



Journal of the Association
of Mormon Counselors
and Psychotherapists

January 1983 Vol. 9, Issue 1

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The purpose of this Association shall be:

- a) To promote fellowship, foster communication, enhance personal and professional development, and promote a forum for counselors and psychotherapists whose common bond is membership in and adherence to the principles and standards of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, both in their personal lives and professional practice.
- b) To encourage and support members' efforts actively to promote within their other professional organizations and the society at large, the adoption and maintenance of moral standards and practices that are consistent with gospel principles.

*Article 1, Section 2, AMCAP By-laws
(as ammended Sep. 30, 1981)*



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January 1983 Vol. 9, Issue 1

Editor **Burton C. Kelly**
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EDITORIAL

As we commence the 9th year of publication of the *AMCAP Journal*, we do so with appreciation to all of those of you who have contributed to the progress of the past and with faith and hope for continued progress this year. The quality of the *Journal* is primarily dependent on you--for submission of scholarly, sound and stimulating articles and suggestions. We invite you to help make 1983 the best year yet for the *Journal*. Deluge us with your articles and suggestions. Thank you!

BCK

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Burton:

I am impressed to write today in response to Victor Brown's address at the AMCAP convention last April. I am most grateful that it appeared in article form in the October, 1982, issue of our journal. This article, entitled "Human Intimacy: Further Considerations" was significant to me and demonstrated what I see as the unique contribution that AMCAP can make--namely a closer integration between the gospel of Jesus Christ and the professional training that most of us pursue in our efforts to constructively intervene, as invited through therapeutic endeavor, in people's lives.

I believe it also demonstrates what can happen when a uniquely qualified person makes that effort. May I share why I claim that Vic Brown is uniquely qualified?

1. He is professionally trained.
2. He works in a clinical fashion within the context of a church administered and supervised agency.
3. Most importantly he has had a close alliance with President Kimball and has conferred extensively with him regarding clinical/religious applications that are made in support of those whose lives are disrupted by sexual difficulty.

I note that President Kimball's biography indicates that he was designated specifically as one of the general authorities that was to work with this population. His years of effort and his inspiration unquestionably have led to significant understanding and insight. Brother Brown has been able to glean from that effort and inspiration as is evidenced by this anecdote. On the occasion of AMCAP recognizing Victor L. Brown, Jr. for his contributions to the association, his father was in the audience. As an officer in the association that year, I went to Victor Brown, Sr. to express appreciation to him for his son and for the contribution his son had made to us professionally and spiritually. Victor Brown, Sr. was delighted in the moment and in the experiences and events of past years that had contributed to his son's development. It was at that point that he shared with me that, despite his being the Presiding Bishop, he did not spend as much time with the prophet as did his son.

Somehow as I read Vic Brown, Jr.'s writing, I see evidence of significant insight and compassion. I note for instance in this most recent article, the case of the man "who had made a career of confessing his unworthiness to Mormon bishops around the world..." (p.6) based on a childhood experience, in desperate times, of engaging in incest. The therapeutic response involved separating the act from the intent and understanding the desperate need for human contact and comfort. The twin principles of justice and mercy, as taught by Alma to his wayward son, Corianton, were used to sort out the man's feelings and to give him a chance to meet the needs for justice by repenting for the act while still being given the mercy to forgive himself for "gaining nourishment to a starving heart" through the tenderness of his sister that had been misdirected in a sexual act.

I cannot speak for others. I know not their mind nor their heart. I can say that my mind and heart were pierced by the insight and truth that was reflected in this application of the principles of justice and mercy. I'm grateful for the Gospel, grateful for Alma and for his teachings to his son.

I had long understood that mercy could only intercede in behalf of the person, and prevent blind justice, based on repentance, but I am not sure I would ever have "invented" the application of these principles as Vic Brown has revealed it. That idea and example will have tremendous value for me as I work with individuals who are caught in such struggles.

This insight, as shared by Brother Brown, is typical of what I would hope we might achieve as we pursue the integration of our religion with our professional practice and vice versa.

Cordially,
Gary Carson
Past President-AMCAP

CORRECTION AND APOLOGY:

Regrettably there was a typographical error in the article of Brother Victor L. Brown, Jr., "Human Intimacy: Further Considerations," in the October, 1982 AMCAP Journal. The last line at the bottom of page 7, column 1, as submitted read, "Why did my [helping person] ask me to go to my father and tell him I love him?" rather than as published, "Why didn't my [helping person] help me to go to my father and tell him I loved him?" Our apologies to Vic and to those of you who were misled by that error.

KNOW THE TRUTH...

Richard W. Johnson,* Ph.D.

Presidential Address

Presented at the AMCAP Convention

30 September, 1982

There are those who don't agree with what we are doing in AMCAP. That is, they don't think they ought to mix the Church with our professional lives. Perhaps some of us have, if only on rare occasions, wondered at the appropriateness of bringing matters of religious belief into our therapeutic activities. The reasons are undoubtedly varied. Perhaps there is a feeling that we ought not to bring to and, by implication, impose values in the counseling setting. Some might be uncomfortable discussing religious questions with clients and would prefer leaving those matters to duly called authorities. Others might not yet have clarified or committed themselves to their religious beliefs, and still others might think their professional knowledge has gone beyond the point where ideas from the Gospel could add anything significant.

A central issue in all of this is, it seems, a reluctance to mix things of faith, spirit, and the heart with those based on reason, experience, and systematic observation. It is, in a way, a reluctance to bring too close together the truths we have achieved by rather different means. Rex Lee, in a recent address to BYU graduates, characterized these two approaches to truth as the rational process and the extra-rational process. (Lee, 1982) On the rational side would be included, of course, thinking and reason, observation, insight and experience as means to discover truth. On the extra-rational side would be found those ways of knowing that center more in feelings than in reason and past experience. These include inspiration, revelation, and perhaps mysticism. Authority would also be included here if the authority is achieved through inspiration and revelation.

It is not surprising that some choose not to mix church with their professional practice. As professionals we want to appear, or better yet to be, objective, well reasoned, intellectually sound, tough minded---true behavioral scientists; that is, to adhere to the rational process. We may fear too much yielding to the extra-rational will dilute the appearance of scientific objectivity.

Historically, mixing truths gained through reason with those gained by inspiration has been somewhat like trying to mix oil and water. It is an understatement to say that there has always existed a certain amount of tension or discomfort between ideas based on reason and those resulting from extra-rational processes. It is the age-old dilemma of science versus religion. Science and religion have stood facing apart, casting sidelong

glances at each other, science uneasy at the implied unavailability of the authority upon which religion rests, and religion concerned that science might, through its tools, find fault with some of religion's teachings or question its authority.

These differing collections of truths that have come into apparent conflict were born out of distinct needs: on the one hand, the need to maintain ties with and get direction from Him who placed us in this mortal state; on the other hand, to understand our surroundings and those who preceded us here.

I'd like to take a few minutes briefly to trace the development of ideas based on these two ways of knowing.

The approach to truth on the rational side of this conflict perhaps found its beginning in the miracle civilization that was ancient Greece. The philosophical thought of Plato and Aristotle laid the foundation for scientific inquiry even though it preceded the scientific method by almost 2,000 years. (Boring, 1950) Philosophy is the mother of scientific thinking because it takes nothing as a given. It looks first to discover what is real and second to know how it is that we gain that knowledge. (Butler, 1957) The Greek philosophers left us a legacy of the use of insight, intuition, and intellectual processes in the pursuit of truth. They also turned the attention of scholars of their day away from the study of nature toward the study of man himself. Aristotle taught us that we can achieve understanding of complex issues through dialogue. In fact, Chessick (1977), in his book *Great Ideas in Psychotherapy*, credits Aristotle with having conducted the first therapeutic interview.

The Aristotelian approach to truth has persisted upon earth through the decline of Greece and the conquests of Rome into the present day.

It was in one of those conquered Roman outposts that God brought forth the meridian of the fulness of times and with it His plan for the salvation of mankind. Many of the religious truths we cherish now came forth at that time. Christ was born among the chosen of God who had kept a record of their dealings with the Lord, laws and commandments to live by, narratives to inspire and direct their worship---even an account of God's creations of the heavens and the earth.

Christ's disciples went forth to preach the joyous word of the fulfillment of ancient prophecy and of the promise of eternal life for man. Some wrote down accounts of Christ's sojourn among men.

As we know, the church Christ established fell into a state of apostasy, and the power of the priesthood was lost from the earth. Even so, Christ's words and

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teachings were available through the scattered writings of his followers. By about 300 years after his death, these writings were brought together in one volume which eventually became our New Testament. This, and the religious record of the ancients, the Old Testament, were available to guide the religious practice of men, but there was no inspiration or revelation to guide them in that practice. In any event, by about the third century after Christ, the elements for a conflict between rational and religious ideas were in place. There existed by then a body of religious writings and also the beginnings of scientific inquiry in the philosophical legacy left by the Greeks.

What ensued was more a matter of domination than conflict. The apostate church of the day, in fact, showed tolerance for philosophical ideas, but was so deeply steeped in its theology and dogma that it allowed virtually no movement away from strict religious beliefs by any of the church's adherents. Religious ideas dominated men's thinking. The scriptures were taken as the word of God and as the final word on all subjects. Men lived their lives focused only on adherence to dogma that they hoped would save their souls from hellfire in the hereafter. The period we are speaking of was, of course, The Dark Ages.

During this period the advancement of knowledge was, in effect, held in suspended animation. Religious beliefs carried the day, or more accurately carried the years, for a total of more than 1,000 years. Theological thought had a firm grip on men's minds. Those who ventured to understand better their earthly surroundings were called to task if their findings did not match those of the theological authorities of the day. As late as the 15th century, men were put to death for asserting that the world was round when dogma said it was not. (Dyer, 1961)

Historians recognize four or five events that served to free men's minds from their preoccupation with religion and the afterlife and bring about a rebirth of learning.

The invention of gun powder in the 15th century and its use in wars to break down the feudal system of city states helped to establish larger national units and enhanced the exchange of ideas and trade with other such units. Invention of the printing press in 1440 made possible the mass production and wider distribution of books once held only by an exclusive few. In search of trade routes, Columbus happened upon our hemisphere, thus creating a flow of riches from the New World and making land available apart from that held by kings, the church, and nobles, the powerful of the old world. (Boring, 1950)

We sometimes think of the Protestant Reformation as bringing an end to The Dark Ages, but it was as much an effect as it was a cause. The reformers were as critical of scientific inquiry as was the Roman Church. (Dyer, 1961)

The last event to unleash the Renaissance, the rebirth of learning, was publication of the Copernican theory. Copernicus, a Polish scholar and contemporary of Martin Luther, removed man from the center of the known universe. Had he not died the year his findings

were published, he would undoubtedly have been condemned as a heretic. Galileo did suffer condemnation for discovering the four moons of Jupiter which made 11, not 7, heavenly bodies in the solar system, as theologians of the day regarded seven as a sacred number.

Galileo was followed by Newton and other scientists whose discoveries refuted other religious dogma. (Boring, 1950) That, of course, was not their purpose. They set about leaning over their microscopes and into their telescopes, probing, measuring, observing, and dissecting, with the purpose of learning about their surroundings. If we are talking of the apparent conflict between science and religion, science became a force to be reckoned with. The Aristotelian deductive method had been combined with an inductive method proposed by Francis Bacon in 1620 and the scientific method had been born. The 17th century saw significant scientific growth, the 18th century a plateau, which someone called a period of "slightly stunned assimilation." (p. 14) The development of science in the 19th century progressed with explosive force; it coincided with the restoration of the gospel.

Religion from the Renaissance and Reformation to that time had seen elaboration of the Protestant movement with a variety of sects claiming to have the truth but none of them with divine authority. In a sense, their attention was directed toward and against each other and away from defending the faith from those using rational processes.

The real conflict between science and religion seems to have grown along with man's increasing willingness and freedom to do more than just think about, discuss, and look to misunderstood authority to understand the universe and man's mortal condition. It grew with his willingness and freedom to begin testing empirically what pure reason and authority told him was so. The story goes that a group of philosophers were contemplating and discussing how many teeth there must be in a horse's mouth. They were aghast when one of their number suggested they find a horse and count them. It was when men began to count, measure, and systematically observe that conflict arose between science and religion.

I want now to turn to possible continuing causes of this conflict. Some of these ideas are found in an excellent little book by Lowell Bennion (1959) entitled *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*.

A primary reason for the conflict between science and religious thought has been that some religious authorities have taken the scriptures to be the final word on all subjects. Recognized as the words of God, the scriptures have come to be seen by some as the only authority in all matters. We noted that when discussing The Dark Ages. Even today there are those who use scripture as documents of science when they were never meant to be such. Some advocates of teaching "creation science" in the schools, I believe, make that mistake.

Scripture should be recognized as religious writings aimed at helping men and women better understand themselves, their relationship to God and their

fellows, and the purposes of this mortal existence. They were written to inspire us "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." (Micah 6:8)

When in Proverbs (3:19) it says, "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up and the clouds drop down the dew," there is no attempt to describe the universe in scientific terms. The passage is not meant to describe but rather to show the power of God and the wisdom that went into organizing the universe. It was meant to glorify God, written by men of religion, not of science.

A related cause of conflict between science and religion is that those who are advocates and students of one set of truths minimize the significance and contribution of other truths. Since they know little of them, they regard them as we often do the unknown--with apprehension, fear, and suspicion. They malign and ridicule them because they do not understand them.

This might be regarded as yet another source of conflict: the failure to adequately understand the position taken by one side or the other. Jae Ballif (1982), Academic Vice President at BYU and himself a physical scientist, touched on this point in a recent address to the faculty. He said one side stands against a "godless science," the other against an "unscientific religion," neither side adequately understanding the other's stance.

Still another source of controversy is found in those who, too often by self appointment, feel they must defend the faith and restrict teachings they think threaten the faith. They want to defend God's words, which require no defense, and want to limit the freedom to choose, which is, as we know, the cornerstone of the Lord's plan. That plan admits choice, error, and correction, but some would try to protect us from error, at least as they define it. (Bennion, 1959)

Before we end, I want briefly to look at each side of the alleged science-religion contest to see what contribution each side can make to us as professionals.

Science serves us extremely well in areas to which it is suited. I need not enumerate all it has provided in areas such as health, travel, communication, and so many others. Unfortunately, its benefits have not reached everyone, but hopefully will some day. One small, though not insignificant, example of the benefits of science: science in less than a century has doubled man's lifespan, the average time God's children are able to spend on earth. That may be a mixed blessing if one considers the potential glories that await us if we perform well here. Eric Hoffer once said, "Mankind is on a bus, all headed for the same destination, yet everyone is busy jockeying for seats." Our view would be that if we are on a bus, we are attempting to prepare ourselves to be allowed to exit at the most exalted of a number of possible destinations. Science is providing time for more men and women to make the necessary discoveries during life to bring that about.

Science has helped open men's minds. It is, I believe, a manifestation of the fact we are sons and daughters of God. We have been created in his likeness and in that

likeness, I feel, have been imbued with a natural curiosity about our surroundings. In the process of getting our earthly house in order, it seems appropriate to me that we should be poking around in the corners and on the shelves and in cracks to see just what those surroundings are made of and how they work. The landlord wouldn't want us to forget Him, but, even so, He has blessed us with a curiosity to find out about this earth-home. In the pre-Renaissance time we spoke of earlier, earth life was seen simply as a means to an end, a time for waiting until one could experience the glories of the afterlife. Now we see in life value in and of itself, both from a scientific and a gospel point of view. Our existence here is part of the eternal plan.

It is good to know. There is satisfaction in understanding. We feel secure and confident when we are enlightened. Christ once said, "Know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) It seems with each bit of knowledge we gain, we are freed from ignorance, confusion and error. We have seen many of the freedoms we know achieved through our scientific discoveries.

Science, though not directly, has helped man come to a better knowledge of God. Scientists who observe the precise organization of the universe feel compelled to recognize the existence of the Creator. Even though religious authorities were incredulous when Copernicus placed the sun and not the earth and man at the center of the universe, that very act served to humble man and help him see more clearly the powers of Him who organized the heavens, the earth, and the other worlds we are told of.

We need even more rigorous application of scientific principles to our professional activities. We do indeed need to be scientist-professionals. Many of the theories we follow are just that: theories, or even in some cases philosophies, which still need the test of empirical validation. We need science for further discovery and verification of means to assist those with whom we work. Abraham Maslow may have been the one who said, "If you only have a hammer, you treat everything as a nail." We need more tools to do our work.

If science has done and promises to do so much, why then should we consider bringing religious truths into our professional practice?

Science cannot do everything. It is quite fallible. Although its long-range accomplishments are very impressive, science has made many errors along the way. Science operates on a system of successive approximations. That is, scientists themselves recognize they often miss the mark, but have faith that with each attempt they will come closer to it. As many or more scientific theories are disproved as are proved each year. A scientist once wrote regarding the six basic discoveries in physics made before the end of the last century, "There is not one the universal validity of which has not been questioned by serious and competent physicists, while most of them have definitely proved to be subject to exception." (Quoted in Bennion, 1959, p. 62-63) Certainly in our science as therapists, we are also involved in the process of successive approximation.

However, we may take far too long to make the corrective maneuvers that will carry us nearer our goal. We may tend to hold onto theories too long because they "work" or because we become comfortable with them and are too busy or lazy to look for something more effective. We could increase the rate at which we move toward scientifically determined therapeutic truths if more of us were actively empirically evaluating our practices.

Another weakness of science is its essential subjectivity. This may sound surprising, since it is religious beliefs that are supposed to be subjective. Even so, any scientific theory not yet established as fact resides in the mind of the theorist, not in reality. This is particularly true in our professions where theories and not factual discoveries abound. The concepts of psychotherapy proposed by Freud, Kelly, Adler, Michenbaum, Satir, and all the others reside in their minds and in ours when we adopt them. But their reality is a long way from being proven. To bring about such proof we need to diligently apply our knowledge of science.

The most important reason science alone will not suffice in our work is that it cannot define ultimate value. That is the most persuasive argument for bringing religious ideas into our therapeutic practice. Science can show us the most efficient way to get from here to there, but it cannot tell us which direction to go. We are aware of the great discoveries of science, but we know also that they are not always used to the benefit of mankind. In fact, too often they are tools of destruction. They sometimes favor the greedy over those in real need. Religion provides the basis for deciding what is good or bad, right or wrong, moral or immoral. Through the scriptures God has provided us instructions as to how we should live this mortal existence. Scripture teaches us how to be at peace with ourselves and our fellowmen and how to feel at home in the universe. It teaches us how to gain our salvation and to assist in the salvation of others. Science cannot respond to these most fundamental questions.

McGill (1967) comments in his book, *The Idea of Happiness*, that present century philosophers have abandoned the search to define the good life and have turned that search over to psychologists and psychoanalysts. If that is the case, I doubt our knowledge of science will suffice to show us what is true happiness. It seems that more than ever we need the help of the gospel to clarify for ourselves and our clients what the good life consists of. It is certainly something more than the absence of pathology or a flat MMPI profile.

If psychology is indeed defining the good life, a look around us will make vivid the need for more attention to eternal values. What responsibility do we have as a profession for the hedonism we see in what has been called the "I" generation, doing "their own thing" with only passing regard for others and for authority? If we do define happiness, has it led to the new morality with its by-products of hollow relationships, exploitation, and emptiness? Are we responsible for the existential anxiety we see in many of those around us who fail to

understand the meaning of their lives? Do we have responsibility for the sentiment expressed in Neil Diamond's song: "Don't think, feel, it's no big deal," that places value on sensory experiences alone, on being high regardless of how one gets there, but unfortunately, often through some chemical means?

We need the guidance of gospel principles to bring sense to the lunacy we too often see about us. We need the strength derived from recognition of our kinship with God, from having firm and not situational guides to behavior; we need to know of the fulfillment gained in sacrificing for others, working for what we get, being responsible for ourselves, and committing ourselves with affection and sensitivity to those around us.

Another very important and related reason to incorporate gospel ideas in our professional practice is that we are in the business of helping the sons and daughters of God find themselves, find purpose, and find closeness with others. The scriptures and counsel from religious leaders center around helping people lead fulfilled and complete lives, devoid of the pitfalls of self-deceit, guilt, excess, isolation, anger, and the other human conditions that bring people to therapists. Burton Kelly demonstrated so well yesterday how the words of Christ can be used quite directly to help people cope with distress and guide their lives along paths that lead to fulfillment.

We also need to admit religious values to our practice because many of those we attempt to assist are believers themselves. This is a point Allen Bergin has attempted to make for a number of years through various national forums. It is a real inconsistency that psychotherapists as professionals are so often irreligious when so many who seek their help hold strong religious beliefs. (Another possibility exists: perhaps there are more religious therapists around than we suspect, but they choose to sidestep issues of value and belief in favor of objectivity. This might take its toll with the therapist. A colleague, Burton Robinson, told our staff that a presenter at the recent APA convention who was promoting the use of values in treatment speculated that therapist burnout may result from therapists doing things they don't believe in.)

By acknowledging our religious beliefs as therapists, we can be attuned to the counsel of our Church leaders with respect to the work we do. A case in point: at general conferences in 1969, Alvin R. Dyer and Ezra Taft Benson both spoke out against certain practices in group therapy. Some professionals felt the brethren "simply didn't understand the nature of group work". Yet within 18 months our colleagues in the helping professions were themselves calling for a re-examination of a field that was approaching chaos. Nude groups, multimedia groups, non-verbal sensory awareness groups, primal groups, and others of more or less face validity were flourishing nationwide. You might recall Jane Howard (1970) spent a year participating in a number of these groups and later wrote a best selling book called *Please Touch* about her sometimes startling experiences. Many groups were conducted by leaders whose experience consisted only in

having participated in one or two groups themselves. Shostrom (1972) wrote at the time that some of these groups had been "useless, stupid, dangerous, corrupt, and even fatal." (p. 477) Even Albert Ellis was reported to have recognized some of them as "dirty fun" but certainly not therapeutic. Fortunately, alarm within the profession led to some moderation of radical, invalid practices, but problems still exist.

Church authorities have recently spoken out on other issues pertinent to us as therapists, including abortion, the value of the traditional family, the maintenance of appropriate legal protection for women, and defense issues with direct bearing on Church members. I believe the wisdom of these statements goes beyond the wisdom of men and that time will prove that so. We need to be attuned to such pronouncements in our professional work.

Perhaps the final and overriding argument for including religious beliefs in our practice is that we need a source of knowledge that goes beyond our limited intelligence. Operating as rational creatures, our reason will seldom lead us all to the same decision or conclusion. This is evidence that our rational processes are flawed. When we need ultimate truth to which there is no exception, we must resort to that provided through gospel principles, inspired leaders and personal prayer.

We have talked of the conflict between science and religion sometimes calling it an apparent conflict. A final question remains: is there a real conflict. Are scientific and religious truths irreconcilable? Some say conflict between them is inevitable.

But truth is absolute. Something is either true or it isn't. If the gospel embraces all truth, it must, therefore, embrace the truths of science. There are no separate truths. As Ezra Taft Benson (1957) once said, "Religion and science have sometimes been in apparent conflict. Yet, the conflict can only be apparent, not real, for science seeks truth and true religion is truth...the gospel embraces all truth...the two are meeting daily...truth is consistent." (p. 181) Richard L. Evans (1957) said, "Truth is a great thing. It is a thrill to search for it, a thrill to find it. Search insatiably and have patience where there is doubt and controversy for God is not in confusion and one segment of truth is not in conflict with another. If it seems to be, it is simply because we do not know enough." (p. 180)

If there is conflict, "it is simply because we do not know enough." We either do not know enough regarding the science we see in conflict with religion, or we have not yet received the religious knowledge we need to answer some questions posed by science.

It is not hard to see how our science could be in error, or incomplete, and thus in conflict with revealed religious truths. We have already shown that science approaches truth in small steps, making errors in the process. It is also subjective and unable to show us what is of ultimate value. It is also dependent on our fallible intellectual abilities.

It is more difficult to understand why revealed truth sometimes does not address questions posed by science. We have already touched on the answer by suggesting

scripture and revealed truth have been provided so we can know of essentials we need to understand and, if we choose, to participate in the Lord's plan for our salvation. There has been little effort made to enlighten us on other matters. Alvin R. Dyer (1961) once said,

"For that which man strives to learn by earthly scientific methods, pertains to laws already established and well known by our Father in Heaven...but supposing these things were revealed to man, what would be the advantage? How would it benefit him in the search for truth that he should learn from his earthly existence...God in his great wisdom has spoken directly to his prophets for the best ultimate good of man to provide for him that which he could never learn for himself without divine intercession." (p. 27)

Nephi wrote, "and it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give a full account of all the things of my father, for they cannot be written upon these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God." (1 Nephi 6:3)

Scripture and revealed truth are to treat the "things of God" and provide man "that which he could never learn for himself without divine intercession." For the rest of our knowledge we have to use the powers of reason that God gave us. With patience as suggested by Richard L. Evans, we will see truths gained by reason and experience merge with gospel truths until we have all truths as they exist: "The two are meeting daily." Science has yet to discover many truths and there are yet many important things to be revealed. The Lord has said, "All their glories, laws, and set times shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fullness of times." (D&C 121:31) When they are, we will see truth unified.

So that we can go away with a practical challenge, I suggest we all examine our professional lives to see if there is an area there in which we could function more efficiently. If we find such a "soft spot," the challenge would be then to focus intently and intensely on the problem much as Newton is reported to have done. Through intense pondering, reading, discussing, observing and validating with our best practical, scientific tools, we will gain confidence and competence. Discovery comes from such intense and persistent focus. However, as we engage in our best scientific behavior, we should not proceed without guidance from the gospel so that the eventual outcome, whatever it may be, will be consistent with the plan meant to bring us eternal joy.

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STRAINS WITHIN THE MORMON SUBCULTURE

Larry K. Langlois,* M.S.

Presented at the AMCAP Convention

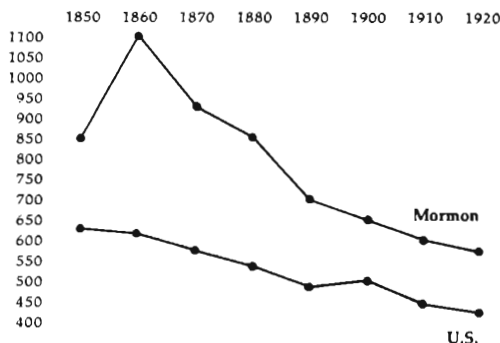
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The Mormon subculture has developed a family form which is both typical of the broader American culture and unique to itself. A major element of this family form is Mormon fertility rates. Its development is reflected clearly in historical trends.

The available data on Mormon fertility shows that during the period from the formation of the Church in 1830 to about 1870 the Mormon subculture was developing and establishing itself as a separate entity. During that period Scholnic et al. (1978) have shown that the Mormon population (particularly in frontier Utah) was a natural fertility population, i.e. one in which there were no constraints imposed on fertility. This was not typical of the general U.S. population. After 1870, with completion of the intercontinental railroad and the turning of national priorities away from the painful ravages of the Civil War, more attention was focused on the Mormon community. Between about 1870 and about 1920, there was a tendency for Mormon fertility patterns to regress toward the national mean. The trends in these two periods are shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1
Child Woman Ratio - Utah and U.S.
(# per thousand women)

Whites only, 1850-1920



The evidence indicates that this movement away from a natural fertility population toward a closer approximation of the national trends was the result of Mormon women who married young beginning to suppress fertility pre-menopausally as their family size

approached the community norm. This appears to describe the trend which has resulted in the modern Mormon population; that is, young marriage followed by prolific fertility during the early years of marriage, then a curtailing of births at a relatively young age as family size approaches the community norm. That general norm among Mormons, though consistently higher than the U.S. figure, has remained closely parallel to it with some divergence occurring in recent years. This can be seen clearly in Figure 2.

The graph demonstrates the parallel fluctuations of the Mormon and U.S. fertility rates, with Utah and Provo-Orem added in the later years.

As the percentage difference between the Mormon and the U.S. rates demonstrates, the difference between Mormons and the overall U.S. rate has grown significantly during the past 50 years or so. In 1920 the Mormon birthrate was 37.2% higher than the U.S. rate. During the post World War II baby boom, the Mormon rate maintained itself consistently at over 50% higher. During the fertility upturn of recent years, the Mormon rate approached 100% above the U.S. rate. Thus, even though the fluctuations in rates have been roughly parallel, the Mormons have been steadily and consistently widening the gap.

Without going through the statistical analysis, let me merely suggest that this parallel fluctuation reflecting the trends in U.S. society within the Mormon subculture is repeated in many areas other than fertility. These areas include total number in household, female household heads, and illegitimate births.

So, the widely observed phenomenon of Mormon typicality mixed with Mormon peculiarity is clearly demonstrable by demographic data. It can also be shown that these differences, rather than attenuating over the years, have actually been becoming more accentuated during the past one-half century or so.

These differences help to sustain a sense of separateness and destiny among Mormons which has been noted by various observers (see especially Leoni 1979, Arrington, 1978, and O'Dea, 1955), but they are also the source of great strains within the Mormon community. It is some of these strains I would like to explore with you today.

First is a set of strains caused by a conflicted Mormon view of the gentile community. There is a pervasive and deep-seated ambivalence among Mormons in their attitudes and actions toward non-Mormons. This ambivalence is rooted in two contradictory roles into which gentiles are cast in the Mormon subculture.

During the period since World War II to the present,

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the Mormons have generally been well thought of, treated with respect by the press, and, in general, have had a fairly positive image in most parts of the free world. Before that time for more than 100 years Mormons were generally viewed by gentiles as a cultish, clannish, fringe group of polygamists. Thus, the long-term collective Mormon experience with gentiles is one of conflicted feelings. On the one hand, gentiles are potential converts to be befriended, courted and brought into the fold. On the other hand, they are a threatening, sinister, evil and errant lot to be shunned and avoided. This ambivalence is a paradox which can be puzzling and confusing to Mormons and non-Mormons alike. In general Mormons tend to be outgoing, helpful, sympathetic, politically active and socially involved. But, at the same time, they can also be clannish, suspicious, withdrawn, exclusive and ethnocentric. The strain within the Mormon family and community resulting from this ambivalence is very real and can be painful. As an example, teenagers and young adults are urged to be missionary-minded and to consciously nurture friendships among non-Mormons with the hope of eventually influencing them to convert to Mormonism. But, at the same time, they are cautioned not to date non-Mormons or marry out of the fold. Local ward, stake and regional activities are generally thought of as perfect opportunities to involve non-Mormons as a way of doing missionary work, but, should a Mormon girl meet a non-member boy at one of these activities and begin to date him, her parents may be upset, since they probably encouraged her to go to the dance hoping she would meet a nice Mormon boy. There is a built-in paradox.

In one sense this paradox reflects a direct conflict

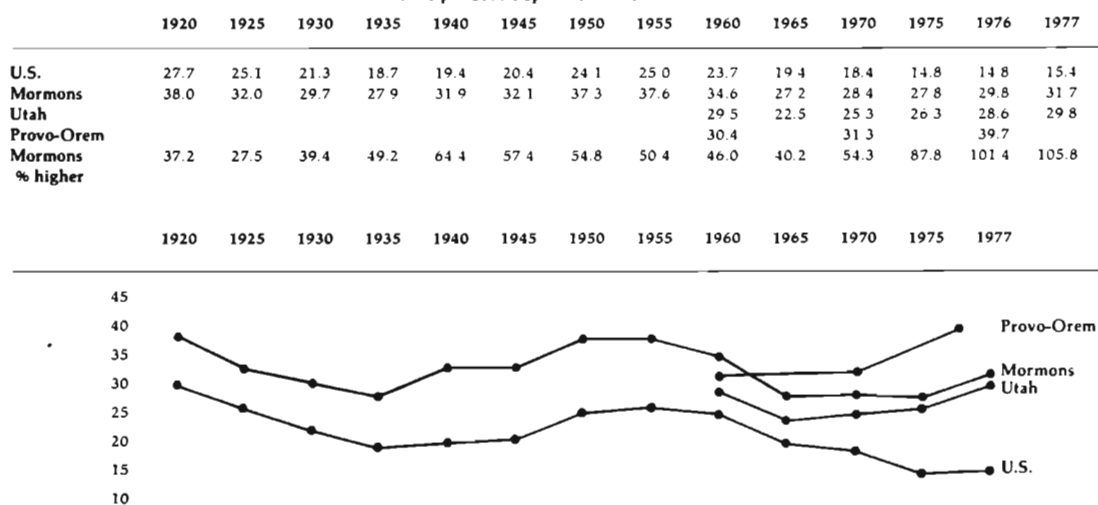
between the Church and the family, at least to the extent that the Church goal is to proselyte and spread the gospel, and the family goal is to manage and control the processes of mate selection. But this view, as you will all recognize, is too narrow. Mormon families and individuals tend to internalize the goal to spread the gospel, and the Church is clearly interested in managing the mate selection process to insure that Mormons marry Mormons and has made that goal explicit in a number of ways. These two conflicting goals represent a very real institutional, family and individual dilemma which is the cause of genuine and significant strain at all three of these levels, but particularly in the context of the family where the mate selection process tends to focus.

I remember as a young man hearing a non-member tell of having made a date with a Mormon girl for the high school Prom, and then showing up on the appointed night only to be informed by the girl's father that she was going with another boy because she did not date non-Mormons. Now that causes me some cognitive dissonance. This was obviously a clumsy, inept way of handling a delicate situation. As an idealistic, young returned missionary, I was inclined not to believe this story, convincing myself that it was obviously a sinister distortion diabolically calculated to make the Church look bad. I hope a few years of age and experience has made me wiser and not just more jaded, but I believe it now. I can imagine the machinations that went on in that home to arrive at the course of action which was ultimately taken.

"But, Daddy, I'm not going to marry the guy, he's just a friend."

"You marry who you date. I won't have a daughter of

FIGURE 2
Birth Rate per 1000 Population - Mormon and U.S.



mine dating a non-member."

"I was talking to him about the Church, and he was really interested. I was just trying to do some missionary work."

I'll let you take it from there. You might want to rewrite the ending to your satisfaction. That little exercise might tell you something about how you manage that particular strain. The point is, the conflict is real, and it focuses pressure directly on the family.

Another example of this ambivalent attitude toward gentiles can be found in the Church sponsored Scout troops, which often attract non-Mormon boys. In many troops this is thought of as a perfect proselyting tool, but in others it is discouraged. The Scouting program has for a number of years been integrated into the broader Aaronic Priesthood youth program. For a while it was Church policy that the non-member boys were excluded from the top leadership positions in the Scout troops because of this broader organizational linkage. This was challenged by some non-member Scouts and the policy was subsequently modified, but the nature of the conflict and its resulting strains have not changed. If you open the Scout troops up wide and encourage non-member participation, the missionary effort is presumably furthered, but some members will see this as depriving their boys of leadership opportunities to which they may consider them entitled. Again, the ambivalent attitude toward gentiles causes a push-pull situation which focuses directly on the family.

Another manifestation of the same dilemma is found in the fact that adult Mormons are urged to become involved in civic activities and cultivate friendships with non-members. But if they do so and become too deeply involved, they may be suspected of straying from the fold to follow worldly pursuits.

This two-edged sword of doing missionary work among the gentiles while remaining loyal and serving the individual needs within the Mormon family and community constitutes a very real double bind which no Mormon can entirely escape. It is a pervasive, underlying cause of tension which must be managed and dealt with within each family as the instances arise. It is parents who fight these little daily battles, manage the decision-making process, and engineer the sometimes agonizing compromises which must be made, and Mormon parents do so under the awesome pressure of knowing that, "No other success can compensate for failure in the home." (McKay, 1964)

There are several issues related to this central ambivalence of Mormons toward gentiles. First, Mormonism constitutes a divinely instituted restoration of ancient pure Christianity. A clear implication of this stance is that other Christian churches are *not* divinely instituted. This stance, of course, does not ingratiate Mormons to non-Mormons.

Within the Mormon community itself, this has resulted in the development of a world view which is another major source of strain and anguish for some Mormons.

This subconsciously scripted world view implies that Mormons should be more righteous, happier, more

inclined to honesty and integrity, more successful and, in general, superior to non-Mormons. The paired assumptions, of course, are that gentiles are more decadent, less happy, less inclined to honesty and integrity, less successful and, in general, inferior to Mormons. On the one hand this suggests an arrogant ethnocentricity which fights against the friendly, outgoing missionary spirit. On the other hand, it sets some Mormons up for painful disillusionment. Our world view suggests that our way of life is God-inspired and thus constitutes in its purity the best of all possible worlds. Any good person of integrity and personal honesty, we like to tell ourselves, will convert to Mormonism once he sees how superior it is as a way of life.

This superiority stance applies strain on Mormons from two different angles. First, we tend to feel we must live our lives as an example of Mormon superiority. This tends to place an enormous burden on the shoulders of many Mormons. When these Mormons see non-members who are not impressed that their Mormon way of life is superior, they feel like failures.

"What am I doing wrong?" they ask themselves. "I know gospel living is superior, so I just must not be measuring up."

As an example, I had a woman tell me a while back about a convention she attended with her husband who was a salesman. While her husband and the other men were in their meetings, the wives had a wonderful time shopping, sightseeing and restaurant hopping—all but my client. When the others ordered drinks, she ordered 7-Up. When they laughed uproariously over little off-color comments, she tried to maintain some dignity, but without much success. When the others spent money frivolously, she would prudently refrain. On Sunday, she went to church among strangers and spent most of the day alone while the other women enjoyed themselves.

Most Mormons go through this type of experience from time to time, but it gets filtered, tempered and re-interpreted for use in fast and testimony meeting or elsewhere in Mormon lore so that it always ends with the defeat of evil and the triumph of righteousness. The stories as they get retold result in someone getting interested in the gospel, or in the heroine getting new insight into how truly shallow and miserable these people really are, and a new understanding of the happiness the gospel brings, or by resisting temptation and sticking to righteous principles, a terrible disaster will be averted.

It was almost in tears of humiliation and guilt that the wife cited above confessed to me that in reality those other women seemed to really have their lives together, and had a wonderful time, while she was never so miserable in all her life. The fact that they were happy and she was miserable in that situation translated to her as personal failure, both because she was unhappy and because as a missionary she was a total failure.

The second strain caused by the Mormon world view of superiority is that many Mormons look around within their own ranks and see the same problems that are

found in the larger community and become disillusioned. "How could those who live God's true religion," this reasoning goes, "be subject to the same failings and weaknesses as those who don't?" Elder Packer put his finger on this strain this morning as he told the incident about being asked what is the purpose for the occurrence of disasters.

I was seeing a teen-aged incest victim a while back. Her father was a member of the high council in their Stake, and was a friendly, outgoing, highly respected and well-loved man in their ward. (I have to admit that as a relatively new, inexperienced therapist the situation shocked me a bit. I can imagine what she was going through.) All during the years the incest was going on, people would come up to this girl at church and say things like, "Your father is such a wonderful man. I'm sure he'll be the next bishop of the ward."

She told me that the only thing that kept her from losing her testimony during that period was that in spite of what everyone said about her father, he was never called as bishop. This is a testimony to me of the inspiration of priesthood callings, but it is not a sound basis for a testimony of the gospel.

Many Mormons tend to idealize Church officials at all levels, and then are shocked and disillusioned when they find they are human too. But this perfectionist attitude is not restricted to Church officials. Another manifestation is the belief that if you just live the gospel, everything will work out. As therapists you all know the havoc this can wreak in peoples' lives. But that belief is widespread and persistent among Mormons—even a lot who should know better.

When I first went into private practice as a therapist, I talked to my dentist, who was a regional representative at the time. As I explained my plans to him, he looked a little puzzled and said, "Well, fortunately with our bishops to handle those kinds of problems and the Church organization what it is, we really have no need for those kinds of services among Church members."

The strains caused by these two factors—the need to live a superior life style, and the belief that serious personal problems should not exist within the Mormon community—are acute. A great deal of energy is devoted to establishing and maintaining an image, both for non-Mormons and for Mormons themselves, that the Mormon way of life is superior. Trying to live up to that superior image is a potent factor in motivating Mormon action, but the resulting tension is palpable. The problems flowing from this tension have been variously termed the "Patty Perfect syndrome" and the "Emma Ray Riggs McKay syndrome." These two syndromes focus on women and ignore the fact that men seem to be about as susceptible to them as women.

Another issue closely related to the place of gentiles in the Mormon-world view is that of ambivalent loyalties. It has been explicitly stated and often reinforced in the Church that a person's prime loyalty is to the family. This axiomatic stance is challenged, however, by another axiom that Mormons should always be ready and willing to make personal sacrifices for the Church. The law of sacrifice, as we understand it, and the general

willingness of active, converted members to dedicate enormous amounts of time and energy to the Church places another strain on the Mormon family. There is an implicit conflict of loyalties to Church and family.

It has been my unfortunate lot to counsel more than one bishop who was dedicating so much energy to his church work that his family was disintegrating. The Church and church service can become an escape for people to throw their energies in to avoid facing the fact that they have serious marital and family problems.

With such high expectations of family living along with the exhaustive demands of church service, it is inevitable that these two areas of expectation come into conflict at times. When one adds the further expectations of civic and community involvement, and personal success and achievement, the pressures can be overwhelming. The strains attendant to these heavy and sometimes conflicting expectations can be demoralizing. Any Mormon who is sincerely trying to practice his religion has faced agonizing choices between his sense of loyalty and duty to family, career, Church, community and personal fulfillment. Managing this strain of divided loyalties is a major fact of life for dedicated Mormons.

In these few minutes together we could not hope to do more than scratch the surface of how the myths and the realities about the Mormon family put strains on the family structure and on the individuals within it. We have not even touched the major subject of the changing role of women in America and how this influences the Mormon family. Nor have we looked at the sexual revolution in America and the strains it causes among Mormons. These, as you will all recognize, are both major areas of strain and conflict within the present day Mormon community, and again that strain focuses directly on the family.

The spirit of this conference has been such that I would like to close by bearing you my testimony. The thrust of this conference as I see it has been on being in tune with the Spirit and using divine inspiration in providing professional therapy services. This is a great resource which most of us, I think, do not tap enough. It was my great privilege to be trained as a therapist by Dr. Broderick, and one of the first things he taught me was how to be sensitive to the Spirit in my work, when and under what circumstances to give blessings, and to see myself as an instrument in the Lord's hands for helping to heal those he leads to me. I can say without question that some of the choicest and most spiritual experiences in my life have occurred during therapy sessions. I know that the Lord has led people to me and used my skills to help them.

I also know that being in tune with the Spirit is no substitute for professional competence. It must not be used as a cop-out. Spiritual guidance and inspiration can be a powerful tool in the hands of a skilled professional therapist, but it will not make up for a lack of competence. I am certain that given the choice between referring a member of his stake to a non-religious therapist who is competent, and an inspired sincere spiritual leader who is a mediocre therapist, Dr.

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EARLY RECOLLECTIONS AS A COUNSELING TECHNIQUE

Ron Jacques,* Ed.D.

Most undergraduate psychology students remember Alfred Adler as being a "student" of Freud and originating the term "inferiority complex." More advanced students may remember such concepts as "lifestyle" and "social interest." School counselors may be acquainted with DUSO (Dinkmeyer, 1973), STEP (Dinkmeyer, 1976), teacher consultation techniques (Jacques, 1983; Jacques & Fuston, 1982), and the four goals of misbehavior (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). Many family counselors may have learned about the family constellation (Nikelly, 1972).

More recently, Adler's contribution to the field of psychology has received greater credit (Eckstein, 1980). Several texts provide an excellent introduction to the theory and application of Adlerian Psychology (Dinkmeyer, Pew, Dinkmeyer, 1979; Nikelly, 1972; Sweeney, 1981). Members of the LDS Church would be especially interested in Allred's book (1968) as it applies to child rearing within the Church.

Early Recollections

One of the primary responsibilities of an Adlerian counselor is to uncover the client's style of life. One assessment tool used in this process is the collecting and interpreting of early recollections (ER's). The purpose of the Life Style Assessment is to become aware of the unique beliefs, motives, and patterns of an individual (Mosak, 1958). A basic belief of Adlerian Psychology is that people only remember those events from early childhood that are consistent with their present views of themselves and the world (Dinkmeyer, Pew, Dinkmeyer, 1979). In other words, memories are not random, insignificant occurrences, but are an expression of the "story of my life."

Kopp and Dinkmeyer (1975) presented a standardized procedure that can be used.

- Think back as far as you can to the first thing you can remember...something that happened when you were very young (it should be before you were seven or eight years old.) It can be anything at all--good or bad, important or unimportant--but it should be something you can describe as a one-time incident (something that happened only once), and it should be something you can remember very clearly or picture in your mind, like a scene.

Now tell me about an incident or something that happened to you. Make sure it is something you can picture, something specific, and something where you can remember a single time it happened.

Phrases such as "we were always..." "would always..." "used to..." or "would happen" suggest incidents that occurred repeatedly. Ask the student to choose one specific time which stands out more clearly than the others and tell what happened that one time. If one particular incident does not stand out over

others, eliminate this event and choose a different early memory which can be described as a single incident.

- Before moving on to the next memory, ask the following questions and write down the student's responses:

- Do you remember how you felt at the time or what reaction you had to what was going on? (If so, please describe it. Why did you feel that way (or have that reaction)?

Which part of the memory stands out most clearly from the rest--like if you had a snapshot of the memory, it would be the very instant that is most vivid and clear in your mind? How did you feel (what was your reaction) at that instant?

Our experience indicates that, although we can begin to see a student's basic beliefs and motivations in the first memory, the accuracy of these interpretations increases when they are based on additional memories. The counselor's assessment thus should be based on at least three memories. Typically, from three to six memories are collected (p. 24).

Sweeney (1975) provides some additional guidelines about how to utilize the early recollections.

- Is the individual active or passive?
- Is he/she an observer or participant?
- Is he/she giving or taking?
- Does he/she go forth or withdraw?
- What is his/her physical posture or position in relation to what is around him?
- Is he/she alone or with others?
- Is his/her concern with people, things, or ideas?
- What relationship does he/she place him/herself into with others? Inferior? Superior?
- What emotion does he/she use?
- What feeling tone is attached to the event or outcome?
- Are detail and color mentioned?
- Do stereotypes of authorities, subordinates, men, women, old, young, etc. reveal themselves?
- Prepare a "headline" which captures the essence of an event; for example, in relation to the women's recollection of the ice cream: Girl Gets Job Done!
- Look for themes and overall pattern.
- Look for corroboration in the family constellation information (p. 49).

Interpretation of ER'S: An Example

Janice, a woman in her mid-twenties, sought counseling to deal with her depression, suicidal tendencies, and to "find my testimony." She was experiencing marital difficulties and had recently lost her newborn child due to a birth defect. She had been progressing quite well in therapy and was expressing a greater interest in attending church. She knew her husband was not interested, but she was. After several weeks with no progress toward attending any church meetings, she was asked to relate some ER's of her early church experiences.

Recollection A: In Primary, we had a dinner of some sort, I don't remember what the occasion was. All the parents were invited, and as usual, I had no parents there. They had a bunch

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TRANSFERENCE TO DEITY

K-Lynn Paul,* M.D.

"God doesn't care about me--He doesn't want me," declared a depressed person. "If you displease God in the slightest way, He will 'zap' you," insisted a compulsive person. These statements might be considered to be characteristic or symptomatic of the types of problems for which these individuals sought help, but they might also represent examples of transference--transference to Deity!

Transference is the unconscious "transfer" to others (often the therapist) of feelings and attitudes that were originally associated with important figures (parents, siblings, etc.) in one's early life. The therapist may then use his observations of these feelings which have been "transferred" to him to better understand and help the patient.¹ Sometimes, however, the patient transfers these attitudes and feelings *not* to the therapist, but to Deity, as illustrated in the following case examples.

Case 1: Mrs. Jones (not her real name), a 48-year-old divorced mother of one adult son, was seen for symptoms of depression and alcoholism. During the course of her treatment she related, "God doesn't care about me--He doesn't want me." Mrs. Jones was the youngest of four children and the only girl. Repeatedly during her childhood her mother had emphasized to her that she (the mother) never wanted a daughter, just sons. While there were reasons in the mother's own traumatic background which made these statements understandable, the effect on the impressionable young daughter was profound.

Mrs. Jones had two given names--Donna Gene (not her actual names). She despised Donna, a traditionally feminine name, and insisted on being called Gene, a name frequently used for males. Her favorite pastimes as a teenager were horseback riding and hunting with her brothers. She obtained a university degree in engineering, which at that time was even more of a male profession than today.

Mrs. Jones eventually married and had one son, but the marriage did not work out, and her husband left her. Her son now grown had some concern for his mother, but was stationed in a distant part of the country in the military service and could not provide the emotional support that she needed. Living alone, Mrs. Jones gradually became more depressed, began drinking, and concluded that no one wanted her or cared about her and, above all, even God didn't care about her and had abandoned her.

Case 2: Mrs. Jan Walker (not her real name), a 30-year-old married mother of two young children, originally

came with her husband for marital counseling, but after two sessions it was apparent that her symptoms were much more distressing than his. Mrs. Walker spoke with intense feeling of how she was always trying to live up to what everyone expected of her and was failing. She demonstrated marked anxiety and some depression. She had many compulsive personality traits and was experiencing physical symptoms of anxiety such as diarrhea.

Mrs. Walker's father was a highly demanding, extreme perfectionist. As a child Jan struggled as hard as she could to please him, but never succeeded. He always criticized her, but encouraged the perpetuation of her behavior by implying that if she just tried a little harder she would earn his approval. Even now that Mrs. Walker was grown, she found him almost impossible to please. If he were visiting Mrs. Walker's home and she didn't do everything his way, he would threaten to leave and never come back. One time when Mr. Walker stood up to his father-in-law, the man didn't speak to them for a year and a half. A typical example was an argument over the cooking of the bacon for breakfast. Jan's father insisted that the bacon be cooked in a pan. Jan's husband (who was also somewhat of a perfectionist, though not as extreme as his father-in-law) wanted it cooked in the microwave so that it wouldn't be so greasy. With these two men making opposite demands, Mrs. Walker attempted to please both by cooking some of the bacon each way. Her attempt at pleasing both, however, usually resulted in both being mad at her.

Mrs. Walker held the view that God was even more of a tyrant than her father. If a person displeased Him in the slightest, He would "zap" that person, and she could quote scriptures from the Old Testament to prove her point. She declared that all her life she had "been on the bottom," and she was going to make sure that in the next life she came out on top. There was only one way to accomplish such a goal and that was to live all of the commandments perfectly. Accordingly, Mrs. Walker participated in all of the activities suggested to Church women (such as cooking, cleaning, baking, canning, sewing, gardening, mothering and visiting the sick) and tried to do them all simultaneously and as intensively as possible. Efforts to counsel moderation failed and she did not slacken her pace until she was exhausted, contracted pneumonia, and nearly died. Only then was she able to see the need to live more reasonably.

Discussion. In the first case, the woman "God didn't care about," the attitudes and feelings that Mrs. Jones expressed about God might have been regarded as simply the gloomy ruminations of a depressive. Depressed people frequently claim that others don't care about them, but even more frequently they feel that they have failed others. To tell whether such statements

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¹ American Psychiatric Association. *A Psychiatric Glossary*. 3rd Edition. Washington, D.C., 1969.

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HEALING: BRINGING THE ATONEMENT TO THE CLINICAL SETTING

Val D. MacMurray,* Ph.D.

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I approach this topic, one that some might find more suitable to a sacrament meeting than a professional conference, with a certain amount of diffidence. On the one hand, a discussion of the Savior within the context of the clinical setting may smack of a glib religiosity that ignores the demands for clinical excellence our clients deserve. And on the other, I feel so keenly about the living power of the atonement of Jesus Christ that I am not comfortable with a clinically analytical discussion of that atonement, as though it were just another therapeutic technique.

Let me preface my discussion with the observation that even my limited understanding of the atonement has been an experience so significant that to it I can trace major developments in my professional and personal maturation as a therapist. I have found--sometimes through unpleasantly pointed experience--that it is not enough to be professionally and technically competent. It has also been inadequate to be only prayerful and spiritual. As President Kimball observed in his centennial address at BYU, we need to be "bilingual" and speak the language of faith and also the language of scholarship.¹ For me, the language of faith echoes and re-echoes with the atonement of Jesus Christ, the center of our faith.

Some years ago, I was faced with a very complicated counseling situation involving not only the use of my technical knowledge and expertise but my understanding of central principles of the gospel. A young man referred to me came with a chaotic record of self-indulgence and violence. Although he was a member of the Church, he had utterly and completely rejected his parents' teachings. He had agreed to come into therapy--even sought it--because he wanted something different and wondered, without really understanding the principles he had heard all of his life, if they could make the difference. He was engaged to a young woman who was an active member of the Church and whose love made him long to change. He had studied the principles of the gospel and acknowledged them as true but could not find the power, even with the love of his fiancée, to change his behavior.

He was suffering deeply. It was obvious during our sessions that he felt a terrible division in his life. He knew what was right and what he wanted to do, yet he had no foreseeable hope that he could attain his desire; and his current efforts, even more forcibly than his past, reminded him repeatedly that he had never been

successful in changing. He felt no connections to God and thought prayer futile as long as his behavior continued to be characterized by willful disobedience. He felt out of control and had frequently been involved in incidents of extreme brutality accompanied by obsessive-compulsive behavior that, according to his own description, "totally consumed" him.

His symptoms were indeed serious and, by all professional measures, any prognosis for improvement was poor. Medication and at least temporary hospitalization seemed indicated but neither produced any change. Medication, in fact, exacerbated his condition by manifesting nearly every contraindication possible. As I continued to work with him, I started to feel the limitations of my technical skills. I seemed to make fewer and fewer positive contributions. For his own good, shouldn't I refer him to another therapist?

One morning, as I anticipated our afternoon session, I reviewed his file of dictation and diagnostic tests. As I closed the file, fully intending to go through with my plans of referral, it occurred to me that we had never talked directly about his attitude and desires toward the gospel and God. In our session that day, I asked him if he had any interest in speaking about his feelings toward himself and God. He did! As we read scriptures together and I explained my understanding of those pertaining to the Atonement, many feelings we both had surfaced. He seemed more open to a more positive view of himself. He seemed surprised at how Christ might view him. I found myself sharing more of what I was learning about the love of Christ and His unconditional love for us all. My client seemed to absorb an awareness that Christ could forgive him in his current condition, and that He loved him.

Over the ensuing weeks, I saw a purposeful effort to employ approaches, principles, strategies, and action-oriented behavior that we had discussed many times but which simply had not "worked" before. He had a new feeling of hope. The despair about himself left and he became aware that he was healing. Over several months, the obsessive behavior slowly subsided. One day in our session he remarked, "I actually feel God loves me and that I'm a good person. I can't remember when I've ever felt this way or thought these thoughts. But knowing that He loves me even in my worst possible moment of sin has made a difference I can't describe. It has given me a faith that I can change and repent."

I have no question that a miracle took place in that young man's life, but I want to stress that there was nothing of the magical in it. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is not a formula or a technique that can be applied

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with X person in Y situation to produce Z results. It is a relationship between two individuals, one of whom has unimaginable power, love and concern, and the other who usually has debilitating and even crippling weaknesses. I believe that one reason for my initial lack of success with this young man is that I was focusing on the wrong things. I was trying to make him behave as if he were strong instead of acknowledging his weakness and turning to the source of strength. My approach was "You can do it!"--when he had overwhelming proof that he couldn't. Perhaps I was expressing faith in him instead of faith in the Savior and asking him to build faith in himself when he needed to develop faith in Christ.

Obviously, a discussion of religious themes and spiritual qualities of life was appropriate in this case because this young man was trying to return to the Church and gain a testimony of the gospel at the same time that he changed a series of devastating personal and social habits. Such candid discussion is not always appropriate because our client may not perceive his agenda as what we would call "repentance." I wonder, for those of us who work with LDS clients frequently, how often we might accelerate that process if we understand the process more clearly.

It seems to me that we are able to be useful to others if we ourselves know the source of healing, and that we have also drunk from the living waters. Christ is able to heal because he is our Redeemer. By the nature of our tasks we are also engaged in a redemptive work and may, appropriately, call on those powers. I am deeply indebted to Eugene England, an English professor at BYU, whose thoughtful approach to the Atonement and personal love for the Savior has been an inspiration to me. He observed several years ago:

A deep feeling of estrangement haunts modern life...The feeling is not at all new to human experience, but in our time we seem especially conscious of it. More men (and women) seem caught up by the divisions in their lives to a terrible anguish or a numbed resignation. We find ourselves cut off from others, relating to each other as things, not as personal images of the eternal God; unable to say our truest thoughts and feelings to each other.

We find ourselves cut off from God, without a deep sense of joyful relation to him;...

And we find ourselves cut off from ourselves. We sin. We act contrary to our image of ourselves and break our deepest integrity. We do not just make mistakes through lack of knowledge or judgment, but consciously go contrary to our sense of right; and therefore we not only suffer the natural consequences of all wrong action (however innocently done), but we also suffer the inner estrangement of guilt--that supreme human suffering which gives us our images of hell.²

The sense of estrangement that he talks about is very deep and very real. All of us have felt it in anguished moments when our consciences accuse us. My young client lived, numbed and bewildered, with that flaying pain. The anguish goes beyond the loneliness, discouragement, and weariness that we all feel, sometimes for days on end in varying degrees. The feeling of being unloving is, in many ways, more damning than the feeling of not being loved, because it is

harder to confess. Our loneliness comes, not only when we realize a void in our lives, but when we reach out for connections and find no one there.

I will never forget an experience I had only a few years ago while doing research on the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. The particular project I was working on involved observations of a medical team working with the chief medical examiner for the province of Alberta. Data collection occurred in the morgue at Foothills Hospital where autopsies were performed. I recall walking into the autopsy room one particular morning and seeing the body of a man on the table. His case history was brief and bleak. He was thirty-four (my exact age at the time), married with three children and had a history of depression associated with his current condition of unemployment, he had taken thirty ounces of vodka and twenty valium tablets. Because I had arrived early, I was the only one in the room. I walked over to review his medical file and the police report. I looked at him as he lay there and many thoughts crossed my mind. Could this have been me? How desperate must this man have been to take his own life? Could someone have stopped him? Did he know his wife and children loved him and needed him? How much despair had he been feeling in his life and for how long?

In trying to answer some of these questions, it occurred to me that the personal loneliness and estrangement and desperation that England talked about must have been very real for this man. He had experienced a lethal division within himself--an alienation from his self-respect, an estrangement from his wife and children, and likely no feelings of connection with God. I recall touching his hand and being wrenched by the profound sadness and the pain that this man likely had experienced just prior to making the decision to take his life.

Most of us are not brought to suicide by our loneliness, but all of us, I think, feel it. The young man whose story I began with perceived it as a seemingly irrevocable estrangement--from sources of righteousness in himself, an apparently unbridgeable chasm between his knowledge of correct principles and his ability to translate them into behavior. To sin and know that we sin is devastating enough. To sin and to know that we may turn again to our sin at the first opportunity is the stuff of which despair, even suicidal despair, is made.

And this brings us to the second major point that Professor England makes.³ As you have all heard many times, the word atonement or "at-one-ment" suggests its healing power, its ability to heal the divisions in our lives, its ability to remove the estrangements and make us into new and whole beings.

Paul's simple statement, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," (Romans 5:8) is deeply important to me. I have come to understand some of the dimensions of that relationship by understanding that as human beings we come equipped with a sense of justice, as Eugene England has pointed out. When we sin, we know that we must repent. Yet paradoxically, the sense of

guilt that accompanies recognition of sin impedes repentance. We feel the need to make restitution, to pay the penalty of our sin in some way, but, of course, we cannot. "God pierces to the heart of this paradox through the Atonement," says England, "and it becomes possible for man to personally experience both alienation and reconciliation, which opens him to the full meaning of both evil and good, bringing him to a condition of meekness and lowliness of heart, where he can freely accept from God the power to be a god."

In other words, love unbalances the sin-justice equation. It does not exchange forgiveness for our suffering or repentance, but "takes a risk, without calculation, on the possibility that a man can realize his infinite worth. It gets directly at that barrier in man, love for himself--unable to respond positively to his own potential, because he is unable to forgive himself, unable to be at peace with himself until he somehow 'made up' in suffering for his sins."

This attempt is, of course, futile. Because of the fall of Adam, sin has become part of our world and part of our natures. As we learn from the Book of Mormon, the natural man is an enemy to God. The atonement is the redemption and transformation of that nature. C.S. Lewis put it this way:

God descends to re-ascend. He comes down; down from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity; down further still, if embryologists are right, to recapitulate in the womb ancient and pre-human phases of life; down to the very roots and sea-bed of the Nature He had created. But He goes down to come up again and bring the whole ruined world up with Him. One has the picture of a strong man stooping lower and lower to get himself underneath some great complicated burden. He must stoop in order to lift; he must almost disappear under the load before he incredibly straightens his back and marches off with the whole mass swaying on his shoulders. Or one may think of a diver, first reducing himself to nakedness, then glancing in mid-air, then gone with a splash, vanished, rushing down through green and warm water into black and cold water, down through increasing pressure into the deathlike region of ooze and slime and old decay; then up again, back to color and light, his lungs almost bursting, till suddenly he breaks surface again, holding in his hand the dripping, precious thing that he went down to recover.⁴

This analogy has the weakness of all analogies, of course, the first one being that Lewis's treasure cooperates neither in its fall nor its coming forth. But it is quite accurate in the idea that we find ourselves in mortality, in a condition separate from the sunlight, which we are powerless to change. The atonement is not only an agent of change in itself, but it also makes change possible.

The Atonement does not deny, ignore, reject, or judge our mortal condition. It accepts it, descends into it and below it--just as Lewis's diver descends into the water--and then transforms and transfigures it with forgiveness and new possibilities. I like Truman Madsen's meditation on the experience of Christ in Gethsemane:

Throughout His life, climaxed by those incomprehensible hours in a garden beyond the brook Cedron, He suffered

'according to the flesh' the pains and afflictions of all the forms of evil doing. He participated voluntarily in the actual conditions that followed the wake of deliberate transgression. He 'took upon Him' the cumulative impact of our vicious thoughts, motives, and acts... Out of his life came a full knowledge of righteousness and a full knowledge of the effects of sin. This means that no human encounter, no tragic loss, no spiritual failure is beyond the pale of his present knowledge and compassion gained 'according to the flesh--that he might succour his people according to their infirmities.' (Alma 7)⁵

And possibly the greatest and most gallant of those infirmities is the wish and desire to somehow atone for ourselves, to suffer enough to pay for our wrongdoing, to somehow present the slate of our suffering set against our misdeeds in the hopes that it will be an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. I am in no way undervaluing the role of earnest effort in repentance, an effort that is often accompanied by bitter tears of remorse, shame, and sorrow. It is the attempt to come to God, clean and whole, after we have repented, because we have repented, that I refer to. Professor England's third point--a simple and powerful concept, is that we do not repent in order that God will forgive us.⁶ We repent because God has forgiven us.

When Amulek pointed out that the Atonement "overpowereth justice," it was precisely man's own sense of justice that he was talking about. When we realize that Christ is already extending forgiveness to us, not waiting impatiently to see if we can somehow merit His forgiveness, then we can accept it. England describes it this way:

Man's usual nature in his dealings with other men, and, most important to my point here, in his dealings with himself, is to demand satisfaction before he can accept, to demand justice before he can forgive. This is not Christ's way... It has a quality of mercy which allows us to be at one with ourselves and thus gain the strength to be the new person that our sense of justice in the first place demanded that we be. We do not repent in order that God will forgive us and atone for our sins, but rather God atones for our sins and begins the process of forgiveness, by extending unconditional love to us, in order that we might repent and thus bring to conclusion the process of forgiveness. And the center of the experience somehow is Christ's ability to break through the barrier of justice, in those men (and women) who can somehow freely respond, with the shock of eternal love expressed in Gethsemane.⁷

Mother Teresa's eloquently simple thoughts expand on the ways we as professionals may extend the love expressed in Gethsemane:

It is not possible to engage in... (direct service) without being a soul of prayer. We must be aware of oneness with Christ as He was aware of oneness with His Father. Our activity is truly service only in so far as we permit Him to work in us and through us, with His power, with His desire, with His love. We must become holy, not because we want to feel holy, but because Christ must be able to live His life fully in us. We are to be all love, all faith, all purity, for the sake of (those) we serve.⁸

In short, in the therapy-change process the Atonement brings the hope of change, it brings the faith that motivates the work to change, and it creates the charity in which such efforts to change are nurtured and nourished.

Once we understand and accept the "shock of love" extended to us in Gethsemane, we can begin to understand the role of the atonement in healing the sense of estrangement we feel within ourselves separating us from our righteous selves, separating us from those we most long to love, and separating us from God. A group of our clients are those who need to understand the process in this way. They have come to us, usually, because their sins are controlling their lives and causing their pain.

However, this discussion would not be complete without some attention to another group of our clients who are deeply troubled, in pain, and bewildered by the causes of their own pain. Although they are undoubtedly making mistakes, we cannot attribute their suffering to their sins.

Not too long ago, a couple approached me to discuss an experience they had with an LDS counselor. I was their bishop at the time and they came in considerable distress. They felt that their family, to use their own words, was "disintegrating before their very eyes" and had, at the point of desperation, come to this particular counselor. They explained the problems of communication, the seemingly unsurpassable obstacles of emotional isolation, the pain of their particular problem. The counselor listened, then asked, "Are you keeping the commandments? Are you praying regularly? Are you attending your meetings?" etc. This couple honestly answered the questions in the affirmative--and as their bishop, I was in a position to know how accurate they were. In addition to the bewilderment they felt from these questions, which did not seem relevant to their particular situation, they were deeply hurt by what they perceived as disbelief on his part and thoroughly discouraged by his advice to go home and pray more, read the scriptures more, and be more faithful in their Church duties.

As it turned out, this couple did have some very specific problems related to ineffectively dealing with their teenagers. With some effective short-term therapy by a very competent counselor, who spent time teaching specific skills in relating to their teenage children, this family was able to solve what appeared to be an unsolvable problem.

Crucial as the Atonement of Christ is to the conquering of sin, it is equally crucial, I believe, in accepting the fact of unmerited suffering. There is a special agony in witnessing the torment of innocent children, the seemingly purposeless anguish of unnecessary bereavement, the agony of the innocent bystander whose hopes and dreams are shattered by the carelessness or malignance of a stranger. If the Savior had not also accepted that kind of suffering, descended below it, absorbed it, and sanctified it with the promise of restitution and renewed love, even the most confident faith in the direction of the universe might well falter.

Professor England points out again that beyond the initial unjust suffering of the innocent are the horrifying consequences:

Victims and dispossessed and their allies have turned back in... escalation---blow for blow, hurt for hurt, raid for raid, riot

for riot, all defended in the name of justice...

Each of us must come to a kind of love that can be extended equally to victim and victimizer, dispossessed and dispossessor--and even to ourselves--a kind of love that moves us to demand justice in society and within ourselves and then goes beyond justice to offer forgiveness and healing and beyond guilt to offer redemption and newness of life.

I am convinced by my thought and experience and the deepest whisperings in my soul that there is a source of that love--one that transcends all others and is therefore our salvation.*

As counselors and therapists, it behooves us to be sensitive to the dimension of innocent suffering and how the Atonement can there too bring healing. Yet this dimension is sometimes a difficult one to grasp. I would like to discuss some of its ramifications in a theological and literary framework provided by the Book of Job.

In reading this book, we usually think of ourselves in the position of Job and draw comfort in our afflictions from his own situation. However, I would like to discuss the role of the three friends who came to console him but who actually ended up accusing and condemning him. At one point, exasperated by their responses, he stops them with some vehemence: "Miserable comforters are ye all. Will your long-winded speeches never end: What ails you that you keep on arguing?" (Job 16:1-3; New International Version.)

That phrase, "miserable comforters" struck me. Even though our working situations are far different from those of Job and his friends, I found myself looking at the role they played in his circumstances and seeing in their behavior some pitfalls that may also confront us as therapists.

Job's needs were real. He had lost all of his children, become alienated from his wife, suffered loss of social status, had lost the physical and emotional resources to serve others, was in physical pain from his afflictions, had a future of poverty to look forward to, and was held in derision. Furthermore, as someone who had daily sacrificed to God and whose worship was deep and real, he also felt alienated from God. His response to this situation was, not unnaturally, deep depression, possibly verging on suicidal thoughts, anger at the situation and at the comforters, and a reaffirming of his own integrity in the face of a desperate situation.

His comforters, however, after their initial silent mourning with Job which recognized the magnitude of the disasters that had befallen him, launched into a process of reinterpreting his experience in their own terms that should make us all very uncomfortable. For instance, they seemed unable to grasp the concept that Job may not have been concealing some secret sin for which God was punishing him. They obviously felt that the solution to this paradox of apparent innocent suffering was to unmask the secret sin. Relentlessly, they hammered away at him. Bildad asked, "Does the Almighty pervert what is right? When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin." (8:1) What grief piled upon grief for a father whose children lie dead to hear that God was punishing them for their wickedness! Eliphaz insisted, "Is not your wickedness great? Are not your sins endless? You demanded security from your brothers, ...you gave no

water to the weary and you withheld food from the hungry...and you sent widows away empty-handed and broke the strength of the fatherless. That is why snares are all around you." (22:4, 6-7, 9-10) This scenario would adequately explain Job's punishment, but there was one thing wrong with it. It wasn't true. Job had done none of these things. Thus, in addition to his other pain, he had to bear the grief of being falsely accused to his face by a friend. Job's friends had only one explanation for evil: It lay within the individual not within the universe. "It is unthinkable," they told him, "that God would do wrong...Job speaks without knowledge...to his sin he adds rebellion." (34:12, 35, 37) Apparently, their view of mortality did not allow for a God who would permit evil, and they felt that someone had to cause it--either Job or God. Since God could not do wrong, then perforce, Job had to.

Job's comforters were not the only people who have ever fallen into this trap. Many make a simplistic assumption about the nature of mortality that could be summarized in the well-known phrase, "The righteous shall be blessed." While this statement is true, it is not always safe to reverse the terms and say, "If you are not being blessed, it is because you are not righteous," or even to imply that "the righteous will be blessed right now."

From the Greeks we inherit a bivalued system: If our happiness is a blessing, then unhappiness must be a curse. From Western civilization, we inherit the Protestant work ethic which asserts that hard work produces rewards. In our Mormon culture these beliefs have turned into a myth: If we keep the commandments, read the scriptures daily, pray, attend our meetings, and pay our tithes and offerings, then we will not have problems in our lives.

It is easy to think that affliction, suffering, pain, and difficulties are the result of sin. None of us would disagree that sin brings suffering and that suffering may bring even more pain to those of us who "know to do good and doeth it not." (James 4:17) But in understanding that sin brings suffering, it is also important to understand that all suffering may not be the result of individual sin. President Romney in a conference address some time ago stated, "Just as Jesus had to endure affliction to prove himself, so must all men endure affliction to prove themselves."¹⁰

It is also interesting to note Job's feelings of anger and depression at the injustice of his sufferings; "What strengths do I have that I should still hope?" he grieved. "What prospects that I should be patient?...My days have no meaning...I despise my life." (6:11, 7:13) These feelings in and of themselves may not be sinful, but a natural result of circumstances. The Lord does not chastise Job for any of his feelings--neither his depression nor his anger. Instead, he affirms at the ending as he had affirmed at the beginning that Job is "blameless and upright" and that it is he, not the friends, who had spoken of me what is right" (1:1, 42:7)

In short, Job's friends failed to be helpful because they failed to distinguish between sin and suffering but had, through their own world view, inexorably telescoped

the two. No wonder he called them "miserable." They ignored the complex reality of life's challenges and of Job's situation. They constructed a theologically simplistic relationship between personal trouble, or suffering, and sin. And they did it with a zealotry that focused on rules and procedures rather than on the person and needs of Job. They seemed to be using gospel principles to punish Job, rather than to lift him from his own feelings of despair and discouragement. Thus, in an effort to provide an explanation in a situation where there was no explanation comprehensible to the mortal mind, they assisted in creating condemnation that only added to the catastrophe.

Sometimes what is needed is not an explanation but endurance, and what a counselor needs to do is not to fill a blackboard with formulae showing where someone has gone wrong but instead to soothe pain and provide strength so that, in a moment of rest, the sense of Christ's continued love--even in the face of the inexplicable--can begin its healing work.

Endurance was the characteristic of Job that the Apostle James singled out to hold up before the Saints of his day; Christ's consolation to Joseph Smith during his sufferings in Liberty Jail also referred to Job's situation. (James 5:11, D&C 121:10) But, as Brent Farley pointed out recently, Job's magnificent example of endurance and faith stems, in part, from the many points on which his experience parallels and even foreshadowed the Savior's.¹¹ It raises the possibility that the Lord does not require our understanding in all of our situations--even though he respects our desire to understand and responds to it. Instead, he requires our faith and trust in the face of our suffering. It may or may not console someone who is suffering to suggest that his or her experience can echo, however distantly, the Savior's. However, the psychological and spiritual benefits are real if that person can offer his or her suffering in consecration--not because he or she has conquered it or explained it away or because it no longer matters--but because that is what he or she has to give to the Lord at that moment.

In the case of the couple who had received such inadequate counsel, it was obvious they were not living perfect lives. Equally obvious, to be told that their sufferings were caused by their lack of faith would prevent such an offering. They needed to feel that they had the potential of doing something right rather than the unsubtle suggestion that *everything*, even their most earnest attempts to be obedient to gospel practices, was somehow wrong.

I think it is instructive to go again to the Book of Job and see in the ending of the story some clues about what the appropriate role of a "comforter" is. After accepting repentantly the rebuke of the Lord for their presumption in judging Job, Job's friends enter his home and "eat bread with him...and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him." In other words, they shared with him the daily rituals of eating and drinking, the homely realities that signal that life goes on. But at the same

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THE MORMON PSYCHOTHERAPISTS: AN ADDENDUM

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In an earlier article, (*AMCAP Journal*, July, 1982, pp. 21-28) we analyzed the contents of the *AMCAP Journal* and identified the extent to which Mormon therapists are trying to integrate their professional training and the gospel. In so doing, we found that the issue is not so much whether or not to integrate but rather how that integration can be reconciled with professionalism.

In the conclusion of our previous article, and in order to provide a frame of reference both for the theoretical justification and the methodological procedure in reconciling the gospel and professional knowledge and training, we suggested the need to consider the existence of three levels of therapy, each reflecting a different value or moral orientation:

THREE TYPES OF THERAPY AND THEIR IMPLIED VALUE ORIENTATIONS

Types of Therapy		
Telestial	Terrestrial	Celestial
Encourages fulfillment of individual, self-centered needs. Ignores social needs and values.	Traditional approach. Clients comfort viewed in terms of accommodation to standards of secular society.	Clients encouraged to perceive problems in terms of family evaluation and a personal relationship to God.
Implied Value-orientations		
Telestial	Terrestrial	Celestial
Hedonism Pride Focus on physical needs Craftiness End justifies means Exploitation of others Conflict Selfishness Individual, relative morality Unfair competition Individual freedom	Happiness Dignity of individual Focus on social needs Knowledge Fairness Self-sufficiency Justice Generosity Socio-cultural morality Fair competition Obeying letter of the law	Joy Constrive spirit Focus on spiritual needs Intelligence or light and truth Golden rule Dependence on God Mercy Charity or the Love of Christ Morality of eternal principles Cooperation Obeying spirit of the law

Thus each progressive level of therapy simply introduces a wider frame of reference within which problems can be solved: from the self-centered individual, to the secular temporal society, to spiritual eternal relationships.

Our religious clients, when aware of our own religiosity, often move on their own from one level to another simply by wondering aloud: "Why would God allow this to happen to me?" But sometimes the celestial

frame of reference can only be reached if we bring it up. Although the senior author has many times spontaneously moved from the terrestrial level to the celestial level in interviews, the appropriateness of the therapist introducing the move was dramatically called to her attention in an interview a short time ago.

One day, a former client called frantically. Her husband had been asked by their bishop to shave his beard. He had resisted and statements had been made around the possibility of losing not only his Church calling but his temple recommend. Coming from a painful, inactive background though active herself, the young wife was very upset. However, she felt pressured to join her husband in rebelling against the bishop's demand. The three of us met.

For some time, the husband vented his negative feelings, blaming the bishop for not warning him that his call (working with the youth) would demand shaving his beard. Feeling my acceptance, he eventually admitted that the bishop was only following an area directive that men working with the youth should not have beards. He realized that his early experiences with an autocratic, arbitrary father had led him to argue and dispute. He admitted that the bishop had actually been very kind and accepting. Now the next move was his. He was to make a decision and go discuss this decision with the stake president, whom he did not know well.

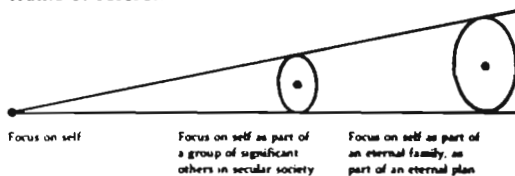
I had participated in many such exchanges during the sixties and seventies, and at first I was not worried as, in most cases, active members have too great an investment in the Church and the gospel to jeopardize it for the sake of growing hair. But I soon realized that accepting his feelings and then looking at alternatives and their consequences was not helping him solve the problem. His decision was to face the stake president and challenge him to prove to him the need for his shaving his beard. We had reached an impasse.

Troubled, I quickly prayed for help. An idea came to my mind: with this client, the terrestrial approach would not work. I had to help him look at the problem in terms of his relationship to the Lord. I asked him, "Do you believe that we are tested while here on earth?" and was greatly relieved when he answered that he certainly did. Together we went to D&C 98:12-15 where the Lord warns us that He would test us in everything, even unto death. We read from D&C 132 and talked about sacrifices in obedience (verse 50), the rewards the obedient receive (verses 49-50, 53, 55) and the loss suffered by those who cannot accept specific personal commandments (verse 54). He was touched, and he related an event during his mission when he was greatly blessed for having "blindly" obeyed. Suddenly he saw

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the situation as an opportunity given to him to declare his faith in God, and he agreed that by shaving he would greatly upgrade his relationship to our Father in Heaven, solve his problem with his ward and stake leaders, and make his wife happy again. He saw the whole event as a test and an opportunity for him to exercise faith and gain spiritual strength.

This experience, coming soon after the completion of our earlier article, helped us to devise a simple schema to visualize the possibility we all have to widen our clients' frame of reference:



There are some therapists who help the client reject his social obligations and thus attempt to find adjustment in a self-centered approach to satisfy individual needs. Most of us, however, have been trained to help clients move from that telestial fruitless orientation to a socially responsible terrestrial level. Mormon therapists can help even more by moving the focus to an even higher level.

To achieve this, Mormon therapists can use, besides their traditional skills, love, respect, and gentle persuasion. This does not imply imposition of values.

Teaching higher principles needs no apology. At any rate, whenever a therapist follows a persuasion he believes to be true (be it Behaviorism, Gestalt, T.A., or the Gospel) he naturally starts teaching that persuasion. Thus, choosing to teach the Gospel is no different in procedure from choosing to teach any other ideology.

Combining the best methods with the best value orientation can only result in the best outcome.

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Broderick would choose the competent therapist every time. The secret is not to choose competence or spirituality, but to combine the two.

As therapists we must know what we are doing and be good at our craft. Elder Packer told the story this morning about the clock repairman who could hear things others couldn't hear and who knew what needed

to be done. The analogy suggested that as therapists we must have knowledge and skills and do our work with competence.

One element in the understanding we must develop, it seems to me, is an ability to look at our Mormon culture and social system with an objectivity which will allow us to hear those revealing sounds that others do not hear; to be able to comprehend the strains and stresses under which we as Mormons operate so that we can help people understand and deal with them effectively without finding it necessary to abandon the Church or reject its teachings. It is my prayer that we might work to thus improve our skills and become more effective tools in the Lord's hands to carry out His purposes.

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of Kentucky Fried Chicken. My Primary class served the dinner. I dropped a plate of chicken in the hall. I scooped it up, and was going to take it out and serve it. A lady came up behind me and realized what I was doing. She made me throw the food away. The floor looked clean to me. There was enough food to feed our whole family for one whole day. I couldn't understand what was the big deal. I felt foolish and stupid that I didn't understand. I felt like everyone would talk about me and our dirty family.

Interpretation: The interpretation of ER's is a very subjective process. It is a process of discovering patterns of meaning that are unique to each individual.

The interpretation is not done statically—in terms of a person's present position—but is, instead continuously related to one's movement. It refers to the direction and cause of the person's transactions with others. It also alludes to where the person is going and to what the person expects to get by his or her behavior—to be special, to be in control, or to obtain special service. Thus, the interpretation enables the person to see the pattern of movement and its meaning (Dinkmeyer, Pew, Dinkmeyer, 1979, p. 95).

Thus, the interpretation of the ER is interconnected with the interpretation of the whole life style.

This ER would suggest a person who feels extremely inferior. She sees herself as clumsy, dirty, and stupid. She sees others as more competent, capable and worthwhile. The world is unpredictable and full of unhappy experiences. She really isn't good enough to go to church.

Recollection B: I went to church with an adult (Janice was uncomfortable with the word "friend"). I was in the sixth grade. During the closing prayer, I suddenly got a terrible bloody nose. I was afraid to get up because I would bleed all over everybody.

So, I leaned over, cupped my hands over my nose, and caught the blood. My hands filled up, and it started dripping. I kept thinking the prayer would never come to an end. It finally did. The person (once again avoiding the word "friend") took me to the kitchen and got the bleeding stopped. I felt embarrassed and helpless. I should be able to take care of myself. I felt angry at myself for not knowing what to do.

Interpretation: The actual event, whether it happened as recorded or not, is not as important as the subjective meaning of the event. Here we see a person, perceived as being incapable, needing someone else to take care of her. She must not get too close to others because the dirt (blood) might rub off on them. From her point of view, she doesn't belong in the church because of her inferiority. She needs others to take care of her but they risk being tainted by her.

Summary of ER's: These ER's were collected for the specific purpose of understanding Janice's reluctance to attend church. They also demonstrate her overall outlook on life. While she was making progress in other parts of her life, Janice still resisted church attendance. It was clearly understood and, most importantly, by Janice that she resisted going to church because she would be an outsider, one who was not good enough to worship there.

Conclusion

Early recollections represent an important contribution for counselors. They can be obtained quite easily and they provide a wealth of therapeutic information. By using ER's, the counselor is quickly able to develop rapport with the client. They help to focus on probable reasons for certain behaviors. ER's also help the counselor to formulate counseling objectives (Kopp & Dinkmeyer, 1975).

The purpose of this paper has been to acquaint the reader with the use of early recollections in counseling. Hopefully, it has sparked an interest in one additional technique that can be used successfully in a counseling relationship.

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are merely depressive symptomatology or transference requires further inquiry into the patient's background. While it is possible to overemphasize the effect of past events on the present, in cases such as that of Mr. Jones, the "fit" seems too good to be dismissed as coincidence. Failure to gather the background information necessary to distinguish depressive expressions from transference runs the risk of leaving an essential component of the person's problem untreated.

Examination of Mrs. Jones' background indicated that as a child she was indeed unwanted and insufficiently loved and cared for by her mother, and as an adult her husband had abandoned her. Mrs. Jones' feelings were accurate, but the problem was magnified when she attributed the attitudes of her mother and husband to God as well. As a result, her despair was intensified because she did not feel that she could turn to God for help in a time of need, which she would have done were it not for those feelings.

An appropriate therapeutic approach for this type of problem would be for the therapist to bring out in discussion with Mrs. Jones the real source of her feelings and to point out that just because her mother didn't want her did not mean that God didn't want her or that nobody would ever care about her. In persons like Mrs. Jones with such deeply ingrained ideas, the new interpretation usually needs to be brought out repeatedly and from many different angles before the person begins to understand and believe it.

In the second case, I attempted early to show Mrs. Walker that God was not the tyrant that she believed Him to be. I also tried to show some of the noncompulsive traits of Christ's disciples that were acceptable, e.g. plucking a few grains of corn on the Sabbath. Yet for every scripture I could cite (primarily from the New Testament) showing God to be understanding or merciful, she could cite one (from the Old Testament) where He did "zap" or destroy someone. Then she would quote, "...God is the same yesterday, today and forever..." Now I am approaching this problem by acknowledging that there are many scriptures which show God to be stern and exacting and that there are many which show Him to be kind and forgiving. I am teaching Mrs. Walker that the reason she focuses exclusively on the strict or stern descriptions of God is because her father behaved that way toward her, and that is why she ignores the counter-balancing scriptures. I repeatedly bring out that her frenzied efforts to please God are but a continuation and extension of her frenzied efforts to please her father, but that unlike her father, God does not expect instant perfection. By so doing I hope with time that Mrs. Walker can begin to understand the loving side of God and can be more reasonable with herself.

Conclusion. When a troubled individual makes

statements about Deity, those statements provide a clue to the nature and source of that person's difficulties, both in early relationships and in present life. Those statements often give understanding of the way that person was treated by parents early in life. The effect of these early experiences on present life and behavior can then be discussed and utilized in treatment.

When a therapist is aware of transference to Deity and uses it in the treatment process, he provides a vital addition to the person's therapy. By liberating the person from psychological problems left over from early life, he enables the individual to seek a more mature and satisfying relationship with God.

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time, they grieved with him over his "evils," the grieving itself seeming to provide comfort. Also, on an immensely practical note, everyone gave him "a piece of money," so that the burden of temporal worries would not be added to his spiritual and emotional sufferings. (Job 42:11) In terms of the biblical story, Job's true vindication came in receiving "twice as much as he had before," but who is to say that the participation and support of his friends did not also play a role? Job's faith in the Lord, though sorely tried, enabled him to be healed from his afflictions.

I know of Christ's healing power, not only as I see it in others, but just as important, as I see it and feel it in myself. I know He is our redeemer and He can heal us. He sustained and healed Job in his suffering even with his "miserable" counselors. I firmly believe King Benjamin's injunction: "For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and forever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Jesus Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father" (Mosiah 3:29).

I believe we must be "bilingual"; we must speak "with authority and excellence to (our) professional colleagues in the language of scholarship, and (we) must also be literate in the language of spiritual things."¹² For me, the vocabulary of the language of faith centers on Christ and his infinite atonement. As one of our fellow laborers of old said, "...we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ,...that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins." (2 Nephi 25:26) May we who are professionally trained continue to develop our technical skills and feel a responsibility to keep current with developments in our individual disciplines and may we at the same time submit ourselves to him who presides over us all that we may truly be gospel centered therapists I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

¹ Spencer W. Kimball, "The Second Century of Brigham Young University," *Speeches of the Year*, 1975. Provo, Ut.: BYU Press, 1976, p.

245.

² Eugene England, "That They Might Not Suffer: The Gift of the Atonement" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, 141-142; italics omitted. Also in *AMCAP Journal*, 1982 (3): 21-27.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴ C.S. Lewis, *Miracles: A Preliminary Study*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1971, pp. 115-116.

⁵ Truman G. Madsen, "The Pre-Eminence of Christ," photocopy of typescript, n.p., n.d., pp. 3-4.

⁶ England, *Op. Cit.* pp. 149, 153.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁸ Malcolm Muggeridge, *Something Beautiful For God: Mother Teresa of Calcutta*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday/Image Books 1977, p. 18.

⁹ England, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 154-155.

¹⁰ Marion G. Romney, "The Crucible of Adversity and Affliction," general conference address, 1951, in *Look to God and Live*, comp. George J. Romney, Salt Lake City, Ut.: Deseret Book Company, 1971, p. 243.

¹¹ F. Brent Farley, "Job: Parallels with the Savior," *Ensign*, Oct. 1980, pp. 26-27.

¹² Kimball, *Op. Cit.*, p. 245.