life™* are a simple ensemble that makes possible the miracle of sustained human life—over and over and over. We'll start with connection.

CONNECTION

Humans are social creatures. Capable of only brief episodes of solitude, human life thrives on our social connections to each other. In fact, human life is only found in the extraordinary number of connections humans make with their families, neighbors, faith members, and fellow citizens. Connections are like the breath of air on which our very lives depend.

The human ability to looking ahead toward the future is as powerful as memory; it shapes our choices to achieve connections that might give us life. We remember the future, and we express our agency in ways that make that future happen. Recognizing a possible future with enough clarity to move toward it is a very highly sophisticated capacity. We are able to sketch a future only as a way of finding more life amid the connections that give us life already. We try to remember our way into a future because we are connected to those relationships that are alive for us.

Congregations generate health and wholeness because of how they connect people. Congregations did this long before we even had printing presses, and will do so long after the cell phones go dead, because congregations are social spaces in which people can connect to each other. They

gradually come to know the multi-layered, many-faceted breadth of each other. As time goes by, those layers and facets gain more depth and resonance, allowing more kinds of connection. Not always and not smoothly, of course. They can also sustain disconnection by promoting and sustaining myths of separation, difference, and danger. But there is a reason that every sustained human culture has some kind of social network that is recognizable as a type of congregation. It is a life form that you'd expect to find wherever you'd find humans.

Human life is caused by our connectedness. The more connected we are, the more generative, adaptive, and complex our life is likely to be. Connection is vital, but insufficient. If you only see connections, you'd have a start, but you'd soon find yourself noticing what is happening among and within those relationships. That's the way life works. The logic of *The Leading Causes of Life*TM is that any one of the causes will generate the space for the others to express themselves, and flourish into a full ensemble. It is the combination of *The Leading Causes of Life*TM that makes sustainable, vital, and generative life possible. You certainly can have just one cause of life, but if you don't have the others the life probably won't last very long.

COHERENCE

What distinguishes generative human life is the presence of coherence. Human life is sustained by—caused by—this coherence. Coherence can be described as a master narrative held so deeply that it goes beneath language and into consciousness. Simply put, coherence is a sense that life makes sense; that what happens is comprehensible, that events are not random, but, at least, somewhat predictable as a whole.

We live suspended in a narrative that quite literally gives us life. Our most primal symbols represent this knowing: the Word of Life, *Logos*, the tree of knowledge before which there is no humanity, and after which humanity is possible. We cannot tolerate incoherence because coherence ties together not just thought, but all that connects us. Human life is sustained by a coherence that generates adaptivity and manages complex relationships. Coherence gives our choices purpose and hope. Coherence is so vital that we rightly fear incoherence as a fundamental threat.

Sometimes a person's sense of coherence gives them the capacity to be an agent in their own healing: they have a reason to take their medicine, do their exercise, and seek their own life. It may or may not be enough, but it frequently tilts the balance. Coherence gives us a way of seeing and trusting the connections across which life might flow. Those connections could be doctors and nurses, people in our congregations, schools, or neighborhoods who will hold us up until we heal, and have a chance to return the favor. Coherence reminds us of the web of blessing that defines our role as humans, and calls us beyond ourselves to the life of others. Coherence gives us life.

Coherence is necessary for all forms of human life, including the institutions that grow from our relationships. It is helpful to see the hospital itself as being alive in this way. There are few structures that find adaptive innovation more difficult and fraught with friction. A hospital frequently feels utterly incoherent to those inside it, and not just to the patients disoriented by the sudden vulnerability of their illness. The environment of those working in the hospital can find their lives driven this way by that guild, that way by that payer, down a rabbit hole by that litigation, and up the other tree by a disruptive competing group with a technology nobody anticipated. But amid these confusing crosscurrents, you still find a deep current that is surprisingly coherent. If you stop almost anyone from the CEO to the guy watching the parking lot and ask them what the point is, they'll say something like: "we're here to take care of the whole community." That's a bundle of coherence that will take you a very long way, and prevent you from making some very stupid (incoherent) kind of choices that would violate what we recognize as life. That's what coherence does for any group of humans that finds a life together.

If connection is vital but insufficient, so it is with coherence. Left alone coherence can run amok, but the fact that it does so is testament to its power. Although it can encourage benevolence, it can also fan the fires of cruelty. "This is who we are," coherence tends to say, "And this is who you are not." Coherence is at work when boundaries are drawn with exclusivity in mind and amongst those who work together to draw the family circle in ever-wider arcs.

Why do we seek coherence? It is tied to the very way we perceive life. For every thought a person has, there are thousands, millions, of other thoughts that do not take root in action or a world of meaning. There are so

many things happening at any given point in time that the brain needs—and has—many filters to determine which perceptions are needed to establish the order known as coherence. Damage those filters and life suddenly becomes overwhelming. With the filters in place, buying groceries at the corner store or in a supermarket is a simple task to navigate. It is exhausting to live without coherence. In other words, we are neurologically wired to establish coherence.

AGENCY

Humans do. We go here or there, now or later, fast or slow. We do, lift, reach, touch, hold, dig, study, watch, fight, love, seek, wait, and stand. We do, and thus we live. Sometimes all we have is this doing. Sometimes doing may be enough to keep us alive until the other *Leading Causes of Life*TM rise into the space created by our doing. Doing is a kind of thinking, for it embeds and expresses choice among options. Sometimes doing is a high order of thinking. Agency is a generative force that inevitably leads to the matter of call. It gives traction to three questions: What am I to do with my life? What have I been called to do? Am I doing it?

Just as hope is different from wishful thinking, and blessing is more than a nice thing to say, so agency has the capacity to transcend mere activity. Agency is an action, but it is also a gift when aligned with purpose or call. I think of physicians who freely give of their time to see patients without worrying about how many minutes a visit lasts, or what the payment code should be. Why do so many relish the thought of lending their healing skills to the people of Haiti, or Paraguay, or Mexico, or mission stations throughout the United States? They do so to recover their call—to nourish the power of agency in their lives.

It is agency that turns abstract nouns into verbs. Agency turns connection into connect, build, reach, touch, embrace, and heal. It transforms the aura of hope into leadership fearless enough to find light at the end of discouraging labyrinths. It is agency that moves coherence into the realm of decision, which defines the boundaries of any community, project, or endeavor. It is agency that insists blessing lead to a new perception. And it is agency that harnesses the perception of call. Agency is more likely to grunt than sing, more likely to burst into sweat than into rhyme.

The name of God as given in Hebrew scripture, I AM WHAT I AM, is a verb, not a noun. It could as well be translated, I DO WHAT I DO. Indeed, it is impossible to say “God” without saying “Agency.”

The single most humane place in the entire modern health system is hospice, where, as you approach your very last days, you can reasonably expect to have all the religious professionals, scientific experts, volunteers, even the insurance companies aligned with each other around your humanity. A friend has pointed out that we shouldn’t have to die to experience that; but for the most part, we do. A good hospice nurtures the life of the family even as the loved one passes on. They generate a little space into which creeps hope.

About this point, you should begin to sense how differently life’s causes work, and the different curiosity they should evoke. If you are looking for life, don’t just look for the one cause. It is important to broaden your curiosity to include any one of them. It is rare to find one cause by itself. This makes things easier, not more complicated. If you want to see agency relevant to AIDS orphans, look for the connections found among village mothers and those they love. If you want to see connection, find the places where some sort of enduring meaning is held up and nurtured. As soon as you add the qualifier “sustained” to the search (sustained connection, sustained agency), the more likely you will find all five *Leading Causes of Life*TM working as an ensemble. That’s what thrives.

BLESSING

Of all *The Leading Causes of Life*TM, blessing is the most dependent on its companions: hope, agency, coherence, and connection. One cannot bless oneself. It just doesn’t work that way. Blessings are received from others or given to others. There are few words that become such a repeated part of a pastor’s vocabulary as “blessing.” Each Sunday at the end of worship, we sing the “Blessing Song.” At potluck suppers, we ask the blessing. Notice the verb: we “ask” the blessing. We cannot bless ourselves. We can “ask” for blessing. We can give blessing to others, and we can receive them. And because they are of life, we cannot live without them.

We cannot imagine our lives without blessing as a touchstone. But, as a *Leading Cause of Life*TM, it goes deeper than that. Blessings have an unpre-

dictable and even ferocious power to change the way we envision life and ourselves. Because we do not own them, their nature cannot be predicted. In the biblical story of Jacob, who would have imagined that it would take wrestling with an angel in the dead of the night for him to receive a blessing, and the limp that would remind him of it for the rest of his life? Who would have imagined that once given, blessings cannot be called back.

We need what we already have—a deep sense of the primal need to be a blessing to those who come behind us, and a deep sense of accountability to those who have come before. This relationship does not feel merely mechanical and function, but has some sense of mystery, of what I want to call blessing. This sense of blessed connection extends to those who are not yet here and those who are already gone. Acting with a daily sense of honor for the generations extending before and after us is far more likely to generate sustained life than a life that is collapsed totally onto its own brief years.

Where can you find blessing? Look for the other *Leading Causes of Life*TM and you'll see it. Where you see agency being expressed between generations you'll find people filled with a deep sense of being blessed and blessing that just seems like common sense to them. They'll be a bit taken aback to have themselves named as something that sounds so noble and cosmic. You'll notice how tightly linked the blossom of blessing is to the sense of connection, and how most strong systems of coherence build a web of meaning across generations with their symbols and most powerful stories. You'll notice how our desire to be agents of blessing motivates the deepest reserves of agency, far beyond those justified by rational self-interest. Isn't that what you'd expect life to do?

HOPE

Hope is the cause that shows up in every small group we've ever gathered to talk about life. It is the one with the richest library of documentation in every possible discipline. Hope is a theological lodestone attracting the most profound of every generation of every faith.

Of all the five *Leading Causes of Life*TM, only one requires an adjective if we are to discern its true meaning. That cause is hope. And the adjective is "informed." Informed hope is a leading cause of life. Wishful thinking will

not suffice. Optimism devoid of reality can bring us both to denial and despair.

But informed hope is grounded in life itself. It is not an event. It is a process. It is not afraid of discouraging facts. It knows that magical thinking is often an escape from life whereas informed hope is of life. Informed hope has a way of saying, "Yes, these untoward events have happened, and there is no way to turn back time. But you still have a life to live. Live it!"

The hope that gives us life is not wishful thinking that ignores the cancer, the extinction of entire species, or bitter cries of anger and humiliation. It is a hope with eyes wide open, perhaps even with a breaking heart that still finds a hint of a memory of what might yet be. A hint of a hope is enough to draw us together so that we can begin to notice connections that can give us life. We notice choices that lead toward life, not away from it. Those choices feel like remembering something that is there to be found.

Hope is so uniquely human, and its consequences so powerfully appreciated, that it is wise to continue the section on hope by noting that it is also the most dangerous. If untethered from the other causes, it can get any group of humans overextended in ways that more thoughtful mammals would avoid. Hope isn't always a pathway to life, especially when religious symbolism is driving the bus too fast around the curve. The well-lived life is not delusional, but the opposite. It is one informed by a hope for those things that matter the most: the ones to whom one is connected the most. It is grounded in a sense of possible choices that could bend the curve toward life, especially the life that would endure beyond one's own.

The Leading Causes of Life™ are inseparable from each other, an ensemble in the full bloom of life—especially the way it is capable of giving life across and beyond boundaries of blood, race, class, and language. The hope that emerged—and still does—was anything but private. It trusted in the life of the whole that would persist, even triumph, in other lives to follow. I share a future, if not a past, with people affected by my actions. Our hopes are entangled and even more so when we think of being in the same web of blessing for those who will come after us. What does life ask of us? What does life make possible for us? Do we also have shared agency? Could we find a shared memory of the future to live in to now? If we can, it will be one that calls us to adapt to circumstances none of our ancestors could advise us about, other than to continue hoping for those who will follow. Don't give up; don't tear the web of blessing. Hope, and then act.

The point of this book is to say that it is premature to give up on the caregiving enterprise. Hope is the only antidote relevant to fear. Thus, we better not pretend to hope. Every pretense is transparent to those trying to care for people up close where you can smell the sweat, see the tears, and measure the losses daily. Caregivers are most vulnerable because they are most exposed to the toxic foolishness of pretence.

We look for hope where it matters most. We look in the lives of those to whom we are connected. We look for it where people gather on the edge of incoherence to find meaning, song, ritual, and, yes, poetry that sprouts like the first tough buds through the snow. We look for it, and always find it, where the mothers reach out with practical tenderness to the children and talk to them of their own future. Life finds another way—it adapts as long as we are together. That’s how life works. Look around you and test your doubts against this testimony. See if it doesn’t carry you toward actions worth taking on behalf of those within range of your caring, at least for another season. That is all a human gets to hope for, as our longest lives are but a season, and some much shorter than that. All the people who have ever been have died. But life? It goes on, and it is our purpose and joy to participate in its powerful, playful generation.

LET YOUR LIFE BE ABOUT LIFE

None of knows how long we will live. *The Leading Causes of the Life™* should help you know what to do with your own life so that you live at least as long as you are physically alive. A lot of people don’t do that. They stare at death from decades away and let all their years be defined by the work of resisting its eventual grip. So it holds them long before it claims them. The point of the causes of life is exactly not longevity, at least on the personal level. The causes might or might not help you extend your life, but they should certainly help you deepen it and feel more useful to those you love.

Just because life is trying to happen, doesn’t mean you should be cavalier. It is important to follow your doctor’s advice: walk a few thousand steps every day, wash your hands, floss your teeth, eat something green, and wear a seat belt. But those things won’t make you more alive. The only way any of us does that is by allowing ourselves to be more richly connected, to seek meaning and coherence, to make the choices that lead to

life, to extend ourselves in webs of blessing, and to nurture hope in all things. In short, the only way is to allow the causes of life to weave in us at the very same time it works through us. This is the way of life.

We believe a careful examination of your own life will corroborate the presence of our five *Leading Causes of Life*[™]. It will also show how the five causes work together to tell a story of marvelous complexity. Just as blue, yellow, and red are the three primary colors from which all other colors—Alizarin crimson, burnt umber, sap green, rose madder—draw their base and their translucent power, the five *Leading Causes* work together to paint the hues and tones of your life.

To say that all five are complete unto themselves as separate units would make for a boring painting indeed. Besides, the truth is elsewhere. Hope, for example, waxes and wanes in our lives. Hope infused with the encouragement that connection provides is a powerful thing. The often-quoted verse of scripture that God does not give us more than we can handle is written not to an individual, but to a church. Or we might realize that action without connection to others can be a prescription for disaster. Connection leads to coherence, which leads to meaning. Once shared meaning is found trust becomes possible. And once trust is present in the equation the power of love begins to flow. Working together the five basic causes of life begin to reflect our very humanity.

Implications of Using *The Leading Causes of Life*[™] in Field Education

Randy A. Nelson

As a field/contextual educator based in a seminary faculty for more than thirty years, I help students identify and address their growing edges in ministry. Usually the language of growing edges has been a way to talk about areas of performance in which the student was not particularly competent or in some way deficient. The implication is that the way to achieve growth and strength is to work on weakness.

While there is value in working on areas of need, it has become much clearer to me over the years that it is important to balance such an emphasis with the permission and encouragement for student and supervisor to work on areas of strength and competence. To spend most of one's time and energy on what one is not very good at—once a certain level of adequacy has been achieved—is likely to lead to frustration, discouragement, and

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limited growth while robbing the ministry candidate of the opportunity to celebrate accomplishment and be energized by work well done.

It seems to me that this shift in emphasis is analogous, in some way, to what Gary Gunderson and Larry Pray are proposing in their book *The Leading Causes of Life*.¹ Rather than focusing on weakness (pathology) or failure (death), is it not better, more helpful, and conducive to well-being to focus on strength (life)? One of the potential implications of *The Leading Causes of Life*TM for field education is precisely the opportunity it presents to enrich and deepen the awareness of what it could mean to focus on strength.

Gunderson and Pray's work can also be helpful for field education by broadening the understanding of the goals of field education to include more than a concentration on agency or technique. Field education, if it is reduced to learning how to perform the tasks of ministry, is less than what it can and should be. Agency is important but the future church leader also needs to see what she does in the larger context of a formation process, which will include what Gunderson and Pray describe with four other leading causes of life as well: connection, coherence, blessing, and hope. As an example, a focus on connection, that is the building of relationships, is as essential to the growth that is to be accomplished through field education as it is to life. Such growth implies an awareness of what makes for good relationships, but, perhaps more importantly, having the relational skills necessary to make connections with colleagues and parishioners alike. Other examples come to mind with respect to the other leading causes of life also.

At the same time, at least two questions emerge in thinking about what Gunderson and Pray are proposing. The first has to do with whether other causes need to be identified and added to the five that they emphasize. Again, let me use an example from field education. One of my hopes for students is that they will use their contextual placements to test themselves and to explore their gifts by taking risks that have the possibility of leading to new opportunities, new learning, and new growth. But willingness to risk on the part of the student usually will not happen unless the student is assured that there is the freedom to risk. And freedom to risk depends on a supervisor for whom the willingness to risk is as important as the outcome. In such a context, a risk that does not lead to the anticipated results becomes an opportunity to start over and try again rather than a reason to forgo future risks. In other words, for risks to be taken there must al-

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ways be the possibility of forgiveness and restoration and the opportunity to begin again without prejudice or long-term negative effects if what is risked is not successful.

What I am here calling the need for forgiveness or the freedom to start over again is more than a necessary condition for risk in field education. It seems to me that forgiveness/reconciliation/restoration (or whatever one chooses to call it) is also essential in reaching the sustainable, vital, and generative life that results from the identified leading causes of life.

The other question has to do with the authors' conviction that life always moves toward complexity and away from simplicity. "If the spiral toward complex life turns back onto itself and recoils from the diversity around it, it begins to die as its energies are wasted on its fears."²

What comes to mind is the conviction attributed to the Quakers that "tis a gift to be simple." Such simplicity, as I understand it, is not based on simple-mindedness and certainly does not succumb to fears. It represents instead a kind of centeredness, even coherence if you will, that may be worth seeking and could, at least in some instances, illustrate life at its best. Such centeredness would not be an inappropriate goal for field education either, although I suspect that it is usually thought of more as integration than as centeredness or simplicity.

In the end, however, the desire to focus not on what is wrong or pathological or dealing in death but rather on the leading causes of life could inform the work of supervision and field education in helpful ways. It is a conversation that is clearly worth having.

NOTES

1. Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, *The Leading Causes of Life* (Memphis, TN: The Center of Excellence in Faith and Health, Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare, 2006). See the summary of this book elsewhere in this issue of *Reflective Practice*.

2. Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, "Leading Causes of Life," *Reflective Practice* 27 (2007): 203–217.

Gary Gunderson: *Leading Causes of Life*

Janet O. Foy

This is not the first time I have experienced Gary Gunderson as a luminary. I have a vivid memory of his appearance at the American Association for Pastoral Counselors meeting in Atlanta in 1998. He delivered an erudite treatise on “boundary people,” who nurture an awareness of being at the edges of a boundary—where things meet—not where they separate. This is, he insisted, an apt description of a pastoral counselor—on the edge between psychotherapy and spiritual mentoring. It is here, in this unique space, Gunderson asserted, where our most creative work is really done.

Now he has captured my attention, as a pastoral counselor and supervisor, once again, with his developed approach to meaningful living. In a new book, he carefully articulates a vision of health and wholeness based on five leading causes, really principles, of life: connection, coherence, agency, hope, and blessing.¹

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At the outset, Gunderson's language delights. Notice how the boundary perimeters are drawn: connection and coherence could be said to reside in the domain of psychological understanding, agency (action) is critical to the health of both psyche and spirit, and hope and blessing speak to the essence of spiritual care.

Our own guild has often struggled to identify a clear identity for pastoral counseling. We have brought before us, in our association meetings, many wise and thoughtful professionals to help us clarify that identity. As we walk away from those encounters, each of us has sought to arrive at some new integration of spirituality and psychotherapy in our daily involvement with clients or students in training.

Gunderson is bringing a breath of fresh air to this longing for identity and new energy, particularly to those of us who have labored among the 'vines' for many a year, and who might be suffering from burn out and frustration. He encourages us to pause for a time and change direction. Instead of identifying the "presenting problem" and "strategies for helping," both of which focus on pathology, we might reflect on a strategy for living, building a structure in which to save life itself, especially when life is full of hurt and desolation. I am reminded of a lecture I attended in New York City some years ago, where Christopher Bollas charged an audience of psychoanalysts to remember that they must often speak for life.

Pastoral counselors are uniquely qualified to consider these five causes: building from seeking connection, which enables coherence, opening the door to action/agency, which evokes hope, and leads one to seek and receive blessing. If we encourage the development of these resources for living, we move ourselves into a new universe of possibility, enlarging or deviating from the language of diagnosis, deficits, problems, and solutions, to a different vision of life that "fills up emptiness, weaves together broken pieces, and moves simplicity toward festival."²

The vocabulary here is couched in the framework of a therapeutic boundary leader and could put us at risk among our professional peers in the behavioral health and medical community. Consider what it would be like for us to respond to hints of hope in the narrative of therapy and supervision—better yet to reframe a reported experience to be a blessing. This might be a message writ large when used to enlighten our traditional understanding of the human dilemma.

By focusing upon the last two of Gunderson's five proposed causes of life, I do not mean to ignore the value of the first three. Fostering connection, coherence, and agency, however, seem to be the everyday stuff of our armamentarium, while fostering hope and blessing might be neglected in our thrust to be problem solvers under the pressure of brief therapy. Gunderson espouses hope and blessing to be the seminal tools for generating more life and not to be exhausted by life.

I am drawn to the idea that life being lived moves one towards complexity, away from simple cause and effect postulations. Living with hope means responding to a green light for relating, connecting, and ultimately to loving.

His idea of blessing, on the other hand, stretches me some. As the author states, I cannot bless myself. Being blessed depends on passing through that green light at the crossroad to significant relating and trusting. Blessing must come from others to me and from me to others. Therefore, I cannot be alone, for that would mean being without blessing, and in the end, without life.

The work of Gunderson permeates every aspect of mentoring and training. In the manner of parallel process, one desires to help form ministers who bring about life and hope, and survive in the activity of doing the same. I believe we are eventually psychologically and spiritually reduced by a lifetime of addressing problems and putting out fires. Forming ourselves and those that follow us in ministry to be seekers of the kind of life that creates the possibility of more life is good work, worthy of the best we have to give.

Gary Gunderson's work well informs pastoral counseling and supervision. Focusing on the five causes of life can bring us new insights so that we can position ourselves at the boundary, bringing a communion of psyche and spirit to the lived life. We may be better able to live, as he so beautifully puts it, with a "clean heart."

NOTES

1. Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, *The Leading Causes of Life* (Memphis, TN: The Center of Excellence in Faith and Health, Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare, 2006). See the summary of this book elsewhere in this issue of *Reflective Practice*.
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Comments on
The Leading Causes of Life™
from a Sikh Perspective

S.S. Sat Kartar K. Khalsa-Ramey

The authors of *The Leading Causes of Life* encourage us to embrace their five causes of life so we can “organize our thoughts and guide our actions...and create the space in which life thrives.”¹ This is a noble cause, and the authors should be applauded for their efforts to blaze a new path through the woods of confusion and unhappiness in the world. As a Sikh minister and clinical pastoral education supervisor, I agree with the authors that there may be a tendency to dwell more on death and dying than on life and living. Their “five causes of life” as a whole, however, do not speak to me from the perspective of my personal experience or religious tradition.

Sikhism emphasizes a pragmatic approach to the mystical and transcendent experience of God by its emphasis on one’s full participation

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in the world, including death and dying. This approach to daily living helps us develop our ability to experience God and apply that reality to human situations. In addition, the experience of God, walking with us throughout the day, keeps us connected to the divine in human relationships. It could, therefore, be said that how we are in relationship with God determines how we are in relationship with our community, our world, and ourselves. Now let's look at the five causes of life more closely from the Sikh perspective.

The authors assert human life is caused by our connectedness.² I believe, rather, that all connections begin with one's connection to God, from which springs all other connections. There is a common saying that goes, "we become who our friends are," which suggests that the quality of our relationships is much more important than the quantity. Sikhs emphasize the importance of being part of a larger religious community to support one another along the spiritual path. Almost all religions recognize the power of the congregation. To make a healthy human connection in this busy and complicated world requires wisdom, discernment, and often periods of solitude. Unhealthy connections are, by contrast, easy to make.

The importance of coherence cannot be overstated. The big question is "How does one find and maintain it?" My sense of meaning and perspective in the world is derived from my spiritual practice, which connects me deeply to God's presence and purpose. Sikh scriptures say that the meaning of life comes to us by walking in the will of God. In this way, our sense of coherence is stable and solid as we meet and experience the pleasant and unpleasant events of the day.

With respect to agency, it is true that "humans do." Unfortunately, humans often do bad things. What is our reason for doing? What do we expect as an outcome? What is our motivation? Who/what else is affected by our doing? These are critical questions that are often not addressed because we are so busy doing. Let us examine a few principles that Sikhs practice to help them "do" good. *Simran*, for example, relates to the mental focus and remembrance of God in one's mind throughout the day. And *seva* is the act of selfless service. This service is performed without reward or payment of any kind. It may be directed towards congregation, family, or community and it is rooted in the desire to act in harmony with the giving nature of the Creator. These practices help us act as an agent of God rather than from our

own confused ego. A common Sikh prayer states, "God is the doer of all, and all victory is His/Hers."

Hope, as the authors state, should not be based on wishful thinking. For me, hope springs from the knowledge and experience that God takes care of us through God's limitless grace and compassion. In moments of crises, we can fail ourselves and our faith. Sikhism believes that there is hope for even the worst man. If we realize our mistakes and uplift our consciousness, we can once again serve God. As for "hope" in the larger social sense, Sikhs tend to be pragmatic. We have a sacred duty to contribute to the social welfare of society (*seva*), whether or not the situation improves as a consequence. In other words, the service is offered regardless of the hope, wishful or otherwise, that success will be achieved. As the Sikh prayer states "all things come from God and all things go to God."

As a society, we are often so preoccupied focusing outside of ourselves in order to get what we want, that we fail to attend to what we need: blessings. How are we to successfully engage in these "five causes of life" or for that matter the basic tenets of the Sikh religion without blessings? As a Sikh, we recognize that if we wish to walk with God throughout our day, we must ask for God's blessings. We do this by chanting God's name throughout the day.

In conclusion, the authors have offered a recipe for living a good and meaningful life. And while the ingredients may be assembled and cooked differently than how a Sikh would prepare them, the meal may taste just as sweet.

NOTES

1. Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, *The Leading Causes of Life* (Memphis, TN: The Center of Excellence in Faith and Health, Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare, 2006). See the summary of this book elsewhere in this issue of *Reflective Practice*. Quote from: Gary Gunderson with Larry Pray, "Leading Causes of Life," *Reflective Practice* 27 (2007): 203-217.
2. Gunderson, "Leading Causes of Life," 203-217.

Vignette

The Sound of Sheer Silence

Melanie Childers

Journalists and ministers often pride themselves on finding just the right word for any occasion. But clinical pastoral education (CPE) provided one transformative encounter that rendered the journalist in me speechless and altered my understanding of ministry forever.

Having burned out quickly on my first career of denominational journalism and having been wounded by a seminary that turned its back on women in ministry and on free-thinking, I enrolled in CPE in 1995 and set my sights in a new direction. I had great hope that chaplaincy would be a place where I might bring all of who I was to my work, a place where I could be with people in the midst of their crisis and not show up the next day to ask objective, factual questions. I knew somehow that my own faith journey and my ministry were intricately woven together and that both needed freedom to grow authentically.

So I started my first unit of CPE at Baptist Hospital East in Louisville, Kentucky, determined to forge a ministry out of brokenness, but also seeking wholeness. In many ways, I got what I was looking for. Through

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supervision with Ted Hodge, weekly process notes, and all the theological reflection I could have wanted, I felt the freedom to continue my own spiritual path even as I joined patients and families on theirs.

Even so, I may have taken this freedom a little further than expected when I wrote an unorthodox verbatim and presented it to my peers. In this verbatim, I was the subject—"a 26-year-old single Caucasian female." The conversation was between me and God, except that every time it was God's turn to speak, God was silent. I poured out my questions and frustrations, each time waiting for an answer that did not come.

I knew I was taking a risk. But the greater risk for me was being disingenuous with my patients. And with myself. So I turned in the verbatim.

In the seminar the following week, my supervisor said nothing about whether I should or shouldn't have used this tactic. Instead, he chose one of my peers to read my lines in a role-play and asked me to read God's lines. Ted told me that as God, I was free to improvise if I chose not to be silent throughout the entire conversation.

And so we commenced. Jeanette read a line of mine...

Silence.

Another line.

Silence.

About halfway through the conversation, Ted stopped us and asked me what I would like to say to this young woman, and I remember replying that I was sad because there was nothing I could say that she would believe or that would make the experience any easier for her. Ted then invited other peers to assume the role of God and offer other statements. But what struck me later was my own discovery that maybe God's silence wasn't really about abandonment at all, but about solidarity. Words couldn't have healed my wounds or answered my questions. Presence is what made the difference.

Despite the fact that some of my peers prayed for my salvation after this experience, I will always be grateful for a supervisor who had the wisdom to help me find my own way through a desert of absence. Even now, eleven years later, I remind myself of this experience when the journalist in me is tempted to use too many words to try to fill up the emptiness of others' grief or provide answers to unanswerable questions.

Silent presence may be the most powerful form of solidarity.

ACPE Theory Paper

Utilizing Myth to Facilitate Growth in CPE Relationships

Nathan Goldberg

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

My name is Nathan Goldberg, and I am an Orthodox rabbi and an Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) supervisor. I am aware of the irony in that statement. That paradox has actually accompanied me throughout my history. I grew up an Orthodox Jew in Nashville, Tennessee. After high school, I was a Southerner attending seminary in Jerusalem. Upon ordination, I entered into a CPE program. In truth, I have spent my life exploring my uniqueness and commonality with my surrounding community.

I have always been fascinated with relationships—I grew up both witnessing and learning different ways to relate. I became adept at fitting in almost anywhere: be it home, synagogue, school, seminary, etc.—and I learned how to hide parts of myself. I suspected if I were to “fly my true colors” and be open about who I was, I would lose relationships. In CPE, I experienced how truth deepens relationships. I found that what I had previously saw as forbidden actually paved my path to deeper relationships with self, others, and G-d. My time as a CPE student served to underscore the value and uniqueness of my history. I began to learn that my emo-

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tions, neglected for years as I honed my intellect, were a key to my ministerial relationships. To my surprise, CPE became a place where I could don my *Kippah* proudly, while creating meaningful connection with people from across the spectrum of humanity. My “dry bones” did indeed come back to life during my initial units of residency.

I could not get enough, returning to supervisory CPE a couple of years later. If I had discovered aspects of my soul during my first round of CPE, then my supervisory educational experience commenced my soul searching in earnest. I began to see myself and my religion in a whole new light and darkness—in CPE, I found the freedom to inquire. I began to question the multitude of impacts both I and my use of Orthodoxy created. As I began learning to redefine my boundaries so they would not become barriers, I advanced through candidacy.

My supervisory training journey has not been as smooth as I anticipated. When I learned my initial set of papers did not pass, I considered exiting the program. After that, I reworked the papers in order to make them acceptable to my readers. As I labored through this process with my supervisor and peers, I began to realize that as I grew as a person, my papers naturally evolved. I was no longer trying to get away with being unique; I felt a greater confidence in my competence as a human being, rabbi, and theological educator. These papers are a result of that wilderness experience that started with my papers being judged unsatisfactory.

Indeed, I have discovered much of my own internal conversation through the reproduction of my theory papers. The process of rewriting has afforded me the opportunity to re-examine my own, and my students', self-conversations. As I became more conversant with myself and how I learned, I became a better rabbi to my students—my papers reflect this evolutionary process.

For this Orthodox boy from Nashville, becoming a supervisory candidate is coming a long way from my Tennessee and Jerusalem past. I am aware and know that my past experiences, along with my emotions, beliefs, and so forth, accompany me to this day—they are the substance of who I am as a person and a rabbi.

CPE has afforded me the opportunity to use the lessons of my own journey to facilitate my students' growth as well. Throughout my clinical pastoral education journey, I have marveled at how my self-conversations became incarnate in my relationships with patients, families, staff, peers,

and supervisors. As I became more familiar with how my own inner dialogue impacted my relationships, I realized I had the opportunity to grow. My theological position paper describes this self-conversation as the "conversation with the snake." This archetypal self-conversation takes place within every human being. This inner dialogue becomes incarnate as students develop their relationships with self, others, and G-d. As a pastoral theologian, I listen sensitively for this conversation taking place inside my students. I aim to re-create students' conversations with self toward their development in ministry. I reveal and withhold my transparency, or greater self, in order to facilitate such growth. As students become more aware of their inner dialogue, they have the opportunity to redeem what they may have once considered forbidden ways of relating. As they redeem the forbidden and use it toward deeper relationships, they grow as people, students, and ministers.

My education theory paper examines this self-conversation through the medium of mythology. By mythology, I mean the lenses through which people see and interpret the world. Mythology helps humans beings confront and survive in the world. At the same time, myths express both a limited and limiting worldview. As students develop relationships with self, others, and G-d, their mythologies become apparent. I share and limit the use of my own mythology toward my students' growth. As students become more aware of their own mythology and how it helps and hinders relationships, they have the opportunity to grow as ministers. As they recognize the limits of their own mythology, they have the opportunity to demythologize. As they grow in their relationships, they entertain the possibility of re-mythologizing, or expanding their use of myth toward deeper relationship. In fact, my own theological framework can be seen as a de- and re- mythologization of the Eden story. Instead of a story of Original Sin and separation from G-d, I have reinterpreted it as a story of Original Blessing with the potential for further connection with self, others, and the Divine. To sum up, through facilitating the de- and re- mythologizing process, I can further students' growth as people, students, and ministers.

In my personality construct, I use Jung as a theoretician to illustrate this self-conversation. With every person, there is a persona, or learned social self, and a shadow, aspects of personality hidden by the persona. Additionally, there is an ongoing dialogue between the *animus*, the "masculine" side of a woman or the drive toward individuality, and the

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anima, the “feminine” side of man or the drive toward connection. The self archetype conducts all these aspects of personality. As students develop relationships with self, others, and G-d, aspects of their self become apparent. As students integrate their shadow and animus/anima into their personality, they can grow as people and ministers. As a clinical supervisor, I mediate the persona of my students so that other aspects of their personality may become apparent. They, then, have the opportunity to integrate them further. As they better utilize all aspects of their personality toward deeper relationships, they grow as people, students, and ministers.

THEOLOGY PAPER
THE CONVERSATION WITH “THE SNAKE” AS INTERNAL DIALOGUE

I grew up an Orthodox Jew in Nashville, Tennessee. At my synagogue, I was exposed to many wonderful men and women. Though they were committed Jews, they fell wonderfully short of the letter of the law. Among them was Aaron, who recited the *Kiddush*, a ritual of sanctifying the Sabbath for the congregation. He then drove home on Friday night, which amounted to “desecrating” the Sabbath. Ben routinely called his bookie in the middle of services and put the synagogue’s sardines in his coat pocket to take home with him. Yet as a congregation, we often turned to Ben to complete the *Minyan*, the required prayer quorum. Many times Ben made the difference in the synagogue’s ability to come together for prayer. My favorite congregant was Shimon, a.k.a. “The Skipper.” Shimon earned his nickname because he could not read Hebrew well. He often skipped portions of prayers while leading the congregation. The participants listened to him more intently than any of our other prayer leaders. The congregation was blessed with rabbis who lectured on the significance of the law on one hand, yet delighted in these “holy sinners” on the other. I would not realize the uniqueness of their ministry until much later in life.

After high school, I attended *Yeshiva*, a Jewish seminary, in Jerusalem. During my four years there, I met fellow students who received a much stronger Jewish education than I. However, they had little emotional connection to their Judaism. They could read, write, and think in Hebrew, but they did not have the soul of “The Skipper.” The rabbis I chose were ones who shared their growth struggles. I experienced them as profound in the

way they shared their transparency, or deeper selves, and delighted in the individuality of their students. They endeavored to build an educational relationship beyond the intellectual expertise they offered. I now realize my debt to them as well as to my rabbis in Nashville. I needed all of the people in my community to achieve my understanding of theological education. In the spirit of my rabbis, Aaron, Ben, and "The Skipper," I write this paper.

I have always been perplexed by the story of the "original sin" in the first book of Pentateuch. As I reflect on the lessons of my life, I have concluded that Adam, Eve, and the Snake have been persecuted through the traditional interpretations of the Genesis story. Like Matthew Fox, I believe the story is one of "Original Blessing."¹ In fact, I view the entire Eden Story as a metaphor for the growth potential in human beings. The conversation between the Snake and Eve can be understood as an integral dialogue that takes place within everyone—an archetypal self-conversation. By conversation with the Snake, I mean the internal dialogue within every human being that can both facilitate and impede redemption. In order to grow, people may need to partake in what seems to be "forbidden fruit," they have the opportunity to step forward to a fuller self, to struggle not to stay stunted in ritual, or try to retreat to innocence.

Though perennially maligned, the Snake induces conversations as it paves the way for "Original Blessing." Indeed, the Snake offers Eve, and through her Adam, the opportunity to become "like G-d." I realize this is familiar to some notable psychotherapists (June, Malone, and Kopp).² It is still, however, a deviation from traditional interpretation. I am particularly indebted to Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, who first exposed me to the grandeur of this story.³

Let me be straight, I hate snakes. They frighten me. I also presume my students will be frightened to acknowledge and affirm their own "conversations with the Snake." In doing so, they may invite change, and change is frightening. As a pastoral educator, my role is to facilitate. I aim to re-engage and/or create the student's conversation with self toward their growth in ministry.

The Snake is described as the most "*Arum*," subtle and clever, of all creatures. Unlike the traditional translation, I believe the concept of "transparency" better fits the overall metaphor.⁴ In the Snake's ultimate transparency, it engages Eve in dialogue. It tells Eve a nodal truth that she can become like G-d, a secret truth of her potential for fuller self of which she

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was not consciously aware. Eve and Adam partake of the fruit. They consume the fruit from “the Tree of Intimacy between Good and Evil.”⁵ I define intimacy as making genuine contact and connection with self and others. As Adam and Eve come to grips with their own transience, their fuller selves, they experience the predicament of good and evil within themselves.⁶ The reaction to their own *Arum*-ness (transience/fuller selves), therefore, is not one of the being horrified at this physical nakedness but one of shame of their shadow side, the part of themselves that became apparent from partaking of The Tree of Intimacy. As a result, they attempt to hide from G-d.

I believe their sin was not in eating the fruit, but in the subsequent hiding. Ultimately, the human task in this world is to embrace our own transience, the parts of ourselves that are “good and evil” in relationship—with self, others, and the Divine. I was a conservative rabbinic student who was reluctant to have an Orthodox rabbi as his supervisor. As I was transparent about my struggles with Orthodoxy with him, he became more open about his own wrestling with his faith.

One aspect of creation that G-d labels as “not Good” is [hu]man “alone”-ness. As an antidote to this loneliness, G-d creates for Adam an *Ezer Knegdo*, literally a “helpmate against” him.⁷ Communal human redemption requires both the “helpmate” and the “against” aspects of relationship to be fulfilled. This is the supervisory task: to facilitate conversation with the Snake through a “helpmate against” relationship. At times, this relationship manifests itself in companionship as *Ezer* (helpmate) and at others in confrontation as *Knegdo* (against). K was a Roman Catholic seminarian whose learning goal was to be less “clerical.” I affirmed his desire to connect with others around him (what he meant by being less clerical). At the same time, I pointed out many instances where he struck me as clerical. In affirming his desire for connection, I was an *Ezer* (helpmate); in confronting him with his “clericalism,” I was *Knegdo* (against him) in the sense that I focused on an aspect of K he did not like to see.

At the end of the Eden story, G-d mutates the Snake from a walking, talking creature to a slithering mute. Post-Eden, it is a snake in the grass. Through CPE, I have discovered aspects of my hidden dialogue. Similarly, I presume that a self-conversation is taking place in my students. Like a snake in the grass, it remains hidden from their consciousness. As a pastoral educator, I must re-engage that self-conversation toward my students’ pastoral growth.

In their desire to hide from themselves and each other, Adam and Eve don fig leaves. The fig leaves they choose just serve to hide their nakedness (read: “transparence”), and thus can only maintain the shame/hiding dynamic. A fig leaf can only serve as a cover-up. However, prior to their expulsion from Eden, G-d gives Adam and Eve the gift of clothing. This has a dual purpose. First, the clothes protect Adam and Eve from having their transparence exposed continuously. Second, the clothes serve as a tool to begin relating. By facilitating relationship, the clothes offer Adam and Eve the opportunity for growth. Without clothes, the potential for relationship would most often be short-circuited: transparence would overpower before the relationship could facilitate growth. In CPE, this redemption is witnessed by the ability to mediate between hidden-ness (with clothing) and vulnerability (without), and be agents of our own transparence. J proudly spoke of his Sunday morning radio program and alluded to the power it gave him. Later I found out the program was not his at all. The pastor at the station allowed him to preach every so often. J had clothed himself in the fig leaf of the broadcast in order to impress others.

Use of Self and Students.

My supervisors, peers, and my clinical experiences have helped me become more conversant with my Snake throughout my CPE journey. I entered the process with the fig leaf of a “nice Jewish boy.” Indeed, I used this to my advantage. People liked me and took care of me. I was limited, however, in my capacity for intimacy. As I grew in the process, I realized aspects of myself that I once judged unkosher (emotions, prejudices, personal history) could be vehicles to more intimate relationships. Even now, I see part of my life’s journey will entail balancing the letter and spirit of the law within myself. As I reclaim and become a consumer of those “unkosher” parts of my self, I grow as a person and minister. I yearn to guide others on that journey.

CPE students present themselves with different sets of fig leaves: their religion, ordination, calling, interpersonal skills, looks, sense of humor, gender, sexuality, and so forth. Beneath these pseudo-clothes, the conversation with the Snake is alive and well. Within my students, this conversation follows a pattern similar to the Genesis metaphor. They too exist in their own “Eden.” They function in a world unaware of some of their own transparence, their own fuller selves. Embracing their whole self may indeed entail eating of “forbidden fruit” in order to grow; they may have to break their

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own rules and rituals to which they have become accustomed and with which they feel safe, in other words, their "Eden."

I shudder to mention one more aspect of the exit from Eden: enhanced life is endangered through pain. For Eve, this was the pain of childbirth. For Adam, it was the pain of living by the "sweat of his brow." Thus, whether it is in the creation or the sustaining of life, pain is engendered. In my own CPE experience, I too have found that pain is often a stimulus for growth. I do not like this fact, but I cannot escape it. My students' growth will also most likely be accompanied by or associated with some pain. Thus, here too, my students' growth parallels the Eden story.

Conversation with the Snake in Process.

V illustrates growth through the re-engendering of her conversation with the Snake. V was a Methodist, middle-aged woman who finished her master of divinity while taking an extended unit of CPE. Historically, she had so angered a congregation that she was released from her pastorate. She was now reporting "difficulties" in another pulpit. V was an "active" group member. She spoke with a heavy Southern accent and triggered her peers' firing pins with her sweeping conclusions and swaggering ways. V spoke in terms of "we." This she did with expressed sentiment for what she called her "feminism." She tweaked them with "we-isms" long after her peers earnestly asked for more telling meaning behind her statements, especially pertaining to herself. V was reluctant to show anything but her fig leaf. Well into the unit, at her appointed time to present a verbatim, V reported to the group that she had not prepared one. As is customary, I had cited her upcoming obligation in the prior session. V pled confusion regarding my instructions and repeated some of my words. Gut-level, I felt livid. This was a function of her manifest shift of responsibility, slippery defense, and seeming disregard for "convention." V sparked my conversation with the Snake. This was my first group, and she foiled my work as a program manager, which violated my sense of control. She broke my rules!

As a Knegdo (the against aspect of relationship), I confronted her about her defiance. However, instead of following through and continuing to argue the letter of the law, as was my instinct, I conceded that what I said may not have been communicated clearly. Thus, I also played the Ezer (affirming as helpmate) part as well.

V was visibly stunned. She was caught in the paradox of "getting caught" and supervisory grace at the same time. She remained silent for a

moment. Then she remarked, "That this is the first time a supervisor has ever admitted to me he was wrong." Later that day in interpersonal relations seminar, V removed her fig leaf and divulged more of her hidden story. She described herself as the caretaker in her family of an alcoholic father. It was her role to make sure the house ran "correctly," because her mother was plagued with psychiatric problems. V was a hurried child. She shopped, cleaned, and covered her daddy with a blanket after he passed out. Prodded by the group, V ventured recollections of her recent ministry past. She illustrated with accounts of "burning myself out" trying to be all things to all people in her congregation.

I was a novice supervisor in training, relying upon a fig leaf of one in control. As I became conversant with the fact that my pseudo-clothing mirrored the emperor's, I was able to relate with V. V wore pseudo-clothing ascribed as "feminist" and "minister." She could not, however, be transparent about her deep story in group. She opted to narrate in generalities about the ways she learned "women" felt, not her feelings as a woman. After my "admission of culpability," V was more able and willing to examine her conversation with the Snake. She had been through enough pain with her past dynamic and was willing to try a new one. She felt a tinge of freedom and instinct to risk the other side of being "everything to everybody." V and I were able to participate in our own creation, to grow more into our fuller selves. We each became more conversant with our Snakes that day.

The externalization of the conversation with the Snake usually does not happen coincidentally between student and supervisor. Generally speaking, a supervisor cannot take a student anywhere the student does not already know how to go. Supervisors must become as familiar as possible with their own conversations with the Snake in order to facilitate their students' conversations. Whether it is Eve, Adam, or V, the conversation with the Snake is continuous and ongoing. Hence, the potential for furthering creation (growth) is always there. In fact, human nature shapes our experience in order to offer opportunities for growth. Eve inevitably encountered the Snake—if not that fateful day, then another, and if not with the Snake, then with some other aspect of creation. The human need for growth compels repetition of opportunities for this conversation. For V, her own internal conversation required reaching a point of "incompetence" for her to be able to observe and break the self-defeating cycle of burnout. Had she completed her verbatim that day, the same conversation would have presented in another case. Looking back, I can

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say V offered many opportunities for the redemption of her dynamic. Her case is not unique. V was mirroring what I understand to be a fundamental tension of the human dilemma: we continuously seek opportunities to grow; while at the same time, we resist change. We often end up both creating occasions for growth and fleeing from them simultaneously.

Redemption and the Relationship of Good and Evil.

"It is not good," the Bible tells us, for humans to be alone."⁸ Human redemption comes through relationship: if people are left isolated, change may not occur. In relationship, supervisors exhibit their craftsmanship in creative confrontation and support with students. Life provides opportunities for growth because it is part of human nature to try to externalize the conversation with the Snake in order to mature. At the same time, it is also part of human nature to resist growth, as witnessed in Eve's and Adam's hiding. Growth occurs through constructively re-engendering the conversation with the Snake with the framework of human relationship and embracing fuller self.

It is no coincidence that the main characters in Eden are male and female. While they do not necessarily point to a "plumbing" difference in human character, reality often mirrors the difference in personalities. Adam, conceived in isolation, achieves redemption in relationship. By hiding from G-d and blaming Eve, he denies himself relationship. In that denial of relationship, he sins. Eve, created in community, achieves redemption when she allows her voice to be heard in relationship. Her sin comes when she initially prohibits herself from touching the tree. Her inability to do anything but blame the Snake when G-d comes calling is a symptom of the fact that she cannot trust herself to have her voice heard in relationship. Remember, the conversation with the Snake is an internal dialogue—as Eve blames the Snake, she really blames herself. In convicting herself, Eve sins in the fact she cannot bring herself to relationship. Similar to Daphne Hampson's formation, Eve stifles her own voice from being heard and, therefore, sins.⁹

Ultimately, these sins—turning away from relationship and/or losing self—are the core of evil. Evil develops as human beings either assert their own identities over others at the expense of relationship (the sin of Adam) or refuse to allow their voices to be heard at the expense of self (the sin of Eve)—evil prospers as both sins coincide. There is, however, a complementary relationship between sin and redemption. "Even the perfectly righteous cannot stand in the place of a repentant sinner." The *Talmud*

makes this bold statement about the power of *T'shuva*, returning/repentance. While the main return is seen as returning to G-d, there is also implicitly a return to a more whole self, as humans are created in the image of G-d. The reason people who repent are on a higher level than the naturally righteous is they have been able to incorporate the evil (shadow) parts of themselves into their divine relationship. Thus, they have accomplished what the perfectly righteous cannot: they have participated in the redemption of evil. I aim to facilitate this evolution in my students. What they interpret as "sinful" in their shadow side has latent potential for holiness. As V became able to embrace her own "weakness," she achieved deeper relationships within her peer group, and, in the end, she sanctified a trait she originally judged to be "evil."

As I look back upon my past, I can see more clearly how my rabbis and supervisors have helped me re-engage by conversation with the Snake. As a youngster, I saw my rabbis genuinely embrace the holy sinners of my synagogue. Through CPE, I have learned how the "sinful" side of my history can inform and enhance my ministry, and I have therefore come to embrace that side of my self as well. My goal as supervisor is to facilitate students to learn, love, and live who they are and become better pastors through the process.

As Rabbi Zusya lay on his deathbed, his students asked him why he was shedding tears. He replied, "In the coming world, they will not ask me why I was neither Abraham nor Moses. They will ask me, 'why were you not Zusya? Why did you not become what only you could become?'"¹⁰ I shall now begin to prepare my students to answer that question for themselves.

EDUCATION PAPER DEFINITION AND USE OF MYTH

As a Jewish professional wrestler, Bill Goldberg is a mythological hero of mine. As a big strong hulk who throws his enemies around like rag dolls, he broke the stereotype of my Jewish mythology. Even as he lost his title belt to an opponent who hit him in the back of the head with a chair, my mythology was hard at work. I thought, "you see, a Jew succeeds and gets unfairly attacked from behind." I had fallen into my "corporate victim" mode. Upon further reflection, I realized that it was my limited mythology speaking. I did

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not immediately associate Bill's fall with the archetypal mythology of professional wrestling, where all great heroes lose their titles unfairly.

The Hasidic saying, "G-d loves stories, that is why people were created," captures a unique aspect of humanity. We use stories, or in my theory, myths, to create and sustain meaning in our lives. Human beings are creatures of myths. These myths, whether fictional or nonfictional, enable individuals to confront and relate to the world around them. Buber maintains that by mythologizing, we do not bring "the stars down to earth...myths are not an affair of yonder and of old, but a function of today and of all times... This is an eternal function of the soul: the insertion of what is experienced...into the magic of existence."¹¹ By mythologizing, we enhance and focus our relationship with others. Bruner adds that myths also serve a both a "filter for experience" and a lens through which human beings can come to grips with and function in the world.¹² The world is too large and overwhelming for humans to cooperate without myths. Nonetheless, as we use our myths to navigate, we limit our own perspectives and may indeed be "missing the mark" and neglecting a potentially vital part of our relationship with self, others, and G-d.

Gestalt theory uses a similar approach when educating students. As students confront new inter- and intrapersonal experiences, they interpret and assimilate them through a variety of historical, spiritual, experiential, and intellectual lenses. I refer to the human use of these lenses as mythology. Fritz Perls maintains, "humans operate not through will but through preference."¹³ In other words, people choose their mythologies to help them interpret and respond to the world. There is a deep human need to expand our use of mythology. At the same time, in the finiteness from which we confront the *mysterium tremendum* around us, we yearn for the perceived safety and security of our limited and limiting mythology. As human beings, we continually wrestle with conflicting desires—to maintain the comfort of our old mythology, to strive to perceive and push the limits of our mythology, and to grow into a new mythology. As an educator, my goal is to equip CPE students to live in this ambivalence as they discover the meaning of their personal mythology.

CPE students enter training carrying along their own mythology evolving from them their gender, sexuality, personality, pigmentation, and socio-economic status, and so forth. Within their communal mythologies, they carry their religion and denomination, their role in the family, their

education, their personal history, and more. They enter into a CPE program with its own mythologies. They enter into relationships with supervisors, peers, and staff. They enter into pastoral relationships with patients and families, all with their own unique mythologies. As students experience and examine the impact of their own mythology, they have an opportunity to grow. In Dewey's words, they begin to realize that "to learn from experience is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do...and what we enjoy or suffer...in consequence."¹⁴

I have experienced the strengths and limitations of my own mythology in my own CPE journey. I entered CPE with my own myths that allowed me to interpret and function in the world. As I ran up against the limitations of my own mythology, my supervisors and peers helped me to de-mythologize my old truths and re-mythologize into a broader understanding that facilitated more profound relationships with self, others, and G-d. De-mythologizing means experiencing and recognizing the limits of my own usage of mythology in relationships. Re-mythologizing refers to embracing a deeper holistic understanding through which I can relate more fully. Re-mythologizing does not necessarily entail a conversion to an outside myth. It may mean reincorporating a dormant but pre-existing myth. For example, as I entered CPE, I was a zealot for the rabbinic statement, "all who get angry are idolaters." As my supervisors and peers re-introduced me to the sections of anger in the Hebrew Bible and especially the Psalms, I was able to re-frame my relationship with anger and grow towards fuller relationships with self, others, and G-d. In my theological framework, de-mythologizing means recognizing that the fig leaf is a mere cover-up. Re-mythologizing is putting on (or removing) clothes in order to relate more fully with self, others, and G-d.

As a pastoral educator, one of my tasks is to continually evaluate my own myths. I frequently ask myself the question, "How are my myths helping or hindering my relationship with my student(s)?" As I feel my relationship deepening and witness a concomitant growth in the student's relationship with me, her peers, patients, and staff, I affirm the educational use of my mythology. If I sense a "stuck-ness" in the above categories, I choose another set of myths in order to relate more fully with my student. As Buber states, "education is selection."¹⁵ CPE students negotiate a myriad of relationships in their ministry. As they can learn to select myths that facilitate deeper relationships, they have the opportunity to grow educationally. Within supervision, I assist my students to identify, select, and relate within

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their own mythological framework. To accomplish this, I model my own myths and reveal them according to my students' needs within the supervisor-student relationship.

Relationship Development and Myth.

Yalom has been particularly helpful to me as I relate to groups. He correctly points out that the group can serve as a microcosm of the universal. Martin Luther King captured this idea with his statement, "We may be from different ships but we are all on the same boat." The CPE group provides a boat for communal exploration into relationships. As the members of the group learn to relate with each other from their own mythologies, they can improve their pastoral functioning outside the group. I find Yalom's labeling and deconstruction helpful, but I am also aware of how he has mythologized over time. His literary journey covered the concreteness of his group mythology, to his celebration of relationship in his existential mythology, to the myth weaving of his novels. The evolution of his mythology reminds me of the tension between science and art in my own supervision. On the one hand, his scientific mythology helps me navigate within the complexity of the group. On the other hand, I realize I must also relate to my students out of my own mythology in a way that connects to theirs. Otherwise more authentic relationships may not develop. This tension also plays in my curriculum design. I intentionally incorporate didactics on basic pastoral skills within each unit. However, I am also aware that these skills (science) are a conduit for the deeper relationship (art) my students wish to cultivate.

Because my own mythology is inherently limited, I cannot use it as the sole arbiter in evaluating students. No matter how confident I may become in my own mythology, I will never be able to navigate the complex web of relationships without help. For this, the group is invaluable. How do the student's peers assess and relate to the student and to his chosen mythologies? What the feedback does the student receive from staff and patients? How do students evaluate themselves and each other, based on the perspective of their own mythologies? Finally, how can I, as the supervisor, relate to all this as part of my mythology and then constructively evaluate and relate to the student? In Parker Palmer's words, "Reality is a web of communal relationships, and we can know reality only by being a community with it."¹⁶

The student group also plays the equalizer role throughout the learning process. As I commence the unit with my students, I am sensitive to my impact as a male Orthodox rabbi.

Although I consider myself open-minded and liberal, the majority of my diverse students seem (hyper-) sensitive to my presence: some view me as the ultimate religious scholar; others wish to atone for historic anti-Semitism; a few have even wished to convert me. Although I have felt patronized by this gesture in the past, my own CPE experience has taught me to become more than a novelty. Instead, I use this opportunity for a deeper educational relationship. As students gain confidence and find their voices together in group, I empower them to feel more comfortable to confront me as an individual. The development of student group and individual relationships thus parallels and enhances each other. I mentioned Jesus' name during a morning report prayer. K, J's peer, asked me if I was offended. I was not. As we unpacked K's question in group, other students echoed they were worried about offending me with their Christianity. As we delved further into the meaning and impact of their fears, the group felt freer to "risk" their Christianity with me in order to deepen relationship.

Whether it is the individual supervisor-student or the multi-faceted group encounter, relational development follows a pattern. The stages I am using describe a process but should not be interpreted as purely linear. I still must learn to negotiate the relationship in the moment. These stages of educational relationship serve as a map that helps me navigate both individual and group development. I have borrowed and adapted Yalom's group development and Perls' stages of contact.¹⁷

Stages of Relationship Development.

Collusion/collaboration is the first stage of relationship development. As a rabbinic supervisor, I have at my disposal a partial vision and interpretation of students' mythologies before the unit begins. Through word of mouth and orientation, the students will have an idea of the interpersonal and intrapersonal exploration that will occur in their training. They will enter the unit both wanting to expand their mythologies and at the same time wanting to maintain the safety of their limited mythologies. In short, they want to learn and to resist learning at the same time. As an educational supervisor, I engage this ambivalence at the beginning of the relationship with students.

Clinically, I may very well have an idea of the student's educational needs; however, learning cannot take place until the supervisor and student

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meet. Gestalt theory terms this meeting “contact,” which is the “lifeblood of growth.”¹⁸ I design the application and orientation process in order to facilitate this meeting. By meeting, I do not just mean two people talking in an office during the individual supervisory hour (ISH). Meeting occurs as the supervisor and student begin to authentically relate out of their own mythologies. I use my pastoral and prophetic authority in revealing and restricting my own mythologies in order to facilitate authentic relationships in the group, supervision, and ministry. If I were to blurt out my knowledge and interpretation immediately, students might be overwhelmed and not learn. If I remain stingy with my mythology, the student will be deprived of the opportunity to learn. This parallels the use of transparency in my theology.

Within the rubric of a budding relationship, I must gain the trust of the student. As Knowles succinctly stated, “teaching is a matter of cooperation.”¹⁹ I maintained, “I was only able to get over my own defensiveness when I realized my supervisor genuinely cared for me and wanted me to grow in ministry.” After she came to this realization, she felt much less defensive and was able to participate more fully. From my perspective, she did not actually “get over” her own defensiveness; that was her mythology speaking. Nonetheless, her words provide a benchmark in my mythology of supervision. As the supervisor gains the trust of the student, the relationship can grow and reach greater depth. Students will feel free to share some of their perceptions more openly. Thus, the relationship evolves from collusion to collaboration.

Collision/confrontation is the second stage of relationship development. People relating in diversity will inevitably be acting out of different mythologies. As the individual and group relationships mature, the learning process may cause conflict between its members. When there is a dissonance between mythologies, conflict may ensue. This conflict can stimulate students to examine the limits of their own mythologies. When the stimulus is external, I refer to it as a “collision.” Complaints from staff, poor work performance, or insensitivity during a verbatim session can all precipitate collision. The common denominator is the strong resistance of the student to change. As a CPE supervisor, at times like these, I aim to see my own “insight [mythology] wholeheartedly, [I] must not blunt the piercing aspect of [my] knowledge, but...must at the same time have in readiness the healing ointment for the heart pierced by it.”²⁰ It is here I see the art and science of supervision intersect: to be able to collide with and confront the

student authentically while at the same time anticipating the healing that can occur in relationship.

As students collide over their learning issues, they have the opportunity to de-mythologize aspects of life that once were sacrosanct and unchangeable. I facilitate my students to confront the other honestly, so that they can re-mythologize and grow into ministers with a greater potential for pastoral relationships. While the process of re- and de-mythologizing may sound smooth and efficient—make no mistake—it is a lifetime journey. Not only that, but it often is a painful process. As a pastoral educator, I realize that, when students entertain the possibility of changing mythologies, they are in the process of transforming themselves and that personal change comes at a price.

D was a beginning student who showed much promise within the program. He celebrated learning that he no longer had to “fix” his patients. One day, he presented a verbatim in which he was visiting an older woman whose son was in the room. As he tried to converse with the woman about her fears, the son interrupted with words of hope. D felt like he wanted to throw the son out of the room. Yet when D continued to describe his conversation with the woman, the group noticed he took on the same tone as the son. D had focused on the son as a barrier to his relationship with the patient as he began his verbatim. Her saw only two possibilities in his visit: either throw the son out of the room and offend him, or else have a diluted conversation with the patient as the son remained. In the middle of case consultation, I “collided” with D, saying he was a lot like the son. D was startled by my supervisory strategy. Upon reflection, he realized that his response to the patient indeed mirrored the son’s. D was initially horrified at the revelation that he was a fixer like the son. As the group explored his old mythology (his judgmentalism over being a fixer), they helped D de- and re- mythologize: Jesus was a “fixer” at times as well. D was then able to comprehend there were other possibilities besides throwing the son out of the room or having a diluted conversation. As his teacher, I could have settled for skill building and told him the other possibilities. By participating in the collision and confrontation with D, the group helped D discover other possibilities. Indeed, as D re-mythologized, the other possibilities came to him more naturally.

As a clinical pastoral educator, I facilitate students’ de- and re-mythologizing and growth as pastors. D’s process illustrates an instance of de-mythologizing and re-mythologizing that occurred simultaneously. Conventionally, growth occurs over an extended period of time. In fact, the process of

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re-mythologizing is more “journey than destination.”²¹ As a pastoral teacher, I continue to apply my own mythology and further conflict, while at the same time respecting the student’s need for room to grow. This is another aspect of the science and art of supervision: knowing when to collide and when to apply the healing balm. I also believe it is important to note that re-mythologizing does not necessarily mean embracing a new mythology. D re-mythologized by growing into preexisting mythology when he asserted, “Jesus was a fixer at times as well.” In that way, re-mythologizing parallels the embracing of the “sinful” side of self I mentioned in my theology paper. D had demonized the fixer aspect of his self. By affirming that side of himself, he was able to re-mythologize and discover new avenues of ministry.

Climax/commencement is often the last stage of group process and relationship development. Commonly, I do not advocate raising educational issues at the time of closure and termination. However, learning still occurs at the end of a unit as the group is about to terminate. Climax/commencement may occur in and around every collision/confrontation, as supervisor and student review what has been learned and what other learning opportunities may be on the horizon. As one of my rabbis from seminary stated, “Ordination is not about accumulated knowledge; it is a license to learn. The sum total of what you have been taught here is just to get you to ask the right questions.”²² In other words, the climax/commencement stage is a time to affirm growth and refocus toward continuing the de- and re-mythologizing experience. During the unit, I try to set the stage with an eye on the next opportunity, be it on the floors, in group, or in individual supervision. As the unit ends, the students have the opportunity to incorporate this experience of learning into a lifelong learning journey.

S was an African American Baptist woman whose ministry purpose was to “evangelize.” She garnered much of her ministerial identity from her pastor husband and experienced great anxiety when she did not take her Bible with her into patient rooms. In my initial contact with her, I sensed she was “out to convert” me. This feeling emanated from my own mythological history. During her first unit, while being supervised by a colleague, I discovered she took a keen interest in the comments I made about teaching my children to pray. After that, I intentionally related similar “common ground” stories within earshot of S as way to challenge her myths about me. I claimed and planned to supervise S as my student for the next unit. Our first ISH was tense. She asked why I was her supervisor. I told her I chose her because I

though I could teach her and she could teach me. She relaxed and agreed. As the unit progressed, both supervisors and patients experienced S as “controlling and evangelical.” These critiques slid off S like water off a duck’s back, but when S received the same critique from one of her peers, she took it seriously. In supervision, we began to retrace the previous critiques. S and this peer collided and conflicted in group. Both grew out of the experience. As she reflected on the unit during final evaluations, she stated she thought of quitting when she initially learned that I was her supervisor. She decided to stay when I told her she could be a teacher to me. As S and I began our educational relationship, I related to her out of my limited mythology. In my counter-transference, she was one of those church ladies who tried to convert me as a Jewish child. I initially colluded with her in telling stories that showed that we had shared interests. As I re-mythologized and realized S could be my teacher, we were able to start a learning collaboration. Collisions occurred often during the unit; however, S took notice as her peer confronted her in group. At that point, she sustained conflict toward her growth. At the end of the unit, she retraced her learning journey (climax) and commenced to focus on her future learning.

The harbinger of growth in all of the above students was their ability to live and affirm the limits of their own understanding and re-mythologize as they discovered new ways of relating to the other and themselves. In my own rabbinic theology, as they de- and re-mythologized, they became more aware of their internal conversation with self and thus re-engendered their conversation with the Snake. As they embraced new mythologies, they redeemed what were once “forbidden” ways of relating. This was one of the gifts of my CPE journey. I hope to pass this onto my students as they begin again to experience their own and other’s mythologies and strive to expand their own mythologies. Thus, I hope to play a role in the process of myth making and the re-mythologizing of the students I supervise.

PERSONALITY PAPER
PERSONHOOD AND THE JUNGIAN JOURNEY

The doors locked behind me as I first entered the psychiatric unit. I was pretty cocky. After all, I had full understanding, or so I thought, of my patients’ diagnoses and medications. Ministering here should have been a

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piece of cake. As time progressed, I became more aware of how I feared the unit. I was just beginning to understand/become aware/integrate that my patients were a lot like me—but not entirely so. I wondered how I could offer healing to others if I was an “undiscovered crazy” myself.

As I look back and reflect, these events helped define my introduction to what I now understand as existential psychology. I found that the experience of a concept, “it is the relationship that heals,” had potential to be liberating for me and for those I served.²³ I found a common bond with my patients in their struggles with death, isolation, and search for meaning. I found that relating with them in and around our “craziness,”—mine and theirs, connected yet separate—created an environment where healing could occur.

I believe the same dynamic is operating in my supervisory relationship with students. When I started supervising students, I hypothesized that the experience of relationship that I valued and sought needed a more concrete and theoretical base in which CPE supervision could occur. While existential theory offered me the freedom to be creative in relationship, I sought a more developed theory to help navigate the longer, deeper educational relationships I hoped to experience with students.

I found that Carl Jung offered a theoretical perspective that both appealed to and challenged me. I was attracted to his theory by the way he utilized it to change his behavior. For example, he changed the way he chose to “meet” his patients, abandoning “the couch” and confronting his patients (and vice versa) face to face. For me, Jung’s behavior helped to re-mythologize psychotherapy. Later, Irving Yalom could write, “it is the relationship that heals.” Jung offers more. I agree with Jung that human beings are creatures of opposites, “full of the strangest contradictions.”²⁴ I believe that students in CPE bring their contradictions to their educational process, just as I bring mine as well. Patients and staff offer theirs too, forming an environment that is rich with potential to learn and grow. In CPE these potentials are sharply focused in the area of pastoral identity and ministry formation.

I believe that all people struggle with inner contradictions. These contradictions invite creativity, risk, opportunity, craziness, and potential for pastoral growth and development. For my students and me, these dynamics help us survive. Jimmy Buffet’s words ring true, “if we weren’t crazy we’d all go insane.”

I am a curious person by nature. From the first phone call, I sniff, look, and listen for internal contradictions that help define my students, their pas-

toral identity, and ministry formation. I believe that all persons find ways to communicate these dynamics, though they are seldom direct and conscious. I assess how people sound on the phone, how they present themselves in an interview, and how their materials are presented. All these opportunities and more provide me direct experience that offers me clues to assess their acceptance, entry, orientation, and immersion in my CPE program. I also wonder what remains hidden. Theologically, I am looking for fig leaves and their impact on the conversation with the Snake. In educational terms, I am looking for their presenting mythologies and places where there are opportunities to de- and re-mythologize. In my personality framework, I assume the "acceptance of one's more comprehensive nature" will lead to continuing integration of personality that will enhance my students' learning and deepen their pastoral relationships.

Persona and Shadow.

Jung helps me to comprehend my supervisory work with students through the lenses of four archetypes. The first two of these personality perspectives relate to the persona and shadow. The CPE curriculum provides me with opportunities to experience the students' inner struggles for growth and learning. Group process, supervision, interactions with the department secretary, and so forth provide clues concerning archetypal inner contradictions within my students. T was a Caucasian Nazarene male in his mid-twenties. He spoke of growing up in Illinois as a preacher's kid (PK) in a "Leave it to Beaver" fashion. Later on in the interview, when he further revealed that he had seen the Disney movie "Monsters Inc.," I asked him which character he liked most and why. The one he chose had a lot of talent, yet, the character he identified was routinely overlooked. T explained that through his eyes, the persona of the monster was so revered, others did not relate to the whole character. I steered the conversation back to his life as a PK where T revealed that, like the Disney character, he too was overlooked. T's ability to reflect in the moment disclosed a deeper capacity for self-understanding. He was able to move beyond his persona and reveal some of his own inner contradictions. As T used his favorite cartoon character like a mirror, he was able to see how he also was destined to succeed, but longed for affection as well. I decided to offer T in a slot in my group. In spite of his age and inexperience, T blossomed during the unit in the eyes of his peers, patients, and supervisors.

Students like T present me both a mask and a hidden side. Jung terms these persona—"mask" in Greek, a learned social self—and shadow—often

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considered “the dark side.” I assume students wish the world to see their personas; however, I believe they also are afraid to claim their own shadow. CPE students live in this creative tension, to maintain the comfort of their persona, to strive to perceive and push the limits of their persona, and to further integrate the shadow side of their personality. In theological terms, the persona mediates between clothes and fig leave: “the persona is a complicated system of relations between individual consciousness and society, fittingly enough a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression on others [clothes], and, on the other, to conceal the true nature of the individual [fig leave].”²⁵ The integration of persona and shadow parallels my theological evolution from fig leave to clothes. Educationally the persona presents a limited mythology. The integration of persona and shadow often requires that students de- and re-mythologize their own dynamic self-understanding.

Animus-Anima and the Self.

Two other archetypes of students’ personality express themselves in the anima-animus relationship and the self. The animus is the “eternal masculine” side of woman. The anima is the “eternal feminine” side of man.²⁶ The anima can be characterized as a drive toward connection, and the animus as the drive toward separation. Modern feminist thinkers, such as Carol Gilligan and June Singer, have broadened my perspective on this concept beyond the purely gender specific. Nonetheless, I search for the anima-animus relationship in my students.

The self, in Jung’s view, conducts all these archetypes of personality. As a CPE supervisor, I facilitate students’ learning process and the relationship of the anima/animus with the self. J simultaneously vilified “boss men,” while at the same time longed for acceptance from authority. He had the desire to be separate, yet connected, in his interaction with his peers and colleagues. He sought the approval of others, while he struggled to implement their consultation. In working with J, I chose to balance the spirit and the letter of the law. On one occasion, I held him accountable for sabotaging the consultation. At the same time, I affirmed his ministry intervention. In doing so, he was given the opportunity to intrapersonally examine his self-preference for animus. Concurrently, he recognized how his anima invited him to establish deeper peer relationships. As J integrated the interplay between his own self and anima, he grew in his personhood. When students incorporate the “undiscovered self” into their being, they are better able to

understand their inter- and intrapersonal relationships. This process allows them to improve the effectiveness of their ministry.

Theologically speaking, the integration of the above archetypes is the incarnation of the "good" and "evil" sides of self. Educationally, the process of integration is accomplished through the de- and remythologizing toward greater relationship with self, others, and G-d. This incorporation "is a dangerous task"²⁷ in human experience. As Jung stated, it means integrating what once was considered an "evil"²⁸ part of us into our personality. Resistance to this will naturally be strong. I presume my students will fight against their own perceived evil and therefore resist change. Often the way to accomplish this integration task will be for the student to have a "vocation, an irrational factor that fatefully forces [wo]man to emancipate [her] himself from the herd and its trodden paths."²⁹ One way to integrate one's shadow and animus/a with the self is to mediate the persona. The persona itself exists through relationship. It is a mask donned to connect with and hide from an audience. As one of the members of my student's audience, I monitor our relationship so both the persona and what it is hiding become apparent. When this happens, change is possible for the students. Jung wrote: "Nothing changes without need, human personality least of all."³⁰ Therefore, I look for patterns in the lives of my students that would benefit from fruit of integration. In searching for these places, I am aware that human beings "yield too much to the...fear... that if everyone were to appear as he[she] really is social catastrophe would ensue."³¹

Transference, Anxiety, and the Archetypes.

In mediating the persona, transference and counter-transference play a major role. In my educational theory, I discuss this process in terms of relating in and around the student's mythology. I enter into the student's mythology (transference) in order to nurture relationship with an awareness of my own perspective. Concurrently, I monitor how my own mythology (counter-transference) interacts with that of the student. My theological construct frames this as beginning to re-engender the conversation with the Snake. Like the Snake in Eden, who ascertained Eve's perception of G-d's command, I too enter into supervisory relationship aware my need to become cognizant of the student's perception of me and the educational milieu.

Existential psychology and its emphasis on anxiety inform my interpretation of Jung. As a supervisor, I monitor the anxiety of my students. By anxiety, I mean the experience of struggle between two or more forces within

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themselves. The point of anxiety may be a point of conflict between the persona and shadow of his/her anima/animus and the self, in Jungian terms. If student anxiety is too high, change is short-circuited. If the student's anxiety is too low, there may not be enough motivation to encourage the integration of the archetypes necessary for creative change. This parallels the use of transparency in my theological view. Educationally, anxiety will also impact how I reveal/restrict the revelation of my own mythology.

In my own CPE journey, I have experienced how the shadow and anima sides of my self can enhance my relationships. For example, I am timid by nature, but integration of my shadow has helped me confront people for their benefit. As an Orthodox rabbi, I have experienced the integration of my anima dimension to be liberating. I am freer to develop intimate relationships. As I have integrated aspects of my personality that I once deemed "evil," I have grown in relationship with self, others, and G-d. I long to guide others along that path.

Archetypes in Process.

G was a roly-poly Mexican American whose radiance endeared him to his community. He was liked throughout the hospital. As the unit progressed, G stated that I reminded him of his early priests who were always preaching original sin. He had worked for decades to embrace the "good side" of himself. In my review of his pastoral work, he challenged my exploration of the "darker sides" of his patient and group interactions. During one ISH, G stated he had "a confession to make." My ears perked. He apologized for being critical of me earlier in the week. I first told him that I forgave him, and he let out a sign of relief. I then asked, "Is honesty a part of your Catholicism?" He was stumped. He had been honest to me in his anger. G then related his experiences with anger in seminary. He labeled his inability to express his shadow as a growing edge for him. As the unit progressed, he became bolder in offering competent and cogent critique in group and supervisory settings.

G's persona helped him become a well-liked chaplain in the hospital; however, his resistance to integrating his shadow stunted his relationships. As I was able to enter into G's world, through his transference between myself and Catholic priests, I connected with him. When I gave him "absolution" for communicating his anger to me, his anxiety decreased to a sufficiently manageable level where his growth would not be short-circuited. As I asked G about his Catholic honesty, his anxiety increased, encouraging

growth. As the unit progressed and G became more courageous in claiming the animus side of his personality, he became better able to relate in disagreement in addition to his usual accommodational style. G also provides an example of a male who felt more comfortable with the anima/connection mode. As he was able to integrate the animus into self, he deepened his relationships and pastoral identity.

G's case illustrates another uniqueness in Jung. That is Jung's analysis of religion. According to Jung, "religion...is an instinctive attitude peculiar to [wo]man."³² Religion is a natural consequence of the human personality. Religion "teaches another authority opposed to that of the world."³³ "Creed," however, is a "social" matter. Religion lays the basis for the "freedom of the individual." Creed can be a force in the destruction of individuality in the name of holy conformity. In Jung's thought, this parallels his use of persona. Creed becomes a collective persona, whereas healthy religion takes an integrated self to accomplish. As G claimed "fidelity to the law of...[his] own being,"³⁴ he graduated from creed and found religion. He realized the creedal messages that he received growing up both helped and hindered his relationships. As he became the agent of how he used his beliefs, he grew as a person and minister.

As I facilitate my students' growth in ministry, I am mindful of the religion/creed dichotomy. As I listen to my students describing their own beliefs, I must decide whether their words are echoing from deep within their self or are just echoes of the social mores to which they have surrendered their individuality.

The depth of my relationship with students is a barometer for potential growth. As Jung wrote, the supervisor and student "must deal head on with real life in the world open to learn from it...we must wander through EXPERIENCES of PASSION...[to] reap richer stores of knowledge than textbooks a foot thick could give...we will know then how to doctor with real knowledge the human soul."³⁵ The stages of relationship in my educational theory help guide me into and through these experiences of passion. As the relationships my students have with me, their peers, and patients become more passionate, I know the potential for growth has increased.

SUMMARY

It is here my personality theory connects with my theology. The conversation with the Snake takes place on a parallel plane to Jung's dialogue with personality. The fig leaves my students present correspond to Jung's persona. They present a public shell that both attracts people to and keeps people from the core of their being. The conversation with the Snake took place with Adam and Eve, the biblical prototypes of male and female, and thus corresponds to Jung's use of animus and anima. Furthermore, in each framework the human contains both masculine and feminine characteristics, regardless of the presenting gender.

Beyond the mechanics, however, lies a similarity in the realization that change is extraordinarily difficult. My theological stance expresses this as pain. In both birth and physical sustenance, human beings must endure pain to achieve life. My personality theory expresses this as danger—the danger of integrating the “evil” side of ourselves in Jungian terms. In truth, both sides inform and complete each other: change can be both dangerous and painful. For this reason, I navigate between media of *Ezer* (helpmate), engaging the student in affirmation, and *Knegdo* (against), someone engaging the student in conflict. For me, the art of supervision lies in the proper application for the good of the student.

From an educational perspective, myths could be interpreted by Jung as a way we “fashion for ourselves a picture of the world. Never shall we put any face on the world other than our own.”³⁶ Jung also used myth to surf the tension between science and art in his approach to humanity. He states, “Myth is more individual and expresses life more precisely than does science.”³⁷ As the supervisor “holds up a reflection”³⁸ of that mythical world, students have an opportunity to de- and re-mythologize. Limited presenting myths correlate to fig leaf/clothes and persona. To de- and re-mythologize, integration of shadow and anima/animus, good and “evil” sides theologically, into self may be necessary.

Ironically, this leads me to the last link between my theology and personality theory. Theologically, human change creates the capacity for related redemption. From a personality perspective, change allows for religion to be realized. The results are counterintuitive: theology opens a door to personal relationship and personality paves the way for religion. The paradox, however, is just another part of slithering amongst the myths and

masks, for whether I speak from my theological, educational, or personality perspectives, I speak of one experience: the relationships I cultivate with students to enhance their ministry.

NOTES

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3. Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith* (New York: Aronson, 1997).
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29. *Ibid*, 12.
30. Jung, *Development of Personality*, 150.
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34. Jung, *Development of Personality*, 150.
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AAPC Theory Paper

What it Takes to Develop and Challenge Pastoral Counselors in Supervision

Patricia R. Briegs

For more than nineteen years, I have worked as a supervisor. In nursing school, I supervised the mentors for all new student nurses and for those who were on probation. After college, I worked as a school nurse and health educator and later supervised school nurses in the township. After seminary, as a pastor, I supervised lay leaders in their ministries as well as seminarians who were doing pastoral work in the local church. When I graduated from Blanton-Peale Graduate Institute as a pastoral psychotherapist, I won the teaching fellow award and took on teaching and supervising tasks in the pastoral studies and residency programs for more than eleven years. I supervised residents in in-depth individual supervision (usually one or two cases over a long period of time) and also did general supervision (overseeing four to six cases at a time.) These cases included residents working with individuals, groups, and marriage and family therapy cases. In the past three years, I have been an Adjunct Professor and

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Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry

Clinical Supervisor for the doctorate of ministry (D. Min.) program in pastoral care and counseling for the Drew University Theological School. For the past sixteen years, I have also supervised a number of clergy in local parishes who have wanted to become more skilled and effective in doing pastoral care and counseling. In all these contexts, I have regarded supervision as an honor and a God-given ministry that combines art and science.

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR SUPERVISION

My model and style of supervision are informed by a combination of object relations theory, self-psychology, and the developmental insights of Jean Piaget. I found D. W. Winnicott's idea of creating a "holding" environment, where supervisees can feel safe and can trust that they will be unconditionally accepted, respected, and cared for to be central to my style of working.¹ Within this environment, supervisees need to feel free to express their true feelings without fear of retribution or undue criticism. They need to feel secure enough to explore the world of counseling without feeling neglected or abandoned by the supervisor. The supervisor provides the empathy needed for the supervisee to explore his anxieties and vulnerabilities.²

Like a good parental object, the supervisor accepts the initial dependence of supervisees and supports them as they tentatively venture into independence, individuality, and the development of their own style of working. The supervisor does this by mirroring admiration and support to the supervisee, by focusing and limiting criticisms, by setting appropriate limits as necessary, and by being predictable in manner and tone.³ Kaslow writes:

The idea that the course of the child's identity development is related to the adult's capacity to adapt to the changing needs and abilities of his or her child is similar conceptually to the notion that the course of a trainee's professional identity development is related to the supervisor's ability to adapt to the changing needs and capacities of the supervisee.⁴

Winnicott's emphasis on being a "good enough" object/parent precludes any need for perfection. Perfection is an unattainable expectation in life. To be a supervisor who learns from her mistakes and does a good job most of the time not only provides a "good enough" way of working, but

also encourages the supervisee to do the same. This kind of environment also fosters using the opportunities to explore myriad ways of working out conflicts, differences, and mistakes with a supervisee if and when they occur. Throughout the supervisory experience, humor and Winnicott's notion of keeping things light and playful aid in the work to be done and in the developing of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee.

The self-psychology of Heinz Kohut includes an affirmation of empathy as an important part of healing that has provided me with much help in working with clients and with supervisees. His views have underscored my belief that it is in the therapeutic experience between two people that "cure" becomes possible and positive. It is also my belief that it is in the supervisory experience that a supervisee learns about herself and can claim a self-identity as a healer.⁵

Piaget was a developmental psychologist who studied how children learn. He also observed that there is an "order and sequence" by which children (people) go through various stages of developing cognitive learning. Piaget believed that people take in new information by "assimilating" it into what they already know. Then they adjust previous learning and knowledge by including the new material they have discovered. Piaget noted that a child/person could not skip over basic steps and simply jump into more advanced stages. It always required learning basic things and then building on these concepts in some appropriate order so as to succeed at the learning task.⁶

When it comes to doing supervision, Piaget's idea of order and sequence speaks to me. A supervisee needs to know certain basic concepts and principles that build on their previous knowledge and experience. If the foundation is not solid, confusion and difficulties arise. If a supervisee is expected to do advanced level work and has not accomplished beginning skills, anxiety rises, and the supervisee and her counselees suffer. I listen to a client or a supervisee's situation—what needs to be learned first, second, and so on—and instinctively know the steps that lead to the desired goal. My supervisees respond very well to this initial view of organizing a plan for their counseling work based on taking progressive steps. This is especially helpful in reducing the anxiety that often accompanies the complexities of doing counseling work.

One of my supervisees with a borderline client began to map out with me steps that would help reduce her client's impulsive behavior. At the same

time, the supervisee learned to calm herself down when the client would “bounce off the walls.” As the supervisee managed her own anxiety and began to just observe the behavior without taking it personally, she began to learn and appreciate first hand what her client acted like outside the sessions with her friends/family and at her job. My supervisee also discovered that as she remained calm and observant, her client calmed down more quickly. Then the supervisee began to help her client recognize her various behaviors when they happened and in what situations they occurred. She helped her client develop a more observing ego about herself and her behavior. Together, they developed specific alternatives that her client might use to help her when she would feel chaos and confusion. Throughout it all, the supervisee learned to consistently keep her boundaries clear and tight in sessions and learned not to get caught in her client’s globalizations. As the client slowly began to do the same in her life situations, her impulsivity improved greatly, and my supervisee felt affirmed as a therapist.

THEOLOGICAL BASIS OF SUPERVISION

The model of the Trinity captures my theology of doing supervision. The attributes of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit help me to describe my beliefs and inform the way I do supervision. God is our Creator. He is love and makes each of us unique with special gifts, talents, and interests. He creates in us the urge to reach out to others and to be part of his healing work. We help others discover the joys and challenges in working with those who are wounded in some way, who struggle for relief and wholeness, and who are precious in God’s sight. To do supervision in this context is to recognize within each person “the face of God.” This is a humbling experience. As we see the preciousness of God, we are changed. As the Duprees say in their book *The Faces of God*, we cannot be judgmental and critical and condemnatory when we see God in the people around us. When that happens, the people with whom we live and work will be more apt to see God in themselves.

The most important thing required for doing supervision is the ability to love and accept another in the fullest way possible, at the same time confronting them as needed. Creation is not a one-time event but an ongoing process. In creation, God entered the chaos and changed it into clarity. What was void and amorphous became solid ground. What began as a creative

idea became a reality. And God declared it good (Genesis 1:37). As God saw that things needed to be addressed or confronted, God did so with love and forthrightness, for which reason Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden and away from more temptation. As a supervisor, I commit to helping others to discover, define, and fulfill their God-given human potential and to declare it good. I commit to being as honest and authentic as I can be in that process as well.

Jesus is the Son of God, and he is our brother as well. He knows firsthand what it is like to be human and to wrestle with the problems of life. He redeems our mistakes, loves us in spite of them, and enables us to love others because we have experienced his love first. I see Jesus as a great model of good supervision. He took the disciples under his wing, challenging and encouraging them with compassion. He did not just tell them what to do, but asked them questions with which they could wrestle. He built on what the disciples already knew to bring them further along. He used parables like case studies. He honored their individual choices. He sent them out on their own and encouraged them to trust their own hunches as they gained experience. When they ran into difficulty, he challenged their self-doubt, confronted their lack of faith and, if needed, pushed them in the right direction. Jesus showed repeatedly that he did not fear his feelings and that he could use them appropriately. Jesus treated everyone as worthy and important and taught his disciples the ethics of respecting the dignity of all persons and the peace that comes from doing the right thing.

The Holy Spirit is the continual, ongoing presence of God that sustains everything and everyone. In the Greek, the word for the Holy Spirit is "Paraclete." Translated this means the Counselor, the Advocate, the Teacher, the Helper. Most literally, it means "the One who walks alongside of us."⁸ The Holy Spirit is what sustains God's creation and everything in it. It embodies the grace and mercy that envelops all things and works from within us to guide and give us direction. The Holy Spirit gives us those flashes of insight and wisdom and helps us to trust our hunches along the way. All who are created in the image of God are given a human spirit with distinct gifts and talents and the free will to determine how and when to use those gifts. The Holy Spirit is always at work inviting us to be in a deeper and closer relationship to God. We are called to surrender our free will to God's will and to bring our human resources as an offering for God's use in

the world. Then God waits for us to accept the invitation offered us. If and when we do, the Holy Spirit directs our journey and sustains us in it all.

The Holy Spirit reinforces our belief in ourselves and reminds us that we “have the stuff” we need to be faithful to God’s call to the work of healing. It also reminds us that perfection is not the requirement for faithfulness but rather our willingness to be vulnerable. According to the theologian Henri Nouwen, we are all “wounded healers.”⁹ It is the recognition of our own woundedness and vulnerability that inspires us to reach out to others who are suffering. Because we have been there and because we have experienced others who have been there for us, we are not afraid to listen to or get involved with the suffering in the process of healing. I see the work of the Holy Spirit as enabling supervisees (and supervisors) to look inside of themselves and to trust the Spirit within them for what they need.

My supervisory style is informed by this Trinitarian understanding of God. I believe everyone’s potential and gifts are given by God and that there is created good in us all. I believe that Jesus Christ is the clearest example we have of being human that shows me how to love and to minister to others who are vulnerable human beings and who seek to serve God. I believe that the Holy Spirit is with me in every supervisory session, guiding me, enlarging my human perspective to include divine possibilities, and is a resource to count on as circumstances arise and help is needed. For me, to be a supervisor is to be a humble participant in the ministry of God’s healing.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISION

Supervision can be defined as the oversight of the educational process in a clinical setting. There are many different paradigms and models for doing supervision. Most of these present a variety of stages in the process. Some stages are more reflective of the development of professional identity.¹⁰ Others emphasize the development of specific skills and interventions.¹¹ I also see supervision as having different stages and see supervisees progress through the various stages at their own pace. Each stage is dependent on what is learned and incorporated from the previous stage. As skills and personal growth increase and are internalized within the supervisee, reaching out for more is a natural response. Sometimes supervisees return

to an earlier stage and add to their previous learning of one stage or another from time to time.

Often supervisees work in a variety of modalities. Some work with individuals, groups, couples, and families. Some specialize in working with crisis intervention, grief counseling, divorce work, substance abuse, eating disorders, and domestic violence, to name a few. Supervisees present their work in a variety of ways as well—through live supervision, audio or visual tape, verbatims, treatment notes of sessions, case studies, role-plays, and specific discussions.

Supervisees also work in a variety of different settings and from different experiences as well. Students that I have supervised in Blanton-Peale's pastoral studies program or other clergy who work in parishes and are interested in learning more about doing counseling are usually novices in developing their skills and methods. The students who I have supervised in Drew's D.Min. program are also, for the most part, beginners who are taking courses and doing supervision with an emphasis in marital and family work. The students and graduates that I have supervised in Blanton-Peale's residency program have had more intensive training and supervision and expect to become professional therapists as their primary ministry.

PERSONAL TRAITS OF THE SUPERVISOR

Florence Kaslow, in her book *Supervision and Training: Models, Dilemmas, and Challenges*, states that the ideal supervisor:

Should be ethical, well-informed, knowledgeable in his/her theoretical orientation, clinically skilled, articulate, empathic, a good listener, gentle, confrontative, accepting, challenging, stimulating, provocative, reassuring, encouraging, possess a good sense of humor, a good sense of timing, be innovative, solid, exciting, laid back—but not all at the same time—the supervisory mode and mood should be appropriate to the trainee's stage of professional development and level of personal maturity.¹²

This quotation identifies several personality traits that I value highly as a supervisor: being direct, but gentle and tender. I respond with guidance, support, and mentoring. I also respond with directness, challenges, and my ability to "push" a supervisee as the need may arise. I can be provocative,

but I often use humor to lighten things up. Supervisees are unique persons and, as such, need to be treated in a way that appreciates and respects their uniqueness. I try to accommodate any appropriate needs supervisees have for being comfortable in the supervision relationship. For instance, one supervisee, who was unbelievably shy and anxious, would practically have a panic attack over coming to supervision. To help her begin to feel safe, I learned to be very quiet. I would wait silently for her to take the lead. If I just stayed still, she would eventually talk. But if I moved too fast, she would withdraw. Over some time, she overcame her extreme anxiety and became much more comfortable in the process. Then there was another supervisee who came to supervision with an arrogant, know-it-all manner. He frequently told me how much he knew and how he really did not need much supervision. He had a strong need to prove himself and covered his anxieties with bravado. Rather than remind him of all he still needed to learn, I spent time affirming him for where he was. I mirrored his desire to be competent and talented in his work. He, too, settled down and began to use supervision in new ways as he felt it was safe to let his real self emerge.

Strengths need to be recognized, respected, and utilized, and weaker qualities developed in order to expand a supervisee's professional repertoire.¹³ I find that helping supervisees name their own strengths and identify their own weaknesses eventually encourages them to recognize the "blind spots" that might interfere with good work. I encourage them to take these issues to their own therapist. I tend to reinforce what they do well as a beginning of establishing a good working alliance.¹⁴

I am committed to help supervisees to grow at their own pace and in their own way and to eventually develop their own abilities to self-supervise. Hopefully, they develop an observing ego that helps them to notice what they do and why they do it, and then feel empowered to make changes as necessary with confidence and maturity. The good supervisor, like the good clinician, must be in touch with his personal issues. Supervisors cannot teach what they do not own.

STRUCTURING SUPERVISION

In the beginning, it is essential that an atmosphere of safety, comfort, and openness develop that leads to a good relationship between the supervisor

and supervisee and that provides a positive forum for exploring the clinical work with clients. As there is mutually honest feedback and communication, skills are more easily learned, creativity is fostered, and problem areas are discovered. Nothing is more important at this stage than building a good alliance with the supervisee that includes respecting them at all times, recognizing their needs, concerns, and interests, and generally understanding how they view the world around them.¹⁵ If the alliance is good, there is less resistance when the supervisor confronts the supervisee on her growing edges and issues. Supervisees need to feel comfortable in celebrating their professional successes as well as in bringing their professional failures, fears, and struggles without fear of criticism or condemnation.

To cultivate a good alliance, it is essential that there be clear boundaries between the supervisor and the supervisee. A common temptation is to blur the boundary between supervision and doing therapy. I certainly believe that doing personal therapy is essential for learning to be a good therapist. As personal issues arise (and they do), I listen to the supervisee and frame their emotional experience so that I encourage the supervisee to explore this part of the issue with their own therapist. Then I concentrate on exploring how the issue impacts their professional functioning and the persons with whom they are working. For the supervisor, to disclose similar struggles in working with counselees can occasionally be useful as long as it is done briefly and the focus is redirected back to the supervisee. Any self-disclosures should "validate reality, normalize experiences with counselees, and offer alternative ways to think or act."¹⁶ It is not the job of the supervisee to take care of the needs of the supervisor.

Another boundary that also can be blurred is the one between being the supervisor and being a friend. Certainly, a supervisor should be friendly and personable, but to become friends with supervisees implies much more. It is not appropriate for a supervisor to socialize with, have lunch with, go to parties with, or generally "hang out" with supervisees. If that happens, the supervision loses its purpose and focus. It also confuses the supervisee with its mixed messages. One particular supervisee saw supervision as a special friendship in which we would get together to share all components of her life and work. It took gentle clarification of what supervision was and how it would help her professional work over a period of time before she could let go of her expectation that we would be pals in the process.

To conform to ethical guidelines and to help structure the supervisory task, a formal contract is helpful.¹⁷ This would include the specifics of time, how often supervisory meetings would occur, the context of, and the fees for supervision. It would underscore the adherence to the Code of Ethics of the American Association for Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and recent Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements. I give copies of these ethical codes to all supervisees and discuss them. I then emphasize confidentiality and respect of persons and explore with them personally how they already deal with situations from an ethical perspective. I point out that if someone is suicidal or is likely to harm others, confidentiality needs to be broken and help sought. I go over the signs and symptoms of these emergencies and discuss myriad ways to deal specifically with them. As a supervisor, I agree to be available to them if they experience an emergency situation. As a supervisee, she agrees to bring any risky behavior on any counselee's part to my attention.

I stress the importance of keeping confidential records and writing treatment plans and their getting written permission to tape their counsees. If I am taping a supervisory session, I get written permission from the supervisee. We discuss at some point the appropriate boundaries of touching, accepting of gifts, and of "making house calls." What might be acceptable in a parish context is very seldom acceptable in a professional counseling setting.

Since evaluations are frequently a part of a supervisee's requirements in their education and/or training, I discussed with the supervisee before it is sent in. I ask supervisees to assess themselves first, claim their own recognized strengths, identify their own growing edges that might still need to be worked on, and express their overall feelings about the whole evaluative process. There should be no surprises for a supervisee when reports are given to their programs. Even if a supervisee is not in a specific program, he needs feedback from time to time to assess the work, to identify his strengths and difficulties, and perhaps to redefine the supervisory contract for future direction. I usually pause with each supervisee every year to take stock, celebrate, and plan.

Beginning stage.

Beginning counselors have different needs and require a different supervisory focus than do more experienced ones. Beginners often need

more direct guidance that includes focusing on basic techniques that need to be learned.¹⁸ Ideally, supervision will begin before the supervisee meets with counselees.¹⁹ This affords time to prepare and to discuss the basic principles of counseling.

Beginners need to be taught how to formulate what they need from a supervisory session. I encourage them to choose what to present, to formulate specific questions, and to lift up the things with which they are struggling. Until the alliance between supervisor and supervisee is well established, most supervisees tend to present only what they do well or sometimes ask questions of the supervisor to avoid discussing more difficult or challenging material.²⁰ It is important to observe and develop a strategy to deal with such resistance as it occurs. Attending to building and maintaining a good alliance is a major part of every stage of supervision. With a beginning supervisee, I first teach them how to do ego supportive therapy to avoid moving into insight work too soon.²¹

The art of becoming a good listener includes hearing not only the explicit material said, but also understanding the implicit material as well. It is essential for a supervisee to differentiate between the specifics of content that a counselee talks about and the latent meaning of it all. I help the supervisee to differentiate the patterns that they hear and to follow the themes among sessions. The supervisee listens for responses from those they counsel and listens to her own emotional responses as well.²² As they develop a "third ear," they also begin to formulate good, open-ended questions.²³ As they gain experience, they learn how to balance being a clinician who uses sound principles of good counseling and being an authentic, real person.

Certain anxieties seem to crop up for supervisees in the later beginning stage. Often a supervisee will worry that they "might harm" a counselee by coming on too strong or saying the wrong thing. When the need to be perfect or to do things "right" gets recognized, addressed, and worked through, supervisees seem to settle down and learn to trust themselves more fully. As they gain confidence, they begin to let the supervisor into the real difficulties and anxieties that they experience in the work and develop curiosity and interest in learning more.

Middle stage.

As the supervisee matures, she becomes more attuned to issues of contextual sensitivity. Once again, the supervisor must model acceptance around issues

regarding gender, age, life cycle issues, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, socioeconomic stature, and religion/spirituality preferences. Context also includes awareness and respect for life situations as well. Is the counselee getting any support from their family? Do they have the economic resources to do counseling? It may not be appropriate to do long-term or uncovering counseling with one who has little or no support in the process.

It is essential that a supervisor broaden his exposure to and understanding of cultural issues, issues concerning gays and lesbians, those pertinent to different races and even subsets of these as well. In my work with supervisees in New York City, I quickly learned that, in working with black residents, it was not enough to understand specific concerns and issues for them. Some of the black students were African Americans; others were from specific tribes in Africa; and others were from a variety of diverse island cultures. All were distinctly different. Some of the Hispanic students who I worked with were from the city and others were from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and other parts of South and Central America. These also were distinctly different. There were wide and yet sometimes subtle differences between Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Korean, and other Asians. In addition, I came to appreciate the differences between Native Americans, Californians, Southerners, and New Yorkers. I believe that it is very important for me to recognize how supervisees are similar or different from me and how they are similar or different from their counselees. When differences are visible and spoken about openly, the issues that emerge are more easily identified, addressed, and worked through. New ways and skills can be discovered to use in supervision, as long as they respect the supervisee's culture and context.

I remember my very first supervisee who was a resident in psychotherapy in New York City. He was gay, developed full-blown AIDS during the time I worked with him, and died before he graduated. He taught me a lot about what it was to be gay in the 1980s, challenged my feelings of homophobia, and flushed out all my inadequacy lies in dealing with him. He was very sharp and regularly called my bluff. I learned not to pretend I knew something I did not know, and I learned from him how to admit my ignorance and allow him to teach me how to work with him in supervision. As a result, we formed a good alliance and respect for each other. I was humbled and, at the same time, began to trust my instincts and feelings to inform my work as a supervisor.

To be more effective with supervisees, a supervisor must be open to speak the “language” of the supervisee. This does not necessarily mean speaking their native tongue, though that may be helpful. Languages include understanding people who talk about their life by using Scripture or a language pertinent to a particular culture or ethnic background (street talk or a political position, for instance). I find that if I can understand their world through their “language,” then I can enter it and meet them in it. For example, I supervise a number of charismatic, conservative, and some fundamentalist Christians who quote Scripture to explain themselves and their issues. Because I am reasonably comfortable using this genre, I can quote Scripture and/or theology to challenge, affirm, or question their perspective. Because I have a medical background, I am equally comfortable in using medical jargon with the physicians and nurses. If I am unfamiliar with the “language” of a supervisee, I find that they are most willing to explain and teach me what they mean if I am willing to learn it. Then I also can reflect it back to them in ways that heighten understanding and shed light on the issues. During the middle stage, most supervisees usually move into a more collaborative stage of supervision that focuses on their use of self in their work and an increased claiming of their own personal authority.

At this point, supervisees are able to recognize and work theoretically with concepts of transference, counter-transference, and resistance, both with their counselees and in supervision.²⁴ They begin to recognize parallel processes. What happens in supervision often reflects the process of what is going on with their counselees and themselves. They begin to identify how their beliefs impact their work. They begin to become more self-aware.

Some place during this stage, the supervisory relationship usually gets challenged. If the subtleties are recognized and raised in supervisory sessions, there is usually a deepening of the supervisory relationship. If the nuances are missed, the supervisory work gets compromised. If I sense any conflict or issue arising in supervision, I discuss it openly with the supervisee. If I sense a supervisee becoming defensive, then I make sure there is an opportunity to deal with the issues raised. The supervisory alliance can be threatened if such issues are not dealt with expeditiously. If this occurs the supervision gets halted and stifled. For example, when one supervisee, after presenting a program to a large group of people in the community, seemed particularly disappointed, I asked about her feelings. She began to tell me that she was angry with me because I had not attended her pro-

gram; she had expected that I would—after all I was her supervisor. As she talked about it, she cried a lot, and eventually I pointed out that she seemed very hurt that her expectations of me had not come about. We had never discussed the possibility of my coming to her program, nor was that something I would do as her supervisor. She began to make the connection that she felt I should support her like her mother never did. She decided to explore these feelings in her own therapy. She recognized the transference, and her wishes that I would “know” that she needed me that day. It became clear to me that she did not completely understand the boundaries needed for good supervision. We reviewed this and reinforced the parameters of her contract. This break in our alliance was resolved with our discussion and our relationship greatly improved after this.

Generally, I do not discount any supervisee’s position, but I do not always agree with their position. I am not absolute in maintaining boundaries in supervision, but I need to understand what rationale or reason would warrant my deviating from these boundaries. If there were questions about this or anything else, I would not hesitate to seek consultation from another supervisor.

Advanced stage.

In this stage of supervision, I continue to encourage supervisees to believe in themselves, and I help them convert their maturing awareness into the ability to self-supervise. This is the stage where it is also possible to deal with the tougher stuff in doing counseling work, for example, dreams, and to help supervisees solidify previous learning into a cohesive style of their own. In addition, this is also the time to bridge the gap between the conceptual understanding of theory and the concrete application of it.²⁵ They begin to take charge of their own work and to trust their choices regarding the treatment of their counselees. As they grow in confidence, they become more comfortable with their own opinions in discussions with the supervisor. Supervisees eventually relate more to their counselees and become less dependent on the supervisor’s input. In this stage, supervisees also become even more aware of their particular strengths and growing edges and their preferences in theoretical styles.

Supervisees must hone the more advanced skills of timing and pacing. With experience, a supervisee hears and recognizes something in a counselee and then decides what, if anything, he will do about it. If the super-

viser points out something too prematurely, the counselee can get defensive or misinterpretation the statement. Sometimes, it is best for the supervisee to just "tuck away" the information that is heard and to raise it at a later time. There are many subtleties and nuances to learning how to trust one's instincts and hunches. When the timing is right, the supervisee can sense it. When the timing is off a little, opportunities to try again will arise. In this stage, the supervisee hopefully becomes more confident in her abilities in the subtleties of the therapeutic work.

Eventually supervision will no longer continue in the same way. Sometimes a supervisee completes their training program and moves on. Sometimes a supervisee needs to "fly on their own." It is helpful for the supervisor to model for the supervisee ways to effectively terminate their relationship. This, in turn, gives the supervisee first hand experience in terminating with their own counselees. As part of the termination process, it is important for supervisees to recognize what they have achieved. Saying goodbye is a poignant time. Celebration for the good work, which has been accomplished, is an essential component of closure. Keeping the door open for further supervisory consultation in the future, as needed and wanted, is always appropriate. To say goodbye to this unique relationship is like watching your children grow up and go away to school and out on their own. It invokes feelings of pride and loss. But it is a joy and an honor to be part of their transformation.

NOTES

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3. *Ibid.*, 39.
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13. Russell Haber, *Dimensions of Psychotherapy Supervision* (New York: Norton, 1996), 64.
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23. Robert Langs, *The Technique and Practice of Psychoanalysis*, vol. 1 (New York: Jason Aronson, 1973–1974), 393–417.
24. David A. Steere, ed., *The Supervision of Pastoral Care* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1989), 196. Martin H. Rock, *Psychodynamic Supervision: Perspectives of the Supervisor and the Supervisee* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1977), 170.
25. Steere, *Supervision of Pastoral Care*, 31. Falender and Shafranske, *Clinical Supervision*, 43.

Felicity B. Kelcourse, ed., *Human Development and Faith: Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004), 342 pp.

By its very nature, the study of human development charts an ambitious course, which yields both tremendous potential and a seemingly unavoidable liability. The potential arises from its desire to understand the biological, social, emotional, and spiritual transitions shared by all human beings who mature through the lifespan, while its liability lies in an overgeneralizing tendency that overlooks the impact of culture, gender, sexuality, and class dynamics on persons' specific developmental trajectories. Felicity Kelcourse, now an associate professor of pastoral care and director of training for pastoral psychotherapy at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, seems equally ambitious with this book. She seeks to provide an introduction to the field of human development, with particular emphasis on spirituality, while simultaneously acknowledging and avoiding the characteristic pitfalls of the discipline. It is a daring and mostly successful effort.

In her introduction, Kelcourse sets out the questions that she and her thirteen contributors hope to answer, the theoretical perspectives that will be employed for those responses, and the underlying theme of the volume. The two questions are: "First, in each phase of life, from birth to death, what are the 'good-enough' conditions of parenting, family, and community that support the growth and development of persons?" and, second, "What gives life adequate meaning as development proceeds?" (p. 1–2). The featured theories fall into three broad categories: structural-constructive psychologies (for example, Erikson, Piaget, Fowler, Kohlberg, Kegan, and Gilligan); depth psychologies (for example, Freud, Jung, Klein, Anna Freud, Kohut, and Winnicott); and family systems theories (for example, Bowen, Bowlby, Satir, and Friedman), with Erikson's epigenetic stage theory enjoying pride of place above all. The major theme, signaled by the book's title, is that "Faith [which Kelcourse defines as "our ability to trust, receive, and make meaning"] is that quality of living that makes it possible to fully live" (p. 2, 59).

Kelcourse divides the book into two parts. Part One holds four essays that contextualize development, while Part Two consists of ten essays that address the lifespan from infancy and childhood through adolescence, adulthood, late adulthood, and finally death.

In my opinion, part one is the strongest section of the book and provides the main reason why this volume would be valuable to persons engaged in

ministry supervision and formation. This section consists of a survey of psychological theories and a summary of Eriksonian theory with attention to physiological, cognitive, intrapsychic, and interpersonal changes, moral/faith development, and social location in each stage (both written by Kelcourse); an essay on human development that emphasizes relational and cultural context (written by Pamela Cooper-White); and a chapter on family contexts, with a focus on African American families (written by Edward Wimberly). Here Kelcourse gives her readers a concise, balanced, and useful introduction to the discipline, and I could easily imagine that it would be helpful to ACPE supervisors-in-training who desire to learn about personality theories in order to write their certification position papers, as well as for supervisors and mentors in clinical pastoral education, pastoral counseling, theological education, and spiritual direction who might want a “refresher course.”

Part two—which includes chapters by Roy Herndon Steinhoffsmith, Karen-Marie Yust, Terrill Gibson, Vivian Thompson, Ronald Nydam, Alice M. Graham, Bonnie Cushing and Monica McGoldrick, Russell Haden Davis, K. Brynolf Lyon, and Claude Barbre—provides a wide spectrum of theoretical perspectives, brought to bear on distinct phases of the human life cycle from birth to death. This section expands upon the issues highlighted by Kelcourse in chapter two, and thus much information from that chapter is repeated again in later chapters, which can be helpful—if a reader is selectively scanning chapters based on his interest in a particular life moment—or less so if a reader is moving linearly through the book. As is true of many (if not all) edited collections, the contributors’ writing styles are diverse, and individual readers will find some chapters more engaging and rewarding than others. Personally, I appreciated Yust’s chapter on “The Toddler and the Community” and Thompson’s chapter on “Acculturation and Latency” because they told stories of their caregiving that vividly illustrated their arguments; and my own research interests drew me toward Davis’s chapter on “The Middle Years” and Lyon’s chapter on “Faith and Development in Late Adulthood.”

Because it is an anthology of essays and also because the book’s contributors are addressing theoretical paradigms other than their own (Monica McGoldrick being the exception), the book offers its readers more breadth than depth. It cannot substitute for a reader’s experience of wrestling directly with the primary voices in the field—a fact that Kelcourse quickly admits in her introduction, while helpfully directing her audience to some texts that would enable readers to do just that. Another

limit of this volume resides in its uneven sensitivity to language that would include diverse faith perspectives, especially those of non-theistic religious traditions. Speaking of the soul and God is comfortable to me as a reader and (I suspect) to most if not all of the book's contributors. Yet, as Diana Eck would remind us, we live in "a new religious America," and I believe that the theoretical perspectives represented in this book have something valuable to say to children and adults who affiliate with historically under-represented faiths...if we can find language that meets their ears in a welcoming way.

Having offered these critiques, however, I still commend this book as an excellent resource for introducing an important discipline of psychology and attending to a vital dimension of human experience—namely, the blossoming and nurturance of faith within our lives. For those of us engaged in the supervision and formation process of spiritual caregivers, it is a worthy tool to enhance our own growth and development.

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Pamela Cooper-White, *Shared Wisdom: Use of the Self in Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 176 pp.

The subtitle gives focus and comprehension to Pamela Cooper-White's subject of shared wisdom. The author takes seriously her goal to research the significant subject of countertransference. She begins with Freud, who in 1910 introduced the subject and recognized within himself this issue and the need to overcome it in his practice. The author, however, goes beyond this beginning to thoroughly expand on the subject by doing a history of the concept and its development by other outstanding therapists and scholars. The latter include Freud (of the Hungarian Psycho-analytical Society), Paula Heimann, D. W. Winnicott, Henry Stack Sullivan, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Erich Fromm, and Kohut (who put his own emphasis on the importance of rightly understanding empathy).

The author is of the conviction that "the rise of social constructivism has perhaps had the most influence on the evolution of the concept of countertransference." It is in the previously mentioned historical setting that she believes the development of countertransference was recognized and utilized in the pastoral care and counseling tradition and also became the basis for how most pastors and pastoral counselors understand it in their practices even today.

In the following chapter, the author gives a brief history of countertransference and its impact on pastoral care and counseling. It included the influences of such persons as William James and E. Brooks Holifield, the founding of the American Foundation of Religious and Psychiatry, and the strong existential influence of Anton Boisen (who advocated "the study of living human documents rather than books"), and of Wayne Oates, and Seward Hiltner (with the latter two reasserting "the distinctiveness of pastoral perspective"). Moreover, the author touches on the influence of the "human potential movement," the work of Karl Menninger, and in the 1970s the increasing recognition of differentiating the role of clergy from that of secular counselors.

The author goes on to explain that in the 1980s, specialists in the field of counseling came to see that there existed two different real definitions of countertransference—classical and totalistic. She notes that Richard Schwartz attempted to bring the two together by lifting up for consideration the religious authority, importance of forgiveness, and the concept of the pastor

as being “more than human.” At this point, the author gives enough substance for many a dialogue and debate.

In the next chapter, the author proceeds into greater detail about how a new “relational school” of psychoanalysis began viewing the practice of counseling in a “two person”/“relational paradigm.” She explains that subjectivity was reexamined in favor of a view toward intersubjectivity, even as the relational model reconceptualizes the nature of itself.

The author then gives three case studies to illustrate the approach in using the relational school of psychoanalysis. From there she takes the relational paradigm and applies it to the pastoral care practice, again using a fourth case study to illustrate its use. She views it as a shifting paradigm that is made up of three aspects: contextualization, diversification, and balance. In conclusion, she states, “effective pastoral care includes giving close attention to one’s own thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and behaviors.”

Of interest is the sharing of the author’s own research, which was designed “to address the overall question of how pastoral counselors conceptualize and utilize the countertransference in their therapeutic work.” She recognizes that the research raised many significant questions that could be of value for therapists or supervisors to reflect on and dialogue with their peers.

The author’s conclusions for her research were as follows:

1. The need to focus again on the verbal exploration of the phenomenal subject of transference and countertransference
2. The importance of therapists considering a greater use of in-depth consultation and supervision
3. The necessity of taking the romance out of the term empathy and recouping the use of it as a diagnostic tool

In her concluding chapter, the author moves into the theological dimension—what she calls relational theology. She draws a parallel to recognize the significance of Freud’s classical view of countertransference as a base. The author also recognizes how the subject has evolved into a most complex and relational dynamic process that moves beyond the classic model of the Trinity to “embrace a model of greater complexity and multiplicity of the human mind, this will lead us not only to a more complex and nuanced appreciation for the diversity and mutability of human persons, but also, finally, to a more variegated, nonlimited, and nonlimiting *imago Dei*.” Finally, the author recommends Elizabeth Johnson’s book *She Who Is*, which

challenges one to think of the Trinity image in a broader relational living basis.

In a one-volume publication, Pamela Cooper-White has packed an enormous amount of history, research data, and personal challenge to further integrate pastoral care and counseling relationships within the context of the critical issue of transference and countertransference.

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Israel Galindo, *The Hidden Lives of Congregations: Discerning Church Dynamics*. (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2004), 230 pp.

Named one of the top ten books of 2005 by the Academy of Parish Clergy, *The Hidden Lives of Congregations* surveys much of the recent—and some not so recent—material in what might be loosely termed “congregational studies,” bringing it together between two covers. This survey quality would make the book worthwhile to those who have not been reading this literature as it has been published—ministry students, for example. However, Galindo makes his own constructive contribution to the genre by highlighting the hidden, often unconscious dynamics of congregational life revealed through these various perspectives. These dynamics, if unattended, frequently lead to or exacerbate congregational crises, stuck places, and pastorates that end abruptly and messily. When crises inevitably occur in the life of the congregation, its leaders usually attend to the symptoms they see, only to have the original problems recur, often through more than one generation. It is Christian educator and church consultant Galindo’s penchant for uncovering the hidden dynamics at work that makes this volume so useful to student and seasoned pastor alike. His thesis is that much of what troubles congregations can be alleviated by understanding the corporate nature of congregational life, and the often invisible dynamics at play within these systemic interrelationships.

Three sections move like a helix, revealing the interlocking nature of theological, spiritual, cultural, historical realities, giving a wide-angle view of the congregation so essential to appropriate and effective leadership. Early on (p. 2–3), Galindo exposes his assumptions about congregations, assumptions themselves revealing: (1) A congregation is a localized, unique, and institutionalized religious expression of Church that is subject to hidden forces that both affect and is affected by its temporal and contextual setting. From this perspective, a congregation is both a limited and self-limiting relationship organism rather than the external organization it is so often assumed to be. (2) Each congregation has a unique corporate identity that is the result of its context: its history, its locale, its size and style, and its (lay and clergy) leadership. Galindo focuses on this corporate identity rather than on the actions and intentions of individual members of the congregation. (3) Each congregation is a complex, multilayered, intergenerational, and multigenerational institutional relationship system. It is these system dynamics that, when “hidden,” cause so many congregations and their leaders to founder.

Once this perspective on congregations has been adopted, Galindo's reliance on family systems theory (Friedmann, Steinke, Richardson, Gilbert, and so forth) makes sense.

Galindo's social scientific perspective, however, is set within foundational treatment of the relationship of the congregation to Church, and the mandate, mission, and models of congregations, all understood as theological and ultimately biblical issues. Galindo readily confesses that his theological perspective will be more congenial to Protestant Christians, but it is general enough that most communities of faith can readily specify their own theological and ecclesiological perspectives without doing violence to their perspectives or to Galindo's theological foundation.

Part two gives the book its name. In introducing this section, Galindo sets out five basic systemic dynamics ("organic, relational hidden life forces") that are continually at play in any congregation—either predictably or chaotically: Systemic Anxiety, Energy, Organizing, Controlling, and Relational. This latter dynamic is so crucial that Galindo wants us to see congregations primarily as relationship systems. With this introduction in place, Galindo then devotes entire chapters to each of four more dynamics: lifespan development, size, spirituality styles, and identity. In each case, he probes below the surface to illumine how this dynamic and the five systemic dynamics interact in mutually interlocking relationships.

Part three takes up the crucial leadership functions in congregations, with emphasis on dealing with the network of hidden corporate dynamics. This section, while somewhat repetitious, does review the systemic dynamics from the point of view of leadership.

Galindo's treatment deals with the full spectrum of leadership in a congregation, from the pastor, professional staff, lay leaders of various types, to the "matriarchs and patriarchs" and other persons who, while having no official roles in the leadership structure, do indeed exercise significant leadership. The most helpful chapter in this section, chapter nine, deals with leading from the self, and how crucial such self-reflective leadership is in maintaining an identity that is separate from the congregation and in staying clear about what belongs to the leader's personality and what to the congregation's hidden dynamics. Effective congregational leaders, Galindo claims, tend to be those "who have a clear sense of their own identity, are clear about their personal values and principles, and are mature, both personally and spiritually" (p. 183).

The strength of this book is also its weakness. In covering so many angles and approaches, none are covered in great depth. Would a congregation's leadership be able to get a good overview of their congregation by working systematically through Galindo's material? His five appendices provide grids keyed to various chapters, and working through them systematically would, I believe, gain a picture of the congregation as an organic system. If the congregation or leadership were facing an entrenched issue, however, Galindo's treatment may indeed help diagnose the matter, but the leadership may very well need other consultation to gain sufficient depth with system dynamics to address the system itself rather than simply the players in it. If readers come away from *The Hidden Life of Congregations*, however, with a better sense of the congregation as a relational organism with its own system dynamics, this book will have made a significant contribution.

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Mary Rose Bumpus and Rebecca Bradburn Langer, eds., *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2005), 199 pp.

This volume, edited by Mary Rose Bumpus and Rebecca Bradburn Langer, is a welcome addition to the relatively limited literature on the supervision of spiritual directors. The book is divided into three sections.

The three essays in part one deal with the question, "What is Supervision?" These essays are helpful in exploring what is unique to supervision of spiritual directors, as opposed to, for example, supervision of therapists. While the authors take different approaches, they tend to focus on what might broadly be termed the "contemplative" aspects of supervision. What is the vocation and charism of the person receiving supervision? How might God be working in the lives of those with whom the spiritual director is meeting?

Part two is entitled "Specific Topics in Supervision" and contains four essays dealing with support of beginning directors, listening to the various dimensions of human experience (sensations, emotions, and thoughts), appropriate attention to sexuality, and avoiding ethical quagmires. If part one lays out some theoretical approaches to supervision, part two contains practical suggestions and helpful case studies. Beginning supervisors will especially find these chapters enlightening, and even experienced supervisors will find insights worth further mining. This reviewer found the essays on sexuality and on ethical quagmires particularly helpful.

Finally, the three essays in part three explore the topic of "Worldview and Supervision." The authors in this section argue that the context of supervision goes well beyond the one-to-one encounter that takes place in the supervisor's office. The essays explore issues embedded in social or institutional structures, in "co-cultures" (or what readers may more familiarly call subcultures), and in the disabled community. The first essay lays out a helpful model of discussing supervision in dimensions of human experience, which are nonthematic (diffuse and inarticulate), imagistic (affective-imaginative), and interpretive (logical, propositional).

A particularly useful appendix in the book presents a Contemplative Reflection Form, which can be adapted by other supervisors after receiving written permission. Supervisees fill out this form in prior to meeting with

their supervisor. This tool is worth considering for adaptation to other programs.

The authors in this volume are almost all associated with the diploma in spiritual direction offered by San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, California. The advantage of this is that they share a similar approach to supervision; the disadvantage is that a wider variety of voices is not heard. Also, several of the articles, in this reviewer's opinion, addressed spiritual direction almost as much as they addressed supervision. A clearer distinction of supervision from spiritual direction would be appreciated.

Overall, *Supervision of Spiritual Directors* is well done and a must-read for those involved in this ministry. Supervisors will find helpful suggestions both for the theory and the practice of supervision.

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Peter L. Steinke, *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2006), 125 pp.

Peter Steinke, who is writing for the Alban Institute, a nationally known think tank for clergy effectiveness, has written a readable, clear, and classic summary of how systems theory illuminates the dynamics of congregational life. He offers a new perspective on congregational troubles, a perspective that gives readers the “eyes to see” the familiar in a new way. It is a paradigm shift for those unfamiliar with systems thinking. This volume will rapidly become a classic in church consultation circles and among those charged with oversight responsibilities for congregations.

Steinke draws upon two metaphors: the family system and the physiological system of the human body. In both cases, he draws upon these metaphors to illuminate the concept of health and disease in a community of faith. What I liked about Steinke’s work is that he does not just write in theoretical terms, but spells out in clear, concrete, and observable terms the traits associated with health and disease. He tells it straight—about the dangers of murmuring, blaming, lying, triangulating and over reacting among congregational leaders. He talks about the essential role of anxiety in a congregation, its ill effects and how to manage it with maturity. He uses several “clinical” examples to illustrate his points. He challenges a pastor’s codependent behavior by explaining what self-differentiation is and how it has a place in promoting and maintaining congregational health.

This is an easy book to read. Steinke writes in clear, simple language, filled with colorful illustrations, like “pastor as elephant,” or “the tomato effect,” or “do not throw marshmallows.” This is a book that can be read and understood by lay congregational leaders, as well as by the ordained. There are discussion questions at the end of each chapter, suggesting that this book can be used as a study guide. There is a nice blending in of biblical references without overwhelming the reader. While distinctively Christian in orientation, the book could be read and applied to any community of faith.

The book seems a bit simplistic a times. Therein is its strength—that is, it is easy to read and easy to understand. At the same time, do not be fooled—this is a profound and radically different way of viewing church life that could create many uneasy readers. Readers be aware, you may see yourself or your church in these pages.

BOOK REVIEWS

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Steinke does not fall victim to the church growth movement, seeing congregational health as not merely a matter of growth. His comments about the dangers of a congregation that over emphasizes its clergy are particularly helpful. Most of all, I appreciated his repeated observation that a congregation's health is directly related to the relative health and maturity of its clergy and lay leadership. We are, after all, a system of mutually reinforcing and interlocking parts—in short, to use a biblical image, the body of Christ.

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John E. Paver, *Theological Reflection and Education for Ministry: Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 169 pp.

John Paver has made a bold claim for theological education. He declares that theological field education can be a catalyst for the reform of theological education. He asserts that theological reflection done within pastoral supervision provides integration for the whole of theological education. His theological reflection models are theological. His own theological reflection upon experience permeates his writing. His honesty in reflection shapes the integrity and insights of this book. He invites us to bring the same experiential and theological integrity as we encounter his work.

As the field education faculty of a school that has worked on integration and cross disciplinary teaching, I am very aware that our discipline has been peripheral to the academic disciplines. Furthermore, we have difficulty in defining the subject and theory of our discipline. John Paver believes that we have a field-pastoral theology and a discipline-theological reflection within the context of pastoral supervision.

His thesis is that theological reflection within the context of pastoral supervision can be a central integrating factor for the whole of theological education. Ministry practice that is critical theological reflection is revelatory and transformative. Our ministry practices, our spirituality, and our theological sources inform, confront, engage, and reveal to each other the meaning of our faith. At its best, theological reflection and pastoral supervision provides integration of theological insight and practice.

He gives an historical overview of the theory-to-practice debates in theological education that have led to fragmentation and a lack of critical theological reflective practice. Then he explores different models and methods of theological reflection that are integrative. He explores the formational and education modes of pastoral supervision that facilitate critical theological reflection, integration, and coherent pastoral practices. His emphasis on the need for educating the supervisor and on the qualities of supervision is critical to his theological reflection methods.

He goes on to describe and explain how he has developed theological reflection seminars with pastoral supervision. And finally, he tells the story of his involvement with structural integration within the theological institution and insights he has gained in trying to envision a more integrative theological

education. As a good field educator, he also gives us an appendix that provides resources for theological reflection seminars.

His book is “theological/practical.” He believes they are intertwined, not separate entities. He gives detailed descriptions of three models of theological reflection and their strengths and limitations. He has a preferred model that has been revelatory for his own journey, but its limitations are also presented. Models are ways to structure reflection and highlight sources of information that provide different theological insights.

In the methods of theological reflection that he described, he examines them for their theological meaning. Too often, we are attracted to methods because they “work.” He asks about the theological meaning of the model itself. The model needs to lead to questions of meaning. He gives the example of his experience with cancer and how his theological reflection leads to exploring the meaning of weakness and strength, life and death. His exploration of these issues also leads him to ask global questions about the meaning of strength and weakness, life and death in the post September 11th United States where Jesus the avenging militaristic warrior is replacing Jesus the gentle savior. He moves from his own cancer to war because critical theological reflection leads to such integration.

What’s so refreshing about his work is that he is both passionate about the significance of his theological reflection model and self-critical. In one section, he describes a model of reflection that he deeply values and concludes that “it provided some of the most powerful and exciting pieces of theological reflection—and some of the worst.” How I resonated with that! He brings in a wealth of material from many sources that I would love to explore, but I will limit myself to one to give a flavor of his thinking.

John Paver claims the priority of experience in doing theological reflection. He says that theological reflection “begins with concrete lived experience, involving the past and the present. Experience is an essential source of wisdom, for it is here we find God’s presence and Spirit” (p. 35). This is one of the most vexing issues in my context. As a feminist, I know how critical it is to affirm experience in the face of dominate patriarchal theologies and experiences. As a field educator, I am also aware of the deep individualistic orientation of the dominate culture in the United States. His definition of experience honors the revelatory power of experience. However, because it is central, he also understands that it is the critical arena for self-deception and dishonesty. He redefines experience as what breaks through our expectations. He quotes

H. G. Gadamer's argument that "in its pure sense, experience is always new. Only through being surprised can we really acquire new experiences." What we bring to situations are our expectations, and it is in the rupturing of expectations that there is a breakthrough to a new type of openness, emancipation, or release from prior certainty that gives room for transformation and new action (p. 37). If we understand that we come to new situations with our expectations and, that it is when those expectations are not met, that we become open to experience, then we are also open to transformation. That is a theological understanding of experience that allow us to honor the personal, challenge the dominate powers, acknowledge the limits of individualistic meaning-making, and encourage communal insight.

Finally, I am always conscious of the resources that an author uses. Are they pluralistic and challenging as well as confirming. John Paver finds wisdom in Dorothee Soelle and Charles Wood and the Mudflower Collective and the philosopher Gadamer, and the Uniting Church in Australia, and the wisdom of his students to mention a few. With such an open heart and a commitment to the ministry of pastoral supervision and theological reflection, his "passion is infectious" and gives insight. Despite struggles to bring integration to theological education in his context, his book is hope-filled with possibilities for theological education that is holistic, integrated, and deeply theological.

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Robert Leslie in Passing

October 20, 1917 – June 14, 2006

Robert Leslie, who died at the age of eighty-eight, represents for me one of those individuals you meet briefly in passing, but who leave an enduring impact. The extent of our interaction occurred in the context of one week of clinical pastoral education (CPE) in Boston and a dinner in Philadelphia.

My first unit of CPE began in the summer of 1958 at Boston State Hospital. We were greeted with the announcement by the supervisor, Robert Leslie, that he would be with us for the first week only. We learned that he had been a CPE supervisor at Boston State before joining the faculty of Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley in 1954. Even though we had only five days together, his contributions to my clinical experience left a deep and lasting impression. One innovation I still remember was a unique model of role playing in which the chaplain/patient interaction included the voices of alter egos standing behind the actors, expressing unsaid feelings that might be occurring within both individuals. It was an imaginative introduction to attending to unspoken feelings in oneself and in the patient. In discussing a verbatim, Bob Leslie created a mock panel consisting of Freud, Jung, Rogers, and Sullivan who responded to the material from their theoretical positions. The behavioral sciences came to life in a remarkable way. In setting up the interpersonal relation groups with five or six supervisors-in-training, Bob drew heavily on the work of Bion, who was later to be incorporated so well into the CPE group process by Joan Hemenway. During a worship service that same week, I remember Bob Leslie telling us that George Matheson wrote "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go" in the aftermath of losing a promising career and fiancé as a result of becoming blind. Not such a bad introduction to CPE.

Robert Leslie brought the same passion and imagination I experienced in CPE to teaching the practical skills needed by pastors and counselors when working with people in crisis. He pioneered videotaping role-play simulations to train seminary students in pastoral care skills. Leslie's interests bridged the fields of psychology and religion. His *Sharing Groups in the Church: An Invitation to Involvement* (1970) remains a core text on the psychological value of small groups in the parish. Other books by Leslie draw from the work of Viktor Frankl, a Viennese psychiatrist and concentration camp survivor, with whom Leslie studied in Vienna, Austria, 1960–1961. *Jesus as Counselor* (1982), first published as *Jesus and Logotherapy* (1965), and *Man's Search for a Meaningful Faith* (1967) extend Frankl's psy-

chological theory to Christian practice. *Man's Search for a Meaningful Faith* has been published in Spanish, Korean, and Japanese.

The second time I met Bob Leslie in passing was in the spring of 1966. He had taken his sabbatical at Emily Mudd's Marriage Institute of Philadelphia, and I was initiating a CPE program at the Princeton Medical Center. We agreed to meet for dinner, and in the course of our conversation, I proudly announced that my wife and I had just bought our first house. To which Bob responded, "Your troubles have just begun." He had a way of getting quickly to basics. His humor, creativity, wisdom, care, and commitment to teaching will be missed even though I only knew him in passing.

C. George Fitzgerald

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Chair of the Editorial Board of *Reflective Practice*

M. Jerry Davis

June 10, 1938 – November 25, 2006

Jerry Davis died on November 25, 2006, after a long and rich professional life as an Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) supervisor in the Pacific Region. In 1988 he was selected to be the regional director of the Pacific Region, a position that he held until his death. In the role of regional director, he was known for his welcoming spirit and hospitality. Jerry was certified an ACPE supervisor in 1973. In 1978, he became the chair of the Chaplain Department at Loma Linda University Medical Center and remained in that position for the next twenty-six years. During his tenure at Loma Linda University, he was also an associate professor in the Division of Religion and supervisor in the Marriage and Family Counseling Program in the Graduate School. Many of his CPE students went on to become chaplains, CPE supervisors, and successful pastors in churches. During his tenure, Jerry also conducted CPE part-time at the Jerry Pettis VA Medical Center.

Jerry had a gentle and personable way of communicating. He was on the certification subcommittee that I met for an extension of my status of acting supervisor. He was quiet throughout the entire committee meeting but afterward he said he had some feedback he was still formulating that he would like share with me. He gently gave me some challenges about how I was communicating with the committee and how I might also enhance my supervision with my students. I felt especially cared for in that moment. Another time, he was on the accreditation site team for a period review and the addition of supervisory training at my center. As we walked from one meeting to another, he asked if I was "ready" for the increased pushing and tugging that would happen between a student in supervisory education and myself. I remembered his question many times as I supervised students in supervisory education. Jerry had a special way of making each person he spoke with feel special. He did this simply by remembering your name, encouraging you in your process, challenging you to do your best, and always leaving the door open to be in contact with him.

Following his retirement from Loma Linda University Medical Center, he continued to supervise CPE part-time at the VA Medical Center, something he did right up until his death. Jerry fought cancer valiantly for several years. He is very much missed in the Pacific Region, in ACPE, and in the Seventh Day Adventist Churches in Southern California.

Rod Seeger

Retired ACPE Supervisor

Member of the *Reflective Practice* Editorial Board

**The Reverend Joan Hemenway
In Celebration of a Life Well-Lived**

March 14, 1938 – January 31, 2007

Joan Hemenway, former president of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), died January 31, 2007. Many people knew Joan personally. Others, like myself, know her primarily through her professional writings, leadership, wisdom, and teaching, including *Inside the Circle* (JPCC Publications, 1996) and *Holding on...While Letting Go: Reflections in Times of Grave Illness* (Pilgrim Press, Looking Up Series). I imagine that I am one of many relative strangers who greatly admired her strength of spirit, integrity, and the profound impact of her professional contributions. She touched many lives through her work, and I believe her influence will continue as a living legacy for my generation of CPE supervisors. I sought every opportunity possible to be in the same room as Joan, and on these remembered occasions, I learned much about myself, group theory, ACPE, and gracious leadership.

Joan was a brilliant teacher and an inspired theorist. And yet colleagues and students who knew her well will speak first about her compassionate supervision, kindness, clarity, and sense of humor. Joan was rigorous about thoughtful scholarship. Yet in her presence, I felt free to allow my passion for teaching and ministry to soar and take flight. Joan was a *shero* for me. Her wisdom and spirit revealed the light of learning, the love of teaching and integrity in leadership. Joan made a phenomenal contribution to ACPE, an offering that spreads throughout the world. Joan often used the following words as a blessing for her students in their final gathering, and I repeat them now in memory of her:

“When we walk to the edge of all the light we have, and step into the unknown, we must believe that one of two things will happen: there will be something solid for us to stand on or we will be taught to fly.”

Joan will be deeply missed.

Laurie Garrett-Cobbina

San Francisco Theological Seminary

ACPE Supervisor, Shaw Chair for Clinical Pastoral Education

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PLEASE NOTE: This is an <i>open book exam</i> . A suggested way to take this quiz is to copy the quiz page and then place it alongside the article being read. Circle the letter next to the correct answer.
Your comments for improving this quiz: _____
Thank you!

**REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: FORMATION AND SUPERVISION IN MINISTRY
QUIZ 2007**

COACHING RELIGIOUS LEADERS (MARTINSON)

1. *John Whitmore's book Coaching for Performance stresses that underlying all coaching is the belief that people*
 - a. need more knowledge and skills to lead effectively.
 - b. will lead when given the right motivation.
 - c. possess more capability than they are expressing.
 - d. must have mentors to be good leaders.

CONSIDERING "DIRECTION" IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION (PHILLIPS)

2. *John confronted a former colleague about a serious ethical breach with John's directee, Harriet. John was motivated to do so by God bringing to mind that*
 - a. Christ is the light of the world.
 - b. God is always with us.
 - c. God's grace is offered to everyone.
 - d. the Shepherd's rod offers protection from predators.

BURNOUT AMONG PASTORS (BROUWER)

3. *For a pastor suffering from burnout, the author would first recommend*
 - a. counseling with cognitive therapy.
 - b. a less consuming approach to ministry.
 - c. reconnecting with God through silence and prayer.
 - d. a cleansing period of self-chastisement.

REFLECTIONS ON FORMATION (WOLFTEICH)

4. *From a Christian perspective, which is TRUE concerning spiritual formation?*
 - a. It replaces worldly values with the fruits of the Spirit.
 - b. It is most fully practiced by the monastic tradition.
 - c. It is primarily an individual matter.
 - d. It is intended more for those in vocational ministries.

LESSONS LEARNED ALONG THE WAY (PLUMMER)

5. *The author's theory of pastoral supervision was primarily formed by _____ theory.*
 - a. psychoanalytic
 - b. family systems
 - c. Jungian
 - d. cognitive-behavioral

STUDY CREDIT

295

MENTORING CLERGY (GARTNER & DREIBELBIS)

6. *In this study, the most encouraging mentors for clergy were*
 - a. peer clergy
 - b. older clergy
 - c. lay persons
 - d. seminary teachers

7. *When Jerome, an effective priest from the Midwest, was disillusioned with working with kids, his mentor suggested that he*
 - a. seek counseling for possible burnout or depression.
 - b. do a Bible study on "perseverance."
 - c. talk to lay people in his ministry and ask them what keeps them going.
 - d. spend the next six weeks thanking God specifically for all His blessings to see if his perspective changed.

TOWARD INDIGENOUS CPE (DE JONG)

8. *During this 3-week CPE program conducted in South Africa, the students*
 - a. learned about ministering to patients infected with AIDS/HIV.
 - b. were exposed to the African worldview of *ubuntu*, which defines personhood by community rather than individualism.
 - c. experienced language barriers and fatigue.
 - d. all of the above.

ANCHOR POINTS (SIMS)

9. *Which is NOT one of the author's anchor points?*
 - a. grounding supervision in Christian traditions.
 - b. a Learning Covenant.
 - c. maintaining strict authority over trainees.
 - d. theological reflection.

MINISTRY AS SOULFUL LEADERSHIP (SNORTON)

10. *Gary Gunderson's concept of "boundary leaders" is similar to Snorton's concept of _____ leaders.*
 - a. institutional
 - b. elected
 - c. political
 - d. relational

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