



Journal of the Association  
of Mormon Counselors  
and Psychotherapists

**FALL 2003 & SPRING 2004**  
**VOLUMES 28 & 29**

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Contributors need not be members of the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists. All manuscripts, books for review, advertising inquiries, and other editorial matter should be sent to: Rachel E. Crook-Lyon PhD, Associate Editor, <[rec2@email.byu.edu](mailto:rec2@email.byu.edu)> 340 Q MCKB, Brigham Young University, Provo UT 84602. Manuscripts should be submitted in accordance with the "Instructions for Contributors" in this Journal.



Journal of the Association  
of Mormon Counselors  
and Psychotherapists

FALL 2003

VOLUME: 28

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## EDITORIAL: VOLUME 28

RICHARD GERMAN ELLSWORTH, PhD

*Editor, AMCAP Journal*

This issue, volume 28 (2003) of the *AMCAP Journal*, has been edited during the transition period between presidents – Duane M. Laws EdD and Marleen S. Williams PhD. It has been a distinct pleasure to work with these two remarkable leaders. Their personal support for the *AMCAP Journal* has been extraordinary. I am grateful, also, for the distinguished reviewers and dedicated authors who have so significantly contributed to producing this volume.

### JOURNAL STAFF

Carrie Maxwell Wrigley LCSW has retired from serving as Associate Editor but will continue serving the *AMCAP Journal* as a member of the Editorial Board. Her remarkable service to the *Journal*, and to AMCAP, deserves our deepest thanks. She served with exceptional diligence for many years, almost single-handedly reviving the *Journal* from a long-dormant state, recruiting editorial staff (including this editor) and encouraging many notable manuscript submissions. She has been an excellent Associate Editor, shouldering much of the administrative load of producing the *AMCAP Journal*. Her diligent service, gentle encouragement, and thoughtful editorial advice will certainly be missed.

Thanks also goes to the Journal Editorial Board and current Associate Editor, Garison L. Jeppeson LCSW, of the University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institute, who continues to serve the *Journal*, and continues as a member of the AMCAP Leadership Council.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Rachel Elizabeth Crook-Lyon PhD, as an additional Associate Editor. A *summa cum laude* graduate of Brigham Young

University and the University of Maryland, she completed clinical internships at the University of Utah, the Baltimore Veterans Affairs Hospital, LDS Family Services, the Greenbelt CARES Community Mental Health Center, and the Psychiatric Institute of Washington. She previously taught at the University of Maryland and the University of Utah, and currently holds appointments in the Department of Counseling Psychology and the Counseling & Career Center at Brigham Young University. In addition, she also serves as a member of the AMCAP Leadership Council. Her insight and exceptional experience will significantly contribute to the *AMCAP Journal*. She has recruited Sharon J. Black M.A., an insightful and very experienced editor, whose excellent editing skills are significantly evident in this issue. I am personally very grateful for Sharon's and Rachel's willingness to contribute to the *AMCAP Journal*.

### REGARDING VOLUME 24 OF THE AMCAP JOURNAL

It should be noted that the monograph published by Brigham Young University Press, edited by Dr. Aaron Jackson (previous editor of the *AMCAP Journal*) and Dr. Lane Fischer (AMCAP president 1998-2000) – *Turning Freud Upside Down: Perspectives on Psychotherapy's Fundamental Problems* – is a compilation of notable presentations from the AMCAP Conventions 1998-1999, and represents Volume 24 of the *AMCAP Journal*.

### CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Professionals interested in reviewing relevant books and media – please volunteer! [see the "Guidelines for

Book and Media Reviewers,” in this issue.] Suggestions for reviews are also very welcome.

Authors of previously submitted manuscripts are reminded to contact the editor if their submissions have not been acknowledged. Please contact the Editor at this address:

<amcapjournal@byu.edu>

All submissions and correspondence regarding the journal should be directed to this address and submitted following the guidelines found in the “Instructions for Contributors” published in this issue. The *AMCAP Journal* solicits manuscripts from diverse disciplines using diverse methodologies, including qualitative techniques as well as quantitative techniques. We are especially interested in discussions integrating a spiritual focus within clinical treatment; specifically, articles that contribute to the scientific literature in the field of spiritually related counseling, via research or clinical report – and, especially, articles which uplift and encourage therapists or patients. Articles may be theoretical, methodological, or substantive; may report basic or applied research following an established theoretical foundation or be based on new ideas; or may reinterpret previously reported research, be position papers, or report specific clinical cases or techniques.

#### **AMCAP HONORS THE 2002 NATIONAL PARENTS OF THE YEAR – EZEKIEL AND PAULINE SANCHEZ**

The *AMCAP Journal* notes that one of its distinguished authors, Ezekiel C. Sanchez (see Sanchez, 2000, “The One Who Stands Within”), and his distinguished wife Pauline M. Sanchez, were named 2002 *National Parents of the Year*. Ezekiel and Pauline Sanchez were also honored at the AMCAP Awards Banquet on October 3, 2002. At that time, portions of the Arizona press release were read:

Mesa, Arizona: September 29, 2002

At a ceremony in the Mesa City Hall, Ezekiel and Pauline Sanchez were honored by Mesa Mayor Keno Hawker and Arizona State Representative Mark Anderson as National Parents of the Year, receiving the 2002 Excellence in Parenting National Award. The award was presented by the National Parents’ Day Council, A Project of the American Family Coalition and the *Washington Times* Foundation. In 2001, Ezekiel and Pauline were the first Native American recipients of

the Arizona Parents of the Year award.

Pauline began her life journey in the Arizona desert on the Navajo Reservation. Though a church educational placement program, she gained a high school education, graduating as an honor student and Outstanding Teenager of the USA. She went to Brigham Young University on scholarship, where she traveled with a performing group known as the Lamanite Generation, sharing her native dances and songs. When she and Ezekiel married, they married not just for time on Mother Earth, but into the “change of worlds” as their native people believe – for eternity. Thus they began their marital journey as their native people had taught them, and they continue to walk together sacredly. Next month, they will have been married 28 years.

Ezekiel, also known as “Good Buffalo Eagle,” is a Totonac Indian born in Mexico. He is the only one of 16 siblings to learn English. He attended Brigham Young University on an art scholarship, led wilderness survival courses with Dr. Larry D. Olsen, and eventually became a full-time staff member in the Department of Youth Leadership at BYU. His knowledge of plants and ancient skills is unparalleled, and he is widely respected for his unmatched ability to track and travel through desert terrain. He has served on President Eisenhower’s Council on Children and Youth, as a member of the American Indian Service Board, as Area Director for LDS Seminary and Institutes in the Navajo Nation, and as Director of Training at the LDS Mission Training Center in Provo, Utah. He has also served in numerous positions in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, including serving as bishop of a ward consisting of members of 30 different Native American tribes.

Ezekiel is co-founder of the Anasazi Foundation, a non-profit organization serving at-risk youth and their parents; Pauline is a member of the Anasazi board. “They have raised 7 wonderful children of their own and have helped thousands of others through their work at Anasazi,” says Arizona State Representative Sylvia Laughter, “their lives are an inspiration to us all.” Their entire family has walked as guides in the wilderness with families and troubled children. The success of their unique approach has made Anasazi Foundation the international model of wilderness therapy for troubled youth and their families. In 1999, Pauline addressed the World Congress of Families in Geneva, Switzerland, and explained the sacred worth of Nihiyi’si’zi’nii – the One-Who-Stands-Within.

Ezekiel and Pauline stated: “there are many caring people of different cultures, languages, beliefs, and talents – who have stood with strength at our crossroads to give us hope and encouragement, to impart their wisdom and their kindness and love to us. We are only one voice for all of them, who live exemplary lives with their families, fellow man, and God.”

The *AMCAP Journal* editorial staff and AMCAP Leadership Council honor Pauline and Ezekiel Sanchez as AMCAP members who exemplify the goals outlined in the AMCAP Bylaws (Article 1, Section 2[b]): “to promote within other professional organizations and society at large, the adoption and maintenance of moral standards and practices that are consistent with gospel principles.”

### CONTENTS

AMCAP has been honored for many years to have LDS church leaders address the AMCAP conventions and to have these addresses published in the *AMCAP Journal*. This volume (28) includes addresses by two LDS General Authorities who have consistently presented significant insights about counseling and therapy throughout the world for many years. Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone was the recipient of AMCAP's *Distinguished Service to Humanity* award in 2002, and this issue presents the inspiring address he delivered on that occasion. Elder Featherstone has supported and encouraged AMCAP from its beginnings: he was the first General Authority to address AMCAP (Featherstone, 1975), and a notable phrase from his landmark address – “you are healing souls” – has come to epitomize the professional goals of AMCAP members.<sup>1</sup> His gracious ongoing support of AMCAP is exemplified by this remarkable praise from his recent correspondence with the Editor:

... please express my gratitude to all those in the AMCAP organization for the wonderful service they render to mankind. François-René de Chateaubriand<sup>2</sup> said [1802], “In the days of service all things are founded. In the days of special privilege they deteriorate and in the days of vanity they are destroyed.” Of course your people are so involved in service that they keep revolving from service to service to service rather than to special privilege and vanity. Thank them on behalf of one who has had the privilege of speaking to them. God bless you always.

Similarly, Sister Sharon G. Larsen's candid sharing of her insights learned as the parent of a difficult child, will inspire and encourage parents and therapists alike. She has humbly written that this speaking assignment significantly augmented her personal learning and therapy. Indeed, this quote from her address (Larsen, 2003) demonstrates her personal insight into psychotherapy and summarizes the mission of AMCAP:

It is a very serious undertaking to work with the inner life of another person. That is why the Lord is such a vital part of what you do as therapists. It is a gift, but also a responsibility, to feel and know what is inside someone else. Yours is the profession that works with the soul – the spirit and the body (D&C 88:15). You help another child of God become whole. What a trust your clients have in you! (Larsen, 2003, p. 54)

The journal continues to publish highlights from the AMCAP conventions. One of the more notable of these in recent years was Dr. John Rector's (2002) insightful presentation exploring the “Paradoxical Nature of Sin,” published in volume 27. It was published accompanied by a response written by a member of the journal's Editorial Board (Swedin, 2002). This current issue (volume 28) presents additional insight in a response from a prominent theological scholar who also serves on the Editorial Board, Dean Ronald L. Farmer of Chapman University. Dean Farmer calls for further dialogue examining LDS concepts which arise from similar views of God's character as does that of *process theology*.

This issue also presents reviews of two significant books very relevant to clinicians: Jeppsen's *Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept*, reviewed by Paul J. Birch M.S., presents a gospel-based outline for addiction treatment. Bergin's *Eternal Values and Personal Growth*, reviewed by Dr. Eric Swedin, is a basic manual of gospel-based psychology.

The 1994 Spring AMCAP Convention featured a number of presentations focusing on hypnosis. Most of these pointed out that even though hypnosis has long been associated with inaccuracy and myth, it can nevertheless be a very useful therapeutic tool. “Freedom of Choice and Hypnotic Communication in Psychotherapy and Public Address” (Ellsworth, 2003) discusses hypnotic techniques which some very effective public speakers and therapists do naturally, but which all therapists may

learn to do with greater facility.

Also in this volume, the concept of *individualism* is insightfully examined by Dr. Timothy Smith & Dr. Matthew Draper. And, in another highlight from a recent convention, Dr. Robert L. Gleave & Roger H. Belisle outline the roles that *justice* and *mercy* play in

mediating interpersonal conflict.

This issue also presents important research by Jennifer M. Vigil, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill & Rebecca R. Nichols, addressing LDS women's career and family choices.

This issue of the *AMCAP Journal* will enlighten all who read it.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 This also inspired the title of the recently published comprehensive history of LDS psychology and counseling: *Healing Souls*, by Eric Swedin (2003, p. 58).
- 2 François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848) was a founder of romanticism in French literature; his musical prose significantly enriched the French language. Napoleon appointed him secretary of the legation to Rome and minister to Valaise, but he became a bitter anti-Bonapartist. Later, he also served as ambassador to London and minister of foreign affairs (*Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2003).



# A Change *of Heart*



*"I found what the important things in life are: my family and their love and God's love for me."*

*-R.C., Boston, Mass.*

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# Family and Career Decision-Making among LDS Women at Brigham Young University

JENNIFER M. VIGIL, B.A.,  
BONNIE BALLIF-SPANVILL, PH.D., &  
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*This study explores how college-aged women who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) make decisions about choosing a career or staying home full-time. It examines how committed they are to multiple role planning, what influence their mothers have on their decision-making process, how much they know about the roles they will assume in the future, how certain they are about choosing those roles, and how involved they are in the decision-making process itself. The LDS Decision-Making (LSDSM) scale was answered by 149 junior and senior women at Brigham Young University. Four factors were found that affect decision-making in this population: (1) commitment to the single role of motherhood, (2) perceiving that mothers were happiest as homemakers, (3) lack of confidence in planning for multiple roles, and (4) active involvement in the decision-making process. Significant differences were also found between women in different academic majors. The counsel of church leaders and personal inspiration – as well as the perception that their mothers are extremely satisfied in their roles as homemakers – seem to most influence young women's decisions about their lives.*

The “mommy dilemma” and the tough choices that women are forced to make today is of concern to women everywhere (WNDU-TV, 2002). Sylvia Hewlett's study (2002) of professional women and their quest for children earned her a “cover story in *Time* magazine, a lengthy segment on *60 Minutes*, and countless radio, TV and newspaper mentions” (Arnst, 2002). Tyre, et al., in *Newsweek* (2003) added to the discussion by describing a trend in which the wife is the sole wage earner, and the consequences of that decision on husbands, children and families. Clearly, as women in the United States are given more and more options about the course of their lives, their decision-making process becomes more complicated. When a woman's

religious beliefs become a factor, the decision-making process becomes even more complex. The purpose of this research was to explore how LDS college-aged women make their decisions regarding their education,

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*Jennifer M. Vigil is an April 2002 graduate of Brigham Young University. Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill and Rebecca Nichols are both of the Women's Research Institute at Brigham Young University. This research was funded in part by a grant from the Office of Research & Creative Activities at Brigham Young University. The authors thank Dennis Eggett of the BYU Statistics Department, Lauren Weitzman and Julian Barling. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Jennifer Vigil <jennifer\_m\_vigil@yahoo.com> or Rebecca Nichols and Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Women's Research Institute, 337 SWKT, Brigham Young University, Provo UT 84602 <wri@byu.edu>*

career, and motherhood. It examined their views on planning for multiple or single roles, whether or not they intend to follow in their mothers' footsteps, how knowledgeable they are about their options, how confident they feel about the decisions they make, and the influence of religious leaders and the LDS culture on their decisions.

In an extensive review of research in the field of women and career development from 1986-1995, Phillips & Imhoff (1997) wrote:

psychologists have a long and rich tradition of studying questions of career development: how individuals explore their options, plan their directions, and enter and progress in their chosen vocational roles. (1997, p. 32)

But gender and religion have not always been studied together within the context of decision-making for future courses of action. Indeed, focusing "on gender and on religion allows each topic to illuminate the other, revealing the gendered nature of religious beliefs, practices, and socialization, and the ways that religious institutions constitute themselves in order to attract gendered, secular individuals and offer them pertinent solutions to the predicaments of modern life" (Davidman, 2000, p. 426).

Furthermore, Scott (2002) has already found evidence that religious beliefs do influence the meaning of work, and hence, decisions about career and family.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints encourages traditional gender roles, but leaders sympathize with the pressures women feel as they make decisions. Elder M. Russell Ballard told the students of Brigham Young University:

I can only imagine some of the questions you young women are facing right now. Should you marry the young man you are now dating, or not? Should you finish your degree, or not? Should you serve a mission, or not? What career should you pursue? Why pursue a career with vigor when all you've ever really wanted is to be a mother? (2002, p. 71)

By focusing on religious women who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, this study not only adds to the numerous studies done on decision-making among college-aged women (e.g.,

McCracken & Weitzman, 1997; Steele & Barling, 1996; Looker & Magee, 2000), but it also examines religious cultural influences on the process.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature relating to decision-making regarding career, education, home, and family covers a range of topics including ethnicity, race, level of parents' education, and women's perceptions of gender roles. Ideas about appropriate roles for women regarding career and family have been traced to such diverse places as children's stories, the media, cultural and ethnic traditions, and individual differences (Phillips & Imhoff, 1997, pp. 34-35). The literature in this area is extensive. For the purposes of this study, only two broad categories of influence on decision making are identified: first, cultural expectations, which include religious influences; and second, the influence of mothers, which is of particular interest given their prominent role in family-based religions.

### Cultural Expectations

**Agency.** Researchers often employ social cognitive theories as they analyze cultural expectations in decision making. In most cases, the agency of the individual is central to the discussion:

Social cognitive theory emphasizes the situation and domain-specific nature of behavior, relatively dynamic aspects of the self system, and the means by which individuals exercise personal agency. (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994, p. 83)

Researchers using this theory focus on the *personal agency* of the individual, specifically addressing how independent individuals are when making decisions:

According to Bakan (1966), agency refers to the condition of being a differentiated individual. It is associated with an organism's striving to separate from other organisms, to master its surroundings, and to exert power and influence. (McCracken & Weitzman, 1997, p. 150)

**Gender.** Ideas about gender roles have persisted for ages. Staggenborg argues that, "these gender restrictions

are longstanding because many forces operate to maintain them" (1998, p. 13). According to *The National Study of the Changing Workforce* conducted in 2002 by the *Families and Work Institute*, two in five men still think a woman's place is in the home (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky & Prottas, 2002). Gender identity is formed when children are young, and becomes "assimilated into the child's self-concept along with the gender schema learned from cultural, environmental and societal cues" (Barak, Feldman & Noy, 1991, p. 512). For example, in their study of 5- and 6-year olds, Barak, et al. (1991) found that there were definite correlations between the traditionality of children's interests and the traditionality level of parent's occupations. In another study done among 17-year-olds, Looker & Magee (2000) found that 80% of the boys in their sample definitely planned to work while they had young, preschool-aged children, whereas only 18% of the girls felt the same way. These two studies demonstrate how ideas about gender form at a young age, before children are faced with the actual decision-making process.

**Religion.** Rarely is religion considered a source of cultural influence in research on gender, education, and employment (Scott, 2002). Yet religious beliefs have a great deal to contribute to ideas about appropriate gender roles. Indeed religions that endorse a division of labor generally advocate motherhood as the ultimate role for women; only in situations of economic necessity is working outside the home deemed acceptable for women (Scott, 2002).

**LDS perspectives.** Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe in the eternal nature of beings, that gender was an essential part of who people were in their premortal life, who they are on this earth and also in the life to come:

President Spencer W. Kimball, in speaking of the separate roles of men and women, said: "Remember, in the world before we came here, faithful women were given certain assignments while faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood tasks ..." We were called, male and female, to do great works with separate approaches and separate assignments. (Faust, 1998, p. 95)

In 1995, President Hinckley gave more specific counsel regarding what some of these "great works" might be as he read *The Family: A Proclamation to the World*. He said:

By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. (Hinckley, 1995, p. 101)

Although this statement emphasizes the separation of genders into specific roles, it also adds the need for equality, a contemporary dimension to the idea of traditional roles and a position held among liberal protestant groups (see Scott, 2002).

Nevertheless, the Church still encourages mothers to stay at home unless a "need" arises. President Hinckley advised:

In this day and time, a girl needs an education. She needs the means and skills by which to earn a living should she find herself in a situation where it becomes *necessary* to do so. (Hinckley, 2001, p. 94; *emphasis added*)

He is encouraging all young women of the Church to get an education and explore their employment options, keeping in perspective the needs of their children.

How do LDS women view the way that their Church encourages traditional gender roles and equality among wives and husbands? Beaman (2001) conducted life history interviews with 28 LDS women in Southern Alberta, Canada. She found that these LDS women exercised agency in the way they interpreted Church doctrine – and that sometimes their choice was demonstrated by deciding to ignore the doctrine altogether (2001, pp. 69-70). She summarized her findings in the following way:

There is some negotiation with what are perceived as the pressures of the modern world, especially around the need for a family to have more than one income to survive. The social context in which the ideal roles are set out by the Church has changed. Women have responded by preparing themselves for a career should the "need" arise ... [This shows] a fascinating blend of acceptance of Church policy, acknowledgment of social trends which would permit fathers to take a more active role in parenting, including staying home with children, and preservation of self as an independent, or potential-

ly independent, woman. Women negotiate the boundaries of prescribed gender roles both within their own families and within the Church. (Beaman, 2001, p. 70)

### The Influence of Mothers

It is evident from data in many studies that daughters frequently plan to follow in their mothers' footsteps. Steele & Barling (1996) conducted a multiple regression analysis to

determine if maternal identification moderated the relationship between perceived maternal gender-role ideology and daughter's gender-role ideology ... [the analysis determined that] this interaction was significant. (Steele & Barling, 1996, p. 644)

Further, Looker & Magee (2000) found that mothers who thought it was a good idea to work outside the home when they had pre-school aged children often had daughters who made the same decision. Bohannon & Blanton (1999) measured the change in attitudes of American mothers and daughters over time and found that although the attitudes of both mothers and daughters changed over time, they altered in a similar manner.

## METHOD

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine LDS women's decision-making processes. Although they have the influences of the world around them, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is central in the lives of these women – and its teachings shape the way they construct the course of their futures. Specifically this study answered the following questions:

- How much do they know about the roles that they will assume in the future and how confident are they about choosing those roles?
- How committed are LDS women to multiple role planning?
- How involved are they in the decision-making process?
- Who are some of the key people affecting their decision-making?
- What influence do their mothers and other Church leaders have on their decision-making process?
- Do they feel conflict or dissonance in their lives as a

result of personal choices that seem to differ from the choices of their peers?

### Sample

The sample consisted of 149 college-aged, LDS women attending Brigham Young University. This sample included a cross-sample of women from different regions of the United States (and a very small percentage from Canada). Only juniors and seniors were included because they were more likely than freshmen and sophomores to be engaged in the decision-making process. The ages ranged from 19 to 25.

Women from a number of majors participated in the study. The majors were chosen based on how many women graduated within each major in April 2001; the sample represented the same proportion of women in seven categories of majors: Business (10%); Education (21%); Humanities (26%); Marriage, Family, and Human Development (MFHD) (11%); Nursing and Food Science Nutrition (6%); Hard Sciences and Mathematics (9%); and Social Sciences (16%). Upper-division courses in these majors throughout the University were randomly selected. After arrangements were made with the professors, the study was introduced and the **LDS Decision-Making (LDSDM)** scale was distributed to all women in the class, who were asked to voluntarily complete the scale on their own time. The completed scales were then collected during the following class period.

Instruments contributing to the LDS Decision-Making (LSDSM) Scale:

- *Attitudes Toward Multiple Role Planning (ATMRP) Scale* (Weitzman & Fitzgerald, 1996). Part of the ATMRP scale was adapted for use in the LSDSM scale. The ATMRP scale, developed by Lauren Weitzman, is "a 50-item instrument [that] was developed to assess attitudes toward multiple role planning." She writes that "instrument development was prompted by current social expectations that women participate fully in both career and family roles and the desire to investigate how women anticipate such role development" (Weitzman & Fitzgerald, 1996, p. 269). From the scale, 19 items were adapted for the LSDSM scale with some necessary adjustments of the language for an LDS audience.
- *Gender-Role Ideology (GRI) Scale*. The second scale

from which questions were drawn for the LDSDM scale was a questionnaire developed by Steele & Barling (1996). Two GRI sections were adapted: (1) items used to assess gender-role ideology; and (2) a section in which women were asked to evaluate their mother's views about her role as either an employed mother or as a homemaker.

- *LDS Items.* Items were constructed exclusively for this scale, focusing on LDS cultural expectations and addressing the sources to which women look for advice when making decisions – such as General Authorities, local priesthood leaders, and patriarchal blessings.

**LDSDM Scale.** The final LDSDM scale contained a total of 49 items, including questions adapted from the ATMRP scale assessing attitudes toward multiple role planning, questions used to assess gender-role ideology, and mothers' views about their roles from the GRI scale, and LDS items constructed for this population. It also included a cover sheet for participants' demographic information, including major, year in school, age, marital status, whether or not they had children, where they were raised, and how long they had been a member of the Church. The scale was initially administered to junior and senior women at Brigham Young University in a pilot study (Vigil, 2002) and then revised for the final study.

## FINDINGS

### Demographic Differences

To investigate the demographic differences among the sample of women and the association between these demographics and the women's responses to each question, a general linear model analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed separately for each question with the women's responses to that question coded numerically to the 5-point scale as the Response variable and the values of the demographic variables (age, academic major, year in school, marital status) as the Explanatory variables. These analyses included investigation of the least squares means and pair-wise comparison p-values, which indicated which aspects of the demographic variables were significantly different from each other with respect to the women's responses to the LDSDM scale questions.

**Differences by Major:** Using a significance level of .05, the ANOVA models identified 10 items (questions

2, 9, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26, 28, 33, and 43 on the LDSDM scale) with statistically significant differences in question responses between academic majors. Within these 10 items, four main differences distinguish between women in various academic majors. There is diversity between majors in how the women viewed the roles of men and women (items 23, 24, and 26); what they thought about balancing both career and family (items 2, 9, 15, and 16); working outside the home (28 and 43); and why they chose their major (33).

The results for questions 23, 24, and 26 are presented in Table 1. Women majoring in Marriage, Family & Human Development (MFHD) consistently responded with the most traditional views with respect to the roles of men and women. (See Table 1.)

Women majoring in MFHD, Nursing, and Education responded, on average, between "agree" and "strongly agree" to question 23 that the sole responsibility of a mother with young children is to home and family. Women majoring in Business, Hard Science, Humanities, and Social Science responded, on average, between "unsure" and "agree" to question 23.

Women majoring in MFHD, Education, and Nursing responded, on average, between "unsure" and "agree" to question 24 that a wife should be primarily concerned with helping her husband's career rather than having a career herself. Women majoring in Humanities, Social Science, Hard Science, and Business responded, on average, between "disagree" and "unsure" to question 24. This result is similar to Scott's (2002) ethnographic study of conservative Protestant women, that they considered being home with their children their primary responsibility.

Women majoring in MFHD, Business, and Education responded, on average, between "agree" and "strongly agree" to question 26 that in their ideal version of an LDS marriage, the husband works outside the home while the wife is a full-time homemaker. Women majoring in Humanities, Social Science, Nursing, and Hard Science responded, on average, between "unsure" and "agree" to question 26.

The results for questions 2, 9, 15, and 16 are presented in Table 2. Women in MFHD and Education majors responded, on average, with the most traditional views with respect to balancing career and family. (See Table 2.)

Women majoring in MFHD responded, on average, between "strongly disagree" and "disagree" and women in

**Table 1**  
*Roles of Men and Women*

Item	Traditional	Less Traditional
23. The sole responsibility of a mother with young children is to home and family.	MFHD, Nursing, Education	Business, Hard Science, Humanities, Social Science
24. A wife should be primarily concerned with helping her husband's career rather than having a career herself.	MFHD, Education, Nursing	Humanities, Social Science, Hard Science, Business
26. In my ideal version of an LDS marriage, the husband works outside the home while the wife is a full-time homemaker.	MFHD, Business, Education	Humanities, Social Science, Nursing, Hard Science

**Table 2**  
*Balancing Career and Family*

Item	Traditional	Less Traditional
2. I should choose ways of managing family and career obligations so I can "do it all."	MFHD, Education	Business, Humanities, Hard Science, Nursing, Social Science
9. The greatest appeal of balancing a family with career obligations is the opportunity it provides for a fulfilling life.	MFHD, Education	Social Science, Humanities, Nursing, Hard Science
15. I'm not going to give up anything; I really want to have both a career and family.	MFHD, Education	Humanities, Business, Social Science, Nursing, Hard Science
16. It's very important to me to try to figure out ahead of time how I could balance family and career responsibilities.	Education, MFHD	Humanities, Nursing, Business, Social Science, Hard Science

**Table 3**  
*Working Outside the Home*

Item	Traditional Views	Less Traditional Views
28. I would like to work part-time as my children are growing up.	MFHD, Education	Business, Humanities, Social Science, Nursing, Hard Science
43. As I was growing up, I imagined myself working outside the home either with a full-time or part-time career.	MFHD, Education	Hard Science, Nursing, Humanities, Business, Social Science

Education disagreed, on average, to question 2 that they should choose ways of managing family and career obligations so they can "do it all." Women majoring in Business, Humanities, Hard Science, and Nursing responded, on average, between "disagree" and "unsure" and women in Social Science were unsure, on average, in response to question 2.

Women majoring in MFHD and Education disagreed, on average, to question 9 that the greatest appeal of balancing family with career obligations is the opportunity it provides for a fulfilling life. Women majoring in Social Science, Humanities, Nursing, and Hard Science responded, on average, between "unsure" and "agree" in response to question 9.

Women majoring in MFHD and Education responded, on average, between "strongly disagree" and "disagree" to question 15 that they want to have both a career and family. Women majoring in Humanities, Business, Social Science, Nursing, and Hard Science responded, on average, between "disagree" and "unsure" in response to question 15.

Women majoring in Education and MFHD responded, on average, between "disagree" and "unsure" to question 16 that it is very important to try to figure out ahead of time how they could balance family and career responsibilities. Women majoring in Humanities, Business, Social Science, Nursing, and Hard Science responded, on average, between "disagree" and "unsure" in response to question 15.

The results for questions 28 and 43 are presented in Table 3. Women in MFHD and Education majors responded, on average, with the most traditional views with respect to working outside the home. (See Table 3.)

Women majoring in MFHD disagreed, and women majoring in Education responded between "disagree" and "unsure" to question 28 that they would like to work part-time as their children are growing up. Women majoring in Business, Humanities, Social Science, Nursing, and Hard Science responded, on average, between "unsure" and "agree" in response to question 28.

Women majoring in MFHD and Education responded, on average, between "strongly disagree" and "disagree" to question 43 that as they were growing up, they imagined themselves working outside the home either with a full-time or part-time career. Women majoring in Hard Science, Nursing, Humanities, Business, and Social

Science responded, on average, between “disagree” and “unsure” in response to question 43.

Women in MFHD and Education majors responded significantly more traditional than all other majors to question 33, “The main reason I chose my major is to help me be a better wife, mother, and homemaker.” Women majoring in MFHD agreed, on average, to this statement, whereas women majoring in Education and Nursing responded, on average, between “unsure” and “agree.” Women majoring in Social Science, Humanities, Hard Science, and Business responded, on average, between “disagree” to “unsure” in response to question 33. MFHD majors indicated that their education was to help them in conventional roles as a wife, mother, and homemaker and were in opposition to women in all other majors who reported they did not necessarily choose their majors in order to help them achieve success in their traditional roles.

Women within the MFHD major expressed more traditional views and almost always contrasted with women in all other majors in their view of the roles of men and women, how they felt about trying to “do it all” by balancing both career and family, their ideas on working outside the home, and the reason they chose their major.

**Differences by Marital Status:** The ANOVA identified one item in which the single women responded significantly differently from the married women. Single women indicated that they felt a greater acceptance among other LDS women than married women by responding higher, on average, to question 46 on the LDS Decision-Making Scale, “I feel like I fit in with the sisters in my ward because I have made similar decisions about career and family.”

**Differences by Geography:** The ANOVA identified 4 items (numbers 20, 35, 36, 39 on the LDSDM scale) with statistically significant differences in question responses on the basis of where the women were raised. Question 20 addressed whether a husband’s and wife’s roles should not be fundamentally different in nature. Women raised in the East responded, on average, that they were unsure, whereas women raised in the West disagreed, on average, with this question. Questions 35, 36, and 39 dealt with the mothers’ satisfaction in her role. Women in the East responded significantly higher than the women from Utah in agreeing that their mothers found real enjoyment and satisfaction in being an employed mother/homemaker.

## Factor Analysis

To investigate the relationships among the responses to the 49 questions in the LDSDM scale survey and attempt to describe the underlying latent factors responsible for these correlations, a factor analysis was performed with each woman’s response to the 49 survey questions coded numerically to the 5-point response scale as the Observable Variables.

The overall factor analysis reduced the 49 Observable Variables (questions) into weighted combinations of 4 Latent (unmeasurable) Factors. Four factors were chosen using a scree plot of the eigenvalues versus the number of factors, and because of the interpretability of these 4 Latent Factors.

The factor loadings represent the correlations between the Observable Variables (survey questions) and each of the 4 Latent Factors. Correlation is a measure of the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two quantitative variables. Thus strong positive correlations (near 1) indicate a strong positive relationship between the survey question and the factor; strong negative correlations (near -1) indicate a strong negative relationship between the survey question and the factor.

**Factor 1: Commitment to the Single Role of Motherhood.** Table 4 includes the largest factor loadings for Factor 1. High scores for questions 24, 26, 31, and 48 are associated with strong commitment to a single role of motherhood and are positively correlated with Factor 1. These women demonstrated their strong commitment to trying to avoid multiple roles. High scores for questions 9, 15, 28, and 43 are associated with commitment to multiple roles and are negatively correlated with the underlying commitment to a single role. (See Table 4.)

LDS women in this sample were not committed to multiple roles; most of these women demonstrated their strong commitment to trying to avoid multiple roles and their dedication to being a full-time homemaker. Of the sample, 93% indicated that they would like to stay at home when they became a mother with young children. This finding parallels previous studies. For example, Gambone, et al. (2003) found that:

Only a very small percentage of women ... reported that [they] would seek outside employment during their children’s infancy. Although the women whose mothers worked during early childhood learned from [their moth-



**Table 4***Factor 1 Loadings:**Commitment to the Single Role of Motherhood*

Item	Correlation
9. The greatest appeal of balancing a family with career obligations is the opportunity it provides for a fulfilling life.	-0.68
15. I'm not going to give up anything; I really want to have both a career and a family.	-0.72
24. A wife should be primarily concerned with helping her husband's career rather than having a career herself.	0.63
26. In my ideal version of an LDS marriage, the husband works outside the home while the wife is a full-time homemaker.	0.74
28. I would like to work part-time as my children are growing up.	-0.63
31. When I become a mother with young children, I would like to stay at home.	0.64
43. As I was growing up, I imagined myself working outside the home either with a full-time or part-time career.	-0.71
48. As I was growing up, I always thought I would be a full-time homemaker, and not work outside the home when I got older.	0.74

**Table 5***Factor 2 Loadings:**Perceptions that Mothers were Happiest as Homemakers*

Item	Correlation
34. My mother considered her role as an employed mother/homemaker unpleasant.	0.59
35. My mother disliked being an employed mother/homemaker.	0.62
36. My mother found real enjoyment in being an employed mother/homemaker.	-0.53
37. My mother was disappointed that she was an employed mother/homemaker.	0.53
38. Most days my mother was enthusiastic about being an employed mother/homemaker.	-0.63
39. All in all my mother was very satisfied with being an employed mother/homemaker.	-0.60

er's example] and plan to work at some point during their own children's lives, women still hesitate to work during a child's infancy. (Gambone, et al., 2003, p. 10)

Likewise, nearly three-fourths agreed that the sole responsibility of a mother with young children is to home and family. Over 70% felt that mothers who work outside the home, when they have young children and it is not financially necessary, are not making their children their first priority. This first factor was almost the reverse of the factor Weitzman (1994) found of "Commitment to Multiple Role Planning" using her ATMRP scale.

**Factor 2: Perceptions that Mothers were Happiest as Homemakers.** Table 5 includes the largest factor loadings for Factor 2. Questions 34, 35, and 37, that describe the women's mothers not enjoying their multiple roles as employed mothers and homemakers are positively correlated with Factor 2. High scores for questions 36, 38, and 39 which describe the women's mothers enjoying their multiple roles as employed mothers and homemakers, are negatively correlated with Factor 2. (See Table 5.)

For the most part, the women in this sample perceived their mothers as very happy in their roles, and most of these women plan on choosing the same path as their mothers chose. Two-thirds of the women in the sample had mothers who stayed at home full-time during their elementary school years; 82% of these women felt that their mothers were satisfied being a full-time homemaker. In contrast, only 44% of the daughters whose mothers worked part-time, and 39% whose mothers worked full-time, felt that their mothers were satisfied being an employed mother.

**Factor 3: Lack of Confidence in Planning for Multiple Roles.** Table 6 includes the largest factor loadings for Factor 3. Questions 4, 8, 18, 19, and 47 all refer to the women's knowledge and thoughts about decisions regarding career and family – and are positively correlated with Factor 3. (See Table 6.)

This factor "reflects self-perceptions of lack of knowledge about planning for multiple roles and ability to prepare for such a lifestyle" (see McCracken & Weitzman, 1997, p. 150). Most of the women in this sample are not thinking about planning for multiple roles because they are committed to a single role of wife and mother and do not feel that they are able to effectively plan for multiple roles. Although 60% of this sample agreed that they could

**Table 6***Factor 3 Loadings:**Lack of Confidence in Planning for Multiple Roles*

Item	Correlation
4. Figuring out how to balance a possible career and family confuses me because I don't feel I know enough about myself or about the stresses involved in balancing these roles.	0.51
8. When it comes to combining a career with a family, I can't seem to make up my mind how to do it successfully.	0.56
18. If someone would tell me how I could manage a career and/or family, or both, I would feel much better.	0.47
19. I seem to spend a lot of time these days thinking about how I could combine family and work responsibilities.	0.42
47. I look to Young Women or Relief Society leaders for counsel when making decisions about family and career.	0.47

**Table 7***Factor 4 Loadings:**Active Involvement in Decision Making*

Item	Correlation
3. I seldom think (or have thought) about the ways I might actually combine career and family obligations.	-0.47
6. I'm not going to worry (or have not worried) about how to combine a career with family until I'm actually involved in one or both of these roles.	-0.52
13. Even though I'm not actively in a position of combining a family with career, I feel there is much I can learn now about how to manage these roles successfully.	0.44
16. It's very important to me to try and figure out ahead of time how I could balance family and career responsibilities.	0.45
17. I'm very clear on how to plan for combining a career and family responsibilities.	0.57

decide how to successfully combine a career with family, only a little over 20% spent time actually thinking about how they could combine those responsibilities. Over half did not want someone to tell them how to manage a career or family, or a combination of the two – which suggests that they do feel they have the abilities to do so.

**Factor 4: Active Involvement in Decision-Making.** Table 7 includes the largest factor loadings for Factor 4.

Questions 13, 16, and 17 describe the women's thoughts on planning and preparing to combine career and family responsibilities and are positively correlated with Factor 4. Questions 3 and 6, which describe the women not involved in planning and preparing to combine career and family, are negatively correlated with Factor 4. (See Table 7.)

This factor shows how involved the women are in the decision-making process. "It reflects the degree of involvement in one's multiple role planning and the perceived immediacy of the need to plan" (see McCracken & Weitzman, 1997, p. 150). Most of the women in the sample expressed that they had spent time thinking about their choices for the future, and 70% agreed that they had thought about ways they might actually combine career and family obligations. Nearly half of the sample believed it was very important to try and figure out ahead of time how they could balance family and career responsibilities.

### **Other Patterns Observed in LDS Women's Decision-Making**

On some aspects of the decision-making process the women in this sample expressed great agreement, but on other aspects there was less agreement. Many women expressed similar feelings concerning the source to which they look for direction when making decisions: patriarchal blessings, personal inspiration through scripture study and prayer, and the counsel of General Authorities are all resources these LDS women rely upon when making decisions. They also state that they intend to work out (or have already worked out) things with their spouse when it comes to deciding on strategies for combining possible family and career responsibilities. Furthermore, these women also answered with significant similarity concerning the roles of men and women: 78% agreed that a husband's and wife's roles are fundamentally different in nature. Similarly, 71% expressed that their ideal version of an LDS marriage would include the husband working outside the home while the wife is a full-time homemaker. Nearly 80% disagreed that marriage should not interfere with a woman's career any more than it does with a man's.

On other items it was obvious that the sample had different views about particular issues, was divided, or unsure. One such question was whether or not their

mothers could give the best advice on career and family. Another question where the sample was divided had to do with the reasons why the women were receiving their education.

### Unique Dimensions in LDS Thinking

Three particular concepts unique to LDS thinking influence women as they make decisions: the sources to which they look for direction; the importance of education; and their feelings of cultural acceptance.

**Sources of Direction.** The factors that have the largest impact on decision-making among the women in this LDS sample were: personal inspiration and patriarchal blessings, the counsel of General Authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the influence of mothers. With 70 to 80% of the women relying on their patriarchal blessings and personal inspiration, it is evident that young LDS women are themselves looking to God to find solutions to the dilemma of careers and motherhood. But also, an overwhelming 95% look to the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for guidance. This shows the great faith that these LDS women have in the counsel of their leaders.

Although these young women are not seeking out advice from other women in the church, it is obvious that their mothers play an important role in helping their daughters make decisions. Again, 44% of the women in the sample felt that their mothers could give the best direction on whether or not to have both a career and family. Even for the 37% who did not believe that their mothers could give the best advice, over 72% felt that their mothers were happy in their roles. It appears that these women are looking to their mothers as role models and they also are aware of how satisfied their mothers are in their own choices. This reflects similar findings in a study conducted by Fleming, et al. (2003), which seemed to "suggest that children tend to most value whatever experiences their own families provided them." (Fleming, et al., 2003, p. 10).

**The Importance of Education.** Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are commanded to "seek ... out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and by faith" (D&C 88:118). It is evident that the women at BYU also believe this. Ninety-one percent felt that college was an integral part of a woman's development. But, will they use this

education to promote a career? Seventy percent strongly agreed that they want to stay at home when they have young children. Brigham Young encouraged women that "they should stand behind the counter, study law or physic [medicine], or become good book-keepers and be able to do the business in any counting house, and this to enlarge their sphere of usefulness for the benefit of society at large" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 1997, p. 135). Although Brigham Young said this over 100 years ago, it is quoted in a teaching manual used in the Church today, indicating it is a concept that contemporary church leaders want to emphasize. Again, although it is not known exactly why each woman in this study who values education would choose to stay at home over having a career, 77% of the women did agree that, to them, being a parent was the most important career. They might feel that the best way that they can "benefit ... society at large" is to devote their lives to being a full-time homemaker.

**Feelings of Cultural Acceptance.** What about the women who are the minority of the Church? In her study, Beaman (2001) discovered that tension emerges for LDS women who do not fit the ideal. Indeed, over 20% of the women in this study felt as if they did not fit in with sisters in their ward. The numbers of women who feel out of place are nearly equal between single and married women.

### IMPLICATIONS

It is hoped that this research will help psychologists and counselors who come in contact with women in the LDS community to understand how these women make decisions about careers and family, how they envision their lives, to whom they look for direction, and what they hold important.

These findings emphasize that junior and senior women at Brigham Young University are neither looking forward to nor preparing for their role as mother and homemaker in addition to a career in some formal sense of that role. On the contrary, most of these women are committed to rearing their children in their homes. Furthermore, those women who are seeking a career tend to be strongly divided on many issues from those who do not want a career, and are more likely to lack the support of their peers. Women planning on dual roles

need encouragement and reassurance that they can find support for their decisions from other members of the Church, and that they can be righteous members of the Church while pursuing both a family and a career. Especially since all of the women in this study relied heavily on spiritual sources such as patriarchal blessings and guidance from Church leaders to make their decisions, the decisions they make certainly need to be honored. This point is pivotal, if divisions between women on the basis of their views on these issues are to be avoided. Young women need to be careful not to judge each other, and to have faith that women who have a different point of view or who have chosen a course different from their own, have done so based on personal inspiration. Indeed, fulfilling individual roles in life may require individually different journeys.

These findings also suggest that young LDS women need to put serious thought into their decisions – not make decisions passively. They need to be encouraged to look beyond their mothers to other women they admire, or to their siblings who may have struggled with similar decisions. There are a number of individuals close to them that may also help them make their decisions: local leaders, including bishops and Relief Society presidents, professors, and other ward members with experience could provide valuable information which should be reviewed in prayerful consideration of their options. Fathers, too, may have considerable insight which would be of great value to daughters struggling to make life-course decisions. Indeed, the counsel of fathers may be of particular value to LDS women who have been taught that their fathers are the

heads of their families – which, in turn, are the fundamental structural units of the Church.

It is clear from this initial exploration of the attitudes and decisions made by juniors and seniors at Brigham Young University, that the influence of the LDS Church figures prominently in the way these college-aged women go about making their choices, and in the actual decisions that they make. As Davidman (2000) suggested, the social and theological aspects of gendered religious beliefs play a significant role in finding solutions to the predicaments of modern life. Traditional gender roles as encouraged by leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as reliance on inspirational resources such as patriarchal blessings, characterize the findings of this study – suggesting that individual theological and philosophical contexts must be understood if the decisions of young women are to be interpreted correctly. Religion and other beliefs do provide significant cultural meaning to gender roles in different groups in different ways. The eternal nature of gender in LDS doctrine, and the celebration of motherhood as a fulfilling and satisfying role for women, is evident in the decision-making processes found in the women who participated in this research. The impact of the beliefs of other religious women may likely be reflected in their decisions as well. Further studies are needed comparing LDS women at Brigham Young University with women at other universities sponsored by conservative religions with traditional ideals. Clearly, however, religion strongly influences the framing of career and family decisions being made by young women.

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# From the Individual to Individualism: A Critique of the Helping Professions

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*Individualistic values characterize contemporary society and many popular approaches to mental health treatment. This paper critiques the individualistic values embedded in the helping professions that implicitly contradict the teachings of Jesus Christ, the surest foundation for mental health interventions. Members of AMCAP are encouraged to search out and replace problematic values that contradict gospel teachings which have been integrated into contemporary mental health practice.*

Elder Richard G. Scott (1998) has emphasized the need to evaluate traditions and practices associated with our cultural heritage against the standards taught in the gospel of Jesus Christ:

You have the responsibility to determine if there is any part of [your] heritage that must be discarded because it works against the Lord's plan of happiness ... there is serious danger in placing [your] heritage in priority above membership in the Church of Jesus Christ ... Where [your] traditions or customs conflict with the teachings of God, set them aside. (Scott, 1998, pp. 85-87)

Though obviously different from the cultural social diversity to which Elder Scott referred, the general traditions and practices of the helping professions may be said to reflect the "cultural heritage" of training institutions steeped in the history of social science. Applying Elder Scott's admonition to the "culture" of the helping professions, this paper addresses one aspect of the cur-

rent culture of therapy – individualism – in light of both scriptural evidence and modern critics of psychology. It is hoped that the reader will proceed to evaluate additional assumptions or perspectives of the field that may also contradict gospel teachings.

## FROM THE STUDY OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE PROPAGATION OF INDIVIDUALISM

The scientific study of the individual was legitimized through the work of the founders of psychology and other helping professions. Indeed, the uniqueness of

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nineteenth century psychology was not so much its content as its approach to the subject. Psychologists attempted to objectively study the individual – particularly the individual in contrast to the group. The aims of objectivity and experimental control seem to have been worthwhile goals, giving rise to many notable findings across the decades. But in addition to increasing the precision of the study of human behavior, psychology's focus on the individual has had an interactive relationship with the social, moral and ethical systems of society. Thus this focus on the individual has reinforced and solidified individualistic values characteristic of Western society.

Individualistic values reflect the tenor of our modern age. Some authors have even gone so far as to call individualism a "disguised ideology" in psychology and psychotherapy (Richardson, Fowers & Guignon, 1999). A great deal of psychotherapy practice assumes the appropriateness of the individualistic ethic, and promotes individualism as an ideal both explicitly and implicitly:

We in America have become a society devoted to the individual self ... Rarely does [therapy] speak of duty to one's society – almost everyone in psychotherapy is concerned with individual gain, and the psychotherapist is hired to assist in this endeavor. (Rollo May, 1994)

The exclusive focus on the individual in psychology, however, has two consequences. First, such a focus limits the utility of the resulting theories and research findings for practice in the mental health professions because it does not take into account the interactive and contextual nature of human nature and well-being. Second, an individualistic focus may also perpetuate problematic ethical and moral positions that may be contrary to the moral systems and practices of many clients as well as the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The focus on individual happiness to the exclusion of other ideals arises due to the subtly held belief that "the basic unit of human reality is the individual person, who is assumed to exist and have determinate characteristics prior to, and independent of, his or her social existence" (Richardson & Zeddies, 2001, p. 5). One of the effects of this view is a sharp division between public and private domains, and a lack of moral understanding beyond the individual's desires (Bellah, et al., 1985). An example of this is the oft-heard refrain "What I do behind closed

doors is my business." Even marriage can fall victim to this process, with some individuals assuming that marriage is only about whether or not their spouse or the relationship makes them happy, completely overlooking the broader moral issue of responsibility to others and coping during difficult times.

In some ways our modern society has tempered such sharp individualism by adding a deeply held doctrine that people are inherently worthwhile, with certain undeniable and unalienable rights that should not be violated. This modern understanding of individualism is called "liberal individualism" (Sandel, 1996). Liberal individualism adds an element of respect and dignity to the rights of all, arguing that it is very important to not intrude on the rights of others. An example of this might be a teenager's attitude of "I should be able to do what I want if I'm not going to hurt anybody." This combination of self-interest and respect for the rights of others results in reluctance for anyone to proclaim the superiority or inferiority of various ways of life, in order to best protect the rights of others. Psychotherapy, in an interesting way, also participates in this process. A good deal of behavior that psychotherapists see or hear about in their practices could be considered problematic if not blatantly immoral by those holding traditional values. Yet rather than discussing behavior such as promiscuity, homosexuality or abortion in moral terms, psychologists tend to label them in terms of "healthy" or "unhealthy" depending on the political climate of the time (Fancher, 1995). In accordance with modern political culture, many issues that were formerly pathologized are now no longer considered problematic, often under the individualistic assumption that what one does behind closed doors is nobody else's business. The practice of psychotherapy has followed this individualistic (and morally ambiguous) trend, seeking to help people become free from constraint and obstacles to happiness, both internal and external. Psychotherapist training emphasizes removing the causes of discomfort or unhappiness, so that the client's "self" might function or feel better.

Paul Vitz (1994), one critic of this trend in psychotherapy, calls this preoccupation with the self "selfism." He quotes Herbert Hendin (1975) from his book *The Age of Sensation* to describe one aspect of selfism:

This culture is marked by a self-interest and egocentrism that increasingly reduces all relations to the question: What am I getting out of it? ... Society's fascination with

self-aggrandizement makes many young people judge all relationships in terms of winning and losing points. For both sexes in this society, caring deeply for anyone is becoming synonymous with losing. Men seem to want to give women less and less, while women increasingly see demands men make as inherently demeaning. (Hendin, 1975, as quoted in Vitz, 1994, p. 121)

The most worthwhile goal in modern society is providing for individualistic needs and wants without looking to greater social or moral obligations. Even familial and marital relationships are understood in terms of what happiness they can provide for the self, eroding the traditional values of self-sacrifice, self-control and duty to others necessary for strong marriages and healthy families (Vitz, 1994).

The clash between the moral practices of clients and the assumptions of psychotherapy, however, is pervasive and can take forms ranging from obvious to subtle. For example, both social constructivism and positivism (philosophies of science) deny the possibility of universal principles of morality.<sup>1</sup> This shift away from universal ethics may be noted in the widespread "value neutral" stance taken by mental health professionals<sup>2</sup> on issues such as homosexuality and abortion. Thus, more often than not, individual morality and individualism, with their more popular synonyms of self-appreciation and self-acceptance, characterize mental health practice – as well as the progressively disconnected social fabric of this country. As Doherty (1995) has noted, "Therapists since the time of Freud have overemphasized individual self-interest, giving short shrift to family and community responsibilities" (p. 7). Such psychotherapy is "self-ish" and unlikely to aid clients who value the importance of family, community, and moral responsibility to others.

Due to the potential clash between non-individualistic beliefs held by some clients and the individualistic ideology of many therapy theories, therapists need to be very careful in their interventions. Psychotherapy, holding the values of personal fulfillment, freedom from misery, awareness and validation of one's own feelings, can be very attractive to those who suffer, regardless of their backgrounds and beliefs (Richardson & Zeddies, 2001). However, by focusing exclusively on the feelings of the individual, and by focusing primarily on the issues of self-esteem and self-acceptance, the therapist may inadvertently perpetuate greater misery. Individuals may

begin to believe that they are at the center of their moral universe, and that if they were truly mentally healthy they would not suffer misery in life. This may build even greater grief and misery when the inevitable disappointments in life do occur. Traditional virtues that help people cope, such as "the redemptive power of suffering, acceptance of one's lot in life, adherence to tradition, self-restraint and moderation" can become lost by the wayside in the face of individualism (Frank, 1978, pp. 6-7). Individualism does not offer an understanding to therapists or their clients about the ways in which society might perpetuate certain inevitable miseries, how they might better live up to their social and moral obligations, or how to fight for societal change rather than just individual happiness.

#### LDS DOCTRINE AND INDIVIDUALISM

Steeped in the traditions of therapy training, therapists may find it incomprehensible that the scriptures contain no<sup>3</sup> references to *self* that support the use of terms such as *self-esteem* or *self-appreciation*. Although some might attribute this to differences between ancient and modern languages, a more likely alternative is that terms that particularly emphasize the *self* inaccurately depict the very nature of existence: people do not live in isolation from one another. Rather, the scriptures repeatedly emphasize the connections and relationships people have with one another. Individualism of any form (pride, self-preoccupation, etc.) is always associated with unhappiness. This unhappiness is destined to grow in the Last Days as modern culture's intense preoccupation with the self also grows (Draper, 2001). Indulging in the wants and needs of the self, at first, breeds increased sensation and increased satisfaction. But over time, sensation alone only provides satisfaction for the body, whereas to the soul it all seems senseless, leading to feelings of hopelessness and eventually nihilism.

When a people have drunk too deeply of the wine of selfishness, they care for nothing, not even themselves. They see no value in anything. In fact, they do not see at all; thus they cannot perceive the light as it pulsates through God's people (Draper, 2001, p. 36).

*Selfism* (or selfishness) breeds iniquity as Christ's love leads to service. Iniquity begets selfishness as selfishness



begets iniquity in an ongoing and destructive feedback loop (Draper, 2001). People become increasingly closed off from others, focusing only on their own wants and desires, walking progressively away from the Gospel of Christ. Their relationships fragment, and they become increasingly isolated. In contrast, successful relationships are the hallmark of happiness because they increase our trust in others (faith), our vision of possibilities (hope), and our level of personal sacrifice (charity). The more that relationships are brought in line with correct principles, the more trust, vision and sacrifice are required, leading to corresponding increases in mutual joy and fulfillment.

Hence the importance of *The Family: A Proclamation to the World* issued by the First Presidency (Hinckley, 1995). In an age of unbridled consumerism, decreased social cohesion, and increased self-absorption, the *Proclamation* reminds that family bonds, if appropriately nurtured, offer essential support. Family bonds increase stewardship and talent development – with a challenge to be better, rather than to just accept one's self as is.

At the apex of this principle is an individual's relationship with God. Over and over the scriptures affirm that personal identity is eternal – and connected with Him. It is the relationship with God and His family, rather than any individual accomplishment that is the very essence of existence (John 17: 2-26).

But all this should not be taken as an argument against individuality. The scriptures clearly affirm the ability to act independently. However, they also affirm that one's actions are connected with other people. And this is the essential part missing from many approaches to therapy – as well as from terms such as *self-esteem*.

### PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTICE AND THE "SELF"

The *individualistic culture* of the psychotherapy profession may prevent recognizing inaccurate principles that can pervade theories and practices of psychotherapy. For example, a theoretical orientation that emphasizes the "self" over a relational perspective of optimal mental health may be utilized. Individualistic practices are found in most of the popular approaches to therapy, including Behavioral (Kitchener, 1991), Cognitive (Prilleltensky, 1990), Gestalt (Saner, 1989), and Rogerian (Usher, 1989). If socially-connecting, unifying

aspects of life are left out of the therapeutic perspective, the support available from non-clinical relationships may unwittingly be minimized. Or therapy may actually encourage a self-focused perspective in clients by placing excessive emphasis on introspection, or by making no intervention or interpretation when a client repeatedly or exclusively focuses on his/her own concerns without consideration of how they relate to others.

Indeed, Vitz (1994) states that the problems of individualism, and the many related issues, are not for psychology to cure but rather for religion to cure. He states that people must lose themselves, and allow themselves to become objects "in the love and service of God" (Vitz, 1994, p. 160). That is, rather than seeking one's own freely-chosen ends, the love of men can be prevented from waxing cold (Matt. 24:12) by looking for opportunities to serve. Clients can even be encouraged to find a purpose in life outside of themselves in a way that connects them with others through service and the process of relating to others. This is a very difficult process, especially in modern culture; Vitz (1994) states that

in order for this to happen, one must let go of the selfist self and of its controlling will, bloated from constructing the interior apparatus of secular competence ... With the preparation of mind and will, transcendent awareness of God's love and will is possible by God's grace. (Vitz, 1994, p. 160)

In sum, clinicians need to look beyond the "self" to the connectedness and interactive relationships that truly characterize existence, and to divine spiritual sources that facilitate those connections.

Clearly, inaccuracies besides individualism could be discerned through further careful comparison of current practices with the teachings of the Savior. This paper has merely focused on one of several potential conflicts between the culture of psychotherapy and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All psychotherapy practices can gain significantly by reevaluating their utility and compatibility with the Gospel (Scott, 1998).

As the one who has the most interest in and knowledge of mental health, the Savior can lead us to truths beneficial to clients and to our own relationships. He can be our Mentor in creating or redefining the culture of our work with his children.

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## ENDNOTES

1. Advocates of positivism state that morality is a social convention and only the forces of nature can be spoken of scientifically. Empirical science is viewed as the pinnacle product of human existence and the only oracle of truth (i.e., Comte, 1896). In contrast, advocates of social constructivism (i.e., Gergen, 1991) indicate that laws and mores are merely shared beliefs that change as society changes – that there are no *universal moral truths*.
2. Bergin (1980) was among the first to make this point. It has since been repeated and amplified by others (e.g., Jones, 1994).
3. The word *self* appears 17 times in the standard works. All 10 occurrences in the *Book of Mormon* are in Jacob 5, with the Lord referring to Himself. Three of the occurrences in the Bible also refer to God (Exodus 32:13, John 17:5, 1 Peter 2:24). Two occurrences refer to people being spoken to (1 Kings 20:22, Philemon 1:19), and two refute the importance of the *self* (John 5:31, 1 Corinthians 4:3). [In the JST, the words *self-will* (Genesis 49:6) and *self-willed* (Titus 1:7, 2 Peter 2:10) also appear, but these have clearly negative connotations.]

# Freedom of Choice and Hypnotic Communication in Psychotherapy and Public Address

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*Historical, theoretical and methodological aspects of clinical hypnosis relevant to free agency are reviewed, including therapeutic hypnotic communication techniques used by effective public speakers. Hypnosis is defined as specific techniques to capture and hold someone's attention, and is herein considered as simply a more sophisticated method of communication – which some effective public speakers and therapists do naturally, but which with study of these effective communication forms, therapists and speakers may learn to do with greater facility. Methods of applying specific hypnotic techniques to enhance the efficacy of psychotherapy and public address are demonstrated, including indirect suggestion, rapport, presupposition, embedded commands and metaphor. Examples are drawn from addresses by Milton H. Erickson, LeGrand Richards, Bruce R. McConkie, Richard G. Scott, and Elaine Cannon.*

The bylaws of the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists (AMCAP) indicate the Association's purpose includes to promote the identification of conceptual frameworks and therapeutic practices that are "consistent with gospel principles" (Article 1, Section 2b; see Westover 1994, p.2). This paper asserts that basic hypnotic concepts and therapeutic methods are consistent with gospel communication principles and practices.

Elder George R. Hill<sup>1</sup>, who was a prominent research scientist for 40 years prior to his call as a General Authority, points out:

there is no conflict between the facts and truths of science and those given to us by direct revelation. Rather than conflicting, the facts and truths in each area complement each other, each supplying answers to basic questions ... Apparent conflicts arise when the theories of science –

which serve as a scaffolding erected to try to understand relationships among observed facts – are mistaken for the experimentally verified facts. (Hill, 1988, p. 72)

It is a basic tenant of our faith that the Lord "will yet reveal many great and important things" (AF 1:9). It is

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precisely because we are committed to believe “all that is true,” that we must diligently seek learning “by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118).

Certainly all that is currently accepted within the field of psychotherapy is not consistent with revealed truth; as Alan Westover MS, AMCAP President 1993-94, has pointed out “we work in a field in which controversial ... treatment methodologies and ethical standards of conduct are prevalent” (Westover, 1994, p. 2). However, there should be no such controversy regarding modern hypnosis methodologies, because they are consistent with gospel principles respecting individual agency. Hypnosis can be considered to be, basically, a very effective way of communicating with a person’s deep self. That is, communicating in ways such that people can really listen deeply – and change. Therefore, it would be expected that methodologies taught by premier hypnotherapists are also exemplified in the presentations of premier gospel communicators.

### HISTORY OF HYPNOSIS

However, hypnosis is not always perceived as a therapeutic or positive form of communication (Gauld, 1992). As pointed out by Melvin A. Gravitz PhD, former president of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, hypnosis has been “beset at times with extravagant claims on the one hand, and infiltration by mysticists and spiritualists on the other” (Gravitz & Gerton, 1984, p. 4). The struggle with such misconceptions is exemplified by a question posed by an LDS Social Worker who asked during a training session, “How do you deal with this negative attitude the church leaders have toward hypnosis?” In order to knowledgeably answer this question, a historical background of hypnosis must be presented.

#### *Animal Magnetism*

The beginnings of hypnosis were dominated by a fallacious concept of “animal magnetism” which was postulated to be some kind of “magnetic fluid” which somehow carried influence from the Mesmerist to his subject. When the theory was disproved, hypnosis fell into disregard and disrepute because it was difficult to separate the theory from the technique (note that the technique did work to induce hypnosis — however, not for the theoretical reasons Mesmer originally postulated).

Despite being discredited by the French investigative commissions of the 1780s (Best, 2004), ideas of animal magnetism became especially popular in America during the early 1800s, blending with the widespread spiritual revivalism of that era. (This same revivalist fervor influenced Joseph Smith’s spiritual quest; see JS-H 1:5-12.) Unfortunately, this unholy mixture of spiritualism and animal magnetism led hypnosis to acquire “a negative connotation ... which heavily permeated the attitudes of reputable medical and psychological scientists” (Gravitz, 1993b, p. 64-65). This also to some degree later influenced Charcot’s unfortunate 1882 theoretical conclusion, later disproved, that hypnotism was merely “a variant of hysteria, that is, that it was a mental disorder” (Gravitz, 1993a, p. 8). Of course, Charcot’s widely circulated hypothesis only served to further discredit hypnosis.

These unfortunate notions/definitions of hypnosis have persisted into this century, prompting such comments (quoted in McConkie, 1966) as that of Elder Francis M. Lyman of the Council of the Twelve:

From what I understand and have seen, I should advise you not to practice hypnotism ... The free agency that the Lord has given us is the choicest gift we have. As soon, however, as we permit another mind to control us ... we have completely surrendered our free agency to another; and so long as we are in the hypnotic spell ... we give no consent in any sense whatever to anything we do. (McConkie, 1966, p. 371)

#### *Medical Hypnosis*

Although unknown to most of 19th-century America, there were several brilliant physicians of that era who staunchly differentiated medical hypnosis from mysticism and spiritualism. These physicians successfully used hypnosis in surgery, depression, and many other medical contexts. Among the first of these was an English physician, Dr. James Braid, whose 1842 book *Satanic Agency and Mesmerism Reviewed* (reprinted in Tinterow, 1970) not only listed successful medical uses of hypnotism, but also convincingly argued against notions of hypnosis being a satanic influence.

Dr. Braid’s work, by separating the use of medical hypnotism from concepts of animal magnetism and satanism, became the apparent foundation for modern medical hypnosis (see Tinterow, 1993, p. 4-5). Note that

such a separation is precisely the stance taken by modern LDS church leaders. Elder McConkie, after quoting Elder Francis M. Lyman's warning against hypnotism, states:

Reputable doctors sometimes use hypnotherapy ... with the practice of their profession ... to relieve pain and aid patients in perfecting their physical well-being [note that the LDS church *General Handbook of Instructions* (1989) also includes mental well-being] ... This medical practice of hypnotism obviously does not carry the same opprobrium that attached to hypnotism in general. (McConkie, 1966, p. 371)

However, objections to hypnosis – even the therapeutic practice of medical hypnosis – continue in the modern church; the major concerns involve notions of agency and free will.

#### HYPNOSIS AND FREE AGENCY

Through the years, church leaders have strongly advocated free agency; for example:

- President Joseph Smith, Jr. – We are not disposed, had we the power, to deprive anyone of exercising ... free independence of mind. (1938, p. 49)
- President Brigham Young – Every intelligent being must have the power of choice. (*Journal of Discourses*, 11:272)
- President John Taylor – Satan sought to take away the free agency of man in the beginning, for which cause he was thrust out of heaven, and has sought to introduce the same principles upon the earth, which principles are opposed to ... the freedom, the welfare and happiness of man. (1882, p. 134)
- Elder L. Tom Perry – The desire to be free has spiritual roots. There is an innate, overwhelming, compelling desire to be free. This desire seems to be more precious than life itself. (1990, p. 19)
- Elder Carlos Asay – We are inconsistent if we resort to Satanic tactics [of forcing others] in attempting to achieve righteous ends. Such inconsistency results only in frustration, loss of the Spirit, and ultimate defeat. (1981, p. 68)

Similarly, recent psychological researchers in agency and freedom have called for “a psychology grounded in [both] freedom and responsibility” (Denner, 1994, p. 143; see also Kernis, 1995), and a psychology in which a person “is free from error [because] the truth of the

matter is available” (Williams, 1992, p. 757). These theorists specifically define *agency* and *freedom* as:

it is not [merely] the ability to choose among alternatives that constitutes freedom [but] the ability to fabricate alternatives and then to test them against selected criteria, including conditions in the real world, [that] is ... definitive of free agents. (Stroud, 1994, p. 142)

These current psychological theory discussions closely parallel Elder Bruce R. McConkie's (1966, p. 26) definitive discussion of free agency, which indicates “the spirit offspring of the Father had agency” in the pre-earth existence and therefore agency is an essential part of the gospel plan (see D&C 29:36). As the Lord told President John Taylor (1882, p. 134), “I have given to man his free agency ... and have never controlled the consciences of men.” Thus it is that free agency played a most essential part in the institution of the gospel plan on earth. Adam and Eve were required to choose to take mortality upon themselves rather than having mortality forced upon them (Moses 3:17); then and only then would they be able to willingly accept the atonement (which also had to be freely offered; see John 10:17-18).

Indeed, the universal conflict between good and evil is, ultimately, a conflict between agency and compulsion (so characterized by Hinkley, 1986, p. 42; see also Brown 1985; Hanks 1986, 1992; Packer 1983, 1988, 1990; Nelson 1988, 1990; Hunter 1989). Without agency there really can be no plan or purpose in earth life (Hanks 1983, Warner 1992, D&C 29:39, 2 Nephi 2:11-27, Moses 4:3). In fact, without agency our very existence is in question – D&C 93:30 suggests that intelligence must be able to act for itself “otherwise there is no existence.”

Thus the association of hypnosis with claims of mental compulsion<sup>2</sup> and spurious “spiritualism” might well foster an understandable avoidance of hypnosis by church members – especially in light of the Apostle Paul's recommendation to “abstain from all appearances of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21). However, the task of overcoming such negative attitudes is not so difficult when the actual nature of hypnosis is considered.

#### THE NATURE OF HYPNOTIC TRANCE

*Normal and Natural Human Process*

So, what is “hypnosis,” also known as “trance”?

Hypnotic trance is a very common normal everyday mental occurrence. For example, you're sitting bored in a classroom, or maybe waiting at the street light (remember this kind of experience?) waiting for the light to change, and you mentally go to another place<sup>3</sup> – so to speak. Then the car behind you has to honk because you don't notice the light has changed to green even though it was entirely within your field of vision. That's a naturally occurring altered state of consciousness, a trance. It's very common and very normal to go into a trance. Anyone who has been to graduate school has experienced the "boredom technique of hypnotic induction." Indeed, some of you may be experiencing that at this very moment!

Hypnosis, then, is not a theory in psychotherapy; it is a method or technique. It is, basically, a set of specialized communication tools, much like speaking Spanish. Some experts (Barber, 1980, 1991; Hart, 1985) have pointed out that the client who does not readily go into a trance is not necessarily "resistant" (in the traditional psychoanalytic sense); rather, that the hypnotist does not have sufficient rapport and/or does not present a varied enough individualized hypnotic repertoire<sup>4</sup> to reach this particular patient – very much like a therapist who does not know Spanish:

the natural variations in the ways people experience hypnosis require the therapist to undertake a "locksmith" approach to engaging both hypnotic and curative capacities ... from the perspective of the locksmith, lack of treatment success means that one has not yet found (or fashioned) the right key – not that there is no lock and no key. (Barber, 1994, p. 254)

But trance happens to all of us often, every day. Trance is a naturally occurring state of mind; everyone slips in and out of altered states of consciousness several times during the day. A trance state is not merely sleep; there's much mental processing and learning going on. It is an entirely routine, natural process for human beings to experience this kind of altered state.

All of you already know how to slip off into an altered state of consciousness: each one of us can remember being mentally absorbed while waiting at a streetlight, or on an escalator; each one of us has gone to sleep, so to speak, in the classroom. You can experience an age-regression trance for just a minute or two, right now. You

can go back in your mind to a time in high school when that certain song was playing and you were with, or wished you were with, your number one heartthrob. For me, in 1963, it was *Blue Velvet*.<sup>5</sup> This triggers a vivid memory of a beautiful girl, and her dress, and the dance, and the music – all memories triggered by the paired-associate cue of that song. The song is, then, an auditory paired-associate cue (Bandler & Grinder, 1979, refer to such a cue as an "anchor").

Now that you've all gone back into your memory and are enjoying your own *Blue Velvet*, you are invited to come back to the present time, and return to the discussion of what exactly is this thing called hypnosis.

### *Therapeutic Trance*

Therapeutic trance is not necessarily somnolence, not necessarily pain control, not necessarily a "deeper-deeper-deeper" kind of experience, but is a

subjective internal experience whose behavioral manifestations will vary across individuals ... It is an opportunity for the subject to set aside his identification with any limiting conscious processes and shift into a context (i.e., trance) where he/she can access and utilize unconscious resources for therapeutic gain. (Gilligan 1980, in Zeig 1982, p. 89)

Such a hypnotic trance, then, facilitates psychotherapy. This is decidedly not an "animal magnetism" type of phenomenon, but is medically therapeutic. Note that hypnosis is not an "alternative" type of therapy; hypnosis was recognized by the American Medical Association in 1958 as a legitimate "medical treatment."

## **HYPNOTIC INDUCTION**

Hypnotic induction specifically facilitates the setting aside of these "limiting conscious processes" so that therapeutic unconscious resources can be accessed. Sometimes implied hypnotic suggestions can be more powerful<sup>6</sup> than directive suggestions (Hart, 1985).

### *Directive Induction Suggestions*

The classical authoritarian method of trance induction (e.g., "go into a trance now"), or standardized induction methods such as the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1962)

are *directive* induction methods. Directive methods do not, or can not, allow for individuality: they allow no alternative pathways into trance, only presenting one standardized directive route – indeed, some standardized inductions, such as the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility (Shor & Orne, 1962, 1963), are presented by tape recording. Directive inductions such as these are often used to determine who is susceptible to [this form of directive] hypnotic induction. Such directive methods do induce hypnosis in a sizable portion – but only a portion<sup>7</sup> – of the normal population. But a significant percent are not able to be hypnotized by these directive methods (see Kirsch, 1997; Benham, Smith & Nash, 2002).

### *Indirect Induction Suggestions*

The question often arises as to why a significant percentage of people don't "respond" to direct hypnotic induction techniques. Those familiar with LDS theology can readily identify a likely reason: free agency is basic to eternal identity. People don't want to be forced; everyone wants to freely make his or her own choices.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, one of the earliest and most pervasive childhood learnings is to insist on autonomy ("by myself"). But how can hypnosis be induced if not by directly and authoritatively telling someone to "go into a trance"?

## UNCONSCIOUS AND CONSCIOUS

Erickson (1957) asserted that two distinct parts of personality exist, the conscious mind and the unconscious mind; he stated that he liked to think of the patient as having a conscious mind and an unconscious mind, and that

I expect to find both the conscious and the unconscious mind in the same patient at the same time, and I expect them to both be listening, able to hear what is being said. (Erickson 1957; transcription in Erickson & Rossi, 1981)

The conscious mind is who we think we are. That is, we think we're the person who reacts in a certain way, who cries at this and gets angry at that, but this is only the conscious part of our personality. As Dr. Erickson often pointed out, the unconscious mind operates "entirely independently" of the conscious. He would often tell his patient, "you're very smart, and the

unconscious is a whole lot smarter than you are" (Erickson & Rossi, 1981).

The unconscious is what is sometimes referred to as the "Real You" (Ellsworth & Ellsworth, 1980), the "Real Self" (Masterson, 1988), the "inward" or "inner" man (Rom. 7:22; 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16). It has been thought of as that "Being within" (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 6:332) "which gives life, force, intelligence and capacity to man" (J.F. Smith in Ludlow, 1948, p. 18), and has the actual power to effect personal change.

Dr. Erickson told many patients that their unconscious would hear and process what he said to them without their conscious mind necessarily understanding.<sup>9</sup> Dr. Erickson was often very careful to explicitly describe (e.g., Erickson & Rossi, 1976) how a patient's conscious mind is always attempting to correct

what did not seem logical, yet the unconscious mind received the uncorrected version, translated it, and made the appropriate association ... Erickson described trance as an active process of unconscious learning. He actually preferred that therapy occur without the client being consciously aware of what was happening. (Slosar 1980, p. 123)

## HYPNOTIC COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

However, as Erickson taught (1957), a deep trance is not always necessary in order to access unconscious resources and effect valid therapeutic change<sup>10</sup>. Even a light trance is not necessary. All that is necessary, as mentioned, is to distract or set aside the "limiting conscious processes" and then to "shift into a context" which accesses unconscious therapeutic resources (Gilligan 1980, p. 89). That's how biofeedback heals, and that's how most psychotherapy succeeds. Indeed, "who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 13:9).

There are many hypnotic techniques which enhance communication with the unconscious. It is useful to consider four: Rapport, Presupposition, Embedded Commands, and Metaphor.

### *Rapport*

To readily gain rapport, Erickson would match or parallel, (also known as "pacing") some of the patient's unconscious physical processes; i.e., rate of eye blinking, breathing, or heartbeat. He did this by making some of

his own physical process to be parallel, via movement or voice tone or voice rate, to the patient's processes. This, of course, corroborates the classic study (Mehrabian 1972, p. 182) demonstrating that most of a communication's message is encoded not in the words but in body posture, voice tone and facial gesture.

Erickson's techniques of rapport address some of the ways unconscious intuitions really govern communication, because intuitive feelings usually arise from unconscious responses to rapport cues (such as pacing physiological processes). By acknowledging and respecting the patient's unconscious physical processes (this message is communicated by pacing them), the patient is unconsciously led to feel more understood, acknowledged and respected – that the therapist respects his/her "intuitive" rate(s) of coping. Much of the real power to effect personal therapeutic change is an unconscious process. And, very little unconscious listening is going to occur if the patient is not feeling respected. Pacing, then, is a very effective method for showing recognition and respect of unconscious processes – and thus enhancing deep therapeutic communication.

Even when not formally doing a hypnotic induction, Dr. Erickson would utilize a speech pattern which paced listeners' unconscious processes, because this hypnotic rapport technique enhanced the efficacy of his communication. For example, in the Ocean Monarch lecture (Erickson 1957), while talking about someone observing hypnosis, Dr. Erickson's voice tone and breath patterns are carefully rhythmically paced to parallel his listeners' normal breathing rate:

They're well aware of the fact – [beat]  
that this is a lecture – [beat]  
that it is not personally directed to them,  
that all that is directed to them – [beat]  
is – [beat]  
the general understanding ...

The most effective gospel communicators often have a public speaking style similar to what is termed *breath-rate pacing*, as well as other Ericksonian hypnotic communication techniques, which leads to much more effective (i.e., unconscious-level) communication.

For example, Elder Bruce R. McConkie<sup>11</sup> and Elder LeGrand Richards,<sup>12</sup> two of the greatest church orators of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, consistently demonstrated this

breath-rate pacing technique. Elder LeGrand Richards punctuated nearly every sentence at a rate closely pacing listeners' breathing. His oft-repeated inspiring discussion of how missions build character is perhaps his most well-known (Richards 1978, p. 34):

I wouldn't want to raise a boy,  
and not have him go – [beat]  
on a – [beat]  
mission!

Elder Bruce R. McConkie exemplified a vocal rhythm style similar to Dr. Erickson's verbal pacing, which greatly emphasized and facilitated understanding of the inspired messages on a deep level. For example (McConkie 1979, p. 93):<sup>13</sup>

We must do all we can, [beat]  
to proclaim peace, [beat]  
to avoid war, [beat]  
to heal disease, [beat]  
to prepare for natural disasters – [beat, beat]  
but with it all, [beat]  
that which is to be, [beat]  
shall be ...  
Relying always on the Lord, [beat]  
we must become independent, [beat]  
of the world. [beat, beat]  
We must be, [beat, beat]  
self- [beat]  
reliant. [beat]

It is likely, then, that Elder McConkie's message was communicated more effectively and powerfully, because he spoke it – [beat] – in the same pattern – [beat] – that we tend to unconsciously – [beat] – breathe.

#### *Presupposition and Embedded Commands*

As an example of presupposition, Dr. Erickson might have said something like this: "I don't know how soon you are going to go into trance, but I've never had a patient who hasn't gone into trance, here, and you are here, and are a patient of mine, are you not? And you are here, are you not?" The patient of course agrees "Well, yes, I'm here, yes, and I'm your patient today, yes." So not only is Dr. Erickson assuming that the patient will readily go into a trance, but he uses the additional technique



of inducing repeated agreements, "Yes, yes, yes," from the patient. Very soon it's just a matter of asking, "And you do want to **go into a trance now**, don't you? But I wouldn't want you to **go into a trance** too soon, to **go into a trance right away**." And this draws another "yes" from the confused patient because of the already established pattern of agreement.

Note that this last example includes the repeated phrase "you do want to go into a trance, now ... go into a trance soon ... go into a trance right away." This exemplifies the embedded command technique (i.e., **go into a trance**). The cognitive processing principle which enlivens embedded commands with presupposition has been outlined by Bandler & Grinder (1979); they title this "You Can't Not Understand."

To examine this cognitive process in more detail, consider what happens mentally upon hearing the example (from Bandler & Grinder, 1979), "Don't think of blue." Specifically, how does the language interpretation process work, in this case, with such negated sentences? In the course of being processed from sound to meaning, the structure of a sentence is mentally transformed, manipulated and reworked, in order to proceed from sound to meaningful understanding. Academically this process is outlined in linguistic syntactic theory. First a positive version of the negated phrase is created, and then the negation "don't" is added. That is, "think of blue" is the first phrase processed. And, as many of you probably experienced, "blue" almost immediately appears in the mind. When the "don't" portion is interpreted, the mental vision of "blue" is removed. That is, there's a stage in this mental process when only the non-negated command is there; i.e., "think of blue." Then almost immediately the "don't" is added, and thinking of blue is removed. Perhaps this explains why when a child is told "don't spill the milk" he of course spills the milk. So, because of "You Can't Not Understand," the mind automatically obeys the brief command; i.e., to "think of blue" or "spill the milk."

Embedded commands can be used in many contexts besides a negation, and in conjunction with presuppositions, are perhaps the most powerful of the communication techniques in the Ericksonian repertoire. Further examples are:

- "I don't know how long it will be before **you start to feel even more comfortable** than you're feeling right now" (note the embedded command: "you start to feel even more comfortable")

- "I've been thinking a long time about hypnosis and wondering about, how some people **go into a trance, now**, and other people **go into a trance** later and I don't know how you're going to **go into a trance** but I do know that trance is a very common happening, and ..."

Many people more readily enter into a trance due to the repeated embedded command, "go into a trance." The point is that within all that other verbiage there is the clear command to enter trance. Now some therapists think such embeddings need to be marked out with intonation; that is, to emphasize in voice tone the embedded message which is actually intended to be received. Of course, in teaching presentations there has to be some over-exaggeration for didactic purposes. However, in the therapeutic situation, such exaggeration may not be necessary. It is believed that the unconscious mind will readily understand; indeed, it "can't not understand." Besides, it is vital that the conscious mind does not realize these messages are being communicated to the unconscious, because then the conscious mind could intervene and sabotage the therapeutic effect.

Another example of embedded commands, which employed a confusion technique as well, occurred while I was visiting a friend who had been hospitalized with a very painful aneurysm and partial paralysis, yet was experiencing tremendous pain, unable to sleep or even think clearly due to the pain. He was understandably very focused on the two pain control medications which he was to receive on a schedule of one every 3 hours and the other every 4 hours. While he was waiting to be transferred to another room in the hospital, I leaned over and said something like this: "You are about to **go to another place, to be involved in a transfer** to another room – and, that **this transfer is a way to be more and more comfortable, even better**, since you've been waiting in this room for the past few days, but that, of course, now you will **leave behind some painful memories** in this room." Also, I mentioned sympathetically, "How frustrating and **how confusing it must be** to understand this medication schedule, that you could only have one medication every three hours, or was it the two medications every four hours, which has of course made **you be confused**, so that you're not really sure when **it is time for you to get pain relief**, are you? It is so easy to **get confused** just thinking about it, and it's

certain that **you are confused**; if you can, figure out how many of the medication you can have during the day, at, you know, 4 times per day; that would be one every 6 hours – but wait a minute, it seems that it was really every 4 hours, wasn't it – which would be 6 times per day, was it not? Yes, and that would imply, wouldn't it, that **you can get relief a lot more often**. Is that not correct? **This way you can get relief a lot more often**. And I think it's still so very **easy to be confused** about the second medication to **stop your pain**, how long in between doses is it that **you are allowed to have relief from the pain**. Was it 8 pills a day, since that's what 24 hours divided by 3 is, or was it 3 pills a day, or was it a pill every 3 hours? I don't know; it's so easy to **be confused about this, and get relief from the pain most of the time** – or does it mean that **you will get relief all of the time**? I'm certainly not sure, but I do know that **you are feeling confused** about the schedule for you to **be relieved of pain**, but one thing is certain, and that's the fact that on this schedule that some of the times, **somehow you are already getting relief from the pain**, because you are lying here now, are you not? And thinking **you'll be, uh, transferred right away**. Now, **remember, you're in the middle of a transfer** to another room here in this hospital, so you can more **easily go to sleep, and rest** – so that **after this transfer you'll wake up peacefully and refreshed**.

Then it happened just like in the hypnosis journals: he fell asleep and awakened refreshed in his new room. During his long subsequent medical recovery, he never mentioned the overwhelming pain again. And neither did I!

#### *Examples in LDS Public Address*

Church authorities desire so sincerely to communicate deeply and directly with their listeners. Using hypnotic techniques such as pacing in public address is unconsciously mediated: church authorities are of course not trained in hypnotic communication techniques; they are not manipulative people carefully planning to overpower listeners with sophisticated hypnotic methodologies. Rather, by opening their hearts to inspiration, these premier gospel communicators receive specific spiritual direction not only regarding the topics and doctrines of their addresses, but regarding the very mode of presentation as well.

Among LDS church leaders, Elder Richard G. Scott most readily exemplifies these communication

techniques (now that Elder Bruce R. McConkie and Elder LeGrand Richards are gone). And, it is very clear that Elder Scott's sincere goal is to most effectively present inspired communication to the hearts of his listeners. In this he readily succeeds – his addresses do indeed touch the heart, uplifting in ways beyond consciousness. It is not surprising that in these powerful addresses, Elder Scott masterfully demonstrates pacing, presupposition and embeddings in multiple contexts. For example (Scott 1992a, p. 33):

You **must understand**, [beat]  
that **you are free**, [beat]  
to **determine to overcome**, [beat]  
the harmful results of abuse.

Elder Scott also exemplifies voice tone patterns similar to Dr. Erickson's. Many therapists remember Dr. Erickson's favorite word, "nowww..." Note the similar use of "now" in Elder Scott's memorable discussion of emotional healing (Scott 1992b, p. 62):

May the Lord **soften your heart** ...  
May he give you the courage and strength to [beat]  
**begin to be healed**, [beat] [beat]  
**now** ...

This very inspiring message is communicated much more powerfully by the use of these hypnotic communication patterns.

#### *Metaphor*

Students of the New Testament are well aware of how powerful a teaching tool metaphorical stories and parables are. Indeed, it is often the case that metaphors motivate very powerful teaching on the unconscious level; thus Jesus usually did not "explain" the parables (see Matthew 13:9-17, when the disciples became focused on a conscious interpretation). Similarly, therapeutic metaphors or stories or parables are sometimes best presented without conscious interpretations, because such explanations can at times distract<sup>14</sup> from the unconscious learning and undermine therapeutic outcome.

Some premier examples of such therapeutic metaphors, teaching stories or parables, have been presented by Sister Elaine Cannon (1983) and Elder Richard G. Scott (1992b):

I was fascinated watching the children deal with their environment. Some deliberately plowed right through the deep mud puddles time and again – and came forth filthy. Others automatically marched around the puddle, almost oblivious to it. Many absolutely couldn't resist the temptation to gingerly touch a toe in the mire. One little girl, afterwards, stooped over and tried to wipe the mud from her shoe, then from her hand; then she brushed the spot on her clothes where she had wiped her hand. *Mud is tough to erase.* (Cannon 1983, p. 88)

Elder Scott (1992b) presented this powerful metaphor regarding drug abuse:

The most treasured experience was the rope swing Uncle Zane had hung in a tall tree near a beautiful brook. Its long gliding passes provided hours of pure joy. We would arch our backs and fling our legs and feet to see who could go the fastest and highest. It was sheer delight! Once, to treat me to even more excitement, my brother Gerald put me on the wooden seat, then rotated the swing until the ropes were twisted in a double row of knots. With a mighty thrust he launched me into a spin of ever-increasing velocity. At first there was a feeling of exhilaration as I began to pick up speed. That short-lived pleasure was quickly replaced by increasing feelings of dizziness, nausea, and just plain terror. When the horrible experience was over, I couldn't walk without falling, my head reeled, and I was certain my stomach would never again be the same. Throughout it all, Gerald jumped with glee. When I finally fell out of the seat, he shouted, "Wasn't that terrific?" My mind thought, "You're crazy," but my mouth said, "Yeah, that was great. Get in and I'll show you how much fun it is." (Scott 1992b, p. 60)

Now, which is the more effective, meaningful communication: these two marvelous metaphorical stories, or to advise "just say no to drugs"?

#### *You Can't Not Understand Part 2: Further Techniques*

There are many other hypnotic techniques which enhance communication, such as talking to someone while really directing messages to a third party who doesn't think the messages are for him/her. This is an especially useful technique in marital and group counseling. This is very effectively exemplified in the video, *The Artistry of Milton H. Erickson, M.D.* (Lustig 1975;

transcribed in Grinder, et al. 1977), where Dr. Erickson works with one person (Nick) while supposedly talking with another (Mondie). Additionally, there were many times while giving a lecture that Erickson would single out a member of the audience to demonstrate hypnotic phenomena while he was seeming to be merely discussing theories of hypnosis. In fact, sometimes Dr. Erickson would use as a clandestine induction a discussion of how "when they listen to a lecture about hypnosis, they ..." (Erickson, 1957). He then would describe the very actions of his intended subject at that moment, and embed within his lecture commands to enter trance.

#### **SAMPLE INDUCTION**

Presenting this topic to a group audience, in order to create a personal experience with therapeutic hypnotic trance, I said something like the following:

It's important to remember that the unconscious mind operates independently of the conscious mind. When I talked earlier about going into a trance, talking for example with embedded commands and marking things out, you probably noticed some things were happening to you, at the moment, as you were relaxing and as you were sitting there, you know, you might want to uncross your legs, or something like that; remembering some of the things I was saying were like that, and you can probably remember right now. It was about a half-hour ago but you can remember at this moment what it felt like to just sort of drift off like that, so you can remember what it felt like to drift off the last time you found yourself having to get honked at, for example, when you were at the intersection street light. I mentioned earlier about getting a series of *yes* answers from the hypnotic subject, and that's another way for you to go into a trance. And all of you can, now that you're here at this conference today, just go ahead and try it: just go ahead and let yourself, go ahead and let your mind wander. Just go ahead with that upright person who might be in your office later this week, and just say, "I wonder, I'm just wondering, how soon it will be before you feel more comfortable than you feel comfortable now?" Do you really think that they might or could object to that? Is that an affront to your client's free agency or integrity? Just say, "I wonder how soon you're sitting very very still, now, and I wonder if you could feel, um, would you like to feel more comfortable than you're feeling now?"

The answer, of course, is “yes,” since you are sitting here, already, now, are you not? Of course you are. And you do feel even more relaxed, now, do you not? Why, yes, of course you are feeling even more comfortable. Well, there’s a series of “yeses” – and that is the first step for you to induce a trance yourself. And if you notice, the things that I was saying did have some embedded commands for you to feel more comfortable, now, and the point is that you absorb the complete attention of the conscious mind, so that the unconscious mind is who I’m really talking to. The point is to relax, the point is to slow down, the point is to think about some time when you were feeling even more relaxed—you know, but it’s really not necessary that you fall asleep now.<sup>15</sup>

Since you now have experienced trance like this, perhaps tomorrow or next week when you’re watching a video, or listening to an audio tape, or working with a client, maybe you’ll find yourself using and remembering all the important and interesting things that you learned here today.

## CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this presentation has brought about an increased understanding of what hypnosis is – and more importantly what it is not – and has taught some specific methods for enhanced therapeutic communication through hypnotic techniques.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 Elder George R. Hill (1921-2001) served in the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy from 1987-1992. A graduate of Cornell University (PhD), he was an internationally-known scientist, a pioneer in the field of fossil fuels, and Dean of the College of Mines & Mineral Industries at the University of Utah; he also served as Director of the Office of Coal Research in the U.S. Department of the Interior.
- 2 Regarding hypnotic compulsion or obedience, especially as exemplified by hypnosis "entertainers" – almost any group of people includes a certain number who are both especially susceptible to trance induction as well as exceptionally willing to obey any suggestion. Stage hypnotists learn to pick such susceptible-obedient people out of the crowd. Joseph Barber PhD, former president of the Society for Experimental & Clinical Hypnosis, stated in reference to stage hypnosis, "That's not *hypnosis*, that's *obedience*" (UCLA Psychiatry Department hypnosis seminar, 1983). This implies a reason why "false memory" phenomena, which likely also proceed following a similar process, cannot be believed (see Barber, 1997).
- 3 Cory Hammond PhD, former president of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, notes that "Ericksonian analogies about mentally drifting to another place aren't entirely accurate. Brainwave (EEG) research on hypnosis documents that what is happening during hypnosis is a state of very highly focused attention and concentration, very similar to internally focused mental problem solving (such as mental math), characterized by what is called mid-frontal theta and 40 Hz gamma activity, both of which are associated with focused attention" (Hammond, 2001).
- 4 A client who does not readily go into a trance, then, could represent a lack of rapport and/or a lack of individualization on the therapist's part – or such situations could be incident to client beliefs about hypnosis which result in negative attitudes toward hypnosis. For example, in comparing a group of subjects holding negative attitudes toward hypnosis with a group of subjects holding reasonable attitudes toward hypnosis, none of those in the negative attitude group scored in the high-hypnotizable range on a hypnotizability scale (see Spanos, Liddy & Baxter, 1994). Note, however, that there is now sufficient brain research on hypnosis to

say that highly hypnotizable persons are *hard wired* (so termed by Hammond, 2001) differently to some degree. Thus, persons with a distinctive brainwave category (e.g., OCD) demonstrate low hypnotizability as a group (see Perlini & Spanos, 1991, for review).

- 5 Artist: Bobby Vinton, from the album "Blue on Blue" (Hollywood: Sony, 1963).

*She wore blue velvet  
Bluer than velvet was the night  
Softer than satin was the light  
From the stars  
She wore blue velvet  
Bluer than velvet were her eyes  
Warmer than May her tender sighs  
Love was ours  
Ours a love I held tightly  
Feeling the rapture grow  
Like a flame burning brightly  
But when she left, gone was the glow of  
Blue velvet  
But in my heart there'll always be  
Precious and warm, a memory  
Through the years  
And I still can see blue velvet  
Through my tears*

- 6 However, note that using a permissive approach (vs. the standardized authoritarian approach) does not necessarily result in greater hypnotic responsivity (Lynn, et al., 1993; Spinhoven, et al., 1988; Matthews & Mosher, 1988). In fact, research (Lynn, et al., 1987) utilizing the Alman-Wexler Indirect Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale (Pratt, et al., 1984) showed that a few people respond more readily to a directive approach, a few more readily respond to an indirect approach, but for most, it makes no real difference in responsiveness to suggestions. Erickson's remarkable success was based not on indirection, but *individualization* and *flexibility* – i.e., sometimes providing authoritarian directives and direct suggestions to dependent people who accepted authority and desired to be told what to do, but when someone seemed more "resistant" (i.e., not as motivated, not as highly responsive to hypnosis, and/or did not have good rapport with the therapist), using more permissive communication, indirect suggestions, metaphors, etc., that would bypass their resistance:

One of the distinctive features of Erickson's approach was his ability to individualize and flexibly adapt to patients, sometimes being highly direct and forceful, and other times being very subtle and communicating on multiple levels (see Haley, 1973, p. 135). Ernest Rossi explained: "He was direct ... when it was appropriate. This was his genius, of knowing when to use what ... extreme flexibility is the keynote of Erickson." To understand the success of Erickson, we must understand his flexibility and freedom

to be eclectic. (Hammond 1988, p. 175)

- 7 That is, about 30% demonstrate "high or very high" hypnotic responsiveness and another significant percent are mid-range (medium) in responsiveness. The several standardized hypnotic scales include:

Alman-Wexler Indirect Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale  
 Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale, Forms A & B  
 Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale, Form C  
 Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form A  
 Stanford Profile Scales, Forms I & II  
 Barber Suggestibility Scale  
 Diagnostic Rating Scale  
 Hypnotic Induction Profile  
 Creative Imagination Scale  
 Stanford Hypnotic Clinical Scale, Adults  
 Stanford Hypnotic Clinical Scale, Children  
 Stanford Hypnotic Arm Levitation Induction and Test  
 Carleton University Responsiveness to Suggestion Scale  
 Waterloo-Stanford Group Scale

- 8 Regarding diffusing such control issues: Erickson (1957) insisted that memories will surface only when the time is right, and no sooner. To provide a feeling of safety in the patient, he suggested that the therapist first ask a question which is too far over the privacy line. But, before the patient can answer, he would insist "no, I shouldn't have asked that, you don't need to answer that question." This promotes a sense of safety for the patient to know that he/she won't be asked to reveal anything he/she would not want to reveal anyway.
- 9 Indeed, some researchers assert that the unconscious has all the resources to effect change even if the specific problem is not consciously known. Bandler & Grinder (1979) outline a *content-free* therapy: while in a trance, the unconscious mind is asked if it is aware of the overriding problem in the person's life and if a change would be appropriate. When the unconscious answers "yes" the therapist asks if the unconscious knows what resources need to be applied in order to effect these necessary changes. The therapist then tells the unconscious "OK, go ahead and do that." Bandler & Grinder (1979) report that when the patient awakens from the

trance his/her understanding of the problem situation is quite changed. What happened? The therapist does not know, because from the therapist's viewpoint, this therapeutic process is *content-free*. According to this treatment outline, the unconscious mind is considered to already have the necessary resources, but needs a little therapeutic push to bring them to bear on the problem.

- 10 More correctly, Erickson said a deep trance is not always necessary for change or eliciting hypnotic phenomena. But note that Erickson can really be quoted both ways on this issue. For example, he once told Rossi that he never gave important suggestions to patients until they had been in a trance for 20 minutes or more and a large proportion of his famous cases were working in profound, deep, time-extended trances (Hammond, 2001).
- 11 Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915-1985) served as a President of the Seventy 1946-1972 and as an Apostle 1972-1985.
- 12 Elder LeGrand Richards (1886-1983) served as Presiding Bishop 1938-1952 and as an Apostle 1952-1983.
- 13 Elder McConkie also used classical linguistic structural devices and figures of speech such as parallelism, but analysis of these oratory techniques will not be addressed herein.
- 14 It appears to be one of the modern Ericksonian myths (Hammond, 1984) that Erickson believed metaphors were best presented without conscious interpretation. In fact, he many times made bridging associations after a story or metaphor, clearly noting the relevance to the patient's problem. Rossi has reported Erickson's assessment about elicited unconscious information – that it should not necessarily be regarded as *superior* to what was consciously known, but as simply one more source of information to be considered along with conscious knowledge (Hammond, 2001).
- 15 Erickson would sometimes lecture medical students about hypnosis. In contrast to the other professors' complaints about students watching the clock and fidgeting during the lecture, Dr. Erickson with obvious pride reported he never had that problem because "all my students go comfortably right to sleep" (Erickson, 1957).

## A Commentary on "The Paradoxical Nature of Sin"

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Although it flies in the face of conventional religious wisdom, this thought-provoking article (Rector, 2002) convincingly argues that sin *can* (if humans cooperate with graciously offered divine help) play a positive role in a person's spiritual development. Rather than focus on how the article makes its case, this short commentary calls attention to a rather unexpected parallel in theological conceptualization.

Setting aside certain distinctive Mormon doctrines (e.g., premortal existence), the article's argument bears several striking parallels to the constructive postmodern theological perspective known as *process theology*. Based on the cosmological perspective of philosopher and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), this relational understanding of reality conceives of God and the world as mutually influencing one another's evolution. Initially developed by Protestant theologians, this panentheistic<sup>1</sup> perspective has been embraced by Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, and other religious traditions. Indeed, *process thought* facilitates interreligious dialogue. The standard introductions are

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Cobb & Griffin (1976), Suchocki (1989), and Mesle (1993). Recently, Slettom (2003) edited a very readable collection of frequently asked questions.

Examples of the parallels between Dr. Rector's article and process theology include the following:

1. The discussion regarding the paradoxical nature of life's larger truths (pp. 68-69) is similar to process thought's notion of the harmonious inclusion of seemingly contradictory elements of one's experience in *the unity of a contrast*.
2. Assertions such as God works "to bring good out of evil" (p. 72) and "sin can with divine help ultimately be transcended, and thus play an essential part in the betterment of humanity" (p. 69) point to the same truth as the process notion of *creative transformation*.
3. The article's assumption that the realities of life are "inextricably intertwined with each other," that they are "entities-in-relation" (p. 70, applied to "good and evil") agrees with the *relational world view* of process thought.
4. Dr. Rector's excellent statement that compassion, not purity, is the most god-like quality clearly arises from the same *view of God's character* as does that of process theology:

A striving for purity and holiness encourages separation and distance from everything deemed to be unclean. Compassion, on the other hand, encourages a striving for inclusiveness, tolerance, acceptance, and understanding. Compassion, in its literal sense, means to "feel with" ... Thus compassion becomes possible only by developing the ability to relate others' difficulty, suffering, and pain to one's own. But if one feels threatened by or disconnected from the reality of his/her own troublesome inner 'shadow,' there will be failure to acknowledge the reality of inner complexity and personal sinful tendencies, and then much more likely to project upon others a spirit of rejection and intolerance. (Rector, 2002, p. 74)

These and other parallels suggest that dialogue between Mormon and process theologians would prove fruitful.

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Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Panentheism. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panentheism>

## ENDNOTES

1. Editor's Note: In contrast to *pantheism*, with which *panentheism* is often confused: *panentheism* holds that the material universe is a part or aspect of God, whereas *pantheism* is the view that God is wholly immanent, synonymous with the universe. The pantheist God is not at all personal, being little more than a metaphor for the universe or nature. Unlike pantheism, panentheism maintains there is much more to God than the material universe – God is a personal transcendent deity viewed as both the creator and the original source of universal morality (Hutchins, 2003; Wikipedia, 2004).

# Author Response to Commentary on “The Paradoxical Nature of Sin”

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I would like to thank Dean Ronald L. Farmer of Chapman University for his thoughtful commentary relative to the article “The Paradoxical Nature of Sin: Explorations on the Nature and Uses of Falling Short in Life” (Rector, 2002). In the context of a larger response to the article, Dean Farmer asked for my clarification on three points. His specific questions are addressed below.

1. “Does Dr. Rector mean (p. 69) that sin is ‘deemed necessary’ or that the risk that humans might sin is ‘deemed necessary’? The former notion seems to contradict his later statement, ‘it would be a logical fallacy to assume inevitability presumes necessity’ (p. 71).”

I agree with Farmer’s statement above, “the risk that humans might sin is deemed necessary,” inasmuch as adversity – or the potentiality of actualizing either good or evil – is fundamental to human beings being “agents unto themselves” and “learning from their experiences” (D&C 58:28, Moses 6:56). In other words, the “risk” of sin (that is, the presence of a sinful alternative in order to allow for choice) is a necessity in LDS theology for the spiritual evolution of human beings (2 Nephi 2:16).

However, I would take it even a step further, based more on intuition than on somehow “proving” with

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chapter-and-verse: I do not believe God is anxiously waiting, hoping his human creations don't ever commit sins. Rather, I think God understands human weakness, human foibles, and allows (in his eternal scheme) his creations to stumble and fall repeatedly – that is, God views sinning as an unavoidable part of the human growth process, that the experience of turning against one's inner light (i.e., "falling"), and then experiencing redemption and the growth which comes from learning from one's own experience in life, is crucial to everyone.

Therefore, I *do* see sin as being "necessary" for each person to experience in life. The paradox is: we don't ever want to condone or encourage ourselves or others to sin (it will happen regardless), and yet, the very experiences of sin and repentance – of fall and redemption – are some of life's most meaningful and irreplaceable growth-promoting devices.

## 2. "On p. 71, how does Dr. Rector distinguish between *contextual* ethics and *situational* ethics?"

I define "situational ethics" as a choice-making rubric (see Gleave, 2000) which says in essence:

I base decisions about what would best advance my purposes upon the circumstance which is confronting me at the moment; other than this, I don't have an underpinning *a priori* rationale or value system for my choices.

Although the term "contextual ethics" does not appear in the article (Rector, 2002), I suppose this could be defined the same way as situational ethics, but my sense is that contextual ethics would acknowledge that *there are times and circumstances under which one's underlying, previously-stated value system would be subverted, amended, or*

*suspended in order to accomplish a higher or greater good.* The classic LDS example would of course be the Nephi/Laban confrontation (1 Nephi 4:5-19), wherein Nephi's underlying value of "thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13) was subverted in the service of what he came to believe was a higher aim or purpose (1 Nephi 4:13). But the point is that Nephi did have a previously-stated value system which the specific context led him to amend – thus demonstrating "contextual" ethics.

3. "Define *innocence*: If innocence merely implies a state of not having been tested (as the term is understood by many theologians), then it should not be referred to as a *virtue*. Contrast this understanding with Dr. Rector's statement on p. 74: 'innocence and purity are virtues ...'"

Inasmuch as virtues involve chosen or "tested" modes of behavior, Dr. Farmer makes a very good point. Obviously, I failed to think through the broader implications of the term *innocence*.

One way to define innocence has to do with the legal concept of *not having acted in the way one has been accused of acting*. Note, however, that not having done something of which one is accused does not necessarily make one virtuous.

*Innocence* can also imply, as Dr. Farmer points out, *the state of not yet being tested*. This second meaning is actually what I had in mind when writing the article, and (as Dr. Farmer points out) it would be wrong to say that this type of innocence is a *virtue*. For example, if someone's virginal state has never been tested (that is, never actually been put to the test of choosing whether or not to remain virginal), then it would be inaccurate to say that this person's sexual innocence is a *virtue* because it has not yet involved choice through being challenged.

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## Book Review

*Eternal Values and Personal Growth: A Guide on Your Journey to Spiritual, Emotional, and Social Wellness*, by Allen E. Bergin. Provo, UT: BYU Studies <<http://www.byustudies.byu.edu>>, 2002. x+274 pages, references, index. ISBN 0-8425-2511-4, paper, \$29.95

REVIEWED BY: ERIC G. SWEDIN PhD

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The psychologist Allen E. Bergin PhD is known individually or through his research and writings to many AMCAP members. It is no exaggeration to describe Dr. Bergin as the grandfather of modern LDS psychology. A convert to the church, his faith and scholarship since the early 1970s have been combined in a sustained effort to promote theistic views within mainstream psychology and to understand human behavior through a combination of secular knowledge and LDS theology. He served as president of AMCAP in 1980-1981. The American Psychological Association awarded him the prestigious *Distinguished Professional Contributions to Knowledge* award in 1989, citing him as a "leading expert in psychotherapy research" and for challenging "psychological orthodoxy to emphasize the importance of values and religion in therapy" (American Psychological Association, 1990, p. 474).

Dr. Bergin collaborated with P. Scott Richards PhD [AMCAP Vice-President, 2001-2003] on two recent books: *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy* (1997) and the *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity* (2000). Dr. Bergin retired from BYU in 1999, served a full-time mission, and published the present book in 2002.

Whereas *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy* was academic in tone and laid down

suggestions for future research, *Eternal Values and Personal Growth* is both a workbook for classes as well as a self-help book. Dr. Bergin acknowledges the assistance of co-authors in every chapter (Sally H. Barlow PhD, Mark H. Butler PhD, Valerie M. Hudson PhD, Daniel K. Judd PhD, Kenneth W. Matheson DSW, P. Scott Richards PhD, Alma Don Sorenson PhD, and Diane Spangler PhD). This book is useful for Latter-day Saints striving to overcome minor psychological problems that impede their spiritual development, an example of the "cure of souls" (Featherstone, 1975) wherein the reader-student is guided toward greater spirituality and a stronger relationship with the Lord through spiritual and psychological exercises.

This book is not for Latter-day Saints who have clinical disorders and require professional intervention. Clinical disorders are defined as the "loss of self-determination" (p. 87). Even so, a psychotherapist sensitive to the LDS context can be of significant help to a healthy client, since even minor psychological problems can block a person from realizing his/her full potential.

Dr. Bergin dedicates this book to Elder Neal A. Maxwell, which is especially appropriate considering how much Maxwell's teachings on discipleship permeate the book – and Maxwell's long-standing support for research into LDS psychology (Hafen, 2002). The themes of agency, identity, integrity, power and intimacy permeate the book. Dr. Bergin notes that "the more enlightened we become about the shaping forces around us and inside us, the freer we become" (p. 6). In keeping with this sentiment, he does not shy away from potentially controversial issues such as sexual orientation, gender roles, discrimination, abuse and unrighteous dominion. Many of these issues are familiar to members of AMCAP.

As a historian, I am struck by the change in attitudes toward homosexuality over the past few decades. Dr. Bergin states: "most Latter-day Saint experts in human behavior agree that a strong preference for the same sex is not chosen but develops early in life and

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becomes prominent in adolescence" (p. 68). Unfortunately, "many priesthood leaders are not informed about same-sex attraction and may counsel members awkwardly or insensitively" (p. 69). Dr. Bergin believes that rates of homosexual *reparation* (see Nicolosi, 1991, 1997; Byrd, 2000) are good for individuals with bisexual tendencies, although "our knowledge remains limited" and "those with exclusive homosexual arousal and no heterosexual arousal have low rates of [reparative] success" (p. 208).

Some other quotes – pearls of wisdom from Dr. Bergin – accentuate the approach of the book:

- Discernment is necessary as we apply both inspired teachings and secular wisdom. (27)
- For some people, pathological circumstances, evil environments, or biological defects can cause severe problems to become deeply embedded at an early age – before there is any chance for the developing child to alter them by exercising agency. (34)
- From a Latter-day Saint perspective, it might be difficult to reconcile clinical evidence that unconscious processes are real with gospel concepts that we can choose our thoughts and behavior. (44)
- The combined power of eternal spiritual truths and inspired professional intervention provides hope for everyone that our eternal identity can shine forth brilliantly, providing light where darkness once reigned. (46)
- Fortunately, the devaluing of girls and women in Western culture has been countered gradually for about 150 years by movements supporting women's dignity and equality. Although some elements of these movements have been problematic, their core values are positive. (65)
- Social conditioning, a form of control, is benevolent when it provides reasonable structure and protection so a child can safely mature in his or her capacity to reason and make choices. (86)
- To have full command of oneself is the ultimate freedom. With godly mastery of self comes peace, righteous achievement, and harmony with self, others, and God. To reach this high level of personhood, we must learn step-by-step to regulate our thoughts, feelings, and behavior. (112)
- Unrighteous anger will destroy us, while righteous anger is an important part of the healing process. (136)
- Modern revelation tells us that there are eternal

differences between woman and man ... The differences between the sexes have often been used to position men above women, but a true God-like perspective does not allow this view. (157-158)

- Because Church decisions come from the top down, there are more opportunities for abuse than in more democratic organizations. All members of the Church should understand that they are not required to submit to unethical, immoral, or other unrighteous abuses of power, including verbal or emotional abuse. Abuse must be addressed. (166)
- We are so surrounded by gospel-alien cultures of power that it is easy to believe we have little choice but to participate in "the system" as it is. Even spiritually healthy people can be seduced and trapped by corrupt power structures and cultures. (178-179)
- *love is lawful*. Although deep, inner feelings are at its core, real love requires a firm, benevolent structure to surround it, just as civic laws give structure to community life and freedom to those who abide by them. True love exists within a framework of principles. (191)
- Regular forgiveness is vital to the health of any good relationship, especially marriage and family relationships. (197)
- God-ordained roles for the sexes should never become straightjackets upon the souls of God's children. Intimacy and growth are impaired when men and women narrowly constrain their roles. (198)
- Most will need *both a medical specialist and a sex therapist who are trained and competent* in treating these problems. We emphasize the importance of confronting sexual problems and consulting professionals rather than relying on spiritual means alone. (207)
- In healthy, godly intimacy, each partner makes a deliberate choice to consecrate himself or herself to the welfare of the marriage by caring for, celebrating, and enlarging each other. (216)
- A transitional person is one who rejects the unhealthy or evil family patterns of previous generations and sets a new course for future generations by adopting healthy and godly patterns ... The transitional person exemplifies Christlike love by becoming a participant with the Lord in helping to redeem others. (229)
- *Eternal identity is strengthened by integrity and righteous action, including service, self-sacrifice, and sincere repentance. It is also strengthened through loving relationships, family kinship, social ties, and responsibilities.* (246)

- As we seek to be congruent with our values, we must be careful to avoid over-control and perfectionism ... if we feel guilty, we can think through in an honest and non self-punishing way what we did that triggered the guilt. (249)

The psychology espoused in this book is heavily influenced by client-centered and humanistic psychology; the writings of theoretical giants such as Carl R. Rogers (1902-1987), Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), and Erik H. Erikson (1902-1994) are often drawn upon. The positive ideal of the individual as being able to self-heal is a characteristic of humanistic psychology, as are the ideals of self-realization and self-actualization.

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Dr. Bergin describes the work of the BYU philosopher Dr. C. Terry Warner (2001) as "the best existing analysis of self-deception in relation to prescriptions for a life of integrity" (p. 139), and draws on Dr. Victor L. Brown's (1981) concept of intimacy and illusions when discussing sexuality.

In many ways, this book (Bergin, 2002) is really a workbook for the earlier, more theoretical book, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy* (Richards & Bergin, 1997), and is another example of integration drawing on theories and insights from both secular and spiritual sources. I strongly recommend all LDS helping professionals read both books.

## Book Review

*Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept* by Rod W. Jeppsen. South Jordan, UT: Pathway Press, 2002. xi+373 pages, index. ISBN 0966189817, paper.

### REVIEWED BY:

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*Sexual Addiction Research and Treatment Institute*

Conclusion: regarding *Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept* (Jeppsen, 2002), contemporary literature on the treatment of sexual addictions does not have a better illustration of how the “study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than talking about behavior will improve behavior” (Packer, 1997, p. 9).

### BRIEF SYNOPSIS

In this work, author Rod W. Jeppsen creatively uses the *Articles of Faith* to organize the book. Each of the twelve chapters is based on one or more of the *Articles*. The *Articles* are reframed as principles that addicted individuals need to learn in order to overcome their problem. For example, the second article: “We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression,” Jeppsen

reframes as “Individual Responsibility for Behavior.”

Having put the gospel principle in a cognitive, emotional, behavioral context, he then presents the manner in which the principle can provide direction for how to do things differently. Numerous anecdotes and quotes from addicted persons color the principles and commentaries; workbook exercises give concrete direction for change.

### VALUE TO THE FIELD

Jeppsen’s work is a key contribution to the field of sexual addictions. I believe the book is so fundamentally important it should be on the list of required readings for clients and therapists, and on the recommended reading list for religious leaders<sup>1</sup>. There are four key strengths of this work that lead to such an unequivocal recommendation.

First, it represents one of the first and certainly most complete attempts to describe how the doctrines of the gospel inform theory regarding the etiology, maintenance, and cure for the vexing problem of addiction. The book is replete with literally dozens of relevant quotations from the scriptures and the words of modern prophets. This gospel framework illuminates many of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes common to sexual addictions and provides information to help individuals overcome the problem.

Second, the book contains the same stunningly rich descriptions of etiological and maintaining factors as Patrick Carnes’ *Out of the Shadows* (2001a). Professionals will additionally benefit from Jeppsen’s new, gospel-saturated description. Clients will gain new hope as they see and understand addiction in a gospel framework, as told in the words of their peers.

Third, the book contains numerous workbook assignments. Many of these assignments can be adapted as foundations for effective in-session activities and can readily become between-session assignments. They can also combine with and strengthen some of the exercises outlined in Carnes’ *Facing the Shadow* (2001b), by adding a gospel perspective.

Finally, the book contains reports of dozens of client perceptions of this problem that can assist professionals to better understand the problem, particularly those in training to treat sexual addictions. Those struggling with the problem will benefit from learning

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about the experiences of others (particularly those who are not yet ready to attend group settings to address their problems).

### LIMITATIONS

There are a few practical issues that this book does not address:

#### *Non-LDS issues*

I believe that the most effective existing models of treatment are those that start with a doctrinal foundation and then adapt to non-religious audiences, rather than the other way around. With Jeppsen's book (2002) having laid the foundation for an LDS doctrinal basis for understanding sexual addictions, it is hoped that the author will expand the model by writing additional versions for non-LDS Christians and unreligious individuals as well.

#### *Workbook exercises*

The workbook exercises are generally well conceived. However, although many of the exercises generate serious thought, some lack sufficient detail to compel one to actually complete them. Some exercises probably serve more as questions to stir the thinking of the individual in productive ways. It would be very helpful to develop a manual to accompany this book that outlines the assignments in more thorough detail. Such a workbook could lead the reader through a series of questions and end with suggestions for specific actions, followed by questions to answer after having completed the new actions. As currently written, the exercises are best suited for individuals with a high motivation to change. A workbook would help motivate those in the earlier stages of change as well.

#### *Overall Framework*

The main limitation of this work is that there is no explicitly described framework that tells us how to decide which information is most useful at which points in time. The author should be commended for the exhaustive description of so many important points that need to be heard. However, while the Articles of Faith do provide somewhat of a sequential road map through recovery<sup>2</sup>, the work is so exhaustive

that at times it feels like reading a long list; average readers may lose interest if they are not motivated enough to read the whole book to find the principles they are most in need of.

It would be useful to develop a model that helps particular individuals choose what is most important for them to hear<sup>3</sup>. I would recommend a survey instrument be developed that would point a reader toward the most expedient principles to understand his/her individual situation. This model could be an important addition to the workbook.

### APPROPRIATE AUDIENCES

#### *Service Delivery*

This book is strongly recommended to all practitioners who treat or anticipate treating sexual addiction cases. Because most mental health professionals are unfamiliar with specific gospel-based views of sexual addiction, most all mental health professionals (not just beginning therapists) could benefit from reading it. Clinical practitioners will likely find it useful to assign every religious client (at least every LDS client) to read it. It is also strongly recommended that bishops and stake presidents read this book to become familiar with how the doctrines of the gospel pertain to addictions.

#### *Clients or Individuals Struggling With the Problem*

Indeed, all LDS individuals with addictive problems should read this book. The book is probably most appropriate for individuals who have already made a fairly firm commitment to change. Although individuals early in recovery may not read it very closely or follow the workbook assignments in detail, they will still benefit significantly from other important aspects of the work (e.g., peer experiences). Clients who are further along in recovery will likely find the book is most useful as an ongoing companion, rather than as a work to be read from cover to cover in a few sittings.

### SUMMARY

Jeppsen's ambitious undertaking has resulted in a comprehensive index of gospel doctrines as they pertain to sexual addiction that is both readable and compelling. Professionals, ecclesiastical leaders, and individ-

uals affected by this problem are all strongly encouraged to read it. Future adjunctive efforts such as a workbook would enhance this significant contribution to the field by providing more powerful tools to combat the increasingly prevalent and troubling problem of sexual

addictions. I am personally grateful for this fine example of clinical scholarship, fulfilling Elder Maxwell's 27-year-old charge to LDS behavioral scientists (1976, p. 70) to "become more of a link and bridge between revealed truth and the world of scholarship."

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## ENDNOTES

1. See recommended reading lists for addictions at <<http://www.latterdayfamilies.com>> (click on *Pornography*, then on *Helpful Reading*).
2. In fact, the 13 Articles of Faith map fairly well onto the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), another well known sequential recovery program.
3. It should be noted that a well developed and tested model of this kind is not yet available. Thus, this is a comment more on what is needed in this field than a criticism of this particular work.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS PRESENTED AT THE SPRING 2003 AMCAP CONVENTION ~ APRIL 3, 2003

# Reflections and Revelations on Relationships: A Mother's Perspective

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This discussion is from the perspective of a mother. I would never presume to counsel counselors and therapists. But I would like to discuss the Lord's omnipotence to perceive our needs and His desire to be involved in the growth of His children through parents and therapists. My goal is to share experiences that might deepen our understanding in four important areas:

- How covenant therapists are assisting the Lord in bringing to pass His work and His glory
- How the scriptures can provide therapeutic guidance
- How the Holy Ghost can be a divine resource
- How counselors can help to make the atonement active in the lives of their clients

## SEEKING TO ASSIST WITH HIS WORK AND HIS GLORY

How do covenant therapists assist the Lord with the growth of His children? I am here today because of a wise and caring therapist. About 20 years ago, our first child became a teenager. Almost overnight our perfect little daughter became not so perfect, and I panicked. A few years before this time I had worked on a Church committee with a member who was a professional therapist. My husband and I discussed the possibility of going to him. That decision was a major hurdle. No one I knew at that time had ever gone to a "shrink." To me, doing that meant you could not handle your own

problems. But my need surpassed my pride, and we went (humility is great preparation for being taught).

## My Children and My Self

We chose this therapist because we knew him and also because he seemed to personify our values. As far as we could tell, he was endeavoring to live his life and nurture his relationships according to the will of the Lord. Our therapist did not waste any time telling me two things that shocked me:

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1. "You've got to get yourself together before you can expect your children to improve." (My internal response was, "Well! This certainly is uncalled-for; I want him to fix my daughter – it's not me that has the problem.")
2. "The controlling home you grew up in isn't working for your children." (My internal thoughts were: "Controlling home? My home was perfect, and so were my parents!")

But these two hard facts were presented with love, compassion, reassurance and hope, so I kept my thoughts to myself and kept coming back for more. It turned out my oldest child was not the problem – I was the problem: I needed to find out who I was, and be secure in that identity before my second child became a teen – or, as the Apostle Paul told his young missionary companion, I needed to "lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come" if I were to have a chance for eternal life (1 Timothy 6:19).

Rudy Giuliani, Mayor of New York City during September 11, 2001, expressed the perspective I was learning when he said:

The event of September 11 affected me more deeply than anything I have ever experienced; but the idea that I somehow became a different person on that day – that there was a pre-Sept 11 Rudy and a wholly other post-Sept 11 Rudy – is not true. I was prepared to handle Sept 11 precisely because I was the same person who had been doing his best to take on challenges my whole career. (Giuliani & Kurson, 2002, p. x)

Now, I am not comparing my difficulties with our second child to the trauma of the Twin Towers – but to me, it felt similar. Our wise and sensitive therapist helped me to be strong, and helped me understand who I was, so that I was somewhat ready for the "attack" of our second child. Thank goodness these children were 10 years apart; I needed all that time to prepare!

Our therapist explained, "You have got to become acquainted with who you are and what you are feeling." At that time I was a wife and mother, PTA President and Gospel Doctrine teacher. He assigned me to tell the people in each of these stewardships how I felt about them and about my position or calling. I remember sitting in the middle of a PTA board meeting and saying to the board, "I would like to tell you how I feel about

you and about being PTA President." My heart was pounding and I felt a little foolish, but I trusted my therapist, and I did it. The people were kind and responsive. I did the same thing in my Sunday school class and with my family. The therapist also counseled me to stop every 2-3 hours during each day and ask myself, "What am I feeling and why am I feeling that way?" At the time I thought this was pretty remedial advice, certainly not life-changing. But I was like Naaman wanting Elisha to perform some astounding miracle instead of simply telling him to wash in the river to be healed (2 Kings 5:11). But over the past 20 years, I have found that what I learned by acting on that simple advice still really helps to ground me.

And I have needed that grounding in order to put my relationship with my children in perspective. Mothers seem to have an inherently disproportionate investment of passion and of potential for guilt when it comes to their children. We become so caught up and emotionally welded to our children that it is difficult to tell where the mother ends and the child begins. Every choice a child makes can determine the mother's actions and reactions if she is not solid in her identity and values. For example, one day in a moment of frustration, I said to our son, "I want you to wear a sign that says, 'I've been taught better!'"

He laughed and said, "You make it, Mom, and I'll wear it!" I have had to learn that my identity and my wholeness do not depend on the behavior or the public image of my children.

### My Husband and My Self

Imperfect family conditions are an aspect of a fallen world, and a difficult child can create chaos in the best of families, particularly in the marriage relationship. My husband and I were raised according to entirely different parenting techniques. Ralph's training was "casual, with high expectations." Mine was "controlled, with high expectations." Both approaches seemed to work reasonably well for us – at first. Then along came a child who challenged our mettle – and our marriage. Ralph's laid-back attitude caused me to think, "well, somebody has got to step up to the plate here," so I became much more controlling and manipulative out of fear of what might happen without the strong control that had been a part of my own upbringing. The Apostle Paul told his companion Timothy (2 Timothy 1:7) that fear is not from

God, but power and love and a sound mind are: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." This certainly applies to fearful mothers who may have a tendency to confuse love and power! The more fearful and controlling I became, the more Ralph backed off and eased up, to balance this foray. Consciously or subconsciously, we were working against each other in our common concern for our children. It was time to revisit our therapist.

Again our therapist understood what was happening and had the courage to tell us. He told Ralph to step up the level of control as a father and a husband. He told me to "chill-out" and quit being a "control freak." He didn't use those words, but I got the message. We took this hard medicine because we were desperate, and because we trusted him. Trusting our therapist was the first thing we had agreed on in months! He was the neutral compass for negotiating three separate disoriented individuals (mom, dad, and son) through the stormy sea of a very troubled relationship.

As precarious as we felt, we never got the impression that our therapist felt frantic or did not have ideas to help us. There was no double-mindedness in him. He was focused on us and was very clear about his role: he had to be the strong one. We were intense – our world was falling down around us. He would lean back in his chair or roll his chair right next to us, listening with his heart and his mind. He took us carefully from our slippery position to higher ground. Then he would tell a joke or get us to laugh at ourselves; he would say, "Sharon, the next time you have an urge to lecture your son, go in the bathroom and lecture the towels! Ralph, if you can't think of anything positive to say, tell him he has nice elbows!"

The help the therapist gave us was not merely additive, it was logarithmic. We could no longer justify our individual actions because of each other's actions or inactions. Our therapist was not hesitant in telling us what we were doing wrong and how we would have to change. We were grateful to know that there were reasons we were having difficulty. He was patient and only gave us a little to work on each time. These assignments brought us together, strengthening our individual self-reliance and reinforcing the unity of our marriage. He gave us hope that someday our son would come around – and in the meantime, that we could handle the wait and trust the process.

When our son was about 16 or 17, the therapist said he was very immature (he met with the boy a few times before our son quit going). He said our son would probably grow up (mature) around the age of 25 or so. I saw the therapist about a year ago and reported that nothing much had changed. He said, "Oh, well, he may not grow up until he's about 30."

I hit his chest and yelled, "You told me 25!"

He said, "OK, OK – 25!"

You LDS therapists and psychologists help us in the process of becoming whole. You are helping us to prepare spiritual and emotional reservoirs to carry us through the 9-11's of our mortal relationships. The resulting strength enables healthy and happy social relationships to continue for eternity. As LDS therapists, you are better equipped to help than any other therapists in the world because you not only have all the theories and studies available, you also have the scriptures and the Holy Ghost. As C.S. Lewis<sup>1</sup> said:

It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world [i.e., Heaven], that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven, and you will get earth "thrown in": aim at earth and you will get neither. (Lewis, 1943, p. 118)

When you consider the scriptures and ask for guidance from the Holy Ghost, you can contribute so much more, because you look to Heaven – not earth alone – to find truth.

#### **APPLYING THE SCRIPTURES TO HELP INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES**

Considering the scriptures, we see abundant evidence that the Lord and His prophets knew the principles of psychology and relationships long before Freud (1856-1939) or Frankl (1905-1997). Let's consider a few examples.

##### **Wise Individuals**

Remember when Lehi's sons went back to Jerusalem (1 Nephi 5) to get the brass plates and Sariah became frantic? From her perspective, four of her sons were either back in that wicked city or possibly worse, had perished in the wilderness; all she knew was that they had been gone a long time on a very dangerous errand –

at least it seemed like a long time to her as a mother. She panicked, in about the same way I used to panic when I didn't know where my son was or what he was doing: she turned on Lehi, blaming him as I used to blame my husband about his easy-going attitude. But they did not have a friendly therapist close at hand, so their relationship could have become precarious. But Lehi obviously knew how to handle a distraught mother: when Sariah was blaming him, telling him he was a "visionary" man and questioning why they had left their beautiful home in Jerusalem to wander in the wilderness, Lehi avoided being defensive. What did he do? He comforted her: instead of defending himself, he gave her what she needed – comfort and reassurance. I can see Lehi hugging his wife and saying, "dear Sariah, you are right – I am a visionary man, and because of that we will not be destroyed in Jerusalem. And I know the Lord will deliver our sons safely back to us" (see 1 Nephi 5). When I read that account, I want to cheer for Lehi. He knew how to listen with compassion and concern.

Another scripture that enlightens our therapeutic experience is in what has been referred to as the "Psalm of Nephi" in 2 Nephi 4. The relationship between Nephi and his two older brothers was a constant vexation for him; in fact, we know eventually the Lord told Nephi he would need to take his people and leave. But in this chapter, Nephi is lamenting and feeling unworthy because he is so angry. Then he stops – like my therapist asked me to do – and asks himself, "Why am I feeling this way? Why am I so angry?" He realizes he has been blaming his brothers for his anger (although most of us might think that being tied up, threatened with death, and ridiculed could be adequate justification for anger). But when he vocalizes his feelings, Nephi understands. He is angry with himself for the way he has been *reacting* to his brothers' abuse. He can't control the behavior of his brothers, but he can find the inner strength to deal with it – just as my husband and I needed to find the inner strength to deal with the behavior of our children. Nephi concludes that if he lets his anger control his behavior, he becomes his own worst enemy. That kind of introspection is very healthy – but it takes real humility and honesty. Ralph and I had to develop the humility to be honest, but we managed.

Another example of preparing a good foundation for relationships is recounted in Alma 42. Alma is counseling his son Corianton, who may have reminded Alma of

himself when he was a juvenile delinquent. Alma takes four chapters to counsel this son and then he says to him:

O my son ... do not endeavor to excuse yourself in the least point because of your sins, by denying the justice of God; but ... let the justice of God, and His mercy, and His long-suffering have full sway in your heart; and let it bring you down to the dust in humility. (Alma 42:30)

Alma speaks directly and honestly to his son, encouraging him to stop making excuses, to repent, and get on with his life. After the rebuke, Alma shows forth the increase in love and trust that the Lord has instructed (D&C 121:43) us to give:

And now my son, ye are called of God to preach the word unto this people ... go thy way, declare the word with truth and soberness, that thou mayest bring souls unto repentance, that the great plan of mercy may have claim upon them. And may God grant unto you even according to my words. (Alma 42:30,31)

Alma knew the importance of getting beyond the difficulties of the past and approaching with gratitude the promise of the future. Corianton, who had been very immature, was finally growing up. I wonder if he was 25, or 30?

One of the best scriptures on strengthening relationships is D&C 121:41-43. After Ralph and I had tried all of Satan's ways to exercise power and influence over our son – coercion, bribery, manipulation, threats, etc. – we read that scripture and the light went on. Surely we wanted to have power and influence, and this scripture taught us how: "No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of" – *parenthood* – the scripture specifies, "only by persuasion, by long-suffering." We never hear much about *short-suffering*, but that would really be easier for parents! The scripture continues, "by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned" – that is really hard sometimes. And there is another verse: "by kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile." Only after preparing ourselves with these emotional dispositions, then the Lord recommends "reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy."

## Eternal Families

The Creator of heaven and earth knows human nature and even understands psychology – in fact, He invented it. I was recently reading about the studies done by Peter deVries<sup>2</sup>, who is a disciple of the well-known German psychotherapist Bert Hellinger<sup>3</sup>. Under deVries' leadership, people come together to practice what is called "family constellations" in hopes of healing and strengthening family relationships. Hellinger (2003) teaches that families have a soul that is affected by injustices from past generations, and that past imbalances can entangle the lives of today's generations. But prophets have told us this for centuries: for example, when Moses returned from Sinai, he told the children of Israel that the sins of the parents would be upon their children "unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate [the Lord]" (Deuteronomy 5:9). But, there is good news about the soul of families and about building relationships for those who *love* the Lord:

The Lord thy God, He is the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments – to a thousand generations. (Deuteronomy 7:9).

This scripture tells us that strengthening relationships can not only happen across the life-span but across a "thousand generations" (which seems to be pretty close to saying "eternity"). As LDS therapists and counselors, you can help your clients feel the grace and love of God, whether they fully understand the Gospel principles – or even believe in God. God believes in them and is still their Father; through your intervention, they can experience His love.

You have the power to nourish every soul who comes into your office, regardless of his or her faith. As you strengthen individuals and families, generations will be blessed, and you can help to break negative traditions, helping your brothers and sisters to establish a good foundation for eternal relationships. Satan opposes healthy and loving relationships, especially in families. As counselors and psychologists, you know that better than anyone. The Prophet Joseph Smith said,

The policy of the wicked spirit is to separate what God has joined together, and unite what God has separated, which the devil has succeeded in doing ... in the present state of society. (Smith, 1938, p. 103)

Where the joining and separating can have eternal consequences, eternal perspectives must be applied. As LDS counselors and therapists, you alone have the ability to do this, for you can perceive the family as an eternal unit on its road to godhood.

I have never had a more difficult assignment on my road to godhood than to keep the relationship with our son open and fluid, when my whole being cries out to run away – to cut it off and forget it. But I cannot cut off the relationship because I eternally love this boy. You counselors and therapists are the ones who can give parents of difficult children the motivation and hope to hang on (Sanchez, 2000); and you can share with us as parents the tools to be able to do this. Many of us want a "quick fix" – perhaps an angel like the one who appeared to Alma the Younger (36:6-9). And when the "quick fix" doesn't happen and we find ourselves faced with "long suffering," we may feel that giving up on a child or a relationship is the only way for the rest of family to survive.

You, as our therapists and counselors, can help us to recognize who we are and what we need to do. Ralph and I were blessed that our therapist helped us to recognize our feelings, our backgrounds, and our weaknesses – and to become emotionally independent. We learned that we could not control our son's behavior, and we became strong enough in ourselves and confident enough that we could cease to manipulate; we could let our son take responsibility for his own choices. When parents can do this, the burden is literally lifted from their shoulders, and they can turn their attention to things and people they may have been neglecting because of the turmoil. Yet we should never withdraw our compassion or cease to offer appropriate help. We may have to wait until a child is 30, but we can "suffer long" if that is required.

Our son was in the Bahamas for over two years without contacting us. But he did call his sister, so we knew where he was. We continually sent boxes of goodies, even though we never heard if he got them. But, this way, he knew we wanted to stay connected. He needed the connection to be *his* choice as well. He is back in Utah now. Although I wish his choices had been what I would have chosen, I do not want to give up what I am learning from this soul-wrenching journey: I am learning that often the people in our lives are there to teach us, not necessarily to satisfy us. I don't want the Lord to

give up on me, as a daughter whose choices are not necessarily what His choices would have been. So I will suffer long and be kind where my son's choices are concerned. I keep hearing President Brigham Young's words in my ears, "We need to learn, practice, study, know and understand how angels live with each other" (*Journal of Discourses* 6:76). The members of our family are trying, but we still have a long way to go in order to be angels.

Thank you for your humility and preparation to learn wisdom from the One who knows all the answers. Thank you for your sincere concern for your brothers and sisters and for your desire to serve them in the Lord's way. You are dressing the wounds of those falling in battle. The Lord's work and glory is the saving of souls (Moses 1:39); everything else is mortal scaffolding that will eventually come down.

### SEEKING THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY GHOST

Your academic training, research, and experience give you an elite status. Your studies have taken you far beyond what the average person knows. You undoubtedly can quote and expound on theories and cite specialists from a multitude of fields and sources. Your expertise is respected and sought by young and old, rich and poor, functional and dysfunctional. As the world continues in its free-fall, you are more and more in demand. But as trained and professional as you are, I would like to humbly suggest one more dimension for your preparation: the spiritual dimension of the Holy Ghost. Remember, the "clinical material" you are working with are the *divine children of God*. So it would only seem responsible for you to turn to their creator in your efforts to help His children find both themselves and the happiness he intends for them. As C.S. Lewis has pointed out, this is a necessity:

The reason why [seeking happiness apart from God] can never succeed is this: God made us, invented us – as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on gasoline, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on himself. He himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us happiness and peace apart from

himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing. (Lewis, 1943, pp. 54, 69)

But many of us in our everyday pursuits, including working with troubled clients, do not make full use of this fuel that is freely offered to us. President Brigham Young (1856) said, "Do you not perceive that there is a lack of confidence in our God?" and then more pointedly asked, "Do you perceive it in yourselves?"

### The Holy Ghost as a Teacher

We need to have confidence in what God will teach us. Our Father intends for us to turn to Him. We agreed to do so before we left Him to come into mortality. A dear friend who is a therapist has learned to seek His help as an integral aspect of her practice: she often prays for her clients by name. She also prays for herself, and tries to listen, to be taught by the Spirit to know how to counsel her clients and how to balance her personal life. She knows that sacrifice and obedience are required for "tuning in" to the Holy Ghost, and that sometimes we need guidance to know what to pray for. The Apostle Paul tells us that the Spirit will make intercession for us, whispering with "groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

Even some of the greatest of God's children need to know when to ask and how to receive. When Nephi was told to build a boat (1 Nephi 17), he really didn't know how to do it. He had never built a boat. There didn't seem to be a great need for boats in the desert wilderness. When he started the project, Nephi was mocked and ridiculed by his brothers. But Nephi knew that the Lord wanted that boat and would give him the help he needed. Consider the scripture:

And the Lord did show me from time to time after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship. Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers after the manner which was learned by men, neither did I build the ship after the manner of men; but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me; wherefore, it was not after the manner of men. And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord – wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things. (1 Nephi 18:1-3)

You may have occasion to counsel some clients whose problems and needs will seem as far outside your arena of experience as boat building was for Nephi. The Lord

showed Nephi a better way of working timbers, and he may show you different ways of working with people – if you will pray to Him often, as Nephi did. Instruction may come directly from an omnipotent Father who sees perfectly the hearts and souls of His struggling children – and you may be the one who is privileged to hold the tools and apply what he teaches you. You will know when those times come, as you respond to the instruction that is given.

### The Holy Ghost as a Tool

You have your five senses to help you to understand your clients: you observe their body language and try to listen beyond their words to what they are really saying. Maybe a cold and clammy handshake tells you something, or perhaps an odor reveals the presence of an addiction or medication. Your five senses are vital tools. But the most helpful, insightful, and honest tool you have to help your brothers and sisters is your access to the Holy Ghost. Revelation is indispensable to relationship work. A loving Father knows your clients' hearts, their motives, their weaknesses, and their circumstances. Even if you do not know a new client, the Holy Ghost can help you nourish that person.

The Holy Ghost can reveal a person's heart to your mind and help you to see the individual and the circumstances as they really are. You have probably had experiences when you were visiting with a client – and thoughts, feelings, and impressions came to your mind that you had never read about in your formal training. Whatever you have a question about, you know the Lord already knows the answer. Whatever you do not understand about your clients' feelings or worries, the Lord does understand. Your testimony that Gethsemane made their struggles His struggles helps you feel the Savior's love for each of His struggling sons or daughters, and you can be directed in conducting therapy (see Alma 7:11-12). The Spirit can work miracles in relationships, and thus you can recognize the divine solutions to even the most distressing dilemmas.

Elder Parley P. Pratt suggested that the Holy Ghost is a spiritual storehouse from which we can enlarge our understanding and thus enrich our service:

[The Holy Ghost] quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands and purifies all the natural passions and affections and adapts them by the gift of

wisdom in their lawful use ... It invigorates all the faculties of the physical, intellectual, and spiritual man ... In short, it is as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being. (Pratt, 1942, p. 61)

### The Holy Ghost as a Source of Strength

Sometimes I think we underestimate the forces working for us on both sides of the veil, and we rely too much on our own human powers. Recall Moroni's well-known editorial comment in Ether 12:27. We can insert our own roles into this principle:

And if [therapists] come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto [them] weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all [therapists] that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them. (Ether 12:27)

Our own abilities, however great, will not be enough to nourish our brothers and sisters. To try and live without the direction of the Holy Ghost is like buying tickets, dressing up for the show, going to the theater, and then sitting in the foyer throughout the entire performance. The show will go on, but all we experience is the furnishings in the foyer. With the guidance and encouragement of an experienced usher, we can walk into the theatre, find our places – even in the dark – and become full participants as we were intended to be. Help is available, but we do need to prepare ourselves and ask – and accept it when it is offered.

Two stories from the scriptures show how the Lord makes weak things strong. The first example is Enoch (Moses 6). Poor, insecure, hesitant, and fearful Enoch is surrounded by so much evil that the heavens weep. The Lord asks Enoch to tell the wicked people that His "fierce anger is kindled against them." You know Enoch's reaction, "Why is it that I have found favor, and am but a lad"? (which is a bit of an understatement; I've read that he was probably about 60 years old). But in his feelings of immaturity and fear, he continues, "All the people hate me; for I am slow of speech" (Moses 6:31). Then the Lord tells Enoch,

Open thy mouth and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance ... all thy words will I justify; and the moun-

tains shall flee before you, and the rivers shall turn from their course (Moses 6:32,34).

Enoch did what the Lord asked him to do, and the scriptures testify the result:

[Enoch] spake the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled ... and the rivers of water were turned out of their course ... so powerful was the word of Enoch and so great was the power of the language which God had given him. (Moses 7:13)

The very weakness Enoch worried about (his speech) became a great strength when he let the Lord make him strong.

Another example of strength through the Holy Ghost is the experience of the brother of Jared. After he had built eight barges according to the Lord's direction, he still had two problems – light and air. The Lord knew the brother of Jared would not be able to come up with a way to solve the air problem, so He told him (Ether 2:20) to make a hole in the top and the bottom of each barge, so when air was needed, they could unstop the holes. But there was still the problem of light. Because the brother of Jared did have the creativity to solve this one, the Lord said, "What will ye that I should do?" (Ether 2:23). Many of us have had the feeling of being in a "dark barge"; we may have felt like saying, "We are told to ask and we shall receive, so I am asking!"

Could the Lord have put light in the barges? Of course He could; He put light in the world. He intended to put light in the barges, but He also wanted the true light to be in the brother of Jared. We don't know what kind of research preceded this miracle: the brother of Jared probably learned all he could about ways of producing light. Surely he was praying, and in all probability he was circumspect in his own life, analyzing what more he could do to be in tune with the Spirit in order to receive direction. When he had worked out the plan for the illuminating stones, he asked God to touch those stones so they would produce the needed light. So when the brother of Jared got the light (faith) inside of him, then he not only got light for the barges, he received much, much more than he had ever expected: he saw the Lord (Ether 2-4). As the prophet Joseph Smith counseled (D&C 123:17), "Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the

utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for His arm to be revealed."

I suspect there may be times when you LDS counselors and therapists, like the brother of Jared, want more light than is found in your professional training and books. The Lord may test your desire and preparation – and, like the brother of Jared, you will need to look at your own life and see what more you can do to be in tune with the Spirit that knows all things. If you treasure in your mind continually the words of life as well as the words of your profession, guarding carefully what you let into your mind so that you preserve its purity, the Spirit can tell you what to say at the very hour it may desperately be needed (D&C 84:85).

At times like this, what we *know* is not as important as what we *are*. It is what we have become – i.e., a succession of acts that result in our becoming worthy servants of the Lord – that qualifies us for the Spirit to guide us (Oaks, 2000, p. 32). And invariably we will receive more insight and understanding than we hoped for. We are never diminished when we submit to God – we are enlightened.

It is a very serious undertaking to work with the inner life of another person. That is why the Lord is such a vital part of what you do as therapists. It is a gift, but also a responsibility, to feel and know what is inside someone else. Yours is the profession that works with the soul – the spirit and the body (D&C 88:15). You help another child of God become whole. What a trust your clients have in you! That elusive, invisible spirit life is far more real, far more important, than any visible activities – and yet all too often clients (and sometimes even therapists!) try to silence that shy, persistent inner voice. It is the Spirit that will help you to hear that voice. Doing this in your professional role, you are participating in the pattern stated so well by President Ezra Taft Benson:

The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. The world would take people out of the slums. Christ takes the slums out of people, and then they take themselves out of the slums. (Benson, 1985, p. 6)

#### SEEKING TO ACTIVATE THE ATONEMENT

As members who have testimonies of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we turn to the atonement for strength and



for hope in our own lives. Can we activate the atonement to share strength and hope with our clients as well?

### The Atonement in Healing

Isaiah describes the healing, liberating power of the atonement as he describes the mission of the Savior:

The Lord hath anointed unto me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives ... to comfort all that mourn ... to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. (Isaiah 61:1-3)

The atonement is pivotal in what you do as you work in therapy with those in need. On just our own power, life would be more than any of us could handle, and death would be more than we could face. The atonement unlocks the gifts of the Spirit. Because you experience those gifts in your lives, you can help others access them as well. We all taste the bitterness of mortality, from sin and ignorance to sorrow and disappointment. Without the atonement, that bitterness would drag us down, and we all would become as Satan is – miserable (2 Nephi 2:5,18,27). Or, as Jacob (2 Nephi 9:5-10) writes, as angels to Satan. Even though the atonement has cosmic implications, it also has the power to touch us personally – although it is *infinite*, it is also *intimate*. The atonement is the source of strength to deal productively with the disappointments and heartbreaks that occur in mortality. Recognize it, value it, and share it.

The word *atonement* comes from the Greek word meaning reconciliation or a process of coming back into a relationship after a period of estrangement. To *atone*, then, means to come back into a state of being *at one*. Spiritual estrangement, or separation, has happened to all of us who have left our heavenly home and are here on earth. Many suffer because glimpses of what they once had cause them to dearly miss that heavenly sociality; they search for celestial relations but experience only unfulfilled expectations. But all things are made new through the atonement, especially relationships. This understanding is a sacred gift you can give as therapists and counselors.

### The Atonement and Forgiving

The atonement also applies to estranged relationships in mortality; it is the healer for all broken rela-

tionships. The principle that heals those relationships is at the heart of the atonement – the principle of forgiveness. The Lord forgave those who were crucifying Him (Luke 23:34). You participate with that sacred principle of the atonement when you help those you serve to forgive those who have hurt them; also when you help those who have abused others to recognize their need for the atonement and to desire access to its healing power. Through the atonement forgiveness is *interactive*: we forgive each other and God forgives us – all of us are reconciled. We are cleansed, renewed, *at one* – as one. No matter how lost an individual may be, the Lord knows how to find each of His sheep. He has been where we are. He reaches across that everlasting gulf of misery and woe and brings us back into His arms.

Every disrupted relationship is an opportunity to practice the principle of forgiveness, to activate the atonement in our lives, and to lead us in the direction of celestial practices. On a particularly difficult day, with my finger pointed and my voice raised, I said to my son, “If I make it to the Celestial Kingdom, I will have you to thank!” I may have been speaking with more wisdom than I realized at the time!

Recalling the cycles of frustration and forgiveness I experienced with my son reminds me of a familiar parable in relation to forgiveness and oneness between a father and a particular son (Luke 15). This son wanted his freedom and his inheritance. Life with the family was too confining, and the pleasures he wanted seemed to be passing him by. The father could see trouble ahead, but he knew the son needed his freedom to choose, even if the freedom resulted in wrong choices. So the son took his inheritance and left the home and family. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland says in relation to this:

his money and his friends disappeared sooner than he thought possible – they always do – and a day of terrible reckoning came thereafter – it always does. (Holland, 2002, p. 62).

The son then asked himself, “How could I have gotten here?” The scriptures explain, “And when he came to himself,” he turned homeward. He was undoubtedly wondering and worrying about the kind of welcome he would receive. But when his father saw him, he ran to him and kissed him (Luke 15:20), and there was a great

celebration. The father said, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

### The Atonement and Coming to Oneself

"Lost" souls have many ways of "coming to themselves." As counselors and therapists, you can gently help them in this process, so they can find their way back and heal their damaged relationships. In addition to losing his material inheritance, the son had brought spiritual consequences on himself. Many times, those who come to you counselors are experiencing both situational and spiritual confusion. They have strayed far from hearing the voice of the Spirit, and the voices of the world have begun to manipulate and confuse them. Soon your clients feel alienated and lost. They look to you to find the road back to where they belong. Robert L. Millet, in his book *Lost and Found*, says:

There is no coming to oneself without the memory of belonging. The self has been constructed in relation to others, and it can come to itself only through relationship to others. The first link with the other in a distant country of broken relationships is memory. The memory of sonship gives hope. (Millet, 2001, p. 43)

You give hope as you help to nourish the memory of "sonship." This is a fragile moment in the lives of your clients, and with the direction from the Holy Ghost and the forgiving, reconciling power of the atonement, you can pave the way for that reunion. Salvation occurs one soul at a time. Elder Boyd K. Packer has said,

Save for the exception of the very few who defect to perdition, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no apostasy, no crime exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness. That is the promise of the atonement of Christ. (Packer, 1995, p. 20)

Whether the individual has physically run off to the Bahamas, or to a bar or to a bedroom (and slammed the

door), you can help the "lost" one to come to him or herself and begin the journey home.

You are also the ones who help those waiting at home to forgive, accept, and love those who have strayed (see Luke 15:25-32). When I become impatient with our son and say, "when is he ever going to line up his ducks and quit shooting himself in the foot?" I can hear my Father in Heaven saying, "Sharon, Sharon – when are *you* ever going to line up your ducks and quit shooting yourself in the foot?" When I hear that in my mind, I become more patient and long-suffering. I don't want the Lord to give up on me, and so I won't give up on our boy. In the meantime, the atonement gives me the power to forgive and submit my will to the Lord's way, for:

Surely, He hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions. And with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5).

I testify that through the atonement of Jesus Christ, and after doing all we can do, all the children of God – including therapists and their clients – can be transformed beyond our mortal failings, can put off the "natural man" and become a saint worthy to be recognized as a son or daughter of God (Mosiah 3:19).

Our Redeemer is acquainted with all our weaknesses and infirmities, and with those of the strongest and weakest of any therapist's clients. Unpolished and inadequate as we may be, the Lord stands by to encircle us in His arms. He is on our right hand and our left, with His Spirit in our hearts and His angels round about us to bear us up (D&C 84:88). The Lord augments and supplements our efforts. With Him and through Him, healing is effected, and miracles do come to pass. I thank you, brothers and sisters – LDS therapists – for living lives worthy to call forth that divine power to bless those who need you, and I pray that the Lord will continue to bless you in your work.

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## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963), the atheist scholar who became a devout Anglican and celebrated Christian apologist,

was a professor at Oxford and Cambridge from 1925-1963. An officer in the British army during WWI, he was wounded during the Battle of Arras. The watershed in Lewis' life was his conversion from atheism to Christianity in 1931, following deep discussion with his long-time friend J.R.R. Tolkien. He chronicled his conversion in *Surprised by Joy* (1955). Lewis was briefly married to Joy Davidman; their relationship was the subject of the 1994 film *Shadowlands* (directed by William Nicholson, starring Debra Winger & Anthony Hopkins). She died of cancer in 1960; Lewis' personal struggles during this period were published under the title *A Grief Observed* (1961). Lewis died one week before his 65th birthday on November 22, 1963 – the same day that Aldous Huxley died and President John F. Kennedy was assassinated (Green & Hooper, 1974).

- 2 Peter deVries is a California teacher and practitioner of the Hellinger approach to *Family Constellations*. He leads workshops throughout the U.S. and has a private practice in the San Francisco area. See: <<http://www.curezone.com/Hellinger/practitioners.asp>>
- 3 Bert Hellinger is one of Europe's most innovative and provocative psychotherapists. Described as the ultimate empiricist, Hellinger acknowledges several important influences on his life and work: his parents, whose faith immunized him against accepting Hitler's National Socialism; his 20 years as an Anglican priest, particularly as a missionary to the African Zulu; and his participation in interracial, ecumenical training in group dynamics. Educated in psychoanalysis, Gestalt Therapy, Transactional Analysis, and family therapy, he pioneered the *Family Constellations* that have become the hallmark of his therapeutic work and have propelled him to the forefront of contemporary family therapy (Hellinger & Weber, 1998).

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO HUMANITY ADDRESS PRESENTED AT THE FALL 2002  
AMCAP CONFERENCE ~ OCTOBER 3, 2002

## Use All The Tools In Our Toolbox

ELDER VAUGHN J. FEATHERSTONE

*First Quorum of the Seventy  
and  
Logan Utah Temple  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

Years ago I remember reading in the paper when President David O. McKay received the *Outstanding Man Of The Year* award. After President McKay received it he said these words which I think are so important about the way I feel tonight. He quoted from Shakespeare's *The Merchant Of Venice* (Craig, 1961), where Portia is before Lord Bassanio; she says this:

You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,  
Such as I am: though for myself alone  
I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
To wish myself much better; yet, for you  
I would be trebled twenty times myself;  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times  
more rich;

That only to stand high in your account,  
I might in virtue, beauties, livings, friends,  
Exceed account ... (Act III, Scene ii)

I guess no one really does deserve many of the awards we receive; I think compliments are not what we are but what we should be – and I'll try to measure up.

I was counseled to think of myself tonight as being at an Irish *wake*: you're the guest of honor but you don't say very much. I can appreciate the man that said, "Hey, Joe I passed your house the other day" and Joe said, "Thanks!" Also, I think of the young employee who opened his pay envelope and found a notice that said "congratulations on your raise in pay; it will become effective as soon as you do" – and that's the way I feel here tonight.

I guess if I had a title for the talk you've asked me to give tonight it would be to *Use All The Tools In Our Toolbox*. That's a great statement, a great one-liner. I'm going to talk about one-liners in a minute, but let me just mention another one that has been really interesting to me as I've restored blessings, or when missionaries have come in for interviews, or I've counseled couples at weddings. I have said to them, "Give me the deepest convictions of your life, the things you know more than you know anything else in this world." You can tell an awful lot about people when they answer that; they say such things as:

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Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone served as second counselor to the Presiding Bishopric 1972-1976, and has been a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy since 1976; he received Emeritus status in October 2001. He currently serves as president of the Logan Utah temple. He has also served as a member of the Boy Scouts of America National Advisory Council and as Young Men general president; as president of the Pacific Area, the North America Northeast Area, the Texas San Antonio mission, and the Boise Idaho North Stake. He is the author of several popular books, including *Do-It-Yourself Destiny* (1977), *Charity Never Faileth* (1980), *Purity of Heart* (1982), and *The Millennial Generation: Leading Today's Youth into the Future* (1999).

- There is a God in heaven
- Jesus Christ is the redeemer of the world
- We can be sealed in temples for time and all eternity
- There is a great plan of happiness in which we can all be involved if we follow the pattern of the Master.

For me, I could go on and on talking about the things that are the most meaningful to me in my life: my wife, my children, and the things of this gospel of Jesus Christ. When asked that question, responses can be fairly shallow, but many have been so very deep. At a regional meeting in Melbourne Australia, I turned to a stake president and asked, "President, would you come up and stand by me, and give us the deepest convictions of your life, the things you know more than you know anything else in this world?" Well, he stood at the pulpit, just stood there, and the tears came. I watched as the minute-hand went around the clock once, and then twice – and he just couldn't speak. Finally I said, "Thank you; everyone here knows exactly the depth of your feelings about what you're thinking and what you wanted to say." And he sat down without having said a word. Sometimes it is hard to speak when we feel deeply about things that are really important to us.

I'd just like to thank all of you for unwearingly facing the trials you go through to help people that desperately need help. I guess most of us don't understand, and don't see the deep feelings, because a lot of emotions are hidden – but before you, they bare all, and that is so important.

In 1966, Robert F. Kennedy made this statement while he was in South Africa:

It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is thus shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance. (Kennedy, 1966)

I believe that is true. And on his tomb in the Arlington National Cemetery in Washington DC, these words are inscribed [quoted from the ancient Greek poet Aeschylus]:

In our sleep, pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart – and in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God. (Kennedy, 1968)

I believe that is so very true – there are wonderful blessings to be gained in suffering, if people understand the reasons why they're going through certain trials.

### HELPING THE HEALING PROCESS

I want to talk about five different things tonight which I think we don't talk about enough, that can be used in the healing process that you perform for so many needy people across this earth.

#### First: Humor

The first thing I would like to talk about is humor. I think humor is so essential to counseling and to the people who are being counseled. Sometime you just have to laugh. You know, I have heard that the insane<sup>1</sup> person never laughs; these people don't laugh; they mentally go away to where no one can ever hurt them again. And that is a tragedy. So if you can laugh, you won't go insane – at least that is my understanding about this. I remember the young man that lamented:

I asked my girl to wed,  
and she said, "go to my father"  
now she knew that I knew that her father was dead,  
and she knew that I knew the life he had led,  
and she knew that I knew what she meant when she said,  
"go to my father."

That one might take a minute or two to figure out.

And next, the young boy comes into the house – this is the kind of humor that I think does help us – and his dad took a look at his report card and said, "Son, that is the worst report card I have ever seen; I've never seen a report card so deplorable – that undoubtedly is the worst report card I have ever seen!"

Then the son said, "Dad, I agree. What do you think the problem is – heredity or environment?"

There may be some truth there!

Next – a man came home from work and showed his fist to his wife and said to her, "Sweetheart, if you can guess what is in here, we'll make love tonight."

And she said, "An elephant!"

But he said, "Close enough!"

I don't know if you remember Charley Boswell<sup>2</sup>. Charley Boswell was probably the greatest blind golfer in the world. One time Charley was on the Bob Hope Show, and after awarding a trophy, Bob got a little playful and said, "Blind golfer, huh? I'd like to play you sometime."

Charley said, "Well, Mr. Hope, I would like to play you sometime."

Bob said, "You don't understand – I gamble on every hole."

Charley said, "That's fine with me, Mr. Hope."

Bob said, "A lot of money – on every hole!"

And Charley said, "That's wonderful; I like to do that too."

Bob said, "You mean you'll play me?"

Charley said, "Of course."

Bob said, "When?"

And Charley said, "Midnight!" (Boswell, 1969; Smith, 2003).

So you have to have a sense of humor. That's the first of the five that I'd like to share tonight.

## Second: One-Liners

Now I would like to talk about one-liners for a minute and share some of those with you. There's some genius in one-liners that really can change lives and motivate people. Let me just read a few of them; these are only a fraction of my one-liners, but these are some I've picked up over the years. The first one I've already given to you:

- *Use All the Tools In Your Toolbox.*

The second one is:

- *Never try to catch a falling safe.*

The third one is:

- *Always do your homework well.* Boy, we better do our homework well when we're dealing with people.

Some more are:

- *Don't die on every hill.*
- *Never be a dream stealer.*

• *Never walk on the message.* For example, there are people that go out and wash their car in their shorts and we know that they've been to the temple; or, we occasionally see people drink something they shouldn't be drinking; or, the missionaries when they are doing something they shouldn't be doing – they are "walking on the message."

Andrew Jackson<sup>3</sup> – and this is probably as important for

this group as anything – said:

• *Don't beat a hasty path to judgment.* It is indeed a pretty thin pancake when you've only got one side. For example, when counseling marriages or other groups. I've listened to many over the years – I guess I've not counseled as many as you have, but have counseled thousands. Often, in listening to a woman talk about her husband and the problems she has with him, I think, "Boy, he should not do that; that's a tragedy that he would treat her that way." But then I talk to him and I'll think, "You know, she shouldn't act like that with him." It becomes confusing when you don't have all the facts. So, "don't beat a hasty path to judgment."

Then this next one is really important:

• *The Internet could become a Trojan Horse in our homes.* I was in Preston, Idaho, and I said to the Stake President, "What is the greatest single problem you have in your Stake?" I thought he might say "home teaching" or "lack of Melchizedek Priesthood commitment." But he said, "The internet – we are having men leave their wives with a romance on the internet, and we are having wives leave their husbands; we are having youth who have been on the Internet and are deep in pornography." These are indeed tragedies; the internet truly could "become a Trojan Horse in our homes" if we are not careful.

And, finally:

• *Great leaders march off the map.* Alexander the Great said that, and I think it's a great one-liner. Every great achievement starts out unspectacularly – isn't that true? Dr. Laws,<sup>4</sup> all those years ago, while you were working your way up, who would have thought that one day you would be standing here as president of this organization, having served as Chair of the Department at BYU, having earned a doctorate from Columbia University, and all you've done in your life – it's a miracle what you've done.

## Third: Music

The third point that I'd like to make tonight is the importance of music in healing. Music is essential. When I prepared this talk, I went downstairs and put on a Tabernacle Choir (1995) recording. I especially love "Holy Art Thou" – it's the lyrics (Kingsmill, 1913) to "Largo" [from *Xerxes*], by George Friedrich Handel (1685-1759). It's my favorite piece of music in the whole world. After listening about twenty seconds into it, I'm

always uplifted spiritually.

But it isn't just classical music; we could talk about the hymns, too: "I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me; confused at the grace that so fully he proffers me" (*Hymns*, 1985, 193) and "I Need Thee Every Hour" (*Hymns*, 1985, 98). I really love "For the Strength of the Hills" – there's something so very deep in that song; I'd like to meet the author [Felicia D. Hemans<sup>5</sup>] of the lyrics:

We are watchers of a beacon whose light must never die;  
We are guardians of an altar 'midst the silence of the sky  
...  
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,  
Our God, our fathers' God. (*Hymns*, 1985, 35)

These words ring so clear! That's just one of the verses, the fourth. The other three are just as powerful. Also, I think of "Though Deepening Trials," another one of my favorites:

Though deepening trials throng your way,  
Press on, press on, ye Saints of God! ...  
Though tribulations rage abroad,  
Christ says, "In me ye shall have peace." (*Hymns*, 1985, 122)

Music is something that we all need. People who are alone can turn on some music, and the music is soothing. But if it is just silent, sometimes they can fall deeper and deeper into their frustrations and anxieties. But if they can just put something on the stereo, it can reduce the loneliness. Merlene<sup>6</sup> has been alone a lot, during most of her life; she says that the first thing she does is get up and turn on the radio so she has some music going on – and then she has company. People who are desperate quite often do not do those things. I think they need to.

I've driven on that crowded freeway in Salt Lake City from 5:30 to 6:00 in the evening for the last 29 and a half years and if I were a swearing man, I could easily do that a few times (someone once said of a swearing man "where he spits the grass never grows"). But to turn on the music – the station I listen to plays the kind of music that I like – then all of a sudden the traffic is no problem at all: I can just sail through all the traffic, whether it is a half hour or an hour and 15 minutes, and have a wonderfully pleasant experience, and arrive home calm

and peaceful. We all need that kind of healing music as well. We can listen to this and it's healing, but some types of music aren't healing, they're damaging.

I was at a stake conference with Elder ElRay L. Christiansen<sup>7</sup> many years ago when I was on the church's General Missionary Committee in 1965-67. We were at a stake conference in Idaho and he did something I had never seen: he just stood at the pulpit and read "How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word" – and just read through all the verses. I thought of how people with a great deal of problems, if they would listen to these verses, even just read the lyrics, how it could certainly give them some kind of healing in their hearts and lives. Just listen to the words of the last four verses – the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh:

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
The rivers of sorrow shall not thee o'erflow,  
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,  
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials my pathway shall lie  
My grace all sufficient, shall be thy supply.  
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

Even down to old age, all my people shall prove  
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love,  
And then, when gray hair shall their temples adorn,  
Like lambs shall they still to my bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose  
I will not, I cannot, desert to its foes;  
That soul, though all hell shall endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake! (*Hymns*, 1985, 85)

I remember sitting in a meeting when I was just a young man. I think at that time we had four sons; Lawrence was a baby in his mother's arms. We were in a ward in the Valley View Stake and our Bishop had us sing "Count Your Many Blessings" (*Hymns*, 1985, 241). I'll never forget that experience because, for some reason that particular morning, the tears just streamed down my cheeks unashamedly – and I thought what a beautiful, strengthening verse this is that someone has put to music. We do, indeed, need to count our blessings; even

though there are a lot of problems in life, still we need to count our blessings.

#### Fourth: Poetry

Then the fourth thing – and remember I'm trying to talk about things that I don't think you usually talk about (you're so far over my head intellectually with all that you know about social work and psychiatry and psychologists and medicines for those kinds of things) – these suggestions are just some of the things that could be additional aides that ought to be used. The fourth thing is poetry.

You know, the poets are philosophers. The poet-philosopher Frances Cornford<sup>8</sup> wrote:

O why do you walk through the fields in gloves,  
Missing so much and so much?  
O thoughtless woman whom nobody loves,  
Why do you walk through the fields in gloves,  
When the grass is soft as the breast of doves  
And shivering-sweet to the touch?  
O why do you walk though the fields in gloves,  
Missing so much and so much? (Cornford, 1954)

There's a powerful message there. Merlene was once teaching a class of the little sunbeam children; she had been asked to teach because the teacher couldn't stay. The teacher had said this lesson is on "feelings" and she had written "feelings" on the board and put a happy face and a sad face and a frowning face to key off the lesson. Merlene said to the children, "what's this?"

The little kids said, "that it's a happy face!"  
And Merlene said, "what's this?"  
"It's a frowning face!"  
And, "what's this?"  
"It's a sad face."

Merlene apparently had fifteen or twenty of these little kids in her class, and she said, "Boys and girls, are all of you happy?" And you know how little kids are at that age, their hands just go up in a flash – all except one. Brook's hand didn't go up, so Merlene said, "Brook, aren't you happy?"

And she said, "no, teacher; I have a broken heart."

Merlene knelt down and said "come up here, Brook." Brook came up to the front and Merlene put her arm around her and said, "boys and girls, Brook has a broken heart and she isn't feeling very happy, so let's all tell her

how wonderful she is, and maybe help her feel happy." And so – this is as I recall Merlene telling it – they went around the room and each of the little kids said something nice about Brook; someone said she had a nice little ribbon in her hair and her shoes were nice, and they thought she was pretty; each one of them said something nice. When they finished Merlene said, "Now Brook, I love you and I care about you, and all these children care about you; now doesn't that help you feel happy?"

She said "no teacher, I have a broken heart – my mommy and daddy are getting divorced this week, and I have a broken heart." Merlene told me this story, and then I had a broken heart.

I remember I had to turn away because the tears came, thinking "how can we do that to little children?" But somehow they do this; they "walk through the field with gloves."

A young man who had been a bishop and stake president, and higher – not a general authority but very high – and after he had been in those high positions, he went to his bishop and said "I've found an alternate lifestyle." He went into the homosexual community and found himself a companion, left his wife and three children, and was excommunicated from the church. He was great person and beloved by everyone; a wonderful stake president; you could hardly describe this wonderful man as any better, he was so great before he went this lifestyle – now he's the empty shell of the man he once was. His brother who loved him dearly sent him a letter and quoted from *The Rape of Lucrece* these words by Shakespeare (Craig, 1961) – they are just wonderful:

What win I, if I gain the thing I seek?  
A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting joy.  
Who buys a minute's mirth to wail a week?  
Or sells eternity to get a toy?  
For one sweet grape who will the vine destroy?  
Or what fond beggar, but to touch the crown,  
Would with the sceptre straight be stricken down?  
...  
Thy secret pleasure turns to open shame,  
Thy private feasting to a public fast,  
Thy smoothing titles to a ragged name.  
(lines 197-217, stanza 128)

And, the poet Harry Kemp (1883-1960) said this, and you'll appreciate this in your counseling; he called it "My Prayer for What I Have Not Been":



I kneel not now to pray that thou  
 make white a single sin,  
 I only kneel to thank thee Lord  
 for what I have not been –  
 For deeds which sprouted in my heart  
 but never to bloom were brought,  
 for monstrous which I stew  
 in the shambles of my thought –  
 Dark seeds the world has never guessed  
 by hell and passion bred  
 which never grew beyond  
 the bad that cankered in my head.  
 Some said I was a righteous man  
 poor fools! the gallows tree  
 if thou hadst let one foot to slip  
 had grown a limb for me. (Morrison, 1948)

Isn't that true? We look back on our lives and how narrowly we escaped doing things that could have changed our whole lives and put us in places where a lot of people are suffering at this time because they may not have had the balance we had.

I think if I were in your business I would pull out some of these poems and use them at the right time with the right people and maybe they could help somewhat.

This next one I absolutely love; it was written by a great man, Walter Malone (1866-1915); he's in the Tennessee state Hall of Fame. He was a prominent district judge in Tennessee. I don't know what else he did that was of great renown, but if all he did is write this poem he deserves to be not only in the Tennessee state Hall of Fame but in the celestial Hall of Fame. These words need to be emblazoned over his name. He entitled the poem "Opportunity," and it is a healing experience:

They do me wrong who say I come no more  
 When once I knock and fail to find you in;  
 For every day I stand outside your door,  
 And bid you wake, and rise to fight and win.

Wail not for precious chances passed away,  
 Weep not for golden ages on the wane!  
 Each night I burn the records of the day—  
 At sunrise every soul is born again!

Laugh like a boy at splendors that have sped,  
 To vanished joys be blind and deaf and dumb;

My judgments seal the dead past with its dead,  
 But never bind a moment yet to come.

Though deep in mire, wring not your hands and weep;  
 I lend my arm to all who say "I can!"  
 No shame-faced outcast ever sank so deep,  
 But yet might rise and be again a man.

Dost thou behold thy lost youth all aghast?  
 Dost reel from righteous retribution's blow?  
 Then turn from blotted archives of the past,  
 And find the future's pages white as snow.

Art thou a mourner? Rouse thee from thy spell;  
 Art thou a sinner? Sins may be forgiven;  
 Each morning gives thee wings to flee from hell,  
 Each night a star to guide thy feet to heaven.  
 (Rittenhouse, 1915; reprinted from Malone, 1906, *Songs of East and West*)

I don't know how you feel about those words but I think they could be just like a life-line being cast out to anyone who feels he has done something so terrible he will never be able to get back into the kingdom again and never have all the things he had before.

And then, I guess one of my favorites is "Gethsemane," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

In golden youth when seems the earth  
 A Summer-land of singing mirth,  
 When souls are glad and hearts are light,  
 And not a shadow lurks in sight,  
 We do not know it, but there lies  
 Somewhere veiled under evening skies  
 A garden which we all must see –  
 The garden of Gethsemane.

With joyous steps we go our ways,  
 Love lends a halo to our days;  
 Light sorrows sail like clouds afar,  
 We laugh, and say how strong we are.  
 We hurry on; and hurrying, go  
 Close to the borderland of woe  
 That waits for you, and waits for me –  
 Forever waits Gethsemane.

Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,

Bridged over by our broken dreams;  
 Behind the misty caps of years,  
 Beyond the great salt fount of tears,  
 The garden lies. Strive as you may,  
 You cannot miss it in your way;  
 All paths that have been, or shall be,  
 Pass somewhere through Gethsemane.

All those who journey, soon or late,  
 Must pass within the garden's gate;  
 Must kneel alone in darkness there,  
 And battle with some fierce despair.  
 God pity those who cannot say,  
 "Not mine but Thine"; who only pray  
 "Let this cup pass," and cannot see  
 The purpose in Gethsemane. (Wilcox, 1910)

You've been there and I've been there, and we'll all go there by and by, each one of us has our turn in Gethsemane – at least our type of a Gethsemane experience. Remember in Job (42:3) where he talked about things "too wonderful for me" and Jeremiah (20:9) talked about how he felt God's word in his heart "as a burning fire shut up in my bones." I think as we talk to people, we should help them understand that this kind of experience is a part of life. Life is a process – as we go along, we can work these things out.

### Fifth: Scriptures

The fifth thing I want to talk about tonight would have to be the wonderful blessings of the scriptures and the healing received when one reads the scriptures – especially the *Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine & Covenants*, and *Pearl of Great Price*. For just sheer pleasure I'll read the *Pearl of Great Price*, from the first page to the last page in an hour or so on a Sunday morning and just have a wonderful, thrilling experience.

I spoke the other day in our own home ward and mentioned a parable that Elder Boyd K. Packer talked about with the General Authorities – the parable of "The man with the wooden leg":

You're having a dance, and at the dance the dads are dancing with their daughters, and the sons are dancing with their mothers, and the people are dancing with each other. Everything is going along fine, then a man without a leg comes in. And then it gets awkward; the music stops and

the people don't know what to do. They can't keep him entertained and busy, and they don't want to dance because it will be hard for him – the whole thing is awkward.

That's where he stopped and asked us, "What does that mean?" and we discussed it for almost an hour. You know, in the church we have to talk about couples that are active, married with children and the mother stays at home; we don't want to hurt those who have to work (and we wouldn't for the world), but there are some mothers who don't have to work, who are working – and they'll pay a terrible consequence for it if they don't really have to work when they still have children at home. And we can't not talk about couples, how wonderful the relationship can be between couples, just because we have a lot of singles in the ward and we might offend the single people.

When I talked in our home ward, I mentioned how sometimes we hesitate to talk about divorce because we can think of five or six people that will be offended if we talk about divorce. But we have to talk about divorce: divorce is unacceptable; we don't do it – two Christian people who live Christian principles can just get along.

I also said, in talking to our home ward, that there are those young people who say, "We'll put off having our family" – and some are guilty of this – putting off their family until they get out of college, until they get their employment in place, and maybe a down payment on a new home or new car; then when things are squared away they go and have their family. That is not good counsel, whether it comes from the parents or even the bishop. The counsel of the Lord is that we have families in a normal way.

As I started out that part of the talk, there was a young couple – I can still clearly see them in my mind's eye – and they started laughing when I said that about not putting off having children in the marriage. I noticed this young couple looked at each other and they started laughing. And then I said "but you know, when they are ready to have children, quite often they can't" – the Lord said:

I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing. Then they say in their hearts: This is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But wo unto such, for their reward lurketh from beneath, and not from above. (D&C 58:32-33).

And then that young couple got just as quiet and pale, almost, as death; I watched them and I thought, "they've done that." As I have said before, young people often come to me and say, "will you give me a blessing so we can have children?" And I'll always ask the question, "Have you put off having children for selfish and personal reasons like getting your college degree and getting a down payment on your home?" If they say yes, I say "Well, I will still give you the blessing" but I quote that scripture from D&C 58: "I command, and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing."

### CONCLUSION

Let me conclude with this. I think you have all heard it. One man asked me to quote it about six months ago, but I don't think I had quoted it for ten years. I rehearse it all the time, though. It's *The Touch Of The Master's Hand* [written in 1926], by Myra Brooks Welch:

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer  
Thought it scarcely worth his while  
To waste much time on the old violin,  
But held it up with a smile:  
'What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,  
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"  
"A dollar, a dollar"; then, "Two!" "Only two?"  
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?  
Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;  
Going for three—" But no,  
From the room, far back, a gray-haired man  
Came forward and picked up the bow;  
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,

And tightening the loose strings,  
He played a melody pure and sweet  
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,  
With a voice that was quiet and low,  
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"  
And he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?  
Two thousand And who'll make it three?  
Three thousand, once, three thousand, twice,  
And going, and gone," said he.  
The people cheered, but some of them cried,  
"We do not quite understand –  
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply:  
"The touch of a master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune,  
And battered and scarred with sin,  
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,  
Much like the old violin.  
A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine;  
A game – and he travels on.  
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,  
He's "going" and almost "gone."  
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd  
Never can quite understand  
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought  
By the touch of the Master's hand.  
(McFadden, 1997; Welch, 1996)

God bless you for your touch of the Master's hand, in  
the name of Jesus Christ.

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## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Editor's note: Elder Featherstone is here using the word *insane* to refer to patients who suffer from catatonic and/or severely depressed mental disturbances.
- 2 Charles A. Boswell (1916-1995) was a star athlete at the University of Alabama who gave up a career in professional baseball to join the U.S. Army in 1941. Major Boswell lost his sight in 1944 when he was hit by enemy fire while assisting a disabled colleague in Germany. Following World War II, he won 28 national and international blind golf championships and was the first Chairman of the Board of the *Helen Keller Eye Research Foundation* (Morris, et al., 2003).
- 3 General Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) became a national hero when he defeated the British at New Orleans in the War of 1812. A contemporary of Joseph Smith Sr., he was the president of the United States during the early years of the Restoration, 1829-1837.
- 4 Duane M. Laws EdD, AMCAP President 2001-2003, was Chair of BYU's Department of Marriage, Family & Human Development and later, a professor at Eastern Michigan University.
- 5 Felicia Dorothea Browne Hemans (1793-1835) was a popular Victorian poet, a friend of William Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott. She is best known for the quote, "Strength is born in the deep silence of long-suffering hearts – not amid joy" (Sweet & Melnyk, 2001).
- 6 Merlene Minor Featherstone married Vaughn J. Featherstone in 1950. They are the parents of 7 children. Elder Featherstone describes his wife as "Merlene has a compassionate heart and a gentle spirit ... She feels a great mission in her home ... She loves family activity and loves the family being together ... Merlene is the miracle maker in our home" (Featherstone, 1976, p. 44).
- 7 Elder ElRay L. Christensen (1897-1975) served as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve from 1951 to 1975.
- 8 Frances Cornford (1886-1960), the granddaughter of Charles Darwin, was also related to William Wordsworth; she was married to the philosopher Francis M. Cornford of Cambridge University. In 1959 she was awarded the *Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry*

PRESENTED AT THE AMCAP FALL CONVENTION ~ OCTOBER 4, 2002

# The Mediator: Justice and Mercy as a Type For Bringing Unity Out of Conflict

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In our work of psychotherapy, much of what we encounter has to do with positions that are in conflict. Since conflict is such a ubiquitous life experience many of us have acquired some ways to deal with conflict. Particularly, those who have developed a personal relationship with the Savior have been able to apply many of our ideas in ways that have become second nature. As one practices the principles presented here, the ability to deal with conflict can become fairly quick and intuitive. Let us remember however that our clients are not always as experienced or as connected to the divine as would be in their best interest. Therefore, we hope a discussion about some of the more specific elements involved in conflict would be instructive and useful.

The conflicts which we address happen between people. While there are conflicts that exist between ideologies, between forces of nature, etc. – and while it might be true that the ideas presented in this paper would be effective with those kinds of conflict – we will focus our discussions on those conflicts which happen between people.

When human beings encounter conflict there seems to be a natural drive for a speedy resolution. Sometimes

that search for a quick resolution leads to premature closure. We propose that a close examination of conflict, one that avoids premature closure, one that is unafraid of what will be found, and one that is bold in its exami-

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nation of realities and implications, will yield specifics with which the atonement can help. Too often out of fear of conflict or out of an attempt to bring premature resolution to conflict, examination of important issues is short-circuited and full understanding is not available. In such circumstances there may be occasions when the power of the atonement is difficult to access or perhaps can only be applied in a partial way.

We will use an example from religion – namely, the opposition of justice and mercy – to present a way that positions which are in conflict, including those that appear opposite and mutually exclusive, can relate. We will present a method of resolution between these positions that we believe preserves the initial and foundational character of each side and yet finds a way to work together to create a unity which is more complete than either alone. We hope to show that it is possible for seemingly opposed positions to join hands in a joint venture, each enhancing rather than diminishing the other.

## JUSTICE

Let us begin with justice. Justice is demanded when the interest of one individual is damaged or harmed in some way. A call for justice presupposes that the losses incurred by an individual matter, and that there is some quality inherent in an individual that calls for and requires a response. If it is possible to discount the hurt and loss to any degree or by any means whatsoever and thereby dismiss the individual, then justice as a concept is significantly weakened. Were it possible to find any basis or reason of any kind that would decrease the claim for recovery by a wronged individual, that were imposed by any kind of external force, the balance would begin to favor dismissing the individual in favor of whatever external pressures might be called to bear. Justice could then easily be overridden by simply dismissing the individual calling for justice. Most of us are unwilling to adopt such a position to any significant degree, because allowing any individual to be discounted and dismissed in this way opens the door for us ourselves to be dismissed and discounted in a similar way. There is an inherent general sense that the needs of the individual matter sufficiently as to ground a demand for justice firmly in our theologies and world views. However, let us press the issue a little further. The very

nature of individuals is directly at issue here:

- Are we created by and therefore “property” of God, and as such available to be “done unto” at his discretion? If so, then our claim on justice is at his discretion, not ours. Thus God would have the power to overrule and to selectively discount any given individual, perhaps in the service of some larger creative or conservation effort.
- Or, are we the result of random forces of the universe? If so, any claim for justice could be overridden by ongoing or future cosmic forces as we are swept along helplessly in the stream of evolution.
- Are we self-existent and co-eternal with God, having identity and agency in ourselves? If so, claims on justice can be self-defined and individually asserted.

Any position other than each individual having self-existence and being co-eternal with God leaves the concept of justice severely undermined. Any other position requires that justice and any claim thereto be footnoted with caveats and exceptions such as “as long as God is willing,” “unless evolution takes some turn or another,” etc.

Justice, then, has the most solid grounding when based upon the existence of a fundamental individual self which has claim in itself on recovery from any insult or damage incurred. And the claim must be immutable. There must be no argument that can set aside the demand for justice. The individual who has been wronged must have the leeway to set the definitions of what constitutes a loss and also what constitutes a recovery. To impose a definition on either from some external source is to severely undermine the autonomy of the individual and to reduce one’s claim on justice, leaving the individual manipulated by whatever greater force establishes those definitions.

Thus for justice to have a maximally strong position, it must be based upon the definition of an individual who has existence, value and importance in him/herself, who can set her/his own definitions – in this case, with particular regard to harm and recovery.

There must, then, be sufficient value placed upon the individual that it is legitimate for that individual to claim recovery regardless of the cost. The definition of loss and the definition of recovery must not be based upon cost to another – or the individual is diminished, and the issue of cost then becomes the defining force of

the individual and the limit-setting force regarding justice: self-determination is significantly undermined; indeed, the very existence of the self as a self-defining autonomous agent is undermined.

### MERCY

Let us now examine mercy. Mercy is a quality which is called into being by the interests inherent in relationships. While the existence of a *self* as discussed above is to be highly valued, it is clear that a self, an individual, is irrelevant without the context of a relationship: it is difficult to comprehend what value there would be in having only one such individual self in existence; there would be no opportunity for creativity, fecundity, etc. Such an isolated entity would be unable to make much of itself. Relationship, then, becomes highly significant to individuals. When one is able to produce more of something than one consumes, the excess can be contributed to a relationship. If there are others producing other things in quantities more than they can consume and if they then are willing to contribute that to the relationship, there is an additive effect and everyone in the relationship is enhanced significantly. Since an individual by his own effort is unable to produce all items that contribute to satisfaction; indeed, some enjoyments cannot be generated in any way other than in a relationship. An isolated individual is, then, at a severe disadvantage. In fact, not only would an isolated individual miss out on many advantages, it is unlikely that one could survive at all as a single entity.

Since individuals are irrelevant and largely impotent without relationships, relationships can be seen as having a significant, foundational, immutable and primary call upon the interests of the individual. Indeed, one's survival and continued existence depend upon it. Mercy therefore begins to call upon the individual to abandon claims on justice, agency, and self-existence in favor of maintaining relationships and survival. Being diminished and discounted, and having needs and feelings ignored, seem to be prices worth paying to insure continued existence. The interests of another in a relationship are therefore extremely compelling. The interest of the other in a relationship might even be seen as the highest priority survival interest for individuals. It can (and has been) said that attention to the needs of others is the best (and perhaps the only) way to happiness, and

is thus in one's best interest (Cuthbert, 1990; D&C 4:4; McConkie, 1980).

Mercy would ask that when there is a loss, the demand for recovery upon the other in a relationship should be reduced, so as to not annihilate or seriously damage the other in the relationship. The request for mercy is a request that justice be tempered, that the amount of recovery to the individual be diminished in some way so as to lessen the loss to the other – and to the relationship as a whole.

Note that the individual who is "other" in our discussion thus far is also a self-existent individual who has a foundational claim on justice to recover perceived and self-defined losses and hurts. He/she is also able to set her/his own demands for recovery. It is from this stance that the request for mercy is ultimately generated: this request for a decrease in the recompense offered as recovery to the first individual is a justice-demand of its own from the second individual (i.e., asserting that the original demand was excessive). The requests and demands generated by each side seem mutually exclusive: how can full justice be claimed if it requires the annihilation of the other upon whom one depends for the advantages of relationship? How can relationships have any value when they exist only at the cost of discounting and diminishing the individuals in the relationships?

### COMPETITION

When these interests between justice and mercy are seen as individual entities, competition surfaces easily. The competition that is generated by the justice-born self-definitions of losses and recovery vs. the discounting counter demands of mercy, gives rise to a significant sense of futility. World events such as the conflict in Ireland or the Middle East exemplify this: situations in the Middle East illustrate the runaway process of each side self-defining its losses and demanding high levels of recovery (higher levels of recovery than the other side feels are appropriate), along with a willingness to dismiss the legitimacy of mercy's counterclaims from the other side. Additionally, the difference between the high cost demanded and the cost which seems reasonable is taken as a further loss to the side of whom the high cost is demanded; that loss must then be recompensed so a demand is made for recovery, which is again perceived as

another loss, followed by yet another demand for recovery, and on and on – thus the conflict escalates. Each side is also quick to make its own mercy-demands, whining about how their pain requires a discounting and setting aside of the justice claim of the other. This process cannot be stopped or mitigated by any dominating or externally defined force without discounting one or both of the parties: Justice must have its due; Mercy is also called for.

We are all touched by real-life stories of families torn apart, marriages dissolved, and friendships lost. As each side in these competitive conflicts fights for its own interests, defines its own losses, demands its own sense of recovery and claims mercy at the expense of the other – conflict escalates, damage multiplies, options diminish, and hopes of resolution fade. Indeed, mutual annihilation seems a probable outcome.

### THE MEDIATOR

There is however an alternative, which is presented in the religious redemption of the tension between justice and mercy (Alma 42:13, 15; Cullimore, 1974). Religion shows us a model which can bring resolution to this escalating conflict; through the process of *mediation* (Alma 23:5-7). Hope is found in the concept of, and the person of, the divine mediator (2 Thessalonians 2:16). In the Christian tradition, this mediator is Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5).

Without imposing any definition from an external source about the severity of the loss, Jesus responds to all with divine compassion. The individual who demands justice while feeling the loss, by accepting the understanding presence of this compassionate and loving interested third party, is able to discharge some of the loss through this third-party connection with the relationship. By being connected in this significant way, a part of the loss that was related to being rejected and being isolated can be significantly mitigated.

Also, the presence of a divine force larger than the immediate context can stretch the world view and vision of the offended person beyond the moment, introducing space and time as variables contributing to recovery. When the influence of immediacy is removed from the demand for recovery, intensity can decrease. The forgiving stance of a divine mediator toward the individual also evokes memories of her/his own given insults and

another's demands for recompense being tempered by mercy. Thus a heightened response of compassion and benevolence can flow. Confidence in the mediator's capacity to provide recovery out of some ample divine store further reduces the demand for recovery from the offender in the interaction.

With hope of a complete recovery in hand, the offended can again become open to the advantages of relationship. The futility of competition can become apparent; thus room can again be made for a return of positive intentions toward the other. The generation of a cooperative attitude on the part of the offended toward the offender is a significant further benefit of such mediation.

When each side of the conflict receives the benefit of the individual presence of such a mediator, cooperation between opposing parties truly becomes a possibility. A spirit of cooperation between opposing parties offers increased hope of resolution, and the possibility of reconciliation begins to seem probable.

### COOPERATION

With firm hope of being valued and a clear expectation of finding satisfaction through mediated dialogue (i.e., relationship), each individual can willingly give away specific outcomes or methods (even those mutually exclusive ones which were held so tenaciously), and instead creatively pursue a unified objective of pleasing the other as a means of satisfying self. Indeed, an individual may be able to genuinely assert that he/she desires the well-being of another above his/her own, knowing that his/her own well-being depends on such a stance. The unity created through this cooperation virtually assures an agreeable outcome.

However, the specifics of the conflict and potential resolution are not automatically resolved. As the conflicts in Ireland and the Middle East demonstrate, the presence of a cooperative attitude would improve much, yet it does not solve the underlying specific issues. Once a spirit of cooperation has been agreed upon between the parties, a more specific dialogue can begin.

Again, remember that any imposed solution such as "compromise" diminishes both the involved parties. Each issue presented by each side of the conflict must have a satisfying response. A cooperative attitude, however, can generate an option for each side to make



offerings without fear of unfair advantage being taken. A cooperative stance is only possible when each party has both its own and the other's interests as high priorities: there must be as much concern for taking too much as there is for taking enough, and vice versa. Each side must have an equal priority. Mediated cooperation works best when each party commits to continuing to work until all issues and all interests are satisfactorily resolved for all parties. When all parties feel assured that all interests are mutually valued, the need to fight/compete with intensity in order to persuade or ensure the achievement of a particular issue can be abandoned. A cooperative exchange may in fact spend some negotiation time on disputing who has the privilege of first attending to the concerns of the other. Note, then, that a process of *compromise* is certainly not optimal, since compromise is the diminishing of one position in deference to the other.

The resolution towards which such cooperative dialogue is aimed is more closely described in consensual decision-making literature – each side willing to alter the specific expression of its needs and being willing to take varied forms of recompense. Cooperative attitudes engender expectation that positive intention can persist over time and space. Patience can allow for some recovery/resolution to occur at a future time or in an ongoing way; indeed, recovery/repair efforts that are larger in scope can be included as possibilities. As the creative brainstorming process continues, options can be generated together that neither could have generated independently. As this joint generation of options continues, eventually each side will be satisfied that all losses have been understood and recovered, and that those things that have been demanded of each side have been those things which are comfortable to give and do not feel excessive.

The presence, then, of a mediator can be seen as a mechanism by which mutually exclusive opposing interests can find common ground and work together to generate a mutually advantageous cooperative working relationship between individuals.

### SUMMARY

Given this discussion – what, then, are the take-home messages?

- We need not be afraid to explore each side of a conflict in its depth and breadth, with all of its

implications and potential for mutually exclusive positions. In fact, such an exploration may lead to the highest probability of an eventual solution.

- Avoid premature closure of conflict; conflict avoidance is the cause of significant mischief.
- One cannot dismiss a person or diminish his/her personal expressions without doing violence to him/her.
- One gets further towards the eventual resolution of a conflict by first exploring and clarifying the individual's desire for justice.
- It is important to allow each individual to generate his/her own sense of motivation and advantage in order to provide the energy to drive attempts at reconciliation: avoid externally imposed solutions.
- Accessing the divine mediator and the relationship he offers provides the most helpful mechanism to respond to the individual's desires for recovery.
- Use the divine mediator to generate trust, hope and possibility – and to reduce fear and defensiveness. Encourage people to reject inward, competitive, immediate-focused choices which are passive, dependent and have a victim flavor – such as “I have to get mine.” Encourage people to embrace cooperative, outward, long-term focused choices which are active, independent and have a survivor theme – such as “how can we work together.”
- Use healthy amounts of dialogue to engage creativity, to fuel consensual decision making, and to pursue mutual benefit in the service of resolving specific issues.

### POSSIBILITIES

Some may be willing to embrace the possibility of such a cooperative stance between individuals and yet see little possibility that such a process could have application beyond dyadic or small group interactions. Certainly the complexity of the task increases to some degree. However, all interactions, whether discussed in terms of nations, political parties, philosophies, etc., are fundamentally interactions between people. It is people who represent groups, ideologies, etc. – and people who eventually bring language to express competitiveness or cooperation around any given point. It is people who have strong feelings about a particular way of doing things. It is people whose stories call us to action and give cause to hold and debate strong opinions.

Note that it is the *individual example* that carries disconfirmatory power, and the specific loss or gain of a given relationship that spurs further action. It is unfortunately true that issues can seem to take a life of their own and develop beyond the specific instance, and that movements grow in complexity and abstraction. Although this expanded form is very useful and an essential arena for discussion, learning, and interaction, yet discourse is frequently called back to its roots: the personal experiences of individuals in relationships.

Why, then, do we not assume that people can rise to the challenge of increased complexity? If people have learned to deal as nations, philosophical groups, etc. in competitive ways, why can they not learn to do so in cooperative ways? Once one has learned the advantage of using a cooperative style in personal interactions, why is it not possible to use similar skills in other perhaps more complex arenas? Arguments such as "it's never been done before" or "I don't see how it could work" really don't seem very compelling.

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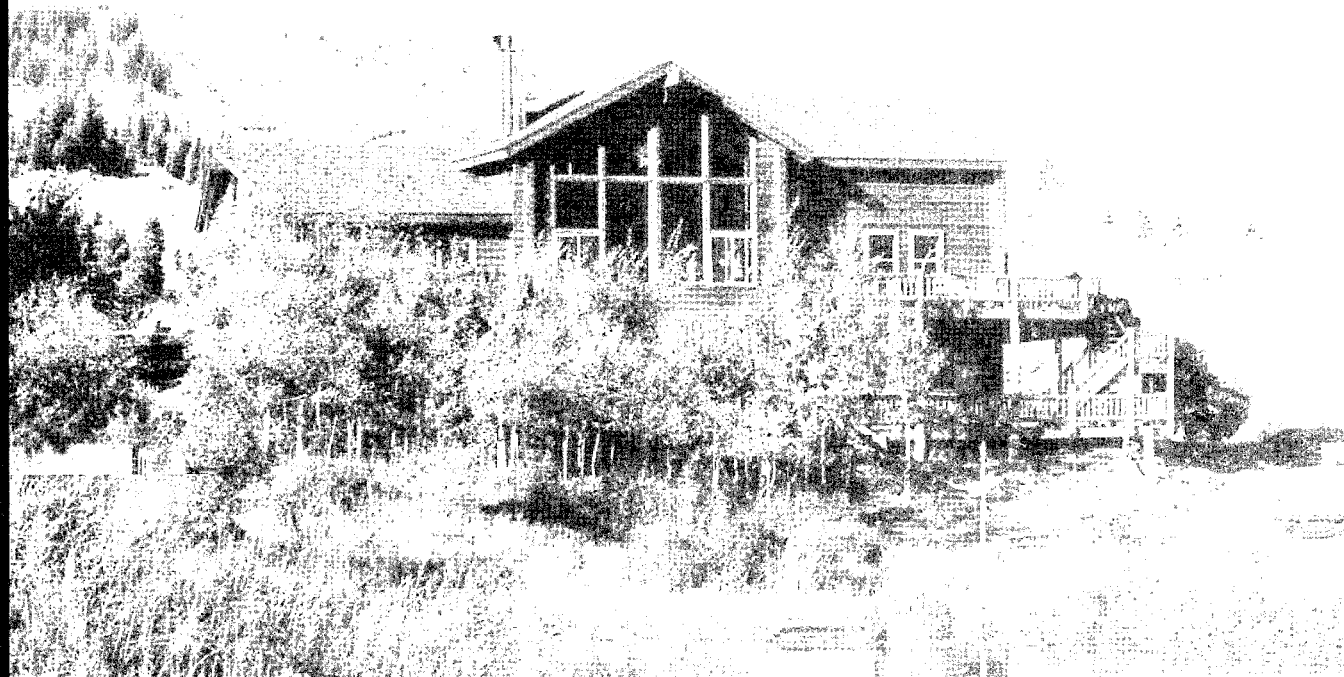
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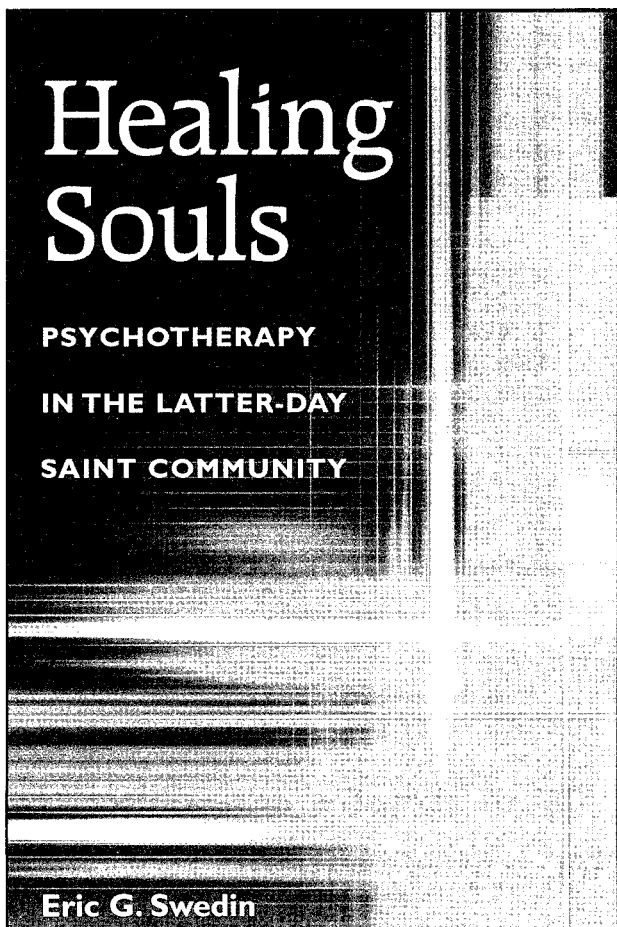
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*The Mission of the Association of Mormon Counselors  
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