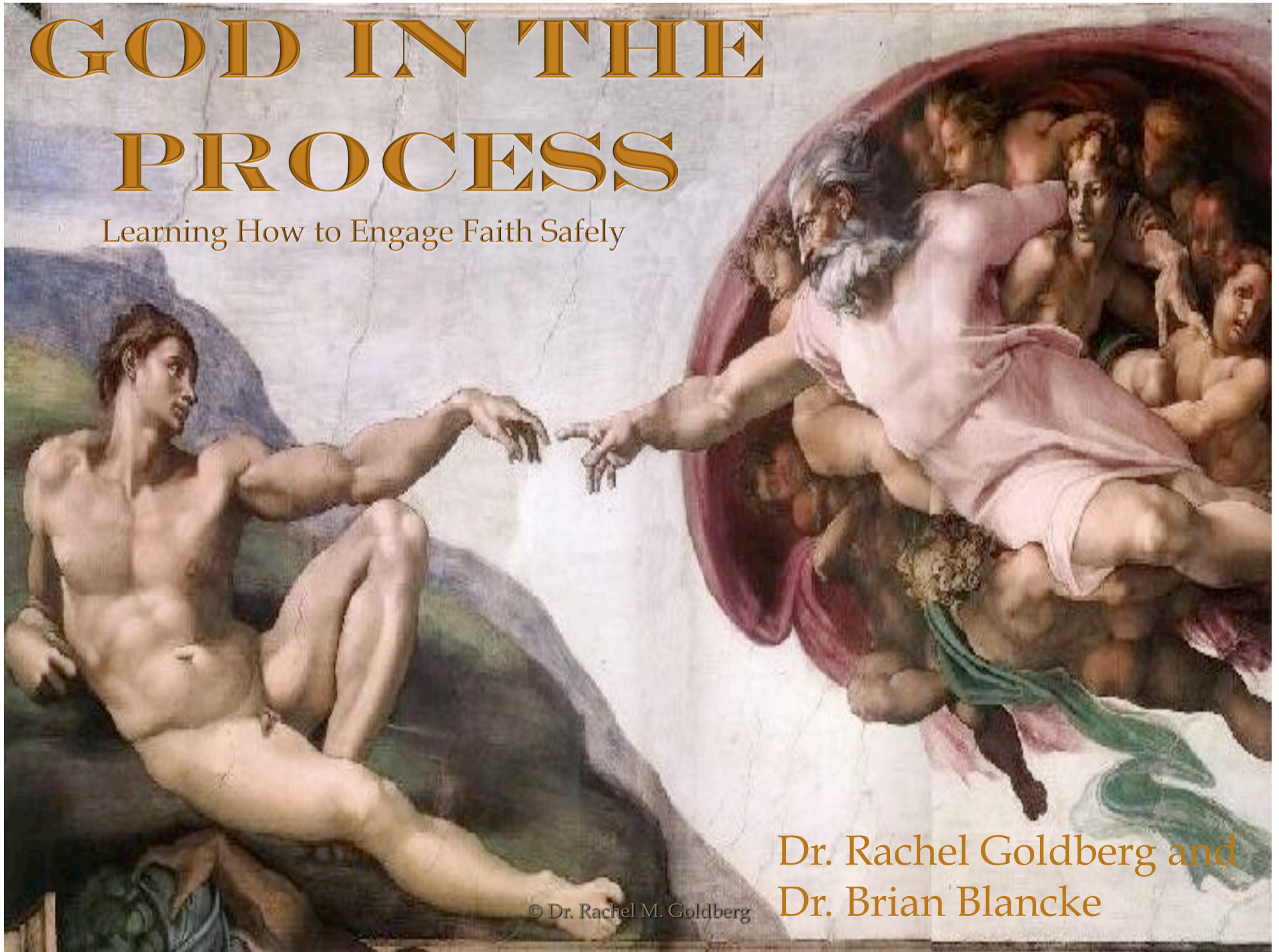


GOD IN THE PROCESS

Learning How to Engage Faith Safely

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Dr. Rachel Goldberg and
Dr. Brian Blancke



Agenda

- ♦ Review of the Debate
 - ♦ Arguments Against
 - ♦ Arguments For
- ♦ What we learned from psychology
- ♦ Multi Dimensional Model
- ♦ What can we do?
 - ♦ Self Reflection
 - ♦ Tools
- ♦ Case Studies - Discussions
- ♦ Final Q and A

Dr. Rachel M. Goldberg

- Mediator for over 25 years
- Professor at DePauw University in Indiana.
- Practice work includes individual, organizational and multi-party interventions; with specializations in intercultural, education, community, environmental, and issues related to spiritual and religious organizations.
- Research includes work on how our values shape our practices/worldview, and religion and conflict resolution.
- Contact me at rachelgoldberg@depauw.edu.

Dr. Brian Blancke

- Mediator for over 20 years
 - Online Lecturer, Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution, Creighton University
 - Content Consultant/Trainer, Vantage Partners, a negotiation & relationship management consulting firm
 - Research interests include: overcoming obstacles to settlement (American Indian land claim disputes), the Third Side Approach to conflict intervention, and religion and conflict resolution.
 - Contact me at bblancke@vantagepartners.com
-

Arguments Against:

- Self determination of parties
 - Legitimacy of field
 - Values aren't negotiable
 - Religion is a source of hate and intolerance
-

Our Arguments: Self-Determination

- The principle of self-determination is, in the words of Beer and Stief, that, "people can and should make decisions about their own lives. The parties speak for themselves, think for themselves, decide for themselves. The hard work is theirs. So is the outcome" (Beer and Stief, 1997, p. 9).
-

Neutrality

- One way we protect parties' self determination: neutrality.
- Another reason we have fought to keep values like religion out of processes is to help legitimize the field as it developed.
- So we claim legitimacy in our role as intervener through neutrality



Values ? Religion?

- Finally, there have been arguments that values are not negotiable, so we shouldn't even work on cases that involve values conflict (Moore, 1986; Forrester, 1999).
- Religion is often used for war and to foster intolerance of others.
- If we allow faith into our processes, they can be used to manipulate people.



Arguments For: Overview

- All processes are value-laden
- Mediators should be advocates
- Claims to neutrality hide oppression and reinforce power imbalances
- Religion has always been a part of conflict resolution - just not the profession
- Many important conflicts are value conflicts, and often religious conflicts
- Religion is a source of transformation and moral authority for peace
- Faith and values are how many parties make decisions and important to them

All Processes Are Value Laden

- Arguments – can't be culturally neutral
- All process shaped by the **cultures and value systems** they originate in (Avruch, 1998 and Lederach, 1995)
- Should we have **more values**?
- Should we advocate for **social justice**? the needs of the **larger society**? (Susskind, 1981 and Laue and Cormick, 1978)

Risks of False Neutrality

- In fact, Laue and Cormick said that “claims to neutrality on the part of the intervener... almost always work to the advantage of the party in power” (Laue and Cormick, 1978, p. 221).
- Goldberg’s (2008) - our values-of-practice do lead to different approaches to the use of power in practice and
- Rack (2000) showed that worldview bias happens – reinforces disparity between parties (Laue and Cormick were right)

Religion is Already Here

- Religion - always been part of conflict resolution processes
- Religious leaders solve conflicts in their communities and amongst their 'flocks'.
- Peace churches - MCC, AVP
- Many major conflicts now involve values conflict or religious conflict as key components.

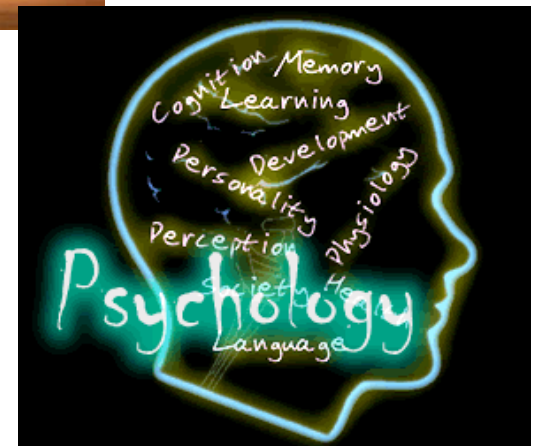


Conclusions

- Neutrality doesn't protect the self-determination of parties
- Parties and mediators make decisions based on their values
- Religion engages people at the metaphoric and narrative level - very powerful location for transformation (for good or ill)

So...If this has some value...?

- We decided to look at what Law and Psychology – framing disciplines - were doing?
- Wanted to look at:
- Can we safely put religion into processes while protecting self-determination and why do it?



Self-Awareness - Boundaries

- Key learning from psych:
- Concern:
 - That therapists will impose their own religious views ([countertransference](#))
 - Issue of [over-identification](#) (pushing client to be like you)
 - [Avoidance](#) (shutting client down because they are not like you)

Solution?

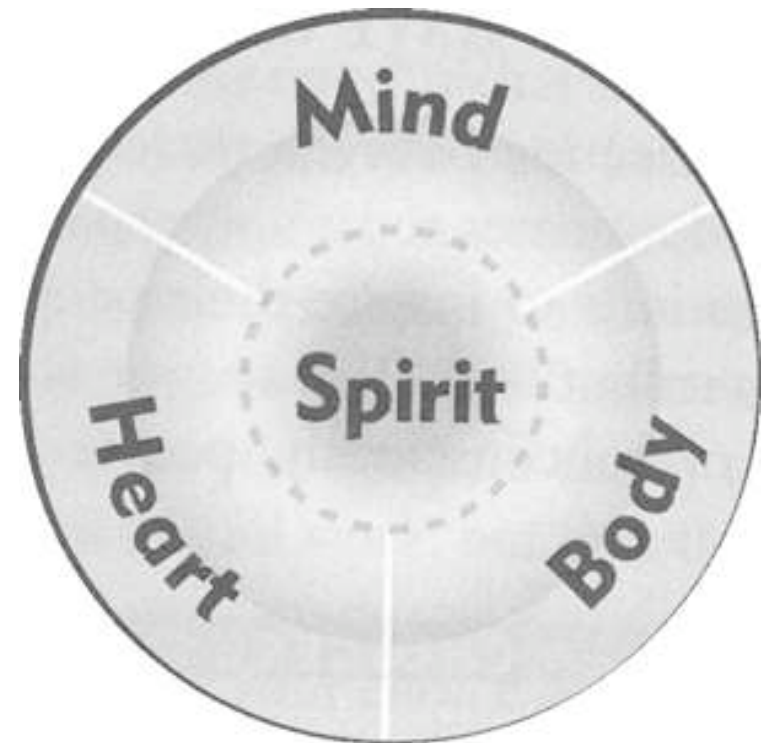
- ▣ Work on self awareness
- ▣ Work on healthy boundaries
- ▣ Many tools that we can learn from

Proposal

- We have proposed a new model: tentatively called ‘Wisdom Conflict Resolution’
- Premises - in order to protect the self-determination of parties we need to:
- Be self aware about our values and talk about them and help the parties reflect on and talk about theirs
- Learn how to develop and maintain good boundaries
- Develop processes that are whole and grounded in the whole reality of the parties involved, including ourselves

Wisdom Conflict Resolution

- How can we incorporate our whole selves into the process and make the process responsive to the whole needs of parties?
- Drawing on Lederach and Davidheiser and engaging
- Mind, Body, Heart, Spirit



Universal Stages of Conflict

- Enter Cooperatively
- Gather Perspectives
- Locate Conflict
- Arrange – Negotiate
- A Way Out - Agreement



Transforming Conflict

“The efficacy of much third party peacemaking or mediation is linked to the creation of a special social space in which the conventions and scripts of everyday life are loosened, enabling person and social transformation.”

-Davidheiser



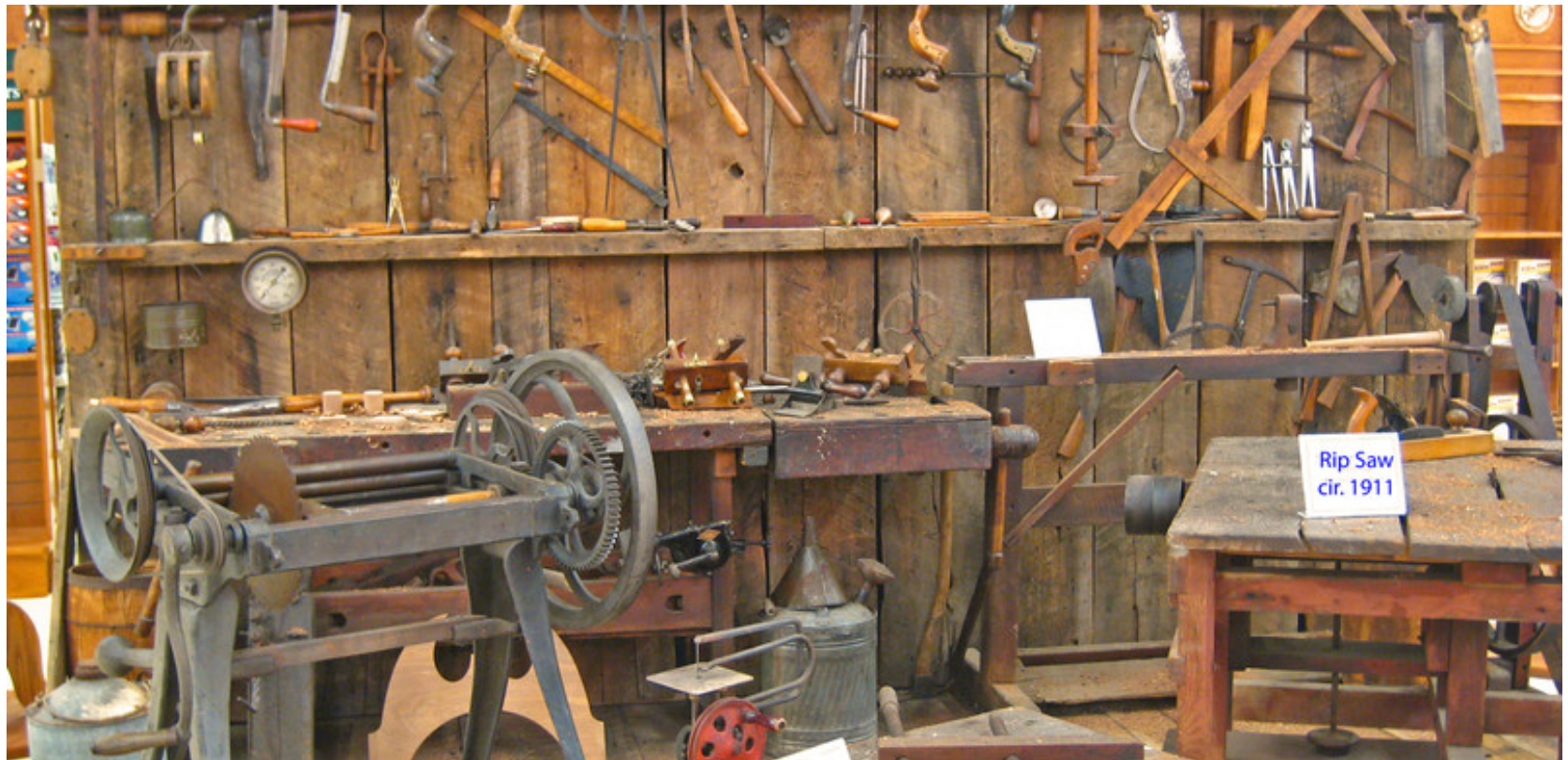
Stages of Transformation

- **Separation** – movement from regular life to the sacred
- **Transition** – entry into a liminal space where transformation can occur
- **Incorporation** – Where the change is reintegrated into normal life and participants are returned to day to day life

-Davidheiser

Conflict Stage: Separation/ Enter Cooperatively	Community Mediation	Ho' oponopono
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪(Neutral third party, unknown to both parties) sets expectations and ground rules (speak one at a time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪(Kahuna or family elder) asks parties to speak honestly and clearly in order to set right what was wrong ▪Set intensions, as they shape the world around you
Somatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Table arrangement (sit side by side or across) ▪Greet, shake hands 	
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Get focused, eliminate distractions ▪Be positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Self Reflective
Spiritual		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Who you are shapes the shift ▪Opening Prayer ▪Connect with the Source

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Tools

Ethics

- Ethics

- Preliminary Practice Guidelines for Working with Religious and Spiritual Issues (h)

Self Awareness

- Self-Awareness Tools
 - Spiritual Autobiography (h)
 - Assessments - PSI
 - Evaluative Framework for the Clinician to Guide the Spiritual Assessment (h)
 - Note: We know we already some of this

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We Already Do Some of This

- We have a lot of processes we already do that do this – dialogue, open-ended questions, unloaded language, good listening, etc.
- A lot of mediation training works at mediator self-awareness around culture and race, for instance.
- We are arguing that it would be important to expand that to include faith and spirituality.

McGloghlin Jr. High

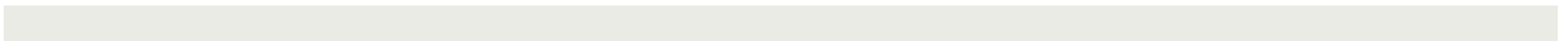
- ▣ What's your gut response?
- ▣ Potential triggers

Church Case Study

- We will think about the following tools @ this case



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Assessment

- Client Spirituality Assessment
 - Example (Long) Comprehensive Framework for Spiritual Assessment(h)
 - Example (Short) Questions in the Initial Spiritual Assessment (h)
 - Questions for the Implicit Spiritual Assessment (h)
 - Instruments for Assessing Spirituality in Psychotherapy (h)
 - Spiritual Strengths and Problems as a Function of Level of Analysis (h)
 - Transparency and Intake Form and
 - Example of language (h)

Transparency

- One way to protect clients
- Being open and explicit with clients about our values and beliefs when appropriate
- But at the same time strongly affirming their clients' right to disagree with them
- Transformative Mediation



Sample intake form (I)

- For example, in a sample intake form, the therapist may write:
- I specialize in [type of cases]...My therapy work is characterized by holism and focuses on the ways people make meaning of their life circumstances. Holism means that I assess health and wellness in mental, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual facets of experience. People seem to benefit from therapy the most when thinking, feeling, behavior, and action are all included in the work (Leach, Aten, et al., 2009, p. 81).

Intake Q

- Another way is through your intake questions
- Find out: Are spiritual or religious issues important to this client and the case?
- Ex: "Has your spirituality or religion been involved in the way you dealt with your problem? If so, in what way?" (Pargament and Krumrei, 2009, p. 100).

Tools

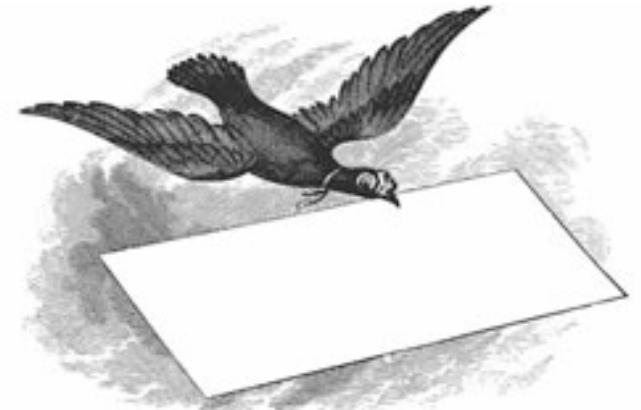
- Tools for Engagement and Resolution
 - Responding to Rigidly Religious Clients (h)
 - Encourage spiritual critical thinking Par, p 301
- Examine sacred literature in its context
- Ano recommends that people study the scriptures themselves
- Talk to respected religious and spiritual leaders for their feedback on major questions

Addressing False Gods

- Par p 279-80
- He sees addictions or other compulsive behaviors as false gods, but I think his responses to these can help other kinds of obsessions – like being attached to a conflict as part of your identity, even when it is harming you
 - Ex 12 step programs
- 4 steps
 - Naming false gods
 - Identifying spiritual yearnings
 - Letting go of false gods
 - Practicing the perception of the sacred

More Tools for Engagement

- Examples of Spiritual Interventions and Techniques (h)
- Visioning (h)
- Spiritual Amnesia
 - Pargament has a useful concept: amnesia
 - Working with a minister who forgot to draw on his spiritual resources. Common – in crisis people forget. One thing we can do is remind them about the resources to draw on that they already have. P. 24

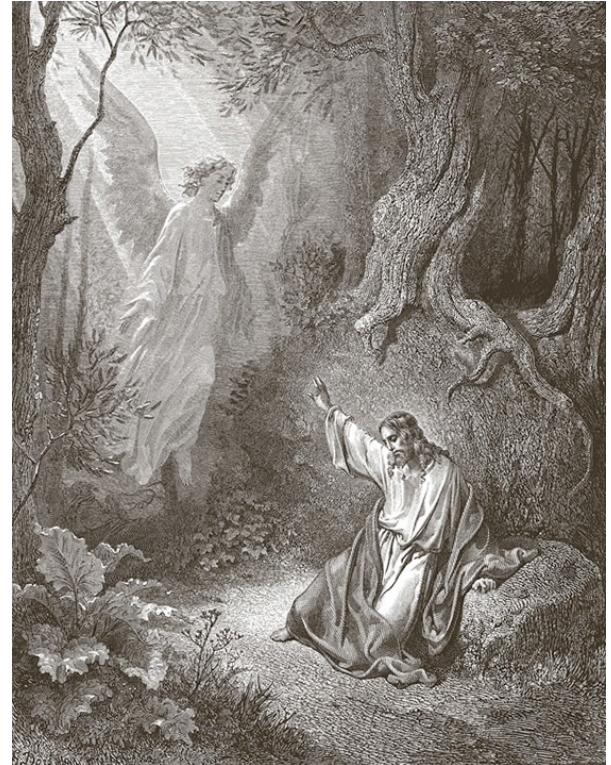


How To Remind Them?

- How to remind them?
 - Par pp 246
 - Need to take a step back and see life from broader perspective
 - Two Obituaries
 - If they continue to live life as they are currently living it
 - If they live life as they would ideally like to do so
 - Another tool – imagine meeting their “future, fully mature selves at the age of 120, the biblical age of wisdom and accomplishment.” Pp. 127

Stories/Models

- Stories from major religions – full of models for change: Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammed, or modern day examples like: Pope John Paul, Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, , etc.



Text Example

- Encourage people to work with their own religious texts, with greater reflection and depth. Ex. P 250
- Christian parents of a 17 year old who had lost interest in school and was dating an undesirable young man, parents furious and considering making a complete emotional break with child
- Therapists gave parents homework – to think about New Testament passage: “While we were yet *sinner*s [italics added], Christ died for us.”
- “It was this scriptural representation of God’s love for humans, while they were in their most unattractive state that, according to the parents, helped them to continue to love and accept their daughter through her difficult adolescence.” P 250

Rituals

- Develop rituals based in the traditions of those you are working with, Par. P. 264
- “In spite of their diversity, effective rituals have several points in common.
- First they are simple....they capture and express basic truths of life simply through image and symbol, action and word.
- Second they are honest. They encourage people to face both the realities of pain and loss and the hopes and dreams they continue to hold for their futures.

More

- And finally, they are sacred. They speak to a timeless, ultimate dimension of existence, and touch people at their deepest levels of emotion and meaning.
- Why? “Stripped of ritual, even the most powerful negative events go relatively unrecognized, and people are left with unresolved grief. Disconnected from rituals, people cannot participate in purposeful acts of transformation that propel them over sacred thresholds from one place in life to another. Instead, they become stuck in particular emotions (e.g., anger, shame, sadness), or particular life conditions (e.g., widowhood, unemployment).” Pp. 261

Caution

- Note: Handle with care. Par pp 244. These aren't cookie cutter events, or technical skills. They are events designed to connect to the sacred in people's lives and must be treated with respect and sensitivity.



Other

- Other
 - Breadth of Practice
 - Table of Contents from *Spiritually Oriented Psychotherapy* (h)
 - Comparative Analysis of 10 Spiritually Oriented Psychotherapy Approaches (h)

Q & A



Any questions?

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