



# CPSC Notes

COUNCIL FOR PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL COUNSELLORS

No 30 – November 2024

## Splitting the sea

Dear Affiliates,

**A**n experience of splitting the sea can evoke many interpretations and emotions. It can be linked to a Biblical interpretation, viewed as a metaphor for overcoming obstacles or seen as achieving psychological insight.

The well-known biblical example refers to an intervention from the Almighty God when the Israelites were pursued by Pharaoh while they fled Egypt. When the Israelites became scared the Lord said to Moses, *"Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. But lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it."*

The sea was split, and each part was like a mountain of water. The Egyptians followed them, but God again commanded Moses to stretch out his hand and the sea engulfed the army. *"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.'" This story is recounted in the Old Testament (Exodus 14: 2-31).*

Splitting the sea could refer to this historical event and the victory brought on by the power of God. But it could also be related to a personal struggle and feelings of being trapped in a situation. The process of facing one's own fear of change or struggles, while going forward could be compared with the experience of the Israelites.

Change almost always causes stress and anxiety, but God can part the sea, in other words, give us insight, courage and lead us through the challenges. Moving forward and through a difficult time is liberating and leads to personal growth. Transformation leads to newfound confidence, hope and a fresh vision.

The end-of-a-year season is a time for reflection on what is in the past, but also imagining what could be in the future. Personal reflection on "splitting-the-sea" moments during 2024 will help you to connect with the presence of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.



How many of these moments can you think of? What did you learn from them? How did it change your life? And future? Share some of these moments with your loved ones and brothers and sisters in Christ. It will encourage them to move forward with change, trusting in the Almighty God and his love.

Pondering God's promises and plans give us hope and reminds us that we are safe in his hands. The promises of God are based in his glory and excellence, and we can rest assured in the outcomes of his promises.

*"And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises."* (2 Peter 1: 4-5, New Living Translation.)

As the end of the year draws near and you reflect on 2024, and on splitting-the-sea experiences, ponder the spiritual and biblical meaning and purpose of these experiences. Contemplate God's promises that relate to these experiences, and give you hope for the future. Be strong and courageous and focus on the hope that God is always with you. *"Do not be afraid or terrified because of .... challenges, changes opposition..., for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you or forsake you"* (Deuteronomy 31: 6; Hebrew 13: 5).

I pray that you will be blessed during the Christ-season and have a deep encounter with our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Shalom

Prof Nicolene Joubert  
Chairperson ■



## Goodbye to Dr Hannes van der Walt, founder of ACRP

Delivered by Dr Ernrich Basson

Ladies and gentlemen, today I speak on behalf of the Skills Development Professionals in SA. We gather here to honour a remarkable visionary leader — Dr Hannes van der Walt. As we celebrate his exit from ACRP, it is important to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we have shared, and the immense impact Hannes has had on all of us and the organization.

**Hannes, your role as the founder of the ACRP cannot be overstated. You had the foresight to establish this institution,** which has made a large contribution. Your dedication and input to develop and register training programs at the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) will have a huge impact on the future of theological training in South Africa. Your passion for education and your commitment to excellence have set a high standard for all of us.



One of your most admirable qualities has been your ability to bring people together, even in the face of animosity. **You have always understood that collaboration is key to progress,** and you have worked tirelessly to foster an environment of unity and cooperation.

**Your diplomatic skills and commitment to inclusivity have created a space where diverse voices can be heard** and valued. You have taught us that, even in challenging circumstances, we can achieve great things when we work together.

**Moreover, your focus on the bigger issues at hand has been nothing short of inspirational.** You have consistently encouraged us to look beyond immediate concerns and consider the long-term implications of our actions. Your ability to connect the dots and see the larger picture has guided our strategic direction and inspired us to think critically about our mission.



**Dr Hannes van der Walt with his beautiful family.**

**FLTR: His son Adrio van der Walt; daughters Janie Barnard and Anina Thiart, Hannes, his wife Liesbet, daughter Engela Theron and son Nico van der Walt.**

Hannes, we will never forget your contributions to the ACRP. **Your academic skills, insights, and dedication to our cause have enriched our work and shaped our future.** You leave behind a legacy that will continue to inspire and motivate us as we move forward.

As you embark on this new chapter in your life, please know that you

We are deeply grateful for your self-sacrifice throughout the years. Your willingness to sponsor many of our expenditures from your family trust is a testament to your unwavering commitment to the ACRP and its mission. You have invested financially and poured your heart and soul into ensuring that the ACRP thrives. Your generosity has enabled us to reach new heights and achieve goals that once seemed out of reach.

carry with you our deepest gratitude and admiration.

While we will miss your presence, we are excited for you and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Dr Ernrich Basson (Excel Training Academy)

## ***Prayer Counselling: Practical guidelines for the use of prayer in counselling.***

By Dr Michiel van der Merwe, who presented at the 2024 CPSC Spring Conference



**P**rayer counselling is explicit or implicit part of pastoral counselling. Our understanding of the concept of prayer and the use of prayer in counselling contribute to the uniqueness of pastoral counselling. The purpose of this article is to provide some practical guidelines for the use of prayer in counselling. This article will focus on the following aspects of prayer counselling:

- The complexity of guidelines in the Bible.
- The impact of our concept of God on the contents and expectations of our prayers.
- The use of prayer in counselling as a conversation between God and the person praying.
- Understanding ourselves according to the vision of God about us.
- The therapeutic effect (outcome) of our counselling in the context of the will of God.

### **1. Complexity about the use of prayer in the Bible**

It may seem that the Bible gives opposing guidelines about the use of prayer. Here are some examples:

- Does God answer prayers immediately? (Exod. 4:12 versus Dan. 9:20-23).
- How long must we pray for the same case/person? (Deut. 3:26-27 versus 1 Thes. 5: 17).
- Must we accept God's answer on our prayers? (Luke 1:38 versus 2 Kings 20:1-6).
- Does the quality of our prayers have an influence on the outcome of it? (Luk. 11:9 versus James 4:3).
- Does God answer all our prayers? (Ps. 13:1-3 versus 2 Cor. 12:9).

The context of the above-mentioned examples is very important. This emphasizes the importance of how and why we are using prayer in our counselling.

**The purpose of prayer in counselling is to become healed in Christ. "Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays" (S Kierkegaard).**

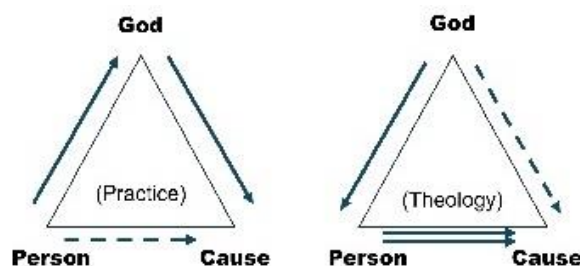
### **2. The use of prayer in counselling**

The following graphs explain how we usually pray and how we are supposed to pray in counselling.

The first triangle shows how we usually pray. We are praying to God by ordering Him what to do according to our expected outcome of our prayer. In other words: we are telling God what to do!

The second triangle shows how prayer is supposed to be used in counselling. We then ask God to guide us in being part of His expected outcome of the situation. In other words: We buy in in His will according to His expected outcome of the situation we are praying about.

Prayer in counselling, therefore, can be a "risk" as God may have not the same expected outcome as for what we hoped for.



**The challenge is to "pray, not until God hears you, but until you listen to God" (Unknown).**

### **3. The concept of God**

The question is: Who or what is God in a specific situation or time of our lives? *"It is not what you look at that matters — it is what you see"* (H D Thoreau). We can look at the same object but add different values to it. Think about a present you received from a special person. You may see and use it completely different as other persons will see and use it.

The principle is: What you see determines your expectations and usages of the object.

The same principle is relevant to how you see God. Is He, for example, the Almighty God, just a Friend, the Loving God, the Judge, the "Christmas Father" or what? It depends on how we experience God in a specific situation what the contents and expectations of our prayers will be.

**Suggested question to ask in counselling:  
Where do you place God in your current circumstances and what role is He playing in your life?**

We cannot proceed in our counselling if, for example, we want to focus on the grace of God if the person is experiencing that God is punishing him/her.

#### 4. Understanding ourselves

If you must complete the following sentence: “*God is almighty, you are ...*” what will your answer be? Possible answers may be that you are human, a sinner, or may be also powerful because you believe in Him.

There are different perspectives how we can see ourselves in relationship with God. When we pray, we are at the one hand a human being (sinner) and simultaneously at the other hand a new creature in Christ. Therefore, when we pray, we are human beings in relationship with God.

Prayer is an act of committing myself to be part of God’s answer on my prayers.

**Suggested question to ask in counselling:**  
***What are possible ways that the situation discussed can be dealt with?***

It is an open and indirect question to open the mindset for several possible answers which includes the person praying.

#### 5. Therapeutic outcome

What are the criteria for successful prayer counselling? Maybe we can think the fact that we prayed, is enough or that we trust God or have peace after we prayed. There is only one answer on this question and that is that we must be able to say “Amen” on our prayers. This indicates that we accept God’s answer on our prayers and that we are now ready to stand up from our knees and live the answer we received!



The concept of the will of God must be emphasized in this context. Usually, we pray that not our will must be done, but rather the will of God. The question is in what mood do we pray this? The challenge is not to pray this in a mood of uncertainty, but in a mood of certainty, by using an exclamation mark at the end! This indicates that we are convinced that our answer will materialize!

Prayer healing in counselling indicates that I accept the answer on my prayer as “our” answer (God and me), committing myself to live under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Suggested question to ask in counselling:**  
***How will God like to use you in this situation to have a meaningful impact in the kingdom of God?***

This ensures that the person praying will live the answer received from God with the confirmation that God is with him/her.

#### Conclusion

***The more important question is not what or how we prayed, but what we do after we prayed.***

Prayer counselling is about “*ora et labora*” (pray and work).

First, we pray and then we work (live) the answer we received.

*“Pray as if everything depended on God. Work as if everything depended on you”* (S Augustine). ■

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#### BIOGRAPHY

Dr Michiel van der Merwe was raised on Western Cape farm where he was deeply influenced by being dependent on God. This, and the experience of human suffering while working as a pastor in hospitals, resulted in a master’s degree in clinical counselling and a doctorate on prayer in counselling.

He embarked on a career as minister of religion for 25 years which gave him many opportunities to serve God. Throughout his career, he had been fortunate to develop several ministries in the field of pastoral care and leadership. He has published several books in the field of pastoral care. He currently works as a part-time counsellor and minister of religion in a Dutch Reformed congregation.

For 11 years Michiel also acted as the manager of a substance rehabilitation centre, which was an eye-opener for him regarding the other side of an “other” real world. He retired from this position at the beginning of 2024.

It is Michiel’s passion to reach out to others in such a way that they can reach their full potential in Christ, especially those in need, and he endeavours to empower others through empathic and visionary leadership.

His personal philosophy revolves around the understanding that it is not about the gifts you have, but about the effect they have on others (Philippians 4:17).

What you may not know about Michiel: In the pursuit of a balanced life, he enjoys cycling and mountaineering – he summited Everest Basecamp and Kilimanjaro twice! He loves dogs who are his “personal therapists”. He trains dogs for the visually impaired and he does dog therapy with sick and elderly persons. He hopes to be the grandfather of 3 by the end of this year.

## Counselling with sex trafficking survivors

By Idalette Müller, who presented at the 2024 CPSC Spring Conference

**F**or effective counselling with survivors of sex trafficking, it is essential for the counsellor to first develop a comprehensive understanding of what sex trafficking entails and how it profoundly impacts the psychological and emotional landscape of victims, even after they have been rescued.

Christian counsellors can employ trauma-informed, safe therapeutic approaches, such as art therapy and narrative techniques, to support survivors in processing their experiences and progressing from deep trauma toward healing in Christ. Ethical considerations must underpin all counselling methods and interventions, ensuring that the counsellor responsibly responds to the call to provide compassionate and respectful care.

There are several myths around who the sex trafficking victim is. Cultural biases influence people's view, such as that prostitutes are all "bad girls" who are addicted to sex and chose a career path as a prostitute, when in fact, 99 percent of prostitutes are sex trafficking victims who cannot escape. Here in South Africa, sex trafficking is not as portrayed in Hollywood movies – it involves excruciating torture, coercion, manipulation, control, and repeated selling and buying of women.

"Hotspots" for sex trafficking controlled by Nigerian syndicates, include Johannesburg, Pretoria, Heidelberg, Benoni, Springs, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, and Bloemfontein. Unfortunately, some members of the police force are involved with these syndicates, hence the challenge to successfully prosecute traffickers.

After a victim is rescued, a time-consuming process starts in her healing, dealing with challenges such as drug withdrawal, medical issues such as HIV/Aids, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis C, and mental disorders.

Survivors suffer from posttraumatic stress syndrome and often suffer from comorbid mental health issues. Navigating "triggers" that could reactive a flight-fight response in the survivor is a life-long struggle.

The counsellor must consider the survivor's fragmented state and identity crisis due to complex trauma. The counsellor must refrain from harbouring expectations such as a "quick fix" and the survivor reintegrating back into society. The survivor has no frame of reference for "normal living" as every part of her existence was controlled by others. Survivors form trauma bonds with



***Counsellors are called to high ethical standards and should receive specialized training in trauma counselling to avoid doing harm to survivors.***

their captors which is a "love-hate" relationship, preventing her from trusting other men.

As a result, the survivor might run away, back to her captor, seeking his approval as the prominent male father figure in her life. This behaviour emphasizes the survivor's damaged womanhood, her broken inner world, her self-rejection, and fear of abandonment.

The counsellor can come alongside a survivor with understanding for her emotional and psychological pain, and accept her, regardless of her distorted view of God and his love. Creating a non-judgmental trusting relationship with the survivor is crucial and takes time.

Journeying together with the survivor in reviewing painful memories without causing harm like false memory syndrome, helps the survivor understand her own broken inner world. Distorted emotional attachments from primary caregivers left her disillusioned, and the counsellor accompanies the survivor on a journey of discovering who God is, and that he can be trusted.

Moving from brokenness to wholeness is a sensitive and long process. Applying art therapeutic techniques such as drawing, beading, or clay work, helps the survivor to express her inner turmoil and struggles.

The counsellor must not interpret the artwork according to psychological scales, as the symbols and colours in the survivor's drawings usually mean something completely different than what is expected. Let the survivor interpret her own artwork.

Narrative approaches help the survivor to make sense of her experiences and underlying maladaptive schemas are safely explored to help her gain emotional self-control and reach a point of renewed thinking. During this journey, counsellors must avoid using Christian placated expressions or counsel with prejudice.



Artwork used with permission of survivor.

Counsellors should not use the survivor's story to get information on traffickers with the goal of confronting them. These are dangerous men who disregard human life.

Counsellors are called to high ethical standards and should receive specialized training in trauma counselling to avoid doing harm to survivors.



Artwork used with permission of survivor.

Counsellors must also apply good selfcare, as vicarious traumatization is a danger when counselling survivors. It is a high calling that requires counsellors to represent Christ as they demonstrate Christlike compassion, being led by the

Holy Spirit, and re-introducing God as Father to these broken women. ■

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Idalette Muller holds an honours degree in Developmental Psychology and has recently completed her Master's Degree in Divinity.

Idalette is a lecturer at the South African Theological Seminary where she teaches and writes counselling courses.

Idalette is also an artist and a writer and has just recently, at the beginning of August 2024, published a collection of short stories based on Biblical narratives, called *"Through Their Eyes"*. She has also published several blog articles on the SATS website.

Idalette is married to Andrew, and they reside in the seaside town of Jeffreys Bay. They have 3 adult children.

What many people do not know about Idalette, is that she also holds a BMus(Ed) degree in Music from the University of Pretoria! Idalette has, e.g., composed an album of songs named *"Voice of Freedom"*.

As a registered trauma counsellor who specializes in counselling with sex trafficking survivors, she effectively applies music- and art therapeutic techniques in her trauma counselling.

## Counselling with grace: Christian counsellors as conduits of God's love

By Dr Mercy Manyema, who presented at the 2024 CPSC Spring Conference

**T**he field of Christian counselling has grown in leaps and bounds in recent years (Collins G. C., 2007). **In this article we will talk about the importance of the counsellor demonstrating the grace of God to the people they meet.**

We will begin by defining Christian counselling and its goals. We will then define what grace is and based on the people who often come for counselling, why we need it in the counselling room.

We will then explore how grace can be applied and lived out in counselling, and as part of the mandate of counsellors to do no harm.



#### What is Christian counselling?

The general definition of counselling is a form of talk therapy where a person (or people) meets with a professional to talk about the issues they are facing in their lives, with a view to gaining new clarity and perspective, and find ways to cope and move forward (Wits CCDU 2020). The professional creates a safe space for the client to talk about whatever they are facing which could be a mental health condition, a difficult life situation, a life transition, or difficult

emotions (National Health Service UK 2023). When we add the Christian element to counselling, we extend this basic definition.

Several definitions of Christian counselling have been put forward by various experts in the field. Siang-Yang Tan defines it as counselling conducted by a Christian who is Christ-centred, biblically based and Spirit-filled (Tan 2011,15). According to Gary Collins, it is counselling done by a deeply committed Spirit-guided (and Spirit-filled) servant of Christ, who applies his/her God-given abilities, skills, training, knowledge and insights to the task of helping others move towards personal wholeness, interpersonal competence, mental stability and spiritual maturity (Collins G. C. 1993, 21). He sums it up by saying that counselling is all about the stories of people's lives and these stories include early experiences, beliefs, triumphs, tragedies, decisions, disappointments, crises, and times of great joy (Collins G. C. 2007).

**Larry Crabb adds that the goal of Christian counselling is not just to make the client happy but to promote Christian maturity, and to free people to better worship and serve God by helping them become more like the Lord.** From an African context, Christian counselling seeks healing where there is suffering, not denying, or dismissing the different cultures but affirms what is good in them, interpreting everything through the Scriptures (Mwiti & Dueck 2021, 22). Christian counsellors become God's representatives in the communities they serve, seeking to model their counselling approach after the example of Jesus.

### Goals and objectives of Christian counselling

According to Gary Collins' definition of Christian counselling, the goal of a Christian counsellor is to help others to achieve "personal wholeness, interpersonal competence, mental stability and spiritual mentality" (Collins G. C. 1993, 21). Even though the majority of people who seek counselling do not come specifically for issues relating to spirituality, the ultimate goal of Christian counselling is wholeness in all aspects of life, including spiritually (Collins G. C. 2007, 130). Christian counselling seeks to bring healing and wholeness to others (Fowler & Ford 2021, 16). It seeks to reclaim the discarded, rebuild the broken, and re-member the dis-membered (Mwiti & Dueck 2021, 22). The counsellor works as a tool in the hands of God to restore His image in His children. The healing is not only through the skills of the counsellor but primarily through the presence of the Spirit, and is dependent on the counsellor's reliance on God for wisdom and insight.

*Collins sums it up by saying that counselling is all about the stories of people's lives and these stories include early experiences, beliefs, triumphs, tragedies, decisions, disappointments, crises, and times of great joy.*

*From an African context, Christian counselling seeks healing where there is suffering, not denying, or dismissing the different cultures but affirming what is good in them, interpreting everything through the Scriptures. (Mwiti & Dueck)*

### What is grace?

Grace is commonly defined as "God's unmerited favour" – we don't earn it, and it can only be grace because it is undeserved. The best place to get a full description and definition of what grace is, is the Word of God. Eph. 2:8

tells us that it is God's grace that saves us. It is also God's grace that justifies us and puts us in right standing with God (Titus 3:7). The book of Hebrews tells us that at the throne of grace is where we receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need (4:16). And to Titus again, Paul says that it is God's grace that teaches to turn away from ungodliness and live a godly life.

It is by God's grace that we are given eternal encouragement and hope, as well as encouragement

for our daily living today (2 Thess. 2:16-17). Every aspect of our lives today is sustained by God's grace, and our eternal future is only ours again by God's grace. Therefore, as the Christian counsellor deals with the depravity of this world and some of the worst traumatic events known to mankind, they are keenly aware of the sustenance of God's grace for them as a helper, but more so for his hurting children.

### Why do we need grace in counselling?

People come for counselling because they have been touched by the effects of sin in one way or another – through their own choices, through other people's choices or through tragedies of no one's fault but that happen because we live in a world tainted by sin. You may come across someone who has made an unhealthy choice or sinned against God e.g. infidelity, abuse, or drug abuse. Some have been hurt by another e.g. through infidelity, sexual assault, or abandonment.

Some have made unwise decisions that landed them in places where they were violated e.g., raped while drunk or high on drugs. Other people face situations that are highly stigmatized in our society but that may not be of their own doing e.g. a man losing his job and income, infertility, living with HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, or divorce. All these situations call for Christian counsellors to be agents of God's grace towards His children.

God's answer to the sin problem was and always has been His amazing grace – Romans 3:23-24 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus". Therefore, as agents of His divine healing, we must, of necessity, wear gloves of grace to minister to His children. In our endeavour to do

*As agents of His divine healing, we must, of necessity, wear gloves of grace to minister to His children.*

no harm, we must view His children through the lens of grace. The grace of God ministers forgiveness, hope, healing, comfort, freedom, acceptance, validation, and salvation. Grace is imperative for Christian counselling, and for counselling without harm.

## How do we recognize grace transforming counselling?

### 1. It starts with the counsellor: living in grace

For one to dispense the grace of God, they need to have been deeply impacted by it themselves (Fowler & Ford 2021). 1 Cor 1: 3-5 says *“We can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”*

In the book *“In our lives first”* Diane Langberg (2013) asks: *“How can we bring light in the lives of those we counsel, when the same light has not shone in our own lives? Can we lead another to freedom from bondage when we are enslaved to something ourselves?”* Some reflection questions as we consider our own experience of grace in our lives:

- Have you experienced God’s saving grace in your own life?
- Are you experiencing and acknowledging his comfort in your own life’s experiences?
- Are you communing with Him daily?
- Are you allowing His grace to teach you to live a godly life?
- Do you find hope and encouragement in His word daily?

### 2. It starts with the counsellor: Biblical worldview

Grace-filled Christian counselling must be premised on a biblical worldview. We cannot be conduits of His grace if we don’t view our counselees the way God views them. There are several aspects that constitute one’s worldview including what we believe about God, the universe, our epistemology or ways of knowing and what we believe about human nature (Collins, G. C. 1993). In this article, I will only highlight four of them.

- We are all created in God’s image; therefore, we all deserve respect and dignity irrespective of our circumstances. We show grace when we treat our counselees with unconditional positive regard.
- Everyone created in God’s image is of great worth (Ps 8:5-8). Grace means reflecting this God-bestowed value when the counselee has lost sight of it. Clients often walk in with distorted views of their value due to trauma, abuse, or shame.
- Grace is understanding that not every counselling issue is due to an act of sin by the counselee, but also

*The very presence of the Spirit in the counselling room brings healing.*

the state of sin in the world due to the fall (Rom 3:23-24).

- We dispense grace when we present the forgiveness of God (v24) which is freely available to all – including for the counselees to extend to those who have hurt them.



### 3. Grace in the therapeutic relationship

Research shows that the counselling relationship is at the core of the helping process (Collins G. C. 2007, 48). As a Christian counsellor, you come alongside the counselee under the guidance and empowerment of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit bestows on the counsellor the warmth, genuineness and accurate empathic understanding that are necessary to establish the relationship. In essence we come with a genuine interest in the counselee and their healing process – founded on biblical worldview of people (Fowler & Ford 2021).

The Christian counsellor also works under the understanding that the very presence of the Spirit in the counselling room brings healing. The Spirit uses our skills and training in HIS work of healing. It’s not always possible or necessary to explicitly read scripture or to pray with the counselee, but the Spirit can lead and guide a counsellor who is dependent on Him for wisdom. Therefore, we show grace when we ourselves build our dependence on the Spirit.

We show God’s grace when we sharpen our competence and skills to be used as effective tools by the Lord:

- attending skills
- listening skills
- responding skills
- questioning skills
- challenging skills
- teaching skills



Our competence is like an electric drill in our hands and the Spirit is the power that we need to plug into to be effective. Client issues are often layered – if we don’t establish the relationship well, some issues may never be

explored e.g. a young lady who was on drugs, was raped when she was drunk, then fell pregnant and had an abortion – if she feels judged at the outset, she may not feel safe enough to fully explore her story.

### Conclusion

We are mandated to do no harm in our work of leading God's children towards wholeness and healing. We need to be fully immersed in God's grace ourselves before we can dispense it to others. God's grace shows in how we live our own lives. God's grace is seen in the respect and value we show to clients. We dispense God's grace when we build a warm and empathic therapeutic relationship. We show grace when we improve our own skills and competence and become ready instruments in the hand of God. And as we open ourselves to be filled with God's grace, we ourselves will not be left unchanged. ■

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### BIOGRAPHY

Dr Mercy Manyema describes herself as a grace-redeemed daughter of God, a mum, and a wife. She runs a Christian counselling practice in Johannesburg. Mercy is passionate about helping others to navigate the difficult

circumstances of life and to help them gain healing and wholeness.

Mercy feels that no one should have, or needs, to face tough times alone. She therefore firmly believes that mental health awareness is important to dispel the many myths and the stigma that society sometimes has towards mental illness. In this regard, she is actively involved in the youth department of her local church, guiding young people to find their identity in Christ, as well as teaching them to express their emotions in healthy ways. She also conducts mental health talks and seminars in various churches.

Mercy strongly believes in the integration of psychology and theology. She views her counselling room as a space where she meets with clients in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who uses her skills and knowledge as a tool to bring healing and wholeness.

For Mercy it is indeed a privilege to witness God at work in the lives of His children, and to be able to walk alongside them in the process.

What you may not know about Mercy is that she enjoys travelling and loves Thai food – but without the chili!

## Life history research and eco-pastoral counselling

By Dr Annelie Botha, who presented at the 2024 CPSC Spring Conference

According to Clinebell (1996:33), **most psychological theories recognise that a sense of self-worth and inner strength characterise a healthy identity.** Self-image is rooted in our body image. However, a missing dimension of most theories of healthy identity is the strong sense of being firmly grounded. This groundedness centres



### Life history research

Also called life and faith histories, life history research allows people to combine many layers of understanding about a person, their culture, and how they have created change in their lives (Etherington 2009:225). Life history research, or life and faith histories, as Bons-Storm (2002) names it, is an authentic method of comprehending an individual's life and behaviour within their specific context.

Life and faith histories show how, at a certain time and situation, a person tries to live a faithful and graceful life as a member of a community and faith community (Bons-

Storm 2002:27).

*Life history research is an authentic method of comprehending an individual's life and behaviour within their specific context.*

Storm 2002:27).

A life and faith history is often told at a certain point in a person's development, triggered by a certain event that disrupts the flow of everyday life and asks for a new orientation (Riet Bons-Storm 2002:30). In life story research, the individual's story serves as a window through which the broader social reality can be seen and better understood (see Bertaux-Wiame 1979:30, Botha 2015:2).



around one's relationship with nature.

This article will explore the Ecological circle for self-care, earth-care and soul-care of Howard Clinebell (1996) and the telling of earth stories as a means of

practising eco-pastoral counselling. The value of enabling people to create and tell their stories and helping them to make meaning of their experiences is not to be underestimated. This practice is a cornerstone of eco-pastoral counselling, providing a therapeutic outlet for individuals to process their experiences and find meaning in their lives. Therefore, insights into life history research methodologies (Cole & Knowles 2001) will be utilised to interpret life stories, past events, culture, and beliefs.

Life story research explores the interaction between human experience and the social context. The phrase "context is everything" is a key principle of life story research (Cole & Knowles 2001:22). This principle is based on the idea that a person's life is not lived in isolation from their social environment. Understanding the context is crucial for understanding an individual's personal and collective experiences. A person's context plays a significant role in shaping who they are. It is important to listen for what is omitted in the narrative, which events or periods of time are unstored. What social discourses and cultural conditioning have shaped their understanding of themselves, their roles, and their societal position?

In life history research, the locations where the conversations take place may vary, as the location can influence a person's reactions. At her house, there may be photographs that remind her of events, while at her workplace there is another dynamic of her personality is visible, which contributes to the telling and understanding of her life story (Cole & Knowles 2001:75).

Life history research also uses artefacts. According to Cole and Knowles (2001:85-88), an artefact is a physical object that can be handled and observed. This can hold a specific meaning in a person's life or was given to them within a particular time in their life history or given to them by someone who held a valuable position in their life history.

Photos can help with remembering events and persons and sometimes enlighten certain parts of a person's life history. Asking questions about photographs can assist in reconstructing a moment captured and bring a greater understanding of the circumstances surrounding that moment. Questions are about the event or object's meaning, the event it represents, and what else was happening during that time in a person's life history. What did this mean then, and what meaning does it have now?

The purpose of life history research is not only to study people's lives in context but also to encourage transformation through the insights gained. When the discourses available are examined and expanded or recognised as simply one among many different ways of understanding and explaining people and their lives, this allows us to describe, explain, or interpret events in different ways and, therefore, alter our responses. This can bring new hope and new direction in life (see Etherington 2009: 225-226).

As part of the holistic approach to Life history research/counselling, eco-pastoral counselling comes into play.

### Ecotherapy and the Ecological Circle

Ecotherapy theory's central premise is that the human sense of groundedness is rooted in our relationship with

the natural world. Our relationship with the natural world, the earth, is influenced by our culture's views of the natural world and our parent's attitudes and ways of relating to the earth.

According to Clinebell (1996:13), one of the tasks of pastoral counselling is to prevent or heal inner alienation from the divine spirit. To this task are added the healing and prevention of the *"twofold alienation from nature – from our own inner wildness and from bonding with nature."* Inner wildness, according to Clinebell(1996:29), refers to the *"repressed residue from our genetic forebears and their eon-spanning experiences of learning to survive in the wilderness. Our forgotten wildness might be described as the deep dimension of the unconscious mind..."*

The inner wildness of our deeper body-mind-spirit is described as part of our genetic legacy (Clinebell 1996:30). Because of our genetic programming, we all have different transitional objects which strengthen our bond with

nature and give us a sense of groundedness. Transition objects are something in external reality that provide a sense of security. This explains our intense bonding with pets, plants, and other natural ob-

jects. They give us a sense of grounding that substitutes our initial intimate bonding with nature (Clinebell 1996:29).

The second side of the twofold alienation from nature can be described by the term Eco-alienation. This is the process in which humans distance themselves from the *"inescapable life-giving dependence on nature"* (Clinebell 1996:26). This distancing is visible in how the exploitation of the natural world's resources is justified. Humankind is often not aware of how dependent we are on being nurtured by nature. Every bite we eat, every breath we take, and every drop of water we drink reminds us how dependent we are on nature.

In the earth-alienated world, to promote Earth-rootedness, Clinebell (1996:9) uses the ecological circle in practising eco-therapy to promote eco-bonding that "involves claiming and enjoying one's nurturing, energising, life-enhancing connectedness with nature." The

**three dimensions of the Ecological Circle are in-reach, up-reach and out-reach.**

*The purpose of life history research is not only to study people's lives in context, but also to encourage transformation through the insights gained.*

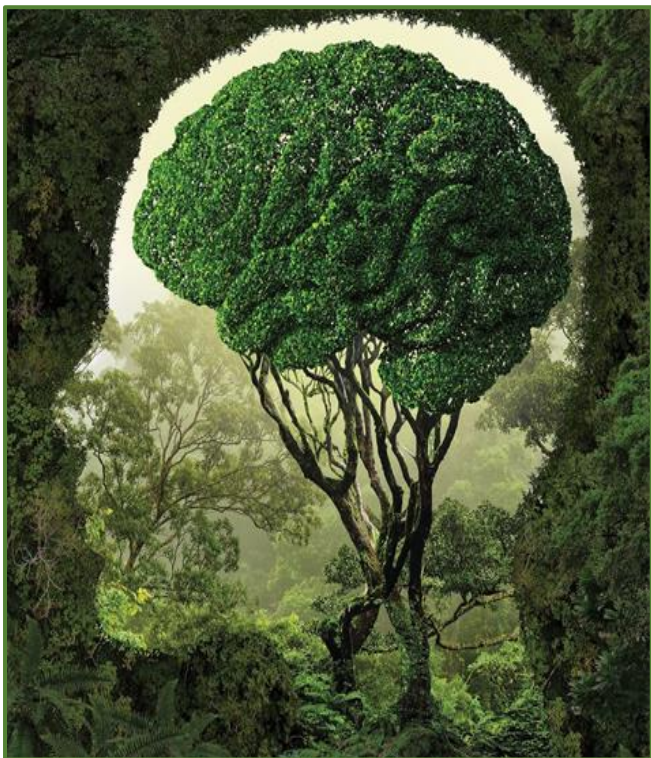


The first dimension is about becoming aware and being grateful for all the live-giving gifts we receive from Earth.

This includes spending time in nature. Spending time in nature and being connected with the earth as a life source can lead to an intimate experience of God being present as the creator of all life. Experiencing the life-giving energy of the Spirit can strengthen our relationship with Earth and others. This leads to outreach and participation with others in actions of earth-caring.

The cycle described by the Ecological Circle starts with self-care, in-reach, and revisiting one's relationship with nature. This flows into soul-care, up-reach, being spirituality renewed and strengthened by God and our connection with Earth, which leads to earth-care, taking responsibility for the natural world and people-care, caring for those with whom we share this earth.

Part of ecotherapy and the Ecological Circle, as a way to eco-healing and eco-pastoral care, is inviting people to tell their own earth story, *"to recall and verbalize experiences with the earth, from their [our] childhoods as well as recent years"* (Clinebell 1996:3).



Telling our Earth stories can enable us to identify, express, and deal with painful and positive feelings about our relationship with the Earth. It can encourage people to strengthen their relationship with the natural world by intentionally nurturing it, experiencing it in their connection with nature, and being strengthened by God.

This energy of eco-bonding, earth-bonding, and spiritual bonding can contribute to our flourishing and well-being in our natural world.

## Conclusion

**Eco-pastoral counselling, which consists of self-care, earth-care, and soul-care, can potentially increase the well-being of people and our environment.** Encouraging people to spend more time in nature and thinking about and telling their earth stories and life histories can assist in deconstructing oppressive conceptual frameworks.

The three dimensions of the Ecological Circle, in-reach, up-reach and out-reach can promote positive relationships with oneself, others, God and creation.

The re-opening, re-evaluating and retelling of life history stories can be linked to three dimensions of the Ecological Circle: in-reach, up-reach and out-reach. The aim is to find new ways of understanding one's life in the context of one's life, connecting with the earth, God, and others. ■

\* \* \*

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## BIOGRAPHY

Dr Annelie Botha matriculated at Kempton Park High School. She studied Theology at the University of Pretoria as a student of the Netherdutch Reformed Church of Africa (NRCA). Annelie has been a minister in the Netherdutch Reformed Church of Africa for 21 years.

Annelie spent some time in England and attended classes at the University of Chester while working on her doctorate in Pastoral Theology, which she obtained from the University of Pretoria in 2013.

In June 2022 Annelie was appointed as a full-time senior lecturer at the University of Pretoria in the Department of Practical Theology and Mission Studies.

Annelie has written many academic articles and serves on several boards.

Her special interests and fields of expertise include Pastoral Care and Counselling, Practical Theology, Pastoral Psychology, Gender Studies, Women's Socialisation, marriage, Eco-feminist family ethics and Eco-pastoral Care.

Interesting facts about Annelie: She loves watching movies and running with her dog, Freya. Annelie has a twin sister!

# Integrating Christian Counselling into contemporary therapeutic practice

By Dr Nelia Drenth, who presented at the 2024 CPSC Spring Conference

## Introduction

**Christian counselling is an approach that combines psychosocial and psychological principles with Christian beliefs and practices to provide a holistic framework for addressing mental health issues and personal challenges.**

This article aims to present the integration of Christian counselling into contemporary therapeutic practices, highlighting its benefits, methods, and ethical considerations.

The integration of Christian counselling into contemporary therapeutic practices addresses the growing demand for faith-based mental health services. This approach not only respects the spiritual beliefs of clients but also enhances their overall well-being by providing a holistic framework for healing. But it also confronts the counsellor to act within his/her scope of practice.

In a contemporary practice setting, one does not have the privilege in diving directly into conversations about faith. This only becomes knowledge if the client wants to share it with the therapist, or if the therapist picks up that the person is a Christian through a thorough assessment. But to attend to the psychosocial functioning of a client, it is quite often inevitable to enquire about spirituality and more specific about faith.

In a contemporary therapeutic practice, therapists can't assume that all clients are Christians. It will also be unethical to only provide service to Christians. Whatever their beliefs are, I should treat them as God commands me to intervene, using my talents and skills to do just that.

We should however take note of the difference between Christian Counselling and contemporary therapeutic practice. Where the focus of the Christian counsellor is on faith and where the counsellor is mostly approached by clients that already have a relationship or want to have a relationship with God, the clients that are seen in a contemporary therapeutic practice are not necessarily Christians.

The focus in the author's contemporary practice usually involves the client and the system in which he functions. The systemic client approach, often used in family therapy and other forms of relational therapy, is a therapeutic model that views psychosocial problems not



as issues within an individual, but as patterns of behavior and interaction within a broader social context, typically the family or a significant relational system. This approach focuses on understanding and addressing the dynamics within these systems rather than isolating an individual's symptoms or behaviors.

In contemporary therapeutic practice, addressing issues related to faith and religion can present several challenges. These challenges often arise from the complex interplay between a client's religious beliefs, the therapist's own perspectives, and the

broader cultural context.

## Challenges in integrating faith in contemporary practice

- Therapists may encounter clients from a wide range of religious backgrounds, each with unique beliefs, practices, and values. A lack of understanding or familiarity with these can lead to misunderstandings or unintentional insensitivity. Therapists must navigate the delicate balance of respecting a client's faith while addressing issues that may be influenced by those beliefs, especially when the therapist's own beliefs differ.
- Some clients may want their religious beliefs to be an integral part of their therapy. Therapists need to discern how to incorporate these beliefs without overstepping professional boundaries or imposing their own interpretations. There can be tension between secular therapeutic methods and those that align with a client's religious framework. Deciding how to integrate these approaches while maintaining therapeutic effectiveness can be challenging.
- Therapists must be careful not to impose their own religious or spiritual beliefs on clients, which can violate ethical guidelines and potentially harm the therapeutic relationship. In some religious communities, there might be expectations for sharing information with religious leaders or using religiously informed practices, which can conflict with confidentiality norms in therapy.
- Clients may experience guilt or shame related to religious teachings, especially in areas like sexuality, family roles, or moral behavior. Navigating these feelings in a way that respects the client's faith while promoting mental health can be difficult.

***The integration of Christian counselling in contemporary therapeutic practice involves blending psychosocial principles with Christian faith to address mental, emotional, social and spiritual issues.***

- Some clients may have experienced trauma within a religious context, such as abuse by religious leaders, coercion, or spiritual manipulation. Addressing this trauma requires sensitivity to both the psychological impact and the client's ongoing relationship with their faith.
- When working with couples or families where members have different religious beliefs, therapists need to navigate potential conflicts while respecting each person's faith. A difference in religious beliefs between the therapist and client can lead to misunderstandings or discomfort, especially if the therapist is not adequately trained to handle such differences.
- Some clients may prioritize religious or spiritual explanations over scientific or psychological ones. Therapists must find ways to integrate faith with evidence-based practices without undermining either. Clients may resist therapeutic techniques that they perceive as conflicting with their religious beliefs (e.g., mindfulness practices seen as too "Eastern" or non-Christian).
- Many therapists may not receive sufficient training in how to work effectively with clients who have strong religious beliefs, leading to gaps in competence and confidence. Therapists' personal biases, whether religious or non-religious, can influence their ability to provide objective, respectful care to clients with differing beliefs.
- Ethical dilemmas may arise when a client's religious beliefs conflict with therapeutic goals or societal norms (e.g., beliefs about LGBTQ+ identities, gender roles). Therapists must navigate these conflicts while upholding ethical standards and promoting the client's well-being. In religious communities, especially smaller ones, there may be a higher likelihood of dual relationships (e.g., the therapist and client being part of the same faith community), which can complicate the therapeutic relationship.
- Clients may have intersecting identities that include race, ethnicity, gender, and religion. Therapists must consider how these identities interact and influence

***Therapists must find ways to integrate faith with evidence-based practices without undermining either.***

the client's experiences and challenges. Clients may face discrimination based on their religious beliefs, which can affect their mental health. Therapists need to be equipped to address the impact of such discrimination in therapy.

- Therapists must also be sensitive to clients who identify as atheist, agnostic, or secular, ensuring that these clients do not feel marginalized in discussions of faith or spirituality. It is important for therapists to avoid assuming that all clients have a religious or spiritual background or that such a background is relevant to their therapeutic process.

- Contemporary therapeutic practice requires therapists to be culturally competent, ethically aware, and flexible in integrating faith and religion into therapy. It is essential to approach these issues with sensitivity, respect, and an openness to learning about each client's unique perspective.

### Opportunities for growth

Contemporary therapeutic practice offers several opportunities for individuals to grow in their faith, as it provides a supportive environment for exploring and integrating spiritual beliefs with personal development.

- Therapy encourages introspection, which can help individuals deepen their understanding of their faith and how it influences their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. Through therapy, individuals can explore whether their actions and life choices align with their spiritual beliefs, leading to greater coherence and integrity in their lives.
- Contemporary therapy provides a safe space to explore doubts, questions, and conflicts related to faith without fear of judgment, helping individuals

resolve these issues and potentially strengthening their beliefs.

- Individuals who have experienced religious trauma or spiritual abuse can work through these experiences in therapy, allowing for healing and the possibility of a renewed, healthier relationship with their faith.

- Therapy can help clients develop coping strategies

Scope of Practice	
Christian counselling Focus: Faith	Therapeutic practice Focus: Psychosocial functioning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian beliefs</li> <li>• Integrates faith, prayer, biblical principles in counselling</li> <li>• Spiritual lens, emphasize relationship with God</li> <li>• May involve scripture, prayer, &amp; discuss religious matters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secular, rooted in scientific psychological &amp; human behavior theories</li> <li>• Schools of thought – CBT, Humanistic approach, psychodynamic theory</li> <li>• No specific religious framework</li> <li>• Emphasis on client's personal goals, emotional well-being &amp; mental health without spiritual component unless requested</li> </ul>

Dr Nella Drenth - Social worker in private practice

that are consistent with their faith, such as prayer, meditation, or seeking guidance from spiritual texts, which can enhance their resilience and mental health. For clients who wish to incorporate their faith into therapy, practices such as mindfulness, meditation, or even prayer can be integrated into the therapeutic process, enriching both their spiritual and psychological well-being.

- Therapy in a contemporary practice can facilitate discussions around forgiveness, compassion, and love—core principles in many religious traditions—helping individuals apply these principles in their relationships. In family or couples therapy, exploring shared faith practices can strengthen family bonds and provide a shared foundation for resolving conflicts and supporting each other.



- Many people find meaning and purpose through their faith. Therapy in contemporary practice can help individuals clarify and pursue their life's purpose in a way that aligns with their spiritual beliefs, enhancing their overall sense of fulfillment. Therapy often involves discussions about the meaning of life, death, and existence, which are closely tied to spiritual beliefs. Engaging with these topics can deepen an individual's faith and provide comfort during challenging times.
- For many, faith provides a sense of hope and resilience in the face of adversity. Therapy can help individuals tap into their spiritual resources to navigate difficult life circumstances. Therapy can encourage clients to connect with their faith communities, which often provide additional support, guidance, and a sense of belonging that can be crucial during tough times.
- Therapy in contemporary practice helps clients explore their personal values. This exploration can lead to personal growth as individuals strive to live more authentically according to their moral and ethical principles. Many faith traditions emphasize compassion, kindness, and service to others. Therapy can support the development of these qualities, encouraging individuals to live out these principles more fully in their daily lives.

- Life transitions, such as marriage, parenthood, or loss, often challenge individuals to rely on their faith for guidance and strength. Therapy can help individuals navigate these transitions by integrating their faith into their coping and decision-making processes. Therapy can help individuals create or maintain spiritual rituals that provide comfort and a sense of continuity during major life changes.
- Integrating faith into therapy can contribute to a more holistic approach to well-being, addressing not just mental and emotional health but also spiritual health. For some individuals, reconnecting with their faith or deepening their spiritual practices can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, providing a sense of peace and purpose.
- When clients express a desire to incorporate their faith into therapy, therapists can collaborate with them to explore how their spiritual beliefs can be a resource in their healing and growth journey. Therapy offers a non-judgmental environment where clients can openly discuss their faith, explore spiritual questions, and express their spiritual experiences, fostering spiritual growth in the process.

## Conclusion

**The integration of Christian counselling in contemporary therapeutic practice involves blending psychosocial principles with Christian faith to address mental, emotional, social and spiritual issues.**

Contemporary therapeutic practice can be a powerful avenue for spiritual growth, offering opportunities for individuals to explore and deepen their faith while addressing psychological and emotional challenges. By integrating faith into the therapeutic process, individuals can achieve a more holistic sense of well-being and live more authentically in alignment with their spiritual beliefs.

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***Contemporary therapeutic practice can be a powerful avenue for spiritual growth, offering opportunities for individuals to explore and deepen their faith while addressing psychological and emotional challenges.***

## BIOGRAPHY

Dr Nelia Drenth obtained her MA Degree (Social Work in Health) from the University of Pretoria, and her PhD from Northwest University. The title of her PhD thesis is Complicated grief in the South African context – A therapeutic intervention programme.

She has a special interest in supporting individuals diagnosed with a life-threatening or life-limiting illness. She also focusses on grief therapy to mitigate the impact of grief on the psychosocial functioning of people who have suffered the loss of a loved one.

Dr Drenth is the author and/or co-author of several articles and books. She has presented at numerous national and international conferences over the past 15 years, mostly on the psychosocial impact of loss, grief, and bereavement and on bereavement and grief counselling.

She has served, and still serves, as a board member of various institutions.

Nelia grew up as the second of four children on a small railway station in Mpumalanga, where her father was a train driver. Nelia states that these were the best years of her life, and she attributes her parents' faith, motivation, and

dedication towards all their children as the reason for their accomplishments.

Something you might not know about Nelia:

- She is an expert at planning reunions! She has organised almost a dozen of them.
- She and seven of her friends slipped out of the hostel in her last year of school just to see if it could be done.
- She held her school's high jump record for two years.

## Leadership greed

By Nicholas Mlungisi Notshaya

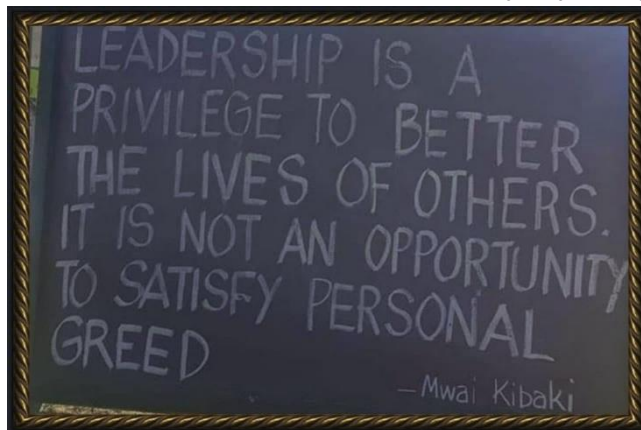
**L**eadership greed, implications for ethics of character, community and responsibility: A case illustration with Ahab -Naboth narrative: (1 Kings 21:1-16 NIV)

*"Let me have your vineyard to use for vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard, or if you prefer, I will pay you what ever it is worth" (1 Kings, 21: 2)*

### Background and introduction

King Ahab's behaviour, attitude and tendencies should be observed and analysed in the context of Old Testament Admonitions on land ownership and acquisition. Accordingly, the portrait of King Ahab and his greed should be conceptualized in the context of the religious and legal framework of his time. The idolater and foreign princess (Jezebel), Ahab's wife is from a strange civilization (Tyrian). In this alliance marriage we can see a clash of civilizations (religious and cultural), according to The New Jerome Biblical Commentary (1990: 173).

Ahab appears petty and ineffectual, dominated by the forceful and unscrupulous Jezebel. He (Ahab) allowed himself to be manipulated by wicked Jezebel. He obviously was a weak-willed king who could not stand up for doing the right thing. The ethical and moral challenges and indecisiveness that exposed King Ahab's greed is understood in the context of the following Old Testament admonitions on land:



- *"The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers."* (Leviticus 25:23 NIV)
- *"And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the first fruits of the land: for it is holy unto the Lord."* (Ezekiel 48: 14 NIV).

- *"No Inheritance shall be transferred from one tribe to another."* (Num. 36:9 NIV)

- On land ownership and property rights: Num. 36: 1-12 NIV.

The dynamics of greed and greedy behaviour assume several dimensions: leadership greed, social greed, corporate greed, etc. In the case

of Ahab-Naboth narrative, the characteristics of greed have moral, cognitive & emotional elements, as will be seen in the coming episodes.

In the 1987 movie "Wall Street," Michael Douglas as Gordon Gekko, had this to say on greed and its process: *"The point is that greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit."* (G. Gecko, 1987). This takes us to the following process of greed.

### Process of greed: Ahab -Naboth narrative

#### Episode 1: Ahab's Covetous Desire (1 Kings, 21: 2 NIV)

*"Let me have your vineyard to use for vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard, or if you prefer, I will pay you what ever it is worth" (1 Kings, 21: 2 NIV)*

In this episode we see the destructive power of greed unfolding. Ahab, the king of Israel, sets his sights on Naboth's vineyard, passionately yearning to possess it for himself. Ahab first offers a land exchange, money is a second possibility, in the unlikely event that Naboth should

**As Christians we are challenged to liberate ourselves from greed and its disastrous consequences.**

prefer it to land (New Jerome Biblical Commentary, 1990: 174). Naboth rejects this offer:

*"The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers" (v. 3) So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." (v.4)*

### Episode 2: The envious King

So, Ahab went home, sullen, and angry because Naboth, the Jezreelite had said, *"I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers"*. So, he lay on his back and refused to eat (v.4). His wife came in and asked him, *"Why are you so sullen? why won't you eat?"* (v.5). The king replied:

*"Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, 'Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" (1 Kings 21:6 NIV).*

The unethical king ignores the religious and legal basis on which Naboth rejects his offer: *"The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine."* (Leviticus 25:23 NIV)

In the Ahab-Naboth narrative, the characteristics of greed have moral, cognitive & emotional elements. Adapting this narrative to the words of Gecko (1987), greed clarified, cut through, and captured the essence of King Ahab's spirit during his reign in Israel. Similarly, the power of greed can be seen in Pontius Pilate's famous question, *"what is truth?"* (John 18:38 NIV)

The essence of Pontius Pilate's spirit had been captured by greed for power, thus compromising the ethics of responsibility. **Greedy behaviour is the product of both reasoning and intuitive processes as well as interaction between emotions and cognition** (Long Wang and J. Keith Murnighan, 2011).

An ethic of responsibility involves a hierarchy of values and norms. The expected act is thus not taken without regard to values, but recognizes that we are constantly required to seek to be obedient to higher values at the expense of what in a given situation may be regarded as lower values (Villa-Vicencio in Villa-Vicencio & de Gruchy,

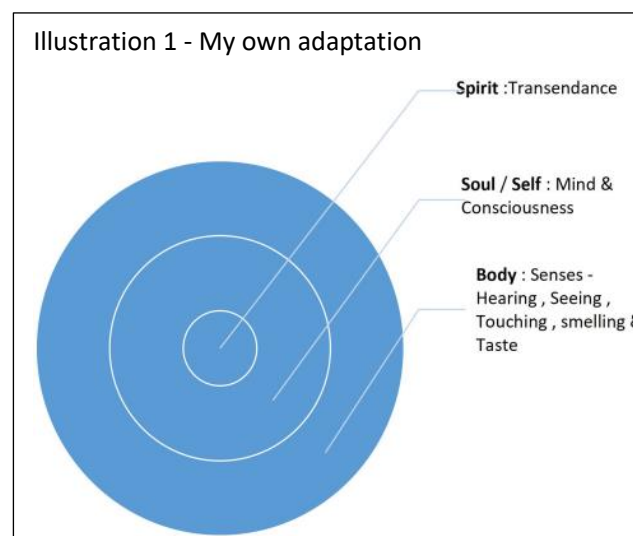
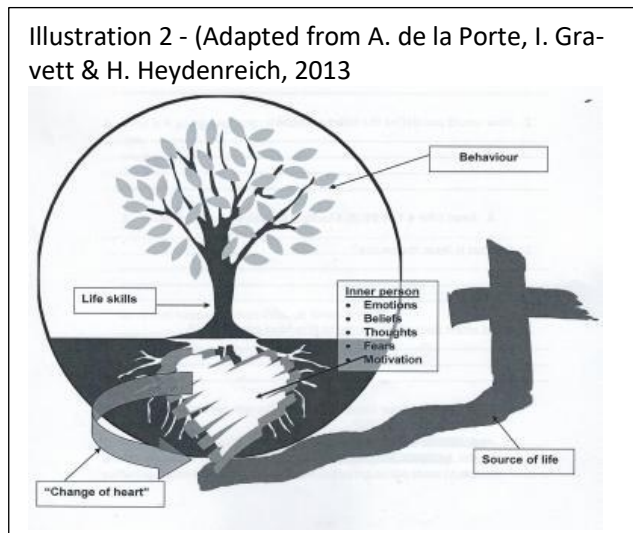
1994: 86). This has implications for psycho-spiritual dynamics observed in the emotional distress and accompanying behaviour in the greed process. I can illustrate this as follows:

### Psycho-spiritual approaches in understanding a person

At the hand of Ahab, Jezebel and Naboth's personalities

### Episode 3: *"Are you not the King of Israel, relax I will give you Naboth's vineyard."* (v.5)

Teaching on the human condition and liberation (liberation from greed) the Buddha identified non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) as cause of suffering (JS Kruger, 1991: 82). People are the victims of their own desires, and this is what makes them inwardly sick. They are pathologically unhappy, and the underlying cause of this unhappiness is *tanha* (craving), JS Kruger (1991: 83). Similarly, as Christians we are challenged to liberate ourselves from greed and its disastrous consequences.



### EPISODE 4: *So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth City with him.* (v. 8)

This act alone leaves much to be desired in the Royal possesses of justice and administration. The use of the seal ordinarily worn or carried on the person implicated Ahab. On the other hand, this meant that Jezebel was the real ruler, and Ahab a puppet king.

My basic assumption is that the letters would be prepared for her by the royal secretaries. Jezebel's part was to take the signet ring of her husband, and therewith affix the royal seal that the document might go forth with authority. Apparently, Ahab asked no question about the means which his wife meant to employ (Cambridge Bible for Schools & Colleges, 1882).

### EPISODE 5: *"Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you he is no longer alive."* (v.15).

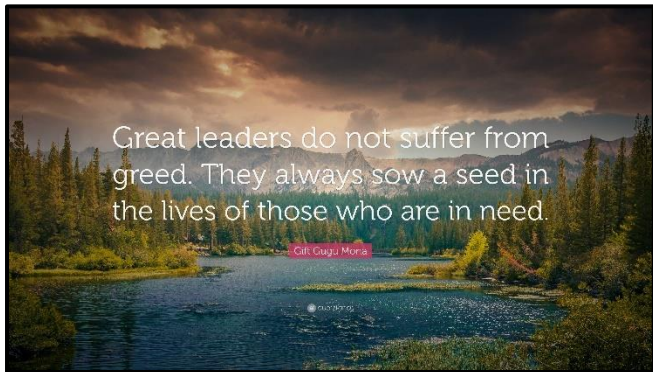
The process of greed and greedy behaviour lead to the death of Naboth as orchestrated by Jezebel. Somebody

who is expected to be the custodian of Jewish laws and cultural rights is captured by greed to achieve what he wants. In this episode we see murder within the law, motivated by material greed. Following his wife's instruction, Ahab proceeded to take Naboth's vineyard. (v.16).

Instead of being a moral agent, Ahab compromises himself for Satan. **If ever there was a time to uphold the standards of the Christian person to person ethics, this is it. It is now that Christian light should be shining like a light in the dark place** (Barclay, 1971: 213).

## Conclusion

The concept of greed is very complex to explain, but I take as basic that we understand the context in which I use it in this paper. I have also tried to illustrate the psycho-spiritual dynamics at play in the human being during the greed process and how this may relate to the issue of ethics as important aspects of a person's character (the inner person) in the community and the



accompanying responsibilities in the context of leadership, which I think is also relevant in our context as South Africans.

With the psycho-spiritual illustrations, I do not seek to compare the personalities of the characters (Ahab, Jezebel & Naboth) in the narrative, but rather to illustrate the psycho-spiritual dynamics and the value system guiding thinking processes leading to certain behaviour and consequences regardless of right or wrong at a particular time and context. ■

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## Perspectives on school bullying

By Dr Marianne Viljoen

### Defining school bullying

**B**ullying is a repeated aggressive behaviour where one child intentionally causes harm or discomfort to another child, either physically, verbally or emotionally. "It is typically defined as repeated, intentional hurting of a person who is weaker or less powerful than the perpetrator" (Salmivalli, 2021).

Bullying involves a power imbalance where the perpetrator sees himself as more dominant or socially advantaged than the victim (Smith 2016). Bullying and victimization may continue over a long period of time, especially among adolescents who are more reticent to report it than younger children. Bullying can be directly, such as physical or verbal abuse, as well as indirectly, such as social exclusion, rumour spreading, or it may be done on social media.



**Bullying is a repeated aggressive behaviour where one child intentionally causes harm or discomfort to another child, either physically, verbally or emotionally.**

School bullying among children may occur at any age; however, the impact of bullying during the adolescent stage has profound effects on the victim. The adolescent years are the years during which the formation of identities and self-esteem happens. During this life stage, it is important for the adolescent to be accepted by the peer group and have status in the form of popularity and regard from others within the social system of the peer group.

**The most vulnerable groups to fall victim to bullying are members of marginalised groups** such as

children from poor families, children with different gender identities, children with disabilities, and children from minority cultures. The special-needs children, such as those with disabilities and overweight and obese children, are targeted as well.

Bullying happens in person or on the internet, and this is referred to as cyberbullying. Bullying on social media is especially harmful because false and hurtful information, texts, and photos reach a wide audience (UNICEF, online).

GALE (online), describe the following types of bullying:

- **Physical bullying:** Physically assault.
- **Verbal bullying:** Mocking, shaming and verbal abuse.
- **Social or emotional abuse:** Spreading harmful gossip, excluding the victim from activities and destroying the victim's reputation.
- **Cyberbullying:** Using electronic media to spread socially or emotionally harmful information about the victim. This form of bullying is especially dangerous because social media reaches a vast audience and can cause lifechanging damage to a victim.



### The psychological impact of bullying

Victims of bullying suffer from anxiety and depression and might have suicide ideation. They have low self-esteem and a sense of helplessness. They are in danger of becoming alcoholics and drug abusers. Bullying can trigger mental health issues in children or exacerbate existing mental health problems. Victims are likely to suffer declines in academic performance.

### Why children bully

There are various reasons that underlie the acts of bullying. Some perpetrators come from homes and families where they have witnessed abusive behaviour, and they see violence as normative behaviour. Some bullies have unresolved emotional issues.

Others have the need to be accepted by the peer group and believe that their behaviour will enhance their status among them.

It is clear that both the perpetrators and the victims need emotional support.

### Counselling intervention

Young children are more likely to tell parents about the bullying than adolescent children (Salmivalli et al., Online).

It is important that parents believe their child's experience of the incidents and that they assure him or her of their support. The school and teacher should be informed immediately and steps taken to stop the perpetrator from bullying. Victims are afraid that the bullying might become worse if they tell someone. I recommend that if this is the situation, the child be absent from school until the matter is resolved. Losing a few school days is less of a problem than the level of emotional damage that might be done to the child if bullying continues.

### Parent-child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

This form of therapy helps the communication flow between parents and child, thus leading to a supportive environment at home. This will provide the child with emotional stability (Eyberg & Funderbruck, 2011).

### Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)

When the bullying has continued to a level where the child is traumatised, this therapy is particularly useful. The child will relate his or her experience to the counselor, who will support the child in managing their feelings of fear and anxiety by providing context and understanding of the behaviour of the bully (Cohen et al., 2016).

### Help for the child who bullies

Schools should provide help for and control of children who hurt others. The school should inform the child's parents and encourage them to provide counselling for the child. School counsellors, if available, should handle the situation.

### Prevention and intervention

We live in a time where schools should have policies and programs in place to prevent bullying. School curricula should encompass a philosophy of respecting the dignity of others and having compassion and empathy for each other. Teach the children what the scriptures say in Matthew 7:12.

So, whatever you wish people would do to you, do so to them: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and of the teaching of the prophets. ■

***Both the perpetrators and the victims need emotional support.***

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BIO

Dr Marianne Viljoen matriculated at Sentraal High School. She studied psychology at the University of South Africa,

and University of the Free State. She completed a PhD in Psychology at the University of Port Elizabeth and researched the effect of Type 1 Allergies on the emotional wellbeing of children. During this time, she had three children and helped raise three of her husband's children. In 2002, she began working at the School of Nursing (UFS), accompanying forensic nurses who worked at the Tsepong Rape Crises Centre. In 2007, she was appointed Senior Lecturer Researcher at the Faculty of Education where she was supervisor and promotor of Master's and PhD studies and conducted research on various topics relating to the influence of psychological problems on academic achievement. Following her retirement, she began a practice as emotional counsellor.

## Boundaries (Part 28)

By Dr Hanlie Meyer, Counselling Psychologist in private practice and CPSC affiliate

In previous articles we considered the necessity of experiencing healthy pain and healthy guilt. The table below summarizes **the differences between healthy guilt and maladaptive or unhealthy guilt.**

The table can help parents in two ways. Firstly, it can help parents to assess their own actions in raising their children. You can ask yourself if you acted in certain way, what is the risk that your child would develop maladaptive/unhealthy guilt if you reprimanded them in a certain way. Secondly these distinctions can help you assess the nature of your child's pain/ guilt and give you ideas on how to address these with your child to ensure that they learn how to set healthy boundaries in their relationships. One very uncomplicated statement we can bear in mind, is: "Your desire is not my command!" Jesus's desire, however, is my command and Jesus's command is my desire!

In line with this, Cloud and Townsend (2002, p 91) state that the effective parent needs to distinguish between hurt and harm if the child is to develop healthy boundaries without unhealthy guilt bogging them down. According to them harm is done when any actual injury is inflicted by wounding the child's person, judging, attacking, abandoning, or otherwise not providing something the child needs.

For example: constantly ignoring the child's needs or making them feel guilty or in your



way or a burden if they had a need, is a certain way to ensure that they will develop unhealthy guilt.

***Constantly ignoring a child's needs, or making them feel guilty, in your way or a burden if they had a need, is a certain way to ensure that they will develop unhealthy guilt.***

Although no growth can take place without pain, not all pain produces growth. Use this table to pause before you act!

To view more information about maladaptive guilt, visit Open Heart Assets at the following link:

<https://www.openheartassets.com/en-za/products/understanding-guilt-handout-bundle>

### Guidelines

To further support parents in their efforts to evaluate their child's pain/guilt-feelings when reprimanded, the above-mentioned authors provide the following guidelines:

When your child cries or complains, keep these precautions in mind:

- Do not allow your child's pain to control your actions. The frustration and discomfort induced by discipline, help the child to learn to delay gratification. This is one of the most important emotional regulation strategies a person can learn!
- To help the child to engage in healthy ways to transcend this discomfort, is critical: the parent should resist the temptation to give in if the child nagged or cried long enough, or made promises of improvement, or to never again do the same thing. Avoid giving immediate relief in the form of comfort food or promises of much needed love if the child performed better or stop crying or nagging.
- Deep breathing, listening to music, expressing their pain or discomfort verbally and learning not to act out their frustration, acknowledging the validity of their discomfort, are some of the ways in which parents can help their kids to bounce back without acquiring unhealthy guilt.

Healthy guilt	Unhealthy/maladaptive guilt
Feel the pain of acting out of God's heart and will in any given situation	Generalized feelings of guilt about and responsibility for other peoples' pain and discomfort
Accept the responsibility for my own behaviour in the given situation and focus on my development and restoration with God	Constantly ask forgiveness and make promises to never cause pain or discomfort again. Focus on the other person's relief and restoration.
Let go of guilt-feelings once forgiveness has been asked for a specific wrong-doing	Can only feel better – momentarily - if the other person gives reassurance that they do not feel pain or discomfort any more
Let go of the responsibility to resolve other peoples' problems for them – to fix them. Empathy but not guilt for their pain and problems	Feel guilty about other peoples' problems and my own inability to prevent or solve it for them
Trust God with everybody's needs and accept that I may act within a budget/ personal restrictions – be it time, finances, emotional resources, or social interaction	Constantly focus on other peoples' needs and feel guilty for not being able to meet everybody's needs. Feels a deep unrelenting responsibility to fulfil everybody's needs
Accept the legitimacy and reality of own feelings – grant self the freedom to feel	Feel guilty about own feelings of anger, sadness, loss, loneliness....
Accept own God-given needs for love, connection, private time, financial care, safety, rest....	Feel guilty about own needs and set these aside to provide satisfaction for other peoples' needs
Act in faith that God will direct my actions and that I will grow and be transformed into His Image according to His promises	Double-guess own actions and become paralyzed with guilt about own actions
Accept own fallibility and imperfection	Feel guilty about mistakes and imperfection. Make rules for self not to be better

- Keep your pain separate from your child's pain. Every **healthy** parent is deeply touched when their child must be disciplined. The child's pain can trigger memories in the parent of their own moments of childhood pain and how these were handled. Learn to recognise this and allow God to use it as an instrument of healing for your own pain. It can also cause fear of doing permanent damage to your child.
- But remember that each person's pain is their personal property – your child needs to learn this. In the past we have drawn the distinction between saying you hurt me versus I get hurt when you.... The first way of explaining personal pain, leads to developing a victim attitude and paralyzes the child to learn strategies to overcome their own hurt. The second way empowers the child to take responsibility for their own pain without denying that the parent's actions have caused the pain. When this happens, the child can be taught ways to deal with their pain. It is hard for parents to help the child to learn new strategies to deal with pain when the parent is angry or hurt by the child's actions or words! But this is one of the hard responsibilities of parenting. Without constructive feedback, the child will most probably learn unhealthy strategies to deal with pain. The next precaution is linked to this one.



- Help your child to see that life is not about avoiding pain – not in oneself or in someone else, but about making good pain an ally! However, remember that your young child does not know how to do this. They will need your guidance and your example. Life is about learning to suffer well. We cannot merely say "Suck it up boy! Living is tough!" We need to have empathy with them in their pain without removing the awareness and acknowledgement that it was their own choice that incurred the pain. Developing unhealthy guilt can

be prevented by teaching your child this healthy boundary that their pain is their personal property, and that your pain is your property, and that they do not need to prevent you from getting hurt or have the responsibility to heal your hurt. Therefore it is important not to say to your child "YOU hurt mommy" – but to say when you do this, mommy gets hurt. And through the way in which you deal with your hurt – even if caused by them – set a healthy example for them.

- Change only takes place when the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of changing. To make this clear to our children requires endless patience and wisdom from Holy Spirit. Again, our example in dealing with our own pain, is crucial. Our children watch us carefully! They pick up when we project our necessary developmental pain on other people and refuse to learn something from it ourselves. Our example of being sad in the face of hurt or disappointment and embracing this as an opportunity to grow, instead of being about it and trying to hold on to the old, is very important.

***When your child is injured or in need, run to their rescue. However, when they are protesting reality's demands for maturing to the next level, empathize with that struggle, manage it well, but let them go through it to the end.***

- Ascertain whether the pain your child feels, is not the result of a real neglected need or a real injury or trauma. Don't just jump into disciplinary action without this step. Our children (even we as adults!) express their experience of trauma or injury through inappropriate behaviour. Our children live in a very unsafe and challenging environment. We must always be sensitive to possible deeper messages conveyed through behaviour. Also ensure that you have not caused the pain by your actions (other than necessary discipline). Be willing to acknowledge your mistakes and apologize. Remember that after your apology, the child will still need time to process this and receive healing. Even in this, the parents' guidance is important.

As parents we need to learn how God disciplines His children. Parenthood is one of the most taxing positions anybody can hold. We can only endeavour to learn from our own Father. Cloud and Townsend (2002, p 92) offer this advice: *"When your child is injured or in need, run to their rescue. However, when they are protesting reality's demands for maturing to the next level, empathize with that struggle, manage it well, but let them go through it to the end"*

**Dear reader**

**Dr Meyer would like to invite readers to comment on her article series that has been running for many years, casting a wide net across the theme of boundaries in our relationships within the context of the Biblical guidelines and our relationship with God.**

**Address any questions and comments to Ilse at the CPSC Administrative Office at [admin@cpsc.org.za](mailto:admin@cpsc.org.za)**

## Animal therapists

By Dr Heinrich Lottering

*"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Genesis 2:18-19*

**S**ince creation there has been an exceptional relationship between man and animal. In agriculture, law-and-order, and in war, but above all in companionship.

Taking it a step further, we have research that has confirmed that pet ownership has many health benefits.

### Stress and anxiety

Scientific studies done by the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) have confirmed that the interaction between pets and their owners reduces stress levels. Simply petting your animal or playing with them reduces anxiety and feelings of stress.

A reduction in levels of the stress hormone cortisol has been noted after human-pet interaction. Although the studies have only been done on children regarding ADHD and animals, it has been shown that having a animal present with the child in class helps the child to focuss. Could this be true for geriatrics as well with focussing their minds and thoughts?

### Exercise & health

Most people find regular exercise to be tiresome and boring. Immobility and its negative health consequences are usually a contributing factor to geriatric morbidity and mortality.

Yet walking with a dog or cat (yes you can walk with a cat on a leash) brings a new dimension of relaxation and motivation if done daily.



Research done at the Center for Family Health at the University of Chicago has shown that heart attack survivors are likely to live longer if they have a pet, than



those who do not. **Apart from the emotional benefit, the animal can also have a role in mobilising the patient.**

### Joy

Few experiences beat the joy of returning home to a loyal and loving animal - that unconditional love and the excitement to see you. Dr Walsh from the University of Chicago wrote that **people who have strong relationships with their pets often have a larger capacity for love, compassion empathy towards others.**

As little as five minutes with an animal can boost serotonin and dopamine levels – the so called “happy chemicals”.

Especially the elderly who are often isolated, can benefit substantively from the mood-elevation effects of pets.

### Purpose

**One of the greatest sorrows for the elderly is a sense of uselessness.** When there is a pet who depends on and to



whom the elderly person is a , protector and provider, ensures a renewed sense of purpose – making a huge difference. Having a beloved pet urging you to get out of bed in the morning for their breakfast or urging you to go for a walk can drastically change an elderly person routine and activity level, adding to a sense of self value.

### Preventing isolation & loneliness

**Having a loving pet can meet many of human psycho-social needs.** It has been found that people who regularly interact with animals develop better social skills and a higher tendency for sharing and cooperation. They fit in better in society and community.

**To summarise: The elderly are faced with so many challenges; the array of benefits that acquiring and loving a pet can bring regarding change of their social and emotional well being is incredible.**

Looking at this from a different angle, so many pet shelters are full of homeless animals deserving a loving owner!! Proverbs 12:10 states that righteous people take good care of their animals, homeless animals and the elderly can only tremendously benefit from caring for each other. ■

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## Sea salt- grain of life

By Mrs Roxanne Bailey, Career Guidance Counsellor, Independent Psychometrist and Pastoral Counsellor

*"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world."*

- Matthew 5:13-14 (KJV)

10 *"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*  
11 *My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined."*

- Job 23: 10-11 (KJV)

**Keywords:** sea salt, truth, gold, lost, hardiness, self-acceptance

### INTRODUCTION

Mark 9:50 states, *"Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another."*

Finding peace, knowing what God wants for our life is not always known. We search for something within ourselves. As counsellors we see, hear, and feel with our clients. We ourselves are not perfect, yet God gave us the gift to be altruistic in that moment through mindfulness. What is in a grain of life...? All of us are blemished by some form of tribulation. Yet, God never breaks his covenant. "Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the Kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?"

In Numbers 18:19 and 2 Chronicles 13:5 we read that salt was widely used as a symbol which illustrated a covenant of friendship. What do salt and light mean and how does it relate in our lives?

### CONTENT

Scientifically named Sodium Chloride is a gift so great, that without it we cannot live. Early hominids that lived on the edge of the saline Lake Olduvai (J. Warren, 2015) used salt in their diet. It was used as trade in ancient Greece, and by the ancient Egyptians during the art of mummification. Apart from being a valuable commodity with political and military significance, it is also a food preservative, and it contains medicinal properties.



Dr Brownstein, a family physician and the Medical Director of the Center for Holistic Medicine in West Bloomfield, Michigan states in "Salt Your Way To Health" that there are many medical controversies regarding how much and if salt is healthy within the diet. "Unrefined salt contains over 80 minerals in a perfect proportion for our bodies. Our bodies were meant to function optimally with adequate mineral levels and adequate salt intake. Only the use of unrefined salt can provide both these factors." Unrefined salt is taken from evaporated seawater or mined directly from the source like the Himalayan pink salt that is extracted from the Khewra Salt Mine located near the Himalayas in Pakistan (one of the oldest and largest salt mines in the world).

According to the "Salt" document from the University of Illinois, salt during the ancient times was crude, impure, rare, and costly. Today salt is available everywhere, less costly, and pure.

Salt has an ionic compound consisting out of sodium and chlorine. Chlorine is a non-metal material, accepts electrons and is an oxidant whilst sodium is a reactive and alkaline metal. A client approaches the counsellor with many blemishes and is 'crude', thus in need of refinement.

There are the negative electron, and the positive proton, sides of the client with the counsellor being the neutrons to see how he or she may be able to assist the client in creating an ionic compound of opposites. We need a little salt in our diet, even if it is just a little, since one can take something with a "grain of salt"... If one starts to look at all aspects as unrefined, healing as well as growth can begin. In becoming just like edible salt, a 1:1 ratio is formed in discovering ourselves

through the eyes of God. Let us become **the salt of the earth**, where one is honest, kind-hearted, and reliable; this starts to become worth your salt- not in status and money, but in being honest with yourself, and in growing towards and entrusting all of who you are to God. The poet, Thomas Hardy, born June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1840, wrote about a love for architecture, literature and music, and an interest



in the lifestyles of the country folk. Each of us has a voice, a specific melody, just like T. Hardy wrote in his poem "Let me enjoy the earth". As a unique grain of salt with all our strengths and weaknesses, one needs to become true to oneself and true to God's already written pages for our lives. God never wants one of His grains of salts to wither away. Instead, He wants us to become hardy and grow into His greatness for us.

Let us not lose our saltiness, thus become part of the worldly things such as wealth, status, and luxury and in becoming like an hourglass letting all life filter through. No, let each one become pure Himalayan salt -- healthy in the ways of God's Grace and Love. This is where God gives the counsellor guidance and strength to guide a client through certain techniques to harness the inner strengths and assist with the weaknesses. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Colossians 2:6). Letting each grain of salt be worthy of self-acceptance one can fully receive God's salt in our life.

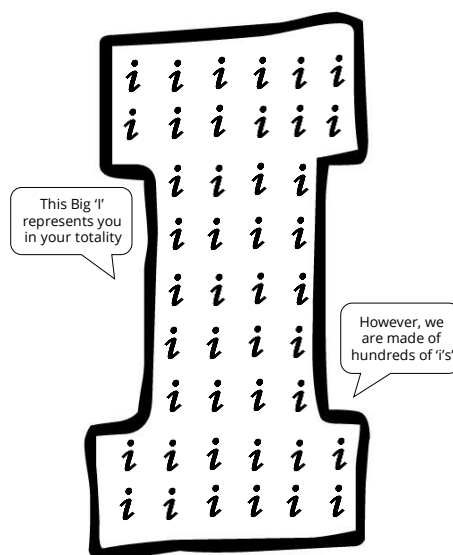
H.W. Krohnea (2002), as well as Lazarus (1991), referred to Selye's theory of 'systemic stress', where fifteen basic emotions have been distinguished. Nine of these are negative (anger, fright, anxiety, guilt, shame, sadness, envy, jealousy, and disgust), whereas four are positive (happiness, pride, relief, and love). (Two more emotions, hope and compassion, have a mixed valence.) As unique grains of sea salt each one undergoes its own purification system after being crude salt. There are two needed polarities within the self: strengths and weaknesses, also seen as all the "little i's" in the theory by Lazarus (1991).

Corey, G. (2013) states that "In your professional work, you are asking people to take an honest look at their lives and to make choices concerning how they want to change, so it is critical that you do this in your own life".

An honest and self-acceptant therapist willing to look at each little "i's" of each client without judgement, can bring forth the inner greatness of each client, thus make each grain of sea salt a cohesive unity part of the greatness of the whole client.

The "little i's" represents all the weaknesses and strengths written into the bigger "I". All the positives are encircled in the big "I" and then one incorporates this into

## Big I, Little i exercise



the self, while still acknowledging the other more negative aspects. One needs to work through these weaknesses and least pleasant feelings and thoughts to become more acceptant of the self.

Neenan, M. and Dryden, W. (2002) uses this "little i, thus big I theory" to develop a client's self-acceptance: "good copers have a life philosophy of developing their personal identity along many dimensions".

Moreover, Neenan, M. and Dryden, W. (2002) depicted our thoughts of over criticism, pessimism, anxieties, fears etcetera as "ants in our minds".

In practice with a client see these "ants" as grains of unique salts that needs to be "purified" through repetition (just as Neenan, M. and Dryden, W. (2002) mentioned in their "ants" analogy to trial and error) until the client starts to internalize information and become the

"I" God wants them to become. In addition, to assist them let go of the feelings of inferiority and gain the worth God had already instilled before birth yet got damaged and blemished by the world and our own negative beliefs.



## CONCLUSION

Collins, G.R. (1998) states: "Self-love, as I understand the concept biblically and psychologically, includes the following: (1) accepting myself as a child of God who is lovable, valuable, capable; (2) being willing to give up considering myself the center of the world; (3) recognizing my need of God's forgiveness and redemption."

Christian self-esteem results from translating "I am the greatest, wisest, strongest, best" to "I am what I am, a person made in God's image, a sinner redeemed by God's grace, and a significant part in the body of Christ". As stated in Mark 9:50 -- "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another." Counselors need to assist the client as a sea salt grain in becoming hardy, thus enhance their hardiness as denoted by Loche III, R.W. (2017) : "hardiness consists of commitment, challenge, and control, which prepare an individual to handle difficult and problematic events (Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982)".

God wants us to recognise all the “i’s” in our whole self and acknowledge Him to guide our less saltiness, in becoming pure Himalayan salt through His imminent Grace for each of His salt grains. ■

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## Poverty caused by widowhood in Thohoyandou Vhembe District of Thulamela in Limpopo Province: A Pastoral Challenge

By Dr L Julia Rambau

### Abstract

**W**idowhood has become a global concern in all cultures, ethical and racial groups, including religion. Women who lost their husbands experience widowhood and they change immediately after the death of their spouses. After the death of their husbands, widows experienced extraordinary oppressive customs after the death of the better halves, leading to poverty. This article has analysed the impact of the Thohoyandou township customs on poor widows as emanating from their in-laws after the death of their husbands. Therefore, the aim of this article is to unpack some of the challenges faced by poor widows in Thohoyandou Vhembe District of Thulamela in Limpopo Province, which often impact them tremendously.

This research unearthed the extreme poverty that has been brought to the fore through the suffering of the widows in Thohoyandou township on the loss of their husbands. The author engaged pastoral caregivers and the clergy to journey with impoverished widows in their troubled land so that they feel loved and cared for. Themes and sub-themes were developed in the interviews to achieve measurable and testable data. The amount of data was engaged and hermeneutically scrutinized and presented as recommendation.

Contribution: Widows in Thohoyandou are most vulnerable, yet rejected and isolated by the church members,



community members and their family members. The Thohoyandou Customs play a major role in the livelihood of the poor widows. The Thohoyandou customs, church members, and community member practices have major impacts on widows and may even shorten their lifespan.

Keywords: Custom, widowhood, mourning, cultural practices.

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to investigate the reasons for poverty caused by widowhood in Thohoyandou Vhembe District of Thulamela municipality in Limpopo Province and why it is a pastoral challenge, to educate, inform and stimulate discussion about it among affiliates of CPSC.

The author in this section focused on poverty caused by widowhood in Thohoyandou township after the death of their better halves. The researcher attempts to analyse the problems of widows related to poverty and deprivation in Thohoyandou. The author is aware that there are

wealthy widows, middleclass, and poor widows. The death of a loved one is paradoxical and contradictory in nature. Literature has proved that the population of widows can be regarded as having reached epidemic levels globally with future projections expected to rise in countries such as Syria (Chandran, 2020).

<https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/after-four-decades-war-afghan-widows-battle-homes>.

**Widows in Thohoyandou are the most vulnerable -- rejected and isolated by the church and community members, as well as by their own family members.**



The researcher is more focused on the poor widows in Thohoyandou township. Poor widows struggle daily to make ends meet. It is common for people to take advantage of widows who are struggling with the issue of poverty after the death of their husbands. The difficulties that widows encounter daily are not managed as they ought to be. Hence, pastoral care is needed to address this issue.

Singh & Chudasama's (2020) study conducted in India articulated that poverty is when the person is lacking enough resources to provide for the necessities of life such as food, clean water, shelter, and clothing.

Singh, P.K, Chudasama, H., 2020. *Evaluation poverty alleviation strategies in developing country*".

Widows who live in poverty face a variety of issues, including social, mental, and psychological effects. Young (2006) alluded that the poor condition of widows has attracted the attention of global research and poverty has increased in most developing societies and widows are the most susceptible during difficult times because of poverty, especially those in Thohoyandou.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/47.2.224>

The author discovered that widows in Thohoyandou communities were left with no financial resources to fight and alleviate the impact of HIV and AIDS, and other disease exasperate their vulnerability to men during tough times due to poverty caused by widowhood. According to

(Baloyi, 2016, and Mabunda and Ross, 2022) widows are obliged to undergo the procedure of sexual cleansing rites with the brother-in-law without her consent or the use of condoms.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2022.2065708> Published:  
Routledge.

Widows who are experiencing poverty caused by widowhood in Thohoyandou communities are compelled to remarry the deceased's brother or a relative without her consent to secure the deceased's inheritance, or else she will forfeit everything including monies and her children. This process leads to absolute poverty. When widows are exposed to HIV and AIDS, this leads to stigmas by everyone around them. Widows in Thohoyandou Township are vulnerable due to customs or harmful traditional practices imposed on them because of the passing of their husbands, leading to poverty.

Widows, specifically in Thohoyandou township, also tend to be subjected to poor treatment by their immediate family members, and the broader society during and after mourning period. The author's observation was that everyone with whom one interacts appears to benefit from individuals who do not seem to comprehend their ownership and rights. Widowed (women) should be treated equally to married women even after the death of their husbands. Their in-laws often subject widows to poor

treatment, leading to destitution (Young 2006, Munyali et al., 2003, Dlukulu, 2010) articulated.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/47.2.224>.

Widows who are experiencing poverty suffer discrimination following the death of their spouses, leading to destitution. Peterman (2012) established that widows were discriminated against, and their property confiscated, leading to impoverishment and social welfare aggravating the widows' incapacity. The above scholar is on the spot. For example, most widows in Thohoyandou communities are perceived to face rejection, isolation and denied the rights to occupy the land, leading to incipient poverty for themselves.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254392257>

The researcher discovered that failure of the economic system coupled with political unrest has caused poor widows in Thohoyandou township to become even poorer, making it challenging for them to avoid dependency syndrome and self-pity following the death of their husbands. According to Masango (2014) poverty is created by the failure of the economic system and adopted by being creative to survive. The above scholar is on the spot.

*HTS Theologies Studies/Theological Studies 7(03), Art. #2737, xx Page: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i3.2737>.*

According to Mandela (2005) in London BBC (ibid), he indicated that charity is an act of Justice, like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural, it is man-made, and it can be overcome and eradicated by actions of human-beings. The poverty of widowhood is a reality and cannot be underplayed.

*Hanoman, J., 2018. "Hunger and poverty in South Africa". Published: Routledge.*

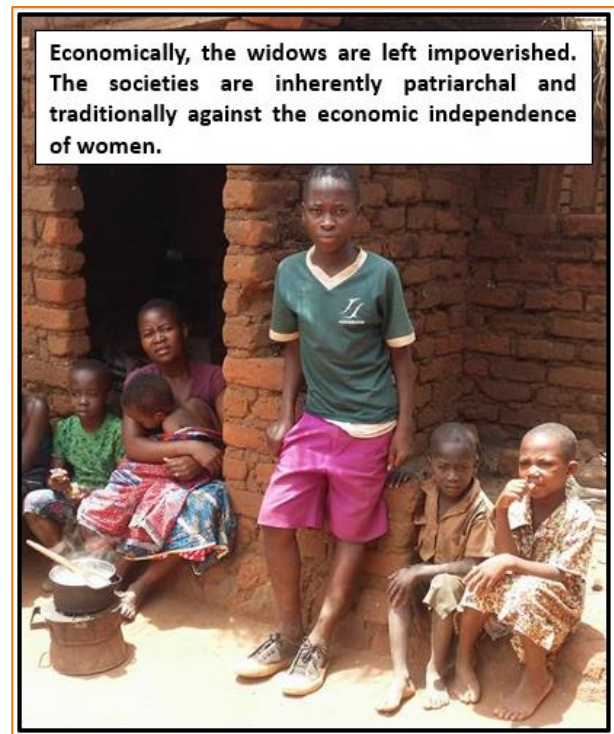
The decline in women's economic well-being made it difficult for them to be expected to support the family and work as the breadwinner. Everything in the entire family is doomed if the breadwinner's image is invalidating. In addition, (Mbiti, 2012) cited in (Masango, 2014) argues unequivocally that when two elephants fight, the grass gets hurt. This means that when people in the authorities fight against each other for personal gain, the poor widows suffer the most.

*HTS Theologies Studies/Theological Studies 7(03), Art. #2737, xx Page: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i3.2737>.*

Likewise, in South African context, the suffering of poor widows in Thohoyandou is exacerbated by the kind of economic system that South Africa has adopted.

The failure of the economic system has caused poor widows to become even poorer because of the unprecedented behaviour.

Peterman (2012) (ibid) alluded that the in-laws deprive most (women) widows of property they accumulated with the husband and exploited them, e.g. by forcing them to marry the husband's brother or relatives that caused predisposed to poverty after the death of their



husbands. The widows were traumatized and overwhelmed by the brutality displayed by their in-laws. They felt betrayed, persecuted, and experienced insomnia because the resources were insufficient to support themselves and their children.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254392257>

Consequently, widows who are experiencing poverty caused by widowhood in Thohoyandou communities are compelled to remarry the deceased's brother or the relative without her consent to secure the deceased's inheritance or else she will forfeit everything including monies and her children that lead to absolute poverty. The widows, who are suffering from poverty induced by the in-laws, become stressed because of these intolerable circumstances. The difficulties widows encounter daily ought to be overseen pastorally.

Widows in Thohoyandou townships are marginalized, unprotected, and defenceless due to poverty caused by widowhood after the death of their spouses. Nnodim, (2012) added that being a widow is a tragedy, and it is exclusively a woman's problem, which relegates women (widows) to the group of the marginalized defenceless and invisible. Hence, a pastoral care model for widows is important, which this study utilized to apply to impoverished widows who are unprotected and marginalized due to poverty.

The injustices and intolerable harmful traditional practices on poor widows in Thohoyandou township have an adverse effect on their entire being as they were also denied the right to inherit their husband's property because of the greediness of others, leading to poverty. They also feel sorry for themselves because their husbands have passed away and they were without anyone to protect them from exploitation. This worsens their suffering and pain. Ogba (2018) postulates that the elite constructed

businesses in the rural areas in the expense of women on widowhood after the death of their husbands.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314232102>. Published: Nigeria in River state.

The author discovered the Thohoyandou customs have affected widows tremendously since they are defenceless individuals because of what the deceased left behind. The above-mentioned cruelty, which is inflicted on poor widows who are left to be destitute following the passing of their spouses, traumatised and overwhelmed them. The in-laws in Thohoyandou township frequently destroyed the means of subsistence of poor widows, establishing damaging traditional customs that dehumanize them and leave the poor widows with nothing but intolerable chronic illnesses like stress.

Traditionally, in Africa, widows were typically thought to have murdered their spouses and charged with bewitching them. Family, friends, relatives, and the community turn against them due to the above-mentioned speculations. Because of the above inhumanity and subsequent isolation and stigmatization following the passing of their husbands, they experience low self-esteem and are unable to think independently.

The in-laws accused them of being witches. Due to the above acrimonious they grieved indefinitely because they feel detached (segregated) and when there is no sufficient time given to grieving, it delays one's ability to heal and move on. This is a good time for the pastors to maintain a good relational contact with colleagues even after exits.



Peterman (2012) observed that after the death of a husband, most widows were discriminated against, deprived the property they toiled for and acquired with their husbands, and are often exploited. Lack of legal knowledge, poor asset to justice and poor or absent systems for existing statutory rights hinder widows further. (USAID 2016, Peterman 2012) further articulate.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254392257>

The researcher explored that this destructive ancient practice is as poisonous as cancer that slowly but certainly consume the defenceless. Widows in Thohoyandou township, who are living in poverty are stigmatized after their husbands' deaths and treated like objects, which causes them to become seriously ill and poorer.

## EXPLORATION

Poverty caused by widowhood is poverty that is caused by factors such as loss of income that was generated by the late spouse, unemployment of the remaining spouse, cultural constraints that prevent the remaining spouse from working for years or more. Victims of this kind of poverty want to be understood, listened to attentively and accompaniment interaction rather than being told what to do. The ability to do that makes them feel free to say how they feel about poverty that was caused by widowhood, what they are doing to solve the problem and whether they are open to counselling.

## APPLICATION

This topic seeks to investigate an issue that requires counselling practice. Widowhood is a plight that may lead to poverty and a prolonged period of a feeling of loss and grief recovery.

## MY OBSERVATION

The author observed that widows in Thohoyandou township feel unnoticed, unwanted, unaided, unprotected, unloved, betrayed, persecuted, and so forth due to poverty caused by widowhood after the demise of their better halves, hence pastoral care is a prerequisite.

## FINDINGS

The following themes and sub-themes were developed in the interviews to achieve measurable and testable data:

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Suppression of pain and stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pretending as if there is no problem</li> <li>▪ Claiming acceptance of the problem</li> <li>▪ Taking care of disobedient children and innocent children</li> <li>▪ Developing the feeling of denial</li> </ul>
2. Lacking family support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Isolation by family</li> <li>▪ Exploring bad alternative ways to generate income</li> <li>▪ Lack of consideration for grants by social welfare</li> <li>▪ Lack of financial advice</li> <li>▪ Harmful traditional praxis</li> </ul>
4. Lack of counselling	Lack of pastoral care

Often all widows experienced the above inhumanity at the hands of their in-laws, community members and the church due to poverty after the death of their husbands. Below were the findings from the data collected from the widows who are experiencing poverty after the death of their husbands in Thohoyandou communities, leading to suppression of pain and stress due to poverty caused by widowhood after the death of their spouses.



Widows across Africa are treated as sub-human. Their fundamental human rights are constantly violated. The mental and physical health effects of these rites on widows are indescribable.

## Suppression of pain and stress

All widows are experiencing suppression, pain and stress caused by oppressive customs imposed on them by their in-laws due to poverty after the death of their spouses.

*"The elderly women forced us to sleep on the mattress instead of sleeping on the bed, they articulated.*

Often, widows experience burnout to show that their wounds are still bleeding due to improper customs that have been imposed on them by their in-laws, leading to poverty. The whole situation of widowhood and poverty is painful, all widows are prone to suppress the pain and loss while they secretly cry and lose confidence in life as the need for the process of healing grows. Pain, suppression, and secret tears were at order of the day because when someone you love dies, you have a feeling of numbness, a yearning, and protest.

One of the participants at Ngudza village articulated, *"I spent sleepless night because the pain of being a widow was unbearable."*

The above experience was common to most, if not all, of the widows in Thohoyandou township. Poverty is one of the persistent chronic illnesses that besiege the widows in the challenge to live a fulfilled life.

The researcher found that this work of data collection is sensitive and could trigger re-traumatization, the old wounds were re-opened. The study engaged pastoral care and the clergy to help journey with the troubled souls. One of the widows agreed to be one of the participants in the interview, then became evasive and could not help the interview.

*"I do not want to think deeply on traumatizing issues. When it appears, I suppress. I'm determined to forget about the past and focus on the future. I wept secretly in order not to please my enemies. The pain was so severe that I was unable to withstand it",* one of the participants lamented.

## Pretending as if there is no problem

Widows who are experiencing trauma due to poverty after the death of their better halves, sometimes insist that there is no problem when all the symptoms indicate otherwise. In some instances, a widow resolved to accept the plight, but this is denial and depression of trauma. The pain and poverty ramification cannot be wished away before being dealt with in a therapeutic way. The widow would claim acceptance and to have overcome trauma/reached closure but when interviewed they reject the interviewer and become emotional.

*"Do not pity me, all is well,"* one of the participants exclaimed.

When widows lose their husbands, they grieve over them to show that they love them and this is a clear indication that person has not healed properly, they (widows) are still wounded by the death of their husband that resulted them into poverty. They claim to accept the death

whereas they are still bleeding (hurt) inside. The researcher engaged pastoral care giver to exhibit Ubuntu to the poor widows for their well-being.

#### **Claiming acceptance of the situation**

The following statements evidenced this:

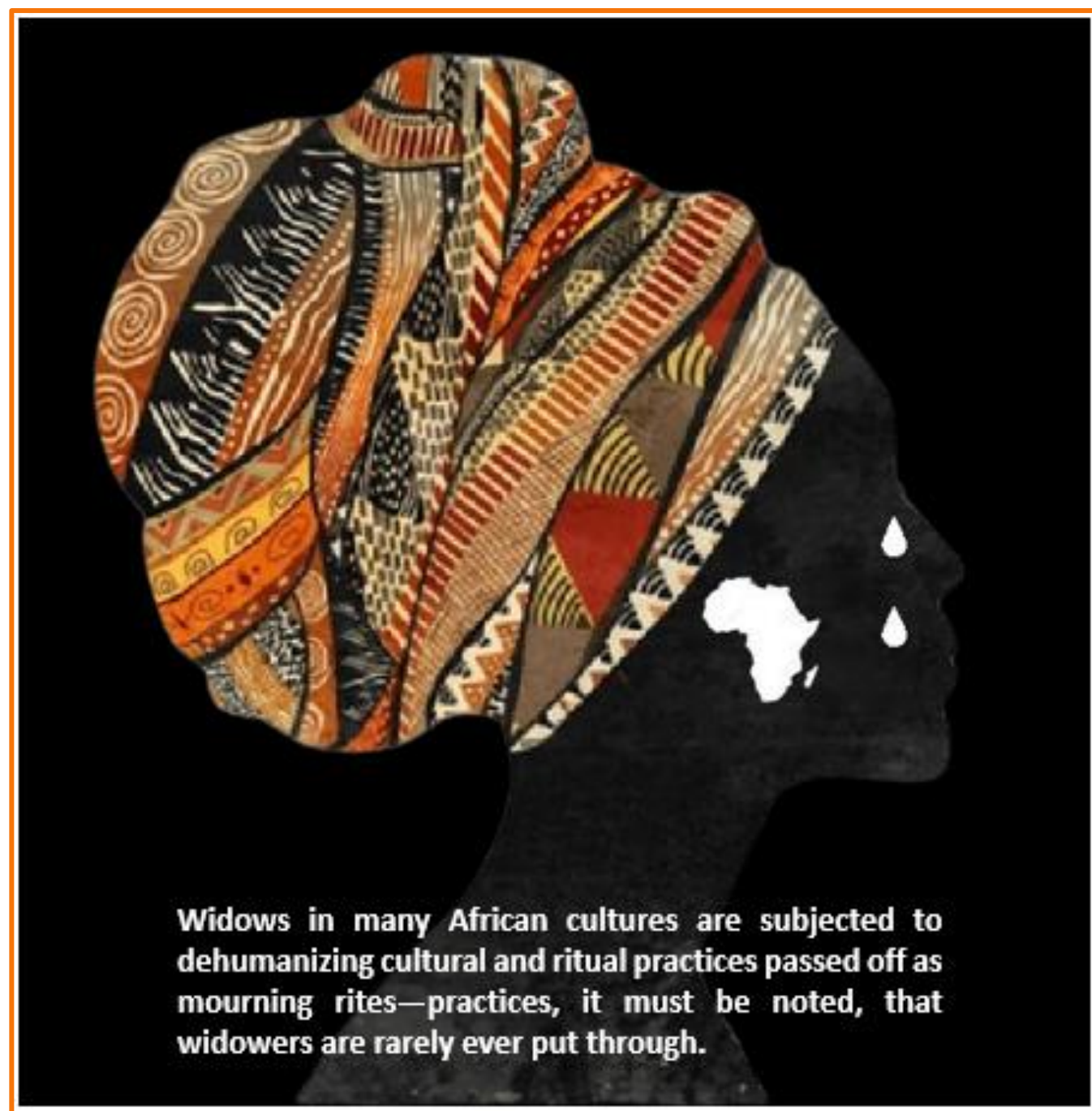
*"I'm determined to forget about the past and focus on the future. I wept secretly in order not to please my enemies. The pain was so severe that I was unable to withstand it" because I do not want to think deeply about these issues.*

The above inhumanity the widow was experiencing needs pastoral care, and the clergy are to help her to accept the situation and move on with life without fear of unknown or uncertainty.

#### **Taking care of disobedient children and innocent grandchildren**

Some widows openly shared that bringing up children was a big issue as some children were obedient while others were wayward and disobedient; they end up bringing children from different fathers into the world and scarcely can provide food and clothing.

The mother remains with a meagre income from government to take on the whole upkeep of their grandchildren while their mothers abandoned them in the care of the widow. In some instances, the children who bring many mouths for widows to feed also exacerbate the situation by bringing toxic braggadocios comments that lead poor old widows to entertain suicidal thoughts. Some fortunate survive at the nick of time when watchful neighbours intervene to save a life.



### Developing feelings of denial

All widows struggled to let it go because a major problem was in-laws who wanted to inherit the deceased's property. In some instances, the widows resolved to accept the plight of poverty, but this is denial and depression of trauma. Often the widows would claim acceptance and to have overcome the trauma/reached closure, but when interviewed they reject the interviewer and become emotional which is a sign that despite the length of years healing has not taken place.

*"Do not pity me",* says another widow in a way of denial.

The researcher found that this work of data collection is painful and trigger re- traumatization, the old wounds are re-opened.

Here, widows are like an island with no one to share their predicaments with, or on whom they can rely in times of storms or whom they can count in times of trouble. They end up getting into undesirable activities such as unsafe sexual intercourse to relieve the stress or trauma they experience due to unceasing grief after the death of their husbands. Pastoral care is prominent and helps them to deal with their emotions and if the situation is not improving, they can make a referral. It is difficult to cope if they lack family and social support.

### Lack of family and social support

The widows didn't get support from the family members. Inflation that keeps fluctuating, exacerbates the widows' poverty who were already poor and that lead them further into lots of debts.

*"We have tried to borrow money to start our businesses but in vain and left being destitute"* they lamented.

The widows felt isolated by their family members due to poverty after the demise of their better halves. In this case, pastors must try to help them deal with their emotions and pains without condemning and judging them, then healing will unfold. The issue of isolation hinders or delays the healing process. The pastors must stand in the gap of the widows and God- *"integrating God's love through service and counsel in Christ's name"* (Waruta & Kinoti, 2000:95).

### Lack of pastoral care

Some of the widows were not received by the members of the church. In the case of death, the comforting and consoling of the Pastoral Care and healing are the sole perspective of witnessing church. The denial of widows' acceptance in some churches is anti-gospel as Jesus welcomed all who are burdened. As the Bible says:

*"Come to me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11:28).

## RECOMMENDATION

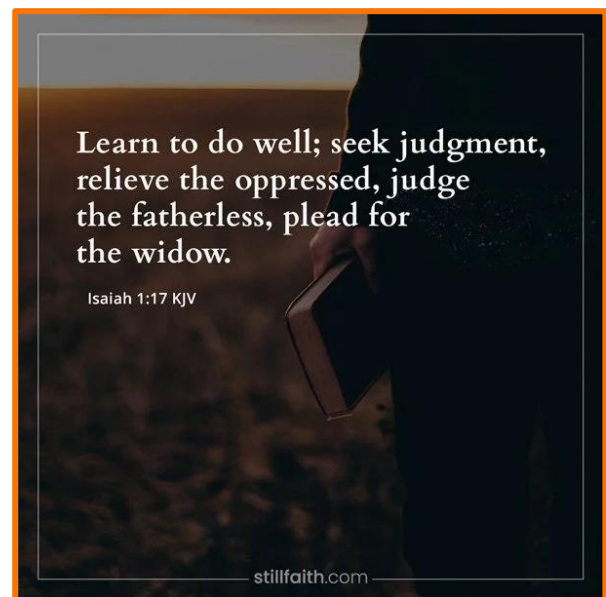
The study encompasses the following ten recommendations: the communities, the government, churches, the In-Laws, Department of Education, Pastoral caregiver and

the clergy, family members, widows, married women, and the psychologists. Below are precautions to be considered by each group.

### The communities

They need to be educated and sensitized to the issues that widows experience in the community, church, and the villages they live in. Some of the above can be helped if tackled by clergy, who pastorally counsel them. Loneliness is aggravated by the stigmatization, isolation, rejection, and persecution by the community members when the widows lose their husbands.

*"I have no one to help me in my situation,"* one of the widows exclaimed.



The isolation is compounded by the insensitivity by which the community sometimes sees the plight of the widows. The community needs to support the widows in times of need. They must empower them by developing community projects that will assist them to avoid dependency syndrome and self-pity.

### The government

The government must support religious institutions with money to assist the widows in times of need. God's kindness was meant to be an example to be followed by His covenant people. His kindness and mercy are evident in Luke 6:36.

*"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap."*

The government must also protect widows' vulnerability by ensuring their financial stability through the launching of widows' organizations that can promote their interests and offer employment. The Government must again create skills and empowerment centres for the impoverished widows. The Government must also employ those widows who are unemployed to alleviate poverty caused by

widowhood after the death of their spouses. Moreover, education is what everybody needs to get rid of poverty, because without proper education, widows will become unproductive, which will end up affecting the economy globally. Hence, corrupt Governments cannot produce better lives for all.

For the Government to produce quality in education, and to get rid of people who are embezzling money, it must exhibit zero intolerance to corruption of any kind. The government must also develop long-term strategies designed to prevent serious impact of drought that end up causing abject poverty to the livelihood of impoverished widows, more especially in Thohoyandou where widows who are experiencing impoverishment depend on the farming for their survival.

### **The churches**

They must make provision for counselling facilities by churches, to develop coping mechanisms in the event of the death of a husband. The Church must journey with widows who are impoverished and alleviate their plight. The church also must involve community members to accommodate widows who are poverty-stricken after the death of their husbands and to assist for them to become accepted and inclusive. The role of the clergy and the Church cannot be underestimated especially for the healing of widows through prayers and counselling.

### **A spiritual aspect**

Pastors must conduct a retreat that will take place almost every month as a way of counselling the process to impoverished widows in Thohoyandou communities during bereavement and after the burial. There should be an execution plan to assist them through their world of abuse at the hands of their in-laws, community members and the church. The researcher engaged pastors to encourage them to form an organization where widows share their plans without fear or uncertainty. And have interim leaders to craft sustainable growth patterns for the organization during their shortened tenure. This will help them to be healed quickly.

### **The in-laws**

They should not be greedy. They must learn to allow widows to inherit their husbands' properties and monies without the fear of the unknown or uncertainty. They should also learn to work for themselves, instead of waiting for their brothers' death and grab everything the deceased left for his family. Family members exclude the widows from participating in financial issues and benefits, therefore exacerbating the poverty situation in the lives of the widows and their dependents. Usually, all the heritage is grabbed and managed by rude and incorrigible relatives who have no interest in the welfare of the deceased's family members and the surviving widow and her children.

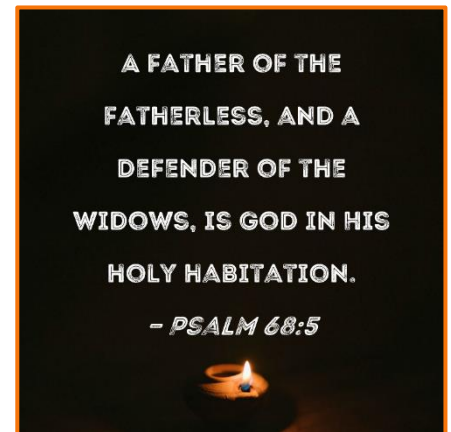
### **The Department of Education**

There is a need that the department of education develop a curriculum to be used in dealing with these unprecedented predicaments the in-laws are imposing upon impoverished widows. Harmful traditional practices that violate widows' rights to inherit their husbands' property and monies, right for movement, right for freedom of speech and many other rights must be stopped so that these rights can be enjoyed by anyone without any prejudices.

### **Family members**

It is the family's responsibility to protect widows who are experiencing abuse by the in-laws due to poverty after the death of their loved ones.

If they are far from each other, the family members must make sure that they visit them so that they feel loved and cared for. Family feuds and conflicts emanating from greed and disguised as culture are common occurrences in Thohoyandou township. The above cruelty imposed on widows who are poverty-stricken after the death of their husbands must be ended and the community must be taught to avoid this kind of treatments at all costs so that the impoverished widows feel welcomed and taken care of.



Family feuds and conflicts emanating from greed and disguised as culture are common occurrences in Thohoyandou township. The above cruelty imposed on widows who are poverty-stricken after the death of their husbands must be ended and the community must be taught to avoid this kind of treatments at all costs so that the impoverished widows feel welcomed and taken care of.

### **Widows**

Widows who are experiencing impoverishment must stay away from dependency syndrome and self-pity. They must learn to develop self-esteem and be capable of doing something that is valuable for their lives. They must also learn to be content with what they have. The widows also need to be re-educated on their legal rights, especially on issues of inheritance and estate. When you resolve to re-educate widows on their rights it has to be with great stride in building a nation through rights and legal empowerment.

### **Married women aspects**

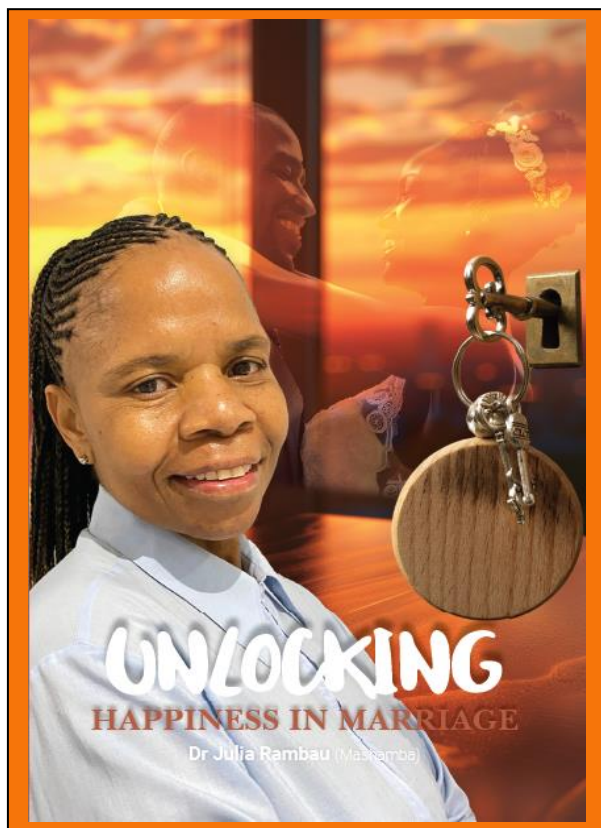
Church leaders, pastors and the clergy must develop groups that deal specifically with women who are married, so that they can be trained on how to treat widows who are impoverished and abuse after the death of their husbands. They must develop stigma awareness where they should be taught that anyone might become a widow any time. They should know that those widows who are impoverished did not apply to become widows, they themselves may become widows as well.

## The psychologists

It is very prominent for the psychologists to collaborate with pastors and the clergy so that they can be able to assist widows who are affected by abuse of in-laws after the death of their better halves. The main purpose of psychologists is to make sure that they help them develop sound minds since their mind-sets were stagnant and dormant due to the inhumanity there were encountering daily due to poverty after the death of their spouses.

## CONCLUSION

The topic impact of poverty in Thohoyandou communities after the death of their husbands has been investigated and duly addressed in article. There were several issues that have been explored that were related to widows who are impoverished in the above-mentioned township after the death of their husbands. The greed of patriarchy fam-



ily members, disguised as culture property grabbing, exacerbate poverty. The promotion of the rights of widows and the creation of organizations that empower and protect widow's interests in alleviating their plight was succinctly discussed. This led us to surmise that the of the topic could be directly correlated in that poverty is man-made can be eradicated.

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Dr Rambau strongly believes that '*focusing on the solution is far much better than focusing on problems*'.

She was married to the late Mr. A.Z. Rambau and their marriage was blessed with one girl, Mpho, and two sons, Justice and Ndivhuwo.

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# Development as a Pastor & Counsellor: Life Coaching

## Detach yourself and become an observer

By Pastor Charlotte Meintjes

### Introduction

As we approach the bustling festive season, it is essential for pastors, counsellors, and all who are dedicated to advancing His Kingdom to take time to detach ourselves from the challenges we may encounter during this period. A reminder of what we have already learned.

What message is needed to be heard that can last us a lifetime and that can be used on a daily basis?

A message on how to defeat any situation.

Having knowledge about defeating situations is crucial or you will prolong the situation. Find out and receive knowledge from the spirit from within, pray that God the Father will give you grace and guide you. You will always protect yourselves because you will have advanced knowledge.

### Exploration

- Observe what is happening. The key to help you to defeat negativity is to separate yourself by becoming an observer. Anytime something hits to disturb you, sit back and watch what just happened. Emotions are not you; it is your body. So, separate yourself from what is happening, then you will be able to master any condition.

- Then ask yourself... did I contribute to it? Yes, or no? The more you become anxious or excited, the more you create lack for yourself. There is a need that needs to be fixed in my life, but I'm not anxious but the more you push the more you create lack.

Let us look at what Jesus did when He was confronted with any issue. Jesus would look up and give thanks to God and He blessed it.

For example, the parable of the five loaves of bread and the two fishes (Luke 9:13-17): 5000 men, besides women and children, had to be fed. Jesus did not "freak out" so to speak with respect.... He was not anxious.

Jesus did the following:

#### 1. He told the disciples to tell the people to sit.

Why?

When you are in a hurry in life, you miss your divine supply.

When you are not stable, you cannot attract.



Your soul will begin to wonder.

To have a divine miracle - are you sitting or are you standing?

Are you clothed with anxiety?

#### 2. Jesus thanked God.

Jesus fixes through the heart of appreciation.

Jesus gave thanks to the Father.

Do you know that gratitude and appreciation confirm that it is already done?

#### 3. Jesus blessed the bread and fish.

The more you bless what you have, the more you push lack out of your space. This is part of the law of receiving.

- Remember: The moment you see something as a problem, you have already created it. Thoughts and words confirm the things we see. It will manifest in your life.

So become an observer not the one involved. Do not create lack through your confessions. Know what to do -- ask the Father to send His guiding angel to help you and guide you and find out what to do. Handle the situation immediately. Things happen in our lives because we add our vote to it. Your voice is your vote.

- The real you can separate yourself from any situation. It happened, but do not permit it or confirm it by adding your voice to it.

For example:

When you drive a car, it does not make you the car.

You are the controller of the vehicle.

The driver gets out of the car.

Your real self is the driver.

Your situation is the vehicle.

When your car is dirty, do you go and take a shower? No, you climb out of the car and wash the car.

If the car has dents on it, it is not on you, it is on the car.

Your situation is the car and not you at all.

### Application

Separate yourself from the situation and it will help you control your emotions.

Learn to become and be the observer in any situation and not the one involved. ■

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observe don't  
absorb

## Book Review: Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership

By Charmaine L Daniels

*Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: The Paradox of Personal Dysfunction* Authors: Gary L McIntosh & Samuel D. Rima, Sr., 1997. Baker Books, House Company, Grand Rapids, MI. 49516-6287, 233 pages.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

I found the book “*Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership*” quite insightful. The authors describe the failures among Christian leaders due to personal experiences that happened in their childhood and resurface in their adulthood. The book spells out the solutions or resolutions that one would want to follow. The purpose of this work is to do a book review. And in doing so, my approach will be to do a report of my reading that will include a summary of the book, some highlights, and the evaluation of the book’s value.

### 2. ABOUT THE AUTHORS

MacIntosh is the director of the doctor of Ministry program at the Talbot School of Theology in La Marida, California and he serves as a professor of Christian ministry and leadership. He had the privilege to be at the service of the presidency of the American Society for Church Growth and he is a nationally known seminar leader. Mac is also the editor for Church Network News and for the journal of the American Society for Church Growth.

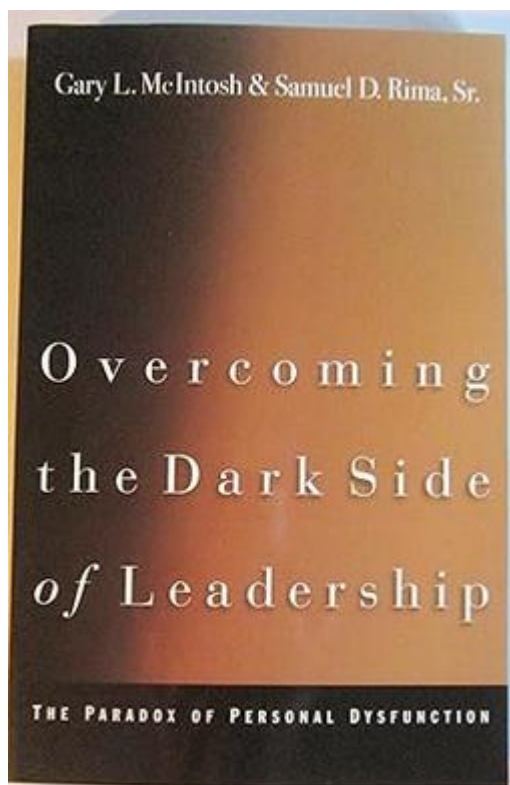
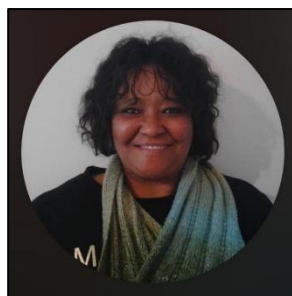
Samuel D.Rima holds degrees from the Talbot school of Theology in M.Div. and D.Min, and also received his BA from the Eastern Washington University. He served as senior pastor of Eagle Heights Church, is a member of Grace University of Omaha and of the Talbot school of Theology. He served as a Church planter, an instructor with walk through the Bible Ministries and teacher at the Talbot School.

### 3. ABOUT THE BOOK

#### *What is the meaning of the dark side?*

The dark side is a natural result of human development, and it is also the inner urges, compulsions and dysfunctions of someone’s personality that often go

unexamined or remain unknown until he/she experiences an emotional explosion.



MacIntosh and Rima are the co-authors of this book. They observed that most of the influential Christian leaders are victims of failure in leadership. It is in response to this failure that they came to write the book “*Overcoming the Dark side of Leadership*”. They specifically wrote it for the present and future Christian leaders to be aware of the causes, results, and potential preventions, of these failures. This book is an exploration of the background of some of the leaders in an effort to study their cases and to find out if there is anything in common regarding their failure/s.

### 3. SUMMARY OF THE CONTENTS

There are three parts in this book that the authors’ outlined:

- To guide leaders to understand what their dark side is
- To identify or discover the dark side
- To give some specific steps for overcoming the dark side.

#### PART 1. UNDERSTANDING OUR DARK SIDE

##### 1. The blind side by the dark side:

The dark side refers to inner urges, compulsions, motivations and dysfunctions that drive leaders toward success or undermine their accomplishments. Dark side develops slowly over a lifetime of experiences and is often released in moments of frustration or anger. The dark side is a normal

development of life and can be an agent for both good and bad in our lives.

**2. Company on the dark side:** Dark side can be found in leaders through all eras. There are people who ignore or refuse to acknowledge their dark side and frequently

#### What is the “Dark Side”?

“... refers to our inner urges, compulsions, motivations, and dysfunctions that drive us toward success or undermine our accomplishments.” (pg. 29)

encounter major failures in their leadership responsibilities. Therefore, leaders who face their dark side and redeem it, accomplish the most over the long run.

### 3. Shedding divine light of the dark side:



We need to understand the sources and effects of our dark side very well so that we can overcome and keep them from destroying our ability to lead for God's glory. We need to consider God's original design for us and the corruption of that design that resulted from the very first leadership failure (Gen. 1:26, 28 & 17). Raw materials are things that cause people to fall, such as pride, selfishness, and self-deception and wrong motives (Rom. 2:5-8 James 3:14, 16).

God always exposes the dark side of leaders, like in the cases of Saul (1Sam. 9-15) and David (2Sam. 11-24). Anyone who aspires to spiritual leadership needs to become fully aware of the raw materials that go into the creation of the leader's dark side. The fall of many leaders described in the Bible is directly attributable to components of their leadership responsibilities regarding their dark side. Meanwhile, there are leaders who are aware of their dark side and are willing to deal openly and honestly with it before God. And as a result, they are empowered for greater effectiveness. This is the stage of identification.

**4. The development of the dark side:** Whatever a person went through during his childhood regarding love, esteem, self-actualisation, safety, and physiology becomes a dark side when one didn't deal with any issues. Consequently, that dark side of leadership develops through a predictable pattern even though the particulars will be different for each person but will still have an impact on that person. With rare exceptions, the experiences of our childhood and adolescence form our dark side and though we may be only subconsciously aware of them, there are signals that point to it. Such signals are noticeable in the drive to succeed, the desire to be accepted, irrational fear, the need to be in control, perfectionism, or various compulsions. Our dark side is inclined to be overcompensation for needs that have not been met in our lives and develop as we attempt to repay the existential debts of varying degrees that we have taken on. The result is now for us to ask ourselves: What experiences from our past formed our own dark side? How do these past experiences show up in visible ways today?

**5. Seafood, Pictionary, and the dark side:** We overcome the negative aspects of the dark side of our lives by taking time to reflect on the powerful influences which play a role in our current success. To overcome that requires a continued vigilance. Leaders need to understand that the same powerful forces that helped forge their success can also facilitate their failure. There is a good side to the dark side and it often serves as a silent mentor. Those who reflect will see that the dark side has a powerful influence on their current success. Therefore, a leader needs to reflect on the past and develop his career, life, and ministry.

## PART 2. DISCOVERING OUR DARK SIDE

"People who ignore or refuse to acknowledge their dark side frequently encounter major failures in their leadership responsibilities."

**6. Compulsive leaders in the Church:** A compulsive leader sees the Church as the organisation he leads and an extension and reflection of himself. Therefore, any flaws in the organisation are seen as a direct reflection on the leader personally. One manifestation of the dark side is the development of a compulsive leader. Moses is one of the compulsive examples found in the Bible (Ex. 18:22).

Some signs of compulsive leaders are being status conscious and looking for reassurance and approval from those in authority. They try to control activities and keep the order and usually are workaholics. At times, they are excessively moralistic, conscientious, and judgemental, and at heart compulsive leaders have an angry and rebellious attitude. Since they may not feel it is proper to express their true feelings, they may repress their anger and resentment.

**6.1 Narcissistic leaders (1Chr 29):** A narcissistic leader is a man who is obsessed with his image. He never looks at his past circumstances in which he found himself and underestimate. He looks up to God and trusts Him that He can do great things with him (Ecclesiastes 2:9-10). In his mind it is just "Me, mine, and I". One manifestation of the dark side is the development of the narcissistic leader. Solomon is one of the examples found in the Bible. Some signs of narcissistic leaders include a driven spirit to succeed by a need for admiration and acclamation. They may have an overinflated sense of importance as well as great ambitious and grandiose fantasies, but at the heart there are self-absorption and uncertainty due to deep feelings of inferiority. In addition, they may not enjoy their success and may be dissatisfied with their lives.

**6.2. The paranoid leaders:** A paranoid leader is desperately afraid of anything or anyone -- whether real or imagined—that/who he perceives to have even the furthest potential of undermining his leadership and stealing away the limelight. He is suspicious, hostile, and guarded in his relationships with others. Paranoid leaders are pathologically jealous of other gifted people. One manifestation of the dark side is the development of the paranoid leader. Saul is one of the examples in the Bible. Some characteristics of the paranoid leader include being suspicious, hostile, fearful, and jealous. Afraid that someone will undermine their leadership, they are hypersensitive to the actions of others, attach subjective meaning to motives, and create rigid structures for control. At the heart of the paranoid leader are strong feelings of insecurity and lack of confidence.

**6.3 The Co-dependent leader:** One manifestation of the dark side is the development of the co-dependent leaders. Samson is one of the examples in the Bible. Some signs of the co-dependent leaders are that they are peacemakers who cover up problems, rather than face them, in an effort to balance the group system. They may be very benevolent with a high tolerance for the deviant. They are also willing to take on more work so they do not have to tell anyone no, and react rather than act. At the heart of co-dependent leader is a repressed and frustrated person who has trouble giving full, honest expression to emotions or problems.

"Leaders who face their dark side and redeem it accomplish the most over the long run."

**6.4 Passive-aggressive leaders:** One manifestation of the dark side is the development of the passive-aggressive leader. Jonah is one of the examples found in the Bible. Some signs of passive-aggressive leaders are as follows; stubborn, forgetful, intentionally inefficient, tend to complain, resist demands, procrastinate, and daily as a means of controlling their environment and those around them. On occasion, they will exert control through the use of short outbursts of sadness or anger. At their heart are anger and bitterness as well as fear of success, since it will lead to higher expectations. A person like that will try to avoid crippling leadership failures that humiliate him and those he loves. With increased awareness and understanding comes greater responsibility to remove and overcome the dark side of personality.

## PART 3. REDEEMING OUR DARK SIDE

**7 Overcoming the dark side:** The dark side of leadership can never be eliminated, but it can be overcome by exercising a degree of self-management to keep his/her dark side in check. It is not easy to overcome a lifetime of experiences that have combined to form one's dark side one time; but as the word of God is being applied to it the negative effects on one's life, career, family, and ministry can be

minimized. At least, overcoming the dark side will take discipline, continued vigilance, and effort throughout a lifetime. There are some steps to follow for one to overcome the dark side:

**8 Acknowledge your dark side:** Here the person needs to admit and understand the shape that the dark side had taken in his/her life. A person must not deny his/her dark side and then blame their failure on others. One also needs to acknowledge God's power at work in our lives (2Cor. 12:9-10).

**9 Examining the past:** The leader needs to avail himself to the work of the Holy Spirit, to His leading him into the truth, and also he needs to recall the events that have shaped his life so that he can identify the feelings that are still motivating him as a leader at the present moment. The things that are important from the past that the leader will need to do are to gain freedom from the power of the dark side and involve extending forgiveness of others and self.

**10 Resist the poison of expectations:** One needs to resist the unrealistic expectations that produce friction and failure that lead to burnout, and must continue to pray for God's grace over one's life and leadership to be liberated from unrealistic expectations.

**11 Practice the progressive knowledge:** It requires measuring oneself with the scripture which is going to bring knowledge (James 1:22-25). The last step is;

**12 Understanding of your identity in Christ:** We need to know who we are in Christ and understand that our values don't reside in our performances or positions, but by being known by God and by being righteous through Christ. One must also not allow that the power to righteousness overpower the spirit of intelligence.

## EVALUATION

Christian leadership of today has failed because we are inclined to do things like the time of Israel when Ezekiel was in the office of the prophet (34:2-5 & 10).

Furthermore, spiritual leaders are using the ministry's positions and peoples' opinions to advance their own needs and desires. The Church, because of this, is in a bad space. The drive of this book is to not follow the ways of

the fallen leader. The Church needs to take responsibility in addressing the issue before irreparable harm is done to the ministry. The challenge is that the Church needs to educate and alert young leaders to the danger of their dark side though counselling and theology since their personality is even more vital in effective ministry. If they fail in this area, all other skills are reduced in value. Dealing openly, directly, and biblically with the dark side is crucial to the future health of the Church and its ministry effectiveness in the world. The main dark side is noted in the beginning of history as recorded in Genesis (1-2): pride and selfishness.

After counselling, a person needs to discover other aspect of his dark side that were undermining his effectiveness as a leader, and then overcome it by exercising a high degree of self-management. This book is a very noble book for Christian leaders and Church organization to read, especially the young ministers within the Seminaries. It convinces and guides the reader about the dark side of his/her life to understand the dark side, to discover it, and then, to overcome it.

This book covers everything that need to be dealt with concerning our personalities. It also protects the leaders from being humiliated by failure in the future, and helps

others to avoid similar defeats. Knowing that Christians are uninformed concerning sexual morals; and the failure of Christian leaders is like a family secret that no one wants to talk about. Another reason for writing this book is a personal struggle with the dark side for the authors who wanted to share their experiences in order to bring light in us so we may be overcomers.



I recommend this book to everybody, young or adult, because it deals with the past, present and the future. Every individual can identify himself within the contents of this book. ■

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## SAVE THE DATE:

**CPSC SUPERVISION  
WORKSHOP!**

**21 FEBRUARY 2025**

**Please save this date!**

The following will be addressed:

- Supervisor Training
- All questions re Supervision

CPSC CPD points will be awarded to attendees.

**THIS WORKSHOP IS FREE AND WILL BE AN ANNUAL EVENT.**

**Details will be shared ASAP.**

## 2025 ACRP Autumn Conference

Dear Affiliate

We trust that you are well. Another year is almost at an end, and we at the Association for Christian Religious Practitioners (ACRP) would like to thank you for the continued support and prayers and good work that you are doing.

**We are excited to let you know that we are once again planning an Autumn Online (Zoom) Conference, presented by the Council for General Ministry Practitioners (CGMP), one of the three councils within ACRP.**

**Date: Thursday 10 April 2025**

**Theme: Faith in Action: The Church's Role in addressing and preventing Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

This Conference will count for 8 CPD points and will be relevant to all registered affiliates of the 3 ACRP Councils, of which CPSC is one.

### Call on presenters

We are excited to provide you with this opportunity to apply to present at the upcoming Conference that will take place on Thursday, the 10th of April 2025.

### The themes

1. Understanding Gender-Based Violence: Educational sessions on the root causes and impacts of GBV.
2. Theological Perspectives: Exploring how religious teachings can promote gender equality and respect.
3. Survivor Support: Best practices for churches in providing resources and safe spaces for survivors.
4. Community Engagement: Strategies for churches to collaborate with local organizations and advocate for policy changes.
5. Youth and Education: Programs aimed at educating younger generations about healthy relationships and consent.
6. Is the church in Africa safe for women?
7. Empowering women in leadership and ministry – beyond Children's ministry.
8. Addressing Patriarchy – a more biblical masculinity.
9. Addressing the root of GBV in Africa.

Please submit your proposal by Thursday, 30 January 2025. You will be informed by the 6th of February 2025 whether your proposal was accepted.

If you have not received any feedback by 7 February 2025, your proposal was unfortunately not successful. Presentations must be 30 minutes long, after which there will be a 10–15-minute Q & A session.

Please note that our affiliates include young and old, the educated and less educated, the experienced and less experienced, students and professors, and everything in-between. Kindly keep your presentation on a level that will be clear to all.

Presenters who are registered affiliates of one of the ACRP councils, will receive double the amount of CGMP CPD points than the attendees for preparing and delivering a presentation *if* also present for the full conference. The Zoom system will keep track of the presenter's attendance, as well as his/her participation in the breakout room.

Presenters need to record their presentations and submit the recording/s.

It is compulsory for all the presenters to have enough data and a strong Internet connection with back-up plans in case of loadshedding or other technological issues!

Presenters do not need to pay any registration fees to take part in the Conference but need to fill out the Presenter Registration Google form to receive the CGMP CPD points.

Last date for proposal submissions: 30 January 2025

**For the full requirements for being accepted as a presenter, contact Andrea at [acrp@acrpafrica.co.za](mailto:acrp@acrpafrica.co.za) or 073 557 4716.**

We will be sending out more details as well as the link to the *Google registration form* by approximately 20 January 2025.

Blessings

Ms Andrea Leipoldt

ACRP Chief of Operations

073 557 4716



## Notes from the CPSC Conference Office

By Maria Jansen, Administrative Officer of CPD Solutions

As 2024 draws to an end, I want to thank all our Affiliates/Non-Affiliates and registered students who registered for the 2024 CPSC Online Spring Conference. The Conference was a huge success, and we realise without you it would not be possible!



A huge thank you and our sincerest appreciation to our wonderful duo: our very competent Master of Ceremonies, Dr Candida Millar, and our CPSC Executive member



and technical fundi, Dr Nadine Dunn, who managed the conference outstandingly.



Please remember that those who missed out to register in time for the 2024 CPSC online Spring Conference, may still register to receive the recordings and questionnaires. All you need to do, is to complete the registration form and make the payment of R260.

On receiving your payment and registration form, the link to the recordings and questionnaire will be send to you. In order for you to still obtain your certificate and CPSC CPD points, you have to complete and submit the questionnaire.

Your 2024 CPSC Spring Conference certificate displaying the ACRPCPSC CPD points achieved will be sent to you after you had successfully completed and submitted the conference questionnaire. Please submit your filled out questionnaire to Maria at [conference@cpsc.org.za](mailto:conference@cpsc.org.za)

CPSC affiliates will have their points automatically recorded on the CPSC CPD register.

A friendly reminder that the recordings and questionnaires for the Spring Conferences of 2022 and 2023 are still available and you can still earn CPSC CPD points by listening to the recordings, filling out the questionnaire and submitting it to the above-mentioned email address.

This is a very affordable way to earn highly applicable Pastoral Counselling focused CPD points. You can obtain the registration forms from Ilse at [admin@cpsc.org.za](mailto:admin@cpsc.org.za), or Maria at [conference@cpsc.org.za](mailto:conference@cpsc.org.za)

Please note the different fees for the 2022, 2023 and 2024 Conferences:

- 2022- Active CPSC Affiliates and registered Student Affiliates: R225; Non-affiliates: R450.
- 2023- Active CPSC Affiliates and registered Student Affiliates: R250; Non-affiliates: R500.
- 2024 – Active CPSC Affiliates and registered Student Affiliates: R250; Non-affiliates: R520.

For your convenience, herewith the **banking details**:

NEDBANK

Account name: CPSC

Account number: 1020501553

Branch code: 136305

Please send your proof of payment to Anita at [finance@cpsc.org.za](mailto:finance@cpsc.org.za)



Christmas brings family and friends together. It helps us to appreciate the love in our lives that we often take for granted. May the true meaning of Christmas fill your hearts and may Jesus bring joy to your home. All my blessings and good wishes to you and your family. May you and your loved ones have a Holy Christmas and a prosperous new year.

Maria Jansen ■

## Notes from the Finance Office

Dear CPSC Affiliate

Thank you for yet another year of constant support, understanding and appreciation I experienced in the Finance Office. I appreciate every email, special message, and kind gesture.

This year my message from the Finance Office is to keep your face turned to the Light in 2025. The word "light" appears in the Bible 535 times. In Genesis God said, "Let there be light" and there was light. Light runs/shines through the Bible like a living, golden thread and we are called to not only walk in the light, but to be the light for others.

If you pass a field of golden yellow, young sunflowers the amazing thing is that they are all facing the sun in the morning and if you pass that same field in the afternoon, their bright yellow heads have adjusted and are still turned to the sun. They swing their heads by growing a little more on the east side of the stem to push the head west during the day and a little more on the west side at night, so the head swings back to the east.



We can take a few tips from sunflowers as they stand tall and find the sun, they all stand together, and each part of the plant is useful.

There is even a proverb stating: "Just like sunflowers, keep your face towards the light and shadows will always fall behind you."



Sunflowers always portray joyfulness and seeing a field of giant yellow flowers can't help but make us smile. They are bright and cheery, and as warm and inviting as the summer sun.

The sunflower however also teaches us a very valuable lesson in abiding by always facing the sun to draw energy to grow. We are called to keep our faces turned to Jesus, Son of God to draw our strength and joy from Him. Hebrews 12:2: "Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end."

The comforting difference between the sunflower's sun and our Light is that for sunflowers there are days full of light and then dark nights, but for us as Christians our faces can always be turned to the Light, as no amount of darkness ever overcomes the Light. John 1:5 "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."



Kindest regards and Christmas Blessings  
Anita ■



Notes from the Admin Office

Dear ACRP CPSC affiliate

I am so thankful that this position at CPSC allows me to get to know so many wonderful individuals! Thank you for welcoming me into your lives and for sharing your joys and your sorrows with me. I am both honoured and humbled by your trust.

I know that 2024 has been a particularly difficult year for many of you. Events that should be joyous celebrations, inevitably become bittersweet to those who have experienced a deep loss.

The reason for the celebration is still there, but it is also a stark reminder that someone is missing. This is true for weddings, birthdays, graduations, etc., but somehow it is more pronounced at Christmas time and the festive holiday season can be a period of deep loneliness and sorrow.

It is easy to forget that the Christmas story itself has its share of darkness and grief! After Jesus was born, King Herod ordered the murder of all the infants and toddlers. For obvious reasons, this dreadful event does not make the cut in most children’s nativity plays, but it is there, and it reminds us that at the very heart of our Christmas celebrations there are bereaved parents, siblings, grandparents, friends, and other family members.

Even in the stories of Jesus’ birth, we are confronted by the brokenness of the world. Perhaps we should not be surprised that Christmas is a confusing mix of joy and deep sadness – it always has been! But therein also lies the point of the Christmas story: God in Christ comes into a world full of sin, selfishness, sorrow, and grief.



For those who face Christmas 2024 with an empty space, or empty spaces, at the table and who feel more broken than joyful, it can be comforting to know that when we strip away the tinsel and fluff, there is a light shining in a dark world, a glimmer of hope for the hopeless and a source of comfort for the bereaved. It is, after all, for our sorrows too that Christ came, and Christmas brings home the promise of a sweet reunion in heaven with Jesus and with our beloved.

Wishing you and yours a blessed, meaningful and peaceful festive season and a new year filled with happiness and joy.



Warmest regards  
Ilse ■



<p><b>CPSC Administrative Office:</b> <i>Ilse Grünwald</i>   Cell: 072 705 1183 (am)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Email for administrative matters: <a href="mailto:admin@cpsc.org.za">admin@cpsc.org.za</a></li><li>Email specifically for matters regarding CPSC CPD points: <a href="mailto:cpd@cpsc.org.za">cpd@cpsc.org.za</a></li></ul> <p><b>CPSC Finance Office:</b> <i>Anita Snyders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Email for all financial matters: <a href="mailto:finance@cpsc.org.za">finance@cpsc.org.za</a></li></ul> <p><b>CPSC Conference Office:</b> <i>Maria Jansen</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Email for ACRP and CPSC Conference registrations, questionnaires, and certificates: <a href="mailto:conference@cpsc.org.za">conference@cpsc.org.za</a></li></ul>	<p><b>BANKING DETAILS</b></p> <p>CPSC (The Council for Pastoral and Spiritual Counsellors)</p> <p>Nedbank</p> <p>Branch: Woodlands</p> <p>Branch code: 136-305</p> <p>Account no: 1020501553</p> <p><i>E-mail proof of payment to the CPSC Finance Office at <a href="mailto:finance@cpsc.org.za">finance@cpsc.org.za</a>.</i></p> <p><i>Please state your initials and last name as reference for any deposit made.</i></p>	<p><b>DISCLAIMER</b></p> <p>While CPSC supports initiatives for equipping pastoral and spiritual counsellors, statements and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views and/or opinions of CPSC.</p> <p>CPSC does not make any warranty regarding the information supplied.</p> <p>CPSC shall in no event be liable for any decision or action taken in reliance on this information.</p>
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