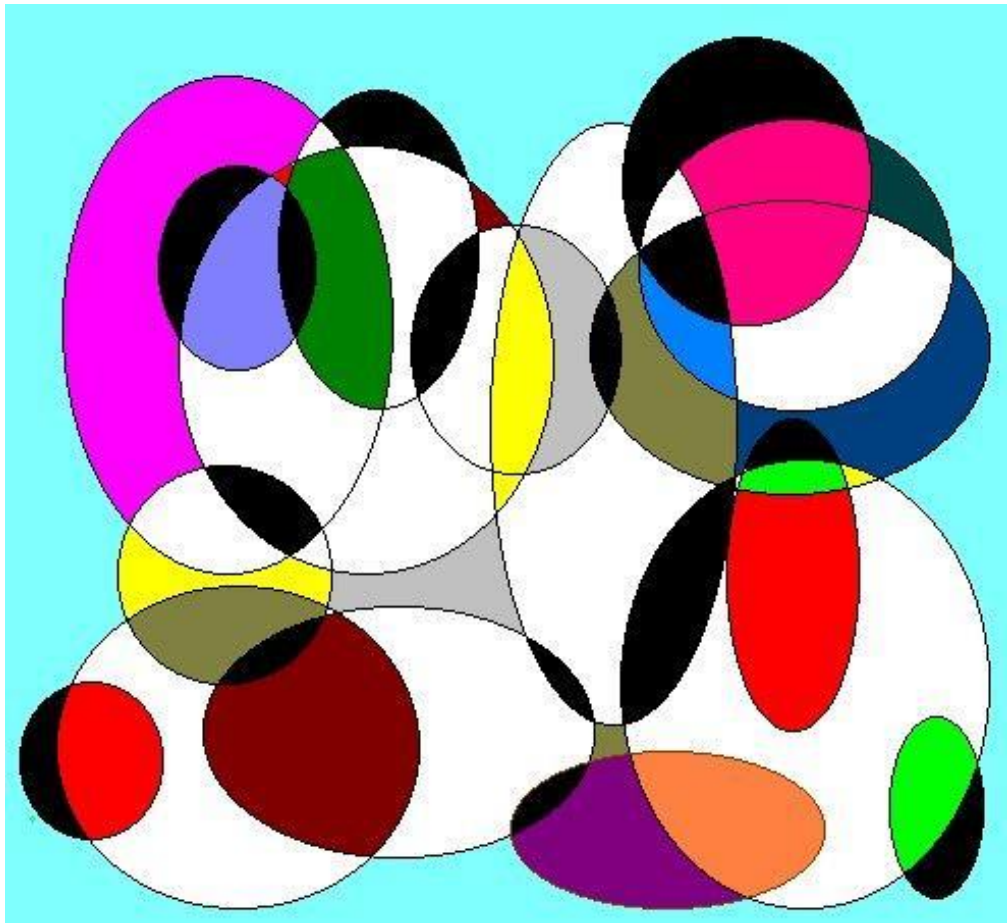


Psychological and Sociological Resources for Transformation



by Donald Stoesz

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Introduction

Setting the Stage

I discovered the difference that psychology and sociology make when I worked as a chaplain in the prison system. While I was conducting worship services, conducting Bible studies, and providing pastoral care to inmates,¹ psychologists were meeting with offenders to help them understand the reasons why they committed their crimes. Parole officers were meeting with inmates to ascertain whether they were eligible for parole. Correctional officers were managing these inmates in the housing units.

I realised that if I was going to be an effective chaplain, I would have to learn more about criminal behaviour, prison dynamics, and the way in which the Correctional Service regarded its mission and conducted its business. I was helped along this journey of discovery by a mentor during graduate studies at McGill University, Professor Gregory Baum.

Gregory Baum was a noted Catholic priest and theologian who came to Canada in 1940 as a young man. He was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church in 1946 and joined the Augustinian Order in 1947.² He taught for many years at Saint Michael's College in Toronto, before transferring to McGill University in 1988. He was an advisor to the pope and cardinals during the 1960s Vatican II Council. He contributed substantially to the document on the church and antisemitism.³ He believed in a new ecclesiology that was more open to democratic reforms.⁴

Gregory became increasingly disillusioned with what he regarded as the lack of reforms within the Catholic Church. As a result, he went in 1975 to study under sociologist Peter Berger in New York.⁵ As he explains in his book, *Religion and*

¹ For an example of what prison chaplaincy entails, see Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2010), Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2020).

² Gregory Baum, *The Oil has not Yet Run Dry* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017), xi.

³ For an overview of Gregory Baum's involvement, see Michael Higgins, *The Journalist as Theologian: A Tribute to Gregory Baum*, *Commonweal*, December 2, 2011, 12-18.

⁴ Gregory Baum, *The New Ecclesiology*, *Commonweal*, 31 October 1969, 123-128.

⁵ For works by Peter Berger, see for example *The Sacred Canopy* (Anchor Books, 1990).

Alienation, he wanted to have a better understanding of the psychological and sociological dynamics of the church.⁶

Gregory found answers to his questions by studying such eminent psychologists and sociologists as Sigmund Freud, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Ferdinand Toennies, and Alexis Tocqueville.

Sigmund Freud had used the oedipal complex as a grand narrative to explain dysfunctionalities within individual human behaviour.⁷ Emile Durkheim had discovered a collective unconscious that influenced the way in which society operated.⁸ Max Weber had shown how charismatic authority was able to transform traditional authority into rational authority.⁹

Baum realised that the Catholic Church operated like a large unwieldy hierarchy, that charismatic influence was only so effective, and that psychological fear of change was what induced the laity to cling to old worship practices that had been instilled in them since time immemorial.¹⁰

Baum used concepts such as subsidiarity¹¹ and symbolic idealism¹² to show how the church could change. He acknowledged that the weight of the hierarchy combined with the vivid memory of traditional authority played a large part in the failure of Vatican II reforms.

I realised during my sojourn with Gregory Baum that the same psychological and sociological concepts could be applied to the Correctional Service. The Correctional Service also represented a large hierarchy. It functioned a little bit like a military operation, with a top down chain of command.

Similar to the Vatican II Council in the 1960s, the Correctional Service adopted a new Mission Statement in the 1980s. The Catholic Church was committed to a “People of God” theology while the Correctional Service regarded inmates as

⁶ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 2nd edition (New York: Novalis, 2006), 15-18.

⁷ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 110-113.

⁸ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 115-119.

⁹ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 115-119, 143-167.

¹⁰ Gregory Baum, *Compassion and Solidarity*, (House of Anansi Press, 1992); Neo-Conservative Critics of the Church, *Neo-Conservatism: Social and Religious Phenomenon*, edited by Gregory Baum (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1981), 43-50.

¹¹ *Subsidiarity (Catholicism)*, Wikipedia, [Subsidiarity \(Catholicism\) - Wikipedia](#), *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, second edition, (Italy: Libreria Editrice Vaticana), 1990), 1883.

¹² Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 115-119.

subjects in their own right.¹³ CSC's mission was "to help offenders become law-abiding citizens while exercising safe, secure, and humane control."¹⁴

During my thirty-five years as a prison chaplain, I had ample opportunity to apply the theories that Gregory Baum had introduced within the context of a prison. Max Weber's theories of traditional, charismatic, and rational authority,¹⁵ along with Sigmund Freud's theory of the self as comprising three parts, id, ego, and superego,¹⁶ could be applied to the lives of the young adults that I worked with. Freud's oedipal complex was alive and well in relation to various sex offenders that I counselled.

Emile Durkheim's collective unconscious helped to explain the Correctional Service's prioritization of authority, loyalty, and sanctity over that of equality, empathy, and respect. Correctional officers worked according to a chain of command and within an atmosphere of staff loyalty that gave clear direction to inmates, bent on undermining order when given the chance in order to continue their illicit activities.

The collective unconscious also helped me to understand offenders' pervasive delusion that crime paid. The harsh reality of prison itself produced dark false ideas on the part of its residents that selling drugs was simply a business, that they had acted in self-defence during an assault, that gangs were necessary to keep the ideal of living above the law alive, and that next time, they would not get caught.

It is within this collective backdrop that I used various psychological and sociological theories to aid offenders in becoming law abiding citizens. I showed young adults that Max Weber's theory of traditional, charismatic, and rational authority applied to them. I demonstrated how Sigmund Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego helped to explain the irrationality of their high speed car chases,

¹³ Pierre Allard makes this comparison in his D. Min thesis, *The Statement of the Correctional Service of Canada Values and a Biblical Perspective for the Role of Chaplain*, Doctor of Ministry Dissertation (Illinois: North Baptist Theological Seminary, 1986), 20. Cf. Richard McBrien, *The Church: The Evolution of Catholicism* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008).

¹⁴ Pierre Allard, *The Statement of the Correctional Service*, 18. Cf. the slightly stronger wording in the third edition of Correctional Service Canada, *Mission of Correctional Service* (Ottawa: Correctional Service, 1991), 5. This statement adds "encouraging and assisting" to the original CSC *Values* wording of "helping" and places this "assistance and encouragement to become law-abiding citizens" before its exercise of "reasonable, safe, secure, and humane control." "The Correctional Service of Canada, as part of the criminal justice system, contributes to the protection of society by actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens while exercising reasonable, safe, secure, and humane control."

¹⁵ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, Volume 1, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 226-299.

¹⁶ Wikipedia, *Id, Ego, and Superego*, [Id, ego and super-ego - Wikipedia](#).

their inability to deal with their parents' inconsistent care, and their current difficulties in asserting their ego against the constant pressures of their peer group.¹⁷

I showed various sex offenders that Sigmund Freud's oedipal complex was alive and well in regard to their offending behaviour. Unable to overthrow the dominating influence of their spouses, the offenders had resorted to infantile behaviours in order to get out of the situation.¹⁸

I realised that the only way that I could counter the depressing reality of prison along with the prevalent view among offenders that crime paid was to offer compelling social and collective alternatives. A volunteer driven Alternatives to Violence program responded directly to the predominant inmate view that violence was necessary in order to solve problems. Inmates could be liberated from the strict coercive enforcement within and without gangs by becoming pro-social members of an alternative prison community. They could become co-facilitators with community volunteers in the AVP program and show fellow inmates how dynamic communicative action through transforming power was able to diffuse so many potentially violent situations.¹⁹

The Christopher Leadership course offered similar pro-active solutions. Volunteers came into the prison to show inmates how to become relaxed in group settings, how to talk in public, and how to share personal stories with others. Volunteers shared their spiritual journeys of giftedness, uniqueness, caring, courage, and leadership in order to emulate those principles for others.

The two groups' symbolic ideation countered inmates' anti-social values at a basic collective level. Community solidarity was achieved as inmates gave up their con codes in order to trust others in the group, to share personally about their lives, and to identify with the transforming power of AVP and the leadership skills of Christopher Leadership.

These two volunteer groups served as complimentary resources to the new focus of Canadian prisons on dynamic security and programming.²⁰ While static security in the form of fences, guns, and locked doors represented the primary role of prison security in the past, the correctional service in the 1980s saw staff's dynamic

¹⁷ I deal with some of these issues in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 115-124

¹⁸ Note the discussion in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 125-132.

¹⁹ Note the discussion in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 133-140.

²⁰ Note the discussion in Donald Stoesz with Joan Palardy, *Transformative Moments in Chaplaincy* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2024), 39-40.

interaction with inmates as key to keeping the prison safe and in motivating offenders to change.

Correctional Service management stated the priority in this way:²¹

We want to make full use of all talents in our people. It is for this reason that we want to delegate authority as close as possible to the point of impact of the decision made . . . trust and motivation are key issues.

Staff's interactive interventions with inmates was supplemented by a new emphasis on programming.²² While work was considered in the 1960s as the most important skill that inmates could learn, the correctional service decided in the 1980s that offenders needed to take programming regarding their offences. Addictions counselling, violence prevention, pro-social associations, and sex offender therapies were mandated in order for inmates to understand the reasons for their offences as well as to internalize pro-active and pro-social solutions to their problems.

Other sociological theories were useful in understanding what was needed for change. Max Weber's theories about mysticism and asceticism spoke directly to the various meditative and physical exercises that took place in prison.²³ Whether that had to do with the Correctional Service's emphasis on work during the day, the inmates' preference for "working out" in the gym in the evening, or various self-help groups and contemplative programs, all of these activities could be analysed in relation to whether they were this-worldly or other-worldly affirming.

I became convinced of the importance of this book when I was able to extrapolate the psychological and sociological insights that I used in prison and apply them to a broader context. Authors John James and Russell Freedman have used the idea of "Short Term Energy Relieving Behaviours" to explain how grieving people respond to the death of their loved ones.²⁴ Harville Hendrix has used the theory of the unconscious to help couples move from power struggles to true love.²⁵ Bruno Bettelheim has used fairy tales to help dysfunctional children overcome their oedipal complexes.²⁶ Various movies such as *Into the Woods* and *American Beauty* have used

²¹ Ole Ingstrup, *Task Force of the Mission and Organizational Development of CSC: 300 Senior Managers' Views of CSC – 1984 No. 11* (Ottawa: Correctional Service Canada, 1985), 31, quoted in Allard, *The Statement of the Correctional Service*, 23.

²² Donald Stoesz with Joan Palardy, *Transformative Moments in Chaplaincy*, 42-43.

²³ Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 149-154.

²⁴ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook* (New York; William Morrow, 2009).

²⁵ Harville Hendrix has detailed the dynamics of this situation in *Getting the Love You Want* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2008).

²⁶ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975).

these same psychological theories to show how some rapprochement after the failure of modern ideals is possible,

These contemporary re-evaluations of historically important theories -- id, ego, and superego, collective unconscious, oedipal complex, and post-modernity -- convinced me that I, too, could go on a flight of fancy with regard to desires, compulsion, mutual love, and wish fulfillment. I based my creative reflection on a book by William Leach, *Land of Desire*,²⁷ that dealt with the lure of department stores. I suggested that the now defunct Eaton's Department Stores embodied a Durkheimian collective unconscious in the way it displayed its wares over eight floors. I follow these displays in the chapter to show how they encourage individuals to desire romance, seek love, become committed, marry, have children, and establish a home.

This reflection speaks directly to the modern ideal of romance that has been upended in two movies, *Into the Woods*²⁸ and *American Beauty*.²⁹ I am assuming that a more detailed look at what once was a modern ideal helps to reinforce the denouement that is necessary when modernity in various forms has been upended and replaced by something else.

I also extrapolated what I had learned about sociology to analyse how inmates could take on a new identity in prison by taking such courses as Alternatives to Violence, Christopher Leadership, and Celebrate Recovery. Being grounded in this worldly activities through directed retreats helped to strengthen the self-identity that was being claimed.

In summary, the book shows how various psychological and sociological insights were useful in my work in prison, as well as how these theories could be extrapolated to apply to such diverse topics as grief recovery, marriage relationships, and modern ideals to form and shape a new identity.

²⁷ William Leach, *Land of Desire* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

²⁸ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1987); *Into the Woods*, DVD (Walt Disney Studios, 2015).

²⁹ *American Beauty*, DVD, director Sam Mendes (Warner Brothers, 2013).

Section A

Psychological Theories

and Their Applications

Chapter Two

Discovery of the Unconscious

Where it All Started

A surprise awaited me in 1998 when I as a chaplain transferred to Bowden Institution in central Alberta. There were about two hundred young offenders, ages 18 to 25, residing at this lower-medium security federal prison. This number represented about 30 per cent of the inmate population of seven hundred offenders.

The reason that this number surprised me was because I had encountered few younger inmates in the last three prisons where I had worked. These three prisons were higher-security facilities that housed inmates between the ages of thirty and sixty. Many of these residents had been involved in criminal activities for many years. They did not take kindly to younger inmates who tended to talk too much. These more seasoned offenders wanted a quiet prison where people did not rock the boat. Younger inmates tended to act out rather quickly when confronted or put into a compromising situation.

The first reason, then, why there were so many younger inmates at Bowden was because the Correctional Service wanted to keep these men safe. The Correctional Service reasoned that putting these younger inmates together in a lower-security institution would cause less problems and give them a greater sense of belonging with their peer group. An open population and more pro-social atmosphere would give these men a chance to change before they became entrenched in their ways.

The trouble with this philosophy was that these younger offenders were also disruptive in Bowden. Their love of drama, willingness to talk too much, immaturity, insecurity, tendency to congregate in groups, and lack of significant social supports

in the community made them a higher risk for violent behaviour than the other five hundred inmates.

Many of these younger inmates had spent their adolescent years in Young Offender Centres in the big cities. They were generally dependent on their peer groups, were deeply distrustful of authority, and had committed serious violent offences, often in association with gangs.

These young people were unpredictable because of their immaturity, insecurity, and impulsivity. They could, on the one hand, be easily provoked. They could, on the other hand, be easily influenced by older inmates to become involved in subculture activities in the prison. The authorities did not know what to do with these younger offenders. Several of them had been kicked out of every public school that they had attended. They respected no one but themselves and their peer group. They also did not know how to work for a living.

One Saturday during the first autumn I was there, several of these inmates caused a disruption during an inmate social where family and friends could socialize with their loved ones.³⁰ These young offenders were charged with various offences and placed in dissociation (now called the Structured Intervention Unit).

I realised that these inmates had acted out because they had no one who wanted to visit them. They had burned most of the bridges that had been built for them over the years. They acted out during the social because of their desperate need for attention.

As a result of this incident, I started a Young Adult Group to reach out to these men. I realised that the sociological and psychological insights I had gained from my mentor, Dr. Gregory Baum,³¹ during graduate work at McGill University, could be applied to these young men's situation. I facilitated seven sessions in which a group of eight men could participate, share, and graduate upon completion of the course. The sociological and psychological categories that I used to help these men mature are outlined in the rest of the chapter.

³⁰ More details of this incident are recounted in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2020), 115-124.

³¹ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, second edition (Ottawa: Novalis, 2006).

Max Weber's Traditional, Charismatic, and Rational Authority³²

I suggested to the men that their lives could be divided into three historical phases, ages 1-12, 13-18, and 18-25. Parents or grandparents had raised them for the first twelve years of their lives. They looked up to their older brothers or peer group during their adolescence. After they turned 18 years of age, they had to take responsibility for becoming mature adults. These men had been convicted as adults of some serious criminal offences.

The men told me that when they were five years old, their mothers had taken them to prison to visit their fathers.³³ For the most part, their fathers were alcoholics who had gotten into brawls at the bar. They had been convicted of various assaults. The inmates' mothers had raised them while their fathers were in jail. The inmates told me that they hated their fathers for who they were.

The young men were drawn into a negative peer group as a result of inconsistent parental care. Their older brothers got them involved in committing "break and enters" and helping with other robberies. These young men sold drugs to their fellow classmates at school. These young men wanted to be bad like their fathers had been.

Ending up in prison as adults made these young men take another look at the life they had led. They realised that they had turned out just like their fathers. That represented a sobering reality. The men had to relook at the traditional authority with which they had grown up and the charismatic authority under whose influence they had become trapped. These men could only become mature adults if they internalized authority for themselves. They had to let go of the negative external authority they had experienced as children and the negative peer pressure that had influenced them to commit serious crimes.

These young men were willing to take my course because they were now under a harsher external authority than they ever had been before. They were told when to get up, where to go to work, when to eat, and when to go to bed. The freedom that they craved when they were young had turned into a nightmare. The fact that they had basically done whatever they felt like for the last eighteen years meant that an external authority called prison became necessary as a replacement for their unwillingness and inability to discipline themselves (internal authority).

³² Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, Volume 1, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 226-299.

³³ This story is told in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2010), 48.

Sigmund Freud's Superego, Ego, and Id

I suggested to the men that Sigmund Freud's categories of superego, ego, and id³⁴ helped to explain the lack of control in their lives. They had received such inconsistent care when they were young, ranging from violent beatings to neglect, that these men acted out impulsively at the slightest provocation. The negative influence of their parents, known as a superego, caused these men to swing the pendulum over to the unconscious emotional side known as an "id."

The men participated in as many acting out behaviours as they could to make up for the lack of (self) discipline that they had learned as young people. They went on high speed car chases with the police, participated in drive-by shootings of rival drug dealers and gangs, and had had numerous near-death experiences.³⁵ These adrenaline rushes compensated for the thoroughly chaotic lives and lack of morals that they had embraced up to now.

I suggested that Weber's emphasis on rational authority represented a way of balancing traditional and charismatic authority. One did not have to be controlled by the bad influence of one's parents or the hold that gangs had over them.

Freud's emphasis on the ego represented a way of stabilizing the superego and id. One did not have to use the excuse of a dominating or neglectful superego to do whatever one felt like. The ego could channel the unconscious need for fulfillment in countless ways while holding the power of the superego in check.

Sigmund Freud's Oedipal Complex

Sigmund Freud's use of the oedipal complex provided further insight into the life situations in which these young offenders found themselves. The Oedipal complex is explained in the form of a Greek myth. Abandoned at birth, a son unknowingly falls in love with his mother and kills his father when he grows up.³⁶ This myth points to the fact that young children identify emotionally with their primary care givers. The love that a mother shows to her child is reciprocated by the son's response of affection to the motherly nurturing that he received.

The son unconsciously realises that his mother's husband represents an emotional threat to his affections. The father and son compete for their wife's/mother's love.

³⁴ Wikipedia, *Id, Ego, and Superego*, [Id, ego and super-ego - Wikipedia](#)

³⁵ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 78.

³⁶ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 110-113.

The Greek myth ends with the son killing his own father in order to gain his mother's primary affections.

The fact that the inmates' mothers raised them in the absence of their fathers meant that the mothers regarded their own sons as their primary emotional support. The mothers began to regard their sons as the substitute husbands that they did not have. They leaned on their sons for emotional support because there was no-one else who represented such a close social and emotional bond.

The mother's codependent, parent/child relationship with her adult son proved disastrous for both parties. Every time the mother began to date a new boy friend, the mother's teenage son would intervene by beating up her new date. The same thing would happen when the son would start dating a woman his own age. The mother would intervene by asserting her dominant emotional control. The son would end the relationship with his girl friend because he did not want to lose the only significant emotional bond that he had ever had.

I suggested to the men that they had to work as hard at emotionally distancing themselves from their mothers as they did with their dysfunctional fathers and unhealthy peer group. Traditional authority was as destructive when displayed in an unhealthy emotional way by their mothers as it was in a physical violent way by their fathers. The id's emotional attachment to the mother superego was as destructive as the acting out behaviours that the inmates displayed to distance themselves from the external authority of their fathers.

Insecurities and Conflicted Personalities

Two personality types emerged in the wake of the upbringing described above.³⁷ There was, on the one hand, the insecure person who did not know how to assert his own needs and desires. He had been controlled by his mother or peer group for so long that he felt lost without them. This inmate had a weak ego that found it difficult to assert its own internal and rational authority.

The other type of personality that emerged was one that was deeply conflicted. Lured in by the gang's promises of riches and pleasures, the young man boasted to his criminal friends about the car that he was driving and the money that he is earning (illegally). When in the presence of his parents or girlfriend, however, the man hid

³⁷ Note the discussion in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 91-93.

the fact that he was involved in criminal activity. He spoke about the legitimate job and “pro-social” friends that he had.

This double lifestyle fell apart when the young man was convicted of his offences. His girl friend left him because there was no future for her in this scenario. His parents were grief stricken because they thought they were raising their children in the right manner.³⁸

The young man, now in jail, had to make some difficult choices. He had a high status as a “drug dealer” or “robber” in jail. His criminal friends looked up to him for what he had been able to accomplish. The young man felt a sense of belonging and acceptance by this group. He was tempted to continue this lifestyle simply because it is the easiest route to go.

The fact that his parents were ashamed of him and that his girlfriend left him made the young man reconsider the advantages of a pro-social lifestyle. While being bombarded on every side in jail to continue his criminal lifestyle, the young man had an opportunity to change his ways. He had to weigh the relative advantages of traditional authority, represented by his parents, and charismatic authority, represented by his peer group. The young man became an adult when he made a mature decision about what was best for his life.³⁹

Theory Application to other Populations

After facilitating the Young Adult Group for five years, featuring one hundred graduates in twelve groups of eight offenders each, I realised that the theories that I had used could be expanded to other inmate populations.

Many of the offenders who came to my office were deeply sorry for what they had done. They were seeking solace and searching for answers to move on with their lives. They could not, however, give other than simple answers regarding the reasons they had committed their crimes. They said things like: “I was stupid,” “I was drunk,” “I was influenced by the gang,” or “I was desperate.” It sounded like the crime had been committed spontaneously, without rhyme or reason to the situation.

³⁸ The children most conflicted are often first-generation children of immigrants who came to Canada to settle. While the parents are often quite religious, tradition minded, and conservative, their children want to fit into Canadian culture in the worst way. They are attracted to older classmates who seemingly can earn a lot of money and be popular without having to work. These first generation Canadians are attracted to illegal and marginal pursuits because, as visible minorities, neither their parents nor they fit easily into main stream society.

³⁹ Several of the men with whom I worked considered the criminal lifestyle too important to quit. They came back to jail a few years later with life sentences, see Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 20.

I suggested to these men that there were at least ten rational reasons why they had committed their crimes. I asked the offender to retrace the series of events that had happened in his life during the last five years. We spoke about his family, his relationships, his economic situation, his drug use, and his peer group. Each of these dynamics contributed in some way to the offender deciding to commit the crime. By retracing each of these influences, the offender was able to come to some rational understanding of the reasons that he committed the offence.⁴⁰

A rationale for very irrational acts was particular evident with a group of offenders who had offended against their teenage (step)children.⁴¹ These men were generally between the ages of thirty and fifty, had been married for about ten to twenty years, had committed their crime in the context of a trusting relationship with their adolescent daughters, were now divorced, and were serving federal time in prison.

Having lost everything, including their reputation, career, spouse, children, and friends, many of the men were at a loss to understand why they had allowed themselves to assault their daughters. For most of their lives, they had lived pro-social lives, had a good job, had a loving family, and were respected in the community. Yet here they were, sitting in jail, with very little to live and hope for in the future.

As these offenders retraced the steps that had caused them to assault their daughters, I realised that the same theories I had used to understand the young offenders could be applied to this situation.

The men told me that they had fallen in love in their early twenties, had married the love of their lives, and had had a good marriage for the first five years or so. During the next five to ten years, the marriage turned into a nightmare. Mutual love turned into demanding love as power and control arguments replaced the sacrifices that each partner was willing to make for the other person.⁴²

The men retreated into isolation because they did not know how to deal with the situation. The more the husbands retired into their garages to tinker in the evenings, the more demanding their spouses became. The man's wife was desperately trying to recreate the love that they had initially experienced. Because of her extroverted

⁴⁰ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 88.

⁴¹ Some of these points are outlined in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 125-132. The following description only applies to a small number of men who have committed sexual assaults against their children.

⁴² Harville Hendrix has detailed the dynamics of this situation in *Getting the Love You Want* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2008), 64-83.

personality, the only thing she knew how to do was to become more assertive in the relationship. Unfortunately, this overt way of seeking love caused the husband to retreat further into his own self.

The man began to see himself as a victim. He spent long hours feeling pity for himself and repressed anger towards his wife. The man felt emotionally drained, numb, and exhausted in the constant battles with his wife. He felt isolated from the rest of the world. He did not share the problems he was having in his marriage with anyone else.

The sad aspect of this situation had to do with the fact that the man turned his attention to a vulnerable person who could identify with his emotional state. Their teenage step daughter was drawn into empathizing with her father because he kept telling her how he was the victim in this situation. The father used the same skills of emotional bonding that he had established with his wife with his daughter. Before long, the father was able to use the empathy that the daughter expressed to his advantage. Emotional bonding turned into sexual abuse.

Five years later, the inmate who had committed this offence remained baffled at how he had allowed himself to get into this situation. Why had he used all of his manipulative skills to seek emotional and sexual gratification from his daughter? He knew that this action was wrong. He knew that he and his wife had had a good marriage for the first few years. He knew that he would lose everything if he offended against his daughter.

I suggested to the offender that the same Freudian categories of superego, ego, and id that I had used with the young adult group could be applied to his case. The marriage had begun on an equal footing, with the husband and wife establishing a healthy adult-adult relationship.

As the marriage deteriorated, the man's wife took a more dominant role similar to a parent or superego. The man felt reduced to being treated as a child with infantile desires. He began to feel more and more desperate. The self-sacrifice that he felt he needed to show his wife turned into a vast void of despair and emotional emptiness. The man had become the id in this lopsided arrangement.

Given this emotional void, the husband turned to whomever would show him attention and empathy. He satisfied his irrational desires by sexually offending against his daughter. He was no longer able to take his daughter into consideration. Everything revolved around his own needs. He regarded all adult authorities as

superegos that wanted to harass him. This prediction came true when the man was convicted of sexual assault and sent to prison.

Similar to the young adults that I had worked with, the husband was unable to internalize the superego of conscience that his wife represented for himself. While the young people had acted out overtly against the police and other gangs, the husband acted out covertly against his own daughter. Both groups acted out in criminal ways. The id of irrational desires rose in protest against the perceived negative superegos of authority in their lives.

I suggested to each of the inmates who had sexually assaulted their daughters that one of the reasons they had done so was to seek revenge against their wives. The offenders found this difficult to believe. They said that they loved their wives, even though they had offended against a close family member.

A textbook interpretation of the situation would suggest that the husband had taken advantage of their daughter because he could. The husband took the same parent/child stance regarding their daughter as his spouse had in becoming the controlling person in their relationship. He took advantage of his daughter because he had emotional control and physical power over her.

The husband transferred the initial affection and emotional satisfaction that he found with his wife to their daughter. He now considered their own daughter as filling the emotional and sexual void that had been left by his wife. Similar to the mothers who treated their sons as emotional substitute husbands in the young adult group, the sexually offending husband treated their daughter as his substitute wife.

There were three additional reasons why the husband offended against his daughter, instead of getting divorced or having an affair outside the marriage to satisfy his needs. The first reason was that their daughter was the closest available person who could empathize with his situation. The husband could take advantage of their daughter because of the trusting relationship they had established. He assaulted their daughter by placing his own needs ahead of hers.

The second reason he offended was to get back at the only significant person that he had had a satisfying emotional, social, and physical relationship with, his wife. He committed the offence to hurt his wife and to destroy any semblance of a marriage that they had had. He passively retreated from his wife when she demanded love while aggressively assaulting their daughter to get back at his wife for the hurt that he felt.

A third reason for the husband's assault had to do with the religious vows that the husband and wife had said at their wedding ceremony. The husband's religiosity prevented him from seeking a divorce. He had promised God that he would stay with his wife "until death do us part."

A subconscious reason for the husband assaulting their daughter was that his wife would divorce him for his crime. The husband reasoned that he could say before God, in "good conscience," that he had kept his marriage vows intact. His wife had to face the consequences before God for breaking their vows and divorcing him (the reader can see how twisted this self-justified reasoning can become).

I concluded that Sigmund Freud's theory of superego, ego, and id was as applicable in identifying some of the reasons for these sex offenders' crimes as the young adults who had committed assaults. The unconscious id came to the surface to avenge the negative superegos who had repressed it.

Theory Application to Grief Recovery

One of the things that surprised me as I proceeded with other programs for men in prison was the extent to which Sigmund Freud's theory of superego, ego, and id applied in various situations. I discovered that the concept of "Short Term Energy Relieving Behaviours" (STERBS) was used in the book, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*,⁴³ to describe ways that suffering survivors coped with their grief.

John James and Russell Friedman suggested that people grieving over the death of loved ones, over the breakup of a relationship, or over other losses, would engage in activities that provided immediate emotional gratification and relief from their feelings of turmoil and suffering. Food, alcohol, anger, exercise, fantasy, isolation, sex, shopping, and workaholicism were listed as ways that they coped with deep emotional turmoil.⁴⁴

These behaviours reminded me of the young adults who went on high speed car chases to deal with their parental abandonment, as well as the offenders who used sex as a way of coping with their alienation from their spouses. The difference in the above list was that although using drugs and becoming angry could lead to criminal offences, these behaviours could be exhibited in appropriate legal and social ways.

⁴³ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook* (New York; William Morrow, 2009), 77-84.

⁴⁴ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 78.

I realised that we resort to infantile behaviours when we are challenged to the core of our being with crises, death, loss, and social dislocation. We become like wounded children, curled up in a ball, and unable to cope with reality. The sheer numbness of the crises experienced paralyses us. We reach out to whatever gratification we can find. We binge watch TV, drink excessively, or get lost in a book. Others simply work harder, exercise furtively, or consume large quantities of food.

We have been reduced, in other words, to the id of our world. Our subconscious takes over. We act out without knowing why. Our actions send a message while remaining unfathomable. We hope desperately for someone who will notice our suffering. Validation of inappropriate anger expressed at the smallest slight enables us to move from irrationality to rationality, from the depths of our subconscious to consciousness.

James and Friedman show readers how they can move from these immediate external signs of grief to a broader embrace of the suffering experienced. They ask participants to fill out a history graph of all the losses they have experienced.⁴⁵ They ask the person to place the current loss into this broader perspective.⁴⁶

Through mutual one-on-one and group sharing, participants verbalize what could have been *different, better, and more* if that person were still alive today.⁴⁷ They accept the unfinished business that has been left over. They remember the times when they were hurt by the other person and when they inflicted harm. Ownership of these matters enables one to apologize and forgive while naming the deep emotional bonds that were established.⁴⁸

Theory Application to Marriage Relationships

Another author who is adept at bringing the unconscious to consciousness is the marriage counsellor Harville Hendrix.⁴⁹ He provides workshops for couples who are on the brink of divorce. He asks couples to give him a chance to work with them for three months before they decide to break up.

He starts his workshops by going through the various stages of marriage, from the honeymoon phase when the couples loved each other to a time when the couples became embroiled in power and control struggles. Hendrix suggests that couples

⁴⁵ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 85-103.

⁴⁶ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 115-134.

⁴⁷ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 61-68.

⁴⁸ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 136-158.

⁴⁹ Harville Hendrix, *Getting the Love You Want*.

take a step back from the entanglement in which they are now, to the time when they fell in love and got married.

Hendrix suggests that the reason that the couples got married in the first place was because there was something deeply attractive that the man saw in the woman. It was as if the woman could see right through him. She understood him on a deeper level than anyone else.

The reason for this unconscious attraction was that the woman's emotional, social, and intellectual makeup reflected the man's father and mother's way of being. The woman mirrored on an emotional level all the moods, behaviours, and reactions of the man's family as he had grown up. The man was able to anticipate his new girlfriend's reactions and state of mind because he had had to deal with these types of behaviours for the first eighteen years of his life.

The same held true for the woman. The man in some way reflected the way that her mother and father had handled situations in life. She was able to anticipate how her new boyfriend was going to react to various events because this is how her father and mother had dealt with various challenges.

The reason, then, that the woman could see right through her new boyfriend was because he reflected so closely all of the emotional, affectionate, social, and personal dynamics with which she grew up.

Hendrix calls this unconscious attraction the phenomena of recognition, timelessness, reunification, and necessity.⁵⁰ The couple recognise each other because of their similarity to the last twenty years of their upbringing. Their mutual attraction transcends history on the basis of an eternal state of bliss. They have been reunified with their past by celebrating the mutuality of love in the present. The couple feels as though they have found something they lost when they left home. They feel as though they have to be together for the rest of their lives.

The couple becomes entangled in power struggles seven years later because their partner is, in fact, quite different from what they expected. The bliss of mutuality, love, and timelessness was based solely on the partners' ability to understand each other on a past emotional level that had been established in their formative years.

The present is quite different. The couple is now demanding love from each other because they are showing the true difference between the way that they grew up and

⁵⁰ Harville Hendrix, *Getting the Love You Want*, 50-53.

their current identity. The couple needs to integrate the initial ecstatic experience of recognition, timelessness, reunification, and necessity with the reality of difference that the other person represents.

Hendrix suggests that the couple reclaim the unconscious reasons that they were attracted to each other in the first place to save their marriage. The fact that the couple understood and loved each other on a deeper level than other relationships meant that this mutual love could be rekindled by stepping back from the embroiled situation in which they now found themselves. Rediscovering the reasons that they fell in love with each other in the first place provided a way forward for continuing to love each other.⁵¹

I found this way of looking at the matter highly effective in working with the ex-married inmates who had offended against their adolescent (step) daughters. I asked the men to retrace the steps that they had taken in falling in love in the first place. I asked them to tell me why the marriage had been so good for the first five years or so.

By looking at the initial reasons they married their spouses, the inmates were able to see the vast difference between that time and the present. They were able to identify the various stages of undoing that occurred in the next five to ten to twenty years of marriage. The inmates realised that there had been various opportunities along the way in which they could have intervened in order to restore their marriage to a healthy state.

Instead, they had resorted to stubbornness, selfishness, intractability, resentment, and self-pity. They came up with countless reasons for the conflict that they used as weapons against their wives. The final straw had to do with offending against their daughters. The men would rather offend in a criminal manner and irreparably harm their daughter and spouse than admit that they were wrong. It was only later, years later sitting in a jail cell, that the men realised that they had loved their wives.

My role in these encounters was to help the men move from the superego/id relationship that their marriage had become to reclaiming the adult/adult love that they had had for their spouses. I helped the men understand that they had allowed their wounded id to offend against their daughters while getting passive/aggressive revenge against their spouses at the same time.

⁵¹ Harville Hendrix, *Getting the Love You Want*, 85-100.

Theory Application to Children

One of the things that surprized me as I journeyed along this path toward the unconscious was that it also affected the way that children behaved. Psychologist Bruno Bettelheim discovered in working with severely disturbed children that fairy tales had been written to name the various fears and traps that the children's parents represented.⁵² Fairy tales that spoke about fire breathing dragons and wicked witches were naming the ways in which children regarded their own parents. Children discovered that while their mother and father were generally nurturing and nice to them, their parents would sometimes change into harsh taskmasters and punishing authorities. Children could use the idea of a dragon or witch to tell others how fearful and harmful this experience of their parents was.

One thinks, for example, of a sorceress locking Rapunzel in a tower when she turns twelve.⁵³ Rapunzel's mother is zealously possessive and fearful for her daughter's safety. She would rather keep Rapunzel for herself than risk her growing up and establishing mature relationships on her own. Only a prince can save Rapunzel from her entrapped state.

One thinks of Jack and the Beanstalk.⁵⁴ Jack can only rid himself of his mother's overbearing influence by climbing the beanstalk for himself and stealing gold from the giant. Like so many children in fairy tales, Jack has to assert his adolescent independence in order to become mature.

These stories show on a very basic level what is needed for children to escape the oedipal influence of their parents. They reflect so closely the dilemma of the young adults, sex offenders, grieving survivors, and estranged couples described above.

The young adults had to detach themselves from their codependent mothers and emotional hatred of their fathers in order to grow up.

The older sex offenders had to recognize the destructive influence of their wives as authority figures in order to intercept their infantile behaviours toward their daughters.

People grieving over the loss of loved ones had to link their need for immediate gratification to the deep emotional and psychological void that has been caused by the death of their spouse. Infantile desires point to the need for a person to name the

⁵² Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 8-9.

⁵³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 148-150.

⁵⁴ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 183-193.

fulfilling relationship that has been lost, as well as to share these emotional longings with others who have experienced grief. Naming the unconscious moves it into a consciousness that becomes satisfied.

Couples on the verge of divorce get in touch with their love of their spouses that they lost along the way. While one spouse has become the wicked witch of the west, and the other the dragon of fear and reprisal, these experiences are temporary aberrations that can be replaced with healthy memories and current actions of sacrifice, agape, forgiveness, forbearance, and articulation of one's deepest desires.

Theory Application to Other Fairy Tales

My discovery of the unconscious led me to some contemporary fairy tales that illustrated the role of the id in relation to the ego and superego. Dr. Seuss wrote two stories about a cat with a hat who went into the house of adolescents "Sally and me" and messed the place up.⁵⁵ After a series of catastrophes that makes the situation worse, the cat summons Thing 1 and Thing 2 to clean up the house just before mother appears at the door.⁵⁶

The cat represents the unconscious desire of the children to mess up the house. They are sitting at home, bored, while it is raining outside. The idea that they could rearrange the whole house is something that every small child has thought of. Repressed desires rise to the surface when the superego is out of the picture. As the saying goes, "the mice begin to play when the cat is away." The children project their secret desires onto the cat's antics.

The children are still under their absent mother's authority. Their conscience tells them that they had better clean everything before mother comes home. There will be "hell" to pay if they don't. Thing 1 and Thing 2 are summoned as part of the regulating role of the superego, internalized within the children's conscience.

The second story is even more interesting in that it features the cat eating cake in a tub. A pink stain appears on the rim of the tub as the water drains away.⁵⁷ This stain represents the guilty pleasure that the children feel in having these repressed desires. Their mother has asked them to clean the snow from the sidewalk. All they can think of is playing instead of working.

⁵⁵ Dr. Seuss, *The Cat in the Hat* (New York: Random House, 1957); *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* (New York: Random House, 1958). Cf. the discussion of these stories in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 73-74.

⁵⁶ Dr. Seuss, *The Cat in the Hat*, 33.

⁵⁷ Dr. Seuss, *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*, 10-14.

Guilt is the telling sign that makes things worse. It appears on mother's white wedding dress, on dad's ten dollar shoes, on the rug, and on dad's bed. It wouldn't go away.

The cat's solution is to summon twenty-six little children who help him clean up the snow. With a magical substance known as "Voom,"⁵⁸ the tiny little children, representing all the letters of the alphabet, are able to make everything white again.

Dr. Seuss's solution to the increasing chaos that results is to introduce the notion of language into the equation. Rationality, as Weber has shown, and ego, as Freud has noted, are the regulating aspects of the human personality. While pleasurable moments can lead to guilt, the ego's ability to internalize rationality helps to clean up the mess. Dr. Seuss' introduction of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet shows that he believed in rationality as a solution to these unconscious desires.

Dr. Seuss continued his reflection on the matter by publishing another story about language, *On Beyond Zebra*.⁵⁹ In this book, Bartholemew wants to create letters of the alphabet that go beyond the letter Z. He manages to draw a series of fanciful letters with illustrations of fantastic creatures that only exist in his mind.

Dr. Seuss demonstrates with this book that there are times when irrationality cannot be explained within the bounds of language, decency, and reason. One could say that the human sciences, sociology and psychology, were established to take account of this subconscious fact.

Freud's tripartite notion of the id, ego, and superego is one example of going beyond ordinary language to explain the mysterious. Splitting people into their various aspects -- desire, rationality, and morality -- represents a way of explaining the internal dynamics of a human personality.

Dr. Seuss captured the mischievous and devious nature of children through projections of their inner desires. Like fairy tales of old, which featured dragons and witches to illustrate negative aspects of parental behaviour, the cat in the hat represents a marvelous trickster who through subtle hidden code points to the unconscious dynamics in all of us, adult and child.

⁵⁸ Dr. Seuss, *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*, 57

⁵⁹ Dr. Seuss, *On Beyond Zebra* (New York: Random House, 1955).

Chapter Three

Incremental Opportunities to Change

Introduction

Knowing that our personalities are made of different aspects that influence the way we act does not, in and of itself, solve problems that we are faced with. This fact was brought home to me as I worked with the young adults in prison. After outlining a variety of ways that the inmates could move from criminal activities to pro-social behaviours,⁶⁰ the young men pointed out to me that they were still stuck in the not caring phase at the centre of the diagram. They were not convinced that changing to a more positive lifestyle was worth it. There were too many sacrifices to be made along the way.

The young adults suggested to me that they continued to live on two levels of reality that were not integrally linked to my view of the situation. On the one hand, they lived in a fantasy world in which they were rich and did not have to work. In spite of the fact that they had ended up in jail because of their criminal lifestyle, they continued to think that they would not be caught the next time that they committed a robbery.

On the other hand, these young men were staying medicated in order to deal with the harsh reality of prison. Numbing the pain of life was the only way that they knew how to cope. My fancy diagrams and conceptual insights meant little to them.

I found the same reticence to change in other offenders. Some were simply in denial about the offences they had committed. Others minimized the harm that they had inflicted on others. They suggested to me that they were only acting in self-defence, that they had only engaged in physical touching, not assault, that they had acted out

⁶⁰ Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 119.

criminally to solve a problem, and that they had been drunk or caught off guard in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Each one of these men found it difficult to move from the immediate recollection of the offence to a broader analysis of the context. Like the id of instant gratification, these men were preoccupied with the manner in which their drug use, criminal behaviours, and anti-social actions had satisfied a momentary need.

Powerful Force of Denial

Two examples demonstrate the difficulties involved. One man that I worked with only looked at how he had excelled in life. He told me, “I have been a good worker all of my life. I do not know why I keep being punished.” I asked him when he had committed his crime. “Well, during the week of holidays when I was binge drinking. I am not an alcoholic. I only go on a long drunk once or twice a year.” This man was over fifty years old when I met him as a young chaplain. He had first come to federal prison before I was born. This was the third time that he had been in prison.⁶¹

This man did not want to look at his alcoholism. This habit was entrenched in his life. He had learned to function as an alcoholic while getting into serious trouble every ten years. This man defined himself primarily in terms of his work ethic. He was told when he grew up that as long as he worked hard, nothing else mattered.

This conversation took place thirty years ago in the Federal Training Center (*Centre Federal de Formation*) in Quebec. The government established this medium-security prison in the early 1960s to teach trades to inmates. Inmates could enroll in bricklaying, construction, school, culinary arts, gardening, metal fabrication, upholstery, and cabinet making. It was only in the 1980s that the government made programming for alcoholism, spousal abuse, violence, sexual offences, gang involvement, and selling drugs mandatory. Many of the trades listed above were abandoned in favour of a programming model. Inmates had to learn to deal with the sources of their offending patterns.

The life of the fifty-year old inmate described above reflected the priorities of his generation. He was told in the 1950s that work was the most important aspect of life. This inmate decided that as long as he only binged on his holidays (and drank on weekends and during evenings after work), that he was alright. The fact that he came to jail for two or three years every decade was simply an inconvenience.

⁶¹ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 90.

This man could not adjust to the fact that in the 1980s he had to take programming for his offences. He felt that it was no-one's business that he drank on weekends and evenings. He was doing time for his offences. That was punishment enough. He did not want to face the fact that he had caused serious harm to other people (as well as to himself).

The second example comes from the true story of a British woman executive who married an American man by the name of Clark Rockefeller. The story has been made into a movie entitled, *Who is Clark Rockefeller?*⁶² The man claimed that he was related to the famous Rockefeller family. He invited himself to their family reunions. He told his wife that he only worked *pro bono* (for free) on architectural projects because he could not as a Rockefeller stoop to working for hire for real money.

The woman accepted his explanations. They had a child together and were married for ten years. There came a point when the woman no longer believed everything her husband was telling her. She hired a lawyer to look into the case. The lawyer discovered that the man was originally from Germany. Rockefeller was not his real name. After the spouse filed for divorce, the husband kidnapped their daughter. He claimed that he should get custody because he had spent the last ten years raising their daughter. It took the police a few months to find the man and arrest him.

The woman acknowledges imbalances in her life in a poignant scene at the police station. Given the trauma of having their daughter kidnapped and the true identity of her husband revealed, she looks at the policeman and says, "How could I be that dumb (stupid)?" The policeman continues to look at the bottom of his coffee cup without answering.

The woman's financial success as a well-paid executive blinded her to the lies that her husband told her. The woman was attracted to her husband because of his so-called elite connections to the Rockefeller family. The woman wanted desperately to believe that she had married into an historically rich and famous family. Her need for recognition deflected her ability to see the real facts at hand.

The woman in the story is not that much different from the alcoholic man that I interviewed. The older man who went binge drinking and committed crimes wanted desperately to believe that he was alright. He wanted to be accepted on the basis of

⁶² DVD (Sony Pictures, 2010).

the generational mores with which he grew up. That generation believed in the value of hard work, regardless of the personal state of one's alcoholism or marriage.

I suggested to the alcoholic man that his life priorities could be compared to the four walls of a house.⁶³ Work represented one wall. The man had had numerous financial successes. He became a pilot later in his life. He flew around the country in his small Cessna plane (sometimes while being blacked out).

The man's family represented a second wall. The man had been married and had raised a family. Although he recently had divorced, the man's ability to be part of a family represented a second positive aspect of his life. The man had a sense of belonging to something beyond himself.

The third wall had to do with the man's Christian faith. He came regularly to the worship services I conducted in prison. He expressed regret and remorse for what he had done. He experienced God's comfort and love as he spent time in jail.

This man's work, family, and faith represented three solid walls of his house. He had spent years building these walls and securing them on a solid foundation. The problem was that the fourth wall was missing. This non-existent wall had to do with the man's alcoholism.

The man's inability to acknowledge this non-existent wall allowed rain to fall and snow to blow into his house. The house could not be adequately heated in spite of the fact that he had provided a roof over his family's heads. The family could not live comfortably in the house because of this missing wall. They decided to move out because they could no longer tolerate the situation. The man also had to move out and go to jail. Living in the house was not sustainable.

The man was unable to see this missing wall. The man was so entrenched in viewing his alcoholism as normal and in maintaining the other three walls that he refused to see the "big" thing that was causing his house to crumble.

The woman described above was in the same situation. She had worked so hard to become successful that she had neglected personal aspects of her life. The love of her life who happened to be a Rockefeller represented a winfall. Not only was she now wealthy and successful. She now had status and fame because she had married into the Rockefeller family. Her need to be recognized blinded her to the real

⁶³ The movie, *Life as a House* (DVD, Winkler Films, 2001), uses the house as a metaphor in portraying various characters rebuilding of their lives.

situation at hand. The lies and false image of her husband represented the fourth missing wall that brought her house of cards to the ground. The woman had to take another look at the personal aspects of her life in order to grow into a well-rounded person.

Difference in Myths and Fairy Tales in Bringing about Salvation

I found Bruno Bettelheim's distinction between the use of myth and fairy tales in solving problems⁶⁴ helpful in moving from denial and minimization to accepting the gravity of the situation. Myths tell the story of superhuman figures to emphasize the importance of a superego ideal. Superman and Spiderman have superhuman powers that enable them to save others.

Children are drawn to these heroes because they also want to feel like saviour figures that can save others. They want to be given superhuman powers so that they can gain power and control over their own lives and the lives of others.

The problem with this scenario is that the superhuman figure portrayed actually reduces the child to an id-like state. The child becomes intimidated by the superhero because they know that they can never live up to that ideal. The myth's emphasis on the role of the superego diminishes the child's confidence that they too can succeed in the world.

Another way of making the same point is to say that the superhero replaces the need for the child to save themselves. Reduced to a sense of helplessness because of the overwhelming presence of an imposing god, the child projects their fantasies onto the saviour figure of a superhero in order to extricate themselves from the situation.

One could say that the young people referred to above resorted to this type of fantasy as a way of coping in jail. They rose above the fact that they were under harsh taskmasters by imagining the riches and glory that they would receive when they returned to society. Glorification of the criminal lifestyle represented a negative superego of power that the inmates wished they could have when released. Fantasizing about the impossible brought immediate relief.

In spite of its tantalizing appeal, the thought of a superhero to save them from themselves actually resulted in despair and pessimism on the part of these young people. They knew that this dream of wish-fulfillment was unrealistic. They had

⁶⁴ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 35-41. Cf. the discussion in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 73, and Donald Stoesz, *Magic of Fiction in Illuminating Transformation* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2018), 54-62.

been caught and convicted because of their criminal lifestyle. It was pure delusional thinking to think that it would not happen again.

The same effect was evident in the sex offenders who were intimidated by their superhuman spouses. Their wives had resorted to moralizing and demeaning behaviour toward their husbands because the men could not live up to the expectations that their spouses had of them. The more the husbands retreated into infantile thinking, the more the spouses hounded them with the superego ideal that they were supposed to emulate.

The alcoholic described above continued to live in the fantasy world of his past to avoid looking at the present. Work represented the internalized superego expectations of society when he grew up. He continued to hold onto the fact that he had succeeded in this area in order to avoid looking at the failure that he had become.

The executive who fell in love with a fake Rockefeller did so because of her internalized superego expectations of fame, money, and success. Her husband could dupe her in believing that he was famous because she so desperately wanted the elite status that that affiliation represented. She was so blinded by her ambition that she could not see the delusions under which she was living. Her subconscious desires to be reach the upper echelons of society made it difficult for her to see the lies that her husband was telling her.

Bettelheim suggests that myths are inherently pessimistic because of the link they make between humanity and divinity. The gods in Greek myths tower over mortals as a result of their superhuman strength. Watching a Greek myth causes the audience to feel like they are spectators on a grand stage of existence. The gods are involved in the action while the spectators become mere observers in the drama being played out.⁶⁵

The unrealistic goals that the spouses placed on their husbands, and that the parents placed on their young children, caused the husbands and young adults to react in infantile ways. Reduced to being ids in this situation, they became the return of the repressed. The passivity to which they had become resigned in relation to their parents and spouses rebounded in criminal actions that announced to the world that they, too, wanted to have their “day in the sun.” Harm, hurt, and revenge represented

⁶⁵ Shakespeare wrote many plays in which the main characters die on stage at the end of the play because of their futile heroic actions in the face of overwhelming circumstances, Donald Stoesz, *Magic of Fiction in Illuminating Transformation*, 59-60. Theologian Reinhold Niebuhr also saw life as tragic. For him, perfect love as exhibited by Jesus ended in tragedy and death, note the reflection in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 159.

key aspects of these behaviours to accentuate the feelings that husbands and young people had that they, in some way, had been grievously wronged.

Bettelheim suggests that fairy tales are more effective because they start at the level of the id and move the person toward ego integration.⁶⁶ Fairy tales portray children who feel inadequate, are insignificant, and have lost loved ones. Fairy tales begin with a person who has been disadvantaged in order to help them move forward.

They portray characters who are universal in nature by naming them “girl,” “boy,” “father,” or “mother.” The young reader can identify with the protagonists because they reflect their own situation. They are caught in inextricable ways by the expectations of their parents and stepmothers in the same way as Cinderella, Jack, and Sleeping Beauty were.

The question that remains is how a person moves forward from the id of helplessness and passivity to the ego of action and integration. The first answer is somewhat redundant in that naming the problem represents the first step toward solving it. Introducing concepts of superego, ego, and id help to identify specific aspects of human behaviour that are hidden.

Owning the fact that they turned out just like their fathers helped the young people identify the suppressed anger and rage that they felt toward their criminal dads, along with the guilt and shame they felt about themselves. Owning guilt and shame meant that the young people did, in fact, have some moral standards on the basis of which they judged themselves and their parents.

They did not raise their hands and tell their grade five teachers that they wanted to be criminals when they grew up. They wished that they were more normal like other children. They could not tell their friends that they had spent the weekend visiting their fathers in jail. Shame about this fact meant that the young people had an internal moral compass on the basis of which to judge right from wrong.

The same relief came to sex offenders when they understood the emotional and psychological control that their spouses had exercised over their lives. To name their spouses as fearful superegos brought a sense of relief because these sex offenders now understood why they had offended against their daughters.

⁶⁶ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 40.

One could say that these men were simply manipulative, obsessed with sex, and willing to take advantage of anyone that they could. The men admitted that they used their daughters to get emotional pleasure and sexual fulfillment for themselves.

Given this insight, the men still came to me because they were baffled about why they had committed such a crime. They knew that they would lose everything if they offended against their daughters. And yet they did it.

I suggested to the men that the very love, affection, endearment, and commitment that they had experienced with their wives was what led them to desperation when their marriage became a nightmare. They turned to their daughters to get the same satisfaction that they had had with their spouses.

The husbands did not realise that their dysfunctional relationships with their wives represented the root of the problem. Allowing their wives to become intimidating superegos gave the men the excuse to act in infantile ways against their daughters. It was only as we spoke together about the matter that the men realised that the bonding that they had experienced with their wives was why they now wanted to bond with anyone who took notice. The men could use their emotional ties with their daughters to take advantage of them.

Incremental Ways of Changing

Admission of the hurtful consequences that the young adults and sex offenders had caused others represented the first step in a long journey toward change. Acknowledgement of guilt and feelings of shame paradoxically alleviated the anxiety, dread, secretness, and stigma surrounding the offence.

The young people and sex offenders' realisation that they had been willing to act out in such devious, heinous, and thoroughly frightening ways brought a sense of reality to the situation. The men realised not only what they had been capable of. They realised that they had, in fact, harmed many people by their actions.

The first step toward recovery, then, has to do with admission of guilt. The twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are effective because they begin with acknowledgement that all people tend to minimize responsibility for their actions.⁶⁷ Denial is a powerful force in our society that instinctively places the blame for one's actions on everyone but oneself.

⁶⁷ *The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous*, [THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS \(aa.org\)](http://www.aa.org)

Admitting that one is in denial, that life has become unmanageable, and that one is to blame for the sorry state of affairs in which one finds oneself represents a statement of honesty and truthfulness that provides the bedrock for change.

The question that remains is how a person can move from this admission of guilt toward a more positive view of oneself and the possibilities of change. Fairy tales provide stories of incremental change that help the reader with this problem. They provide ways that the characters can improve themselves, get help from nature, get help from other people, and get help from fairy godmothers.

One thinks of the story of the three pigs in regard to solving one's own problems. The first two pigs make their house out of straw and sticks. These flimsy defences do not stop the wolf from destroying their homes and devouring the pigs. The third pig learns from this disastrous situation. He makes his house out of bricks which the wolf cannot tear down. When the wolf finds another way to get in, down the chimney, a boiling pot of water is waiting for him at the bottom. The third pig succeeds in defeating the wolf.

Bettelheim makes the point that the first two pigs are more concerned about the pleasure principle than the reality principle.⁶⁸ Building their house of sticks and straw takes only a little time. They then have the rest of the day to play. The third pig realises that he will only be safe if he takes the time to build a strong house. Once this house has been built of bricks, the pig can effectively defeat the wolf.

In the various scenarios described above, the inmates were more concerned about immediate gratification than in delaying pleasure in order to set their house in order. Working at a legitimate job, developing strong pro-social friendships, claiming the good parts of their parents' upbringing, and having a purpose to their lives takes time and energy.

Legitimate careers are only able to offer a fraction of the money over a longer period of time that illegal pursuits can promise immediately. Friendships that are based on mutual trust and respect are quite different from gang involvements in which members use each other to get what they want. Respecting the authority of one's parents translates into a respect for other authorities -- teachers, employers, and charismatic leaders -- along with respect for oneself. Goals and ambitions obviate the need to derive immediate pleasure from whatever situation in which one finds oneself.

⁶⁸ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 41-44.

Jack and the Beanstalk illustrates a second example of self-improvement. In the story, Jack trades his cow for some magic beans. The magic beans grow inextricably during the night. They give Jack the opportunity for adventure and a chance to see what he can learn on his own. He is able to get away from the oedipal clutches of his mother by defeating the giant and bringing back gold so that they can build a new house.

The Cat in the Hat plays a similar role in the Dr. Seuss stories. It represents the inner desires of the children to play as well as a way of saving the day when the house is all messed up. The cat is a trickster who helps the children clean up the house with Thing 1 and Thing 2, as well as with all the letters of the alphabet. The children move from a pleasure principle to a reality principle by internalizing the conscience of their mother for themselves. They are saved from the punishing threat of their mother superego by taking matters into their own hands. Internal authority obviates the necessity of external authority.

This was a hard lesson that the young adults had to learn in jail. They thought they could escape the superegos of their mothers and fathers by living on their own and doing what they wanted. They soon realised that the violent tendencies of their fathers and codependent control of their mothers were no match for the convicting and punishing role of the police, state, and prison. The police, state, and prison became the young men's substitute authority figures.

As I have noted in another place,⁶⁹ correctional staff are most effective with these young men if they regard themselves as substitute parents dealing with wayward children. Instead of being hooked in a negative way with their shenanigans and antics, correctional staff can help these young adults by giving them real choices within a prison setting. Negative authority in terms of control is intercepted when correctional officers treat the inmates as adults who can make real choices within the limited environment in which they are living.

The stories of the three pigs, Jack and the beanstalk, and the cat in the hat point to the fact that children can learn on their own how to grow up. The third pig learned a lot about life from his two siblings. Jack grew up as he ventured out on his own. Sally and me realised what could happen if they let the cat do what it wanted. These stories emphasize the difference that the shift from childhood to puberty makes. A

⁶⁹ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 46, 55.

growing awareness of the dangers in society, along with one's own sexual nature, moves the child from innocence to adolescent awareness.

Nature represents a second magical presence that helps fairy tale characters achieve success. One thinks of the story of Simpleton and his two older brothers who set out on an adventure.⁷⁰ The two brothers are wilful and want to destroy the ants at an anthill, shoot the ducks that they see, and set a tree on fire so that they can get to the honey in the honeycomb inside. Each time Simpleton asks them to desist and respect the animals, insects, and birds.

When the three brothers reach a castle, a little man inside asks them to complete three difficult tasks. When the two older brothers are unable to do so, the man turns them into stone. Simpleton is also stymied by the request. When he sits down on a log and cries, the ants, ducks, and bees come to help him out. The ants collect the thousand pearls scattered about, the duck dive into the pond to fetch the key to the bride's wedding chamber, and the bees identify the youngest and most lovable of three princesses. With this success, Simpleton marries the princess and the brothers are turned back into life.

This story reminded me of the Wiccan inmates that I worked with in the prison.⁷¹ As part of their ritual, they gathered around a table on which they placed four items: water, a candle to represent fire, a feather to represent wind, and salt to represent the earth. These elements represented the basis of a naturalistic spirituality that they practiced.

These offenders also regarded the four equinoxes and four solstices as holy. The four seasons were represented by the movement of the moon and sun across the earth. After the earth experienced a long repose during winter, it came to life again in spring. This rhythm of death in fall and rebirth in spring can be compared to the pregnancy of a woman who gives birth to a child in spring. The natural seasons represent a metaphor for the spiritual circle of life and death. Human existence can be linked and celebrated as part of this naturalistic spirituality.

One is also reminded of Dan Brown's book, *The Da Vinci Code*,⁷² in which the ritual of procreation becomes the basis of a naturalistic spirituality. Deprived on his theological significance as the Son of God, Jesus is said to have married Mary Magdelene in order to carry on the royal blood line of a genealogical spirituality.

⁷⁰ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 76-78.

⁷¹ I detail my work with Wiccan inmates in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 167-172.

⁷² Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

Sacred Scriptures that tell the story of unification of non-related peoples are obviated in favour of a biological spirituality. The act of intercourse becomes the substitute holy grail in Dan Brown's story.

The third popular use of magic in fairy tales has to do with male saviour figures that save princesses from distress. A prince saves Cinderella from her work as a servant for her step mother; a prince saves Rapunzel from her entrapment in a tower; and a prince saves Sleeping Beauty from the wicked witch by kissing her on the lips.⁷³

Each of these stories points to the need for a child to establish adult-adult relationships with loved ones in order to escape the clutches of one's parents. These stories reinforce the saying used in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh."

Children move from traditional authority to charismatic authority in order to become adults. They move from the id of their childhood to the regulating ego that channels desires in a healthy way. Marriage represents a fulfillment of a dream in which two people escape their oedipal dependencies in order to live happily ever after.

Many different stories include the role of a saviour figure. One thinks, for example, of the film *Inception*.⁷⁴ A private company hires a team of experts to plant a false memory into the mind of one of their rivals. The team leader recruits his wife to help with the complicated procedure. It involves putting the victim into a coma through the use of drugs in order to complete the implant (*inception*). The team remains in an induced state of unreality. The team returns from this parallel universe once this experiment is completed. The spinning of a top indicates transformation from the virtual reality of the experience to reality itself.

The man's wife falls in love with being in this parallel universe. She finds that life feels more vital and alive when she is living in a drug-induced state. Unfortunately, she is unable to tell the difference between this dream and reality. At one point, she sits on a window ledge and questions her husband about whether he truly loves her. Her husband pleads with her not to jump. He tells her that this situation is real, not a dream. She jumps to her death anyway.

The man is heartbroken. He accepts the blame for having introduced his wife to these elaborate experiments in virtual reality. He remains in despair and grieves deeply.

⁷³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 111-115, 199-214, 225-235.

⁷⁴ DVD (Warner Brothers Entertainment, 2010).

The situation changes when he recruits a new female member to his team. This female member intuitively understands and empathizes with his grief. In a virtual reality experiment, she takes an elevator down four floors to the basement of the man's mind to visit with his deceased wife. She reminds the dead wife that she has to take some of the responsibility for her own death, She tells the dead wife that she has to stop interfering mentally with her former husband's mind.

The new female character empathizes with the widower in order for him to move on with his life. She represents a saviour figure in the sense that she validates his grief while galvanizing him into living a new life.

One thinks of the fictional film series about Jason Bourne. Jason is an American assassin trained to kill people in clandestine operations for a secret spy agency. The people he is mandated to kill represent a threat to American democracy and its way of life. Jason reaches a point when he cannot carry out his assignment. His epiphany comes when he sees two children sleeping beside a foreign official that he has been sent to kill. He flees the scene and is shot two times in the back. He is left for dead in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea.

The first movie in the series, *Jason Bourne Identity*,⁷⁵ begins at this point in Jason's life. Jason has amnesia as a result of being shot. He is rescued by a passing boat and brought back to life. *Jason Bourne Supremacy*⁷⁶ and *Jason Bourne Ultimatum*⁷⁷ follow Jason as he redeems his life. He retraces the steps that have made him into an assassin. He confronts his past and changes his future.

Two women aid him in this recovery. The first person's name is Marie. Like Jason, she is living a nomadic existence in Switzerland. She moves from place to place without finding any real grounding in her life. Marie agrees to help Jason retrace his steps. She stays by his side as Jason slowly realises who he is and what he has become.

An assassin mistakenly shoots Marie at the beginning of the second movie, *Jason Bourne Supremacy*. Nicky Parsons, an American agency assistant, replaces Marie as a saviour figure. She helps Jason remember an assassin assignment that he completed in Berlin. Nicky helps the new American woman director of spy operations find money stolen by a Russian oligarch in the third movie, *Jason Bourne*

⁷⁵ DVD (Universal Studios, 2008).

⁷⁶ DVD (Universal Studios, 2008).

⁷⁷ DVD (Universal Studios, 2008).

Ultimatum. Nicky finds the location of a bureau manager who knows more about Jason's past.

Nicky Parson appears again in the fourth and final movie in the series, *Jason Bourne*.⁷⁸ She finds Jason earning money boxing against rivals of the highest bidder. Nicky retrieves valuable agency documents that reveal that Jason's father was involved in Jason's recruitment and training. She helps Jason escape the agency's assassins while being shot in the process.

Marie and Nicky serve as valuable saviour figures for Jason. They normalize the situation while Jason slowly regains some of his memory. They provide relief and comfort while Jason is starting a new life.

Jason's new perception of himself comes into focus at the end of the second movie, *Jason Bourne Supremacy*. He is on the verge of killing a bureau manager who has ordered his death. The bureau executive challenges Jason to pull the trigger. Jason responds by saying that he no longer wants to kill people. He adds, "The only reason you are alive is because Marie wouldn't want me to (kill you)."

Marie's salvific role becomes clear. Jason does not know how to live a new life. Marie shows him that he can become a normal person again. Her love and care for him is reciprocated by his love and care for himself. This new validation of himself ripples outward. Jason visits the daughter of two parents that he killed and says he is sorry. He kills the next assassin in self-defence in order to save Nicky. He continues to move forward without knowing how to live. All he knows is that he wants to be different from before.

The above mentioned movies show that there is a healthy role for saviour figures. Marie, Nicky, and the woman in *Inception* intervene in the lives of their friends and lovers by showing empathy, love, compassion, and care. These actions are carried out without the creation of a codependency relationship. Saviour figures are indeed needed.

A Caveat to this Idyllic Scene

One of the problems with the above scenario is that marriages do not always succeed. Fairy tale endings give way to other stories that point to the disastrous results that can occur when a husband or spouse feels betrayed. One thinks of the Arabian story

⁷⁸ DVD (Universal Studios, 2016). *The Jason Bourne Legacy*, published as a DVD in 2012 (Universal Studios) , also includes a woman saviour figure. A woman scientist helps the chief protagonist "viral off" the dependence on drugs that he is on to enhance his physical and mental capabilities.

of *A Thousand and One Nights*,⁷⁹ in which a woman tells her husband a story every night in order to avoid being killed. After his first wife betrayed him by sleeping with his brother, the king kills all of his subsequent brides on their wedding night.

In another story, *Bluebeard* gives his wife a key to a secret room of his castle and tells her not to open it.⁸⁰ After he goes away, his wife cannot resist leaving things well enough alone. She opens the door and discovers the bodies of other women who have been married to and murdered by Bluebeard. She suffers the same fate when Bluebeard comes home and discovers that she has opened the secret door.

The point of these stories is that being married does not necessarily mean that one will live happily ever after. The sex offenders mentioned above found this out from themselves as their marriages descended into chaos, despair, and betrayal.

One of the curious facts about the young adults that I worked with was that they saw themselves as saviour figures in regard to other people who were more needy than themselves.⁸¹ One ex-husband who was released on parole fell in love with a woman who had four children. The man got a job and rented an apartment in which they could all live. He took care of the children and became a husband to his new girlfriend. Within three months of this arrangement, the man fled the scene and starting using drugs in another town. He could not cope with his intentions of living a normal life.

In another case, a young man was released on day parole to a half-way house in a city. Within a few hours of arriving there, his younger brother phoned him. He said that the gang was after him because he had stolen ten cellphones from them. The older brother met with the gang and paid his younger brother's bill.

A former girl-friend phoned the young man on parole in the middle of the night. She was being assaulted by some men and needed help. The young man showed up at the apartment and intervened.

The young man told me these stories after he had been suspended from parole. He could not cope with the codependent relationships in which he was in. He had to break close family and friendship ties in order to become healthy.⁸²

⁷⁹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 86-89.

⁸⁰ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 299-303.

⁸¹ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 45.

⁸² Mark Totten explains this dynamic in *Guys, Gangs, and Girlfriend Abuse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

Co-Dependent No More author Melodie Beattie explains how this toxic cycle of becoming a saviour figure works. She uses the illustration of a Karpman triangle.⁸³ A man is attracted to his girlfriend because she needs help. The man helps her out by giving her money, taking her away from her abusive boy-friend, and moving her into a new apartment. The man represents the peak of the triangle while the girlfriend is the person being saved on the lower right hand side.

The next stage of the relationship involves the two people living together. They feel that they have found true love. Their previous problems are over. They are living an idyllic situation represented by a form of mutuality. Each person is getting something out of the relationship.

Unfortunately, this relationship often falls apart. The boyfriend is upset because his new girlfriend is not showing him as much love as he wants. The girlfriend is upset because her boyfriend is treating her like a child. She is thankful that he has helped her. The girlfriend nevertheless wants to be treated like an adult. The man looks at love in terms of a parent-child relationship. He expects love on the basis of the fact that he is protecting and taking care of his girlfriend.

Mutuality represented by the lower right hand side of the triangle is no longer a possibility. The man begins to see himself as a victim. The bottom left side of the triangle represents this self-pity stance. The man is resentful and hurt. His girlfriend has not reciprocated the love that he has shown her by feeling sorry for her. He leaves his girlfriend. He retreats into self-loathing. He isolates himself and no longer believes true love is possible.

After grieving, the man moves from a victim stance represented by the bottom left hand side of the triangle to the top, where he becomes a saviour figure again. He once again believes that love is possible. He once again finds a person more needy than himself. He establishes a new relationship with this person. The cycle repeats itself all over again: from saviour figure to true love to victim stance to saviour figure.

Melodie Beattie believes that true love is possible when each person treats the other as an adult. There was a point in the three month relationship described above when the situation could have changed. The man could have stopped seeing himself as a saviour figure. He could have decided that he really loved this person, irregardless of her circumstances. He loved this person for her own sake, not because she was

⁸³ Melodie Beattie, *Codependent No More*, (Minnesota: Hazelden Publishing, 1986), 83-95.

needy. The true love that this couple had for each other could have diffused the way in which the man saw himself as a parent figure taking care of the other person.

The stories of saviour figures gone wrong represent a caveat to the idyllic fairy tale picture of a couple living happily ever after. Marriages can fail because of betrayal. Saviour figures can fail because they are unable to switch from their helping role to their loving role.

Divine Saviour Figures

One question that remains is whether divine saviour figures can be helpful in transformation. There are only a few fairy tales that mention benevolent supernatural forces saving the day. One thinks, for example, of Cinderella, who calls on her fairy godmother in order to go to the ball. Her godmother magically creates a carriage with horses as well as outfits Cinderella with a suitable dress.⁸⁴

Bettelheim has suggested that linking human and divine power through mythical supermen is detrimental to the recovery process. The mythical superman acts like a dominating superego that stunts a child's growth and renders them paralysed. Is there another way of seeing divinity as helpful in the healing and salvific process?

I would suggest on a basic level that people cannot be healed unless they ask for help. Although people can theoretically find salvation on their own, sharing the nature of their problems with others brings immense relief. The young people and sex offenders that I worked with were immensely grateful that they could share their stories with someone else. The mere telling of their stories brought about many "ah ha" moments of insight and recognition. They then had to decide whether they wanted to continue on with this journey.

Mention of a higher power introduces the idea that we need to be saved from ourselves. Our propensity to act selfishly, to step on others to get our own way, and to be wilful in our actions means that we need someone not only to hear our admission of guilt, but to forgive us of what we have done.

The young people and sex offenders breathed a huge sigh of relief when they realised that they did not have to take ownership for "the whole pizza" by themselves. They could forgive themselves for what they had done. They could see how they had been influenced to commit their crimes while wearing the guilt of their own actions.

⁸⁴ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 236-276.

Unhooking themselves from the superego idea that everything was their fault helped them to take ownership of the crimes for which they were responsible.

While forgiveness of self is possible, offenders want desperately to be forgiven by others. This other includes not only human beings, but the very Godself. Offenders need to be unhooked from the power of helplessness and acting out behaviours that have had control of their lives. God's offer of forgiveness and mercy for dastardly deeds done opens a space within the universe that allows freedom and grace to emerge.

God is less of an external divine superego who imposes morality and judgement than an internally liberating force that enables integrated egos to emerge intact and able to act.⁸⁵ This liberation is possible because of the fact that human beings have been created in God's image. Divinity within the person themselves obviates the necessity of seeing God as an external superpower that diminishes the role of human beings into id-like status.

God saves people from themselves by becoming the very person that they represent. Jesus as God is humbled as a human being in order for humans to be liberated from the very notion of God as an external superego. Morality is internalized into the human heart and liberated through acts of love.

It is thus possible for saviour figures to emerge that forgive a person of past wrongs done while enabling the ego to grow for its own sake. Our view of God shifts from external authority figure to immanent presence that saves people from themselves by becoming the internalized human/divine ego that represents themselves. The fact that humans reflect the divine nature enables them to regard God as an internalized self of love, forgiveness, grace, and goodness. Superego and id are internalized into the regulating ego.

⁸⁵ Gregory Baum has reflected on the immanent presence of God as a powerful catalytic force, *The Oil Has Not Yet Run Dry* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017), 53-58.

Chapter Four

From Wish Fulfillment to Post-Modernity

Introduction

The third chapter illustrated fairy tale endings in which a couple falls in love, gets married, and lives happily ever after. From saviour figure to adult partner, the prince establishes an adult-adult relationship with his spouse that illustrates the wish fulfillment rewards of marriage while avoiding the pitfalls of codependency.

The third chapter also suggested that marriages made in heaven can fail. Fairy tales such as *A Thousand and One Nights* and *Bluebeard* point to the fact that betrayal and jealousy can lead to violence and heartbreak. Sex offenders found this out for themselves when they resorted to assault and abuse instead of finding their way back to the living by asking for help.

The following three chapters illustrate these alternative scenarios. The fourth chapter takes a trip through the Eaton's Department Store to show how the items displayed project and reinforce the fantasy of marriage. Wedding dresses, jewelry, and lingerie, along with mannequins in the store front windows, and baby strollers and clothes on the fifth floor demonstrate that the wish fulfillment of true love, marriage, commitment, and expectation of progeny is still alive and well in modern day society.

William Leach has shown how twentieth-century department stores projected the desires of its age through its display of material goods.⁸⁶ The post-modern reality of

⁸⁶ William Leach, *Land of** Desire* (New York; Vintage Books, 1994).

alternative visions and failed romances is only possible if the idyllic expectations of the twentieth century are compared to the twenty-first.

The fifth chapter questions the propriety of this nuclear family setup by analysing a two-part, fairy tale drama entitled *Into the Woods*.⁸⁷ The first act shows how wish fulfillments are realised. Rapunzel and Cinderella marry princes, the Baker and his wife have a child, and Jack steals gold from the giant in order to provide his mother with a wonderful new house.

The second act brings these modern ideals to an abrupt halt. Rapunzel is killed, Cinderella is betrayed by her prince husband, the Baker's wife has an affair, and Jack's mother is killed by a giant. These post-modern tales point to the fact that life "has its moments." Marriage is not always what it seems, temptations of affairs abound, tragedy can strike at any moment, children do not know how to become adults, and taking care of children can cause feelings of despair and being overwhelmed. The fifth chapter analyses this drama to show how life after marriage is still possible, albeit in a modified form.

The sixth chapter continues this denouement by analysing the movie, *American Beauty*.⁸⁸ It shows how the conflicted personalities that abound can find some modicum of solace and redemption. Redefining one's expectations enable each person to become integrated as a whole person.

Eaton's Department Store as an Ethic of Desire

We as a family would travel every Christmas from southern Manitoba to the window display at the south-east corner of the Eaton's Department Store in downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba (Figure 1). Snow was on the ground, winter was in the air, and people were crowded around the large window that housed a display of Santa's workshop. Warm in our parkas, we were eager with anticipation as we lined up to see (Figure 2). Children and elves were scurrying about inside, packing Christmas presents for Santa to bring us (Figure 3).

Figure 1: South-East Corner Window of Eaton's Store in Winnipeg

⁸⁷ Lapine, James. *Into the Woods*, music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1987).

⁸⁸ *American Beauty*, DVD, director Sam Mendes (Warner Brothers, 2013).



Figure 2: Lining up to See



Figure
Example

Christmas display

3:
of



An enticing aspect of the display had to do with the Eaton's Department Store inviting us inside. Glass display windows surrounded the store on the main floor. High ceilings inside accentuated space. Escalators took customers to every one of the eight floors (Figure 4). A restaurant called the Grill Room was situated on the fifth floor (Figure 14).

We were mesmerized by these features. We would ride the escalators up and down -- again and again. We would get lost from our parents' care. We were astonished at the sheer amount of goods being sold. We would wander from one aisle to another, wondering what we would find next.

The Eaton's Store represents a capsule of desire. It contains all the things a family needs. It forms a hierarchy of values that leads its customers on a series of steps. These stages include desire to intimacy, intimacy to love,

Figure 4: Eight Floors of the Eaton's Store in Winnipeg



love to commitment, commitment to marriage, marriage to a house, and a house to a home. Children represent consummation of desire as well as a progenic future.

The Eaton's Store encapsulates all of these things in an analogical and structural manner. This chapter builds on the work of historian William Leach. He has shown in his book, *Land of Desire*,⁸⁹ how nineteenth-century commercialism became so successful. Mind cure, imagination, happiness, dreams, and fairy tales fomented desire through enticing department store displays.

Eaton's Store as a Hierarchy of Values

The best way of showing how the Eaton's Store entices customers into its hierarchy of values is to take the reader on a journey. We begin on the ground floor, where everyone starts as they meander their way to success and happiness. Most of the items on this floor are portable, easily accessible, and represent impulsive purchases (Figure 5). What person does not yearn to check out the jewelry, cosmetics, wallets, umbrellas, hats, lingerie, flowers, shoes, souvenirs, gloves, silverware, watches, and other “notions” that tickle one's fancy?

Figure 5: Detailed Description of Items on First Floor⁹⁰

⁸⁹William Leach, *Land of Desire*, 225-261.

⁹⁰ Bruce Allen Kopytek, *Eaton's: The Trans-Canada Store* (Charleston: History Press, 2014), 410.

WINNIPEG, 320 Portage Avenue—**SUnset 3-2115** (July 15, 1905)

Downstairs

Eaton's Foodateria 284, 379 • Lunch Bar • **Eaton's Basement**

Main Floor

The Souvenir Bar • Eaton's Flower Shop • Jewellery 215 • Silverware 215 • Clocks 215 • Cosmetics 216 • Drugs, Soaps, Sundries 212 • Candy Counters 214 • Notions 222 • Hosiery 201 • Handbags 217 • Main Floor Lingerie Bar 209 • Gloves 202 • Fashion Accessories 262 • Wigs 225 • Whatzit Nook 241 • Cameras 512 • Men's Dress Furnishings 228 • Men's Casual Furnishings 228 • Men's Clothing 229, 429 • The Pine Room 629 • Timothy E. 329 • Tuxedo Rentals and Formal Wear • Men's Footwear 237 • Men's Hats 237 • Men's Sportswear 429 • Men's Casual Clothing 229 • Adam Shop 329 • Made-To-Measure Shop 230

The main floor entices the imagination. We have entered the store with a subconscious urge to buy something. The store provides plenty of opportunity. The small portable items are just the right thing to buy for oneself or for one's girlfriend. A hat or wallet is needed to complete one's wardrobe. A gift card allows one's girlfriend to visit the cosmetics department, check out the handbags, and linger at the glass jewelry display. Who knows, maybe some earrings or even a ring is going to be a present soon for someone special?

Inviting glass windows with their displays surround the store. The large double oak doors provide ready ground floor access. The many portable items within easy reach stir the desires of the heart. Manufacturing desire is indeed a truism. Who would have thought one needed a new wallet until it was right in front of you, waiting to be picked up? Who came up with the idea of buying flowers every time you visited a friend's house? Then there are the more intimate items on display, such as lingerie and fashion accessories. The sheer availability of these items gets the imagination going.

These examples are illustrative of what takes place at any party of single peers. The women are looking their best, flashing glances at the men. The men are taking in the possibility of getting to know someone new, wondering how they are going to introduce themselves. The stage has been set for fulfilling interactions between the sexes. Each exchange, suggestive gesture, and animated conversation give the parties concerned the idea that the other person is, indeed, available -- or at least, looking. Why invite all of these young adults to a party if not for the purpose of having these individuals take the interaction further?

Figure 6: Alluring Displays in the Large Store Windows



The buying of merchandise such as a skirt fulfills a desire for consumption and ownership. Why dress up if not to attract someone else? Why flash one's jewelry if not to show off the fact that one might have money? Why look handsome and dashing if not to give the impression that one has a successful career to sustain this lifestyle?

Desire for consumption and attraction to another person are alluring because of the fleeting, momentary, and transient nature of the purchases and encounters. Tomorrow, the flowers will fade. The souvenirs will look cheap. The makeup has been overdone. The jewelry is unaffordable.

Tomorrow, one will have regrets about the one night stand. The suggestion that one was actually interested was misconstrued. The idea that one had a successful business was slightly inflated. The notion that one was available was not true.

These momentary flings and exciting encounters give us immediate, gratifying pleasures. The play of our imagination gives us great satisfaction. We have let our mind wander far beyond what was intended. We believed the suggestion that the person left with us. They gave us the idea that all things are possible.

These flights of fancy are fundamental to the yearnings of the heart. We all believe that love and happiness are possible. This longing is especially true if we are not experiencing contentment at the present. The hungrier we are for love, the more impulse buying we do. Human and material goods are there to satisfy the emptiness of our souls. We believe the innuendoes of the store merchandise -- that we are worthy and deserving of love. We believe the love that others tell us that they have for us -- in the form of flowers, a card, a glance, or a suggestion. We have not yet come to love ourselves. We fill the void by grabbing onto as much as we can grasp.

Grief counsellors John James and Russel Friedman have suggested that these “short term energy relieving behaviours” are precisely what are needed to gratify the soul.⁹¹ Going to movies, shopping, using drugs, having sex, gambling, accessing pornography, or buying things at convenience stores represent STERBs. These activities foster the idea that many things in life are immediately available for gratification.

Easily accessible items in the Department Store gave us this idea. Consumerism is alive and well precisely because we need so much of it. The sheer amount of merchandise on the first floor leads to flights of fancy. So do the fleeting parties that we attend. We long for a connection that is more than momentary. Satisfaction is so hard to come by. Why not indulge in what is available to see whether it is enough?

Harville Hendrix, in his book on relationships, *Getting the Love You Want*,⁹² accentuates the importance of impulsivity in finding love. You feel five minutes of exhilaration when you meet someone who understands you only too well. These brief moments represent a falling in love that may last a lifetime.

Sociologist Malcolm Gladwell defines intuition as “the content and origin of those instantaneous impressions and conclusions that spontaneously arise whenever we meet a new person or confront a complex situation or have to make a decision under stress.”⁹³

This statement illustrates the connection between impulse buying and the desires one has when one “falls in love.” Buying things on the first floor of Eaton’s Department Store is like the beginning of a relationship. Let us follow these bread crumbs to see where they will lead.

⁹¹ John James and Russel Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 82.

⁹² Harville Hendrix, *Getting the Love You Want*.

⁹³ Malcom Gladwell, *Blink* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2005), 16.

From Enticement to Love

The second floor always scared me as a young man. I arrived via escalator. Endless rows of women's dresses, skirts, coats, blouses, lingerie, shoes, and accessories surrounded me. I fled the scene, finding my way to the third and fourth floors.

The fourth floor was just as scary. It added more of the same as the second floor. Bridal gowns, prom dresses, fur coats, bathrobes, bras and panties, hairdressers, and beauty salons were there for the asking (Figure 7).

My anxiety reminded me of an incident that occurred shortly after I graduated from Bible College. I went to visit a girl friend of mine. I had worked together with her during the summers in between studies on a farm in southern Manitoba. We knew each other casually. We had not seen each other for a while. We liked the camaraderie of each other's company.

On the evening in question, the young woman appeared for my visit at her home in a dress. I was nonplussed. I had never seen her in a dress before. We had always worked in overalls and jeans. We had dressed casually on various social occasions.

I realised that something was going on. Her wearing of a dress meant that she considered this a more formal occasion. She was sending a nonverbal message about what she understood as possible reasons for my visit. I was not prepared to meet whatever expectations she may have had.

I fled the scene as soon as I could. Even though I was an adult, I was quite immature about relationships. I did not realise the message that I may have been sending.

The second and fourth floors at Eaton's represented a world utterly foreign to me. The merchandise displayed was attractive. Like the visit with my friend, however, it was also quite intimidating. Women's shops generally outnumber men's stores. Eaton's mimicked this trend by having two whole floors dedicated to women's fashions.

By way of contrast, men's clothing was relegated to twenty per cent of the space on the first floor (Figure 5). Men are lazier about buying clothing for their wardrobe. They need it readily at hand in order to give it some attention. Two dedicated floors of women's fashions, on the other hand, showed me that dressing up is serious business for women.

Figure 7: Items on the Second and Fourth Floors⁹⁴

Second Floor

Fashion Fabrics 233 • Creative Stitchery 224 • Sewing Machines • Flame and Flower 208 • Popular Price Sleepwear 209 • Popular Price Loungewear 209 • Popular Price Lingerie 209, 509 • Body Fashions 609 • Slipper Bar 238 • Women's Shoes 238 • Popular Price Dresses 345 • Popular Price Sportswear 545 • Popular Price Coats 445 • Shoe Repair • Custom Gift Wrapping

Fourth Floor

The Colony 744, 246 • Colony Dresses 341 • Young Sophisticates 341 • Mayfair Place 444 • Women's Place 446, 546 • Shoe Salon • Millinery 264 • Wigs 304 • Fur Salon 248 • Bridal Shop • Lingerie 609 • At Home • Loungewear 609 • Foundation Garments 609 • Beauty Salon • Fourth Gear 640 • Attitude 646 • No. 1 Shop 442 • Coats and Suits • The Weather Vane • Like Young Shop 611 • Mayfair Place 444 • Beauty Salon • The Trimmers • Junior Dresses 241

The difference that a dress made for me was revealed when my girl friend showed up in a dress for our evening encounter. I interpreted the message she was sending me in this way: "We have flirted long enough. We have become friends. We like each other. You recently graduated from college. You are ready to get down to business. The attraction I feel for you could easily turn into love. I am ready to take the next step in our relationship. Are you?"

See what happens when one gets on the escalator and discovers two floors of women's fashions? The friendship that this woman and I had developed was interpreted as something that could become more. The dress gave a clear non-verbal sign that she was ready for a more serious relationship. I realised quite quickly that I was not ready.

I (literally) descended back to the first floor. I was much more familiar with innuendo, flirtation, friendship, and impulse buying. The seriousness of women's fashions had not yet made its impression on me. In case of doubt, there was a bridal shop on the fourth floor.

Figure 8: Window Display of Women's Dresses

⁹⁴ Bruce Kopytek, *Eaton's*, p. 411.



Reality Check

The third floor should be enough of a reality check for any male college graduate. Culinary items, kitchen appliances, washing machines and dryers, vacuum cleaners, and home maintenance equipment -- along with sporting goods and toys -- occupy the space. Given the friendship experience described above, I may want to linger as a single man among the sporting goods and toys for some time to come -- shall we say ten years or so?

The other items denote a similar type of reality check. Lawn mowers, snowblowers, hedge clippers, and furnaces give one the idea that owning a house may be preferable to renting. One can only accumulate so many culinary items before one needs a bigger kitchen to put them in. One can only move couches and beds and tables and chairs so many times before one wants to opt for a more permanent arrangement.

Figure 9: Items on The Third Floor

Third Floor

Seven Seas Gift Shop 270 • Impulse Shop • Glassware 252 • Crystal 252 • China 252 • The Gift Shop 218 • Bar Shop 218 • Bridal Registry • Silver Holloware 515 • Silver Flatware 515 • Housewares 254 • Creative Kitchen • The Current Electric 277 • Kitchen Country 254 • The Open Hearth Shop 276 • Mowers 253 • Snowblowers 253 • Ranges 256 • Washers and Dryers 257 • Dishwashers 256 • Refrigerators and Freezers 259 • Vacuum Cleaners 258 • Personal Care 477 • Furnaces 556 • Plumbing 456 • Pet Shop 253 • Sporting Goods 261 • Coins, Stamps 405 • Toys 271 • Third Floor Meats 281 • Fancy Food Shop 579 • Cake Counter 1108K • Char Bar • Grill Room Products

The third floor leaves the impression that something more solid is available to meet one's housing needs. I may continue to engage in sports for some time to come. I may find bikes and exercise equipment enjoyable to use. I may use these pursuits to avoid thinking about relationships and more permanent arrangements. I may be content to rent and move to different apartments for some time to come.

The third floor brings the idea of home ownership into full view. While remaining a bachelor, I may continue to visit the third floor to furnish the new house I have purchased. The size of the space afforded by a house begs the question of companionship. None of the items described on the third floor encompass the richness of relationships indicated as possible by the second and fourth floors. The steps from intimacy to love and commitment implied on these floors, regardless of gender issues, can be applied to any type of relationship. Changing fashions and divisions of labour can just as easily be adjusted.

The second, third, and fourth floors reveal a reality not evident on the first floor. I may wear a handsome tuxedo to the prom. I may really be a pauper living out of the back of my truck. I appear loving and charming and interested. The truth of the matter may be that I am unable to give of myself to others. I may be so self-absorbed that I have little time for anyone else.

These other realities -- masked from view by presentation -- are warning indicators. Not all is as it seems when one remains on the first floor. The alluring trinkets and momentary pleasures give the impression that there is more to come, more to experience, more to achieve, more to gain. None of these expectations or imaginary flights of fancy may be real.

The second, third, and fourth floors reveal a place where fiction and reality, fantasy and enjoyment, attraction and commitment come together. We can stay on the

fiction, fantasy, and attraction side of the equation. Or we can think about what real relationships mean – and imply. Every person can name a time when a relationship went from the first to the second and fourth floors -- from attraction to love and commitment. One can also name reality checks that appeared along the way, causing relationships to go sideways. The third floor represents a hiatus to what is possible and satisfactory – in relationships as well as in material possessions.

I have offered relationship courses during my chaplaincy career because of the jarring reality that comes when we realise that our partner, spouse, lover, and confidante are different from what we assumed. Our impressions were based on the initial, first floor experiences of infatuation, intimacy, immediacy, and pleasure. Expectations and demands of commitment were not yet real.

Harville Hendrix has written a book about relationships for couples who are on the verge of breaking up.⁹⁵ He believes that the love experienced in the first five minutes of infatuation can, in fact, last a life time. Couples jarred from their illusory perches when visiting the second, third, and fourth floors need to descend once again to the impulsive pleasures experienced on the first floor. What was it about the fleeting glance of fancy, endearing smile, and inviting stance that meant so much in the first place? Can one be attracted to the same person for the same reasons ten and twenty and thirty years after the initial encounter?

The Eaton's Department Store encapsulates all of the things necessary for living. The eight-floor display of an organic whole is alluring precisely because of its non-existence in reality. Many of the Eaton's stores have been torn down. The ever expanding ranch-style malls that feature ground level access to everything has put hierarchy into question. The Eaton's store is an organic metaphor for life because of its attractiveness to the imagination.

Structural analysis of the store reveals dynamics of attraction, consumption, and profoundly intimate relationships. The displays provide visual ways of conceptualizing the nature, progression, and destiny of love. The physical accoutrements of the cosmetic department speak about why anyone would adorn themselves in that way in the first place. What are these accessories but entrapments of love? Where do these entrapments lead but to the purchase of washing machines, fridges, ranges, and dryers?

From Love and Commitment to Babies and Families

⁹⁵ Harville Hendrix, *Getting the Love You Want*.

The fifth floor represents the store's organic centre. Children are most protected here, in the womb of all beginnings. Couples who arrive as lovers and significant others, husbands and wives, leave as parents. The fifth floor is far away from the lure of relationship beginnings.

Infant apparel and children's accessories have been placed here because so many people are not ready for this next step. Ascending the escalator from the fourth to fifth floors has everything to do with the nine months of pregnancy necessary to become prepared to care for a baby. There are, of course, many couples who cannot have any of their own biological children. They may adopt or provide foster care of children who become their own. Others give of themselves in other ways as single adults, volunteering, writing books, and caring for others.

Figure 9: Entrapment of Love through Fantasy



Each in their own way live tremendously fruitful lives. The Eaton's store represents an arbitrary snapshot of average life, in which children are often included as part of the overall picture.

The fifth floor represents a transition from the mutual benefits that each person receives from the love and passion of relationships to the responsibility of caring for

a third, utterly helpless baby. Parenting displaces the mutual benefits of interactive adulthood with something called responsibility: selfless care for another human being. There are many benefits that result from having children. Some of these may only become apparent thirty years later.

Figure 10: Window Displays of Love and Passion



Figure 11: Items on the Fifth Floor

Fifth Floor

Hostess Shop • Portrait Studio 612 • The Grill Room • The Valley Room • The Soup Kettle

Young World—Infants' Wear 210 • Nursery Shop • Young Happenings • Children's Wear 210 • Eaton's Juvenile • Children's Shoes 239 • Girls' Wear 211 • Jean Tree 211 • Younger Crowd Shop 211 • Children's Hosiery 201 • Junior Shoes 239 • Action 5 611 • Boy's Clothing • Students' Clothing 432 • Abstract Shop 332 • 1-2-3 Boutique • Blue Tube

Parents are caught up with the sheer enjoyment of throwing themselves into this new adventure. The fifth floor provides many opportunities to satisfy these desires: baby carriages and baby clothes, cribs and baby car seats, family pictures and mementos of this auspicious occasion. Then there is all the fuss that goes along with caring for this tiny little infant.

Figures 12: Christmas is for Children, Dolls, Toys, and Baby Carriages





Children appear in the Christmas window displays, on the cover of the Eaton's catalogue, and in a variety of promotional materials about toys. We as adults relive the innocence, excitement, anticipation, joy, and sheer embrace of life that we experienced as young children. Why take your children to the Eaton's display window if not to get some satisfaction for yourself? Why take your children on the Ferris wheel if not to relive the enjoyment you experienced thirty years ago in being lifted weightless into the sky? What does a visit to the toy department represent but an opportunity to buy toys for oneself: boats, trucks, furniture, paintings, rugs, dressers, snowmobiles, and building equipment that one played with in miniature fashion when one was young?

Gratification of Culinary Delights

A second delight in visiting the fifth floor has to do with the opportunity to dine in fine style in the Grill Room. Silver cutlery, cloth napkins, crystal glasses, fine china on clean white linen tablecloths adorn the tables. Indian rugs grace the floor. A sacred canopy of glass chandeliers, opulent paintings, and open space set the scene. Every Eaton's store was furnished with one of these restaurants, personally designed and looked after by Lady Eaton.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Carol Anderson and Katharine Mallinson, *Lunch with Lady Eaton* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2004), 50, 67, 72-73, 98.

In contrast to Winnipeg's Grill Room, which was located on the fifth floor (Figure 13), the Georgian Room in Toronto and the *9ieme* in Montreal were located on the top ninth floors (Figures 15 and 17). An array of analogies suggests themselves. Breakfast, lunch, and supper are when family meets most often as a collective unit. Agreeing on meals, disagreeing on chores, and commiserating with each other about work travails are daily fare. Teasing each other about possible boyfriends, noting *faux pas* in etiquette, and sharing news about family and friends completes the scene.

Sitting around a table with family and friends represents a microcosm of society. Young and old, helpless and responsible, peers and mutual friends experience camaraderie and belonging on a deeply intimate level. We are more than the sum of our parts. We participate as a subconscious collective in vicarious ways with all of the associations, concerns, anxieties, and joys of larger society.

We consume the pleasures of contemporary life as a niche market at the dinner table. We are convinced that we have arrived and are living securely. The fruits of our labour, our love, our care, our commitment, and our loyalty are evident in the people around us. Children, adults, and friends gather around us in a secure living space. We lap in the luxury of sumptuous food before us, gleaming plates off which we eat, and the warmth of our winter home.


Figure 13: Grill Room on the Fifth Floor of Winnipeg Eaton's Store⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 98.




Figure 14: Recipes of Some Dishes on the Menu⁹⁸

Original Georgian Room Chicken Pot Pie



- 1 pastry for one double-crust pie
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 2 tbsp. soft butter
- 2 tbsp. chicken fat
- 8 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup mushrooms — sliced
- 4 oz. jar red pimiento — drained and chopped
- 12 potato balls — steamed until just tender
- 1½ generous cups cooked white chicken meat in large pieces
- 1½ generous cups cooked dark chicken meat in large pieces

Iced Beet Borscht



- 4 cups beef stock
- 1 cup tomato juice
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 1 cup beet (finely shredded)
- ¼ cup carrot (finely shredded)
- ½ cup cabbage (finely shredded)
- 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2½ tbsp. soft butter
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- 1 tbsp. whipped cream/bowl

1. Bring stock to boil. Add vegetables and simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
2. Heat tomato juice and stir in.
3. Mix flour and butter into a roux. Whisk into above mixture. Add sugar and vinegar.
4. Simmer 5 to 10 minutes.
5. Push through a fine sieve and chill.
6. Re-season if necessary. Serve cold with a tablespoon of whipped cream with each serving.

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 158, 163.

Figure 15: Georgian Room on the Ninth Floor in Toronto's Eaton Store⁹⁹

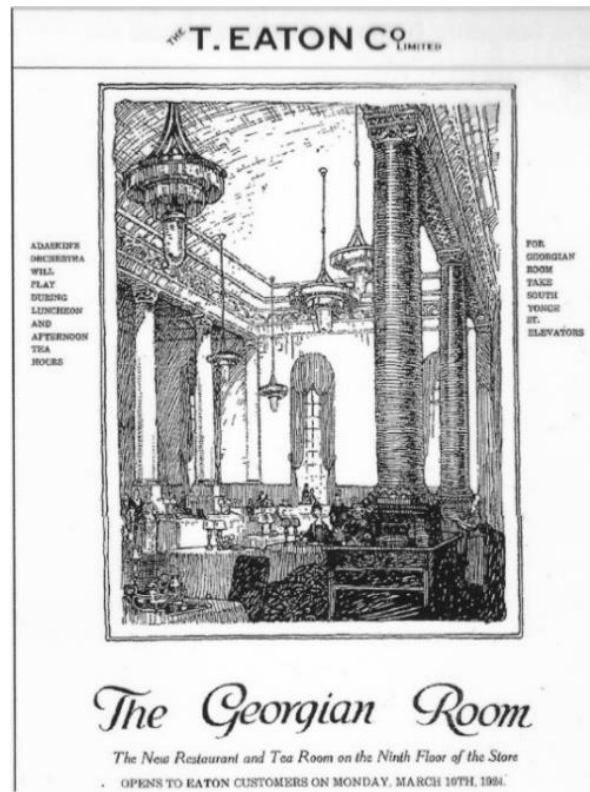


Figure 16: Feasting at Christmas

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 50



Captain of our own Ship

The fact that the Eaton's dining rooms in Toronto and Montreal were situated on the top floors invites the analogy of a captain in charge of a ship. Lady Eaton designed the Montreal restaurant (Figure 17) after the elongated formality of the first-class dining room located on the luxury ocean liner *Ile de France*. She had just completed a transatlantic voyage from Europe to Canada on the ship. She included as many exotic elements into the design of the restaurant as possible:

. . . seven shades of Scotch Ruboleum tiles, *Escalette breche* to complement the use of black Belgian marble on the floor, raised balconies with railings of Monel metal, beige and pink French fabric to cover the walls, opal glass to reflect light from the windows, columns, lintels, bas-reliefs, large ceramic vases on either end of the room, and to top it off, two large murals by Natacha Carlu entitled "Amazonian Arcadia, representing 'The Pleasures of the Chase' and 'The Pleasures of Peace.'"¹⁰⁰

A colleague of mine explained why he went on cruises. "All the drinks and dining and entertainment and sleeping arrangements are supplied. You are served by

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 71-74.

waiters and waitresses at every turn. You live like a king. It is the only time that I feel as though I am a rich man, living at the expense and on the avails of others.”

Figure 17: Montreal's *Le 9ieme*, on the Ninth Floor of Eaton's¹⁰¹



How true that statement sounded to me. I was living on a similar middle class income. Given the responsibilities of family life. I marveled at the riches and opulence which a few other people could enjoy.

The Eaton's store replicated this contrasting reality. It left the functionality of daily living on the lower floors while offering more exotic pleasures on the top floors. The fact that the Grill Room was located on the middle floor of the Winnipeg store reflected the lower class existence of this small prairie city's residents. The same could not be said for Toronto or Montreal. That (upper) society deserved so much more. These two cities had restaurants touching the sky and reflecting the richness of their (deserved) wealth. Who says we do not live in a class society?

Our wish fulfillment to live the American dream was fulfilled when we ate at these restaurants. Us commoners could partake of the lavishness of the 9th floor restaurants

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 72-73.

of Toronto and Montreal. We could claim our more humble working class roots when we dined at the fifth floor restaurant in Winnipeg.

A healthy amount of imagination is needed to know what a million dollars can buy. Just ask Lady Eaton for the price of those Scottish tiles, French bricks, and Belgian marble. Their price range is well beyond that of actual items for sale in the Eaton's store. The consumer items featured on the lower floors have been presented as attainable on a middle class salary. More luxurious items are available on the upper floors -- should one choose to ascend those escalators.

Eating at these opulent Eaton's restaurants gives a person the sense that one is master of one's own universe and destiny. Being on top of the world in these dining facilities allows one to think that one is captain of one's own ship. Eaton's stores were located in the heart of Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal. These department buildings represented the largest retail outlets in the area.

Shopping and dining there gave one the impression that one was part of something larger. One was no longer simply part of a family microcosm. The consumer and luxury goods displayed spoke of an economic reality that drove the engine of society. One identified with this macrocosmic industry of production through one's presence in the store. The displayed goods projected a reality of labour of which everyone was a part. Everyone contributed their own labour in order to become masters of their respective houses and homes.

From Common Goods and Fleeting Pleasures to Durability

The seventh floor of the Eaton's Department Store is the one I remember the best. I rarely ventured there, for fear of being turned away in my dowdy attire. *The Gallery of Fine Furniture, Studio of Interior Design, Colonial Room, and Gallery of Fine Art* were not arbitrary designations. An endless supply of Persian rugs graced the floor. Soft leather couches, maple dining room tables, oak desks, mahogany buffets, wrought iron end tables, and matching bedroom sets were scattered randomly throughout the large space. I had arrived. I was not willing to ask for prices. I could not imagine that I would ever be able to afford such luxuries.

My financial inability to purchase these items was the point. These unaffordable consumer goods served the same purpose as the opulent items featured as décor in the dining rooms. They were meant to excite the imagination. They were there to elevate the possibilities of what might be – one day. Their alluring presence could be compared to the car salesperson who asked me which car or truck I really wanted.

The salesman's knowledge of my wish fulfillment gave him an idea of how much I was willing to spend. Affordability was not the issue.

The fact that the Persian rugs looked so lush meant that I now knew what I really wanted. It did not matter how many *faux* imitations I would buy to convince myself that this or that "knock-off" would do. The real thing continued to tempt, just out of reach.

An analogy to relationships is apropos. Antique furniture, expensive paintings, and luxurious rugs represent the state of existence once one has arrived. These material items symbolize a solidity, heritage, fondness, trust, bonding, and familiarity that cannot be replicated. One can compare these items to a marriage, well lived over a number of years. Love comes in the form of durability, strength, elasticity, and firmly etched faces.

Figure 18: Items on the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Floors

Sixth Floor Bed linens 236 • Bath Linens 336 • Bath Boutique • Table Linens 356 • Entertainment Centre 248, 460 • Musical Instruments 560 • Home Comfort 356 • Draperies 267, 456 • Upholstery Fabrics 267 • Home Improvements 353 • Books 205
Seventh Floor Gallery of Fine Furniture 770 • Accent 7 718 • Furniture 270, 470 • Colonial Corner • Scandinavian Shop • Studio of Interior Design • Pictures 266 • Wall Decor 266 • Gallery of Fine Art 271 • Mattresses • Mirrors 276 • Lamps 377 • Assembly Hall
Eighth Floor Hardware 263 • Garden Equipment 280 • Potting Shed 480 • Lawn and Garden Furniture 280 • Sporting Goods 261 • Pro Shop • Rod and Gun Shop • Outdoor Shop • Paint and Wallcovering 274 • Unfinished Furniture 370 • Luggage 264 • Eaton's Travel

Compare this state of affairs to a person who decides to descend to the first floor. New infatuations, momentary pleasures, and immediate gratifications are available there. Film director Tyler Perry describes what this contrasting dynamic is like in his movie, *Why Did I Get Married?*¹⁰² After being married for twenty years, the husband falls in love with a young woman and separates from his wife.

¹⁵ Tyler Perry, *Why Did I Get Married*, DVD (Lionsgate Films, 2007).

After two years of living with his new girlfriend, the man comes to the following realization: “How can the 20 per cent that she (the young woman) offers replace the 80 per cent of love and affection and caring and loyalty and bonding that my ‘real’ spouse gave me during the last twenty years?” Alas, this insight comes too late. Reconciliation is no longer possible. His ex-wife has moved on.

This new relationship is like buying items on the first floor all over again. These fleeting transitory treasures are immediately satisfying and immeasurably pleasurable. Unfortunately, trinkets, jewelry, hats, gloves, and lingerie cannot compete on a substantial level with the fine furniture that is meant to last on the seventh floor. Fine furnishings are acquired when they mean something, A celebration of love that has flourished and endured represents the same thing.

Carefully selected pieces of art along with carelessly arranged couches, buffets, and mantles within a breadth of space on the seventh floor shows the customer what being rich is all about. One needs so few things with an exorbitant price tag (of sacrifice) to say so much.

Figure 19: Celebration of Family at Christmas



Conclusion

This journey through “Santa’s winter wonderland” called the Eaton’s Department Store has hopefully endeared itself to the reader. Consumerism is alive and well. Let us celebrate its presence among us by knowing exactly why it is there. It points to the things that really matter: love and intimacy, commitment and time-honoured celebrations.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Eaton’s Store Catalogue featured a whole-house-in-a-kit that they were willing to ship to your door. How we wish for such things today. Is it any wonder that tiny houses have become a fantasy item to buy and build? The world has become too large. We need it more manageable, at our supper tables, in our bedrooms, in the yard, with our children, with our parents, and with each other.

Chapter Five

Into the Woods to Find Our Identity

Oedipal Complexes

James Lapine's play, *Into the Woods*, deals with ways that fairy tale characters are caught up in Oedipal complexes.¹⁰³ Jack can not fully grow up until his mother has died. Rapunzel is fated with never being able to grow up because of the stringent control of her mother, the Witch. The Baker's father, Mysterious Man, makes his appearance as a dead apparition at the most inopportune times. The father makes amends for himself while complicating things for his son. Red Riding Hood can not grow up until her grandmother has replaced her red cloak with a wolf skin coat. Cinderella can not grow up until the tree by her mother's grave has been destroyed. She discovers the philandering ways of her charming Prince husband.

The dialogue between Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood at the end of Act II sets the tone for overcoming Oedipal complexes. Little Red Riding Hood is crying because her mother and grandmother are gone. She suggests that they would be very unhappy with her. She is about to help the other fairy tale characters kill a giant.

Cinderella responds by singing the following lines:¹⁰⁴

Mother cannot guide you.
Now you're on your own.
Only me beside you.
Still, you're not alone.

¹⁰³ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*. I am referencing the book while being aware of its differences from the movie version, *Into the Woods*, DVD (Walt Disney Studios, 2015).

¹⁰⁴ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 128-129.

No one is alone, truly.
No one is alone.
Sometimes people leave you,
Halfway through the wood.
Others may deceive you.
You decide what's good.
You decide alone.
But no one is alone.

Cinderella is suggesting that Little Red Riding Hood is not alone because Cinderella is beside her. Cinderella is willing to support Little Red Riding Hood with what ever decisions she makes. At the same time, Little Red Riding Hood has to make these choices on her own. Becoming an adult means letting one's parents and friends influence you while taking the consequences for making a decision on your own.

Jack and Rapunzel go through the same experience of “deciding alone” with only “me beside you.” Jack proved his worth by climbing the beanstalk and stealing gold, a hen, and a harp from the giants. He made his mother rich beyond her wildest dreams. Jack helped kill the first giant.

His mother continues to treat him like a child. In the middle of the second Act, she exclaims:¹⁰⁵

You're still a little boy in your mother's eyes.
I want you to promise, Promise (not to leave your surroundings).

She is afraid of what the second giant will do to him.

A similar fate awaits Rapunzel. She runs hysterically off into the sunset with her two children. She cannot handle the power that her mother has over her. Her mother tells her to “stay here.” The Witch bemoans Rapunzel's subsequent death under the feet of the giant:¹⁰⁶

Couldn't you listen? Couldn't you stay content, safe behind walls, as I could not? . . . No matter what you say, children won't listen, No matter what you know, children refuse to learn (You will only lose them in the end).

¹⁰⁵ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 92.

¹⁰⁶ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 105-106.

Rapunzel was unable to transfer her affections to the Prince so that she would be rid of her mother's voice for ever.¹⁰⁷

Red Riding Hood's destiny is more fortuitous. The Baker's rescue of her and her grandmother from the stomach of the wolf has the desired effect. Red Riding Hood learns how to fend for herself and become a woman. She appears with a knife as well as a wolf-skin cloak. She brandishes the weapon when Jack comes upon her at the end of Act I.¹⁰⁸ She calls his bluff by daring Jack to climb back up the beanstalk to retrieve the harp about which he gloats. A possible budding love interest between these two adolescent teenagers is left to the imagination.

Then there is Cinderella. She dillies and dailies because she cannot make up her mind about why she wants to go to the Ball. She wants to go because her step-mother and step-sisters are going. She wants to go because it sounds so exciting to meet a Prince. She wants to get away from her drudgery.

None of these factors are enough to convince her that the Prince will fulfill her desires. The audacity of a poverty-stricken girl to wish after royalty is delusional thinking. Cinderella decides while dithering that she will put the shoe on the other foot. The prince will have to decide if she is really worth it. She leaves her slipper as a tempting clue.¹⁰⁹

Cinderella is not happy in spite of her subsequent marriage and dream fulfillment of living in a castle. She sends her Prince husband off to look for the second giant. She goes back into the woods to find the missing pieces of her life. Cinderella is met by the second giant. Red Riding Hood asks her to comfort her. The Baker needs someone to look after his son. Cinderella discovers that her Prince Charming is a philanderer, not only with the Baker's wife, but with Sleeping Beauty and Snow White as well.

To say that Cinderella grows because of these events is an understatement. Growing up can be defined as that which you become after that-which-you-became comes undone. Cinderella rejects the reconciling advances of her husband Prince because of his inability to grow up. She becomes a mother figure to Red Riding Hood. She becomes a willing compatriot -- significant other -- of the Baker because he needs

¹⁰⁷ Note the action that takes place in Act I, when Rapunzel's Prince has to pull her away from her mother, James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 73.

¹⁰⁸ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 61-62.

¹⁰⁹ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 64.

someone to take care of himself, his son, and his house. Cinderella realises that she is indeed a cleaning woman, albeit reborn.

We turn to one of the main characters of the play. The Baker is an ambiguous figure. He dithers, unable to make decisions. The Witch's curse of his wife's barrenness was the result of his father's past actions. The Baker's father continues to appear in shadowy form as an omnipresence. The Baker tries to reform his ways by searching in the forest for four items to reverse the curse. He tells his wife to stay home in order to protect her. He brushes off "vague suggestions" by his father figure.

The Baker finds it difficult to fulfill tasks on his own. He and his wife argue about any number of things until they realise that doing things together is better. They learn adaptability through their adventure in the woods. Their mutual objective of removing the curse can be fulfilled through greater respect, patience, and affirmation of each other.¹¹⁰ The husband and wife are able to reverse the curse by feeding the four items to the cow. The wife gives birth to a son. They live happily together as bakers and parents.

This newfound focus and confidence by both parties does not last long. The Baker remains unsure of himself as a parent. The baby cries when he holds it. His wife falls to her death from a cliff after a tryst with Cinderella's Prince. Faced with the sudden death of his wife and defeating the second giant, the Baker runs away. He tells himself that avoiding responsibility is better than facing it.

Baker's subsequent dialogue with his Dad's shadowy appearance reveals the Oedipal nature of this insecurity. His father ran away from his guilt of having brought on the curse. He became the Mysterious Man because of his need to be invisible. The Baker is doing the same thing. He runs away from grief at his wife's death and insecurity at having to be responsible.¹¹¹

The Baker comes to his senses in spite of it all. He returns to Jack, Red Riding Hood, and Cinderella as much to be with his son as to help them out. They decide together on a plan to defeat the giant. The play ends with the five of them becoming a family that support each other and live together in the Baker's home. A love interest between the Baker and Cinderella, and between Red Riding Hood and Jack, is left to the imagination.

Post-Modern Nature of the Tale

¹¹⁰ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 54-55.

¹¹¹ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 123-125.

The characters overcome their Oedipal complexes and become independent of their parents in a post-modern way.¹¹² The easiest way to explain the transition from modernity to post-modernity is to take the example of Cinderella. In the first Act, she fulfilled her dream of marrying the Prince and living in a castle. She believed that this was about as much as life had to offer.

Cinderella becomes disenchanted in the second Act. She finds out that her husband Prince is not faithful to her. The crutch of her mother's magic tree that took her to the Ball is destroyed. Cinderella is given new opportunities in this state of malaise. She re-embraces a negative aspect of her past life as a cleaning lady to become family and community to the Baker, Red Riding Hood, and Jack. Her negative experiences galvanize Cinderella into reinventing and reaffirming aspects of herself. This journey represents the death of a modern fantasy in favour of a thoroughgoing mundane and contented existence.

This is how commentator Robert McLaughlin describes the process:¹¹³

. . . at the same time the characters are moving narratively forward in pursuit of their wishes, many of them are motivated by a contrary desire to move narratively backward so as to repair their damaged, fractured families, and reclaim their prefragmented, presocialized, pre-adulthood selves, selves that are marked by a peaceful, contented, holistic unit. The unity here is connected not just to an infant's relationship with the mother but is also a complex family unit: mother, father, child, and home.

A similar transformation happens to other characters. Jack becomes more manly after the death of his mother. He comes up with a plan to kill the giant. He wants to kill the Steward for killing his mother. The Baker affirms the need for the Steward to be punished while suggesting that killing is wrong. The fact that Jack listens – and evidently obeys -- the Baker represents a more mature attitude on his part to adult

¹¹² Olaf Jubin explains the post-modern nature of the tale in relation to death of the Narrator half-way through Act II. The Narrator pleads with the characters that he is the only one as an objective observer who knows “the proper ending of the story.” The Witch pushes him into the path of the Giant anyway. According to Jubin, the death of the narrator makes the “disorientation and confusion of the characters become *our* confusion,” making their moral decisions “easier to relate to and easier to evaluate,” Olaf Jubin, *Sondheim and Lapine's Into the Woods* (London: Routledge, 2018), 36. Act I represents a modern tale in which characters live happily ever after because they have fulfilled their deepest desires. Act II represents post-modernity. The unexpected malaise of a routinized existence of contentment furnishes the wherewithal for characters to enter the woods again, to see what they can see. Some are reborn while others die in the liminal state of being in the woods.

¹¹³ Robert McLaughlin, *Stephen Sondheim and the Reinvention of the American Musical* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016), 171.

authority figures. Jack has progressed from an infantile Oedipal relationship with his mother to internalizing values of authority and justice.

Red Riding Hood fulfills her post-modern destiny when Cinderella comforts her upon the death of her grandmother. Cinderella acknowledges that Red Riding Hood is “now alone” and that she will have to “decide alone.” She also tells Red Riding Hood that she will be making these decisions with Cinderella “beside her.”¹¹⁴

Not “being alone” does not mean that everyone is in this together. Red Riding Hood alone knows what it is like to have been raped and eaten by a wolf. There is a reason why she carries a knife at her side. While sharing grief with Cinderella, Red Riding Hood alone experiences despair and loneliness at being abandoned. Post-modernity means living bravely in an imperfect world, where bad things happen to us. We have to come to terms with them in the solitude of our existence.

The Baker’s grief over the death of his wife galvanizes him into responsibility after a brief bout of self-pity and avoidance. He realises that there is no one else who can defeat the giant. The Baker represents the oldest member of the group. As a recent widower and father who loves his son, the Baker inspires other members of the group to come up with a plan to defeat the giant. Cinderella calls on the birds to help them. The Baker suggests spreading pitch on the ground to get the giant’s feet stuck. Jack comes up with the idea of climbing a tree and hitting the giant with a club.

After the giant has been defeated, the Baker accepts his compatriots’ help in spite of himself. His house is in shambles. Comradery in the face of danger, companionship in the face of loneliness, and parenting in the face of death represent the post-modern nature of this tale. A blended family of solidarity has replaced the biological logic of filial love.

Taking Responsibility for One’s Actions

Neither an Oedipal complex nor post-modernity adequately explain how reinterpretation and reclamation of identity and purpose are actualized. What gives these fairy tale characters the capacity, willpower, and willingness to embrace common companionship with strangers when so much has gone wrong? The Baker suggests to Jack that he will have to “take care of himself” now that his mother has

¹¹⁴ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 128-132.

died.¹¹⁵ How is this act of adulthood achieved in relation to the difficulties encountered?

The first answer comes when everyone is blaming each other for the arrival of the second giant.¹¹⁶ The difficulty of accepting responsibility for times when we are less than good is shown in plain view. I was struck by this extended deflection on the part of all the characters. I have worked with inmates who are masters at playing the blame game. I repeatedly tell them: spread the blame as widely as possible so you have to take less responsibility for your part.

The characters do an admirable job of tracing the source of the problem to the person next to them. The blame goes from Jack who planted the beans to the Baker who gave them to him. Blame is shifted to the Witch who cursed the house and to the Baker's father who stole the beans. Fingers are pointed at the Baker's wife who pocketed an extra bean and to Cinderella who threw the bean away. Each person finds a way of linking the arrival of the giant to their neighbour.

The characters continue to circle the wagons of blame. Blame is brought back to Jack and his mother, to Red Riding Hood, and finally to the Witch who planted the beans. The Witch stops the deflections by taking responsibility.¹¹⁷ She speaks about a possible apocalypse that could take place as a result of what has happened. She returns to a state of ugliness as punishment for having lost the beans. The Witch disappears in a swirl of magic. Is it any wonder that no one wants to take the blame? There are consequences for erring on the side of wrong and evil.

Some characters admit responsibility after the Witch has disappeared. Jack should not have "stolen from the giant." Red Riding Hood should not have "strayed from the path." Cinderella should not have "attended the Ball." These characters are willing to take responsibility for their part in the catastrophe that has occurred.¹¹⁸

Another dimension of "no-one being alone" becomes evident. The offenders with whom I worked were unable to take other people's feelings into account when they committed their crimes. In fact, the offenders had to suspend any empathy at all to offend against their victims. They considered themselves to be the only ones that mattered in this situation.

¹¹⁵ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 134.

¹¹⁶ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 114-122.

¹¹⁷ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 120-122.

¹¹⁸ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 122.

Some inmates owned up to the fact that their actions had caused a ripple effect of hurt. This acknowledgement of regret represented a beginning for inmates to understand the amount of harm and grief they had caused. The social and moral consequences of these men's offences against other people are what James Lapine is communicating in his statement that "no-one is alone."

Disassembling of Self-Identity

A second part of this transformation has to do with the fact that identities can become disassembled. Life choices are ruined because of the lure of momentary pleasures. The woods represent a place where anything can happen. Innocence is lost in the case of Red Riding Hood. The Baker and his wife succeed in having a child. Rapunzel and Cinderella meet and marry their true loves. Jack and his mother become exceedingly rich. The Witch is turned into a woman of beauty because of her willingness to reverse the curse.

The inviting threshold of newness and otherness – known as liminality -- offers opportunities for success as well as failure. The woods represent obsession, allure, danger, and momentary excitement. They also offer timely fulfillment and happiness. The characters find this out for themselves when they are faced with a second giant who comes to seek her revenge.

Death lurks in the midst of this situation. Red Riding Hood's mother and grandmother, Jack's mother, the Narrator, Rapunzel, and the Baker's wife all die. Other dark aspects of existence are revealed. Rapunzel can not live in contentment with her Prince and two children. The Princes can not live with only one wife. The Baker does not know how to love his son.

The Baker's wife shows what happens when one moves from the wish fulfillment of one's modern dreams to something else. After a happy marriage to the Baker, removal of the curse of barrenness, and birth of her son, the Baker's wife decides to go back into the woods.

She becomes obsessed with Cinderella's fairy tale of infatuation and love. She asks Cinderella what going to the Ball and marrying a Prince was like. The Baker's wife meets Cinderella's Prince in an isolated spot in the woods. She shows an interest. The Prince interprets her interest as desire. They make love even as the Baker's wife remains confused about whose story she is in and which identity she has retained.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 109.

The affair reveals the dynamics between pleasurable moments of infatuation and obsession, and modern ideals of family life. After the incident, the Baker's wife exclaims:¹²⁰

Oh, if life were made of moments,
Even now and then a bad one --!
But if life were only moments,
Then you'd never know you had one.

Life is made up of continuity of identity as well as momentary flights of disorienting fancy. The wife has an affair with the Prince while being married to her husband (*both/and*). Her marriage sets boundaries for her life (*either/or*). The Baker's wife went into the woods a second time because she was not contented with being a wife and mother. She was willing to risk the *both/and* aspects of being married and having an affair. She was willing to seek momentary satisfaction knowing that this might lead to an *either/or* situation.

Either/or means that life is made up of *either* moments (an affair) *or* a continuous existence (marriage). Living in the moment means that that moment becomes more important than anything else. I can speak to this existential reality in my work with offenders. They reduced their lives to the one moment when they killed their wives, raped a young girl, sold drugs for money, became enforcers in a gang, or robbed a bank. Like the inmates that I worked with, the Baker's wife's identity as spouse, mother, businesswoman, and care giver are disassembled at the moment of the affair.

Offenders have one criminal act to remember in the face of their disassembling selves. Impulsivity, premeditation, unconscious desires, revenge, momentary pleasure, and obsession reduced the once respectable husband, businessman, father, and community leader to nothing but the deed done.

The Baker's wife's epitaph of "never knowing you had a moment" has come true. There are no moments to remember if there is nothing left of one's continuous existence called normality and self-identity into which to place that moment. It was only a moment, and a moment is all it will ever be . . . except for the hurt that victims and society continue to experience – and the punishment inflicted on that continuous existence and self-identity called an offender.

¹²⁰ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 112-113.

The death of the Baker's wife¹²¹ completes the series of losses that the four characters left on stage experience: the death of Jack's mother, the destruction of the tree by Cinderella's mother's grave and her husband's infidelity; the death of Red Riding Hood's mother and grandmother, and the death of the Baker's wife as well as his father, the Mysterious Man.

The four remaining characters are brought together as much by grief as by mutual need and cooperation. The common cause of fighting the giant is what sparked the initial community affair. What keeps the story going is the fact that these people are grieving the loss of loved ones.

The consequences of grief become abundantly clear in Cinderella's talk with Red Riding Hood. Cinderella exclaims that she will always be "beside" Red Riding Hood. Cinderella, however, cannot make the hard choices of life on her behalf. "Now you're on your own . . . you decide what's good, you decide alone."¹²²

The same scenario is repeated with the Baker and Jack. The Baker consoles Jack after the death of his mother. He cautions Jack regarding the Steward's punishment. The song sung as a communal response by the four remaining characters includes these lines:¹²³

Someone is on your side.
Our side.
Our side –
Someone is not
While we're seeing our side.
Our side --
Our side . . .
Our side –
Maybe we forgot;
They are not alone.
No one is alone.

Not being alone is brought home on the last page of the musical. Cinderella becomes Red Riding Hood's surrogate mother. The Baker becomes Jack's surrogate father.

¹²¹ Some commentators have suggested that the Baker's wife's death is too high a price to pay for "such a small indiscretion," Olaf Jubin, *Sondheim and Lapine's Into the Woods*, 40-41. Although convenient, the Baker's wife's death accentuates the loss of identity that she experiences as well as the grief that the Baker experiences.

¹²² James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 128-130.

¹²³ James Lapine, *Into the Woods*, 131-132.

Both children welcome the care and affection of their substitute parents while becoming adults. Cinderella can learn to be a mother. The Baker can learn to be a father to his (their) son. It is a new role for both of them.

The post-modern ending has as much to do with self-identity and the dangers of disassembling moments as with reconfiguration of modern ideals. Re-conception is necessary in the face of losses, death, grief, and negative experiences. Assurance that self-identity will survive and flourish is not a given.

Neither the Witch nor Rapunzel, neither the Baker's wife nor Jack's mother, neither the two Giants nor the Narrator survive their experiences in the woods. I have met many people like these characters. Some of the men that I have worked with survived – or not.

The play, *Into the Woods*, offers opportunities of modern success reconceived as acceptance of loss and reconfigured familial loyalties. Post-modernity flourishes in the midst of muted ideals, communal fellowship, and a growing self-identity.

Chapter Six

American Beauty of Conflicted Personalities

Conflicted Personalities

The movie, *American Beauty*,¹²⁴ portrays a series of characters who are struggling with life while exhibiting dysfunctional behaviours. 40-year-old Lester Burnham fantasizes about sleeping with a teenage girl named Angela. Lester's wife, Carolyn, is searching for love and fame wherever she can find it. She is attracted to her real estate idol and mentor, Buddy Kane. Daughter Jane's spoken wish to her boyfriend, Ricki, is that someone should get rid of her geeky Dad.

Then there is Ricki, the next door neighbour who sells drugs and voyeuristically videos various family scenes. Ricki's Dad, US Army Colonel Frank Fitz, collects Nazi paraphernalia and is a repressed homosexual. Angela, in turn, is a beautiful, high school cheerleader star who seems to have only one friend, Jane.

All of these characters are deeply conflicted. Lester fanaticizes about Angela because he and Carolyn have not had sex for years. He hates his job and does not know how to relate to his daughter, Jane.

Carolyn is deeply conflicted because she does not know how to live up to her dream of success represented by her alter-ego, Buddy Kane. She sees her life as a failure, including her non-relationship with her husband and daughter.

Jane is emotionally and socially estranged from her parents. She is emotionally dependent on her friend, Angela, whom she sees as the "perfect girl."

Ricki's father sent Ricki to a mental hospital when he was sixteen because Ricki beat up a fellow classmate at school and severely injured him. Ricki mimics his Dad's attitudes in order not to get into trouble while selling drugs and videoing scenes of life.

Frank Fitz, in turn, is a repressed homosexual who vilifies the gay couple living next door. He has no way of getting in touch with his own sexual identity.

Then there is Angela, who pretends that she has slept with many boys. She flirts with Jane's father because she does not know who else to turn to for attention.

These dysfunctional behaviours are evident in prison. The difference is that one of the men I worked with had killed both his parents. The sex offender had assaulted a number of teenage girls. Another offender was convicted of taking sexually explicit videos of underage children. Other inmates had been convicted of killing their

¹²⁴ *American Beauty*, DVD, director Sam Mendes (Warner Brothers, 2013).

homosexual lovers. They had deep-seated insecurities and confusion regarding their sexual identity. Then there were the drug dealers and drug users. They found ways of medicating themselves through life. The movie's depiction of each of these scenarios was very real for me.

The question I asked throughout the movie was whether these characters were able to resolve what I have called their conflicted personalities.¹²⁵ Events get worse as the movie goes along. I was surprised upon a second viewing at the manner in which most characters were able to come to some resolution of their situation.

Upon realising the futility of his life, Lester quit his seventeen-year career as a reporter. He took the lowest paying, least responsible job that he could find -- a fast-food jockey. He started lifting weights in his garage. He began to be honest about his anger toward his wife, even in front of their own daughter.

Carolyn found out how much love and acceptance she needed when she jumped into bed with Buddy Kane. She started shooting guns at the firing range. Guns throughout the movie represent latent violence lurking below the surface. The pathos of the situation is revealed when Carolyn leaves Buddy for "appearance" purposes. She drives home with a pistol in her purse. She repeats over and over again on the way home that she will not let herself become a victim. Upon entering the house, she throws her purse into a closet. She clings to her husband's clothing hanging there.

Jane finds reprieve from her alienated existence by associating with another person who is other. Jane and Ricki fall in love because there are so few people who are like them. The relationship begins when Jane takes Ricki's hand in a show of solidarity and trust. Jane transfers the negative energy that she exhibits toward her parents by confiding in Ricki that she hates her Dad and Mom.

Transformation for Ricki occurs when he videos a person in the context of a relationship, namely Jane. The seductive power of voyeurism's virtual reality is diffused and becomes real when Jane and Ricki are able to video each other.

Angela becomes real when she acts on her need to have sex by inviting Lester to sleep with her. She recognizes her need to be a star, beyond ordinary. She wants to feel great about herself. She turns to Lester as a substitute father figure because she does not know how to act on her sexual desires.

¹²⁵ I deal with some of these issues in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 91-100.

Angela admits to Lester in the context of being undressed that she has never had sex before. Lester realises in that moment that he can become a responsible father to this young vulnerable girl. He is reminded of his own daughter. He remembers the love that he had for his wife when they first met. Lester realises the supreme selfishness and inappropriateness of his own desires.

The second climax occurs when Frank Fitz shoots Lester in the back of the head. Hours before, Frank showed his vulnerability by kissing Lester in the garage where Lester was lifting weights. In a perverse twist of logic, Frank believed Lester was available because Frank's son told him that they had had oral sex together. Unable to live with the reality of what he had just done -- "come on" to Lester -- Frank killed Lester in order to erase this memory and knowledge.

I identified with the emotional turmoil of Frank Fitz. The similarity between his actions and offenders' crimes was palpable. Like Ricki's father, offenders were unable to resolve their conflicted personalities. They acted out violently to let everyone know that they could not live with themselves. They could not live with the other person with whom they were so upset. In all of these cases, guns were meant to kill, destroy, and annihilate. Some modicums of solace, peace, security, and reconciliation are necessary in order for guns to be used in a responsible manner.

The latent violence that guns represent points to their great potential of evil if left unresolved. Jane tells Ricki that someone should get rid of her father. After Ricki agrees to kill him, Jane says that she was only joking. The same thing happens when Carolyn goes to shooting ranges with Buddy. Guns represent the anger and victimization that she feels regarding Lester. She drives home with a gun in her purse. Upon entering the house, she realises that her anger has to do with what she has lost in life. She throws her purse with the gun in it into a closet.

Guns and the violence they represent are the reasons why so many offenders come to jail. Drug dealers tell me that selling drugs is not a violent crime. They were simply supplying customers with what they needed. My reply has always been the same. What did they do when their customers could not pay? Did the dealers call the police in order to have their debt paid? A level of violence is implied in illegal actions of any kind. People take the "law into their own hands" because they want to live "above the law."

The ending of the movie touched me in a profound way. Ricki and Jane go to live together on their own. Carolyn realises what she had lost. Lester becomes somewhat

responsible. Angela gets in touch with who she really is. These scenes represented redeeming moments.

The reality of violence that occurred when no resolution of conflicted personalities was possible also affected me. Frank Fitz was unable to live with himself so he killed someone else. How sad and ironic.

The only normal and content people portrayed in the movie are a gay couple living next door. They bring a bouquet of flowers to Fitz and Ricki as a sign of welcome. They represent the new post-modern family. Again, how ironic.

The question of Being is raised when Ricki and Jane watch a video of a plastic bag floating in the air for several minutes. The state of being at rest -- implied and portrayed in this viewing -- represents what Ricki, and the movie producer, consider *the beauty of America*. The question I had to ask myself is this: Is it enough?

Chapter Seven

There's no Place like Home

Outline of the Story

Reflecting on Dorothy's role in the *Wizard of Oz*¹²⁶ film represents a good way of completing this section on the use of psychological theories to analyse human

¹²⁶ *Wizard of Oz*, DVD (Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer, 1939).

behaviour. The film is about a young adolescent girl caught between protecting her dog, Toto, and giving in to Aunt Emily's admonishment to let their neighbour, Mrs. Gulch, take the dog away. The sheriff of the county gave Mrs. Gulch permission to destroy the dog because it had bitten her. After the dog is taken away, Toto escapes from the basket he is in and runs back to Dorothy. Dorothy decides that running away with Toto is the best way to save him.

Dorothy regrets her decision to run away when fortune-teller Professor Marvel, whom she meets on the way, reminds her through a crystal ball how much Aunt Emily loves her. Dorothy returns to her farm and is caught up in a tornado with the house and Toto when she is unable to open the storm shelter. The tornado deposits the house with Dorothy in it in a fairy tale World of Oz known as Munchkin land.

Thus begins Dorothy's adventure in following the yellow brick road toward Emerald City. The good witch Glinda tells Dorothy that she has to go to Emerald City in order to find her way home. Glinda provides her with some ruby slippers which will protect her on the journey. Dorothy meets three characters along the way of her quest: Scarecrow, Tinman, and the Cowardly Lion. Scarecrow wants to meet the Wizard in Emerald City in order to obtain a brain. Tinman wants to obtain a heart, while Lion wants to become courageous in the face of danger.

After arriving in the city and arranging a meeting with the Wizard, the Wizard appears in the form of a fearsome giant head with fire breathing apparatuses beside him. He tells the four main characters that he will grant their wishes after they have retrieved the broomstick from the Wicked Witch of the West.

The wicked witch subsequently captures Dorothy and the three other characters so that she can take the ruby slippers from Dorothy. After realising that the slippers will not come off, the witch throws fire at the Scarecrow. Dorothy takes a pail of water to extinguish the blaze, destroying the witch in the process.

After being freed from the castle in which they were held captive, the four main characters return to Emerald City and present the Wizard with the broomstick. It is at this point that they realise that the Wizard is nothing more than a charlatan. He simply moves a bunch of levers from behind a curtain in order to portray himself as a fearsome Wizard. He does not have any real powers to grant Scarecrow, Tinman, and the Lion their wishes.

When confronted, the Wizard tells the group they already possess the powers that they desire to receive from him. He gives Scarecrow a certificate of education to

prove that he is smart, the Lion a medal to show that he is brave, and the Tinman a token heart that demonstrates that he has feelings.

It is at this point that the good witch Glinda reappears on the scene. She tells Dorothy, the only one who has not been granted her wish to go home by the Wizard, that she can return home by simply clicking her slippers together three times. With those instructions in hand, Dorothy says goodbye to the other three characters and returns home to her farm in Kansas.

Dorothy awakens in her bed to find all of her family and friends alive and well: Aunt Em and Uncle Henry, the three farm hands, fortune teller Professor Marvel, and her dog Toto. She ends her recollection of her adventure in Oz with the words, “There is no place like home.”

Analysis of the Story

This story has been included at the end of this section on psychological theories because it illustrates so well the journey toward wholeness that has been outlined in the previous chapters. Dorothy is on the verge of growing up. She has to decide between protecting her dog, Toto, and going against Aunt Emily’s wishes.

This decision making processes is portrayed as a series of challenges in never-never land that Dorothy has to face. Mrs. Gulch appears in the form of the wicked witch of the west who is bent on destroying her. The three farm hands appear in the form of Scarecrow, Tinman, and Lion, aiding Dorothy in her journey. The good witch Glinda represents Dorothy’s opportunity to make things turn out right. Dorothy returns home so that she can show her appreciation for Aunt Em and Uncle Henry’s love for her. The wicked witch of the west does not appear in these final scenes because she, namely Mrs. Gulch, has been killed in the make-believe adventures of the World of Oz.

The process of Dorothy growing up is revealed through a projection of her wishes onto the three farm hands that are presented as Scarecrow, Tinman, and Lion. She is first and foremost a country girl who does not have a lot of education. She feels ignorant and appears naïve in the face of the wizard and city life. She wants to receive a brain in order to become smart and make the right decision regarding Toto and Aunt Em. She realises that running away is avoiding the inevitable. She wants to go home in order to replace her old life of innocence with her new life as a mature adolescent.

Dorothy realises that Tinman is no further ahead than Scarecrow in coming to terms with reality. While country life helps people to avoid the challenges of technology and advancement of science, city life with its mechanical modes of production result in a heartless world. The lack of personal life represented by technology makes people seize up. Tinman needs to be continually oiled and lubricated in order to integrate his feelings and emotions with his aptitude for manufacturing and production.

The Lion, in turn, is intimidated by all of these things, the heartless reality of the city combined with the blissful ignorance of country life. He does not know where to fit in. Unlike Tinman and Scarecrow, who are inadequate human beings, Lion is an animal who is the opposite of what he is supposed to represent, an intimidating and fearsome presence.

This anomaly within the Lion's character is remedied at the point at which the Lion sings about (wanting to) be the king of the forest. Dorothy puts a royal robe around his shoulders while he is singing this song in order to demonstrate how majestic the Lion really is. The Lion becomes the centre piece at this point. While mind and heart are integral to an individual's personality, the core of a person has to do with their willingness to engage heart and mind in order to move forward.

The king's song of victory in the forest reminds the reader of the restaurants that the Eaton's Department stores installed on the fifth or ninth floors of their commercial establishments. A person eating on fine china and using real silverware made the person feel that they were royalty, that they had arrived in life, and that they were masters of their own destiny. Regardless of their real position in life, eating lunch or supper at these fine dining restaurants gave people a sense of optimism and hope. Perhaps they too could one day own similar paintings, chandeliers, Persian rugs, and elegant dinner ware that graced these restaurants.

Freud's theory of id, ego, and superego becomes relevant to the whole process of Dorothy growing up. The brain within the Scarecrow represents the superego of Dorothy growing up in the country. The heart within Tinman represents the id of feelings and desires. The courage that the Lion discovers while travelling through the forest represents the ego that channels heart and mind in the proper direction. The animal nature of the Lion represents the engine by which the other two humans become integrated personalities.

Dorothy, in other words, can only become mature by combining the three elements presented in the form of Tinman, Lion, and Scarecrow. She can only "go home" after

the three aspects of her personality have been recognised as valuable in their own right. Receiving a certificate of education, a medal, and a heart-shaped token enables her to face the dilemma with which the story became. The psychological power that Mrs. Gulch wields over Dorothy with her threatening presence has been destroyed while Toto is now safe and sound in the arms of Dorothy and Aunt Em.

Conclusion

Dorothy becomes mature through her realisation that life is not perfect. The fact that Toto bit Mrs. Gulch is unacceptable and has to be dealt with. At the same time, Dorothy can return home knowing that the love that Aunt Em and Uncle Henry have for her will make things turn out alright in the end. Mrs. Gulch no longer has power over her, regardless of what will happen to Toto.

This story echoes some of the themes discussed above. Like the film, *Into the Woods*, the *Wizard of Oz* story takes place in the middle of a forest. The four characters are brave enough to enter the woods, experience liminality, and conquer their inadequacies within by arriving at the Emerald City.

Apples that have fallen from trees on a yard appear in the middle of this story. Dorothy and the other characters throw these apples around as well as eat them. The wicked witch appears on the roof of a house nearby, representing by her menacing presence the original sin of these characters. The fact that Toto bit Mrs. Gulch means that life is not perfect. Mrs. Gulch deserves her revenge. The four characters representing Dorothy herself need to find a way of acknowledging this while moving ahead.

The Wizard of Oz reminds a reader of the story of the Three Pigs. The third pig defeats the wolf by learning lessons from the failures of the other two pigs. Dorothy, in turn, has to be captured by the wicked witch and threatened with death in order to come to terms with what has to be done. The story suggests that it is as simple as throwing water on the witch in order to save Scarecrow. Misadventures and fears nevertheless have to be overcome in order for such a simple act of (psychological) destruction to take place. Dorothy has to learn the indispensability of the heart, mind, and courage in order to return home a healthier person.

The love that Aunt Em has for Dorothy represents a substitute for the couple relationships that have been detailed in the last three chapters. Dorothy knows that Aunt Em's acquiescence to Mrs. Gulch's request to destroy Toto does not take away from the love that she has for Dorothy. Dorothy has to overcome her fear that Aunt

Em is, in fact, a wicked witch. Both Professor Marvel and the Wicked Witch use a crystal ball to show Dorothy that Aunt Em truly loves her. She is worried about Dorothy's safety in the midst of the storm and wants Dorothy to come home. She is, in fact, like Glinda, a good witch. Aunt Em wants the best for Dorothy even though she knows that she has hurt her.

The difference between the beginning and end of the story has to do with a more mature recognition on Dorothy's part what true love consists of. Running away from the love that Aunt Em has for her represents a childish notion on Dorothy's part. Returning home with her brain, heart, and courage intact means that she can reciprocate the love that Aunt Em has for her. An adult-adult love appears where there was once a more childish approach to parental admonitions.

The Wizard as a trickster is a final comparison that can be made to the previous chapters. Every story needs a foil, an arch villain, a catalyst, or a crisis in order for the narrative to come together and move forward. We have seen how this worked regarding the Cat in the Hat. The cat represented the inner desires of Sally and me to play while mother is away. The wizard, in turn, represents the inner desires of Scarecrow, Tinman, Lion to have a heart, mind, and courage. Like Freud's talking cure, in which the patient simply lies on a couch in order to be healed, the wizard pulls catalytic levers that are attached to nothing in order for the four characters to be healed. They have to face their worst fears, namely the wicked witch of the west, in order to defeat her. They are able to conquer their anxieties, neuroses, and paranoia by bringing the broomstick back (to themselves). The Wizard, like Freud, hands the characters certificates that they have been healed.

I like this story because it assumes that integrity of personality is possible at a relatively young age, before adolescents like Dorothy are faced with the prospects of romantic love. The filial love of traditional and charismatic authority has to be acknowledged and owned before a teenager can become a rational adult. The Wizard of Oz is a hopeful and optimistic tale that reiterates and reinforces Bettelheim's belief and practice that children can learn to live wholistic and healthy lives.

Section B

Sociological Theories

and Their Applications

Chapter Eight

Discovery of the Collective Unconscious

Introduction

Nineteenth century sociologist Emile Durkheim was surprised to find that the suicide rate in various societies stayed the same relative to other constant factors: divorce rates, religious practices, social cohesion, economic opportunities, and community activities.¹²⁷ He wondered: How could something so irrational as a person committing suicide be directly related to objective factors in society that contributed to more or less self-inflicted deaths?

Durkheim found that in a country such as France, which was quite religious and dedicated to common family and social values, the number of suicides was less than in Protestant countries, where there was a greater emphasis on modernity and individuality. Durkheim concluded from his study of suicide that there is something called a collective unconscious which affects the way that individuals behave. Individuals who feel part of a social and religious whole are less likely to commit suicide than people who are disconnected from life and society's values. The latter feel more alienated and so are more likely to commit suicide.

The workaholic alcoholic and female British executive mentioned in the last section serve as examples of how this collective unconscious works. The workaholic based his life on how successful he had been regarding his ability to make money. These are the values with which he had grown up. He did not consider his drinking binges and his assaults during these binges to be a top priority. Jail time was an inconvenience in regard to his private life and a necessary consequence of his offences.

The Canadian prison system from the 1960s to the 1990s also believed in the value of hard work. It considered the teaching of work skills to inmates its most important priority besides incarceration. Whole institutions were established to teach offenders

¹²⁷ This section is based on Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, 116-117.

skills in construction, agriculture, brick laying, upholstery, education, welding, and meat cutting.¹²⁸

This all changed in the 1990s. The Correctional Service placed a new emphasis on providing programs that addressed inmates' offences. Offenders were mandated to take violence prevention, addictions recovery, alternatives to gang affiliation, and sex offender programming.

The workaholic found it hard to take this new societal emphasis on the harm caused by his alcoholism seriously. The man regarded the punishment that he received for assaulting another human being as satisfactory for what he had done. He was not interested in changing his lifestyle nor in knowing whether he would harm someone again. The fact that this man had come to jail three times showed how difficult it was for him to take responsibility for the harm done. His division of life into private and public spheres made it difficult for the inmate to understand the collective consequences of his crime.

The British executive lived in a similar state of unreality. She believed that her husband was telling the truth because she was so thrilled at identifying through him with a historically famous family. The Rockefeller aura of elite status and wealth reinforced her own financial success and ambition to be recognised for her accomplishments. Her husband was able to use her embodiment of the American dream of fame to his advantage. He simply harnessed her collective unconscious by pretending to be part of the Rockefeller family.

Upside Down Pecking Order in Prison

This collective consciousness is important for our discussion because it helps to further explain the reasons that the young adults described above felt compelled to join gangs and commit crimes. In addition to the negative influence of their parents, society's unconscious preoccupation with the criminal lifestyle made the young adults emulate men in the black hats.

In spite of the fact that society was not trying to glorify criminals, many movies made it appear as though there was something glamorous about stealing money from casinos and belonging to a Mafia.¹²⁹ The young adults took the movies at face value and embarked on their own version of a successful robbery group. As long as

¹²⁸ This shift in thinking is documented in Donald Stoesz with Joan Palardy, *Transformative Moments in Chaplaincy* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2024), 42-43.

¹²⁹ *Ocean's Eleven* (DVD, Warner Brothers, 2001); *Godfather* (DVD, Paramount Pictures, 1972).

they could get away with it, the movies seemed to be saying, highway robbery was alright.

The collective unconscious is also important in understanding the nature of prison dynamics. Prisons represent an upside world in which bank robbers, murderers, drug dealers, and fraud artists represent the top of the prison pecking order. Reflecting society's unconscious glorification of the criminal lifestyle, prisons embody this alternate view of reality. Committing crime is acceptable according to this view as long as one can make a lot of money and get away with it.

The fact that prisons are full of people who did not get away with it makes this delusional thinking even more important for the inmates to hold on to. Having embarked on a path in which living above and beyond the law has been embraced, it is difficult for inmates to concede the errors of their ways. They hold on tightly to a negative symbol of power and status because everything will come crashing down if they let go. The high social status that they enjoy in prison makes murderers, robbers, drug dealers, and fraud artists believe that it was all worth it.

The only way that inmates can endure the harsh reality of prison is by believing that it is a temporary setback to their long term vision and goals. They have to hold on to the delusion that crime pays. The only place where these criminals receive such a high status is in prison. Coming back to prison again and again entrenches this upside down kingdom to such an extent that criminals have a harder and harder time believing that becoming a law abiding citizen is worth it. Gang life and its disastrous results are the only reality that they know. They therefore continue to play by its rules rather than becoming willing to consider more pro-social options. They have a lot to lose by letting go of this alternative communal society: status, power, money, belonging, and so-called friends.

An ironic aspect of this collective unconscious on the part of gang members and bank robbers is that they embody society's vilification of sex offenders within their pecking order. The fact that these latter offenders have harmed women and children means that the inmates at the top of the pecking order feel they have the right to punish these offenders even more when they arrive in jail to do their time. Prisoners in higher security jails beat these sex offenders up on a regular basis, force them to "show their paperwork," and to go to the "hole" (Structured Intervention Unit).

Prison staff have to work hard at keeping these more vulnerable inmates safe. Like the young offenders described above, who are sent to lower security prisons for their

own good, sex offenders tend to be sent to “protective custody” facilities so that they will not be harmed.

Staff Embodiment of Authority, Loyalty, and Sanctity of Life

The collective unconscious is as applicable to the staff who work in a prison as the inmates who have embraced an upside down pecking order. Authority, loyalty, and sanctity of life become important for staff in prison because of inmates’ lack of respect, manipulation, and willingness to commit violence.¹³⁰

A prison is run like a military operation in order to establish a clear line of authority from the warden, deputy-warden, assistant wardens, to correctional staff. Inmates need to know how to behave in an institution in which inmates and staff co-exist in close quarters to each other.

An example of how this works can be taken from my experience in the 1990s at Leclerc Institution in Laval, Quebec, a medium security prison.¹³¹ The institution was known as a biker facility in which a large number of the population was part of the Hell’s Angels gang. The dynamics of the institution had gotten to a point where the gang was dictating who could live on their ranges, who could stay in the “open population,” and what privileges they were entitled to.

A new warden was installed at the prison after an inmate riot took place on one of the wings. The new warden made it clear that the Hells Angels could no longer decide who was going to reside on their wings. They could no longer dictate how the prison was managed. Correctional staff were taking back some of the privileges that the Hells Angels had been given over the years.

During the next three months, the Hells Angel inmates repeatedly told the new warden that there was going to be another riot. Correctional staff were going to get hurt, members of the gang said. The inmates were going to cause disruptions of the new routine that was being established.

The warden told the inmate committee that there was not going to be another riot. He told the inmates that correctional staff were not going to be hurt. Anyone who did not obey the new rules would be transferred to maximum security prisons.

¹³⁰ Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 26-33. Jonathan Haidt has outlined some of these concepts in his book, *The Righteous Mind* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2012), cf. Margaret Wente’s review of the book, What liberals can learn from conservatives. *Toronto Globe and Mail*. Saturday, April 21, 2012, F9.

¹³¹ This story is told in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 87-90.

The inmates soon realized that the warden was serious. After a so-called phantom transfer of ten inmates who were being disruptive to a higher security jail, the rest of the offenders became compliant. There were no more riots. The inmates realised that the correctional staff were now in charge.

This type of authority is necessary in order for inmates to know who is in charge. The Hells Angels were so used to doing what they wanted through intimidation, violence, and force that they simply continued the same pattern when they came to jail.

The correctional staff had to fight force with force in order to bring the jail under control. The collective strength of the gang was countermanded by a clear line of authority that indicated what the inmates were allowed, and not allowed to do. Over a three month period, the jail returned to a more normal routine in which correctional staff used their authority to create order and direction.

Staff loyalty is another principle that is vital to the safe running of an institution. Inmates exploit the weaknesses of individual staff members in order to bring in drugs, receive favours, and undermine the trust that staff have of each other. It is quite easy for staff to become suspicious and paranoid when they realise that many illegal activities are taking place in prison. They begin to suspect not only inmates, but fellow staff members as well.

This situation can only be rectified by constant collaboration and communication among staff. Suspicious behaviour and inappropriate conduct are immediately addressed so that they do not get out of control. Staff correct their fellow staff members' behaviour as well as that of the inmates. The more interventions that are made and the faster the conflicts are resolved, the easier it is to have a smooth running institution. Inmates' constant attempts to undermine the system in order to take back more control over their illegal activities is met with an equally dedicated response.

Sanctity of life is a third principle at work. Staff are mandated to protect the safety of all inmates, regardless of what they have done. Safety is ensured by staff placing inmates in various "populations," segregated units, and suitable institutions. The example of the young adults in Bowden Institution is apropos. Their inability to follow the rules in higher security prisons made it necessary for them to be in more open populations where constant interventions through dynamic security was the norm. The risk of overt violence is less in lower security prisons because the inmates who assault others are sent to higher security jails.

As I have discussed in another place,¹³² the increased values that are placed on authority, loyalty, and sanctity of life in prisons make it harder for the principles of empathy and respect for offenders to shine through. Citizens on the street generally give each other the benefit of the doubt when suspicion starts to arise. Members of the community do not want to accuse others of lying, cheating, or stealing unless they absolutely have to and are certain of the facts.

The situation in prison is the opposite. Staff make the assumption that inmates are lying because staff have been conned and manipulated so often that they cannot afford to trust the information that the offenders give them. Accusations, threats, innuendos, and suggestions are checked over and over again against other sources in order to get a clearer picture of the situation.

Intervention in potentially violent situations occurs much more quickly in a prison than on the street. The fact that the inmates involved have already been convicted of violent offences makes staff and other inmates leery of having it happen again. The fact that inmates and staff live in close quarters to each other means that a conflict can easily escalate. Staff err on the side of caution by locking up potentially violent offenders while continuing to ascertain the circumstances of the situation.

Summary of the Situation

The situation of a prison can be summarized in the following manner. While there are some offenders who want to change and be released into society as law-abiding citizens, these personal examples must be viewed against the backdrop of a prison atmosphere in which many offenders want to continue the criminal lifestyle with which they have become accustomed. Some prisoners become worse in jail because of the powerful influence of gangs, violent incidents, drug use, idealisation of the criminal lifestyle, and despair over the possibility of change.¹³³

Correctional staff meet the criminal intentions of offenders to continue their life of crime inside prison with clear lines of authority, loyalty, and commitment to keep everyone safe. The correctional service uses dynamic security, pro-social interventions, and coercion as it becomes necessary to counter the negative social and communal effects of an upside down pecking order, threats of violence, intentions to bring in contraband, and attempts to undermine law and order

¹³² Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 25-33.

¹³³ Examples are given in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, 20.

From Static Security to Pro-Active Projects

The social aspects of the prison dynamics described above means that the individualistic therapies outlined in the first section are not sufficient in addressing the needs of inmates regarding rehabilitation. Offenders are faced on a daily basis with gangs' tantalizing invitation to continue and enhance their criminal associations.

An idealistic social alternative is needed to meet the delusional belief that crime pays. The symbolic status of an upside down pecking order, the need for belonging that the infrastructure of a gang provides, and the false sense of safety that a criminal organization promises need to be met head on with an alternative symbolic system of beliefs and practices.

Two of the most effective volunteer programs that I have encountered that address this need are Alternatives to Violence and the Christopher Leadership course.¹³⁴ AVP speaks directly to the tragedy of violence as a solution by offering transforming power as an alternative strategy. Volunteers collaborate with inmate facilitators in showing participants how many conflicts can be solved peaceably. Role playing, active participation, and egalitarian collaboration result in a group solidarity that meets the delusional rewards of gang involvement head on. Participants learn to trust each other, establish an internal net of safety where emotions and feelings of anger can be shared, and build an external social fence that excludes all those who would undermine these pro-social solutions to life.

The Christopher Leadership course is similar in that it offers communication and sharing as keys to effective problem solving. Participants learn to recite nursery rhymes in order to let go of some of their inhibitions in being part of a group. They listen to volunteers sharing personally about lessons they have learned regarding courage, openness, uniqueness, and caring. Participants begin to share personally in two minute talks about their own life experiences. Barriers are broken down as the powerfulness of the sharing out ways the fears that participants have that their stories will be used against them. A banquet and a graduation complete the bonding that has been established. Inmate guests at the banquet are invited to attend the next course.

These two volunteer programs are powerful because they offer a real social and communitarian alternative to the lifestyle with which inmates are familiar. The unhealthy bonds of mistrust and violence that are reinforced within a gang by threats

¹³⁴ These programs are discussed in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 133-140.

have been replaced by trust in the safety of the group. AVP and Christopher Leadership foster pro-social bonds based on free will and belief in the goodness of each person.

While tentative to say the least, most participants who graduate from these two programs now understand what an intentional community is all about. External fences of enforced belonging have been replaced by internal mutual bonds of respect and trust.

The volunteer driven nature of these two courses represents a surplus value. An idealistic sense of community has been established outside of the contract driven nature of the relationship between staff and inmates. Volunteers, as representatives of the citizens of the community, engage with inmates who have harmed other citizens. Volunteers of their own free will facilitate these courses in order to find some rapprochement between the harm that has been done and the healing that can occur. They assume that there is some good within the offenders by which they can be reached. The non-violent solutions and pro-social interactions that take place within the group settings of AVP and Christopher Leadership show how this goodness can be actualized.

In summary, social and imaginative programs are needed as alternative solutions to the crimes that inmates have committed which they have regarded, up to now, as the only means at their disposal. The negative social reality that prisons represent are obviated at the point where these pro-social engagements occur.

Religious Solutions to the Problem

Are there religious solutions that can be offered to counter the negative symbolization of an ideal criminal lifestyle under which inmates live in order to minimize the pain they feel for having been caught and convicted?

A worship service in prison could be construed as offering somewhat of the same benefits as AVP and Christopher Leadership. A worship service is open to all, provides a sense of safety and belonging to the participants, and joins inmates' longings for a sense of purpose and meaning to the One who provides ultimate meaning and care, the very Godself.

Ministers announce the fact that we all belong to the Being that is God. We are part of a greater whole by which our immediate circumstances are transcended. The solidarity that an inmate faith community represents replicates on a microcosmic level the macro cosmos of meaning that God represents.

Chapel services are nevertheless transient affairs that provide momentary relief from the stresses of prison. While inmates know that they are safe while present in the chapel, they are not as sure of what lies ahead as they head back to their prison units. The negative reality of prison life continues to impinge on the sanguinity that they felt while worshipping.

A more permanent solution has to do with providing a continuity of content that speaks directly to the inmates' need for belonging, safety, and contentment. The reason that *Experiencing God*¹³⁵ courses and *Purpose Driven Life*,¹³⁶ courses are so popular with inmates is because they speak about a loving relationship with God. Rick Warren starts his chapters with titles such as "Becoming Best Friends with God," "Formed for God's Family," "Restoring Broken Relationships," and "Protecting Your Church."¹³⁷

Rick Warren builds on human affections and attachments to illustrate how God can become an intimate part of one's life. Friendships, trust, affection, love, emotional bonding, commitment, loyalty, intimacy, and hope are important to offenders because these realities are exactly what they have lost. Warren enables believers to have a friendship with God that replaces the lack of friendship that they have had on a human level. Offenders devour these books because they want to believe

Henry Blackaby's approach is similar. He suggests that (1) seekers require a crisis of faith in order to "readjust their priorities," (2) God is pursuing a "love relationship" with believers, and that (3) this relationship consists of obedience, trust, and openness to hear God's voice.¹³⁸

Crises of faith and life are central to the experiences of inmates. This is a good place to start in looking at the purpose and meaning of life. Blackaby channels inmates' conviction of spirit, fervent prayers, and newfound belief into a wholesome religious experience. He suggests that God is real, that God can be trusted, and that God loves human beings. This is something that offenders desperately want to hear.

Both Warren and Blackaby move from the human experiences of love to the idea that something greater than themselves is at work in inmates' lives. Far from being

¹³⁵ Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*, Workbook (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2007), *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2008). The first book is a larger workbook that includes questions and space for answers in the middle of each lesson while the second book comes in a smaller format, is a little more academic, while containing essentially the same material.

¹³⁶ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

¹³⁷ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 85, 117, 145, 152, 160.

¹³⁸ Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God*, Workbook, 50, 68, 132, 154.

the centre of the universe, the selfishness of which they demonstrated in their offences, offenders are called by Warren and Blackaby to view themselves from “God’s point of view.”¹³⁹ They belong in a fundamental way to the purposes of God that are being carried out in the world. They are like a piece of driftwood floating down the divine streams of life. Offenders become selfless as they identify with the larger world around them.

Warren and Blackaby move from a sense of belonging to a commitment of service that believers provide through their actions. Offenders are desperate to find love, to belong to something larger than themselves, and to give back for what they have taken. Warren and Blackaby provide clear step-by-step processes by which these three longings can be fulfilled. They refer to believers in the latter chapters as servants, as being part of a mission, of sharing their experiences, and of being part of God’s work.¹⁴⁰ Offenders’ kindness, empathy, friendship, and peer support of others represents ways in which they can demonstrate the love that they have experienced with God.

These books represent a beginnings to faith which is augmented by other practical guides regarding relationships, codependency, grief recovery, and addictions recovery. Some of these books have already been mentioned. *Getting the Love You Want*, by Harville Hendrix, provides multiple examples and user friendly exercises that help inmates think about the health of their own relationships. *Co-Dependent No More*, by Melodie Beattie, outlines the numerous ways in which we all get hooked into living other people’s lives in order to take the focus off our own sorry existence. *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, by Russell Friedman and John James, complements the other books by delving into the grieving process. Then there is *Celebrate Recovery* that uses the twelve step process of Alcoholics Anonymous to undergird eight Christian principles of overcoming addictions.¹⁴¹

Each of these books intersect with each other, becoming in the process a pro-social web of connections and inter-dynamics. Each references the other in terms of the twelve steps of addictions recovery, grief recovery, spiritual resources, and becoming independent of co-dependency.

¹³⁹ Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God*, 154, 178; Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 41, 63, 100.

¹⁴⁰ Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God*, Workbook, 178, 198; Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 227-312.

¹⁴¹ These books and programs are discussed in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 133-148.

In summary, specific programs aimed at providing a symbol system of pro-social activities, non-violent therapies, religious courses, and theological reflections represent a direct challenge to the negative influences and dark ideals that inmates have about the criminal lifestyle.

Chapter Eight

Value of Spirituality-Based, *Volunteer-Facilitated* Programming

Introduction

Toward the end of her book on *Prison Religion*, Winnifred Sullivan reflects on the InnerChange Freedom Initiative that was established in an Iowa Prison from 1999-2008.¹⁴² She concludes that this faith-based group helped inmates form a self-identity in terms of an evangelical religious faith, shaped by universal values such as integrity, restoration, responsibility, fellowship, affirmation, and productivity. Sullivan identifies five factors that place this initiative along a spiritual and secular continuum that contributes to what she refers to as, citing Charles Taylor, “the modern project.”¹⁴³

1. Moral Virtue

IFI was first and foremost “trying to create civilized men who can flourish in that world because they will know how to deal with each other as equals working together to create a mutually beneficial society.”¹⁴⁴ This goal represents the secular end of things in the sense that it has to do with “the *moral life*, is rooted in instrumental rationality, shares a focus on the discipline needed to reform life on earth, and is non-hierarchical as well as non-idealistic.”¹⁴⁵

2. Disestablished Religion

The goal of *moral virtue* is founded on a cosmological order of meaning left over from pre-modernity that involves at least some type of reification in order to be symbolically effective. Stated more plainly, Sullivan believes that some type of

¹⁴² Winnifred Sullivan, *Prison Religion*, pp. 172-179.

¹⁴³ Charles Taylor uses the term “modern social imaginaries” to describe the relevant factors that make up the “modern person,” *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University, 2005), pp. 21-22.

¹⁴⁴ Winnifred Sullivan, *Prison Religion*, p. 175.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

spirituality and/or *disestablished religion* is “intrinsic to the nature of and dependent on the voluntary assent of the individual human.”¹⁴⁶ The link of morality to meaning suggests that some larger frame of reference – whether spiritual (e.g. Christian) or secular (e.g. Seussian) – is needed in the modern and post-modern world to cope with reality. IFI’s use of biblical and evangelical principles in their program of rehabilitation makes a conscious link between meaning and morality. Sullivan suggests that this assumption of spiritual efficacy in relation to moral virtue should not be ruled out of hand because of its religiosity.

3. Belief in Change

A third factor in the Iowa project has to do with *belief in change*. IF’s Initiative in regard to the transformation of inmates is significant because it represents an opportunity for “public reflection on the tension between religious, social scientific, evolutionary, and cognitive explanations of human intentionality.”¹⁴⁷ The question of whether “criminal acts are the product of *deliberate individual choice*” remains an important question for modernity.¹⁴⁸ The link that IFI has made between virtue and religiosity enables participants to increase their capacity for personal responsibility, lawful citizenship, and moral virtue. Disestablished religion dovetails with the modern project insofar as it “makes disciplined moral citizens who are necessary to the modern order and modern state.”¹⁴⁹

4. Self-Identity

A fourth factor has to do with the formation of *self-identity* as inmates become *virtuous*, believe in *change*, and utilize a variety of *religious* and *spiritual* helps. Given the fact that people in the modern world have been reduced to minimum reifications regarding belief in God, Sullivan suggests that secular society makes them feel as though “they are on their own, alone, but dependent on others, . . . working out their salvation without the comfort of a comprehensive divine ordering of society.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 174.

¹⁴⁸ Donald Stoesz considers this capacity for change in his book, *Magic of Fiction in Illuminating Transformation* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2019), forthcoming.

¹⁴⁹ Winnifred Sullivan, *Prison Religion*, p. 178. Michel Foucault analyses the prison’s modern emphasis on discipline as a means of reform, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 135ff.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 174. One is reminded of the biblical passage from Phillipians 2:12: “Therefore, my beloved, . . . in my absence . . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

IFI have reintroduced the value of meaning in religious terms. They have emphasized the importance of faith in shaping a person's self-worth, integrity, and responsibility. They have linked confessions of faith to universal values in order to create modern selves. Their assumption of religious pluralism and commitment to democratic life demonstrates the modernity of their endeavours.

5. Egalitarianism

A final factor has to do with an *assumption of equality* that undermines all pre-modern forms of hierarchy, elitism, and power imbalances. Sullivan quotes Charles Taylor in terms of the mutual benefits, freedom, and rights that are involved when participants are fully engaged in the pursuit of moral virtue.¹⁵¹ Peer support and peer pressure are assumed in the mutual commitment and interaction of moral agents as they influence each other to become law-abiding citizens.

Specific Programs that take these Five Factors into Account

Sullivan's five categories of *spirituality, morality, equality, self-identity, and capacity for change* can be used to analyse spiritual and religious programs facilitated by volunteers that are effective within a prison context. *Christopher Leadership, Alternatives to Violence, and Celebrate Recovery* are attractive to a significant part of the inmate population because of their combination of these five elements.

Christopher Leadership Course

The Christopher Leadership course began in the 1950s as a Roman Catholic based program dedicated to making a difference in the world. Saint Christopher is reputed to have carried a child over some raging waters, thus earning him the title of "Christ-bearer."¹⁵² This emblem of service is enhanced through the Christopher motto: "It is better to light one candle than curse the darkness."¹⁵³

Organization founder Father Keller and others sought to reach as many people as possible with this leadership training. They adopted the three-fold objective of training people to (1) become more effective communicators, (2) develop their

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² *Christopher Leadership Course: Class Manual* (Lumen Institute, 2008), p. iv.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. iii.

individual talents, and (3) promote the wellbeing of others.¹⁵⁴ Based on the God-given dignity of individuals and their power for doing good, the course develops leaders by giving each participant “greater measures of self-confidence, self-understanding, and understanding of others.”¹⁵⁵ Themes of each lesson include talks on courage, listening, openness, uniqueness, affirming oneself and others, accentuating the positive, love and caring, sharing the light, celebrating life, community, and leadership.

The Christopher course includes all aspects of the five categories listed above, *spirituality, morality, equality, self-identity,* and *change*. It shows its “dedication to instrumental rationality”¹⁵⁶ by providing demonstrative skills that are needed in the workplace for people to become leaders in business, professions, and government.



The course focuses on the “discipline needed to reform life” when it speaks about love, care, sharing, and the community. One of things that attracted Stoesz to this course was part C of the lessons that featured a Christopher talk about one of these themes. Personal sharing by the instructors added essential reason to the overt instrumentality of the first two parts.

The *egalitarian* nature of the course was evident in the method of adult learning employed. Four instructors acted out nursery rhymes and illustrated the formulas for giving one-minute talks through personal examples. This empathetic, group approach helped shy participants feel more comfortable in a social setting.

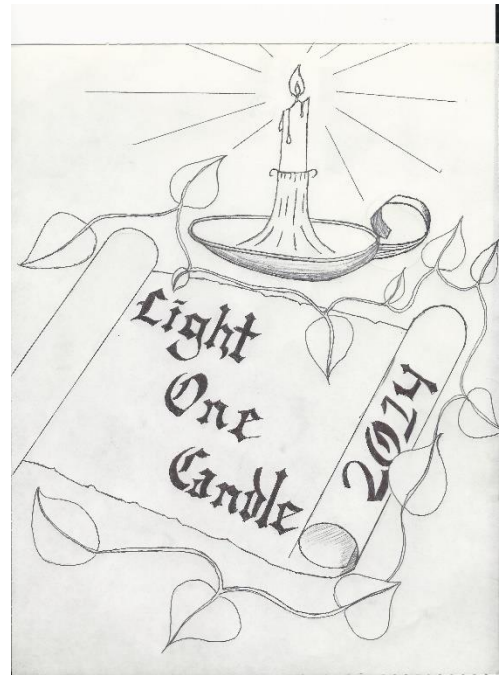
¹⁵⁴ The American-based organization called *Christophers* gives out awards to people who have impacted the world in a positive manner (www.christophers.org, retrieved February 2019.) This same organization developed the Christopher Leadership course. This course is more broadly based philosophically and is facilitated through the Lumen Institute in Canada, dedicated to building character, faith, and leadership, Lee MacDonald, “Excerpts from Canadian History (of Christopher Leadership),” unpublished, see www.lumeninstitute.org, retrieved February 2019. The Christopher Leadership Course has its own website in Canada (www.clcnational.com, retrieved February 2019). It lists the Board of Directors for the Lumen Institute that oversees the course.

¹⁵⁵ *Christopher Leadership Course: Class Manual*, pp. i-ii.

¹⁵⁶ Winnifred Sullivan, *Prison Religion*, p. 173.

Christopher graduates were encouraged to become instructors so that they could continue to grow in their leadership abilities. Student participants, student graduate instructors, and seasoned veterans mingled together in a cohesive whole as a result of the group role playing involved.

Solidification of identity was a further benefit of the course. By dealing with such themes as courage, uniqueness, affirmation of self and others, and accentuating the positive, the course integrated love, care, and sharing into the self-identity of the person. The core skill acquired, learning to speak in front of other people, helped to bolster a person's ego and give them an opportunity to speak about themes dear to their heart. Mimicking the personal sharing by facilitators in part C, participants learned to feel comfortable speaking about themselves in the two-minute speeches. This mentoring process enabled students to imagine themselves as taking leadership roles in various organizations.



The *ability to change* was a key component in the course. Leadership training was aimed specifically at people who had difficulty in speaking in a group setting. Originally from other countries, various offenders took the opportunity to practice speaking English. Introverted participants spoke their memorized parts of nursery rhymes along with others before venturing out on their own. Mutual encouragement and affirmation for work done went a long way in transforming these individuals, preoccupied with shame and guilt, into new persons who could identify and affirm their various talents and abilities.

The *spiritually-based* nature of the course enriched its overall goals and objectives. The fact that (1) the Prayer of Saint Francis was recited at the end of each lesson, (2) the ninth lesson had to do with lighting a candle to celebrate life, (3) the tenth lesson included an agape meal in which each individual poured juice into a community punch bowl and partook of the breaking of bread,¹⁵⁷ and that (4) instructors shared

¹⁵⁷ This story is recounted in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, pp. 137-138. Cf. the instructions for this agape meal in "Instructions for Facilitators: Agape-Christopher Project," *Christopher Leadership Instructor Manual* (2014), pp. 1 – 4.

their personal faith experiences in a variety of talks added to the overall ambience of the course.

The Leadership Manual provides opportunity along the secular and sacred continuum to include as little or as much spirituality as each instructor feels comfortable. An assumption of the spiritual adds to the essential nature of the enterprise, balancing the overtly instrumental aspects of the course. Surplus value is inherent in the foundation and objectives of this volunteer program, differentiating it from secular Dale Carnegie and Toastmasters courses.

Alternatives to Violence

The Alternatives to Violence project started in 1975 as a result of collaboration between a group of inmates at Green Haven Prison in New York and some Quakers. The inmates were working on a *Think Tank Concept* in connection with youth while the Society of Friends (Quakers) had developed a *Quaker Project on Community Conflict*.¹⁵⁸ The two groups worked together to start weekend workshops dedicated to finding non-violent solutions to conflicts. Since that time, innumerable workshops have been co-facilitated by community volunteers and trained inmate facilitators. These sessions involve role-playing, cooperative games, dramatic re-enactments of conflict situations, and community building.

The Alternatives to Violence project's commitment to non-violent transformation fulfills the first two of Winnifred Sullivan's categories, the *moral life* and belief in the *possibility of change*. AVP's core belief in *transforming power* speaks directly to the reality of violence, intimidation, bullying, and coercion that is an everyday fact of life in prisons. AVP facilitators model self-respect, cooperation, and communication while working as a peer group to find creative solutions to conflict.



AVP's assumption of a *basic goodness* in human beings -- and that this inner motivation for goodness can lead to *positive change* -- addresses the pervasive pessimism endemic to prison environments. It also provides practical ways in which this pessimism can be transformed into hope and optimism. Each workshop starts

¹⁵⁸ This history is documented in the American Alternatives to Violence website, under the heading, "How We Began," www.avpusa.org, retrieved February 2019.

with an affirmation of respect, trust, honesty, and caring. It builds on this mutual covenant to create a “safe container”¹⁵⁹ in which participants can share more openly and honestly about themselves. These opportunities for sharing foster greater willingness by participants to take a closer look at themselves, accept responsibility for their lives, and learn empathy for others.

Solidification of identity occurs as workshop participants find out more about themselves and their ability -- or non-ability -- to work with others. *Respect for Self* and *Caring for Others*, two mottos surrounding Transforming Power within the circle, reinforce a sense of self by setting it in relation to the group. Participants find a voice by adding a unique adjective to their name, such as Happy Harry and Helpful Susie.¹⁶⁰

The *egalitarian* nature of the group is evident in the co-facilitation roles of inmates and community volunteers, in the consensus-based, decision-making processes, and in the many team building exercises. This horizontal, dynamic security process of intervening verbally and empathetically among peers speaks directly to the hierarchical nature of the prison environment. It assumes that many conflicts can be solved at the lowest level (according to the principle of subsidiarity),¹⁶¹ without needing the intervention of coercion or other external authorities.¹⁶²

Regarding Sullivan’s fifth category, that of *spirituality*, a continuum of the secular and sacred exists in the program. *Transforming Power* assumes that human beings can change based on an ideal or goal. One pamphlet describes this assumption as a belief that there is “power for peace and good in everyone.” This transforming power, “in and around each of us” enables us to “shift a situation from negative to positive.”¹⁶³ These statements underline the essentially secular nature of the program.

¹⁵⁹ John Shuford, “Description of Program, Target Population and Target Setting,” unpublished, pp. 1-2. “This container of safety allows participants to effortlessly lower their barriers and defences, opening them up to honestly see themselves, their behaviours and the consequences of their behaviours as well as be receptive to new attitude and interpersonal skills.” As one inmate put it, “only a group of this nature can provide us with the safe environment to remove this mask.”

¹⁶⁰ Gary Garrison provides a detailed description of various role-playing situations and team building exercises in his article, “Albertans Make Peace on the Prairie,” *Peace Magazine* (January/March, 2014), pp. 16-19.

¹⁶¹ Note Donald Stoesz’ analysis of the principles of dynamic security and subsidiarity, *Glimpses of Grace*, pp. 62, 64.

¹⁶² John Shuford has written an article about the usefulness of AVP in the training of correctional staff, “Beyond Security: Creating Safer Prisons,” *Corrections Today* (July/August, 2018), pp. 46-51.

¹⁶³ AVP Alberta, *Alternatives to Violence Project* pamphlet.



There is, at the same time, an assumption of the collective force of the group that can be referred to as something more than material. Sociologist Emile Durkheim's concept of the collective unconscious is instructive in this regard. Durkheim believed that modern society was held together by a common symbol system. This symbol system "creates a common bond between people despite their greater personal freedom and their relative independence from traditional values . . . symbols remain constitutive of personal consciousness and society."¹⁶⁴

Durkheim regarded this socialization as transcendent because it represented an internal process of transformation triggered by personal forces known as a conscience and by social forces known as peer pressure. These internal forces can be referred to as spiritual because they represent an ideal or symbol by which people shape their lives.¹⁶⁵

Alcoholic Anonymous' affirmation of a *Higher Power* and Alternatives to Violence's core belief in *Transforming Power* makes sense considering the above discussion. While not overtly religious, both groups are pointing to an internal social force at work in society that shapes how we act. A.A.'s surrender to a higher power and AVP's affirmation of a transforming power speak to the Durkheimian point that unconscious ideals are at work within us through peer pressure and individual freedom.

¹⁶⁴ Gregory Baum, *Religion and Alienation*, p. 129.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 131. Durkheim made this discovery as a result of his study of suicide. He was surprised at the extent to which suicide, which is an intensely personal act, was dependent on a variety of societal factors, note Baum's discussion, pp. 128ff.

John Shuford, AVP facilitator and correctional staff trainer, has done the most work in naming the mysterious quality of this *transforming power*. In an article on AVP as an instrument of peace, Shuford suggests that the term can be linked to Paul's statement in Romans about being "transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Romans 12:2).¹⁶⁶ Shuford goes on to describe this transforming power as:

the river of Spirit that flows within us all, and by tapping into it we connect with that Spirit and the interconnectedness of all. We no longer feel separate or isolated, which changes our experience of ourselves and others, and thus transforms our attitude and view of the world.¹⁶⁷



Durkheim would identify with this statement. It acknowledges the secular social forces at work within us that creates community and a sense of interconnectedness, while also referring to this power as transcendent in some manner. The word spiritual is useful because it refers to the fact that this power is a social force that changes us internally as well as is a power (or ideal) that we accept as our own symbol and model to live by.¹⁶⁸

Regardless of whether the words *higher power* and *transforming power* are used in a spiritual or secular sense, the Alternatives to Violence project addresses *moral concerns* at the heart of the prison system. Its success is directly related to the answers of *meaning* and *purpose* that it gives inmates and staff alike who can easily get caught up in fatalistic attitudes of pessimism and cynicism, actions of violence and recrimination, and assumptions of Machiavellian power politics.

¹⁶⁶ John A. Shuford, "AVP: An Instrument of Peace," *Friends Journal.org*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁸ Shuford refers at one point to transforming power as "grace or the power of God/Spirit," while modifying this affirmation by saying that "no further explanation is needed, nor may it be required." As a Quaker, Shuford may want to invoke the name of God as the one who provides this transforming power (either through God's initial act of creation or through God's spiritual re-creation of human beings), while as an AVP facilitator, he may simply define transforming power in the Durkheimian sense as a positive, non-material "social force" at work within us.

Celebrate Recovery Program

Celebrate Recovery is a program that has moved in the opposite direction in terms of spirituality. While Alternatives to Violence and Christopher Leadership have downplayed the religious aspects of their content to reach as many people as possible, Celebrate Recovery has named the Higher Power in the Twelve-Step program of A.A. as God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Proven recovery principles have been combined with Christian beliefs to address the variety of needs that believers experience in congregations. While some parishioners may feel comfortable going to their pastor, priest, deacon, or elder to discuss personal matters, or going to family and friends for support, or seeking professional counselling, Celebrate Recovery was started as an anonymous peer group that believers could go to address their hurts, habits, and hang-ups.¹⁶⁹



Sharing about deeply personal issues within the safety of a group undergirds the theme of *equality* that Sullivan addresses in her affirmation of the modern project. The participant-driven nature of CR means that there are no experts that facilitate the groups. Participants can become facilitators once they have completed a closed-step study and taken some leadership training. Facilitators lead small open-share groups on Friday evenings as well as sign up to lead closed-step studies that look

¹⁶⁹ A history of Celebrate Recovery is included at the beginning of the *Celebrate Recovery Inside Bible*, NIV (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), pp. ix-xi. A list of the eight Christian principles of CR is included on pages xv-xliv. The program itself is featured in a four-part series entitled (1) Stepping out of Denial into God's Grace, (2) Taking an Honest and Spiritual Inventory, (3) Getting Right with God, Yourself, and Others, and (4) Growing in Christ While Helping Others, *Celebrate Recovery Inside: Participant's Guides* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998).

more in depth at believers' experiences of recovery. Like the other two programs analysed above, CR nurtures leaders from within its ranks.

The *moral* nature and *disciplinary* benefits of the program are evident throughout. Participants are asked to identify character defects, deal with resentments and hurt they have experienced, as well as take ownership of harm that they have done to others. Having completed an inventory of these aspects of their lives, believers share their findings in a confidential manner with a sponsor of their own choosing. Accountability partners are also chosen to mutually support struggling participants.

Belief in change lies at the heart of Celebrate Recovery. The program starts with the assumption that everyone is suffering in some way: from addictions, broken relationships, harm done to others, or abuse experienced at home. The program provides a "container of safety," described above in relation to the Alternatives to Violence project, that enables and empowers participants to share at a deep level about themselves.

Recovery can be described as "programmatic" in the sense that it takes participants through a series of steps from denial to acknowledgement, from admission to surrender, from acceptance to making amends, and from reconciliation to witness. Each step represents an incremental process so that participants do not become overwhelmed by the variety of issues and emotions that arise as they consider the baggage of their past.

Solidification of identity represents a further benefit of the program. Addictions and other acting-out patterns represent "short-term energy relieving behaviours"¹⁷⁰ that participants use to cope with their messed-up lives. Acknowledgement of these patterns of behaviour enable believers to look more deeply into the roots of these actions. They realize that many of these patterns are the result of hurts that they have experienced. Uncovering these paralyzing aspects of their lives enables participants to re-channel their energies into positive pursuits.

The *religious* aspect of the program is unmistakable. As the inspiration and initiator of the program, begun in 1991, John Baker speaks about the fact that he was made to feel uncomfortable in A.A. groups when he spoke about Jesus Christ as the Higher Power.¹⁷¹ He was also made to feel uncomfortable when he tried to speak to believers about the fact that he was an alcoholic. Celebrate Recovery was born as a result of

¹⁷⁰ This phrase, shortened to STERBS, has been coined by John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, pp. 77-82.

¹⁷¹ *Celebrate Recovery Inside Bible*, p. x.

these lacuna in ministry opportunities. It represented a safe setting within a church where one could speak about the brokenness of one's life while proclaiming victory over these hurts through faith in God.

It remains to be seen how effective Celebrate Recovery can be with its overtly Christian emphasis. Inmates who have taken the program are drawn to the faith-based nature of the twelve-step program. They have been appreciative of the programmatic way in which each step is presented, the homework involved, and the confidential sharing that is an integral part of the program.

Role of Confession

A comment about the role of confession in step five is in order. Historically, confession has been an integral part of what one does with a Catholic priest so that one's conscience is clear when one takes communion.¹⁷² Confession to God has been a general Protestant practice that has circumvented the need for a believer to confess one's faults to another human being. Several denominations include a public declaration of confession at the beginning of each worship service to prepare believers for receiving the sacraments.¹⁷³

This historic faith practice has been reconceived in the Celebrate Recovery program. Since its inception in the 1930s, Alcoholics Anonymous together with the earlier Oxford Group¹⁷⁴ viewed confession as an integral part of what one did in moving from a state of sinfulness to a state of holiness. Sharing one's struggles with God and another human being enabled healing and transformation to begin (step five of the twelve step process).

The fact that this private act of confession moved from congregational priest to fellow participant and sponsor in Alcoholics Anonymous and Celebrate Recovery speaks to Sullivan's point about the shift from hierarchy and experts to egalitarianism and the mutual benefits of partnerships. Community and fellowship augment or replace sacraments and worship while confidential sharing with fellow

¹⁷² Note Winnifred Sullivan's comments about confession in her book, *A Ministry of Presence*, p. 20. She quotes Michel Foucault in this regard, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France: 1977-78*, pp. 184-185.

¹⁷³ James 5:16 states: "Therefore confess your sins to each other, and pray for each other, so that you may be healed."

¹⁷⁴ *Alcoholics Anonymous*, Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, *Oxford Group*, Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, www.wikipedia.org, retrieved February 2019.

participants replaces the requirement of saying confession to a priest. C.R. and A.A. fit well into the modern project of equals working together to improve their moral life, mutually benefitting from each others' insights, basing their transformation on God and spirituality, and becoming self-assured selves in the process.

Conclusion

These three *volunteer-facilitated* programs have been analysed to show how community programs can supplement courses and educational programs developed by chaplains. Inmates who have graduated from each of these programs have become A.V.P., C.L., and C.R. facilitators when they reintegrated into society. Each of these courses provides seamless ways in which inmates become citizens, community-minded, and dedicated to the common good.

Chapter Nine

Max Weber's Reflections on Mysticism and Asceticism

Introduction

In 1998, I met with Buddhist professor Victor Hori at McGill University in Montreal. Several Buddhist inmates at a prison where I was working had requested that a Buddhist monk visit them in order to provide meditation classes. I was curious about the type of meditation that would be useful in a prison setting.¹⁷⁵

Victor Hori suggested that there were two types of Buddhist meditation. Zen Buddhism meditated on an ephemeral world in which all life was calm and beautiful. Reflecting in silence on this other world brought a sense of tranquility and bliss to the practitioner.

Pure Land Buddhism was different in that it reflected on the fact that life was hell. Life is full of suffering that every person experiences in different ways. Concentrating on the fact that we are in the midst of a fallen world enables us, mysteriously, to rise above it.¹⁷⁶

Hori suggested that the latter form of meditation might be more useful in prison than Zen Buddhism. The problem with meditating on another world while in jail is that an inmate feels more depressed after this spiritual exercise. The harshness of prison

¹⁷⁵ This chapter represents a modified version on chapter seventeen in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 149-154.

¹⁷⁶ See, for example, Alfred Bloom, *Shinran's Gospel of Pure Grace* (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 1965), 27-33. Both Scott Peck and Bruno Bettelheim start with this latter premise. Peck starts off his book, *A Road Less Travelled* (New York: Touchstone, 1978), with these words, "Life is difficult," 15. Bettelheim suggests on page 7 of his book, *The Uses of Enchantment*, that "the source of much that goes wrong in life is due to our very own natures – the propensity of all men for acting aggressively, asocially, selfishly, out of anger and anxiety."

becomes even more stark after one's contemplation of a blissful other world. Escapism represents but a temporary solution to the problems of life.

We saw the effects of this other world strategy regarding young adults. Using drugs and pretending that crime paid enabled these inmates to numb the negative effects of incarceration. This numbness lasted only so long before the young inmates had to face the challenges of prison life.

Hori suggested that Pure Land Buddhism, with its contemplation on suffering and pain, might be a more useful tool for inmates who wanted to meditate. He gave the example of an inmate with whom he had worked. The inmate had converted to Pure Land Buddhism because he had read a pamphlet that started off with the words, "all existence is suffering."¹⁷⁷

Hori's comments reminded me of sociologist Max Weber's work on mysticism and asceticism.¹⁷⁸ Weber suggested that there were four different ways of looking at the world: (1) other-worldly mysticism, (2) this-worldly mysticism, (3) other-worldly asceticism, and (4) this-worldly asceticism.¹⁷⁹

Other worldly mysticism strove to relieve the practitioner of all pre-occupations with the passions and actions of this world by entering into a contemplative repose of tranquility.

This worldly mysticism embraced the beauty of nature along with its spiritual qualities. Practitioners sought to be in harmony with the cyclical changes of seasons. These solstices and equinoxes undergirded the rhythmic transformation of nature from the death of seeds to the birth of plants, from the growth of vegetation to its harvest, and then back to dormancy and latency during winter.

Other worldly asceticism addressed the same pre-occupation of humans with passions and temptations by actively resisting them through activities. Self-flagellation was the most extreme form of bringing the body into line with its spiritual intentions. Faithful believers physically pummeled their bodies to get rid of sinful temptations and did penance for the sins they had committed.

¹⁷⁷ Donald Stoesz, *Email correspondence with Victor Hori*, December 2018, referenced in Donald Stoesz with Hank Dixon, *A Prison Chaplaincy Manual*, 305.

¹⁷⁸ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, Volume I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 541-555.

¹⁷⁹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, pp. 541-556.

This worldly asceticism also concentrated on the importance of action, albeit in a different form. The most important way of appeasing God and responding to the demands of nature was by bringing creation under control through domestication. Capitalization of monies was used to create an endless line of useful production of goods.¹⁸⁰ The material rewards that money offered was obviated through the reinvestment of profits into even more production. People could be saved by becoming supreme stewards of God's creation.

These four ways of being are represented in various ways in a prison environment. *Zen Buddhism* can be identified with the *other-worldly* form of *mysticism*. It recommended contemplation of another world in order to limit the amount of preoccupation with the passions of this world.

Aboriginal elders' emphasis on the harmony of the world, in which one's marriage, one's children, one's parents, and ancestors form a cohesive whole within the natural world of the Creator incorporates elements of *this-worldly mysticism*. Placing oneself with a larger corporate whole helps offenders see themselves as affecting, and being affected by, a world bigger than themselves.

The causal effect of harm and hurt (karma) can be interrupted and healed through empathetic identification with the pain of one's victims, the absence of the father (who is in jail), the care of the mother, the natural sustenance of the earth, and the spiritual identification of the offender with the Creator who had made all this possible. These themes echo a *this-worldly mystical* approach.

Wiccan emphasis on four natural symbols -- earth, fire, wind, and water as represented by salt, candle, feather, and water¹⁸¹ -- resembles the *naturalistic, organic spirituality* promoted by native elders. The fact that Wiccans follow the rhythm of the solar and lunar cycles of the solstice and equinox shows how the four natural symbols are integrated into a cosmological whole. The death and hibernation of nature during the winter gives way to birth of plants in the spring. These natural cycles echo the human cycle of death, intimacy, procreation, and rebirth. Wiccan participants affirm the natural cycle of human and divine living through these naturalistic elements.

¹⁸⁰ Max Weber outlines this strategy in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁸¹ For explanation of Wiccan practices, see, for example, Thea Sabin, *Wicca for Beginners* (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2006).

Pure Land Buddhism, with its emphasis on the need for divine grace in the midst of sin and suffering,¹⁸² has associations with *other-worldly asceticism*. Contemplation in this case consists of actively journalling and reflecting on the many ways in which prison life disturbs all sense of normality. Concentrating on what is wrong in the world curiously offers a sense of relief from the vagaries of history. Practitioners learn to avoid all dysfunctional behaviours that lead them into a spiral of despair.

Evening self-help groups challenge inmates mentally to take the necessary steps toward recovery from past hurts, habits, and hang-ups. The spiritual discipline of acknowledging denial, accepting help, affirming a higher power, and being released from shame and guilt through repentance and forgiveness represents a group therapy that makes inmates more accountable to themselves and others.

The penitential aspects of these twelve-step programs parallel the *other-worldly asceticism* of self-flagellation, albeit in a spiritual rather than physical form. Confessing sin and doing penance are two time-honoured religious rites that enable purification, cleansing, and healing to take place.

Aboriginal elders' use of a sweat lodge to generate prayers to the Creator, oneself, one's family, and one's victims can be viewed as a physical manifestation of *other-worldly asceticism*. The profound sense of confinement that one feels -- together with twenty other participants crammed in a claustrophobic, pitch-black lodge with a low ceiling that is hotter than an ordinary sauna -- makes one's prayers efficacious, if not for healing, at least for assistance in getting out of there "as soon as possible."

Correctional Service Canada's mandate that all offenders find gainful employment while incarcerated exemplifies the importance of *this-worldly asceticism*. Because boredom tends to fuel discontent, administration has worked hard at keeping inmates busy, doing meaningful work. This includes cleaning the units, helping to prepare meals, working in the metal or construction shops, upgrading academic skills, taking programming, and working as clerks in the library and chapel.

Opportunities to play sports and work out in the gym represent evening activities that keep offenders busy. Many inmates spend a lot of time strengthening their bodies through weightlifting and cardiac-vascular activities. These pursuits reinforce

¹⁸² Shiran had a deep sense of human depravity, believing that we are chained to evil by "our lust, hatred, and delusion," Alfred Bloom, *Shinran's Gospel of Pure Grace* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Association for Asian Studies, 1991), p. 27. He believed that human beings "would fall into hell were it not for the grace of Amida Bhudda and his Vows," *ibid.*, p. 32.

a sense of manliness as well as empower them to defend themselves physically against threats made against them. These activities represent different forms of *this-worldly asceticism*.

Usefulness of Labyrinths

Use of labyrinths in prison is another way of focusing the mind in order to rescue the soul. I developed a seven-step spiritual journey that involved (1) naming obstacles, (2) letting go of one's family of origins, (3) letting go of one's mentors, (4) establishing a spiritual centre, and becoming re-engaged with (5) oneself, (5) others, and (6) divine mystery.¹⁸³

Acknowledging the deeply embedded nature of one's existence represents the first three steps of the process. Suffering is an inherent part of life because of our natural tendency to do wrong, our unhealthy attachments, and our need to be defined by these "dramas" in our lives. We can only be liberated if we have brought these unconscious bonds to the surface. At least half of the spiritual journey involves naming these influences in order to come out of denial.



¹⁸³ A reflection on this seven-step spiritual journey is included in Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace*, pp. 83-84. Other authors who have written about the usefulness of labyrinths for spiritual disciplines include Donna Schaper and Carole Ann Camp, *Labyrinths from the Outside In* (Woodstock: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2000) and Lauren Artress, *Walking a Sacred Path* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1995).

A spiritual centre called self emerges from these ruminations. In the same ways that the book of Genesis tells us that a man can only cleave to his wife if he has left his father and mother, so too can we become whole selves, unencumbered by superego and id, when we have been made aware of these emotional attachments.

The ego, in turn, becomes solidified as it affirms the *imago*¹⁸⁴ of the self, is grateful for the *id*'s drive and zest for life, and affirms the place of the self in the larger world. Whether stated in secular terms as “transforming power” (AVP logo), a “deep willing at the core of one’s being” (Gregory Baum),¹⁸⁵ or simply as an affirmation of the goodness of the self (Enlightenment thinking), the fourth step of the spiritual journey involves taking ownership of past and present in order to move on to the future.

To state it in the starkest terms, one becomes married to oneself in a deeply narcissistic manner. Love springs from within rather than being sought in so many other places. Offenders learn that they are all alone in this world, without friends or family. Aloneness breeds contentment so that individuals can move forward.

The final three steps involve placing oneself within the larger world. This can be viewed in a radically spiritual manner in that one is utterly dependent on the grace of God. God has created us for the good of others. Stated in either secular or spiritual terms, these steps enable offenders to re-engage the world because of their newfound sense of self. Having let go of co-dependency, unhealthy attachments, past hurts, guilt and shame for wrong done, and other relationships, habits, and hang-ups that weight them down, offenders’ healthier self-image translates into excitement and joy at the new possibilities of life. These re-engagements are social, emotional, spiritual, and economic. Liberation from past entanglements makes mutually gratifying attachments invigorating.

I consider the last and seventh step to be deeply spiritual. It involves utter surrender and abandonment to divine mystery because of the forgiveness, graciousness, and liberation that has been either enacted by the divine other (*salvation through ascetical means*) or invoked as immanently present (*spirituality through mystical*

¹⁸⁴ This is the word that Harville Hendrix uses to help couples understand why they were attracted to their partners. He defines imago as “the composite picture of the people who influenced you most strongly at an early age,” *Getting the Love You Want*, 38.

¹⁸⁵ This is the way Gregory Baum states the matter in his book, *Man Becoming* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 15-17. “Every man, by the logic of his action, is led to discover the impossibility of exhausting the deep willing at the core of his being in a finite universe. Man’s unending concern leads him to wider and wider action . . . The distance between himself and himself is (still) infinite. A man is summoned to the inevitable option: either, following the drive of his limitless concern, he opens himself to the infinite; or he encloses himself in the finite order and thus violates the thrust of his own action.”

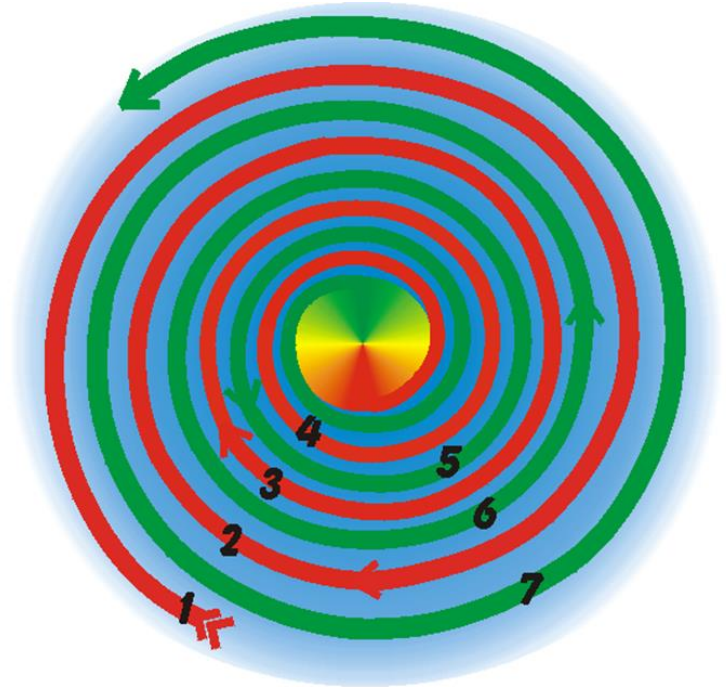
embodiment). The participant embraces the pain of the past, the exhilaration of finding a true self, and the empowerment of living within a larger world known as (divine) mystery.

These seven steps reflect different aspects of *asceticism* and *mysticism*. The actual walking of the labyrinth can be viewed as a *this-worldly ascetical* practice. A mental sense of direction and purpose is invoked by the sheer physical action of following the path. Unlike a maze, which is meant by its many dead-ends to confuse and frustrate a pilgrim's progress, a labyrinth is intentionally directional, with a beginning and an end, to focus a practitioner's mind.

The journey can also be viewed as *other-worldly ascetical* in that it requires letting go of attachments in order to lighten the load for the future ahead. Becoming dragged down by hurts, guilt, shame, and memories of past harm done is an inevitable first step of the journey toward healing. Naming the wounds that remain embedded in one's soul, like innumerable nail holes in a fence, are required for the pain and suffering to be alleviated. While not quite as physically demanding as self-flagellation, the spiritual discipline of being convicted, repenting, and doing penance are emotionally and spiritually exhausting.

This seven-step exercise can also be linked to *this-worldly mysticism*. Having arrived at the centre of one's "own" world, an offender can look around, see from where they have come as well as the path that leads forward. This chapter builds on the assumption that human beings are created as much for others as themselves. This assumption is built into the labyrinth insofar as three steps are taken after one has lightened one's load and arrived at the centre of one's soul.

These last three steps can be referred as falling into the arms of the Creator, affirming the love one has for others, committing oneself to the good, and surrendering to the infinite love that represents the divine and the universe. This *mystical spirituality*



can be labelled as *other-worldly* or *this-worldly* to the extent that a divinity is invoked as transcendent or immanent, other or present, naturalistic or religious, salvific or Being itself.

Conclusion

The reality of suffering and pain in prison behooves a chaplain to come up with spiritual resources that speak to this aspect of daily living. As stated above, Scott Peck starts his book, *The Road Less Travelled*, with these words, “Life is difficult” and references it as one of the four Noble Truths of Buddhism.¹⁸⁶ Bruno Bettelheim proceeds on the basis that “much that goes wrong in life is due to our very own natures – the propensity of all men for acting aggressively, a socially, selfishly, out of anger and anxiety.”¹⁸⁷ Victor Frankl wrote a book entitled *Search for Meaning*,¹⁸⁸ building on his experiences as a Holocaust survivor. Any number of spiritually based books can be used to help offenders find their rightful place in society. This chapter has recommended different *ascetical* and *mystical* spiritual practices that be used to good effect.

¹⁸⁶ M. Scott Peck. *The Road Less Travelled*. 15.

¹⁸⁷ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, 7.

¹⁸⁸ Victor Frankl, *Search for Meaning* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006). Frankl argues that we cannot avoid suffering but we can choose how to cope with it, find meaning in it, and move forward with renewed purpose.

Conclusion

This book has used various psychological and sociology theories to uncover the unconscious and apply those findings to offenders in a prison environment. Young adults' high speed car chases were the result of an overemphasis on the id to the exclusion of the regulating function of the ego. Sex offences against (step) daughters represented infantile behaviours on the part of their fathers as a result of their feelings of intimidation of their superego spouses.

The notion that crime pays is fed by the contrasting and contradictory harsh reality of inmates' lives in prison. They continue to hold on to this delusional ideal because there is so little left to live for. The upside pecking order of the prison gives murderers, drug dealers, and robbers a euphoria of status that they lack in society. This black hat celebrity status undergirds their idea that their life of crime is worth it.

The correctional service's use of dynamic security, the discipline of work, and mandatory programming counter the above collective consciousness by offering an alternative strategy of possibilities in offenders becoming law-abiding citizens. These correctional strategies are complemented by volunteer driven programs that show how non-coercion is preferable to violence, and how leadership and

communication skills benefit inmates in pro-social settings. Religious courses that affirm the reality of divine and human love and relationships reinforce the sense of trust and fellowship fostered by volunteer groups. Mystical and ascetical practices in prison offer a wide variety of options for prisoners to cope well and live richly while incarcerated.

This book has extrapolated on the idea that these psychological theories are applicable in a broader sense. The idea that we still live by the modern ideals of love and marriage, that we have redefined ourselves in new ways as these ideals have failed to live up to our wishes, and that life is possible after modernity offer us hope for the future. Ex-offenders as well as ourselves can achieve a new sense of self-identity.

BACK COVER

Explanation of front cover.

The vibrant colours within each circle represents the fact that we have been created in the image of God. The black colour within each of the circles represents the fact that we have a dark side. The intersection of circles represents the fact that we are connected to other people in myriads of ways. The white colour within each circle represents our future. This is what the book is all about, establishing our own identity and moving confidently into the future.

Excerpt from page 9:

“These contemporary re-evaluations of historically important theories -- id, ego, and superego, collective unconscious, oedipal complex, and post-modernity -- Convinced me that the idea of self identity is important, not only in relationship to important psychological theories, but also how we establish ourselves within the midst of modernity and postmodernity. My reflection on various fairy tales, dramas, stories, and my work in prison has convinced me that we need to have a good view of self. This is what this book is all about.”

Donald Stoesz is a retired chaplain