

# Psychology for Missionaries

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## Preface

During the 1990s I set out to write a series of brochures about mental health and missionaries and posted them on the Asbury College website. I wrote the brochures basically in response to the questions missionaries asked and the problems they discussed as they talked with Bonnie (my wife) and me.

I had no intention of writing a book when I started writing the brochures because I was just writing in response to issues missionaries raised. About the turn of the century Friedhilde Stricker requested permission to translate the 25 available brochures into German and publish them as *Was Missionare Wissen Sollten...: Ein Handbuch für Legen und Dienst*. Soon after that I also gathered the available brochures and posted them on-line as an E-book by the same title in English, *What Missionaries Ought to Know: A Handbook for Life and Service*. Although the brochures are gathered into several sections, that book has no “logical” outline, just groups of “related” chapters.

I taught psychology in Christian colleges for 35 years, and during that time I wrote two books about psychology, both published by Abingdon Press. The first was *Psychology from a Christian Perspective* in 1980, an academic book consisting primarily of journal articles I had written. This was soon followed by *General Psychology for Christian Counselors* in 1983, a book written to supplement textbooks used by undergraduate students in general psychology.

Near the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century I realized that many of the brochures logically fit into the Christian perspective I had used three decades before while teaching psychology. Therefore, writing a book about

psychology for missionaries seemed like a “natural” for me.

This is an E-book, different from any other book I have written. Please read “Introduction to This Book” on the pages that follow. They will orient you to differences from ordinary printed books.

I want to acknowledge the invaluable help of two people editing this book. Art Nonneman gave excellent suggestions chapter by chapter related to the content of the book and Yvonne Moulton did the final editing making sure that my grammar, punctuation, and so forth were corrected.

## **Introduction to This Book**

This E-book differs from printed books in several ways. First, this book has few references to printed material. It is an E-book with links to added materials on the Internet, ones which may be accessed by the click of a mouse. Few people actually look up the references cited in printed books, to some extent because of the effort involved. However, if people can access additional material instantly with little effort, perhaps more will actually do so.

I realize that some of the websites to which I link may no longer exist. This is analogous to printed books being out of print and not available in the library. Because some of the links may not lead to the websites I intended, I give both the link (URL) and the name of the organization/website so that the reader can use a search engine in an attempt to find the website if the organization has moved it to a new URL.

For cases in which the referenced material is not available on-line, I have links to references in the database on [missionarycare.com](http://missionarycare.com). This database gives complete reference to the printed material as well as a summary, an outline, and a brief quotation from the printed material.

Second, this book is under constant revision and expansion like *What Missionaries Ought to Know...* and *Missionary Marriage Issues* which are also on this website. Thus the book is never “completed” because new material is added as it is written, virtually every year.

Third, this book has no index because none is needed. The book is in a digital format, so readers can use a search/find option to locate any topic or topics in the text. In Microsoft

Word the “find” option is located under the edit tab.

Fifth, this book is not intended to be a general psychology textbook. It is written for missionaries about psychology. It may be used as a supplement to a general psychology textbook since the chapters are parallel to those found in most introductory psychology books. Following are two suggestions for readers who would like to read about the same material in a general psychology text.

Currently the most complete introductory text on-line is the one by Russell Dewey at <http://www.intropsych.com/index.html>. If you compare the table of contents in Dewey’s book to the table of contents in this book, you will find many of the same topics covered. You will find a link to the most relevant page of Dewey’s book at the beginning and end of each chapter as well as at the end of each major chapter section. When reading Dewey’s book, remember that it is from a secular perspective so you are likely to find sections with which you disagree.

One of the most widely used general psychology textbooks is *Psychology* by David G. Myers, published by Worth Publishers. It is an excellent, comprehensive text written for all audiences. Dave has taught at Hope College in Holland, MI for many years and is an evangelical Christian. The text is now in the ninth edition so used copies of the eighth edition (2007) are now widely available. The following websites search the Internet to find the best prices. I will give chapters and sections in Myers’ book at the beginning and end of each chapter and section as well. Though Dave is a Christian, you still may find sections with which you disagree. <http://www.bookfinder4u.com/>  
<http://www.abebooks.com/>  
<http://www.bookfinder.com/>

Finally, remember that this book places psychology in “A” Christian Perspective, not “The” Christian Perspective. Different Christians have slightly different world-views and

different theological positions, so you will probably find sections in this book with which you will disagree.

Blessings on you as you read!

## Prologue

# History of Psychology, Religion, and Missions

### Early History of Psychology

Structuralism

Functionalism

### Systems of Psychology

Psychoanalysis

Behaviorism

Humanistic Psychology

### International Roots of Psychology

### Psychology and Religion

Second Half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Coexistence

First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Conflict

Second Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Integration &

### Backlash

### Psychology and Missions

Conferences

Books

Periodicals

Websites

Personal Member Care

Graduate Education

### Conclusion

(Part Two of Chapter 1 in Dewey's introductory text is relevant.)

- [Chapter 01: Psychology and Science](#)

(Prologue: The Story of Psychology in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant)

Someone has said that psychology is the discipline that began as the study of the soul, lost its soul and became the study of the mind, and finally lost its mind and became the study of behavior. Though this statement is oversimplified, it does contain a grain of truth about the history of psychology.

The word “psychology” comes from the Greek words *psuche* (sometimes written as *psyche*) and *logos*. Both of these words appear frequently in the New Testament, and both are translated in several different ways. However, *pusche* is most often translated as soul, life, or mind; and *logos* is most often translated as “word.” Thus psychology is literally “words about the soul, life or mind.” Psychology never did study an immaterial soul, but it did study life and the mind.

### Early History of Psychology

Though it is difficult to specify exactly when modern psychology began, most people agree that it was in December of 1879. One day Wilhelm Wundt and a couple graduate students conducted and experiment in a small room on the University of Leipzig in Germany and called the room a psychology laboratory.

(<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/wilhelm-wundt>)

### Structuralism

Wundt and his followers attempted to experimentally study the structure of consciousness, immediate experience. Since they were interested in studying the structure of the mind,

they came to be called “structuralists.” Chemistry had made great advances by reducing compounds to their elements, so Wundt and his followers attempted to reduce consciousness to its elements. To do this they had the mind observe itself in a method called introspection and concluded that there were three elements of consciousness, (1) sensations, (2) images, and (3) affective states (emotions). This approach to psychology was taken to America in by E. B. Titchner who had left England to study under Wundt. Within 15 years psychology had spread from Europe to North America.

During his lifetime Wundt published 53,735 pages, enough to keep a person reading nearly three years at the rate of 50 pages per day. Titchner translated much of it into English and added more research. However, structuralists soon disagreed over how many elements were in the mind, people questioned the objectivity of introspection, and pragmatic Americans could see little application in knowing what consciousness “is.”

### **Functionalism**

American William James was more interested in what consciousness “is for” than in what it “is.” He and his followers wanted to find out how the mind functioned to help people adapt to the world around them. Our minds allow us to remember our past, adjust to our present and plan for our future. Since these psychologists were interested in the function of the mind, they came to be called functionalists.

James was an excellent writer and published *The Principles of Psychology* in 1890, (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/Principles/index.htm>). about a decade after Wundt had established the first psychology laboratory. James began this book saying, “Psychology is the Science of Mental Life,” so he did not change what psychologists were to study. However, he emphasized that people were also irrational at times, that they may respond to

biological needs and be emotional at times.

Both functionalism and structuralism were to “disappear” from psychology in the first half of the twentieth century, but for different reasons. As other systems of psychology developed Structuralism passed from the scene. It was totally gone soon after Titchener died in 1927, but had been gradually abandoned over the previous 15 years. Functionalism, on the other hand, was gradually absorbed by those new systems that developed. Psychology as a whole became functional.

### **Systems of Psychology**

Missionaries want to tell people about the Good News that God loves them and He sent His Son to die for their sins that they might have eternal life. Why would they want to study the systems of psychology? The reason is because the missionary’s basic assumptions about the people they are working with, what is thought to be wrong with those people, the goal of missions, and the method of reaching that goal are all determined by the “system” the missionaries hold. Although there have been half a dozen or more schools or systems of psychology during psychology’s century of existence, we will consider only three of them here, because they have been major forces in American psychology. Behaviorism and psychoanalysis dominated the American psychological scene during the first half of the twentieth century, and humanistic psychology emerged as a third force during the second half.

### **Psychoanalysis**

Although psychoanalysis was not developed as a part of psychology, it has influenced psychology greatly, especially the parts of psychology most relevant to missions. Therefore, we will consider it here as a system of psychology, realizing that it was developed in the context of medical practice.

Psychoanalysis was developed by Sigmund Freud in Vienna, Austria, in his attempts to treat people he called neurotics. As Freud worked with his patients, he gradually developed a theory of personality and a method of treating such disorders.

(<http://www.personalityresearch.org/papers/beystehner.html>)

**Assumptions.** Any system of psychology must begin with a set of assumptions: unproven, plausible, noncontradictory statements taken at face value. They are the starting point for building a system. What assumptions did Sigmund Freud make about people? First, let us look at his assumption about good and evil. For Freud the most basic structure of personality is the id; in fact, it is the only structure present at birth. The id essentially urges people to take what they want without being concerned about the consequences to self or others. If we are to talk in terms of good and evil, the id would have to be considered as basically evil. Furthermore, the id is unchangeable. We must simply learn to rechannel its expression so that we can live with it.

Second, Freud saw human actions as being completely determined by forces deep within each person. In this psychic determinism, nothing happened by chance. Every "mistake" was really an expression of the deepest motives of the person. For example, a boy wrote to a girl, "I would like to kill you tonight." Even if he meant to write "kiss" instead of "kill," Freud would say that boy really did want to kill the girl. Usually such deep desires are kept in check, but occasionally they slip through as "accidents" (but they are not really accidents).

Third, Freud saw humans as basically irrational. Although the ego does exist as the rational part of the personality, it always remains subservient to the irrational id. The ego strives to control the impulsive, self-centered id, but it has no energy of its own, depending on the id for all of its psychic energy. The ego tries to allow the id to express itself in such a way that the safety of the person and others will not be endangered.

Finally, Freud saw the unconscious part of the mind as

being much more important than the conscious. Although he talked about three levels of consciousness, the unconscious was by far the largest, most important part of the mind. Freud likened the mind to an iceberg in that most of it is below the surface. Events in the unconscious are of utmost importance in determining the behavior of the individual. "Neurotic" behavior is caused by unconscious conflicts, and such people are totally unaware of the causes of their irrational behavior.

Missionaries who see the people with whom they interact (both nationals and expats) as being basically evil, determined, irrational, and unaware of why they behave as they do, will engage in a very different type of ministry than missionaries who see those people as basically good, free to choose, rational, and aware of themselves.

**Definition and Goals.** Freud never wrote a systematic psychology, so we need to gather his psychology from the twenty-four volume set of *The Standard Edition of the Works of Sigmund Freud* (1886-1939). Freud's major goal was to find some method of treating his patients who suffered from a variety of neurotic symptoms. Although Freud was educated as a physician and practiced as a clinical neurologist, he gradually came to adopt nonmedical methods of treating his patients. He was always trying to develop a treatment for neurosis and did not feel bound by existing methods.

Psychoanalysis became both a method of treatment and a system of personality. It can best be defined as the study of unconscious motivations, conflicts between them, and the effects of such conflicts on behavior. Freud gradually became convinced that the causes of his patients' problems were to be found in the unconscious, so he spent much of his time attempting to find out what was happening there.

**Methods.** Although Freud did not originate the concept of the unconscious, he did emphasize it to a greater extent than anyone had done previously. No methods existed for its systematic study, so Freud gradually adopted the "talking cure" or "catharsis," what has come to be called the technique of free

association. In this method patients lie on a couch and talk freely about every thought they have, no matter how socially unacceptable, unimportant, embarrassing, or foolish it is. Freud believed that as patients do this, they gradually reveal what is in their unconscious. In the relaxed state and with the analyst's encouragement, the ego gradually lowers its guard, so that more and more unconscious material enters consciousness, is spoken, and can be interpreted by the analyst.

A second method of getting at the unconscious is dream analysis. Freud's reasoning was similar here. While people are asleep, their rational egos are less on guard so material from the unconscious id gets into their dreams. Since the ego is still somewhat on guard, the material remembered in the conscious recall of the dream will be disguised. However, the analyst then interprets what the patient has recalled to get at the deeper meanings of what is happening at the unconscious level.

As patients went through several years of such treatment, most would gradually improve. Freud believed that as he was getting at the unconscious causes of their problems and bringing them to consciousness, he was effecting a cure. Notice how Freud's methods follow from his assumptions about people. If people are evil, determined, irrational, and not conscious of their problems, then some methods must be found for getting at the unconscious aspects of personality. You will find *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* by Sigmund Freud, translated by G. Stanley Hall (1920) at <http://www.questia.com/read/102189232?title=A%20General%20Introduction%20to%20Psychoanalysis>.

Although psychoanalysis has been very influential in psychology, let us now consider an approach to psychology that begins with a different set of assumptions.

## Behaviorism

Behaviorism is that system of psychology founded by American John B. Watson while teaching at Johns Hopkins

University. It emphasizes an objective, experimental, scientific approach to behavior. Watson's behaviorism was a psychology in which all behaviors, no matter how complex, could be reduced to a series of stimulus-response connections. The behaviorists were reacting against the subjectivity found in the psychology of the early twentieth century. They set out to study only what can be observed. Behaviorists view human beings as essentially complex machines or complex animals. People are quantitatively different (more complex) from animals and machines, but not qualitatively different.

**Assumptions.** With this mechanistic view of people, many of the assumptions psychoanalysts made about persons become irrelevant. First, since humans are not qualitatively different from animals and machines, they are neither good nor evil. The whole question of good and evil is quite irrelevant here, because machines are neither good nor evil. From the behavioristic perspective, human beings may learn actions that result in good or bad for others, but they are intrinsically neither good nor evil.

Second, behaviorists see human action as being determined. Humans are stimulus-response mechanisms who behave in response to some input or stimulus. Human beings do not have the power to make actual choices, since they just respond to stimuli present in the environment. There is an environmental determinism in which behavior is determined by external factors; as contrasted to Freud's psychic determinism in which internal, unconscious factors determine behavior.

Third, behaviorists see people as being neither rational nor irrational. This whole dimension does not really apply to a behaviorist's approach to people, because behavior is seen as a function of past rewards or of stimulus-response relationships. Finally, the conscious-unconscious dimension is also not relevant to a behavioristic approach. In a mechanistic approach, it does not make sense to talk about humans as being conscious or not conscious of themselves.

Again, consider the difference it makes if missionaries

assume this mechanistic view of the individuals with whom they interact. If the behavior of nationals is seen as determined and the other three dimensions (good-evil, rational-irrational, and conscious-unconscious) are seen as irrelevant, the whole emphasis will be on changing the environment in an effort to change the behavior of those to whom they minister, rather than attempting to make some change inside them.

**Definition and Goals.** Watson defined psychology as the "science of behavior," and said that he would never have to go back on his definition, never use terms like consciousness, mind, mental state, imagery, and so forth. Psychology was to be the science of overt, objectively observable responses; only those that could be observed and recorded by someone else. It was to be a purely objective branch of natural science.

The goal of behavioristic psychology was the prediction and control of behavior. Watson wanted to reach the point where he had completely worked out all stimulus-response connections so that given the response, he could tell what the stimulus had been; and given the stimulus, he could predict what the response would be; and controlling the environment would result in controlling behavior.

**Methods.** Watson would allow only objective methods to be used in the investigation of behavior. He specifically stated that observation, conditioned reflexes, verbal reports, and testing methods could be used. Although it sounds like he was allowing subjectivity into behaviorism, one must understand that in verbal report, words were to be regarded like any other responses, such as a knee jerk or an eye blink. Verbal responses were simply overt responses, and did not indicate anything in one's "mind" or "thoughts." Tests did not measure intelligence or personality, but simply were a series of stimuli that elicited responses from people.

You can find his original 1913 article "Psychology as the behaviorist views it" in *Psychological Review* at (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Watson/views.htm>) his 1919 book, *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist* at

(<http://www.archive.org/details/psychologyfromst00watsuoft>).

## Humanistic Psychology

Humanistic psychology is a relatively recent development that is more of a movement than a well-developed system. Humanistic psychologists generally focus on the experiencing person, emphasizing distinctively human qualities, such as choice and creativity. They are concerned with the dignity and worth of individuals and want to develop human potential. Thus they are more concerned with studying meaningful problems than with using "correct" research procedures. Although there was no clearly defined founder, Americans Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow were major early leaders in this movement during the 1940s and the 1950s.

**Assumptions.** With their emphasis on human freedom and dignity, humanistic psychologists begin with a different set of assumptions about people. First, rather than seeing humans as being basically evil or neither good nor evil, humanistic psychologists see them as being basically good. Although human beings can be very cruel, destructive, and antisocial, humanistic psychologists contend that (at the deepest levels) each person strives for a positive, healthy, creative fulfilling of the person's potential. Culture may suppress this inherent goodness in people, but this positive potential will reveal itself in the life of the individual if given the opportunity. This goodness may be relatively weak compared to the cultural forces that make people bad, but the goodness can never be obliterated.

Second, humanistic psychologists see human beings as fundamentally free to make their own decisions, and thus as responsible for their own behavior. Of course, people do not have absolute freedom to do anything, but they can actually see different paths open to them and really make a choice of which one to take. Most humanistic psychologists would say that as individuals mature, they become more free to actualize the

potential they have as human beings. This assumption that people are free and responsible is quite different from Freud's or Watson's deterministic assumptions.

Third, although humanistic psychologists agree that humans are somewhat irrational, they believe most human behavior is governed by rational forces. Humanistic psychologists place little emphasis on animal research because they see people as being quite different from animals, rational rather than irrational. When given the chance, most individuals can give valid reasons for their behavior.

Finally, although humanistic psychologists agree that the unconscious does exist, they see people as being primarily aware of themselves. The unconscious has relatively little influence on behavior as compared to that of the conscious. Most people are aware of why they behave the way they do. In contrast to Freud, humanistic psychologists see the unconscious as having good as well as bad aspects. Buried in the unconscious are creativity, love, tenderness, self-acceptance, and understanding.

Think of the difference it makes if missionaries view the people with whom they interact as basically good, free, rational, and conscious, rather than as basically evil, determined, irrational, and unconscious. Of course, such missionaries may decide to assume that those people have all of these characteristics to some degree.

**Definition and Goals.** Like Freud, the humanistic psychologists have no systematic psychology, so we must gather their psychology from the pages of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology and some of the "official" statements of the Association for Humanistic Psychology (<http://www.ahpweb.org>). The general goal of humanistic psychologists is the development of the potential in every person. They want to develop a complete description of what it means to live as a human being. They study all aspects of human experience to the end of helping people become all that they can become. Rather than trying to make "sick" people

"normal," humanistic psychologists are interested in taking "normal" or "average" people and helping them to become "actualized" or "fully functioning."

Although no specific definition of humanistic psychology is agreed upon, humanistic psychology usually is the study of normal or gifted human beings. If we want to know how fast humans can run, we do not study crippled runners. If we want to know the intellectual feats humans can perform, we do not study the mentally retarded. Likewise, humanistic psychologists would say that if we want to know human potential psychologically, we should not study the mentally ill. They would contend that the study of the sick, crippled, and immature will lead to a sick, crippled, and immature psychology.

**Methods.** Humanistic psychologists place little emphasis on method. They believe that the goal is the important thing and that they should use any method that enables them to reach the goal. Rather than stating how psychologists should "do psychology," they emphasize the goal of helping people reach their potential, using any method available. Of course, the methods emphasize conscious, rational, verbal interchange with the person. The psychologist may use anything from directive counseling to allowing the client to decide what should be talked about.

Articles and books of Rogers and Maslow are not yet in the public domain to be posted on-line but lists of their writings are found at <http://www.nrogers.com/CRRBiblio.pdf>, and [http://www.maslow.org/sub/m\\_bib.htm](http://www.maslow.org/sub/m_bib.htm). Many of the books are available on-line used at reasonable prices.

Now that we have examined two systems which take extreme positions on the issues as well as one which does not, let us place them in a table which makes comparisons and contrasts more apparent.

Figure 1:1 A comparison of the major assumptions, goals, and methods of three major forces in psychology.

System	Psychoanalytic	Humanistic	Behavioristic
<b>Assumptions about humans</b>	Evil Determinism Irrational Unconscious	Good Freedom Rational Conscious	Neither Determinism Neither Neither
<b>Goals of psychology</b>	Therapy for neurotics	Realize potential	Control behavior
<b>Methods of psychology</b>	Free association Dream analysis	All methods	Objective methods

The assumptions, goals, and methods for the three major forces in psychology are shown in Figure 1:1. Notice that psychoanalysis and humanistic psychology take opposite positions on these assumptions, have different goals, and have different methods. Behaviorism does not take strong positions on these issues (except for determinism) because of its mechanistic view of humans. Of course, today most counselors would not call themselves pure psychoanalysts, behaviorists, or humanistic psychologists. However, even psychologists who do not accept a full system of psychology still must have some position on these issues. Later in the chapter, we will present one Christian position these issues.

For further information about specific topics in the history and systems of psychology click on the following links to parts of Chapter 1 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Phrenology](#)
- [Classic Psychophysics](#)
- [Wundt's "New Psychology"](#)

- [James and Functionalism](#)
- [Early Female Psychologists](#)
- [Witmer Starts Clinical Psychology](#)
- [Watson and Behaviorism](#)
- [Mid-Twentieth Century Behaviorism](#)
- [The "Third Force"](#)
- [Modern Trends](#)
- [Summary: The History of Psychology](#)

### The International Roots of Psychology

A review of the founders of the various approaches to psychology shows that the discipline has roots in several countries in Europe and North America

- Structuralism: Wundt: Germany
- Functionalism: James: USA
- Psychoanalysis: Freud: Austria
- Behaviorism: Watson: USA
- Humanistic Psychology: Maslow & Rogers: USA

In addition, nearly every general psychology book contains contributions from other countries in Europe and North America.

- France: Alfred Binet helped establish the first psychological laboratory at the Sorbonne in 1889 and produced the first intelligence test in 1905 (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Pavlov/index.htm>).
- Russia: Ivan Pavlov began publishing studies of classical conditioning in animals in 1905 and published *conditioned Reflexes* in 1927 (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Pavlov/index.htm>).
- Switzerland: Jean Piaget published *The Language and Thought of the Child*, his classic study of cognitive development in humans in 1926 (<http://www.archive.org/details/languageandthoug007529mbp>).
- Canada: Hans Selye published *The Stress of Life*, his

classic work showing that no matter what the stress people responded with three stages: the alarm reaction, resistance, and exhaustion (if the stress continued long enough)

### Psychology and Religion

The relationship between psychology and religion has varied greatly over the years. The relationship was cordial when psychology began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, became antagonistic, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and then developed a truce toward the end of the century.

#### Last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Coexistence

The founders of the first two schools of psychology had positive relationships with the church. As psychology emerged from the philosophy and physiology of the day, it was just a new discipline of study in no conflict with the church. Neither Wundt nor James had a problem with the church, nor the church with them.

**Structuralism.** Wilhelm Wundt was the son of a Lutheran pastor and his early education was by his father's assistant, the vicar of the church. Wundt was so attached to his mentor that when the vicar was transferred to a nearby village, Wundt was allowed to live there with the vicar to continue his education until he was 13 years old and entered school to prepare for his university education.

Wundt revised his most important book, *Principles of Physiological Psychology*, five times between 1873 and 1911 (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Wundt/Physio/> for the 1902 version). He spent a decade between 1880 and 1890 writing on ethics, logic, and systematic philosophy. Then he spent another couple decades writing 10 volumes of his *Folk Psychology* which considered language, art, myths, social customs and morality. None of his writing brought him into conflict with the

church.

**Functionalism.** When William James was a youth, his father was very interested in discussion religious mysticism. It took James a dozen years to write *The Principles of Psychology* (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/Principles/index.htm>), but when it appeared in 1890, it was an instant success.

More than a decade later, James published *Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study of Human Nature* which has remained constantly in print for more than a century. It is also available online free of charge at <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/621>. James included topics such as the reality of the unseen, conversion, and the value of saintliness. Neither of these best-selling books brought him into conflict with the church.

#### First half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Conflict

This positive relationship between psychology and Christianity soured during the first half of the twentieth century as structuralism faded and functionalism was absorbed into all of psychology. Both Freud and Watson were soon in open conflict with the church.

**Psychoanalysis.** Sigmund Freud was born in Moravia, lived briefly in Germany, and then spent most of his life in Austria. Since his Jewish family lived in Austria, Freud was a Third Culture Kid (TCK) who internalized parts of both the Jewish and Austrian cultures, but did not feel fully a part of either. He became a well-known clinical neurologist and developed psychoanalysis. He was never a psychologist, but his theory of personality and method of therapy had a great impact on the field of psychology.

By the mid 1890s, Freud was convinced that sex played a major role in neurosis. In 1900 he published *The Interpretation of Dreams* (<http://www.psychwww.com/books/interp/toc.htm>) which came to be considered his major work. He published dozens of books

during the next four decades, but the one most offensive to Christians was *The Future of an Illusion* in 1927, translated into English in 1928 (<http://www.questia.com/read/93928903>). Freud begins Chapter VII saying, “Having recognized religious doctrines as illusions, we are at once faced by a further question...” Although he was using the word “illusion” in a slightly different way, such remarks throughout this brief book were very offensive to Christians. Many of his assumptions about human beings, his theory of personality, and his therapy resulted in sharp conflict with religious people of all kinds.

**Behaviorism.** John Watson was born near Greenville, SC, USA and received his early education there. He described himself as lazy and insubordinate; his teachers described him as argumentative and not easily controlled; and the police arrested him twice. He attended Furman University, an institution in the Baptist tradition, but he never internalized a Christian worldview.

After earning his Ph.D at the University of Chicago and teaching there for five years, he moved to Johns Hopkins University. While there, in 1913, he published “Psychology as the behaviorist views it” in *Psychological Review* (<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Watson/views.htm>). Six years later he published *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist* (<http://www.archive.org/details/psychologyfromst00watsuoft>). Watson discarded all mentalistic concepts, such as mind and consciousness. Human beings were viewed as mechanistic organisms with stimulus-response connections. Of course, spiritual concepts of humans made in God’s image were discarded as well. This animal-like view of humans resulted in conflict with Christians.

### Second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Integration & Backlash

The last half of the century was characterized by attempts to reconcile the differences between psychology and

Christianity. This took place in several ways.

**Professional Associations:** Around the middle of the century people employed in secular positions and those affiliated with religious ones both wanted to close the divide.

- **Psychology of Religion.** At the 1946 convention of the American Psychological Association (APA) some Roman Catholic scholars met to talk about the need for a Catholic association. By 1949 the American Catholic Psychological Association (ACPA) had been formed and officers elected. In 1970 the ACPA eliminated the word “Catholic” and became Psychologists Interested in Religious Issues (PIRI). In 1976 PIRI was accepted as Division 36 of the APA. Finally in 1993 Division 36 changed its name to “Psychology of Religion.” (<http://www.apa.org/about/division/div36.aspx>).
- **Christian Association for Psychological Studies.** In 1954 a group of conservative Christians of the Dutch Reformed persuasion held “The First American Calvinistic Conference on Psychology, Psychiatry, and Religion.” In 1955, they met again to found the Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS), dropping the word “Calvinistic.” Their agenda was to develop a “Calvinistic Dynamic Psychology” for the first decade and included primarily people in Michigan and surrounding states. Changes took place during the next decade that led to CAPS becoming a national association of evangelical Christians by 1978. (<http://www.caps.net/>)

**Graduate Education.** Members of the professional associations soon realized a need for graduate education of psychologists desiring a Christian perspective. Several models soon appeared.

- In a Theological Seminary. The School of Psychology in Fuller Theological Seminary began in 1965. A seminary seemed to be a logical place to begin other

Christian graduate education.

(<http://www.fuller.edu/academics/school-of-psychology/about-sop.aspx>)

- Free Standing School. Named for the city in which it was built, the Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology was founded in 1968. It went on to become the first free standing school of psychology to be accredited by a regional association. (<http://www.rosemead.edu>)
- In a Christian University. The Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology merged with Biola University in 1977 and went on to be accredited by APA in 1980. In 1981 Rosemead's graduate programs merged with Biola's undergraduate ones to become the Rosemead School of Psychology. (<http://www.rosemead.edu>)
- In a secular university. In 1973 a group of Christian mental health professionals began exploring the integration of Christian faith and professional counseling. They founded Psychological Studies Institute (PSI) which offered a Christian counseling program in the context of Georgia State University. This has now become Richmond Graduate University. (<http://richmont.edu>)

**Professional Journals.** Professionals and academics need some way to communicate, and the usual way is through refereed journals. These journals appeared during the last half of the twentieth century.

- *Journal of Psychology and Theology.* The Rosemead Graduate School of psychology began publishing the *Journal of Psychology and Theology* in 1973 as “An Evangelical Forum for the Integration of Psychology and Theology. (<https://wisdom.biola.edu/jpt/>)
  - *Journal of Psychology & Christianity.* Beginning in 1975 CAPS published the *Bulletin* for a few years. Then in 1981 they started a referred journal, *The Journal of Psychology and Christianity.*
- Books.** With all of this activity occurring, Christian

psychologists began writing books at the rate of at least one each year. The following list is one with books chosen to show the variety of topics covered and the variety of publishers involved.

- 1976, Malcomb Jeeves, *Psychology & Christianity: The View Both Ways*, Intervarsity.
- 1977, Gary Collins, *The Rebuilding of Psychology: An Integration of Psychology and Christianity*, Tyndale.
- 1978, David Myers, *The Human Puzzle: Psychological Research and Christian Belief*, Harper & Row.
- 1979, John Carter and Bruce Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction*, Zondervan.
- 1980, Ronald Koteskey, *Psychology from a Christian Perspective*, Abingdon.

**Backlash.** All of this activity did not go unnoticed by those who opposed the integration of psychology and Christianity. They too began publishing books to “warn” people about the dangers of such heresy. Here are some of the books.

- 1983, William Kilpatrick, *Psychological Seduction: The Failure of Modern Psychology*, Nelson.
- 1985, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, *The Seduction of Christianity: Spiritual Discernment in the Last Days*, Harvest House.
- 1987, Martin and Deidre Bobgan, *Psychoheresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*, EastGate.
- 1990, Martin Bobgan and Deidre Bobgan, *Prophets of Psychoheresy II*, EastGate.
- 1994, Martin and Deidre Bobgan, *Against Biblical Counseling: For the Bible*, EastGate.

Note that the titles move from “seduction” to “heresy.” *Prophets of Psychoheresy II* was written specifically to critique a particular psychoheretic, Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family. By the mid 1990s the Bobgans were even against

Biblical counseling, something they had promoted for many years. By the turn of the century they began “Psychoheresy Awareness Ministries” through which they warn nearly everyone about the dangers of any kind of counseling, even Biblical counseling.

### Psychology and Missions

The modern missionary movement began more than a century before psychology became a discipline separate from philosophy and physiology. Though psychology did not exist, it could have been of great help to the early missionary movement. For example, psychological screening and counseling would probably have been very helpful for the Carey family when William Carey became the “Father of modern missions.” Screening may have prevented Dorothy, William’s wife, from going to the field in her mental state. Counseling may have helped the Carey’s marriage to be one of unity rather than disagreement. Their story is recounted in James Beck’s fine book, *Dorothy Carey: The Tragic and Untold Story of Mrs. William Carey* (1992). Part of the story is given in the first and last chapters of *Missionary Marriage Issues* on this website (<http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#marriage> )

When psychology began as an academic discipline studying what consciousness “is” and what it “is for” during the time of peace between psychology and religion, there seemed to be no obvious connection. Later when psychology included the study of behavior and became involved in helping people cope with problems, psychology and religion were in sharp conflict. Few Christians, especially the ones who were most “spiritual” had anything to do with psychology.

Then as the integration movement between psychology and Christianity got under way, psychologists began to see the missionary population as people they might help. Missionaries often live in a strange culture far from the social support of family and friends. Under these stressful conditions, they often

need someone to listen to them, to care for them. The term most widely used for this is “member care.” Here are some of the ways member care is provided.

### Conferences

In 1980 two psychologists, John Powell and Dave Wickstrom, invited some colleagues who were interested in providing member care to meet with them at a state park in northeastern Indiana. That meeting, the Conference on Mental Health and Missions,” has taken place the weekend before Thanksgiving every year since and is now attended by 200-300 people annually.

For nearly two decades John and Dave conducted the whole conference themselves. Then in 1998 Mission Training International assumed the logistics for the conference, and a program committee has responsibility for the program. (<http://www.mti.org/mhm.htm>). The conference is for mental health professionals, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, and social workers, but mission administrators also attend. Similar conferences for particular parts of the world are held in other countries on other continents. The Global Member Care Network <http://www.globalmembercare.org>) lists those conferences with dates and locations.

### Books

For those new to member care, an entire book about member care, *Missionary Member Care: An Introduction* is available free of charge at

<http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#mmcintro>

Several books for member care professionals have been published. Here are a few.

- Kelly O’Donnell Edited *Missionary Care: Counting the Cost for World Evangelism* in 1992. This was the first

comprehensive book about member care, and it is available at

<http://sites.google.com/site/membercaravan/test/mc-counting-the-cost-book-> .

- John Powell and Joyce Bowers edited *Enhancing missionary vitality: Mental health professions serving global mission* in 2002. Edited by a long-time Psychology professor at Michigan State and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, this book is primarily about member care for missionaries from North America to other parts of the world.
- Kelly O'Donnell edited *Doing member care well: Perspectives and practices from around the world* in 2002. Edited by a psychologist, this book is about member care of missionaries from all over the world, both old sending countries and new sending countries. This book is available at <http://www.wearesources.org>.

In addition, many books for missionaries themselves have been published. Here are several recent ones.

- Sue Eenigenburg wrote *Screams in the Desert: Hope and Humor for Women in Cross-Cultural Ministry* in 2007. Written by a woman who has been there, this book's poignant accounts of everyday experiences in another culture give hope to women who are there now.
- Jeannie Lockerbie Stephenson wrote *By Ones & by Twos: Building successful Relationships between Marrieds and Singles in Ministry* in 2008. Married since she wrote earlier versions of this book, the author has revised and expanded it to include content for single men and married couples that can help everyone to live and work in harmony.
- Additional books are recommended at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_books.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_books.htm) .

## Periodicals

At this time there are no journals devoted to missionary member care. However, several publications frequently have member care articles.

- *Journal of Psychology and Theology*. Published by the Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology, this journal has numerous member care articles. In fact it has devoted several full issues to member care since the early 1980s (<https://wisdom.biola.edu/jpt/>).
- *Evangelical Missions Quarterly (EMQ)* Published by EMIS, this publication is widely read by on-field missionaries and has had many member care articles (<http://www.emisdirect.com/>) and past ones can be viewed on-line with a subscription.
- *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*. Published by the Christian Association for Psychological Studies, this journal has published several articles on member care in recent years (<http://www.caps.net>).

## Websites

Since missionaries are scattered all over the world and most of them have Internet access, some authors have made member care materials available on the Internet. The author of this book has two such websites with similar materials, one for missionaries and one for cross-cultural workers in general.

- Missionarycare.com has both brochures and books on a wide variety of member care materials for missionaries. It also has a database of publications about an even wider variety of subjects (<http://www.missionarycare.com/>).
- Crossculturalworkers.com has most of the same brochures and books, but it does not have the database. It is still a Christian site, but it never mentions missions or evangelism (<http://www.crossculturalworkers.com/>).

- Member Caravan Library has a wealth of information for people working in member care ranging from lists of resources to the resources themselves available on-line (<http://sites.google.com/site/membercaravan/test>).

### Personal Member Care

In addition to providing resources, some member care professionals also provide member care in person. This can be done in a variety of ways as follows.

- The most common type of personal member care is provided by a member care person within an agency. Many agencies have several member care professionals to serve people serving overseas and at home.
- Inpatient treatment for a wide variety of problems, including very serious ones, such as Link Care Center (<http://www.linkcare.org/>). This may involve a variety of member care professionals all in one place at one time.
- Structured retreats of a week or so such as Marble Retreat (<http://www.marbleretreat.org/>). This usually involves much time talking as a group with other people also in ministry as well as individual sessions.
- Relatively unstructured retreats of a week or so such as ELIM retreats (<http://www.elimretreats.org/>) These are usually held in scenic settings with much free time.
- Visits to missionaries in their place of service such as Barnabas International (<http://www.barnabas.org/>). This is usually pastoral care for a variety of minor issues.
- Visits from a mental health professional living in a nearby country to provide member care for people in that region of the world, such as the Mobile Member Care Team in West Africa (<http://mmct.org/>).
- Visits to a mental health center in a country near you, such as Cornerstone Counseling in Thailand (<http://www.cornerstonecounseling.in.th/>).

Many different types of member care are now available to missionaries all over the world. Some of it is available at no charge. Other types may be quite expensive.

### Graduate Education

Although several institutions offer courses in member care, at this time only one, Columbia International University offers a degree in it. CIU offers a Doctor of Ministry degree in member care with some courses taught in modules (<http://www.ciu.edu/seminary/degrees/dm-membercare/>).

### Conclusion

During the first century of psychology's existence, it seemed to have few implications for missions. In fact during about half of that time psychology and religion had little time for each other. However during the last quarter of a century, the two have learned to coexist and Christian psychologists have been able to be of real service to missionaries.

## Chapter 1

# Psychology from a Christian Perspective

### A Christian Perspective

God

Nature

Humans

### Psychology from a Christian Perspective

Definition

Goals

Systems

Methods

### Descriptive Methods

Naturalistic Observation

Survey

Correlation

### Experimental Methods

An Ancient Experiment

Variables

Conditions

Designs

### Ethical Questions

Experiment on People?

Experiment on Animals?

Deceive Participants?

Experiment on God?

Conclusion

Parts Three and Four of Chapter 1 in Dewey's introductory text are relevant.

- [Chapter 01: Psychology and Science](#)

(Chapter 1: Thinking Critically with Psychological Science in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant)

As mentioned in the Prologue, psychology today is the science of behavior and mental processes. Psychologists study what people do and what they experience subjectively. Behavior may be anything from as complex as driving a car to as "simple" as a change in blood pressure. Mental processes may be anything from solving a calculus problem to as "simple" as deciding what to order at a restaurant. Mental processes include not only what people think, but also what people perceive, feel, and what they want. Of course, psychologists also study the behavior of other organisms, but most missionaries are primarily interested in human beings.

Also as mentioned in the Prologue, any field of study begins with a set of assumptions. The major systems of psychology began with the assumptions held by their founders. Missionaries also have assumptions which come with their Christian world-views, so we first need to be clear on a Christian perspective.

### A Christian Perspective

At this point, a particular Christian perspective is used as a framework to organize a Christian psychology. Christians also make assumptions about the nature of human beings, and we should be aware of the assumptions we make.

## God

First, we assume that God exists and is the source of all else in existence. He is independent of nature. There is nothing to limit his sovereignty. He is both infinite and personal. He has revealed himself to us in several ways. Of course, we first think of his special revelation as recorded in the Bible. In this revelation, God spoke through individuals who recorded what he said, as well as the history of the nation of Israel, the life of Christ, and the history of the early church. All Christians emphasize this revelation, but we must not forget that this special revelation tells us that a general (natural) revelation also exists. Psalm 19 and Romans 1 give the strongest statements about this natural revelation. The Romans passage explicitly states that God has revealed enough of himself in his creation to make his eternal power and divinity evident, and even people who have not heard God's special revelation are without excuse.

## Nature

The universe is the creation of God. He created it and sustains it. Although God is immanent in the world, it is neither identical with him nor a part of his being. He also transcends the world. Since God's creation was made by a rational being, it is real, it was created good, and it is orderly. Furthermore, since humans are made in God's image, they can discover these patterns and regularities by examining the world. Some of the best methods we have for learning about God's creation are the scientific methods used by psychology and other sciences.

## Humans

The last part of Genesis 1 tells us that humans are created in God's image. That is, we are created beings like animals, plants, and inorganic creation. However, we are special in that we are made in God's image. Humans are a composite

unity of spirit and matter. We must remember that we are a unity, but that we may look at ourselves from different vantage points, sometimes emphasizing how we are like the rest of creation and at other times emphasizing how we are like God. This is diagrammed schematically in Figure 1:2. This figure will serve as a basis for the rest of the book. As each new topic in psychology is introduced, it will be placed in this perspective so that you will have a unified reinterpretation of secular psychology from a Christian perspective. We must recognize that there are some implications of saying that humans are like animals in some ways and like God in others.

***Humans Like Animals.*** A little reflection will lead to the conclusion that humans are more like animals than they are like anything else in creation. They are more like animals than like plants or inorganic creation. As created beings we are finite creatures, like animals. We are similar to animals anatomically and physiologically. We are also similar to them in some of our behaviors.

Figure 1:2 A Christian perspective into which psychology can be placed.

### HUMANS

Created . . . . . in the. . . . . image of God

**Like Animals**

**Like God**

Some passages of Scripture refer to the fact that humans are like animals in some ways. Psalm 49 points out that humans must die like any animal. Ecclesiastes 3 notes that humans are similar to animals; both breathe the same air, both die, both are made of the dust of the earth, and both must return to it. Like the rest of creation, humans depend upon God for everything, even their continued existence.

That humans are like animals in some ways has implications for missionaries. Some techniques for helping

humans were originally developed through research on animals and were then directly applied to helping humans. It is important for missionaries to use all methods available to help people to whom they minister.

Before leaving the topic of the similarity of humans and animals, it should be noted that saying similarities exist does not mean that humans are merely animals. Even scientists who spend most of their time studying the similarities between animals and humans come to recognize the differences as well.

***Humans Like God.*** God created humans male and female in his own image. Some theologians maintain that the fall of humanity into sin has shattered that mirror, but others interpret Scripture to indicate that the image remains. When God prohibited murder, he said that to kill a human being is to kill one made like himself-and that was after the Fall (Genesis 9). In New Testament times, the apostle Paul wrote how we can be mirrors that reflect God's glory and that we become more like him as his Spirit works in us (2 Corinthians 3:18). James, likewise, noted that we use the tongue to bless our Father, God, and we use the same tongue to curse our fellow human beings who are all created in God's likeness (James 3:9, 10).

Although some Christians speak more of how evil people are, Christianity declares both how evil and how lofty humans are and can become. Psalm 139 speaks not only of Jehovah's glory, but of humans' being wonderfully made. Psalm 8 talks about the majesty of God and goes on to say that he made humans only a little lower than God himself. Humans are crowned with glory and honor and given dominion over God's creation; over mammals, birds, and fish. God saw humans as being important enough to send his Son to die for them.

That humans are like God in some ways has implications for cross-cultural workers. Such workers must remember that they are not just working with machine-like objects or animal-like organisms, but with beings who have capacity for love, mercy, and other God-like attributes. Of course, all this does not mean to imply that there are no

differences between humans and God. God is sovereign, omniscient, infinite, omnipotent, and so forth. Humans can never have these attributes of God, but they are commanded to be like him in some ways.

***Humans Unique.*** Finally, we must remember that humans are unique, different from both God and animals. God gave humans the capacity to make choices for which they would be held responsible. Humans chose to disobey God, and this sin then came between God and humans. We are thus in a fallen state.

That humans are affected by sin also has implications for missionaries. They must not ignore sin and its effects in the lives of people they help. However, they must be careful not to make sinfulness the distinguishing characteristic of humanness. Before the fall into sin, humans were still human, but without sin. Jesus himself was fully human as well as divine, but he never sinned. He was tempted just as we are, but he never yielded to those temptations and sinned (Hebrews 4:15).

### **Psychology from a Christian Perspective**

After considering our basic Christian perspective, we are able to see how psychology can fit into it. We begin by placing things already discussed in the perspective, then continuing to add to it throughout the book.

#### **Definition**

As we have seen, psychology has had a number of definitions. At its beginning scientific psychology was the study of consciousness or the mind. Then this was abandoned in favor of psychology as the study of behavior. Currently most introductory psychology textbooks define it as the study of "behavior and mental processes." This definition takes in the whole range of psychology and fits into our Christian perspective, as shown in Figure 1:3. Note that when





animals, as shown in Figure 1:6. In most experiments the subjects are viewed as reacting, noninitiating organisms. The experimental method is particularly well-suited to study these aspects of humans. When these controlled conditions are used, one can draw conclusions about cause-effect relationships.

Figure 1:6 Research methods from a Christian perspective.

### HUMANS

Created . . . . . in the. . . . . image of God  
Like Animals . . . . . Like God

Overt Behavior. . . . .Definition. . . . .Mental Processes

Understand. . . . .Goals. . . . . Make people  
Creation . . . . . Like God

Psychoanalysis. . . . .Systems. . . . .Humanistic  
Behaviorism . . . . . Psychology

**Experimental** . . . . .Methods . . . . .**Descriptive**

### Methods of Research

Most general psychology texts include a section on research methods in psychology. Although many different methods are usually discussed, they can usually be classified into two categories, descriptive methods and experimental methods.

### Descriptive Methods

First are the descriptive methods, including all those in which the researcher does not exercise experimental control. Sometimes psychologists have a tendency to consider these

methods "second-rate," because it is extremely difficult to prove cause-effect relationships with them. However, naturalistic observation, surveys, and correlation are acceptable methods of research.

### Naturalistic Observation.

The most basic of these descriptive methods is naturalistic observation. In fact, it is the most basic method of science, since all of science begins with the scientist's observations. In this method, the scientist simply observes and records behavior in its natural setting without attempting to intervene at all.

Sometimes this method is the only one that can be used. For example, it is the only method available to astronomers, since they cannot insert and remove galaxies or stars, or even planets. Likewise, in many instances psychologists cannot maintain experimental control over everything happening to the subject during research, so they must be content with observations. This is true of psychologists interested in the influence of spiritual forces on individuals. They cannot completely control the effect of the Holy Spirit or of Satan on individuals, so they must use naturalistic observation.

Naturalistic observation is also a valuable source of hypotheses about the causes of behavior. One of the best ways to learn about your host culture is to observe nationals as they go about their daily tasks. As you watch, you may notice things that you do not understand, and you can ask people more familiar with the culture why nationals do these things.

When Moses sent the dozen men to explore Canaan, he told them to use naturalistic observation. He said, "See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many..." (Numbers 13:17-20). The men reported, "We can't attack these people...All the people there are of great size...We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them" (Numbers 13:31-33).

Unfortunately they went beyond their own observations and reported what they thought the people there had observed as well.

Of course, nationals also watch missionaries and try to understand why the missionaries do things too. One behavior that some nationals have observed is that missionaries blow their noses into clean white pieces of cloth and put the discharge into their pockets. A common question is why they save this nasal discharge!

### Survey

Asking people to report information about themselves and what they think or what they do is thousands of years old. Taking a census goes at least as far back as when God commanded Moses to “Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families...” (Numbers 1:2). Most of that book of the Old Testament is about the survey Moses did.

Giving survey questionnaires is a common way of gathering information about missionaries as well. Dorothy Gish was interested in what caused missionaries to feel stress as they worked in other cultures. She asked 970 missionaries to rate 65 different items as to how much stress each one caused. She received responses from 549 people serving around the world and the most stressful thing overall was “Confronting others when necessary.” Of course, she found differences in those serving in different places, for different lengths of time, of different ages, and so forth and published the results in the *Journal of Psychology and Theology* in 1983, <http://www.missionarycare.com/dbFullArticle.asp?articleid=94>.

Years later Joan Carter wondered if stress had increased or decreased and if the causes of stress had changed. She asked the same questions and added a few more as well. The 306 missionaries participating in her survey felt higher levels of stress overall, but Gish’s “Confronting others when necessary”

was still at the top of the list. (Carter had added some other possible stressors, and “Seeing needs I am unable to meet” was actually a little higher). Carter also published her results in the *Journal of Psychology and Theology* in 1999, <http://www.missionarycare.com/dbFullArticle.asp?articleid=610>.

### Correlation

Another descriptive method is correlation, going one step beyond those of naturalistic observation and survey research. Correlation results in a number that tells the researcher not only that there is a relationship, but whether the relationship is positive or negative, and how great the relationship is. Although the numerical equations were not available when it was written, the Bible gives verbal examples of both positive and negative correlations. An example of a positive correlation is “where sin increased, grace increased all the more” (Romans 5:20). An example of a negative correlation is “Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith...?” (James 2:5).

The correlation method also allows us to predict how well a person will do on future, related tasks. To be admitted to college, one must pass before admissions committees, which often use correlation techniques to predict whether the prospective student can succeed, based on high school grades and admission test scores. People who have high grades and high test scores are more likely to succeed in college, but cause-effect cannot be determined. That is both high test scores and high grades may be caused by high ability combined with high motivation.

Steve Sweatman published an article studying missionaries during their first term of cross-cultural service while adapting to the stress of adapting to the culture. He studied the relationships between marital satisfaction, depression, and anxiety. He found a significant relationship

between general marital satisfaction and depression, but not between satisfaction and anxiety. It could be that depression causes marital dissatisfaction, that marital dissatisfaction causes depression, or that both of these are caused by something else. Sweatman published his results in the same issue of the 1999 *Journal of Psychology* in which Joan Carter published her expansion of the Dorothy Gish study.

<http://www.missionarycare.com/dbFullArticle.asp?articleid=608>

### Experimental Methods

The other major method of research is the experimental method. Since the main objective of research is to discover cause-effect relationships, the experimental method is used whenever possible. The basic idea of the experimental method is to take two groups of subjects (or one group two different conditions) and treat them exactly the same in every way but one. If they behave differently after the treatments, the researchers conclude that the different treatments caused the difference in behaviors.

### An Ancient Experiment

Though most people maintain that the experimental method was developed during the modern scientific revolution a few hundred years ago, an experiment is recorded in the first chapter of the book of Daniel in the Old Testament a few thousand years ago. While being educated for government service in Babylon, Daniel and his Hebrew friends did not want to eat the rich foods provided for them because they believed that the food and wine would defile them. Daniel requested permission for them to eat vegetables and water instead. However, the official in charge was afraid to grant this request because he feared for his life if these four students did not do well on the diet of vegetables and water (Daniel 1:3-10).

At that point Daniel and his three TCK friends proposed a brief experiment (pilot study) to the guard caring for them in their dormitory. They suggested that for ten days all the young men be treated the same except that the Hebrew TCKs would eat vegetables and drink water, while the other students ate the rich food and drank wine. At the end of the ten days the Hebrews looked healthier and better nourished than the others, so the guard concluded that vegetables and water were better for them than the rich food. At the end of their three years of education the four TCKs were at the top on the class in every way (Daniel 1:11-20).

Though refinements have been developed in the conduct of experiments and statistical methods have been derived to help draw conclusions, all of the basic elements of the experimental method are present in this experiment. Several basic variables should be considered in experiments.

### Variables

**Independent Variable.** The guard manipulated the diet of the two groups: one group was given rich food and wine, and one group was given vegetables and water. This experiment really has two independent variables confounded so we do not get as much information as we would if it had been done slightly differently, but the results are still valid. We will discuss that in a section below.

**Dependent Variable.** The guard then judged how healthy and well-nourished they looked, the dependent variable. Their appearance *depended* on which diet of the *independent* variable they received. An experiment may measure several dependent variables if desired. For example, the students' performance in classes or in sports could have also been measured.

**Controlled Variable.** As completely as possible, except for the independent variables, all other variables are kept the same in both groups. Those variables are the controlled

variables. Except for their food and drink, all students were treated the same. They lived in the same dormitories, attended the same classes, studied in the same library, and so forth.

Experiments must have at least two conditions which are compared. This experiment was conducted using two different groups of people. Other experiments are done using one group of people that are given the different treatments of the independent variable at different times. Examining the two conditions in this experiment gives a clearer understanding of the variables.

### Conditions

***Experimental Condition (Experimental Group).*** The experimental condition in this study was the condition in which the students were given the vegetables and water, the TCK group. They received the “new” diet that was different from what was already in place, the “experimental” diet. The TCKs convinced the guard to see if this new diet would make any difference.

***Control Condition (Control Group).*** The control condition in this study was the condition in which the students were given the rich food and wine, the rest of the students. They received the diet that was already in place so that the guard could see if the new diet made any difference.

The logic of the experiment is quite straight forward. The experimental group and the control group are treated exactly the same in every way except for what they eat and drink. Therefore, if they are different at the end of the time, that difference must be due to the effect of the independent variable, their food and drink.

### Designs

***Two (or more) Groups: Different Participants in Each Group.*** As we have seen, Daniel’s experiment was the most

basic of experimental designs. He proposed two conditions with the experimental group being the Hebrew TCKs who ate vegetables and drank. The control group was composed of the other students who ate rich food and drank wine. Of course, he could have had more groups of students eating and drinking additional things.

### ***One Group: Same Participants Measured Repeatedly.***

With repeated measures designs, rather than having different people in all of the groups, one can measure each person under the different conditions. For example, in Daniel’s experiment the guard could have noted how healthy and well-nourished the TCKs looked after ten days of a diet of rich food and wine. Then he could have observed them again after ten days of a diet of vegetables and water. He did not do this because the TCKs did not want to defile themselves, so Daniel had proposed an experiment using different people in each group.

Repeated measures designs are used to compare the same people in different situations, and most often to study changes over time. Christopher Rosik and Jelna Pandzik used the same Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI) that Sweatman used in his study of how satisfaction was related to depression and anxiety during the first term of missionary service. However Rosik and Pandzik were interested in finding how marital satisfaction changed over time in missionary marriages.

They studied how scores changed in 28 couples from the time they were missionary candidates to the time they were on their first Home Ministry Assignment (furlough) four years later to the time they were on their second Home Ministry Assignment another four years later. They found more dissatisfaction with their marriage on the MSI during their first Home Ministry Assignment than four years earlier when they were candidates. In addition, they found that this dissatisfaction was still present during their second Home Ministry Assignment another four years later. That is satisfaction with their marriages declined during their first term of service and

did not recover during the second term of service.

In addition Rosik and Pandzik were able to pinpoint which of the ten areas on the MSI were the ones that were the cause of the decline in satisfaction. This was useful information for people in member care who want to prevent marital problems from occurring. Rosik and Pandzik published their research in the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* in 2008.

<http://www.missionarycare.com/dbFullArticle.asp?articleid=888>

**Factorial Designs.** A couple of pages back we mentioned that this experiment had confounded two independent variables, diet and liquid. This does not invalidate the experiment because it still shows that vegetables and water are better for a person than are rich food and wine. However, statistics have now been developed that let us use factorial designs to find out whether the difference was due to the diet, the drink, or an interaction between the two. Here is the design that could be used with four groups (A, B, C, and D), two diets (vegetables and rich food), and two liquids (water and wine).

	Vegetables	Rich Food
Water	A	B
Wine	C	D

Note that in Daniel's experiment the TCKs were Group A (vegetables and water), and the other students were Group D (rich food and wine). With this factorial design with a TCK placed in each group and the other students also divided among the four groups the experimenter could find out about the diet, drink, or some combination was necessary to have an effect. If the food is the crucial factor Groups A and C would be higher than Groups B and D. If the drink is the crucial factor, Groups A and B would be higher than groups C and D. If there was an interaction between them Group A would be better than Group D, but Groups B and C would not necessarily differ.

**Level of Measurement.** Some people may raise an

objection to the guard judging only that the TCKs looked "healthier" and "better nourished" than the rest of the class. This is not a problem because it is common even today to measure at different levels of measurement. Different statistics have been developed to the various levels of measurement. Here are some of the levels of measurement used today.

- **Ordinal.** The guard measured the dependent variable on the ordinal level of measurement. At this level one can judge only that one thing has more or less than another, that they can put things in rank order. Measurements are often made at this level in the social sciences so these experimenters use a set of statistics developed for the ordinal level (non-parametric statistics).
- **Interval.** If the guard had measured the body temperature of the students, he would have been measuring at the interval level. At the interval level one can make statements about the distance between two points on the scale, such as saying that the difference between 33 and 34 degrees is the same as the difference between 35 and 36 degrees. However the zero point of the scale is arbitrary (it is at the freezing point of water on the Celsius scale but 32 degrees below the freezing point on the Fahrenheit scale). More statistics are available at this level.
- **Ratio.** If the guard had weighed each of the students, he would have been measuring on the ratio scale. A ratio scale has a given zero point so that someone six feet tall is twice as tall as someone who is three feet tall. Still more statistics are available at this level.

For further information about specific topics in research methods click on the following links to parts of Chapter 1 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Observational Research](#)
- [Correlation and Prediction](#)

- [Predictions Based on "The Actuarial Method"](#)
- [Pitfalls in Observational Research](#)
- [Measurement and Observer Effects](#)
- [Questionnaires, Surveys, and Polls](#)
- [The Importance of a Large N](#)
- [Sampling Error](#)
- [Non-Random Samples](#)
- [Biased Samples in Questionnaire Research](#)
- [Options given Respondents](#)
- [Biases due to the Wording of Questions](#)
- [Biasing Context](#)
- [Uninformed Opinions](#)
- [Push Polls](#)
- [Experimental Research and its Pitfalls](#)
- [Independent, Dependent, and Subject Variables](#)
- [Those Confounded Variables!](#)
- [The Problem of Self-Selection](#)
- [Experimental Controls](#)
- [Placebo Effects](#)
- [Experimenter Effects](#)
- [The Double-Blind Design](#)
- [Two Powers of Science](#)
- [Summary: Observational and Experimental Research](#)

### **Ethical Issues**

Ethical questions arise when scientific research is conducted. Let us consider a few of them here.

#### **Is it ethical to experiment on people?**

Since people are created in God's image, one can ask whether or not it is acceptable to experiment on them. Daniel's experiment was carried out on himself and his three friends, all people created in God's image. This received God's blessing and His giving them knowledge and understanding of all kinds

of learning (Daniel 1: 17). Therefore, one can conclude that some experiments do not violate respect for people made in His image.

However, one can find other experiments on people which are widely condemned as being unethical. Several lists of the worst of these experiments can be found on the Internet, such as <http://listverse.com/2008/09/07/top-10-unethical-psychological-experiments/>. For example, in the 1930s Wendell Johnson divided 22 orphans who stuttered into two groups. One group was given positive speech therapy and praised for their progress, but the other group was given negative speech therapy and ridiculed for their speech problem. The University of Iowa apologized for the experiment in 2001.

As a result of such experiments, the American Psychological Association has developed ethical principles for research with humans (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). This code of conduct basically says that the following conditions must be met.

- Informed consent. The participants must receive information about the experiment so that they can decide whether or not they want to join the study.
- Protection. The participants must not be harmed or made uncomfortable without consent.
- Confidentiality. Information gathered must not be shared with others without permission.
- Debrief. The research and results must be explained when the study is over.

These safeguards protect the human dignity of beings created in God's image.

#### **Is it ethical to experiment on animals?**

Since animals are similar to human beings, one can also ask whether or not it is acceptable to experiment on them. We do not have an example of the use of animals in experiments in

Scripture, but God did give humans dominion over animals at creation (Genesis 1:26). This did not give people permission to abuse animals, but those animals were under human control.

As with humans, we can find many experiments in which animals were harmed, many times unnecessarily. Organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (<http://www.peta.org/actioncenter/testing.asp>) list many ways they believe animals are abused for the benefit of humans. Their basic position is that animals have the same rights as humans and should not be used for human benefit, such as in human clothing or even as human food.

As with humans, the American Psychological Association has developed ethical principles for the use of animals in experimentation (<http://www.apa.org/science/leadership/care/guidelines.aspx>), “Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in the Care and Use of Animals.” Along with others, these include guidelines for

- Acquisition of animals
- Care and housing of the animals
- Personnel who work with the animals
- Experimentation with the animals

These guidelines protect animals from abuse in research settings. Of course, they allow the use of animals.

### **Is it ethical to deceive participants in experiments?**

As I write this in early 2010, a story on National Public Radio (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125176684>) is titled, “Shocking TV Experiment Sparks Ethical Concerns.” The story begins, “A French TV show has raised anew questions about when it’s acceptable to subject people to emotional harm as part of a psychological experiment.” Contestants on a TV quiz show were instructed to give increasingly strong electric shocks to a man strapped in a chair as the audience cheered him on. No shocks were actually given,

and the man strapped in the chair was acting. This show was crafted along the lines of an experiment conducted by Stanley Milgram conducted half a century before. His study about obedience to authority sparked immediate ethical controversy so strong that his admission to APA membership was delayed a year (<http://www.stanleymilgram.com/milgram.php>).

This controversy is strong among Christians as well. The Bible has dozens of passages condemning deception or lying, but it has one instance of deception receiving God’s approval. Joshua 2 tells how Rahab lied to the king’s messengers to save the lives of the two Israelites she had hidden on her roof, as well as the lives of everyone in her family. She is mentioned among the heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11. Thus some Christians say that deception is wrong, others say that one has to evaluate each deception situation and decide which ones are wrong and which ones are all right.

Again, the American Psychological Association has developed an ethical standard for deception. “Psychologists do not conduct a study involving deception unless they have determined that the use of deceptive techniques is justified by the study’s significant prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and that effective nondeceptive alternative procedures are not feasible.” (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>) Of course, most psychologists believe that their research is important enough to deceive.

### **Conclusion**

Of course, refinements in experimental design and the statistics used to draw conclusions today require today’s experimenter to do other things, such as:

- Randomly assign people to the different conditions rather than use existing groups
- Use a double-blind procedure in which neither the participants or the experimenters know which condition

the participants are in

- Etc.

Such procedures are routinely followed today but were not understood thousands of years ago. A century in the future experimenters will probably have other new procedures in place. However, several of the ideas explained may have raised questions.

## Chapter 2

### The Person: Physical and Spiritual

Humans as Physical Beings—Like Animals

Nervous System

Synapse

Endocrine Glands

Humans as Spiritual Beings—Like God

A Trinity

Wise

Faithful

Good

Just

Merciful

Full of Grace

Love

Holy

“Disorders”

Sin

Guilt?

Demon Possession

“Treatment”

Forgiveness

Guilt Feelings

Casting out Demons

Conclusion

Chapter 2 of Dewey's introductory text is relevant.

- [Chapter 02: The Human Nervous System](#)

(Chapter 2: "Neuroscience and Behavior" in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant)

Since psychology is the science of behavior and mental processes, psychologists look wherever they can to discover influences on both. The living, behaving, thinking person is a physical and spiritual unity which cannot be divided into parts without destroying the person. Trying to divide a person would be like dividing a coin to separate the "head" from the "tail." The coin would be destroyed, so it would no longer be a coin. However, we can look first at one side and then at the other as we study the coin. We can also do the same thing as we consider the physical and spiritual aspects of persons.

The person can be placed in our Christian perspective as shown in Figure 2:1. First, as human beings we have physical structures similar to those of animals, as shown in the lower part of the figure. This means we can search for causes of behavior and mental processes in the physical, animal-like aspects of humans. Since humans are like animals in that both are created beings, we can study the anatomical and physiological aspects of humans for causes of behavior and mental processes.

Second, as human beings made in God's image, we are spiritual beings as shown in the lower part of Figure 2.1. This means that we also look for causes of behavior and mental processes in the spiritual, God-like aspects of humans. In the last half of this chapter we will look at reflections of the attributes of God in human beings. Obviously humans are not infinite, omnipotent, omniscient beings, but they are similar to God in many ways.

Figure 2:1 The person, physical and spiritual, from a Christian perspective.

## HUMANS

Created . . . . . in the. . . . . Image of God  
Like Animals . . . . . Like God

Overt Behavior. . . . .Definition. . . . .Mental Processes

Understand. . . . .Goals. . . . . Make people  
Creation . . . . . Like God

Psychoanalysis. . . . .Systems. . . . . Humanistic  
Behaviorism . . . . . Psychology

Experimental . . . . .Methods . . . . . Descriptive

**Physical**. . . . .The Person . . **Spiritual**

### Humans as Physical Beings—Like Animals

One obvious place to begin is to look at the organism itself, at its anatomy and physiology. It is obvious that removing an eye will interfere with a person's vision. However, it is not as obvious what an anatomical change in the brain or a physiological change in the chemical balance of the body will do to a person. Physiological psychology is the study of these anatomical and physiological bases of behavior and mental processes.

Some people may question whether or not human anatomy and physiology is similar to that of animals, but the hundreds of thousands whose lives have been lengthened since 1975 by receiving a pig valve in their hearts would not question it (<http://www.economicexpert.com/a/Xenograft.html>).

Although this procedure raises few concerns for Christians who receive the valve, it may raise some for Jewish or Muslim recipients. Of course, those who receive pig valves must take drugs to prevent rejection of the valve just as they would if they had received a human valve transplant.

It may be difficult to see how a change in the secretion of a gland, or calcium levels, or the sodium-potassium balance of the body, or the chemicals in the synapses between neurons could be related to behavior in any important way. Even though they seem far removed from behavior, anatomy and physiology underlie behavior and mental processes because humans are a unity. Changes in anatomy and physiology cause changes in behavior and thinking.

Before we can talk about the anatomical and physiological bases of behavior, we must know something about anatomy and physiology.

## The Nervous System

The basic unit of the nervous system is the neuron, a single nerve cell. Some neurons conduct impulses from receptors toward the brain, others from the brain toward muscles and glands, and still others from one neuron to another. The neural impulse is an electrochemical process involving changes in the amount of sodium, potassium, and calcium inside the neuron. Anything that affects the sodium-potassium balance in the body will affect the nervous impulse.

For further information about neurons click on the following links to parts of Chapter 2 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Neurons](#)
- [Cajal's Drawings](#)
- [How Neurons Communicate](#)
- [The Quiet Revolution](#)
- [Gap Junctions](#)
- [Weak Electrical Interactions and Local Circuits](#)

- [Biomolecular Transfer](#)
- ["Neurons are People"](#)
- [A Close Look at a Real Neuron](#)

Neurons are organized into the nervous system, connecting all parts of the body. The peripheral nervous system includes all neurons except the brain and spinal cord. One part of it (the somatic) conducts impulses to and from the spinal cord and brain and is involved in our "voluntary" movements. The other part (the autonomic) conducts impulses from the brain to glands and smooth muscles and is usually not under voluntary control.

The central nervous system consists of the brain and spinal cord. Fortunately, this part of the nervous system is well-protected, because damage to it is usually permanent. The spinal cord generally conducts impulses to and from the brain and contains many reflexes. The brain is the most important and least understood neural structure. Some parts of it control vital processes, such as heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and so forth. Other parts coordinate movements, control motivation and emotion, relay sensations to higher centers, and so forth. The most important part of the human brain is the cerebral cortex, where we become conscious of the sensations, think, plan, and initiate movements.

For further information about the nervous system see the following from the University of Washington. It is written for children (<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/nsdivide.html>) so it is easy to understand, but it is very well done. For further information about the brain click on the following links to parts of Chapter 2 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [The Brain](#)
- [CNS Development in the Embryo](#)
- [The Cerebral Cortex](#)
- [Lobes of the Brain](#)
- [The Homunculus](#)
- [Hemispheric Specialization](#)

- [The Wada Test](#)
- [Right Brain, Left Brain](#)
- [Subcortical Structures and Functions](#)
- [The Cerebellum](#)
- [The Peripheral Nervous System](#)
- [The EEG and Evoked Potentials](#)
- [The CT Scan](#)
- [The PET Scan](#)
- [MRI and functional MRI \(fMRI\)](#)
- [Summary: The Brain](#)

One thing that missionaries notice is that chemicals that affect the nervous system will vary from culture to culture in their acceptance, use, and legality. Since ancient times, people have been smoking, sniffing, swallowing, and (during the last century) injecting chemical substances to relieve pain, relax, sleep, produce alertness, produce calmness, reduce anxiety, achieve insight, produce excitement, and briefly escape a harsh reality. During this time, societies have been trying to limit the use of these drugs by restricting their availability. Sometimes the legal sanctions seem quite arbitrary, because one drug is widely and legally available but quite dangerous, while other, less dangerous drugs are not available at all. Much of the questionable legality of drugs is the result of how many people use the drug before its effects are determined. For example, in the USA alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco are still legal drugs taken by millions of people, while cocaine and heroin are restricted and illegal.

The central nervous system has a high rate of metabolism, and it is more sensitive to drugs than are other cells of the body. Some drugs stimulate the activity of the central nervous system and are called *stimulants*. Others depress or slow down the system's activity and are called *depressants*. Still others disorganize the system's activity, bringing about a distortion of perception and thinking, and are called *hallucinogenic* or *psychotomimetic* (generating hallucinations or

mimicking a psychosis) drugs.

*Stimulants*. Stimulants are substances that increase the metabolic rate of neurons in the central nervous system and increase their excitability. Some stimulants have a generally exciting effect on the whole central nervous system, while others act selectively on certain parts. These stimulants often prevent sleep when affecting the brain. Following are some common stimulants and their effects.

Caffeine is an example of a mildly addicting cortical stimulant which is present in coffee, tea, cocoa, and many soft drinks. It increases the metabolic rate by ten to fifteen percent, gives a lift, increases heart rate, and increases blood pressure. It is legal, available in many stores, widely used, and generally accepted in the USA.

Nicotine in tobacco smoke acts as a stimulant, leading to increased activity in the sympathetic nervous system and muscles. It causes an increased heart rate, release of blood sugar from the liver, and so forth. Many smokers report that the act of smoking itself feels good, reducing tension and anxiety. It is legal, available in many stores, less widely used, and becoming less accepted in the USA.

Cocaine is a central nervous system stimulant that causes mood swings from euphoria to depression and may even cause hallucinations. It is illegal, available only on the street, still less widely used, and not generally accepted in the USA.

American's serving in the Andes of South America may be surprised to find that fresh coca leaves (source of cocaine) are available by the large bagful in any market where people buy them to chew and make a tea. Such Americans need to be reminded that during its first 17 years Coca-Cola actually contained coca leaves (cocaine) and Kola nuts (caffeine). Although the exact recipe is a secret, even today Coke contains a cocaine-free coca leaf extract for flavor (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coca-Cola>).

*Depressants*. Depressants are drugs that decrease activity in the central nervous system, resulting in drowsiness,

unconsciousness, or coma. After taking depressants, one may feel an initial sensation of euphoria as the central nervous system combats their effects with overestimation, but the effect of increased dosages is unconsciousness. Taking enough of any depressant will result in a loss of coordination and disordered thinking, because depressants usually affect the higher centers of the brain first. Following are some commonly used depressants.

Alcohol is a depressant used by the majority of American adults. The most notable effects of alcohol are the changes in behavior as a result of its action on the brain. Alcohol first depresses the frontal lobes of the brain which inhibit aggressiveness and excessive activity with the final result being more hostile activity and other socially unacceptable behaviors. Thus some people think of alcohol as a stimulant when it is really a depressant. At higher levels of concentration in the blood, greater depression of the brain occurs, resulting in incoordination, confusion, disorientation, stupor, coma, or even death. It is legal, available in many stores, widely used, and generally accepted in the USA.

Codeine, morphine, and heroin all come from the opium poppy. They all can be used to kill pain, but they are addictive. Heroin does not cause great changes in consciousness related to thinking or sensations, but primarily changes one's emotions. Immediately after injecting it intravenously, the user feels a "rush" or thrill that is intensely pleasurable. This is followed by a longer-lasting effect, which is best described as a general sense of well-being. There are no great changes in conscious experience, but anxiety is reduced. Users feel at peace and may alternate between wakefulness and sleep. Codeine and morphine are legal, available by prescription, less widely used, and accepted. However, heroin is illegal, available only on the street, still less widely used, and not generally accepted in the USA.

*Hallucinogens.* Some drugs disorganize the activity of the central nervous system so that they cause distorted

perceptions or hallucinations. LSD'S hallucinogenic potential was discovered accidentally in 1943. Its discoverer reported feeling restless and dizzy, sinking into a delirium marked by extreme fantasy. He closed his eyes and saw brilliant visions. Others have reported that ordinary objects seem suddenly to have great beauty, with music taking on great emotional power. Visions of beautiful colors, patterns, and forms occur. LSD is illegal in the USA

The most widely used minor hallucinogenic drug is marijuana, which produces a feeling of well-being and a dreamy, carefree state of relaxation at the usual low doses. The user also has altered perceptions, which include an expansion of space and time, along with a more vivid sense of touch, sight, smell, taste, and sound. Marijuana is illegal in many states, available by prescription in some states but on the streets in others, less widely used, and not generally accepted in the USA.

One does not even have to leave the USA to find cultural differences in the legality, availability, use and acceptance of a hallucinogenic drug. Peyote is listed as a hallucinogen right after LSD by the National Institute of Drug Abuse at <http://www.nida.nih.gov/infofacts/hallucinogens.html>.

Today it is not widely available or widely used because it is from a small cactus in the southwestern USA. However, its legality and acceptance has varied over the years. Peyote use is legal for members of Native American churches: "Section 1307.31 Native American Church. The listing of peyote as a controlled substance in Schedule I does not apply to the nondrug use of peyote in bona fide religious ceremonies of the Native American Church, and members of the Native American Church so using peyote are exempt from registration."

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peyote>

For further information about these chemicals, click on the following links to parts of Chapter 3 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Psychoactive Drugs](#)
- [Different Categories of Drugs](#)
- [Alcohol](#)
- [Sedatives](#)
- [Stimulants](#)
- [Cocaine](#)
- [Caffeine](#)
- [Opiates](#)
- [Nitrous Oxide and Inhalants](#)
- [Marijuana](#)
- [Effects of Marijuana](#)
- [Synthetic Analogs of Naturally-Occurring Drugs](#)
- [Summary: Psychoactive Drugs](#)

### The Synapse

The synapse is the region where information is transmitted from neuron to neuron. Since the neurons do not actually touch each other, there must be some way to get a neural impulse from one to another. When an impulse reaches the end of the neuron, it causes a chemical (a neurotransmitter) to be released. This chemical travels to the adjoining neurons and, if enough of the chemical is present, starts an impulse in the next neuron.

Various chemicals are used in different parts of the nervous system. When we take other chemicals (drugs) that block these chemicals (the neurotransmitters) from being released or prevent them from acting on the next neuron, we can produce great changes in our behavior and mental processes. For further information about these chemicals, click on the following links to parts of Chapter 2 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Transmitter Substances](#)
- [Manipulation of Neurotransmitters](#)
- [Acetylcholine](#)
- [Dopamine](#)

- [Norepinephrine](#)
- [Serotonin](#)
- [GABA](#)
- [Brain Peptides](#)
- [Nitric Oxide, Glutamate, and Neuroimmunology](#)
- [Endorphins](#)

Neuropsychology is the discipline that studies the relationships between events the physical nervous system just discussed and psychology, overt behavior and mental processes. As David Myers puts it, "everything psychological is simultaneously biological." A good introduction to neuropsychology is available at <http://www.brainsource.com/neuropsy.htm>. For further information about specific topics in neuropsychology click on the following links to parts of Chapter 2 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Neuropsychology](#)
- [Causes of Brain Injury](#)
- [Phineas Gage](#)
- [Aphasias](#)
- [Aphasic Speech](#)
- [Wernicke's Aphasia](#)
- [Moniz and Lobotomies](#)
- [Effects of Lobotomies](#)
- [Facial Blindness](#)
- [The Parietal Syndrome](#)
- [The Split-Brain Operation](#)
- [Dual Consciousness in Split-Brain Patients](#)
- [Brain Stimulation](#)
- [Stimulated Movement](#)
- [Stimulated Mental States](#)
- [Hallucinated Memories](#)
- [Other Psychological Responses to Brain Stimulation](#)
- [The Pleasure Centers](#)

- [Stimulation of the Amygdala](#)
- [Function of the Amygdala](#)
- [Epileptic Auras: A Natural Form of Brain Stimulation](#)
- [Deja Vu as a Brain Event](#)
- [Multiple Types of Intelligence](#)
- [Summary: Neuropsychology](#)

## Endocrine System

The endocrine glands secrete substances directly into the blood stream. These secretions are the hormones and are carried to all parts of the body by the circulatory system. These hormones then usually have a specific effect on some other part of the body. They control everything from an individual's energy level to his or her body size. Some regulate the sodium-potassium balance in the body and thus affect neural transmission. An excellent introduction of the endocrine system is available at

[http://www.emedicinehealth.com/anatomy\\_of\\_the\\_endocrine\\_system/article\\_em.htm](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/anatomy_of_the_endocrine_system/article_em.htm).

When hormones are undersecreted, people can usually supplement them with hormone pills or injections. Most of us know someone who takes insulin or birth control pills, both hormones but from different glands. When our endocrine system gets out of balance, it can affect our behavior and mental processes. We need to be aware of symptoms of such imbalance. You can find more information on disorders of the endocrine system at

<http://www.endocrineweb.com/indexpg.html> .

Sometimes we need to view our passport culture through the eyes of another culture to see it as it really is. A few days ago I received an email from a United States citizen living in Asia, one who said that during the last few months she had been looking into local medicine and its effectiveness. She said she wasn't surprised to learn that dog urine was a "miracle drug" for

the people where she lived, but she was surprised to learn that many areas in Europe still use urine medicinally. I wrote back:

You may not realize that refined urine has been a "miracle drug" for more than 50 years for women here in the USA. The refined urine most often swallowed (not applied to the skin by wrapping it around their heads) by many millions of women here is the urine of pregnant mares. It may even be that your "moms" here in the States take it. The women take it because they and their physicians believe it will make them feel better, help them remain young, keep their bones stronger, and protect them from heart attacks and strokes. During the last few years some have stopped taking it because they no longer believe it will protect them from circulatory problems (and may even increase such problems), but many millions still take it for the other reasons. Of course, it is not marketed here as urine, but as HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy), and the marketing is aimed at older women, those in their 50s or above. One of the best known is sold as PREMARIN (PREgnant MARE urINe). The *Physicians Desk Reference* in the entry for PREMARIN points out that it is "obtained from exclusively natural sources." PREMARIN INTRAVENOUS is also available for those who want to feed it more directly into their bloodstream, and PREMARIN CREAM is available for those women who want to apply it directly to their skin.

Hormone replacement therapy is an example showing that our bodies are physiologically similar to animals, in this case, horses. However, it also illustrates the potential danger of introducing animal hormones into our bodies. For more information see the factsheet from the National Cancer Institute at

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Risk/menopausal-hormones>.

### Humans as Spiritual Beings-Like God

Table 2.1 illustrated the fact that persons are not only physical but also spiritual. Humans have nerves, muscles, and glands like animals, but they are also spiritual beings like God. When we begin to deal with language, personality, creativity, morality, ethics, love, and so forth, we need to look more to comparisons with God than to the structure and function of the brain. God is spirit, and humans created in his image are also spiritual beings.

This means that we are looking for causes of behavior and mental processes in the spiritual, God-like aspects of humans. Humanity's animal-like physical aspects have been discussed, but its God-like spiritual ones have not. When Jesus was talking with the woman at the well in Samaria, he emphasized that God is spirit and that those who worship him must do so in spirit and in truth. The apostle Paul notes that God is spirit, and in the next sentence he explains that we are changed into God's likeness by the spirit of the Lord himself (2 Corinthians 3). Many other passages of Scripture refer to the fact that humans are spiritual beings. Missionaries must always remember that the nationals they are serving are human beings who are made in God's image and who can become more like God himself.

If consider what God is like, then we have a clearer understanding of what we are trying to foster in the people we serve. Theologians have been studying what God is like for hundreds of years. Of course, God is not exactly like anything or anyone we know. When humans have attempted to describe God, words have failed. Ezekiel could not adequately describe God, so he fell back on saying what God resembled. We cannot know all about God, but he has chosen to reveal certain things about himself which we call his attributes.

Although volumes have been written about God's attributes, in *Knowledge of the Holy* (1961) A. W. Tozer summarized them so well that we will use his list here. He subtitled his book, "The Attributes of God: Their Meaning in the Christian Life." This book is available from several websites, but this one allows you to download an entire pdf copy [http://penielministries.co.uk/Documents/Tozer%20-%20Knowledge%20Of%20The%20Holy%20\(b\).pdf](http://penielministries.co.uk/Documents/Tozer%20-%20Knowledge%20Of%20The%20Holy%20(b).pdf). To keep from selecting only those seen as most relevant, we will consider implications of all he lists.

Before beginning the actual comparisons we need to consider two things. First, some people are reluctant to make comparisons between humans and God. They believe that there is such a great difference between the two that meaningful comparisons cannot be made. However, we must remember that the Bible itself, God's own special revelation to us, repeatedly makes these comparisons. We are told to be holy, perfect, loving, merciful, and so forth, like God. Most Christians say that they want to be more Christlike. What they really mean is that they want to become more like the attributes of God they see revealed in Christ. Second, when considering any one attribute in detail, we find that the other attributes are always involved. All of God's attributes are essentially one, blending into each other in his unity. In fact, his attributes really define each other. We must not overemphasize any one attribute or set of attributes to the exclusion of others.

As we look at Tozer's (1961) list of God's attributes, we find that over half of them are related to God's infinity. Of course, we cannot be like him in these ways. Rather than discussing these, we will simply list them. God is self-existent, self-sufficient, eternal, infinite, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, transcendent, omnipresent, and sovereign. Although we can never have these attributes, we are a bit like God even in these. For example, we are not from everlasting to everlasting (eternal) like God, but we do have life from now on (eternal life). Although we can never be omniscient, we can still

increase our knowledge. Although we are not sovereign, we are still given dominion over the earth. Thus, even in these infinite aspects, we are still somewhat like God, and as missionaries we have reason to urge the nationals we serve toward growth in these areas. In the remaining nine attributes of God listed by Tozer we find ourselves even more like God.

### **A Trinity**

One of the great mysteries of the Christian faith is the Holy Trinity. Although the Trinity is three persons, he is one God and he is a unity. This doctrine of the Trinity has at least two major implications for a Christian psychology. First, God is a social being and we, created in his image, are social beings. When he created human beings, he created them male and female in his image, so that our very sexuality is a reflection of God's image in us. We need each other as beings created in the image of a social God. Second, the unity of the Trinity should be characteristic of our social relationships. Jesus prayed that we might be perfect in one. Paul repeatedly used the "body" analogy in referring to the church, emphasizing that we are many but make up one body in Christ. As Christian missionaries, we must emphasize unity in the social relationships of those we serve.

### **Wise**

God is a God of wisdom, a wisdom we cannot fully understand. In fact, it is said that his foolishness is wiser than the wisdom of humans. In his wisdom everything is in focus and in the proper relationship. Although we cannot ever have perfect wisdom, we are encouraged to seek wisdom, and he promises to give it to us. It is true that humans have increased their knowledge (the number of facts they know), but they have problems increasing their wisdom (the true meaning and application of that knowledge for godly living). Knowledge

without wisdom may be a very dangerous thing, especially when it is used to increase power. Clearly, we must encourage our national brothers and sisters to seek wisdom from God.

### **Faithful**

God does not break his promises. It is impossible for God to lie because he is the truth. Our whole hope for the future lies in God's faithfulness. We have seen how he has kept his word in the past and know that he will continue to keep it in the future. Since God is faithful, we are also encouraged to be faithful. Although our hearts are deceitful, with God's help it is possible to keep our covenant with him. Although the history of God's people is full of broken covenants, we must not get the idea that this is the way it ought to be. That only indicates what humans have done, not what they should do. We should encourage our national friends to be God-like in keeping their agreements.

### **Good**

God is good. In fact, goodness is defined by his very nature. He is kind and benevolent toward us. He is tenderhearted, sympathetic, open, frank, friendly, and likes to give us blessings and make us happy. God wants the best for us and is good to us even when we are in rebellion against him. We are to be good, like God. Jesus pointed out that although some said we should love our friends and hate our enemies, we should love our enemies as well. We should love our enemies, lend to them, pray for them, do good to them, and not criticize or condemn them. Jesus specifically points out that in doing this we will be true children of God. Anyone can do good to his or her friends, but to do good to our enemies is a very God-like attribute. Those we serve should be encouraged to be good, as God is good.

**Just**

God is a righteous God, He judges with moral equity, and is no respecter of persons. He treats everyone fairly, giving sunshine and rain to both just and unjust people. He judges according to truth. We are to be just to those under our authority as God is just to us. God commands us to act justly because his righteousness is about to be revealed. Justice and fair judgment are as important to God as sacrifice is. We are to defend the poor and the orphans and to be fair in our treatment of the sick and needy.

**Merciful**

God is actively compassionate. Justice is often contrasted with mercy, but there is no conflict between these in God. There is nothing in God's justice that stops the exercise of his mercy. He is one God, just and merciful at the same time. God's divine pity and compassion are extended to us. His mercy is available to us now through Jesus Christ our Lord. God is a God of mercy and delights in extending it to those who call on him. We are specifically commanded to be merciful as God is merciful. If we are merciful to others, God will also be merciful to us. Our national friends should be both just and merciful.

**Full of Grace**

Closely related to God's mercy is his grace. His grace enables him to help the undeserving, to spare the guilty. He extends his grace, through which we are saved, to sinful humans through Jesus Christ. Everyone who has been justified has received this justification only through his grace, which is extended freely to all. We are to forgive others as Christ forgave us. Even if someone offends us repeatedly, we are to forgive and forgive and forgive, just as God forgives us when we repeatedly fall. Jesus said that when we pray, we should forgive

anyone of whatever we have against them so that God can forgive us. When we pray the "Lord's Prayer," we ask God to forgive us as we forgive others.

**Love**

God is love. It is the very nature of God's eternal love to give. He loved us so much that he sent his son to die that we might have everlasting life. Although humans have no greater love than to lay down their lives for friends, God loved us so much that Christ died for us while we were still sinners, enemies of God. Jesus said that he had loved us as the father had loved him and that we were to continue in his love. He commanded us to love one another as he had loved us. That is, we are to be God-like in our love. We must encourage those we serve to be gracious and loving.

**Holy**

Only God is absolutely holy. When we see him as he really is, we are acutely aware of our lack of holiness. We are incapable of fully grasping what God's holiness means because it is not simply better than the best we know. It is unique. It is an absolute holiness that knows no degrees. However, we are told by God in both the Old and New Testaments to be holy because he is holy. We are to worship and serve him in holiness. God shares a relative holiness with us as our preparation for heaven. He has made it available to us through Christ. We must encourage all Christians to seek this holiness.

In summary, we have considered the attributes of God and seen that we are commanded to be like him with respect to many of his attributes. We must remember that although we considered the attributes of God one at a time, God is a unity. When considering any one attribute in detail, the other attributes are always involved. All of the attributes are essentially one. They all blend into each other in his unity. We are to bring

about the conditions that will foster the development of this God-likeness in those we serve and in ourselves.

### “Disorders”

Since human beings are spiritual beings, sin is possible. However, the concept of sin has not been a popular one in secular psychology, and not even in some interpretations of Christianity. When psychologist O. H. Mowrer presented a paper on "Some Constructive Features of the Concept of Sin" in a symposium at the 1959 American Psychological Association convention, it drew national attention in newspapers and magazines. The absence of much mention of the term by the 1970s prompted psychiatrist Karl Menninger to title his book, *Whatever Became of Sin?* However, when the term was used, it was defined only in the social sense of being against people.

### Sin

The concept of sin fits into our Christian perspective as a spiritual “disorder.” Since this book is titled *Psychology for Missionaries*, I am using the term disorder, the term most often used by mental health professionals. There may be physical disorders of the nervous system when neurons are damaged or physical disorders when endocrine glands produce too much or too little of the hormones. Likewise there may be spiritual disorders when people violate God’s laws.

Nearly any dictionary gives at least two major definitions of sin, the first of which is "to violate divine law," the second, "to violate human rights." From our Christian perspective, sin is against God. It is primarily a matter of transgressing against God even when it is against other people. When Potiphar's wife was attempting to seduce Joseph, he asked her how he could do this great wickedness and sin against God (Genesis 39:9). When the prodigal son returned, he said that he had sinned against heaven and before his father (Luke

15:18). King David was guilty of adultery and murder. But when he prayed for forgiveness in Psalm 51, he said to God, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned. . . ."

Many writers have pointed out that the first four of the Ten Commandments are sins against God and the last six are against humans. These last six are against humans, but they are still against God because humans are made in God's image. Karl Menninger never discussed the question of what became of the concept of sin against God, only what became of the concept of sin against other people. There were probably two reasons for the change from thinking of sin as "against God" to thinking of it as "against humans." One reason is that many people have done what O. H. Mowrer advocated by 1966. They have abandoned the "God-hypothesis" in the transcendental sense. If there is no transcendent God, there can be no sin against him. The other reason for this change in the definition of sin is that many people think of God as only a force, only infinite, and not as personal. One cannot sin against a force, only against a person; only against the Person. In that sense Menninger was correct; sin is against persons made in the image of the Person.

Humans are unique in having been made with the capacity to sin and in having sinned. Animals do not have the capacity to sin and God will not sin. It is the image of God in humans which makes them morally responsible. God gave humans the capacity to choose between good and evil. Unfortunately, humans chose evil and continue to do so today.

This is not to say that sinfulness is inherent in humans. Adam and Eve were created fully human in the image of God, but without sin. Jesus was fully human, as well as fully divine, yet he did not sin. Although sin is not inherent in our definition of humanness, all humans (except Jesus) have sinned. Christ died for us because we are unable to handle this sin problem ourselves.

Since sinning is universal, we must consider its effects. It was sin that marred the image of God in humans and keeps us from reaching our God-like potential. Sin results in separation

between the sinner and the one sinned against. It separates us from God, and from one another. The final penalty of sin is death, both physical and spiritual. Sin was the original cause of humanity's problems, but we so often continue in sin and increase our own individual problems. A partial list of forms of sin given by the apostle Paul includes adultery, sexual immorality, impure thoughts, hatred, fighting, jealousy, anger, complaining, envy, murder, and drunkenness (Galatians 5:19-21). As Christian missionaries, we see sin as one of the disorders in the lives of those we came to serve.

### Guilt?

Although most psychologists do not accept the concept of sin, they certainly accept one result of sin, guilt feelings. One only needs to look at an abnormal psychology text to see how often guilt or guilt feelings are mentioned as factors in the development of "mental illness." Some psychologists have proposed that guilt and/or guilt feelings are to some degree involved in the development of all disorders.

All possible combinations of guilt and guilt feelings are possible. You may be guilty and not feel guilty; you may feel guilty and not be guilty; or you may be guilty and feel guilty. Any one of these is likely to interfere with your work as a missionary. You want to reach the place where you are not guilty and do not feel guilty.

The Bible says much about being guilty. A search for "guilt" and "guilty" will reveal dozens of verses about being guilty of sin. When you break one of God's commands, you are guilty—whether you feel guilty or not. If you are guilty, something needs to be done about the guilt, a subject discussed later.

Of course, you may feel guilty because you are guilty, and that is good. Although the Bible says much about *being* guilty, it says little about *feeling* guilty. If you feel guilty because you are guilty, you just need to do something about the

sin. However, many people feel guilty without being guilty. In fact, the guilt feelings may even be *stronger* when there is no guilt. Here are a few examples of things other than sin that may produce guilt feelings:

- Falling short of your own expectations. This often happens during the first term, especially for perfectionists.
- Falling short of other's expectations. Your church, your family, headquarters, or field director may expect more of you than you can possibly do.
- Not forgiving yourself. After God has forgiven your sin, you may not be able to forgive yourself even though your guilt is gone.
- Guilt trips by other people. Martha tried to "lay a guilt trip" on Mary for not working hard enough in Luke 10, and she even tried to get Jesus to join her.
- Oversensitive conscience. A good conscience will produce guilt when you sin; however, part of your conscience is learned in your culture, and you may feel guilty for many things that have nothing to do with sin.
- Survivor guilt. You may have gone through a traumatic situation and may feel guilty that you survived when others did not, or you may feel guilty about what you had to do to survive.
- Satan himself. Remember that Satan is the "accuser of the brothers" in 1 Peter 5 and Revelation 12. His accusations can make you feel guilty.
- Temptation. Although we are never promised that we will be beyond temptation, missionaries may feel guilty for being tempted to lie, cheat, or be sexually unfaithful.

Shame, rather than guilt, often brings on these guilt feelings. Guilt means that you have broken God's command, fallen short of his expectations. Shame means that you have fallen short of the expectations of someone other than God. It may have begun when you walked through a mud puddle, soiling your new shoes. Your parents said, "Shame on you, you should have known better." Perhaps there was no way for you

to have known, and the Bible does not forbid walking in puddles, but you felt guilty.

You may ask, “Isn’t guilt bad?” Of course it is. That’s a major goal of missions, to tell people in other cultures that God has solved the sin problem. Aren’t guilt feelings bad too? They may or may not be. If they are caused by things other than sin, such as some of the examples given in the previous section, they are also bad. They will interfere with the missionary’s goal of telling others the good news.

Guilt feelings as a result of sin are good. These guilt feelings provide motivation for doing something about the sin in your life. Without them people seldom come to Christ, and often have great difficulty in society, perhaps becoming antisocial personalities (psychopaths) and getting into serious legal trouble. Such guilt feelings tend to be strongest immediately after sin is committed, then to decrease as rationalizations are generated. You then no longer feel the guilt, at least not nearly as much, and your “heart is hardened,” making you much less likely to do something about the sin.

Guilt feelings may be worse for missionaries because of some special situations.

- Living standards. Some missionaries live quite affluently compared to the people they minister to, and they may feel guilty about their wealth. This is becoming less so as missionaries go to large cities.
- Suffering. Many of the people missionaries work with are suffering compared to Western standards, and all their needs simply cannot be met.
- Children’s education. Although MKs do better academically than non-MKs “back home,” missionaries may feel like they are not providing an adequate education.
- Aging parents. Since missionaries are out of their home country and do not have large financial resources, they may feel guilty about not caring for aging parents.
- Civil authorities. How can a missionary get anything done in a society where the local value system may conflict with

that of the missionary? For example, what is the difference between a gratuity and a bribe?

People in their own cultures often have problems dealing with their affluence, the suffering of others, their children’s education, their aging parents, and their government, so the difference is one of degree, not of kind.

### **Demon Possession**

Early writings in many cultures show that demon possession was one of the earliest explanations of mental illness. Stone Age cavemen probably cut a circular hole in the skulls of people complaining of certain mental disorders, likely those involving headaches and convulsions. Presumably this opening allowed the evil spirit causing the trouble to escape. Emphasis on demonology declined during the Middle Ages. Treatment of the disturbed was then left largely to the clergy, and the mentally ill were usually treated with considerable kindness.

However, as theological beliefs about such behavior became more fully developed and widely accepted by the secular world, even treatment by the church became harsher. The treatment then was to make the body such an unpleasant place to reside that the demon would leave. People were whipped, starved, chained, immersed in hot water, and so forth—anything to drive the devil out of them, thus the saying, “I’ll beat the devil out of you. With the rise of modern science, attributing everything to demons declined. The maladjusted were then put in asylums where treatment was not much better. As confidence in science and medicine rose, it became very unfashionable to believe in such things as demons. Recently, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in demons.

The position taken here is that there are such things as demons, and they do influence people, but not all odd behavior is a symptom of demon possession. Scripture speaks about demonology, especially as it might be related to what we call

mental illness. Demon possession is relatively rare in the Old Testament, although it is strongly suggested in some passages.

- Under the influence of a tormenting spirit, Saul was very jealous and violent, attempting to kill David and even his own son, Jonathan (1 Samuel 19:10, 20:33).
- However, not all odd behavior was attributed to evil spirits. In the next chapter we find David pretending to be crazy because he was afraid of an enemy king. David drooled into his beard and scratched on doors until the king concluded that David must be mad. There is no indication that David pretended to be demon possessed, only that he pretended to be insane (1 Samuel 21:13).
- For seven years, Nebuchadnezzar lived in the fields like an animal, eating grass like a cow. His hair and nails were not cut. He was driven from his throne, but when his "reason returned" (spontaneous recovery), he once again became ruler. Again, his odd behavior was not attributed to demon possession, only to the fact that God was teaching him a lesson (Daniel 4:28-37).

Demon possession was prevalent in Jesus' time. It resulted in violence, inability to speak, blindness, falling into fire or water, great strength, uncontrolled movements, foaming at the mouth, grinding of the teeth and rigidity. Of course, many of these "symptoms" are the same as those of the mentally ill or epileptic of today. Yet Jesus distinguished between illness and demon possession.

- Once when two blind men came to him, he healed them by touching their eyes (Matthew 9:27-30).
- Later a man who was blind and dumb was brought to him. Jesus cast out the demon and the man could see and speak (Matthew 12:22).

In one case blindness was caused by demon possession, in another it was not.

Insanity was not equated with demon possession by early followers of Christ.

- One time when Jesus himself was so busy that he could not

find time to eat, some of his friends tried to take him home with them, thinking he was out of his mind. They did not even mention demon possession (Mark 3:20-30).

- Festus accused the apostle Paul of being insane. He did not attribute Paul's insanity to demon possession, but to long studying (Acts 26:24).

The Bible distinguishes between diseases, demon possession, and mental illness. When describing those brought to Jesus, writers distinguish between those who were demon possessed and those who were lunatic (literally, "moon-struck"). Demon possession can cause behavior that is not God-like, but it is not the only cause of such behavior.

A distinction must also be made between demon possession and demonic influence. Only unbelievers are exposed to demon possession. The believer who is "in Christ," filled with the Holy Spirit, cannot be possessed by a demon. However, both believers and unbelievers are subject to demonic influence. In demon possession, the demon invades the personality and gains control over the individual. In demonic influence, attack is made from without, through temptation, suggestion, and pressure. As Christian missionaries, we must at least consider that the source of a disorder may be demon possession or demonic influence.

### **“Treatment”**

After missionaries have determined that the cause of the disorder is due to a problem in the spiritual aspect of an individual, they should give an appropriate treatment. If the cause of the disorder is a spiritual problem, a physiological treatment is simply not appropriate, at least not as the sole or primary method. Too often, people plagued with guilt feelings because of unforgiven sin take tranquilizers or other drugs (e. g., alcohol) to make them feel better, rather than seeking God's forgiveness.

## Forgiveness

If people have unforgiven sin in their lives, they need to do several things to bring about a solution to this problem.

There is a penalty for sin, but Christ has paid that for us, so we do not have to suffer the full penalty. Salvation is of God and only through Christ, but God requires several things of us.

- Confession. Certainly confess your sins to God. You may also want to confess to people you have harmed as well. Confession usually should be only to those actually affected by the sin rather than to the general public.
- Repentance. Repentance is more than being sorry for your sins; it is a change of purpose or a change of mind. We are to turn from our sinful ways to God. After forgiving her, Jesus told the woman taken in adultery to sin no more.
- Faith. Christ paid the penalty for our sins, and we must trust him for this.
- Restitution. As far as possible, try to make right the wrong you have done. If you have stolen something, you can usually return it. Of course, if you have destroyed another's reputation, you may not be able to rebuild it.

Two things need to be emphasized. First, although Christ has paid the penalty for our sin, we must still live with its consequences. We live in a fallen world, and coming to Christ will not solve all problems. All people who have general paresis will not suddenly be given new brains just because they come to Christ. The converted alcoholic will not always be given a new liver but may have to live the rest of his or her life with cirrhosis of the liver. After King David committed adultery with Bath-Sheba and murdered her husband, his confession and repentance were followed by forgiveness, but his child still died (2 Samuel 11-12). Forgiveness does not mean that all the consequences of sin will be removed.

Second, we must be aware of the principle of multiple causation. Individuals may have disorders in several areas of their lives. In fact, this is usually the case. Persons may have

both unforgiven sin and cerebral arteriosclerosis, both a spiritual and a physiological problem, as well as other disorders. We must examine all areas of people's lives and not be content with an oversimplified approach of looking for only one problem.

*Nouthetic Counseling.* Although he has been severely criticized, Jay Adams has a great deal to say to us about the treatment of spiritual problems. He sees humanity's basic problem in terms of sin. God created humans to have authority and rule over the earth, but sin brought a reversal so that the earth gained dominion over humanity. Contrary to God's intention, the environment rules humans rather than humans' ruling the environment. He notes that the Bible talks of organically based problems and of problems that stem from sinful attitudes and behavior, but not of any third source of problems we call "mental illness." Except for organic disorders, the "mentally ill" are people with unsolved personal problems.

Adams developed nouthetic counseling in the 1970s to deal with these problems. Such nouthetic confrontation has three basic elements.

- The first is the idea that there is something wrong (some sin, obstruction, problem, or difficulty) with the person and that this need has to be acknowledged and dealt with.
- The second element is the idea that problems are solved nouthetically, by verbal means. The contact is a personal conference and discussion aimed toward bringing greater conformity to biblical standards.
- Finally, the counselor's motive is always to be that the verbal correction benefit the counselee. Rather than being directed toward punishment, even disciplinary punishment, nouthesis is motivated by love and concern for the good of the counselee.

Nouthetic counseling is direct and confronting. Adams pointed out that women come with tissues ready and men come with their tempers ready to flare, but the nouthetic counselor does not let such things detract from getting to the problem. For example, when a woman breaks into bawling, crying, and

sobbing, one should look her in the eye and tell her to be quiet. Tell her to stop this nonsense and get down to business. Tell her that you know there is something wrong in her life and she needs to start "talking turkey." This kind of counseling can be very effective in dealing with sin in the lives of some persons, and it should be known and used by Christian counselors at appropriate times.

To find out more about the development of nouthetic counseling visit the website of the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors at [http://www.nanc.org/About\\_Us/History.aspx](http://www.nanc.org/About_Us/History.aspx). You can find many other variations of Biblical counseling by typing "Biblical counseling" into any search engine.

### **Guilt Feelings**

If the guilt feelings are because of sin, one needs to deal with it using the steps reviewed above. However, guilt feelings may persist even after God has granted forgiveness. Guilt feelings that one has had for a long time as a result of sin may become conditioned responses and remain even after the sin is forgiven. Just as Pavlov's dogs salivated to the sound of a bell, so you may feel guilty when some event triggers the guilt feelings, even after the sin is forgiven and the guilt itself is gone. These responses gradually decrease and stop over time.

If they do not go away, you may need to talk with your pastor or a counselor about why they are still there. You may have hidden things under layer after layer of rationalization and may need someone else to help you sort it all out.

We must distinguish between humanness, temptations, and convictions on the one hand, and sin on the other. We must also deal with guilt about a problem in other areas of life. For example, one person reported feeling very guilty about falling asleep repeatedly during devotions. I asked him when he had devotions (6:00 A.M.), when he went to bed (2:00 A.M.) and about the presence of known sin in his life (none). From his

answers, I concluded that his problem was physiological (lack of sleep) rather than spiritual, and told him to get more sleep. He did and was no longer troubled with falling asleep during devotions. He did not need spiritual help, but physical help.

If the guilt feelings are because of other factors, you need to deal with each one individually. Let's consider a couple of examples.

First-term missionaries often have very high expectations about what they will accomplish and feel guilty that they do not achieve their personal goals. In this case, they need to talk with an experienced missionary and set more realistic goals. Of course, they may still not lower their expectations, thinking that they are different, that their ministry will be more effective.

If the goals set for you by others are too high, ask to have them lowered. One teacher felt guilty for not spending the required number of minutes on each subject until she realized that the required number of minutes each day was an hour and twenty minutes longer than she had the children in class. The principal lowered the number of required minutes.

A related question is how to lead a consistent Christian life to keep from becoming guilty again. Two things are very important. First, maintain a consistent daily devotional life. Missionaries report that this is their most difficult "spiritual" activity. Second, get into an accountability relationship with others to check on each other weekly, or at some other regular interval. Agree with the others, as to what you will hold each other accountable for, and give this meeting a high priority in your life. Include daily devotions in any accountability plan.

Christ died for our sins and there is no condemnation in Christ. There is no need to be hindered by guilt or guilt feelings.

### **Casting Out Demons**

If the cause of the disorder is demon possession,

something must be done to expel the demons. Although exorcisms were commonly practiced by the Jews during Jesus' time, neither Jesus nor his followers used any conjurations, incantations, or magical ceremonies to cast out demons. Jesus relied on his own living word of infinite power. He spoke and the demons obeyed him (Matthew 8:28-34). The phrase "In Jesus' name" is not a magic phrase to bring about a cure, but a reliance on the Infinite behind the name.

Jesus delegated his power over demons to the twelve (Luke 9:1), the seventy (Luke 10:17), and several early missionaries in Acts drove them out. These apostles cast out demons in his name. This is not to imply that casting out demons is a simple task because even his disciples failed at times (Luke 9:37-43). As Christian missionaries we need be in a place spiritually where we can call on the power behind the name of Jesus to cast out demons. If we do not believe we are capable of this, we should know some Christian to whom we can refer the person, just as we would refer someone with a physical problem to a physician.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter we have considered the first of the areas of psychology usually discussed in general psychology, that of physiological psychology. We have placed this in our Christian perspective in that humans are animal-like in their anatomy and physiology. Changes in anatomy and physiology can bring about disorders in behavior and mental processes. Since we know that these anatomical and physiological changes produce disorders, we can take steps to prevent them, or to reverse them, where possible. This seems reasonable from our perspective. If something is wrong with the person's anatomy or physiology, we can treat it by taking corrective measures.

In this chapter we have also said that humans are spiritual beings like God, as well as physical beings like animals. As we consider how humans are like God, we must

remember that our goal in helping is to provide conditions in which those we serve (and we ourselves) will become more like him. Since humans are spiritual beings, there can be disorders in this area of life. These disorders are caused by sin, which brings guilt and guilt feelings. They may even be caused by demon possession. Our task as Christian missionaries, then, is to deal with the sin problem by bringing those we serve to Christ for forgiveness or casting out the demons. Taking a tranquilizer is treatment just as inappropriate for the results of sin as nouthetic counseling is for the person with physical disorders. Our treatment must be appropriate for the disorder. It must also be comprehensive, not restricted to only the primary cause, but also dealing with related problems that have arisen.

## Chapter 3

# Development

Development from a Christian Perspective

Childhood: Before Puberty

Physical  
Cognitive  
Moral  
Spiritual  
TCKs

Adolescence: Added in 19<sup>th</sup> century

Physical  
Cognitive  
Moral  
Spiritual  
TCKs

Offspring of “helicopter parents”

Adulthood: Shortened several times

Physical  
Cognitive  
Moral  
Spiritual

Retirement: Added in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Death: Not in the Original plan

Suicide  
Grief

Resurrection: Christian concept

Chapter 10 in Dewey’s introductory text is relevant

- [Chapter 10: Development](#)

(Chapter 4: Developing through the Life Span in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant.)

Another major area of psychology is developmental psychology, in which psychologists are interested in describing and explaining changes in behavior and mental processes that result from maturation and experience. American developmental psychology has traditionally been unbalanced, because psychologists saw "development" as something that happened primarily to children and adolescents. Most books before 1970 were written about child psychology and adolescent psychology, but even those about developmental psychology devoted about nine-tenths of the book to the first two decades of life and the remaining one-tenth to the last five decades. Fortunately, psychologists corrected this imbalance. As Christians we should take this more balanced view of lifespan development.

### Development from a Christian Perspective

Developmental psychology fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 3:1. The figure shows that at immaturity people are more like animals, and as they mature they may become more like God. Note that it does not imply that they are animals, just that they are similar to animals, and it does not say that they necessarily become like God, only that they have that potential. As we consider different sections of developmental psychology, we will see repeatedly that people progress from animal-like to God-like. This progression is closely related to our applied goal of making people more like God.

Figure 3:1 Developmental psychology from a Christian perspective.

## HUMANS

Created . . . . . in the. . . . . Image of God  
Like Animals . . . . . Like God

Overt Behavior. . . . .Definition. . . . .Mental Processes

Understand. . . . .Goals. . . . .Make people  
Creation . . . . . Like God

Psychoanalysis. . . . .Systems. . . . .Humanistic  
Behaviorism . . . . . Psychology

Experimental . . . . .Methods . . . . . Descriptive

Physical. . . . .The Person . . . . .Spiritual

**Immaturity.** . . . . .Development. . . **Maturity**

Through much of history, as well as in many cultures today, the developmental periods were childhood (from birth to puberty) and adulthood (from puberty until death). However, during the last couple of centuries some cultures, especially Western ones, have divided adulthood into several additional periods, and there is no general agreement as to what they should be or at what ages they occur. Some of these periods are marked by physiological changes (puberty), and others are marked by cultural norms (laws).

### **Childhood: Before Puberty**

Development begins at the moment of conception and continues for a lifetime. Although childhood can be divided

into several parts, this book defines it as extending from conception to puberty. Events in the womb may have a profound effect on life after birth. If the mother is severely stressed during pregnancy, her stress hormones can affect her baby's temperament. If the mother is a heroin addict, the baby will be born an addict as well. If the mother smokes, the baby also experiences the nicotine and reduced placental blood flow. If the mother drinks alcohol, the baby may be born with fetal alcohol syndrome, a leading cause of mental retardation. In cultures where taking such drugs is common, missionaries may see these results in children to whom they minister.

### **Physical**

Physical development takes place primarily during the first two decades of life. During the first year, height increases by more than a third and weight triples. Bones continue to ossify and muscles grow. Body proportions change. At birth the head is about one-quarter of the length of the body. By five years of age the child's height has more than doubled, so that the head is only a little more than one-eighth of the length. Between the ages of five and ten, children grow at a fairly constant rate. Physical development varies depending on the general community health situation and diet available to children where missionaries serve.

### **Cognitive**

Cognitive development follows a progression from animal-like to God-like. The most influential individual in the study of this area is Jean Piaget, who conversed with and observed the behavior of children as their thinking developed. He discovered three stages of cognitive development during childhood.

- Sensorimotor stage. This stage occurs during the first two years of the child's life in which the child experiences the

world through senses and actions such as looking, mouthing, and so forth.

- Preoperational stage. This stage lasts from about age two to age seven. Children now acquire language and can manipulate the meaning of objects and events using words and images.
- Concrete operations stage. From about age seven to eleven or twelve children can have a mental representation of a series of actions, can draw a map, and think in relational terms.

Though they have more stages of development ahead, in these stages children already begin to show progression from animal-like to Godlike. Animals have similar senses and can act on the basis of their sensations, much like children in the sensorimotor stage. However, most animals are not capable of the Godlike qualities of symbol use and relational thinking that characterize children in the preoperational and concrete operations stages.

Although the ages and particular things children can do vary across and within cultures, missionaries should realize that this general progression in cognitive development occurs. Most children before the age of puberty are unable to think abstractly. They cannot conceive of the Holy Spirit, but they can conceive of Jesus, “God with skin on.” They may not be able to understand sin, but they can learn that taking someone’s toy is wrong.

During childhood, children learn languages rapidly and without an accent. During this time it is common for children to become truly bilingual if they play frequently with national children, though the languages may be confused at times. Parents may become quite discouraged as they struggle to learn the language while their children learn it with no accent and little effort. Of course, the children are learning what is spoken on the street in the neighborhood, not necessarily what is grammatically correct.

If children live in a host culture for a significant amount

of time during their later childhood, they begin to become Third Culture Kids (TCKs) as they live between cultures. Of course they internalize parts of their parents’ culture in their home and in a circle of expatriates, but they also internalize parts of the host culture in which they live. Along with the language they learn different ways of thinking and different sets of assumptions which determine their broader world-views.

### **Moral**

Piaget also believed that children’s moral decisions were based on their level of cognitive development. Rather than separate stages, he believed that they went through two overlapping phases.

- In the heteronomous phase, more prominent during earlier years, children believe that unchangeable rules are handed down by authorities (God, parents, etc.). These rules must be obeyed and punishment should be proportional to the naughtiness of the offence. For example, they believe the child who accidentally breaks five cups while trying to help set the table should be punished more than the child who breaks one cup while climbing up to the shelf to get cookies placed there so he or she cannot reach them.
- In the autonomous phase, more prominent during later years, children understand that people’s interpretation of the rules differ, and the rules can be broken under some conditions. Intentions become more important than the naughtiness of the offence, and these intentions should be the basis of judging the behavior. For example, the child who breaks one cup while trying to get forbidden cookies should be punished more than the child who breaks five cups while trying to help.

<http://alevelpsychology.co.uk/a2-psychology-aqa-a/unit-3/cognition-development/development-of-moral-understanding/piaget-s-theory-of-moral-development.html>

Even in the transition between these two phases children begin to become more like God. As Samuel was anticipating anointing a new king, God reminded him that human beings look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). In the heteronomous phase children judge on the basis of visible damage done, but in the autonomous phase they judge on the basis of the inner intentions, the heart.

During recent years there has been an increasing concern with moral development during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Lawrence Kohlberg expanded Piaget's work concluding that there were three levels of moral development, each with two stages. At the pre-conventional level, individuals obey or disobey the rules to avoid punishment or to get rewards. Even animals can respond on the basis of reward and punishment. At the conventional level, people try to please and help others to get their approval or do their duty to maintain social order. At the post-conventional level, individuals realize that different cultures have different moralities, and they develop their own inner convictions. Here are the stages that most often occur during childhood, and they are still often found in adults.

Level 1: *Pre-conventional Morality* in which moral values are in external events or bad actions.

- Stage 1. Obedience and Punishment Orientation. In this stage children see rules as fixed and obeying these rules is important because doing so avoids punishment.
- Stage 2. Naively Egoistic Orientation. In this stage children obey the rules to get rewards to meet their own needs. The best course of action is the one that serves one's interests.

Level 2: *Conventional Morality* in which moral values are in performing the right roles expected by others.

- Stage 3. "Good-boy/Good-girl" Orientation." In this stage children make decisions based on what is expected of them. They conform to be "nice" and consider relationships as they decide issues of right and wrong.

Again, even animals can respond at the level of pre-conventional morality. They act to maximize reward and minimize punishment. However, as children reach later childhood, they begin to consider what others, including God, expect of them. They begin the change from animal-like to God-like.

As they interact with the nationals, especially in the national church, missionaries need to remember that they may be at different levels of moral development than people in the missionaries' passport culture. In fact, the nationals sometimes have markedly different world-views and ways of thinking which seem to completely contradict God's Word.

<http://psychology.about.com/od/developmentalpsychology/a/kohlberg.htm>

## Spiritual

<http://www.yutopian.com/religion/theology/Salvation.html>

Although theologians usually do not use the term "stages" when talking about spiritual development, they use the same concept. In his *Systematic Theology* Louis Berkhof talks about the "relation between sanctification and some of the other stages in the work of redemption." There is little agreement among theologians on the specifics of the stages of spiritual development. Sometimes they may use the same terms, but with different meanings. However, they generally agree on broad stages of development toward God-likeness, so let us consider some of these.

First, human beings are born in a sinful state, commonly called *original sin*. This original sin is present in every person from birth and is the root of the overt sins appearing later in life. Humans can do nothing to rescue themselves from this sinful state, an unGod-like stage of development.

Second, is *justification*. In his death and resurrection Jesus paid the penalty for our sins so that through him anyone

could receive eternal life (John 3:16). This gift of salvation comes by God's grace and is not based on our works (Romans 3:24). Although the most common time for people to enter this stage of spiritual development is shortly after puberty, children may enter this state of justification before they reach adolescence or adulthood.

### **Third Culture Kids (TCKs)**

People living and working in other cultures may think that they do not need to give much thought to taking their preschool and primary children along. Parents may think that although the children may not want to go, they will soon adjust and be happy in the new culture.

Although this scenario is often the case, it is not always so. Children who do not want to go sometimes never adjust, refuse to learn the language, refuse to make friends, and talk about going home for years.

Parents can increase the likelihood that their preadolescent children will make the transitions to and from the host culture successfully. Following are suggestions that may increase the chances of a child having a good experience in another culture.

**Parenting.** Probably the most important factor in the adjustment of children is the relationship between their parents. Someone has said, "The best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother." Although parents may not realize it, children are aware when problems exist between their parents.

Living in another culture is difficult for any marriage, so couples who have not developed good methods of communication and resolving conflict should take time to do so before going. Then they will be able to adequately do the following P's of Parenting:

- **Presence.** Parents are available for children. Of course, there will be times of separation, but when not out of town, parents should "schedule" time with their children.
- **Provision.** Parents provide for their children's needs, not only financial and physical needs but also spiritual, relational, and emotional ones.
- **Protection.** Parents protect children by setting boundaries and by administering consequences as well as by their physical presence in times of danger.
- **Permission.** Parents give permission to express emotions in age-appropriate ways as well as to try new things and take some risks.

**Preparation.** Although children need not be involved when the idea of serving cross-culturally first comes up, they want to have their voice heard as a part of the family when it is seriously discussed. Talking with them about it is vitally important rather than just telling them they are going. Even preschool children can process an amazing amount of information and should be included when considering the move. In addition to generally talking about the move, talk about specific things in their new culture and experience parts of it if possible.

- Talk about the food they will be eating when there.
- Cook some of the food while still at home.
- If possible eat at a restaurant that serves such food, and let the children hear the language and see the actions and appearance of the cooks and servers.
- Talk about the place the family will be living and look at pictures of it.
- If children are in school, talk about their school and look at pictures of it.

In all of this, stress positive things about the move and discuss options open to them months in advance of the move.

**Packing.** When parents are packing and realize that they cannot possibly take everything they planned, they should very carefully let children have a voice in what they leave

behind. The following “worn out” or “insignificant” items may be very important to a child:

- An torn blanket
- A wrinkled picture
- A broken toy
- A ragged teddy bear

Parents may tell a child to leave a cherished teddy bear behind and they will get him or her a new one when they arrive.

Although that sounds good, it may be the emotional equivalent of someone telling a person to leave a baby at home because they can always have another one when they get there.

If individuals are into the popular pastime of scrapbooking, they should be sure to take some of those scrapbooks along. They can be invaluable for keeping memories alive. Photo albums are important as well. If individuals are really cramped for space, in this digital age families may still have the photos in the computer or burned on a CD that can be taken along easily because it is so small and weighs only ounces.

Goodbyes are very important. People tend to say goodbye to others, but they also need to bid farewell to other things as well:

- Places. Take a child to school to tell it goodbye, then to the church, then to the park, and so forth.
- Pets. A cat, a dog, or even a fish may seem like a part of the family to a child. He or she needs to tell it goodbye and see who will be caring for it.
- Possessions. Obviously everything your children have cannot go with them, so giving their things away (or selling them at a yard sale) lets them know who will have their treasured possessions.

**Possibilities.** On arrival the choices may seem endless where children are involved. Adults may want their children to play with the national children who live nearby. However, the children have so many strange things to adjust to that the

thought of playing with boys and girls who do not speak their language may be daunting at first.

Parents may want their children to learn the national language as children so that they can speak it without an accent and think in it like the parents can never do. However, still mastering the intricacies of their own language, they may find the new language confusing and not want to learn it.

Parents may want their children to take in the incredible scenery of the surrounding countryside or the important historical monuments and buildings in the area. However, they may rather play in the sandbox in the back yard.

The number of potential choices may seem endless, and families will have to use their own judgment. However, very important is realizing that there is a big difference between parents spending time with their children and children spending time with parents.

- If mom and dad are all doing something kids want to do (play in the sandbox), they are spending time with them.
- If Children are all doing something parents want to do (seeing the monuments), they are doing something with parents.

Of course, parents do not have to do everything with children, but they need to be sure that they do enough “somethings” with them. Better to end up with good memories of the sandbox than with bad memories of the monuments.

**Preschool & Primary.** School is a very important part of the children’s lives, and missionaries have a broad range of open options:

- Local Christian school
- Local international school
- Correspondence courses (traditional or DVD)
- Distance learning (internet or DVD)
- National school (public or private)
- Home school (alone or cooperative)
- Assisted home school (home and other)

- Boarding school (mission or international Christian)
- Satellite school (small or multigrade class)

As parents and children face these choices, it is important to remember that no one type of schooling is recommended for all children or even one child over his or her lifetime. Some children flourish in one type of school while other children flourish in another. A child may do well in one school situation when five years old but need a different one when ten years old.

This decision is one that is likely to be revisited several times during a child's life, so parents should not be reluctant to make changes when such changes will help. For further information about childhood click on the following links to parts of Chapter 10 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Infancy](#)
- [Differences among Newborns](#)
- [Communicating with Newborns](#)
- [Sound Perception in the Womb](#)
- [The Importance of Touch](#)
- [Infant Information Processing](#)
- [Summary: Infancy](#)
- [Attachment](#)
- [Shyness](#)
- [Continuity from Age 3 to 6](#)
- [Normal Development: Saltation and Stasis](#)
- [Socialization and Sex Roles](#)
- [The Boy Raised as a Girl](#)
- [Parenting Styles and Discipline](#)
- [Piaget](#)
- [The Sensory-Motor Period \(0-18 months\)](#)
- [The Pre-Operational Stage \(18 months-5 years\)](#)
- [The Conservation Experiments](#)
- [The Concrete Operational Period \(5-12\)](#)
- [The Formal Operational Stage \(12-adulthood\)](#)
- [Assessing Piaget](#)

- [Appearance vs. Reality](#)
- [Metacognition in Childhood](#)
- [Development of the Understanding of Symbols](#)
- [Summary: Childhood](#)

### **Adolescence: Added in the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

Jesus was a teenager, but never an adolescent. So was Moses. So was Paul. So was George Washington. If you are working among non-Western people, that may be the case with them as well. If you are working in developing countries, you may have noticed that teenagers in the larger cities are adolescents, but those in the rural villages are not.

The idea that adolescence is the time of life between puberty and adulthood seems simple enough; but it is much more complicated than it appears at first glance because of changes in the definitions of puberty and adulthood during the last 200 years.

- Puberty. Puberty originally meant, "of ripe age, adult." That is what it still means in many tribes where children go through rites of passage as teenagers to become full adults in their culture. However, in Western nations the age of sexual maturity has decreased by three or four years, but people do not become adults culturally at that time. Today puberty means only sexual maturity.
- Adulthood. People used to become adults in their early teens, such as Jewish children going through bat or bar mitzvah at 12 or 13. It is not clear when people become adults today in Western cultures. They begin paying adult prices in restaurants and theatres at 12, driving at 16, graduating and voting at 18, and buying liquor at 21. We have gone from the bar mitzvah to the bar as the final step to adulthood.

Adolescence is the time of life after puberty but before adulthood; it did not exist much before the twentieth century and still exists only in Western (or Westernizing) countries.

However, developmental changes occur in various areas of development.

### Physical

Growth during later childhood takes place at a rather constant rate. However, between the ages of ten and fifteen, puberty occurs. Great changes happen as the anterior pituitary increases its output of certain hormones. This results in a sudden spurt of growth in the bones and muscles and in sexual development. After the adolescent growth spurt, the rate of growth decreases and full adult size is usually reached by the age of sixteen or eighteen. Slight increases in height and weight occur during the next few years, but physical development is now nearly at its peak.

### Cognitive

During childhood we saw that children progress through the sensorimotor stage, the preoperational stage, and the stage of concrete operations. Most people make it through these three stages, but not everyone makes it through the final stage proposed by Piaget. They can perform well in most subjects, but they still have difficulty in subjects requiring abstract thinking, such as algebra or theoretical physics.

The final stage of cognitive development, occurring near the age of puberty, is the stage of formal operations in which people can finally begin to think in purely symbolic terms. They can now use abstract rules to solve a whole class of problems and can think in terms of hypothetical ideas. If this stage occurs late, a person may fail algebra one year but repeat it a year later and find it quite easy. The progressive development from animal-like to God-like is again obvious.

Some people in all cultures and many people in some cultures remain in the stage of concrete operations or get only partly into the stage of formal operations. This does not mean

that anything is wrong with them, just that they are different and do not have some of the abilities of others in the culture.

Adolescents who have grown up between cultures and become TCKs have a broader world-view and develop ways of thinking that are a combination of two or more cultures. However, not everyone who lives in two cultures becomes a TCK. Adolescents who live almost entirely on a military base or a missionary compound may have little contact with the culture around them and internalize little of the culture.

There is a difference between being able to communicate in everyday conversation and communicate in an academic setting. Adolescents who can speak fluently with friends on the street may not be able to do well in school because they have gone to school in a different language. This is of particular concern if the children of cross-cultural workers have attended national schools rather than schools taught in the language of their passport culture. Basic conversational ability can be learned in a year or two, but the academic language ability required for high school or college may take five to seven years to learn. See this master's thesis for more information. [http://etd.ohiolink.edu/send-pdf.cgi/Grigorenko%20Margaret.pdf?acc\\_num=cedar1116340990](http://etd.ohiolink.edu/send-pdf.cgi/Grigorenko%20Margaret.pdf?acc_num=cedar1116340990)

### Moral

The stages of moral development that most often occur during childhood are still often found in adolescents. However, a new stage may also appear.

#### *Preconventional Morality*

- Stage 1. Obedience and Punishment orientation.
- Stage 2. Naively Egoistic Orientation.

#### *Conventional Morality*

- Stage 3. "Good-boy/Good-girl" Orientation.
- Stage 4. Authority and Social Order Orientation. During adolescence many people begin to consider society as a

whole when making moral judgments. They know that they are supposed to respect authority and follow the rules made by society just because those are the rules. Of course, they may not follow them, but if they do, they do so out of a sense of obligation.

#### *Postconventional Morality*

- Stage 5: Contractual/Legalistic Orientation. Later adolescents see laws and rules as being defined by society and make sense. If a rule or law conflicts with an individual need, the law should be followed because the majority rules for the welfare of all.

Of course, being able to think at this level and make moral decisions at this level does not mean that adolescents act accordingly. Knowing what ought to be done and actually doing it are two separate things. Many adolescents know what they should do, but they do something quite different.

Kohlberg's theory is about moral thinking, not moral action.

Again nationals in a different culture may not think in these terms at all. Those living in a totalitarian society may not be able to comprehend making moral judgments in this way. They may have always lived where what the chief of the tribe or the ruler of the party in charge is always to be obeyed.

Nationals living in a collectivist culture may have very different moral outlooks. People living in individualistic Western cultures emphasize personal rights while those living in collectivist Eastern cultures emphasize society and community. These different perspectives may result in very different decisions about moral issues.

## **Spiritual**

People begin in a state of *original sin* and need to progress to a state of salvation. As noted earlier in the chapter, the most common age for people to experience *justification* is around puberty, at the beginning of adolescence. As people enter the stage of formal operations cognitively and the stage of

conventional morality, they become aware that they are breaking human rules and God's laws. They begin to experience feelings of guilt and want to do something about it.

In modern Western society which has created the concept of adolescence most people who have a conversion experience do so during adolescence. A few people do so after reaching adulthood, but the majority who experience conversion do so before that.

## **Problems of Adolescence**

When difficulties occur during the teen years, they often center around our invention of adolescence, and they occur in three major areas: identity, sexuality, and work.

- **Identity.** Adolescents have problems knowing who they are because we have not yet created a cultural identity for adolescents. They are neither children nor adults. In addition to the loss of family identity by such things as divorce and remarriage, MKs may live much of their lives thousands of miles from their extended families, seeing them only rarely. In addition to the loss of community identity caused by urbanization and bussing, MKs may live in a different "home" each time they come to their "home" country. And in addition to the loss of religious identity due to denominations and independent churches, MKs may be confused by national religions.
- **Sexuality.** The very definition of adolescence means that teenagers are not able to express their sexuality in a marriage relationship. They cannot legally be married (without parental consent) for about the first six years of their sexual maturity and cannot financially afford to for about the first ten years. Unfortunately, this is during the young men's time of greatest sexual desire. Of course, we know that most teenagers in Western cultures are not sexually inactive. MKs may grow up in host cultures that are even more sexually permissive than their "home" culture

as well as in missionary subcultures that are less sexually permissive. This may result in even more difficulty dealing with their sexuality during adolescence.

- **Work.** Teenagers worked for thousands of years, but full-time work that pays enough to live on was legally prohibited for most people before the age of 18 with the invention of adolescence. Since they could not work, our culture passed laws that adolescents must go to school, although many teens now work part-time. MKs often have even more limited opportunities to work, earn money, and learn how to spend it than teens in sending countries.

### Preventing Problems

Problems in adolescence can at least be greatly decreased. The major way to help those going through adolescence is to treat them as adults. Expect responsible behavior from them and teach them to be adults. Parents can take many specific actions to help with all three major problem areas. Here are a few examples.

**Identity.** Help teens develop an identity:

- Family. Have family nights, family outings, family traditions, family jokes, family devotions, family scrapbooks and videos. Study the family history.
- Mission community. Participate in school activities, church activities, dinners, retreats, outings, etc. with others in the mission. Have a positive attitude about it.
- “Home” community. When in the home country, participate in scouts, 4-H, PTO, block parties, etc. Subscribe to the local paper and read about the local history.
- Religious. Adolescents should participate as adults in the choir, ushering, teaching, leading Bible study, participating in board meetings, leading small groups, etc.

**Sexuality.** Talk with teens about sex.

- Talk about sexuality and adolescence so that the adolescents will realize the problem is with Western culture, not with

them as individuals. Begin doing this when they are children.

- Study what the Bible has to say about the various types of sexual activity in which adolescents engage, and look at all the positive things the Bible has to say about sex.
- Begin interacting with the opposite sex in acceptable ways. Dating is a time of becoming friends and developing commitment, not becoming sexual partners.
- Make a commitment during the early teen years about what the teen will do and will not do in terms of sexual behavior (hold hands, embrace, pet, premarital sex, etc.).

**Work and Money.** Teach teens about finances.

- Everyone given a job to do to help around the house and grounds, without pay.
- Teens work extra jobs to earn their own money to spend as they see fit, to learn how to manage money.
- Give teens the money used to buy their own necessities (clothing, toiletries, etc.) as their weekly or monthly pay, just as adults are paid. It is then their responsibility to manage that money so they will have new clothes for school. If they do not have it, let them wear their old ones.

Although there will almost certainly be times of conflict, in general adolescence can be a time of growth for both parents and teenagers. Adolescence was invented primarily between 1850 and 1950, so it is a relatively recent concept. It may have been a sustainable one if everyone considered to be adults at its invention had continued working until death. However, another concept, retirement, came into being during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and most societies may not be able to support both adolescence and retirement. Much more about adolescence is available in the book *Understanding Adolescence* at <http://www.crossculturalworkers.com/ebooks.htm>.

### Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

Adolescents who live in two or more cultures during

these crucial developmental years are very likely to become TCKs. They internalize parts of all the cultures in which they have lived, but are not fully at home in any one. Growing up between worlds has an influence on all the areas we have discussed in this chapter (cognition, morality, and spirituality) as well as many other parts of life. Children of missionaries and other cross-cultural workers, such as people working for the diplomatic core or the military or businesses, often become TCKs.

Much more about TCKs is available in *Third Culture Kids and Adolescence: Cultural Creations* at <http://www.crossculturalworkers.com/ebooks.htm>. Also see materials available at TCK World at <http://www.tckworld.com/> and Interaction International at <http://www.interactionintl.org/>

Children of missionaries are often called MKs (Missionary Kids). and these MKs have websites specifically for them on MK Connection at <http://www.mknet.org/> and Mu Kappa at <http://www.mukappa.org>.

### Offspring of “helicopter parents” in missions

Helicopter parents are called that because they are always hovering around their children, rarely out of reach. There have always been overprotective parents, but not as many, not as blatant, and not extending “childhood” for such a long time as some parents do now. The term was invented in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and became widely used around the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as college administrators began using it to refer to parents of some students. New technology, especially the cell phone, has made it possible for parents and “children” to remain constantly connected for many years. Today, if university students do not want to take a course suggested by their advisors, they can (and do) pull out their cell phones and have mom or dad talk to the advisor.

These overparented students are now graduating and moving into the workplace—and into missions. In 2007,

Michigan State University did a survey called “Parent Involvement in the College Recruiting Process: To What extent?” This survey of 725 employers found that about a third of the large employers and about a quarter of smaller employers (60-3700 employees) reported experiencing “parent involvement.” Here are the types of such involvement reported:

- Getting information about the company (40%)
- Submitting resume (31%)
- Promoting son or daughter (26%)
- Attending career fair (17 %)

Some employers who contacted students with good resumes found that the students knew nothing about it and had no desire to work for the company! Four percent reported that a parent attended the interview!

***What does the Bible say about helicopter parents?*** Of course, no one in the Bible is labeled as being a helicopter parent, but back in Genesis Rebekah, mother of Esau and Jacob, is a good example. She liked Jacob better than Esau, so she always looked out for him. Her overprotection was most obvious when Isaac was about to give Esau his blessing as firstborn. By that time the “boys” were both over 40 years old (Genesis 26:34).

Rebekah eavesdropped on their conversation when Isaac asked Esau to bring him food (Genesis 27).

- She told Jacob what she overheard (v. 6).
- She told Jacob to kill two goats so she could cook them the way Isaac liked (v. 8).
- She told him to take the food to Isaac to get Esau’s blessing (v. 9).
- When Jacob objected, she called for the curse to fall on her, that he should “Just do what I say” (v. 13).
- She cooked the goats, and she put Esau’s clothes on Jacob (v. 15).
- She put goatskins on Jacob’s hands and neck and gave him the food for Isaac (v. 16).

- When she heard that Esau was furious, she told Jacob what Esau was planning (v. 42).
- She told Jacob to go and stay with her brother, Laban, until Esau calmed down (vv. 43-44).
- Then she promised to let Jacob know when Esau was over it so he could come back home (v. 45).

Does that sound like a helicopter parent?

**How do they affect my team?** Children of helicopter parents may not be able to function on their own because their parents have always taken care of them. Even while in college their mothers still phone them to get out of bed, and their fathers call their professors whenever there is a problem. They have never learned basic life skills about how to live on their own and relate to people in real life.

Without independent living skills and wanting to be served rather than to serve, they may become “high maintenance” on the field. This may require large investments of time by people on the field, and other missionaries may become enablers of the immaturity and irresponsibility of the children of helicopter parents.

Being asked to use their time to “care for” such individuals who not only accept but also expect help doing everyday tasks is likely to make other missionaries unhappy as their own projects begin to lag. This may result in low morale or anger across the field.

**What can we do?** Problems like this can usually be solved by prevention, correction, or some combination of the two.

Naomi Singer (pseudonym) suggested prevention as a possibility in “Life Skills & Assessing New Candidates” in the July, 2012 issue of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* (EMQ). She suggested assessing several life skills including whether a candidate:

- Demonstrates responsible, independent living.
- Has practical work skills.
- Handles money and resources well.

- Is skilled socially.
- Has personal disciplines.

These things can be measured by some of the following means:

- Ask someone who has lived with the candidate to fill out a life skills evaluation.
- Engage field workers to make life skills checklists for their field.
- Have candidates self-evaluate on a checklist.
- Require candidates to have lived independently and worked for someone else several years before serving on the field.

One of the disadvantages of rejecting people until they develop life skills is that in the process of developing those skills, they may become enmeshed in life itself. Those individuals may buy a home so they have a mortgage to pay or that they found or work at a job that they do not want to leave.

Correction by mentoring and/or educating candidates after they become part of the agency is another way to solve the problem created by helicopter parents. Although some correction may come through “education” using books, lectures, and discussion, it is likely that mentoring of some type will be needed. People can read books about parenting, attend seminars about marriage relationships, and engage in discussions about having neat homes, but still not be able to apply that knowledge to their own lives.

Children of helicopter parents may literally need a “life coach.” They do not need someone to talk with them and help them discover their potential nearly as much as they need someone to observe them and then help them to face “life” in the real world of everyday living. Like a football or basketball coach, these coaches may watch the person performing a life skill, such as clean the house, and then suggest and demonstrate better ways. Then the coaches may watch again and make more suggestions, etc. This may be repeated as often as necessary for each deficient skill.

Finally, rather than either the agency or candidate making a long-term commitment, it may be better to have a definite “trial period” to see if both the agency and the candidate work well together. At the end of the time (a year or two), either or both may want to end the relationship, and it can be done without either one “losing face” and without huge investments in time and money being lost by either party. For more information about helicopter parents see [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_helicopter\\_parents.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_helicopter_parents.htm)

For further information about adolescence click on the following links to parts of Chapter 10 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Adolescence](#)
- [Rebellious Adolescence: A Misleading Stereotype](#)
- [American Teenagers](#)
- [Entering the Same Profession as a Parent](#)

### **Adulthood: Shortened several times**

Before the invention of adolescence, the age of adulthood was often clearly marked by a ceremony when people reached some particular stage of puberty or reached a particular age. In the Jewish culture boys became men at their Bar Mitzvah at age thirteen, and girls became women at their Bat Mitzvah at age 12.

However, in places where adolescence exists, there is usually no clear indication of when people become adults. Even within the same building, such as a hotel or motel, parents with several teenagers may find that they are all adults in the restaurant (all pay adult prices), none of them are adults in the bar (they cannot buy liquor), and some adults and some children at the front desk (have to pay extra for some but not for others). The indication of adulthood used to be the Bar Mitzvah; now it is the bar.

Adulthood has been shortened by removing the person from full participation in society relative to work during the early years (usually the teen years) and calling it adolescence. Similarly in Western cultures people typically leave full participation in society relative to work during the later years (usually beginning in the mid 50s to mid 60s and calling it retirement). Whether this is a sustainable situation or not remains to be seen, but at this point it appears that the economic contributions of working adults between the early 20s and the 60s may not be able to support both adolescence and retirement for long.

### **Physical**

Although endurance increases for another twenty years, performance on tasks requiring speed and agility begins to decline slowly after the early twenties. Perhaps society places too much emphasis on this decline, because the decline between twenty and sixty years of age is very gradual, especially if people care for themselves physically. Furthermore, adults more than compensate for the physical decline by using better judgment. For example, although the reaction time of an adolescent male is faster than that of a sixty-year-old, the adolescent's traffic accident rate is higher.

The most outstanding characteristic of the psychology of aging is the sensorimotor decline that typically accelerates rather rapidly beginning in a person’s 60s. With aging, all of the senses show some changes that reduce the individual's contact with the environment. Individuals are not able to see, hear, touch, taste, or smell their surroundings as well as they once did. Responses change as well, tending to slow down. Since we are animal-like physically, from our perspective we would expect a decline of the physical as we age.

### **Cognitive**

People often think there is a general decline in cognitive abilities throughout adulthood, that memories fail, intelligence drops, and older adults are not able to think as well as younger ones. This is true on tasks requiring rote recall and a speedy answer. However, older adults do better in many areas, such as:

- Vocabulary
- Recognition memory
- Analogies
- General knowledge
- Integrating information
- Good judgment

In four studies Timothy Stackhouse found that when given 15 minutes to work on a crossword puzzle from the New York Times people in their 60s and 70s correctly filled in twice as many words as people in their 20s.

**Wisdom.** The Bible says a great deal about wisdom. In fact, the books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are often referred to as “wisdom literature.” Within those books the major passages about wisdom are in Job 28 and in Proverbs 3-4. Of course, one of the attributes of God is that he is wise and the Bible repeatedly urges people to seek wisdom no matter what the cost. Over the centuries most people have believed that wisdom increases with age, and recent research has found evidence that supports that.

Psychologist Paul Baltes studied wisdom for many years and even developed some tests to measure it. He was interested in more than knowledge. He was looking at knowledge about life in general and about how to live using that knowledge to make good judgments when facing complicated and ambiguous situations. He found that older adults do well on the test. The writers of the US Constitution realized that the twenty-something may have an abundance of knowledge, but they wanted someone older to lead the country, so they set the minimum age for President at 35. For more information about Baltes work see

<http://www.wisdompage.com/WisdomResearchers/PaulBaltes.h>

[tml](#)

**Disease.** Unfortunately, dementias of various types increase with age, especially in later life. Dementia simply means a loss of cognitive abilities including memory, thinking, language, and problem solving, and this loss is caused by an underlying physical basis. It can be caused by a series of small strokes, a brain tumor or many other factors. The most feared type of dementia today is Alzheimer’s Disease, a slowly developing loss of mental functions. By the time people reach their mid-80s nearly one in five shows signs of dementia. Medline Plus has much information about dementia at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/dementia.html>.

At the same time that the highest potential of people’s God-like cognitive development is possible, one’s chances of their animal-like physical brain deteriorating is at its highest rate.

## Moral

The stages of moral development that most often occur during childhood and adolescence are still often found in adults, along with a new one or two.

### *Preconventional Morality*

- Stage 1. Obedience and Punishment orientation.
- Stage 2. Naively Egoistic Orientation.

### *Conventional Morality*

- Stage 3. “Good-boy/Good-girl” Orientation
- Stage 4. Authority and Social Order Orientation

### *Postconventional Morality*

- Stage 5: Contractual/Legalistic Orientation
- Stage 6: Universal Principles Orientation. Adults can also base their moral reasoning on abstract reasoning and internalized ethical principles which they believe are universal. When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus replied with the principles of loving God supremely and loving one’s neighbor as oneself. He went on to say

that all of the Law and the prophets were based on these principles (Matthew 22:34-40). People can follow such general principles of justice even if they conflict with specific laws and rules. People who believed slavery was wrong formed the “underground railroad” to help slaves escape even though it was illegal. Because they believe that everyone has a right to worship God, people in some cultures today worship in an “underground church” even though it is illegal.

- Stage 7? Ontological-Religious Orientation. Kohlberg speculated on the possibility of an ontological-religious orientation in which the person deals with the question "Why be moral?" People with this orientation adopt a cosmic perspective with a sense of being a part of the whole of life and often express themselves in theistic terms <http://gerontologist.oxfordjournals.org/content/13/4/497.short>. In 1973 mainstream psychology had little time for such “religious” concepts, and Kohlberg abandoned following up on his idea.

At the principled level, people obey laws because those laws are a "contract" they have with others to avoid violating their rights. They also make judgments on the basis of self-accepted moral principles containing ideas of justice, human rights, and human dignity. Again, we begin our moral development with an animal-like emphasis on reward and punishment and have the potential to develop toward a God-like perspective.

## Spiritual

During childhood and adolescence, two stages of spiritual development commonly occur.

- Stage 1: Original Sin. Children are born in a sinful state.
- Stage 2: Justification. Although it can occur at any time, the most common is around the age of puberty, people may repent of their sins and seek salvation.

- Stage 3: Sanctification. Theologians probably disagree more about this stage of development than any other. They disagree about when it takes place and what happens in it. Some say sanctification is completed during life on earth; others, at a person's death; and still others, after death. Some emphasize its aspect of dedication, being "set apart" or consecrated. Others emphasize its aspect of transformation or being made holy.

Whatever theological position is taken, most agree that at some time a person has the potential of becoming more and more God-like. In 2 Corinthians 3:18 Paul said, “We are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory.”

## Retirement: Added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and their companions never planned for retirement or made the transition into it. They simply kept working until they died. Retirement for the masses, like adolescence, is an invention of our modern Western culture. Never before in history have the majority of people had enough money not to work during their first decade of their lives after puberty and to be able to quit working with 20-30 years of their lives remaining.

If Jesus were telling the parable of the rich man in Luke 12 today, he would probably talk about the missionary getting on-line daily to check his retirement portfolio, thinking about diversifying, perhaps by a strategic rebalancing of stocks, bonds, and real estate. This modern rich missionary may still say to himself or herself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and be merry” (Luke 12:19).

Retirement can take many forms from a delightful, freeing experience to a traumatic, depressing one. A major factor in determining which it becomes is the planning one has done. Most people make some sort of financial plan for it, if nothing more than knowing that Social Security (or similar

benefits) will be available. However, people need to think about where they will live, if they will have enough money, what they will do, and who will be in their circle of friends. This planning should begin early, but at the latest, early in the last term of service before retirement. This time can be a wonderful time of growing into God's likeness. For further information see "What Missionaries Ought to Know about Retirement at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_retirement.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_retirement.htm) . For further information about adulthood click on the following links to parts of Chapter 10 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Persistence of Personality](#)
- [Stages of Life](#)
- [Changing Social Roles of Women](#)
- [Age-Related Changes in Intellectual Functioning](#)
- [What Causes Aging?](#)
- [Nerve Growth in Old Age](#)
- [Is Immortality Around the Corner](#)
- [Summary: Adulthood and Aging](#)

### **Dying and Death: Not in the original plan**

Paul, an early cross-cultural worker, wrote to Christians in Rome telling them in Romans 5:12 that

- Sin entered the world through one man.
- Death entered through sin.
- Death came to everyone.

Of course, Paul went on in the rest of Chapter 5 and all of Chapter 6 to say that life was possible through God's grace in the form of his son, Jesus Christ. Where sin reigned in death, grace could reign through righteousness.

Throughout the Bible in both the Old and the New Testament people wrote that though death was inevitable, they did not fear it.

- Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.... (Psalm 23:4).
- Even in death the righteous have a refuge (Proverbs 14:32).
- Whether we live or we die, we belong to the Lord (Romans 14:8).
- For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain (Philippians 1:21).

Of course, the Bible is about how the fall into sin (Genesis 3) brought death, but the death of Christ paid the penalty for sin (Romans 5:6) and makes life in him possible. A study of this whole topic in the Bible is invaluable in gaining a Christian perspective on death. This is not the place for such a study, but it is the place for several topics related to death.

### **Suicide**

Suicide is one of the ten leading causes of death in the world and is most common in highly developed Western nations. Although we hear a great deal about adolescent suicides, most suicides are committed by people over forty years of age. The suicide rate in the USA remains relatively constant for nonwhites and for white females, but climbs steadily for white males as they get older. Although women attempt suicide more often than men, men succeed three times as often as women. There has recently been a rise in the number of adolescents committing suicide. Christian missionaries are likely to counsel potential suicides, and we need to be aware of basic facts about suicide.

*Is that true?* Many myths surround suicide. If people believe these myths, they may miss a chance to save a life. Here are a few of those myths.

- People who talk about suicide never do it—they just want attention. False. Not everyone who talks about suicide actually does it, but most people who commit suicide do tell someone before doing so—as a cry for help. Any serious statement about suicide is a real danger signal and should not be ignored.

- Adolescents are much more likely to commit suicide than adults. False. The adolescent suicide rate is about the same as adult rates. The people most at risk for suicide are older males, someone such as the retiring teacher.
- People are more likely to commit suicide around the Christmas holidays, not in the spring of the year (when the school year is ending). False. The holidays have one of the lowest suicide rates, and spring has the highest.
- One should not mention suicide when talking to depressed people because it may give them ideas. False. Such people often have such thoughts already and should be encouraged to express them. In fact, talking about it may discourage people from doing it.

**Is suicide sin?** Many people assume that the Bible states that suicide is sin. It is true that several people (Judas, for example) took their own lives, and God never gave his approval to any of those. Most of those who took their own lives did it as a direct result of doing evil, and they probably could see no other way out.

However, the Bible nowhere specifically states that suicide is sin. The Bible does say that murder (taking someone's life) is wrong. In fact, that is one of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. Most Christians believe that the command not to take someone's life includes not taking one's own life.

**Would God's people do it?** Godly people are no exception. The Bible records several prominent individuals who wanted death very much. We often quote wonderful statements Job made as he suffered, but we forget some of his negative statements. Job cursed the day of his birth (Job 3:1), asked why he did not die at birth (Job 3:11), and wished he had never come into being or died at birth (Job 10:19).

In fact, some of God's people wish for death shortly after great spiritual victories. For example, shortly after Elijah had a great victory over the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, he was sitting under a tree praying that he might die. He said,

"I've had it, Lord. Take my life" (1 Kings 19:4). Of course, God did not take his life but let him sleep and sent an angel to tell Elijah to get something to eat. It is not unusual to feel the worst soon after wonderful things happen.

**Missionaries wouldn't, would they?** Yes, missionaries may come to wish for death as well. This goes back to the first cross-cultural missionary in the Old Testament, and it happened after one of the most successful missionary terms ever. After his initial disobedience, Jonah obeyed God. When he did, more than 120,000 people repented. Instead of rejoicing, Jonah wanted to die and told God, "I'd be better off dead" (Jonah 4:8). Of course, God did not take his life but tried to reason with him.

Like other people, missionaries and TCKs do take their lives. If a person hears people say that they are thinking of suicide, it is time to take action to prevent it.

**What can I do?** Of course, you want to help, but how do you know what to do? What you do depends on how serious the person is about harming himself or herself. You can do this by going through the following three steps in order. If at any time during these steps you feel uncomfortable about doing them, you can report what you have found to the person's superior in his or her agency. Do not simply ignore this call for help—do something!

**Step 1: The idea?** Ask people whether or not they have thought about harming themselves. Some people will say that they never have. Others (probably the majority) will say that they have, but it was during a difficult time years ago, and they would never do anything like that now. If that is the case, just let the issue drop. However, if they say that they have been thinking recently about taking their lives, you need to take further action.

Don't act shocked or be sworn to secrecy. Do listen non-judgmentally, offer empathy, show interest and support, talk openly about suicide, and offer hope that alternatives are available. Offer to pray with them and share scripture with them (have passages in mind). Encourage such persons to talk

with a mental health professional who can take responsibility. Missionaries sometimes would rather talk with a pastor, and that is fine as well. If the person talks with one of these, your task is finished. However, if they refuse to talk with someone else, go on to Step 2, and remember that you should never leave a person alone who is actively suicidal.

**Step 2: A plan?** Note that people harm themselves in different ways. Ask the persons whether or not they have considered various ways of doing it. Even if they have not begun to plan by thinking about a way, offer to make an appointment for them with someone competent to help, such as a mental health professional or pastor of their choice. Also get at least a verbal commitment not to harm themselves but to contact you if the feelings come again. Express your concern and care for them and follow-up to see that they keep their appointment.

If they have considered various ways, ask them whether or not they have chosen a way. If they have not chosen a way, offer to go with them to see a mental health professional or a pastor. If they have chosen a way, insist on a commitment in writing—a contract signed by both of you in which they promise to do no harm to themselves. Again express your concern and care and follow up immediately with Step 3. Remember that actively suicidal persons should not be left alone.

(Note: If at any point they refuse to continue talking with you or see someone else, contact someone who can take responsibility for them. This may be a professional in their agency, their supervisor, or anyone else who can help.)

**Step 3: The means?** Ask them if they have acquired the means to do the harm. That is find out if they have the gun, the pills, the rope, the knife, and so forth. If they have the means to do the harm, call immediately for help and stay with them until someone specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention arrives.

**What if they do?** If a person is determined to commit suicide, you probably cannot prevent it. I know of one missionary who was in a mental health facility because of depression and suicidal tendencies. Even though the staff knew about his condition, he was able to take his own life while under their care.

If people you have been trying to help take their own lives, it is not your fault. Your responsibility is to love and care for them as well as you can. If you do that, you have done all that is possible.

**What if it's me?** You may be reading this because you are the one contemplating suicide. If so, follow the advice recommended in all three of the steps. Go see a mental health professional or pastor who can help you.

Remember that suicidal thinking is usually associated with problems that can be solved. If you cannot think of solutions, mental health professionals, pastors, and even friends can help to find a solution. Your suicidal crisis is a temporary one, and once you get past the problem facing you, it will not look as big as it does now. Ties to family or friends, your relationship with God, and dreams for the future will provide meaning and satisfaction in life in the future.

The goal of the American Association of Suicidology is to understand and prevent suicide. The website [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org) has reliable information in their fact sheets about suicide.

## Grief

Cultures vary widely in the expected reactions of family and friends to the death of a loved one. These reactions vary from very silent and stoic to prolonged weeping and wailing. Burial may take place within 24 hours or be delayed for a week or more. Of course, there are also differences within these cultures depending on whether the deceased lived in a rural or

urban area, age at time of death, and many other factors, especially religious ones. Even within a religion, there may be a wide range of differences. The people in the culture where you serve may react quite differently than the people in your passport culture.

One emotion many Christians have difficulty expressing is grief, or bereavement. The loss of a loved one has a profound effect on the survivors. We would expect an especially strong grief reaction to the death of a spouse. Two have become one, and there are repeated warnings about dividing what God has joined together. When this unit is broken by death, it is especially traumatic. Many studies have shown that the bereaved are much more likely to die through illness, accident, or suicide than are those who have not lost loved ones.

Those studying the mourning process have found from three to five phases in it. There is usually an initial period of shock, sometimes followed by anger, hostility, and appeals for help and support from others. Then there is an intense period of grief characterized by despair, withdrawal, and disorganization. Finally, there is the period of recovery and reorganization, which leads to the resumption of a normal social life.

As Christians, we are sometimes given the impression that we are not to feel grief in reaction to death, because death is to be a victorious time. However, numerous instances of grieving and mourning are recorded in the Bible, and we do not find the bereaved being reproved, but being comforted.

- Abraham mourned and wept over the death of Sarah, his wife (Genesis 23:2).
- When Jacob thought that Joseph was dead, he felt such grief that he could not be comforted (Genesis 37:35).
- Even when Absalom had been rebellious and caused him great anguish, David wept much for him and wished that he had died in his son's place (2 Samuel 18:33).
- When Mary was weeping over the death of her brother Lazarus, Jesus did not rebuke her, but wept himself (John 11:35).

If Jesus wept at the loss of a friend, we can certainly grieve about the loss of a loved one. Of course, we are not to mourn like those who have no hope, but we must remember that death was not God's original intention for humanity. Death entered through sin and is referred to as an enemy. As Christian missionaries, we will work with people going through grief, and we must help them get through it.

For further information about dying and death click on the following links to parts of Chapter 10 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Death and Dying](#)
- [Denial of Death](#)
- [Suicide](#)
- [The Work of Kubler-Ross](#)
- [Near-Death Experiences](#)
- [Final Thoughts](#)
- [Unexpected Deaths of Loved Ones](#)
- [Stages in the Mourning Process](#)
- [Normal Reactions to Death](#)
- [Modern Ways of Dying](#)
- [The Hospice Movement](#)
- [Summary: Death and Dying](#)

### **Resurrection: Christian concept**

Although this stage of development is not considered by secular psychologists, there is general agreement among Christians on this final stage of development. Jesus Christ arose from the dead and was seen by many people, for example:

- Two women (Matthew 28:9)
- Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9)
- Two disciples (Luke 24:15)
- The eleven disciples (John 20:19, 26)
- Paul (Acts 9:5)
- Peter (1 Corinthians 15:5)

- Five hundred people (1 Corinthians 15:6)  
The resurrection of Christ was repeatedly emphasized in the book of Acts, for example:
  - God raised him from the dead... (2:24; 3:15).
  - The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus... (4:33).
  - God raised him from the dead on the third day... (10:40).
  - Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead... (17:3).
 The most complete passage of scripture about the resurrection of Christ and others is in 1 Corinthians 15. In this passage Paul, early missionary, elaborates on this doctrine of the Christian faith.

### **Spiritual Development**

Earlier in the chapter we considered the stages of spiritual development, and after death the last stage occurs.

- Stage 1: Original Sin
- Stage 2: Justification
- Stage 3: Sanctification
- Stage 4: Glorification

The final general stage of development is glorification, which occurs at the resurrection. This means life in heaven where we will be even more like God. As John puts it, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

### **Conclusion**

From a Christian perspective in this chapter we have seen that humans have the potential of becoming more like God as they develop. Although their animal-like physical aspects decline after their teen years, their cognitive, moral and spiritual aspects can become increasingly like God as their development progresses.

From a historical perspective we have seen that

adulthood has been divided into several additional parts during the past two centuries. For thousands of years adulthood spanned the entire time from puberty to death. Now, at least in Western cultures, it has been divided into adolescence, a shortened adulthood, and retirement. Whether or not these additional times are economically sustainable has not been determined.

Finally, from a Christian perspective, we have seen that death, not in the original plan, is not the end but another developmental stage, followed by resurrection after death. In this resurrection stage we become even more like God.

## Chapter 4

### Awareness

Awareness from a Christian Perspective

Sensation

Vision

Hearing

Other

Perception

Organization and Interpretation

Spiritual Perception

ESP

States of Consciousness

Sleep

Dreaming

Visions

Meditation

Drugs

Chapters 3 and 4 in Dewey's introductory text are relevant.

- [Chapter 03: States of Consciousness](#)
- [Chapter 04: Senses and Perception](#)

(Chapter 5—Sensation, Chapter 6—Perception, and Chapter 7—States of Consciousness, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition are also relevant.)

Another major area of psychology is that of awareness which includes receiving sensations caused by stimuli coming from the environment, organizing these sensations into perceptions, and experiencing various states of consciousness. This study of awareness has been part of modern psychology from the beginning. As we saw in the Prologue, when Wundt and his colleagues began psychology, they set out to study the structure of consciousness. When they reduced consciousness to its elements through introspection, they concluded that the three elements were sensations, images, and affective states (emotions). Although the structural school disappeared from the scene more than a century ago, sensations, images, and emotions are still a vital part of psychology.

#### Awareness from a Christian Perspective

Awareness fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 4:1. Our sensory receptors are very similar to those of animals. For example, various primitive eyes all have the same basic plan, that of a lens forming an image on a set of receptors that are sensitive to light, and human eyes are typical vertebrate eyes. Although the external structure of our apparatus for hearing (what we call our “ear”) is quite different from that of animals, the receptors themselves, in the cochlea where the neural impulses are generated, are very similar to those in animals.

These sensations do not enter a blank nervous system. The central nervous system is not simply a passive receiver of stimulation but reacts in an integrated manner to these inputs. Current sensations interact with memories of past experiences. Motivations, emotions, values, and expectations all contribute to the interpretation of the sensations. The organization and elaboration of these sensations into meaningful wholes are parts of the process of perception. Although the patterns of reaction to sensations seem to be innate in many lower animals, in

human beings these reactions are organized and altered by learning and thinking. When talking about sensation, we said that humans were quite animal-like, but when talking about perception, we are talking about the more God-like aspects of humans, as shown in Figure 4.1. We are made in God's image, and this has an influence on how we perceive the world around us.

Figure 4:1 Awareness from a Christian perspective

HUMANS

Created . . . . .	in the. . . . .	Image of God
Like Animals		Like God
Overt Behavior. . . . .	Definition. . . . .	Mental Processes
Understand. . . . .	Goals. . . . .	Make people
Creation		like God
Psychoanalysis. . . . .	Systems. . . . .	Humanistic
Behaviorism		Psychology
Experimental . . . . .	Methods . . . . .	Descriptive
Physical. . . . .	The Person . . . . .	Spiritual
Immaturity. . . . .	Development. . . . .	Maturity

**Sensation** . . . . . Awareness . . . . . **Perception**  
**(States of Consciousness)**

Finally, people sometimes have experiences other than those found in usual waking consciousness. Sometimes they enter these in the course of usual life activities, such as falling asleep and having dreams. At other times they purposely alter their awareness through religious experiences or consuming

chemicals, such as going into a trance or taking a psychoactive drug. These activities may make persons either more animal-like or more God like(as depicted in Figure 4.1).

**Sensation**

One major area of interest to psychologists has been the study of how humans come into contact with their environments, how they become aware of the world around them. Looking at the title of this section, one might ask why psychology looks at sensation if psychology is the science of behavior and mental processes. Sensation qualifies in both respects. When energy strikes an appropriate receptor, the receptor initiates a neural impulse which is a response, or a behavior. These impulses usually result in other responses, but not all are as immediately obvious as those following sitting on a tack or touching a hot stove. Sensation is also a mental process, as it is the way in which we come consciously into contact with the world around us. We cannot even imagine what our mental processes would be without any of our senses. A very important reason for studying sensation is that our sensations become organized into perceptions that largely determine how people behave. If we can understand how people perceive their world, we have come a long way toward understanding their behavior.

The rest of this section is primarily about two major senses, vision and hearing. However, it also contains some material on other senses.

**Vision**

Seeing something may lead to temptation and even to sin. This truth goes back as far as sin itself. God told the man and the woman in the Garden not to eat the fruit of a particular tree, and the temptation to the first sin was a visual one. “When the woman saw that the fruit was good...and pleasing to the eye...she took some and ate it” (Genesis 3:6). Visual stimuli

may lead to a variety of temptations, such as coveting, gluttony, and sexual immorality.

**Coveting.** In the Ten Commandments God told people not to covet anything belonging to someone else, not the person's house, spouse, servants, animals, or anything else (Exodus 20:17). Achan is a good example of seeing things leading to temptation and sin. After a stunning defeat, Joshua asked Achan what he had done. Achan said, "When I saw...a beautiful robe...shekels of silver...and wedge of gold...I coveted them and took them" (Joshua 7:21).

In Achan's day such visual temptation to covet came primarily from seeing actual things. Today such visual temptations come from pictures on or in a wide variety of sources, such as billboards, catalogs, books, television, and websites. These may appear while driving on the highway, reading printed material, watching sports or a movie on TV, or while surfing the Internet. Even if people have learned to avoid them in their passport culture, they may take them by surprise in their host culture. They may make a person want a new house, car, sexual partner, or nearly anything else.

Envy was one of the Seven Cardinal Sins (sometimes called the Seven Deadly Sins), and it leads to unhappiness. For more information on this see the brochure about happiness, comparison and envy at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_comparison\\_envy.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_comparison_envy.htm).

**Gluttony.** Another of the Seven Cardinal Sins was gluttony. The Bible also contains many passages on eating and gluttony. It points out that hunger drives people on (Proverbs 16:26), and it notes that appetite is never satisfied (Ecclesiastes 6:7). When the people were wandering in the wilderness, they wished they had never left Egypt where they had abundant seafood and vegetables (Numbers 11:5). The Bible also notes that delicacies can be deceptive (Proverbs 23:3). Proverbs warns that gluttons become poor and wind up in rags and suggests putting a knife to one's throat if prone to gluttony

(Proverbs 23:2, 21).

When it comes to feeling hungry, many people are more sensitive to the sight of food than they are to the actual physiological needs of their body. They are not even hungry until they see food; then they become hungry and eat it as long as it is in sight. Today with our abundance of rich food, we have a world-wide problem with obesity. Advertisers know that and put pictures on billboards to get people to stop driving to eat and on television to get a person to go to the kitchen and get some food.

**Sexual Immorality.** Another of the Seven Cardinal Sins was lust. The Ten Commandments in the Old Testament not only mention coveting someone else's spouse, but also forbid adultery with that spouse (Exodus 20:14, 17). Jesus in the New Testament elaborates on this commandment bringing in vision. He says those who look lustfully at (eagerly desire) another person have already committed adultery in their hearts (Matthew 5:28).

A classic example of this temptation leading to sin in the Bible is King David whose actions in 2 Samuel 11 illustrate processes similar to what Christian workers may experience today. David should have been out on the front lines with his army, but he remained at home alone. One night when he could not sleep, he got up and wandered around his house. He looked out and saw a very beautiful woman bathing. Rather than looking away, David sent someone to find out more about her. Even though he found out she was married, he sent someone else to invite her over. After their night of sex, she went back home. All seemed well until the woman sent word to David saying she was pregnant (and she had not had sex with her husband in weeks).

Rather than confessing his wrong, David tried a cover-up. When David had her husband come back to Jerusalem for a few days, the husband did not go home to spend the night with his pregnant wife. David got the husband drunk, but he still did not go home to his wife. So David had the husband sent into

the thick of battle to be killed, adding murder to his sin of adultery. In following chapters he was confronted by a prophet who told him what he did in secret would be avenged in daylight. The child conceived in adultery died, and incest, rape, violence, family disintegration, and murder within the family followed.

People fighting in wars have succumbed to sexual temptation just as people did in Bible times. Military personnel have been notorious for their sexual exploits for thousands of years. They are lonely, tired, living in a strange culture, away from home, away from family, away from friends, engaged in an ideological conflict—and no one will know. Missionaries are in a similar position, only they are in a spiritual battle in Satan’s territory. The local dress may expose parts of the body which have sexual implications in their passport cultures, but not in their host cultures.

Those sexual temptations are even more prevalent because of the Internet. Even missionaries in developing nations often can access pornography from all parts of the world. Unable to sleep, they may surf the net, notice something “interesting,” click on other icons to find out more, and download graphic visual images and text. If they contact others in chat rooms, the conversations may be discovered by spouses who feel betrayed or by children who become disillusioned. Families can disintegrate when either the husband or the wife becomes romantically or sexually involved with others in cyberspace.

Since we are dealing with a problem that involves the computer, a person can do several things to clean up computer use.

- Most Internet service providers have some kind of filtering software that will block access to pornographic sites, so use that.
- Since everyone surfing the Internet or searching for something specific on it is likely to at some time access an inappropriate site, decide in advance that you will click on

the “back” icon as soon as you realize what it is, without looking at it in detail.

- Keep your computer in a “public” place in the house so that others are around whenever you are using the computer.
- Have someone hold you accountable by coming in at random times to look at the history of sites you have visited on the Internet.
- Have someone hold you accountable by stopping by at random times to look at the “cookies” that have been placed in your computer to see that there are none from pornographic sites.
- If you carry your laptop to conferences, conventions, deputation, etc, leave a list of where you will be staying every night and have a friend call you every evening at random times to ask you how you are doing.
- Avoid discussing your Internet problem with an opposite-gender friend because doing so often increases the intimacy of that friendship, leading to temptation.
- Admit to yourself and to God that you are powerless to control this behavior on your own.
- Admit to at least one other person of the same gender that you are powerless to control your Internet activity on your own.
- Have an accountability group or partner that you meet with regularly (weekly, if possible) to report how you are doing and hold you accountable.
- Have accountability partners online who receive a history of the web sites you visit each month. For a few dollars a month “Covenant Eyes” will e-mail or snail-mail two persons of your choice a history of all the Internet sites you visit. You will be able to view your own history, but you will not be able to change it. You may pick your own accountability partners, or they will find one for you. See <http://www.covenanteyes.com/> for more information.

- Write a “good-bye” letter to your addiction, that “problematic companion” who was always there but whom you never want to see again.
- Be very careful what “pictures” you hang on the “walls of your mind” and what “films” you play in the “theater of your mind.”
- Engage in the following every day, and record them in your journal.
  - Begin each day with prayer for resistance to Internet temptation.
  - Call and report to a recovering buddy.
  - Read some recovery literature or devotionals.
  - End each day with prayers of thanksgiving for resistance (and of confession, if necessary).

For more information see the Internet Immorality brochure at: [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss\\_internetimmorality.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss_internetimmorality.htm).

For further information about specific topics in vision click on the following links to parts of Chapter 4 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Receptors and Stimulation](#)
- [Light and the Visual Waveform](#)
- [Sound and the Auditory Waveform](#)
- [Summary: Receptors and Stimulation](#)
- [The Visual System](#)
- [Structures of the Eye](#)
- [The Lens and Visual Accommodation](#)
- [The Retina](#)
- [The Fovea](#)
- [Color Mixing](#)
- [Theories of Color Vision](#)
- [Land's Demonstration](#)

## Hearing

Just as something seen may lead to sinful behavior, so may something heard. The issues in audition are similar to those we just considered in vision.

**Temptation.** In Bible times people had to be present to hear what people said or hear the music as it was played. Today recordings may be made of conversations and musical performances so that one can hear them not only on television and in the movies, but also on the radio and on compact discs, mp3 files and so forth. Missionaries anywhere in the world can receive satellite radio in their own language, and some stations are notorious for their foul content. CDs, ipods, and so forth may be carried anywhere, and the lyrics of many songs are sexually explicit. Listening over and over to such things tends to make them seem normal and acceptable.

**Refusal to hear.** In addition to what people hear, the Bible talks about what they refuse to hear. Consider these examples:

- “Their ears are closed so they cannot hear” (Jeremiah 6:10).
- “...they have ears to hear but do not hear” (Ezekiel 12:2).
- “They hardly hear with their ears” (Acts 28:27).
- “They will turn their ears away from the truth” (2 Timothy 4:4).

Of course, these instances do not refer to people who cannot receive the vibrations through the air and hear the words, but to people who refuse to believe that the words relate to themselves.

**Hearing but not doing.** Finally, the Bible talks about people who do hear God’s Word and understand it, but they do not act on it.

- “They hear your words but do not put them into practice” (Ezekiel 33:32).
- “Everyone who hears these words...and does not put them into practice...” (Matthew 7:26).
- “Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it

says...” (James 1:23).

For further information about specific topics in hearing click on the following links to parts of Chapter 4 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [The Auditory System](#)
- [Structures of the Ear](#)
- [The Inner Ear](#)
- [Cochlear Implants](#)
- [Sensitivity of Human Hearing](#)
- [Musical Hallucinations in Deafness](#)
- [Summary: The Auditory System](#)

### Other Senses

Other senses may also have different implications in missionaries’ host cultures. Here are some related to touch, taste, and smell.

**Touch.** People in some cultures routinely greet each other with a kiss as an indication of friendship, not as an indication of sexual interest. Paul told the Corinthians and the Thessalonians to greet with a kiss, as did Peter in his letter to the churches (1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:26, and 1 Peter 5:14). Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (Matthew 26, Mark 14, and Luke 22). All of these were routine cultural greetings as are some kisses in many cultures today.

Other kinds of touch, such as holding hands, may also be simply signs of friendship. On the other hand, a touch that has no sexual implications in one’s passport culture may have very intimate implications in the host culture. Loving touch can be a powerful healing agent, whereas abusive touch can be a source of physical, emotional, or spiritual wounding.

**Taste.** Things considered unacceptable to eat in one

setting may be delicacies in another. Missionaries in one culture may see the dogs as protection and not as dinner. In another culture dogs are considered a delicacy.

**Smell.** Body odor is considered offensive in some cultures, so people shower daily then apply antiperspirants, perfumes, and/or deodorants to keep the odor from occurring. However in other cultures the same odor is considered erotic, so people living there bathe much less often and do nothing to stop the odor from occurring.

For further information about specific topics in other senses click on the following links to parts of Chapter 4 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Olfaction](#)
- [The Vomeronasal System](#)
- [Olfactory Adaptation](#)
- [Does Odor Alter Mood?](#)
- [Gustation \(Taste\)](#)
- [The Cutaneous Sense \(Touch\)](#)
- [Pain](#)
- [Kinesthesia](#)
- [Equilibrium \(Balance\)](#)
- [Motion Sickness](#)
- [Summary: The “Minor” Senses](#)

### Perception

The sensations mentioned earlier in the chapter do not enter a blank nervous system. The central nervous system is not simply a passive receiver of stimulation but reacts in an integrated manner to these inputs. Current sensations interact with memories of past experiences. Motivations, emotions, and expectations all contribute to the interpretation of the sensations. The organization and elaboration of these sensations into meaningful wholes is the process of perception. The

sensations essentially provide the “raw data” for the perceptions, but these raw data are then combined with the mental processes to create the world we experience. It is not likely that any of us can experience a “pure sensation,” because any sensation we have is automatically elaborated upon.

In lower animals, the patterns of reaction to sensations seem to be innate. In higher organisms, especially humans, these reactions are organized and altered by cultural values, learning, and thinking. When talking about sensation, we said that humans were quite animal-like, but now that we are talking about perception, we are considering the more God-like aspects of human awareness as shown in the lower right part of Figure 4:1 (Awareness-perception). This is not to say that animals do not also organize their world, but it is to say that human beings do it in a more culturally influenced, meaningful, cognitive way than animals. We are made in God's image, and this has an influence on how we perceive the world around us.

Perception enables us to organize the many incoming impulses into some stable form or figure. We do not perceive the world around us as bits of color, brightness, loudness, or pitch; we perceive *things* around us. We see houses, trees, and people. We hear trains, animals, and words spoken in our language. The most fundamental perceptual process is the capacity to form figures and see (or hear) them on a background. Certain stimuli are seen as belonging together to form an object (figure) that stands out from the background, which seems to be relatively formless and extends continuously behind the figure. The figure seen or heard often depends on the culture of the observer and what he or she is expecting to see. Furthermore, through selective attention, our brains select only certain stimuli to which they will attend. We need to realize that different people perceive the world differently, depending on what their past experience is and what their culture makes them expect to see. Missionaries will find the same thing when interacting with nationals who may view the same situation quite differently. It is extremely important to find out how

different people involved view the situation. Perception includes both the organization of the stimuli and the interpretation of the stimuli.

### Organization and Interpretation

Following are two ambiguous figures that can be interpreted in at least two ways regardless of one's cultural background. When people look at Figure 4:2, most of them report seeing a woman. However, some say they see a young woman, and others say they see an old woman. The visual stimuli are the same for everyone, but people organize those stimuli differently. If they concentrate, most people can make themselves see both the young lady and the old lady. Older people tend to see the old woman first and younger people tend to see the younger first.



Figure 4:2. Do you see a young woman or an old woman? Can you make yourself see them both, one after the other? (Hint: The old woman's eye is the young woman's ear.)

Women are viewed very differently from one culture to another. If the culture is one which basically views women as “property,” people may think of the young woman in terms of dowry or someone who could bear a son. If the culture is a

matriarchal one which respects age, the older woman may be seen as a wise person.

When looking at Figure 4:3, people usually report seeing a duck or a rabbit. Again the visual stimuli are exactly the same, but some organize them as a bird and others as an animal. Again animals are viewed very differently from culture to culture. In America a cow may be viewed as a source of food, something to be killed and eaten. Such would not be the case in India.

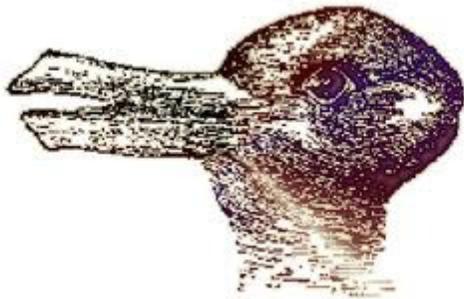


Figure 4:3. Do you see a duck or a rabbit? Can you make yourself see them both, one after the other?  
(Hint: The duck's bill is the rabbit's ear.)

If you can look at the same set of stimuli and see them two different ways, just imagine how easy it is for people raised in different cultures with a variety of visual stimuli to perceive objects and situations in very different ways because of their cultures. Figure 4:4 is called the Necker Cube, and it shows how people within and between cultures may vary in how they organize the lines.

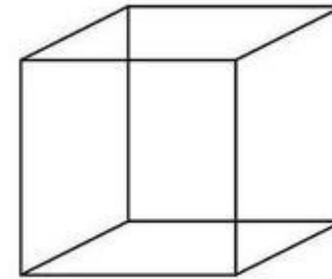


Figure 4:4. The Necker Cube. What do you see?

People from cultures which have many three dimensional objects, such as boxes in which they put things and rooms in which they live, usually see a “transparent” cube. Some of them say that the square on the left is the near side of the cube while others say that the square on the right is the near side. However, people born blind or going blind as infants and recovering sight as adults or people reared in cultures with no rectangular structures see only two dimensional lines (which they actually are), not as a three dimensional figure at all.

For further information about specific topics in perception click on the following links to parts of Chapter 4 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [From Sensation to Perception](#)
- [Hallucinations, Illusions, and Perceptions](#)
- [Gestalt Psychology](#)
- [Laws of Pragnanz](#)
- [“The Whole is Other than the Sum of the Parts”](#)
- [Depth Perception](#)
- [Depth Cues Pt 2](#)
- [Binocular Disparity](#)
- [Motion Parallax](#)
- [Size Constancy in Visual Perception](#)
- [Summary: The Visual System](#)

## Spiritual Perception

Let us now consider how perception is related to the areas above it in Figure 4:1. As was pointed out in chapter 3, we are spiritual beings, and thus we are capable of spiritual perception. Things are not always as they appear to be. When the King of Syria sent a great number of horses and chariots that surrounded the city where Elisha was, Elisha's servant was very frightened. Then Elisha asked God to open the servant's eyes so that he could see that those with him were more than those against him. The servant then saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha (2 Kings 6).

The best examples of spiritual perception are summarized in the “faith” chapter, Hebrews 11. Faith is defined as perceiving as real fact that which is not revealed to the senses (Amplified). It is by faith that we can understand that the world we see is framed by the Word of God: the things we see were made out of things not visible. Noah was warned by God about things not yet seen and he responded to this warning by building an ark, which saved him and his family. Moses left Egypt because he endured as one who saw him who is invisible, God. Many more individuals could be cited from this chapter who saw through the eyes of faith. Missionaries need to develop their spiritual perception, and that of the nationals, because we read that without such faith it is impossible to please God. Since faith may be a special form of perception and since perception depends on past experiences, faith too, depends on past experience. Just as perception is modified by experience, faith is changed by experience.

## ESP

Our ordinary perceptions are initiated by sensory stimuli. Many people believe that humans can perceive objects without making use of the usual stimuli of light, sounds, temperature, pressure, chemicals, and so forth. This capacity to

perceive without making use of these known sensory inputs is called extrasensory perception. Although many Christians have rejected extrasensory perception as a part of occult mysticism, from our perspective, we see at least some of ESP as an aspect of the image of God in humans. Of course, other aspects may relate to the occult.

Since humans are made in God's image, they can communicate with him in an extrasensory manner, we call it prayer. When Hannah was “praying in her heart,” her lips were moving but Eli could not hear her, so he accused her of being drunk. God heard her prayer and answered it (1 Samuel 1:12-20). Likewise, God communicates with us without the use of our senses. Paul wrote that the Spirit of God tells our human spirits that we are God’s children (Romans 8:16).

At times individuals knew where things were without any sensory evidence. For example, Moses struck the rock, and water came out for the people to drink (Exodus 17:5-6). At other times people do not even know what to pray for, and the Spirit intercedes for us in ways that cannot be expressed in words (Romans 8:26).

For further information about specific topics in extra sensory perception click on the following links to parts of Chapter 4 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Extrasensory Perception \(ESP\)](#)
- [Forms of ESP Studied by Parapsychologists](#)
- [Perception without Awareness](#)
- [Subliminal Perception](#)
- [Anniversary Phenomena](#)
- [Déjà Vu...Again](#)
- [Fraud and Deception](#)
- [Selective Reporting](#)
- [Summary: Extra Sensory Perception](#)

### States of Consciousness

Up to this point we have been talking about sensation and perception when the individual is awake and in a normal state of awareness. Psychologists have traditionally spent most of their time studying sensation and perception under these conditions, but in recent years many have turned to the study of sensation and perception under altered states of consciousness. As more people voluntarily altered their states of awareness by taking drugs and using different meditation techniques, psychologists became interested in sensation and perception under these conditions.

Although the study of consciousness was the initial subject matter of psychology, that study all but disappeared when behaviorism dominated psychology. Since Watson (1913 <http://pages.pomona.edu/~rt004747/lgs11read/Watson13.pdf>) knew of no objective way to study consciousness, he concluded that it must be discarded as a part of the subject matter of scientific psychology. Although psychoanalysts did include consciousness as a component of the mind, it was a very small part and not nearly as important in determining behavior as the much larger unconscious. However, during the 1960s, many young people began experimenting with drugs and Eastern religions that altered consciousness. With these questions being raised about altered states of consciousness, psychologists began to turn their attention to these states and found some changes that could be studied by the methods of science.

From our Christian perspective we welcome this change, because consciousness is a God-like attribute of humans, as shown in the lower central part of Figure 4:1 (States of Consciousness). Of course, psychologists never eliminated the study of consciousness from psychology, because the study of sensation and perception is really the study of consciousness, but it is good to see it recognized again. Now we consider some other states of consciousness.

For further information about specific topics in consciousness click on the following links to parts of Chapter 3 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Consciousness](#)
- [When is Consciousness Helpful?](#)
- [Unconscious Thought Processes](#)
- [Unconscious Learning](#)
- [The Location of the "Executive"](#)
- [Two Modes of Thought](#)
- [The Two Modes Discovered Again](#)
- [Summary: Consciousness](#)

### Sleep

Sleep is not a state of total unconsciousness because we all have dreams during the night and can carry out simple plans while asleep. Although many people say they consider sleeping a waste of time, they spend many hours sleeping when given the chance. We can lose a few hours of sleep one night, or even a whole night's sleep, and function relatively normally the next day. However, if we try to miss several nights' sleep in a row, dramatic effects begin to occur. When one remains awake between 50 and 100 hours, one reaches a turning point where changes become severe, with the appearance of delusions and hallucinations.

Since we know that we do need some sleep, the next question is how much. There is no simple answer, although research has found some general facts. In general, the older you get, the less sleep you need. Infants may spend sixteen hours of each day in sleep, but this declines to about ten hours per day by ten years of age. The decline continues throughout life, so that most college students need about eight hours of sleep, but most retired people function well on seven hours a night. However, individuals vary widely, so there is no point in trying to be average. Some need ten hours of sleep, including a nap, and that

is their particular need and they should get it. Others only need seven, and there is no point to lying in bed the extra hour. Trying to get eight hours is like trying to wear size ten or size seven shoes on size eight feet.

God's people from time to time have had difficulty sleeping. Through no fault of his own Job experienced great stress and said, "I have been allotted months of futility, and nights of misery have been assigned to me. When I lie down I think, 'How long before I get up?' The night drags on, and I toss till dawn" (Job7:3-4).

Even great political leaders like King Darius agonized over poor decisions that endangered his friends, and he found himself unable to eat or sleep (Daniel 6:18).

However Scripture has promises for good sleep, such as "When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet" (Proverbs 3:24). Another promise is, "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:8).

After receiving a message from God, the prophet Jeremiah awoke, looked around and said that his sleep had been pleasant to him (Jeremiah 31:26). Our Lord himself slept during a furious storm, much to the surprise of his disciples (Matthew 8:24).

Peter, early preacher and church leader, was sleeping between two soldiers bound with two chains with two sentries standing guard the night before he was to be brought to trial (Acts 12:6).

Yet, Christian workers may have difficulty sleeping at times; however, not all such difficulties are necessary. God may enable us to sleep at peace even in the most difficult circumstances.

- Establish a sleep routine. The most important part of that routine is to get up at the same time each morning. The second most important is to do things in the same order and at the same time just before you go to bed each night.

- Do not lie in bed more than 15-20 minutes trying to get to sleep. Get up and do something boring and not physically taxing, such as polishing your shoes or even just cutting strips of paper. Then go to bed when you get drowsy. Repeat this as often as necessary.
- Do not use the bed for anything except sleep and sex. Do not read, watch TV, have devotions, etc. If you want to read, do so in a chair next to the bed, and get into bed when you get drowsy. You want your bed to be associated with sleep and rest, not with wakefulness and activity.
- Do not exercise vigorously within two hours of bedtime. Do exercise vigorously at some time during the day.
- Do not do serious thinking at the end of the day just before you go to bed. Do it earlier so that you can relax before bedtime.
- If you are anxious at bedtime, consider journaling to get those anxious thoughts out of your head and onto paper.
- Pray at night to turn everything over to God. Ask him for sleep.
- Ask other people to pray for your sleep problem.
- Make confession a part of your nightly prayers if you keep thinking about your shortcomings. Pray for protection during the night if you have fears about that.
- If nightmares are a problem, write them down and add a happy, redemptive, resolving ending. Ask Christ to come into that dream and deal with it.
- Check your medications to see if they have side effects that interfere with sleep. Your physician or pharmacist can give you that information, or you may have noticed that your sleep problem started when you began a new medication.
- Find information about sleep disorders on the Internet at sites such as the one maintained by the National Library of Medicine at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/sleepdisorders.html> or the one maintained by the National Sleep Foundation at

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/>. These web sites have numerous links to reliable information about sleep disorders. (Remember that the domains .gov and .edu tend to be the most reliable.)

- If you want to listen to music, use soothing instrumental music rather than vocal music.
- For more suggestions see [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss\\_sleep.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss_sleep.htm).

You may not be able to do all of these things, and none of them work for everyone. However, all of them have helped some people, and one or more of them may be just what you need to get a good night's sleep.

For further information about specific topics in sleep and dreaming click on the following links to parts of Chapter 3 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Sleep](#)
- [REM Sleep in Cats](#)
- [Stages of Sleep](#)
- [Dreaming and REM sleep: Not the Same Thing](#)
- [Dream Recallers and Non-Recallers](#)
- [Eye and Body Movements Related to Dreams](#)
- [Normal and Disturbed Sleep](#)
- [Age-Related Changes in Sleep](#)
- [Melatonin and Sleep](#)
- [Sleep Deprivation](#)
- [Inaccurate Reporting of Insomnia](#)
- [Temperature Variations and Sleep](#)
- [Advancing the Daily Rhythm](#)
- [Attempts to Explain Sleep](#)
- [Curious Phenomena of Sleep](#)
- [Sleepwalking and Sleepwalking](#)
- [The Hypnagogic State](#)
- [The Hypnopompic State](#)
- [Sleep Disorders](#)

- [Sleep Paralysis](#)
- [HSD and Sleep Drunkenness](#)
- [REM Behavior Disorder](#)
- [Sleep Apneas and Snoring](#)
- [Summary: Sleep](#)

## Dreams

During the study of sleep, psychologists noted that the eyes of a sleeping subject begin to make rapid movements periodically during the night. The two most basic stages of sleep now appear to be REM (rapid-eye-movement) sleep, and NREM (non-rapid-eye-movement) sleep, and we need both to function normally. At first, psychologists thought that dreaming took place only during REM sleep, but we have now found that dreaming takes place during both. Many people have asked what, if anything, dreams mean. Some think that dreams are simply confused, crude thinking like that done by senile people or people under the influence of some drug, such as alcohol. Others have argued that the contents of our dreams are influenced by the events we have experienced or are anticipating. The major theory for the interpretation of dreams for many years was that of Sigmund Freud, the psychoanalyst. Freud believed that dream analysis was one of the major ways of investigating the contents of the unconscious. Today a search of the Internet reveals many approaches to the interpretation of dreams.

The interpretation of dreams has long has a long history in Christianity. There are about fifteen dreams recorded in the Old Testament, most of them coming at the beginning of vital stages in Israel's history. In the New Testament, dreams are again essential to the beginning of the Christian faith. Dreams are referred to as frightening things in some instances. In others, writers portray God speaking through dreams. In the prophecy of God's pouring his spirit on humanity, Joel noted that some would dream dreams and others would see visions (Joel 2:28,

quoted in Acts 2:17). Here are some other major references to dreams in the Bible.

- Jacob's dream of the stairway to heaven (Genesis 28:12)
- Joseph's dreams of the sheaves, sun, moon, and stars (Genesis 37:5-11)
- Dreams of the cupbearer, baker, and pharaoh interpreted by Joseph (Genesis 40-41)
- Nebuchadnezzar's dream interpreted by Daniel (Daniel 2)
- Joseph's dream of the angel (Matthew 1:20-24)
- The Magi's dream of warning (Matthew 2:12)
- Joseph's dream of another angel (Matthew 2:13)

Since dreams are a way God has spoken to humans in the past, we should take a closer look at them. Rather than ignoring them, abandoning their interpretation to such systems as psychoanalysis, or dismissing them as caused by something we ate, we need to examine the content of dreams from a Christian point of view. We must have a more positive view of dreaming, that it is a potential means of communication from God to humans.

For further information about specific topics in dreaming click on the following links to parts of Chapter 3 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Nightmares](#)
- [Dreaming](#)
- [Lucid Dreams](#)
- [Meaningful Dreams](#)

## Visions

Related to the altered states of consciousness that make up a part of our Christian faith. God frequently communicated with humans through visions, but we must be careful to distinguish between visions from God, visions induced by drugs, and the hallucinations of the mentally ill.

***God Speaking through Visions.*** God seemed to use visions at major turning points in the history of his people, just as he used dreams.

- God appeared to Abram in a vision to promise him a son when he thought he would have none (Genesis 15:1-4).
- He spoke to Jacob in a vision to tell him to not be afraid to go down into Egypt (Genesis 46:2-4).
- God used a vision to send Ananias to see Saul, who had just experienced a vision of Jesus (Acts 9:10-16).
- He used a vision to persuade Cornelius to send for Peter and a vision to enlighten Peter concerning the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-3).
- On his second missionary journey, it was a vision that made Paul decide to change his route and go over into Macedonia (Acts 16:9-10).

There were also visions of God and things that were not describable in human language.

- When Isaiah saw the Lord, he described seraphims having six wings, crying "Holy, Holy, Holy," and the house filled with smoke (Isaiah 6).
- When Ezekiel saw the Lord, he saw a whirlwind, a cloud, a fire, wheels, and rings, and heard loud noises (Ezekiel 1).
- When the apostle John had a vision while on the island of Patmos, he heard a loud voice behind him and he saw Christ with hair white like wool or snow, eyes like fire, and feet like brass (Revelation 1).
- When Peter, James, and John went with Jesus into a high mountain, they saw him transfigured and had difficulty describing Jesus (Mark 9).
- When the apostle Paul wrote about his vision of paradise which he called the "third heaven," he was not sure whether he was in or out of the body and said that while there he heard unspeakable words (2 Corinthians 12).

***Visions and Hallucinations.*** In some circles it is no longer quite "respectable" for Christians to have visions. Some

Christians believe that visions ended with the Book of Acts and that anyone who has them now is somewhat suspect. They are prone to call such things hallucinations and try to explain them away. However, God did communicate with humans in visions and he can still do so. As Christian psychologists, we need to develop criteria for distinguishing between visions and hallucinations. Secular psychologists are not going to develop these, so it is our responsibility. God can communicate with us through visions, and we must not automatically dismiss his communication as a mere hallucination.

For example in May 1979, a man was convicted in federal court for lying on his tax forms. He told the jury that "The Lord told me not to pay income taxes and get out from under it the best I could." He said that he had claimed forty exemptions when only entitled to three "because the Lord told me to." When asked whether or not he had filed a tax return for the current year, he would not reply, saying, "That's between me and God, and he's dealing with me." One might question whether or not God actually told him to do this.

There are probably at least two criteria for judging whether an experience is a vision from God or an hallucination. First, is the vision consistent with Scripture? As much as we all hate to pay taxes, we need to see what the Bible has to say about paying taxes to see whether or not this man's experience was from God. We also need to see what the Bible has to say about lying, claiming 40 exemptions when entitled to only three. A second criterion for distinguishing between visions and hallucinations is found in looking at the other behaviors of the individuals having the "visions." A walk through the wards of most mental hospitals will reveal many people who claim to have visions from God, but other aspects of their lives reveal behavior out of touch with reality. They also claim to be Napoleon or Jesus Christ returned at his second coming. Although you say one could really be Jesus returned to earth, what do you do when three men on the same ward make the same claim? They cannot all be Jesus. At least two of them have

to be wrong!

## **Meditation**

Many religions suggest the use of meditation as part of their practice. This encyclopedia entry lists more than a dozen types of meditation <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditation> , and only two are classified as "Secular." One of those was Transcendental Meditation, commonly known as TM.

***Transcendental Meditation.*** The leader of the Transcendental Meditation movement is Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who left India in 1958 to begin a tour of the West. Within fifteen years he had inspired about a half million meditators. During a brief training, meditators are given a secret "mantra" (meaningless sound) to be repeated during meditation whenever their minds wander to concrete thoughts. The goal of meditators is unity with the impersonal god, and they reach this by the repetition of the secret mantra for twenty minutes each morning and evening. This leads to a state of consciousness without any specific objects or subjects, a state of unity with the impersonal god. According to the Maharishi's philosophy, the observable world is neither real nor unreal, but it is always changing. Meditators wish to go beyond all thought to a state of pure awareness.

Many people report only a sense of calmness when meditating, a state of being relaxed and relieved of the tensions of everyday life. However, some report more dramatic changes in consciousness. For example, subjects who meditated on a blue vase several times a week for three weeks came to see the vase as more vivid or saw changes in the apparent size and shape of the vase. Some experienced a sense of merging with the vase. Others said that the vase seemed to take on a life of its own. They also reported tingling sensations or other unusual bodily sensations.

Though TM was first considered to be secular and was taught in some public schools, people began to realize that it

was really a religion, Hinduism. Both the U. S. District Court (New Jersey) and the U. S Court of Appeals have ruled that it is fundamentally a religion and forbade its being taught in public schools. For more information about TM, see the following site.

<http://www.allaboutreligion.org/transcendental-meditation.htm>

Many people begin Transcendental Meditation without understanding the Hindu philosophy of religion behind it. The ultimate goal of meditators is to lose their individuality in pure Being, mere abstract Being. Transcendental Meditation is a version of the Hindu religion, and advanced meditators find themselves adopting Mahirishi Mahesh Yogi's Hindu philosophy. Even some Christians do not realize that Transcendental Meditation is a form of a different religion and simply see it as a good way to relax and reduce tension.

**Christian Meditation.** This does not mean that Christians should not meditate. The Bible contains many passages calling us to meditation.

- God told Joshua to meditate on his Word “day and night” so that he would act according to what was in it (Joshua 1:8).
- The apostle Paul urged Timothy to meditate on the things of God and to give himself completely to them.
- Not only are we told to meditate on God's law day and night, but when we are in a right relationship to him, we find that this is a delight (Psalm 1:2).

As Christians, we certainly are to meditate, but not to strive to go beyond all thought to a state of pure awareness. Christian meditation is centered on God himself. Our mind is guided by the Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Missionaries need to encourage nationals to do a study of what the Bible says about meditation and encourage them to practice Christian meditation. In our rushed age, twenty minutes morning and night meditating on God and his Word will bring relaxation and peace.

For further information about specific topics in meditation click

on the following links to parts of Chapter 3 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Meditation](#)
- [Research on Meditation](#)
- [Summary: Meditation](#)

## Drugs

Psychoactive drugs that affect the central nervous system as stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens were discussed in Chapter 2. These increase the activity of the nervous system, decrease the activity of the nervous system, or disrupt the activity of the nervous system. Nearly all cultures approve of the use of some of these drugs and disapprove of the use of others. Some of them are for sale at grocery stores; others are illegal and result in arrest.

Around the turn of the century the use of illegal drugs decreased so that many people thought we were winning the war on drug abuse. Headlines such as “Teenage Drug Abuse and Smoking Decline” appeared year after year. However, what was happening was that people were replacing the illegal drugs with legal ones. Instead of following the directions for prescription and over-the-counter drugs, they were crushing, overdosing, or using the available drugs to change the effects on consciousness.

By 2004 Vicodin, Oxycontin, Ritalin/Adderall, and Cough medicine were all more likely to be abused than were Crack/cocaine, Meth, LSD, and Heroin. Vicodin and Oxycontin are powerful painkillers. Ritalin and Adderall are used for the treatment of ADHD, and cough medicine for common cold symptoms.

People bought (or shoplifted) Sudafed, a decongestant and used it to make methamphetamines from simple “recipes” found on the internet. People discovered that Coricidin HBP Cough & Cold contained dextromethorphan which would make

them high. Coricidin became known as Triple C, skittles, candy, robo, and red devils. The chemical is found in over the counter cough suppressants, such as Robitussin, Drixoral, Vicks formula 44, etc.—over 140 over-the-counter products in all.

The statistics change annually, but one can get the latest available data on the Monitoring The Future survey of high school students at <http://monitoringthefuture.org/>. This survey has been given to 50,000 high school students every year since 1975, so trends can be followed. More general information about drugs can be found at the National Institute of Drug Abuse at [www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov).

Finally, some adolescents think they have found a drug-free high in the “Choking Game.” The basic idea is to keep oxygen from reaching the brain so that the person gets a “high” as they pass out and a second “high” as they regain consciousness as the blood rushes back. It is also known as Space Monkey, Knockout, Pass Out, Black Hole, Funky Chicken and many other names. It is often done using a rope or belt to one’s self or others and is most likely at middle-school age. Of course, depriving brain cells of oxygen even a few minutes is very dangerous and may lead to permanent damage or death. Further information is at <http://chokinggame.net/index.html>.

### Conclusion

Psychology began as the study of awareness when Wilhelm Wundt defined psychology as the study of consciousness and proceeded to look for its “elements.” Psychologists still study the three elements Wundt thought he discovered: sensations, images, and emotions.

Sensations and the resulting perceptions have been integral parts of psychology for its entire modern history. Though sensations may be much the same all over the world, people of different cultures may perceive things quite differently because of how their cultures view things.

Likewise, people living in different cultures may have very different views of altered states of consciousness. They vary on what drugs are considered acceptable and unacceptable. They also vary in their views of what kinds of religious influences on such things as meditation are acceptable and unacceptable. Culture has a great influence on awareness.

## Chapter 5

### Intellect

Intellect from a Christian Perspective

Learning

- Classical Conditioning
- Operant Conditioning
- Applications

Cognition

- Thinking
- Language
- Applications
- Groupthink

Memory

- Memory Model
- Too Little Memory
- Too Much Memory

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 in Dewey's introductory text are relevant.

- [Chapter 05: Conditioning](#)
- [Chapter 06: Memory](#)
- [Chapter 07: Cognition](#)

(Chapter 8—Learning, Chapter 9—Memory, and Chapter 10—Thinking and Language, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition are also relevant.)

The last chapter was concerned with how humans become aware of the world around them. This chapter is a different topic area of psychology, one dealing with the intellectual processes. This chapter is devoted to the areas of learning, cognitive processes, and memory. Although there is some debate whether or not any human behavior is instinctive, everyone agrees that learning and higher mental processes influence human behavior. Even innate responses, such as eating, elimination, and crying, are modified by learning and thinking.

#### Intellect from a Christian Perspective

Intellect fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 5:1. As with awareness, some of the intellectual processes were present in the elements that Wundt and other early structuralists discovered in the last half of the nineteenth century. They found sensations, images, and affective states, and the images were cognitions that people used as they interpreted the sensations.

Early in the twentieth century psychologists were greatly influenced by Pavlov's findings about conditioned responses, primarily studied through his work with dogs. These same animal-like conditioned responses are also found in humans as they learn.

Psychologists were also influenced by the late nineteenth century work of Hermann Ebbinghaus studying human rote memory. This work is found in his classic book, *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology* (1885) <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Ebbinghaus/index.htm>. Such rote learning was much like animal learning.

Works during the first half of the twentieth century by the Gestalt psychologists, particularly Max Wertheimer, as well as many cognitive psychologists during the last half of the twentieth century, pointed out the importance of more God-like

characteristics on memory. Therefore, memory appears in the middle as having both animal-like and God-like aspects.

Figure 5:1 Intellect from a Christian perspective.

HUMANS

Created . . . . .	in the. . . . .	Image of God
Like Animals		Like God
Overt Behavior. . . . .	Definition. . . . .	Mental Processes
Understand. . . . .	Goals. . . . .	Make people
Creation		like God
Psychoanalysis. . . . .	Systems. . . . .	Humanistic
Behaviorism		Psychology
Experimental . . . . .	Methods . . . . .	Descriptive
Physical. . . . .	The Person . . . . .	Spiritual
Immaturity. . . . .	Development. . . . .	Maturity
Sensation . . . . .	Awareness . . . . .	Perception
	(States of Consciousness)	
<b>Learning . . . . .</b>	<b>Intellect . . . . .</b>	<b>Cognition</b>
	(Memory)	

**Learning**

Psychologists usually define learning as a relatively permanent change in behavior as a result of experience. This excludes changes in behavior due to maturation, fatigue, drugs, injury, and so forth. They usually consider rote learning to be a

much simpler process than other intellectual processes. The study of learning can be placed in our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 5:1 (Learning- Intellect). That is, humans are very similar to animals in the way they learn many simple responses. In fact, much of the study of learning has been the study of the way animals learn, with the concepts generalized to humans. Of course, we must not forget that humans are also like God, and that this will influence even the way they learn simple responses.

**Classical Conditioning**

Classical conditioning is practically synonymous with the work Ivan Pavlov (1927) did with dogs <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Pavlov/>. While Pavlov was studying the physiology of digestion in dogs, he noticed that the dogs began to salivate at the sight and sound of the experimenter. He first called these “psychic” secretions but soon found that they were produced by any stimuli that regularly preceded food. Pavlov then studied this secretion of saliva under carefully controlled conditions and discovered much of what we know about this type of learning.

Although the salivation of dogs might seem to be far removed from missions, much of what Pavlov discovered is related to living in other cultures. Classical conditioning occurs in many species, including humans. Classical conditioning of humans has been most often studied using the kneejerk and the eyeblink responses, but classical conditioning is involved far beyond these simple responses, including fear conditioning.

Classical conditioning of emotions often occurs in humans. Missionaries may meet someone they immediately do not like. If the new acquaintance looks or acts like someone they dislike, the dislike generalizes to the new person. The missionary may not recognize the similarity between the people and be puzzled why they feel so negative. Of course, classical conditioning may lead to liking a person if the new

acquaintance has characteristics of an old friend.

When trying new foods in the host culture, the same thing may occur. If the new food has the smell, taste, or texture of a favorite food, the missionary may immediately like it. Often with tastes people recognize the similarity and note that it tastes like \_\_\_\_\_. Likewise, if the food reminds them of something they do not like, the new food will also be rejected.

For further information about specific topics in classical conditioning click on the following links to parts of Chapter 5 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Classical Conditioning](#)
- [Why Classical Conditioning Evolved](#)
- [Reflexes](#)
- [Pavlov's Dog](#)
- [The Conditional Response](#)
- [Acquisition of the Conditional Response](#)
- [Extinction and Spontaneous Recovery](#)
- [Generalization](#)
- [Discrimination](#)
- [Release from Habituation](#)
- [Pavlovian Conditioning: "It's not what you think it is"](#)
- [Summary: Classical Conditioning](#)

## Operant Conditioning

Although B. F. Skinner did most of his experiments on animals, he promoted operant conditioning as one of the primary ways humans learn. The most common apparatus used to study this kind of learning is the operant chamber, commonly called the "Skinner box." This is simply a box that contains a lever or disc and a food or water dispenser so that whenever the lever is pressed or a disk is pecked, a pellet of food or drink of water is given to the rat or pigeon. Rather than making a new

stimulus-response connection, operant conditioning takes a response which the subject is already making and strengthens it with reinforcement.

Reinforcement is anything that increases the probability that the response will be repeated. Whereas reinforcement increases the probability that a response will occur, punishment is used to suppress or decrease the probability of a response. Although there has been much controversy over whether or not reinforcement is necessary for learning to take place, everyone agrees that reinforcement is necessary to bring about changes in performance; therefore it is important to look at positive and negative reinforcement.

A positive reinforcement (reward) is any stimulus that increases the probability of response when the stimulus is presented following that response. If the subject is hungry, food is a positive reinforcer. If the subject is thirsty, water is a positive reinforcer. If the person has been ignored, attention is a positive reinforcer. If the individual is lonely, social interaction is a positive reinforcer. Since most people view reinforcement as one of the most efficient ways to bring about changes in behavior, missionaries may make extensive use of it. When a national has done something the missionary wants (Bible study, prayer, and so forth), the missionary may give something culturally appropriate, such as a smile, pat on the back or a kiss. In addition they sometimes give objects, such as a bookmarks, stars, or pins.

Although people often use reinforcement as a means of trying to bring about permanent changes in behavior, the fact is that the changes produced by reinforcement are no more lasting than those produced by punishment. When the punishment is discontinued, the punished behavior reappears. In the same way, when reinforcement is discontinued, the behavior of "not responding" reappears, only we call it extinction. This view of reinforcement may force us toward a redefinition of learning because we now see that we are unable to bring about lasting changes in behavior through either reinforcement or

punishment. From the perspective taken here, we would say that in our animal-likeness in learning, we respond only to the reinforcing or punishing events in the world around us, but in our God-like cognitive processes, we are able to evaluate rationally the world around us, make a decision, and permanently change our behavior, regardless of conditions around us.

Although secular psychologists are interested in changing behavior and see reinforcement as the most efficient means of bringing about the desired change, Christians see reward in terms of justice as well as behavioral change. That is, reward is given because the person deserves it for having made the response. We do not give it only to manipulate the person into doing what we want. Reinforcement increases the probability of response, but correct responses are not enough for the Christian! We can use reinforcement to bring about behavior change, but we should not give reinforcement when it has not been “earned.”

A negative reinforcement is a stimulus that, when removed, strengthens a response. Negative reinforcers are noxious stimuli, such as electric shock, which we try to escape or avoid. Humans, like animals, learn responses that remove noxious stimuli and responses that prevent noxious stimuli from being presented. Note that even though noxious stimuli are used, we call this reinforcement because its removal *increases* behavior.

Noxious stimuli are sometimes involved in the reinforcement of religious behavior. For example, most people consider shame and guilt feelings to be noxious stimuli, so they make responses to escape or avoid such feelings. People may witness, pray, attend church, and tithe to avoid the shame or guilt feelings they know will come if they do not do these things a Christian “should” do. If they already have the guilt feelings, one popular escape route is through confession and tears. The people vent their misery through crying and confessing some misdeeds. This leads to a temporary reduction in guilt feelings

without doing anything about the actual guilt itself. This leads to a series of “weeping in confession responses,” usually during a time of spiritual emphasis. Actual guilt cannot be removed without the person’s repentance and forgiveness from God. As Christian missionaries, we are interested in dealing with actual guilt as well as guilt feelings.

In the study of learning we find several types of operant conditioning.

**Reward.** The most widely studied form of operant conditioning is reward learning, in which a reinforcement is given whenever the appropriate response is made. This occurs naturally when someone picks out a response we make and starts reinforcing it so that we begin repeating it. When they stop reinforcing the response, we stop making it. When children are not reinforced for making sounds, they do not learn to speak a language. When learning the language of their host culture, missionaries are reinforced each time they communicate accurately and nationals respond appropriately.

**Escape.** Escape learning is similar to reward learning, except that a different kind of reinforcement is used. In escape learning, the subject learns to escape from a noxious stimulus that is turned on and then not turned off until the appropriate response is made. For example, children use escape learning to teach their parents to pick them up. The children turn on the crying (a noxious stimulus to most parents) and do not turn it off until the parents pick them up. Children can cry for a long time, longer than the resistance of most parents. When the parents pick up the children, they stop crying. When new missionaries feel uneasy in groups of nationals, in order to escape those negative feelings they may leave the groups much sooner than is appropriate in the culture.

**Avoidance.** Avoidance learning is another type of operant conditioning similar to escape learning except that it involves acting (or not acting) before the noxious stimulus is presented. Avoidance learning may be involved in missionaries’ lives when they avoid doing things that they find

uncomfortable but know they should be doing. For example, the missionary may begin by leaving groups early (escape learning), and later they may not go to the groups at all (avoidance learning). One important characteristic of avoidance learning is that it is very resistant to extinction, so that long after the noxious element is turned off, the person will still stay away. That is, even when the missionaries learn the language and culture well enough to feel comfortable in groups, they may still avoid going.

**Punishment.** A noxious stimulus is also used in the punishment situation, but it is not presented unless the undesired response is made. This type of learning is widely used by parents and society. Nothing happens until the children or the criminals make the forbidden response, then the noxious stimulus occurs. Although punishment can be very effective when used in combination with reward learning, we must be aware of several facts about its use.

- First, it is often accompanied by emotional side effects so that, although the behavior is suppressed, the person is angry, fearful, or resentful.
- Second, punishment only temporarily suppresses the inappropriate response. Parents who use only punishment usually have model children when they are present, but the children may be very bad when away from their parents.
- Finally, punishment suppresses the response that occurred immediately before it is given, and sometimes we inadvertently punish the wrong response.

For example, if a child comes in the house confessing that he or she just broke a window and you spank him or her, you are not likely to stop window breaking, but you are likely to suppress the confessing behavior. The next time the child breaks something, he or she is less likely to confess his or her part in it.

For further information about specific topics in Operant conditioning click on the following links to parts of Chapter 5

in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Operant Conditioning](#)
- [Starting Out in a "Rat Lab"](#)
- [Positive Reinforcement](#)
- [The Premack Principle](#)
- [Extinction of an Operant Response](#)
- [Negative Reinforcement](#)
- [Punishment](#)
- [Response Cost \("Negative Punishment"\)](#)
- [A 2 x 2 Table of Consequences](#)
- [Stimulus Control](#)
- [Discriminative Stimuli](#)
- [Backward Chaining](#)
- [Intermittent Reinforcement and Resistance to Extinction](#)
- [Extinction-Induced Resurgence \(the "extinction burst"\)](#)
- [Spontaneous Backward Chaining in a Blue Jay](#)
- [Avoidance and Escape Learning](#)
- [Observational Learning](#)
- [Summary: Operant Conditioning](#)

## Applications

Obviously the techniques of classical conditioning and operant conditioning are used in the training of animals. However, since human beings are animal-like in some ways, both of these types of learning are also used at times in the treatment of psychological disorders. Missionaries are often involved in counseling situations, so they need examples of the applications of these techniques in the treatment of disorders.

**Involving Classical Conditioning.** The techniques using classical conditioning are usually aimed at changing a person's emotional responses (likes, dislikes, fears) in order to change overt behaviors. The basic idea is that inappropriate emotional responses to certain stimuli have been learned and that the person must be reconditioned.

**Extinction.** The basic idea in extinction is to present the conditioned stimulus (such as a feared object) but not follow it with the unconditioned one (such as pain). When this is done repeatedly, the conditioned response gradually drops out, as when Pavlov sounded the bell but did not follow it with the meat. Soon salivation to the bell alone stopped. This extinction can be attempted gradually or rapidly, and verbally or in real life, as shown in Figure 5:2. Since counselors cannot control the environment twenty-four hours a day, extinction may be difficult. Family and friends may reinforce responses counselors are trying to extinguish.

Figure 5:2 Classification of therapies based on classical conditioning.

	Verbal Techniques	Real Life
Gradual Extinction	Systematic Desensitization	Systematic Desensitization
Rapid Extinction	Implosive Therapy	Flooding

If extinction is attempted gradually and verbally, it is called *systematic desensitization* and involves three steps.

- First, patients are trained in relaxation, usually some form of progressive, systematic muscle relaxation.
- Second, patients and therapists construct a list of fear-arousing situations in a hierarchy of fearfulness. For example, people with a fear of dogs may have little fear of a playful puppy, more of a cocker spaniel, and a terror of a snarling Doberman pinscher.
- Third, the patients relax and imagine themselves experiencing the situations in their hierarchies, beginning with the least fearful and gradually moving to more fearful ones. When fear replaces the relaxation, they drop back in

the hierarchy for a while. The basic idea is to extinguish the fear gradually.

Extinction may be attempted gradually and in real life, but the principle is the same. This was the technique we used when our son developed his phobia of dogs. We actually got a small puppy, which elicited only a minimal amount of fear. Soon he was able to play with the puppy without fear but was still afraid of larger dogs. It was simply a matter of time until the puppy grew into a dog, and the boy's fear of dogs gradually extinguished as the puppy grew. Fears of heights can be extinguished gradually by standing in higher and higher places, fear of closed spaces by being in smaller and smaller rooms, fear of crowds by being around more and more people, and so forth.

If extinction is attempted rapidly and verbally, it is called *implosive therapy*. The idea here is to arouse as much fear as possible, an inward explosion (implosion) of fear. This is done repeatedly in the safe setting of the therapist's office and the fear soon extinguishes. The therapists find out from the clients what are the most feared stimuli, then ask the clients to imagine these feared things over and over, embellished with the most fear-producing things the therapists can imagine. At first great fear is aroused, but over several sessions the fear subsides until it is gone.

If extinction is attempted in real life, the process is called *flooding*. Rather than imagining the most terrifying situations, patients are actually placed in them repeatedly. For example, if patients are afraid of heights, they are actually taken to the tops of tall buildings and required to look down. This obviously brings a "flood" of fear, but when nothing bad happens time after time, the fear extinguishes. If the patients have a fear of crowds, they are actually taken into the largest crowds that can be found so that the fear can be extinguished. As missionaries, we can make use of these techniques, which work so well on the phobias. Although they were developed from working with animals, we can use them because humans

are like animals in many ways.

We can use these techniques of classical conditioning where they are appropriate. If the cause of the problem is a learned inappropriate response, we can use the principles of learning to get rid of the response. The use of the "healing of memories" or "inner healing" (to be discussed later in this chapter), so popular recently in Christian circles, is really a combination of these extinction techniques with the work of the Holy Spirit. Although many who practice healing of memories do not realize it, they are using techniques originating in animal learning.

***Involving Operant Conditioning.*** The techniques involving operant conditioning are usually aimed at directly changing individuals' overt behaviors (behavior modification). The basic idea here is that inappropriate responses have been reinforced, and the task of psychologists is to change the reinforcement so that this will no longer happen. As with classical conditioning, this involves extinction, and it may also involve punishment.

***Extinction.*** Behaviors that have been learned by being reinforced will soon disappear if the reinforcement is discontinued. The task of the psychologist in this case is to find the reinforcer and, if possible, discontinue it. For example, children may become real problems in the classroom because they are deprived of attention. Their disruptive behavior is then reinforced by attention from teachers and other students. The problem is solved by extinguishing the disruptive behavior by turning off the attention. Another example is children who cry when left in the church nursery or when put to bed at home. When they cry, the parents pick them up, reinforcing their crying. (Of course, we must realize that the children are using negative reinforcement to reinforce their parents' picking them up. When they turn off the noxious stimulus--stop crying--this makes it more likely that their parents will pick them up.) The way to stop the crying is to stop reinforcing it, to stop picking the children up.

Simple extinction is difficult to use because when it is first begun, the unwanted behavior occurs in much greater amounts. Ignoring the disruptive child in the classroom results in a great increase in such behavior temporarily, but it must still be ignored. Ignoring a crying child may result in two or more hours of crying, but the crying must be ignored. Another problem is that everyone involved must consistently ignore the behavior. If the teacher ignores it, but other students give their attention, the misbehavior will continue. If parents ignore the crying child, but a visiting grandparent picks the child up, the crying will continue.

***Reinforcement.*** Positive reinforcement is currently the most widely used form of behavior modification. Many different specific techniques of reinforcement are used, but they all involve using reinforcement to increase the probability of a desired response. . Three techniques are among the most commonly used.

People in institutions are often made members of *token economies*. That is, tokens (poker chips, slips of paper, points on a chart) are given them when they make the desired response. The tokens can then be exchanged for candy, games, books, a better room, television time, or a weekend pass. The tokens are conditioned reinforcers because they have gained their reinforcement values from association with primary reinforcers, such as food or recreation. The psychologists have specified the desirable behaviors for each patient, and the patient must perform those behaviors to get the tokens, which can be exchanged. This procedure is also called *contingency management* or *contingency contracting*, depending on how specific the requirements are for the responses.

Positive reinforcement is often used in shaping behavior, as was mentioned earlier. People are reinforced for making responses that successively approximate the desired one. For example, therapists do not wait for withdrawn patients who have not spoken for weeks to utter a complete sentence before they reinforce them. At first, they may give candy or gum for a

grunt, then for a word, then for a phrase, and finally for a complete sentence. Again, they pick the desired response and reinforce closer and closer approximations of it. We must be careful not to reinforce behavior that occurs naturally because (as we will see in chapter 11) externalizing motivation may result in a decrease in desired behavior when we cease reinforcement.

*Modeling* may be used when the psychologist does not wish to take the time involved in shaping behavior. In modeling, patients first come to emit the behavior by watching someone else do it. It is the old principle of monkey-see-monkey-do. Children with a fear of dogs may watch another child play with a dog, then go pet the dog themselves. Then the petting of the dog is immediately reinforced by praise, candy, or some other reinforcer. Giving the reinforcement makes this a type of operant learning, but the modeling is used to get the response made in the first place. Of course, this is a major part of our talking about being Christ-like or God-like, from our Christian perspective.

Other types of reinforcement may be used; sometimes in combination with cognitive processes, sometimes in combination with punishment. However, the main idea of reinforcement is to get the person to make the response, and then reinforce it. Missionaries can use this very powerful way to change behavior. Humans are animal-like in some ways, and there is nothing wrong with using what we know about these animal-likenesses.

*Punishment.* Punishment may be used to lower the rate of responding. This is particularly effective when used with positive reinforcement. In punishment the aversive stimulus is not given until the response is made. For example, problem drinkers may be given a drug called Antabuse. This is a chemical that produces a very unpleasant physical reaction if the individual drinks alcohol. Drinking is punished even if no one is present. When these people drink, they flush, their heart rate increases, they become very nauseated, and they feel very

ill. Antabuse stops impulsive drinking because the drinkers must stop taking Antabuse at least two days before they can drink comfortably. Electric shock or other punishments can be used. However, many people frown on the use of these types of punishment.

One type of punishment that is more commonly used is *time-out from positive reinforcement*. This is much like the old practice of making children stand in the corner. When people make an undesirable response, they are removed to a place where they stop receiving reinforcement. Several important conditions must be met for this to work.

- First, the place they go must contain no reinforcers. Sending children to their rooms does little good since they can play there.
- Second, there must be clear rules to start the time-out and to stop it. For example, a temper tantrum starts it, and the child must stay there until he/she is calm for ten minutes.
- Finally, time-out must be imposed dispassionately so that the persons do not have the reinforcement of knowing they have angered their parents or the therapist. Missionaries can make use of any of these techniques of behavior modification using operant conditioning.

For further information about specific topics in applications click on the following links to parts of Chapter 5 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Applied Behavior Analysis](#)
- [Behavioral Analysis](#)
- [Baselining](#)
- [Self-Monitoring as a Method of Behavior Change](#)
- [Using Reinforcement](#)
- [Using the Premack Principle](#)
- [Natural Social Reinforcers](#)
- [Secondary Reinforcement Using Tokens](#)
- [More about Shaping](#)

- [Prompting and Fading](#)
- [Differential Reinforcement](#)
- [DRO and DRL](#)
- [Using Negative Reinforcement](#)
- [Using Punishment](#)
- [Treatment of Uncontrollable Sneezing](#)
- [Punishment from the Environment](#)
- [The Punishment Trap](#)
- [Response Cost with a Rabbit](#)
- [Applied Analysis of Antecedents](#)
- [Summary: Applied Behavior Analysis](#)

### Cognition

Psychologists usually define cognition as all of the mental activities we use to understand, remember, and communicate. We usually consider cognition to be a much more complex process than learning. The study of cognition can be placed in our Christian perspective as shown in the lower central part of Figure 5:1 (Intellect-Cognition). Humans are very similar to animals in the way they learn many simple responses, but they are much more like God in the way they use their cognitive abilities. In this section we are going to consider the topics of thinking, language, and the application of cognition to helping persons with disorders.

### Thinking

To simplify things in our world enough to think about them, we develop concepts. For example, we can say, “Sit in the chair” and people in our culture know what we mean because they have a concept of “sitting” and a concept of “chair.” Probably most cultures have a concept of “sitting,” but what about a culture which has no chairs? Missionaries often face the problem of people in their host cultures not having concepts by which one can explain Christianity.

Probably the best-known example of this is when Don Richardson ran into this problem when working with the Sawi people in Indonesia. After he learned enough of the complex language, he began to tell them about the gospel. As he told about the life of Jesus, he suddenly realized that to the people there, Judas was the hero of the story, and Jesus was a dope to be laughed at. They had no concept of a redeemer, one who sacrificed himself to save others. Only after watching two tribes try to make peace by exchanging a child, a “peace child,” was he able to talk about Jesus being God’s “Peace Child” who gave himself to redeem them ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don\\_Richardson\\_\(missionary\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don_Richardson_(missionary))).

We often organize how our concepts are related in hierarchies. For example, “chairs” are one concept fitting under the more general concept of “furniture.” Some cultures not only have no chairs, they may not even have any furniture. Some hierarchies are highly complex and well organized as students may have learned from studying the periodic table of the elements in chemistry or learning the taxonomy of genus and species in biology.

Thinking also includes problem solving. For example, connecting the nine dots (in Figure 5:2) with four straight lines is a problem for people who do not “think outside the box.” If connecting these dots is a problem for you, please see the solution in Figure 5:3 at the end of the chapter.

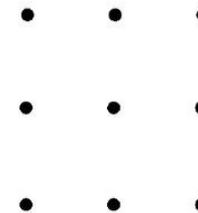


Figure 5:2. Connect the dots with four straight lines without retracing any lines or lifting your pencil from the page.

Cultures may emphasize different ways of thinking. Western cultures tend to lean toward linear thinking in which people use step-by-step approaches to solve problems. Solving a problem is similar to following the directions to assemble a bicycle. Some other cultures lean toward radiant thinking which is much more free-form and like brainstorming. Preachers from Western cultures outline their sermons beginning with a joke, three points (all with the same first letter), and draw a conclusion. Preachers from other cultures may tell stories and leave it to the listeners to come to a conclusion. Jesus came from such a culture and frequently told parables.

For further information about specific topics in thinking click on the following links to parts of Chapter 7 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [What is Thinking?](#)
- [Cognitive Reshuffling](#)
- [Selective Attention](#)
- [Problem Solving](#)
- [Puzzles](#)
- [The General Problem Solver](#)
- [Advice for Human Problem Solvers](#)
- [Constraint Satisfaction as a Problem-Solving Approach](#)
- [Classic Biases and Errors](#)
- [Expertise and Domain Specific Knowledge](#)
- [Expert Systems](#)
- [SOAR: Universal Sub-Goaling](#)
- [Analytic vs. Holistic Thinking](#)
- [Metacognition: Thinking About Thinking](#)
- [Effective and Ineffective Problem Solvers](#)
- [Summary: Thinking and Problem Solving](#)

## Language

The language (or languages) we learn as children may influence how we think. As already noted, one culture may simply not have a particular concept, so there is no word to express that concept. Another culture may have a language that has several words to express subtle differences of a concept.

Both the ancient Greeks and current Americans have the concept of love. However, the Greeks had several words for different kinds of love, but the Americans just have one word and use an adjective to describe various kinds of love. English speakers have a difficult time understanding what is going on in John 21:15-19 where it sounds like Jesus and Peter are saying the same thing about love as they carry on their dialogue. They are not. Here is what they are saying with the "Greek" words for love inserted where the English always says "love."

- Jesus: "Do you truly agape me more than these?"
- Peter: "Yes, Lord, you know that I phileo you."
- Jesus: "Do you truly agape me?"
- Peter: "Yes, Lord, you know that I phileo you."
- Jesus: "Do you phileo me?"
- Peter: "You know that I phileo you."

Just as some may not have understood what was going on between Jesus and Peter, they may not have the vocabulary to understand interchanges between nationals or between them and a national. Of course, language is more than vocabulary, and it may be that the language learned may influence the way a person thinks.

During the early twentieth century Edward Sapir and later his student Benjamin Whorf proposed what has been called the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis (or linguistic relativity hypothesis). This theory proposes that language brings with it different conceptions of reality. Bilinguals report feeling a different sense of self when speaking different languages; they may even show different personalities when taking the same personality test in different languages.

Several decades ago I was talking with a Chinese student from a traditional background studying here in America where she spoke English fluently. She said that if she was asked out on a date in Chinese, she would always decline because that would be inappropriate in her Chinese culture. However, if asked in English, she would eagerly go, that she really wanted to date (she was conversing with me in English).

To learn more about this hypothesis, click on the following links.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relativism/supplement2.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic\\_relativity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_relativity)

<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/language/whorf.html>

For further information about specific topics in language click on the following links to parts of Chapter 7 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Language](#)
- [Language Learning in Babies](#)
- [Second Language Learning](#)
- [Comprehension](#)
- [The Modal Model of Comprehension](#)
- [Reading](#)
- [Phonetic Decoding and "Phonics" as a Method](#)
- [The Resource Allocation Problem](#)
- [Reconstructing the Author's Meaning](#)
- [Fallacies of Speedreading](#)
- [Prose Macrostructure](#)
- [Macrostructure in Expository Prose](#)
- [Summarization Processes](#)
- [The Importance of Revision](#)
- [Summary: Language](#)

## Applications

Although therapy involving cognition was relatively ignored for many years because of the dominance of the Freudian psychoanalytic theory of personality, several forms of cognitive therapy have been proposed more recently. A couple of examples from the last half of the twentieth century are those of Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck who both placed an emphasis on cognition.

***Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy.*** During the 1950s, Albert Ellis developed a method of therapy which has come to be called rational-emotive behavior therapy. Although emotion is mentioned, the emphasis is on the rational. Ellis first called it "rational psychotherapy." He also founded the Institute for Rational Living, the Institute for Advanced Study in Rational Psychotherapy, and the journal, *Rational Living*.

Ellis' idea is that emotional disturbances are not the result of objective events in people's lives, but the result of irrational beliefs used in interpreting these events. For example, when people fail a task, it is not failure itself that causes them to be depressed and depreciate themselves. Rather, disturbances occur when people interpret that failure through the belief that they should be competent, adequate, intelligent, and successful in all possible respects. Thus, it is not the failure that causes depression, but the person's belief that one should never fail. The real causes of the disorders are the beliefs of the people themselves, not what happens to them.

Ellis believed (he died in 2007) that humans are born with a potential to be rational, but that they are pushed toward the irrational by their culture, especially their family. They think, feel, and behave simultaneously, so we need to treat all these areas in therapy. Therapists should have good rapport with their clients but may use a variety of impersonal methods, including bibliotherapy, behavior modification, audio-visual aids, and activity-oriented homework assignments. The goal is not just symptom reduction, but a change in the underlying

thinking that produces the symptoms. Insight into the cause of the symptoms is not enough. The individual must eliminate the irrational thinking, and this takes hard work and practice.

Practitioners of rational-emotive therapy do not just use understanding and acceptance. They may bluntly point out the irrationality of the counselees' thinking. For example, they may say, "So what if your father doesn't love you. That's his problem!" They use firm, hard-headed methods to convince the clients that they must resort to more self-discipline. For further information on Albert Ellis and his therapy go to <http://www.rebt.ws/>.

Missionaries may reject this method when they read some of the "irrational beliefs" Ellis wants to eradicate. For example: "one needs something stronger or more powerful than oneself to rely on," or "certain acts are awful or wicked, and people who perform them should be severely punished." Although we may disagree with his calling these particular beliefs irrational, many other beliefs are simply untenable, and people need to change them. For example, certain ideas--that we should be loved by everyone for everything we do; that we should be thoroughly competent, intelligent, and achieving in all respects; that we must have certain and perfect self-control at all times; or that we have virtually no control over our emotions and cannot help having certain feelings--are simply not true.

We can filter these beliefs through our Christian value system and use Ellis' basic approach if our counselee's problem is one of irrational thinking. Such directive techniques seem odd to Christian counselors who have been trained in psychoanalytic or client-centered approaches, but there is nothing unbiblical about being directive. Jesus himself was quite directive with many of the people he encountered.

**Cognitive Therapy.** In the 1970s Aaron Beck proposed that psychological problems are not the product of mysterious, uncontrollable forces, but come from faulty learning, drawing incorrect conclusions from too little or wrong information, and not distinguishing adequately between imagination and reality.

Disorders can be treated by sharpening discriminations, correcting misconceptions, and learning more adaptive attitude—a process he calls cognitive therapy. This approach brings treatment much closer to everyday experience, to common sense.

Cognitive therapy consists of all the approaches to treatment that aim at correcting faulty conceptions and self-signals. This emphasis on thinking does not mean that emotion is ignored, only that one gets to emotions through cognition. Many methods may be used to help patients make more realistic appraisals of themselves and their world. The "intellectual" approach consists of identifying misconceptions, testing their validity, and substituting appropriate concepts. The "experiential" approach gives the patient experiences that are powerful enough to change misconceptions. The "behavioral" approach helps the patients develop specific behaviors that change the way they view themselves and the world.

Beck noted that some people make direct, tangible distortions of reality. These distortions may be obviously delusional or may be less obvious (e.g., "I have lost my ability to drive") when the person has simply not tried to do something recently. Other people have not distorted reality but have illogical thinking. Their system of making inferences or drawing conclusions from their observations is faulty. They may over-generalize and think the whole house is falling apart because a faucet leaks and a light switch is broken. They may magnify the importance of minor undesirable events, selectively perceive bad events and ignore good ones, and engage in "all-or-none" thinking.

In cognitive therapy, the therapist is seen as a collaborator, rather than playing an omnipotent and omniscient God-like role. The patient-therapist relationship becomes a joint effort. Both work together to reach a consensus on the nature of the problem, the goal of therapy, and a plan to reach the goal. They agree on the nature and the duration of the therapy. The patients gather information about themselves through

experiments that allow them to discover and refute their false beliefs. Together, therapist and patient discuss the patient's assumptions, beliefs, and expectations. Then they design behavioral-disconfirmation experiments in which the patient has a series of successful experiences. They may even schedule the patient's activities on an hour-by-hour basis.

Individuals are also encouraged to examine their maladaptive thoughts, which produce unnecessary discomfort or suffering, or lead to self-defeating behavior. These are automatic thoughts, which the person needs help in identifying. These thoughts take place between the stimulus and response and must be identified. The thought that comes between the sight of a dog and a phobic response may be "It is going to bite me." These thoughts need to be recognized and dealt with, as do many attitudes similar to the ones we discussed in Ellis' rational-emotive therapy, such as: "To be happy I must be accepted by all people at all times," "If I make a mistake, it means that I'm inept," "I should never feel hurt but always be happy and serene," or "I should always be spontaneous and I should always control my feelings."

**Faulty "Christian" Thinking.** Missionaries can use many of the techniques and insights of the treatments emphasizing the cognitive dimension of humans. Although we cannot accept all parts of these therapies, humans are cognitive beings made in God's image, so disorders in their thinking may have a great effect on their behavior. In addition to insights from these secular psychologists, we must correct faulty concepts that Christians may have about the Christian faith.

**About God.** Many Christians have incorrect concepts of God. These lead to a poor relationship with him. Some come from distortions of his attributes, while others are a matter of thinking about God as people think about their parents. Frequently these individuals can give all the correct definitions or verbalizations about God, but their thinking behind these verbalizations needs to be discerned and clarified by the missionary counselor. A major part of counseling is correcting

the thinking of those one counsels.

Some people think of God as a hostile God. They think of him as someone keeping a record of all of their wrong actions, just waiting to punish them. This punishment may come in the form of accidents, financial failure, disease, and so forth. When people have this concept of God, they ask, "Why is God doing this to me?" or "What sin have I committed?" when something bad happens. Although God does know about our sins, it is incorrect to think of him as hiding behind a cloud spying on us and ready to "zap" us with a bolt of lightning as soon as we make a wrong move. Although he knows all of our sins, he loves us and has taken the initial steps toward reconciliation.

Other people think of God as unpredictable. Such individuals may have grown up in a home where their parents were loving at one moment and hostile the next. This may not always be obvious. For example, many young people worry about finding God's will for their lives, afraid that they will miss his will and be punished for not doing it. They need to be asked about the God they worship. Is he a God who reveals his will to some, but not to others, and then punishes those who do not even know what he wants them to do? Their God is a capricious God who apparently will not tell them what he wants, then punishes them when they cannot guess it.

Still others think of God as a God of love who could never punish anyone. Overemphasizing love and mercy, these people believe that they can do whatever they want and God will forgive and save them anyway. They become universalists, believing that God is going to work out some way to save everyone. They forget that God is also a God of justice.

Others focus on the infinite aspects of God and depersonalize him to make him only some kind of "force," or the "absolute," or "energy." This depersonalization makes him less than he is. In their attempts to keep from anthropomorphizing, these individuals have not made God more than a person, but less.

This is not a complete list of the wrong concepts of God, but it is enough to illustrate the point. We should be aware of the literature on concept formation so that we can focus on changing the concept of God in those we are counseling. Without an adequate concept of God, people cannot have a correct concept of themselves. We must remember that individuals are made in God's image, and if we have a wrong image (concept) of God, we will have a wrong concept of who we are and who we can be. Although I want to be like God, I do not want to be like some people's concept of God.

*About People.* Our counselees may have wrong concepts about people, including themselves. One such concept is about unregenerate people. Christians tend to look down on the unsaved, but we must remember that they are also made in God's likeness. That is why we are not to murder other humans. James reminds us that we cannot bless God on the one hand and curse humans on the other because those humans are made in God's image (James 3:9). During the 1960s, when overpopulation and pollution were first of great concern, the term "people pollution" came into use, meaning that the earth was becoming polluted with people (who made more pollution of other types). This was saying that beings made in God's likeness were pollution. Rather than thinking of people as pollution, God thought they were important enough to send his son to die for them.

Our counselees are even more likely to have wrong concepts about Christians. We seem to expect absolute perfection out of other members of the church. We have the concept that we should have arrived at some final state, although Scripture does not indicate this. The apostle Paul addressed his first letter to the Corinthian church to those who were sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints (1 Corinthians 1:2). Even a quick reading of that letter will reveal that that church had a lot of room for growth and improvement. We must look for improvement and not absolute perfection in the church.

Finally, many Christians have the wrong concept of themselves. Christians must not center on their sinful past or present shortcomings, but rather upon themselves as new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) with the potential of becoming increasingly like him (2 Corinthians 3:18). Furthermore, we are children of God (Romans 8:16), not merely slaves or servants.

### **Groupthink**

Irving Janis, the first person to study it in detail, defined groupthink as the kind of thinking people do when they are committed to a cohesive group and their striving for unanimity overcomes their ability to be realistic about which action to take. Individual uniqueness, creativity, and independent thinking are left behind in protecting the cohesiveness of the group. People do not want to appear foolish or to upset the group so they set their doubts aside and make irrational decisions.

Janis studied American foreign policy disasters such as Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961. Most missionaries today remember the American government's decision to attack Iraq in 2003 to destroy the weapons of mass destruction although many USA citizens and most of the rest of the world did not think it was wise. Groupthink is not only something that politicians may do, but also it is something missionaries may do.

***Did groupthink happen in the Bible?*** We do not have enough details to be sure but groupthink appears to have happened shortly after King Solomon died. His son, Rehoboam, became king and soon asked Solomon's advisors about how to respond to a difficult situation. Rehoboam rejected their good advice to serve the people, and then he consulted some young men with whom he had grown up. These young men gave him bad advice to treat the people harshly. He

did so, lost many of his subjects, and barely escaped alive to Jerusalem (1 Kings 12:8-20).

**Conditions leading to groupthink.** Though nothing has been proven to cause groupthink, several conditions may make groupthink more likely. Here are several of these conditions relevant to missionaries on the field.

- Highly cohesive group. Missionaries value the closeness of their group because there are few people nearby with whom they can share deeply.
- Insulation of the group. Missionaries have few people to talk with because they are far from their passport countries.
- Directive leadership. Field directors may tell missionaries what they would like to see done rather than asking what should be done.
- Homogenous group. The selection process in choosing missionaries often results in people with similar values, ways of thinking, education, and so forth.
- External threats. Missionaries often live under difficult situations with political, safety, and health threats surrounding them.
- Difficult decisions. Differences with values in the host culture may make “simple” decisions very difficult.

**Symptoms of groupthink.** Some of the symptoms indicating that groupthink is in progress follow. Beware if you notice any of them as your group meets.

- Illusion of invulnerability, such as “This can’t fail because God is on our side.”
- Collective rationalization of warnings that challenge assumptions. For example, if a secular consultant says that money will not come in for the project, group members agree that she just does not understand faith promises.
- Unquestioned belief in the morality of the group, such as “Because we are God’s children, what we are doing must be an ethical or good thing to do.”

- Stereotyping people outside the group as weak, biased, stupid, or even evil. For example, nationals opposed to building a church in their neighborhood may be characterized as under demonic influence.
- Pressure on dissenting group members to conform by suggesting they lack faith if they do not support the decision.
- Illusion of unanimity among group members because the silence of others is taken as agreement even though most of the committee may think the idea is doomed to failure.
- Self-censorship in which members do not express doubts because of the apparent consensus among other group members. Because it looks like the whole field committee agrees, no one is willing to look like a Doubting Thomas.
- Self-appointed “mindguards” who shield the group from problematic information. Committee members who are in favor of the project may take it upon themselves to see that conflicting financial reports are suppressed or taking aside any missionary who expresses doubts and pleading for unity behind the field director’s project.

**Results of groupthink.** Consensus-driven decisions lead to the following types of problems.

- The group does not completely study what needs to be accomplished. They begin planning the building before exploring whether or not it really needs to be built.
- The group does not explore all available alternative actions. Perhaps the agency could afford to rent or buy an existing building rather than building a new one.
- The group does not thoroughly study the risks of the preferred choice. Will the project be seen by supporters as low priority, too ostentatious, or a waste of money?
- The group selectively looks for confirming information. Committee members do not take time to ferret out facts that indicate it is a poor choice.

- The group does not formulate any contingency plan, Plan B. They are so sure they are right that they give no thought to what they might do if Plan A fails.

**Preventing groupthink.** Groupthink may be less likely if some of the following suggestions are followed.

- Leaders do not express their opinions or preferences when assigning the task.
- Leaders encourage each group member to express objections and doubts when the group meets.
- Members of the group routinely discuss plans or progress with trusted persons outside the group, such as nationals or those in other agencies.
- Outside experts should be invited to meetings on a staggered basis and encouraged to challenge views expressed.
- At each meeting a different member of the group should be the “Devil’s advocate” assigned to point out possible flaws and suggest alternatives.
- Before final approval at least one meeting should be devoted to consider all warning signals members can think of.

Of course, in avoiding groupthink, people must not go to the opposite extreme and be so cautious that they get caught in gridlock and do not approve any solution.

**Differences between unity of the Spirit and the unanimity of groupthink.** Finally, the unanimity of groupthink must not be confused with the “unity of the Spirit” described in Ephesians 4:3. The unanimity of groupthink comes from a set of assumptions that must not be questioned. Unity of the Spirit comes from a Christian set of assumptions and a common purpose of being united with Christ (Ephesians 2:1-5).

After the first term of Christian missionary service, a problem surfaced which illustrates the difference between the unity of the Spirit and the unanimity of groupthink. When they reached the church in Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas met with the apostles, elders, and the church. They reported the results of their service, and some of the believers present stood up and

said that the converts had to be circumcised and obey Moses’ law. Then the apostles and elders met to consider this (Acts 15).

- There was much discussion (v. 7).
- Peter, not the leader of this group but someone with previous experience with this issue, addressed the group (v. 7).
- Barnabas and Paul reported what God had done among the Gentiles (v. 12).
- The group became silent as they listened to this report (v. 12).
- Only when they finished did James (leader of the group) give his opinion on what should be done (vv. 13-21).
- To implement their action we read that the apostles and elders, with the whole church decided...” (v. 22), and they wrote in their letter, “So we all agreed to...” (v. 25).

This was unity in the Spirit, quite different from the unanimity of groupthink. The leader did not express his opinion at the beginning; people from both sides of the issue spoke; people were quiet as they listened; there was much discussion; in the end a decision was reached that the Gentiles involved “read it and were glad for its encouraging message.” Missionaries must be careful to distinguish between the unity of the Spirit and groupthink.

### Memory

Another part of cognition is memory. Things we have learned and thought about must be remembered. Material we have learned and thought about does us no good unless we can recall it when needed. Following is a widely used model of memory and what to do when someone has either too little memory or too much memory.

## Memory Model

The most widely used model is an easily understood intuitive one which maintains that people need to encode the information, store it, and retrieve it when needed.

**Encoding.** The first step in remembering something is to get the information into our memories. Some encoding occurs automatically with no effort. For example, most people remember most of the major activities they did during the day and can recall the sequence in the evening even though they did not try to “memorize” each event as it happened. We also often remember “where” things are, such as knowing that a favorite Scripture passage is about a third of the way down the right page in our Bible (though we may have trouble finding it in someone else’s Bible).

Other encoding requires effort, and we have to intentionally encode it so that we can recall it in the future. Rote memorization takes much time and often results in much forgetting, so many people develop mnemonic devices to use in encoding. Some of these are presented in the “too little memory” section that follows.

**Storage.** The second step is that we need to retain the material in some way. Humans have several types of memory.

- First, they have a sensory memory of what they see and hear that lasts at the most two or three seconds. This is of little help for recalling things later.
- Second, they have a small short-term, working memory that lasts up to ten seconds or so. The task is for people to transfer information during that time to another memory.
- Finally, they have a long-term memory which may last as long as the person lives and has an almost limitless capacity.

People who develop skills for getting information into their long-term memories can perform phenomenal feats that amaze others.

**Retrieval.** The final step is to get the information out of the long-term memory. The more associations, retrieval cues,

people have on the information, the more likely they are to be able to access it. For example, if they are trying to recall a person’s name, the more different things they have connected to him or her, the more success they are likely to have.

For further information about specific topics in memory click on the following links to parts of Chapter 6 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Ebbinghaus](#)
- [The Forgetting Curve](#)
- [Tests of Recall](#)
- [Paired-Associates Learning](#)
- [The Free Recall Method](#)
- [Cued Recall](#)
- [Tests of Recognition](#)
- [Forced-Choice Recognition Testing](#)
- [The “Almost Limitless” Capacity of Recognition Memory](#)
- [Recognition Errors](#)
- [Memory as a Construction](#)
- [Summary: From Ebbinghaus to Encoding](#)

## Too Little Memory

Although there are no magic formulas, those with poor memories can usually do some things to improve memory. They should learn material well originally. Such material is more resistant to forgetting than material barely learned. They can make material meaningful by using coding techniques, such as some of the mnemonic devices described below. Learning under the conditions where you will have to recall the material is most effective. When learning, try to provide yourself with retrieval cues so that you will be able to retrieve the information when you need it. Actually practice the material. After reading a section in a book, stop and recall it, or after you are introduced

to someone, use his or her name several times in the conversation. Do not learn while under the influence of drugs, including alcohol. You may get state-dependent learning and not be able to recall unless you take the same drugs again.

***Mnemonic Devices.*** In addition to the above suggestions, many persons can improve their memories by using mnemonic devices. These memory aids all serve to organize information and use information already stored in memory. Some of the most common mnemonic devices are discussed here.

The *method of loci* involves the use of a series of places already in memory, a series of locations that can always be recalled in order. Each place then becomes a place associated with a thing you are trying to recall. If you imagine a walk down your street, you may imagine the first object being on your mailbox, the next one in your neighbor's tree, the next one on the roof of the next house, and so forth. When you need to recall them, imagine the same walk down the street and visualize the objects in their respective places. Using this technique, almost anyone can memorize a list of fifteen words by going through them only one time, and be able to recall them a week later.

The *peg system* involves having a list of “memory pegs” already known to you on which you can “hang” the objects to be memorized. For example, one is a bun, two is a shoe, three is a tree, four is a door, five is a hive, six is sticks, and so forth. Then make an association between “bun” and the first word on the list, “shoe” and the second word, “tree” and the third word, and so forth. The list—bun, shoe, tree, door—can be recalled easily because each sounds like a number. Then the corresponding objects can be recalled easily.

*Acronyms* can be created using the first letter of each word in a series. I still recall the colors of the spectrum by remembering “ROY G. BIV,” an acronym I learned in elementary school, representing red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. A similar technique is known as

*narrative chaining*, in which you make up a story centered on the words you need to recall. Making a *rhyme* helps us remember facts about given things, such as “I before E except after C” or “Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November. . . .” We know the letters and the months, but if we get the wrong ones the rhyme will not work.

For further information about specific topics in improving memory click on the following links to parts of Chapter 5 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Memory Improvement](#)
- [The Method of Loci](#)
- [Interactive Imagery](#)
- [What Should a Student Do?](#)
- [The Spacing Effect](#)
- [Judgments of Learning](#)
- [Studying Before Sleep](#)
- [Studying in a Way that Resembles the Test](#)
- [Effort Alone does not Help](#)
- [Cue Sheets Help](#)
- [Summary: Memory Improvement](#)

### Too Much Memory

Some may have had a difficult experience at some time in their life and its effects are still with them. This may have been something that was apparent to others present, such as physical or verbal abuse in the family. It may have been hurt that no one else realized, such as being laughed at for an answer in first grade. Sometimes people need God’s spirit to bring healing to these damaged emotions, healing of memories.

The story of Joseph, a third culture kid and cross-cultural worker, is found in the last ten chapters of Genesis. As a teenager his jealous brothers hated him so much they couldn’t even say a kind word to him, they plotted to kill him, and they

actually sold him into slavery. The emotional baggage from these experiences was apparent in chapters 42, 43, and 45 where Joseph was unable to control his weeping when he saw those brothers decades later.

People may have experienced similar things at some time in their life, and the emotions related to them still influence them years later. They may have prayed about the situation and tried to forget about it, but the feelings are still there—the emotional part of forgiveness has not taken place.

Following are steps that can lead to healing of these memories. God does not give amnesia about the events; however, he can remove the damaged emotions the memories arouse. Individuals may be able to walk through these steps themselves, or they may find it helpful to have someone else guide them through them as a friend. Use these steps for yourself or others who need your counsel.

***Thank God for gifts given.*** The first step is to thank God for the gifts he has given you. This is not an ego trip or bragging. It is simply a matter of recognizing that God has blessed you with good things in life. He may have given you athletic ability so that you can kick or throw a ball more accurately than others. He may have given you intellectual capacity to grasp abstract concepts that most other people cannot understand. He may have given you musical talent for a particular instrument or a voice that can sing beautifully. He may have given you a face that others in your culture see as beautiful or handsome. He may have given you a personality that others like to be around or the ability to relate so well that people want to be your friend. The list goes on and on.

When talking with his brothers more than two decades after they had mistreated him (Genesis 45), Joseph pointed out that God had sent him on ahead to save their lives. He noted that God had made him “father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household, and ruler of all Egypt.” He said to tell their father about the honor given to him in Egypt. These were not boasting, just statements of fact. He told his brothers not to be

angry with themselves because God used what they did for good in his life—and in theirs.

Think of yourself made in God’s image and thank him for making you. If you are going through these steps alone, it is best to actually write down the good things God has given you.

If someone is there with you, talk about gifts together and rejoice in what God has given. People with the most severe damage to their emotions may be the ones who most need someone else with them. These others may be able to identify gifts or blessings taken for granted—overlooked because the person is so focused on the damage.

***Ask God about healing.*** The second step is to ask God what he wants to heal in you. Sometimes we want to be healed just to have fewer tensions or to live up to what someone else expects of us. Our motivation must be to become more like Christ, and we want to be sure that we really want to be healed—regardless of what other people think.

Sometimes God seems to delay the time of healing. Although Joseph was in charge of the prison, he still wanted to get out (Genesis 40). After he interpreted a dream Joseph asked the cupbearer to mention him to the Pharaoh when things improved. The cupbearer forgot—and Joseph waited two more years.

Sometimes God does not heal. Paul, another cross-cultural worker, asked God for something three times, and God never removed the “thorn in the flesh.” God just told Paul that his grace was enough—that God’s power was made complete without removing the thorn (2 Corinthians 12).

***Share the memory with God.*** The third step is to share the memory with God, the painful memory that keeps you from being healed. Rather than concentrating on the current problem such as fear of people (because you were abused as a child) or difficulty speaking in public (because you were laughed at in first grade), go back to the memory of the original event causing the problem.

We have no record of Joseph doing this, but he certainly could have done so. He had those memories available as we can see in his comments to the cupbearer (Genesis 40), “For I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon.”

Paul had had many painful memories, such as being beaten, stoned, and shipwrecked, and he shared not only with God but with believers in the church. This is recorded in the chapter just before he wrote about God’s grace being sufficient (2 Corinthians 11).

When you share that memory with God, the emotions associated with it will be aroused again. This is to be expected. Remember that you are looking for the healing of these damaged emotions. They have to be brought to the surface again even though the experience is painful.

**Replace the hurt with love.** The fourth step is to replace the hurt with love by forgiving those involved in the painful memory as God would forgive them. Even though the people causing that hurt may no longer be alive, you must forgive them unconditionally—not dependent on the other person’s changing and becoming worthy. When you do this, you can focus not on the hurt, but on change and growth.

By the time he revealed who he was (to his brothers) 22 years after they hurt him, Joseph had forgiven them. He told them not to be distressed and angry with themselves (Genesis 45). Seventeen years later (39 years after the offense), at the death of their father, his brothers still thought that Joseph had not really forgiven them, and they asked for his forgiveness. Joseph wept as he realized they had still not accepted his forgiveness. Showing that he had replaced the hurt with love, he reassured them and spoke kindly to them. He told them not to be afraid, that he would provide for them and their children (Genesis 50).

Replacing the hurt with love requires both deciding with your mind to forgive and letting God help you with the emotional part of forgiveness—healing damaged emotions.

This is not “forgive and forget.” The memory remains, but the associated emotion changes and does not affect your thoughts and actions.

**Become thankful for the memory.** The fifth step is to become thankful for that painful memory. Because you believe that all things work together for good, now is the time to look for the good in this situation. For example, your abuse as a child may have made you particularly compassionate toward other abused children and made you very effective in helping them. Or being laughed at in first grade and your not speaking in public may have encouraged you to develop other methods of communication, such as writing or painting.

Joseph did this when he revealed himself to his brothers. He pointed out that God had used their hurtful act to save lives, to preserve their family (Genesis 45). He reiterated this seventeen years later when he told them, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it to save our lives” (Genesis 50). If they had not sold him into slavery, they all (including him) would have died along with thousands of others in the famine in that part of the world.

This thankfulness is what Paul wrote about in 1 Thessalonians 5 where he said, “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” We can do this with joy not only because it is God’s will, but also because we know that he works for good in all things.

**Thank God for healing.** Finally, you thank God for healing and go ahead acting as the healed person you are. Remember that the healing is from God, and we accept it by faith. When God has given you this gift, you can go out and pass it on to others while keeping it yourself. Since he has set you free, you can help to set others free, setting in motion grace and love to everyone.

When sending out the twelve their first time to spread the good news, Jesus said, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8). The root word for “gift” appears three times in this statement so that it literally says, “Giftwise you

have received, giftwise give.” Since you have received this wonderful gift, you can go out and give it to others.

Some, or all, of these steps may need to be repeated as other memories surface. The Spirit may bring some of these up at unexpected times, and God stands ready to heal.

For further information on healing of memories please see [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_healing\\_of\\_memories.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_healing_of_memories.htm).

### Conclusion

The first psychologists studied the intellect emphasizing the animal-like properties. In fact, Pavlov actually studied classical conditioning using dogs, and Skinner studied operant conditioning using rats and pigeons. Ebbinghaus studied memory using humans, but he emphasized rote learning, something much more animal-like than God-like.

A few early psychologists studied thinking, language, and memory, viewing them as higher mental processes—much more like God. During the last half of the twentieth century, the majority of psychologists shifted to the much more God-like cognitive processes for most of their studies. Of course, we must remember that humans have both animal-like and God-like characteristics; therefore all studies that help us understand and use maximally our intellect are important to us as Christians.

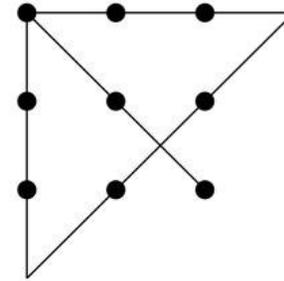


Figure 5:3. To solve the nine dots, four lines problem, one has to draw the lines outside of the “box” created by the “square” of the dots.

## Chapter 6

### Motivation

Motivation from a Christian Perspective

Biological Motivation

Hunger

Sexual Motivation

Other Biological Motives

Cognitive Motivation

Hierarchy of Motives

Love and Loneliness

Compassion Fatigue

Sins of the Spirit

Fruit of the Spirit

Parts 1, 2, and 3 of Chapter 9 in Dewey's introductory text are relevant.

- [Chapter 09: Motivation and Emotion](#)

(Chapter 12—Motivation and Work, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant.)

Previous chapters have considered persons, how they develop, how they become aware of the world around them, and what their intellectual processes are. This chapter is about their motivation which arouses and directs their behavior. Motives

get people going and direct them toward a particular goal. For example, the thirstier people get, the more likely they are to get up (arousal) and get a drink (direction). Psychologists usually divide motivation into two sections that go by different terms, such as primary and secondary, biological and cognitive, or physiological and psychological. These fit well into our Christian perspective.

#### Motivation from a Christian Perspective

Biological motivation fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower left part of Figure 6:1 (Biological-Motivation). Animals as well as humans have these biological motives, and humans are quite animal-like in many of these motives. In fact, much of what we know about such motives comes from the study of animals.

Cognitive motivation also fits into our Christian perspective but on the other side of Figure 6:1 (Motivation-Cognitive). In addition to having physiological needs similar to animals, some psychologists have pointed out that human beings also have higher needs, God-like needs. Although most agree about the biological needs for survival (hunger, thirst, and so forth), they often disagree on the exact cognitive needs, needs such as needs to know, love needs, and needs to realize potential.

Figure 6:1 Motivation from a Christian perspective.

## HUMANS

Created . . . . .	in the. . . . .	Image of God
Like Animals		Like God
Overt Behavior. . . . .	Definition. . . . .	Mental Processes
Understand. . . . .	Goals. . . . .	Make people
Creation		like God
Psychoanalysis. . . . .	Systems. . . . .	Humanistic
Behaviorism		Psychology
Experimental . . . . .	Methods . . . . .	Descriptive
Physical. . . . .	The Person . . . . .	Spiritual
Immaturity. . . . .	Development. . . . .	Maturity
Sensation . . . . .	Awareness . . . . .	Perception
	(States of Consciousness)	
Learning . . . . .	Intellect . . . . .	Cognition
	(Memory)	
<b>Biological</b> . . . . .	Motivation. . . . .	<b>Cognitive</b>

**Biological Motivation**

Many biological motives must be fulfilled for survival, such as the need for oxygen which must be satisfied (or death results in a matter minutes) and the need for water which also must be met (or death results in days). However, this chapter concentrates on only two. These two motives are hunger (or

death results in months) and sex (or humanity becomes extinct in decades).

**Hunger**

In order to survive people must eat enough so that their energy use does not exceed their caloric intake over long periods of time. Daily variations in the amount they eat may not cause many immediate ill effects, but in the long run there must be a balance between intake and expenditure. If there is no balance, the person becomes obese or starves.

**Factors to Consider.** Many variables influence how much a person eats. Some of these involve topics from earlier chapters such as the physiological, sensory, and learned ones.

**Physiological.** Anatomical and physiological factors play a prominent role in biological motivations. Early theories proposed that hunger was due to sensations coming from the body, particularly from contractions of the stomach. However, psychologists found that cutting nerves between the stomach and the brain did not decrease food intake. In fact, removing the stomach entirely did not decrease intake. Theories emphasizing events in the central nervous system then began to dominate psychology. One part of the brain, the hypothalamus, seemed to play an important role. Destruction of one part of it resulted in animals or people who overate and gained weight rapidly, then maintained the new higher weight. Destruction of another part resulted in animals which refused to eat at all and died unless kept alive by tube feeding. Although they then recovered, they never became completely normal. More recently psychologists have shifted emphasis from the hypothalamus itself to pathways passing through it. Furthermore, psychologists once again see peripheral factors as playing a role. The liver apparently monitors the body's fuel supply and sends information to the brain, and hormones released from the intestines (e.g. CCK) or fat cells (leptin) play a role in regulating appetite.

**Sensory.** Taste and smell obviously affect our eating.

The odor or first taste of good food increases the flow of saliva, the secretion of insulin, and the movement of muscles in the digestive tract. When food tastes better, people increase their intake, and when it tastes worse, they decrease their intake. When changes in texture make it more or less pleasant, people increase or decrease their intake in response. Tastes and textures considered good or bad differ widely from culture to culture, and missionaries must be careful not to insult the people they are trying to reach. These sensory factors controlling food intake seem obvious, but even the sight of food will start people eating. This is especially true in obese people who are not hungry. They eat less than normal persons when food is not in sight, but more when larger quantities of appetizing food are set before them.

*Learned.* Our food preferences are greatly influenced by learning. Fried grasshoppers or live termites do not sound very appetizing to most Americans. However, if they think in technical terms about what they actually eat, their food does not sound much better. A slice of buttered toast is really ground embryos (of plants) that have been heated very hot (baked), cut up and burned again (toasted). Then the secretions of the mammary glands of the bovine ruminant (milk from cows) are allowed to separate, one part is stirred until it hardens (butter), and it is spread on the burned embryos. Each culture has a “list” of foods that are considered good as well as ones they consider inedible.

**Potential Problems.** Problems can occur in the form of eating too much, too little, the wrong foods, or some combination of the three. Some people, such as alcoholics, eat all they want, but still suffer from malnutrition.

*Eating too much.* Eating too much may range from people eating more than they need and becoming slightly overweight to people eating huge amounts and becoming obese with an excessive amounts of fat on their bodies. Some people eat so much that it becomes an eating disorder, bulimia nervosa. They typically eat in binges and then do something to

compensate for the eating, such as vomiting, laxatives, fasting, or excessive exercise. MedicineNet has more information on bulimia at <http://www.medicinenet.com/bulimia/article.htm>.

Though bulimia occurs in only a small part of the population, obesity is very common. Obesity may not only make people socially unattractive, but also it may lead to a variety of physical disorders. Our society prizes thinness, but obesity is prevalent. The Centers for Disease Control reports that in the first decade of the twenty-first century a third of American adults are overweight (but not obese) and another third are obese (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/overwt.htm>). The World Health Organization notes that this is a worldwide problem with more than a billion adults overweight and nearly a third of those are obese (<http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/publications/facts/obesity/en/>). This means that wherever missionaries are serving, they are likely to see overweight people.

Of course, we ask why people are overweight, and the simple, obvious answer is that people get fat because they eat more calories than they burn. Then the question becomes, Why do they eat so much? This question has several answers.

- They may have a physical problem such as brain damage or a glandular disorder, although this is only about 5%.
- They may have been overfed as infants, and overfeeding predisposed them to obesity.
- Their culture may view obesity as a sign of wealth or even health.
- They may be eating on the basis of external cues such as the sight or smell of food or because others are eating.
- They may have just developed a habit of overeating.
- Most people tend to gain weight with advancing age because as their metabolism decreases they tend to reduce their activity but continue their former eating habits.

In a society where food is scarce, most people have little trouble with obesity. However, in an affluent society many individuals have problems with what the Bible calls "self-

control" or "gluttony." We hear very little preaching or teaching on the subject of gluttony today, perhaps because so many preachers and teachers are obese themselves. The apostle Paul talks about being temperate in all things and bringing his body into subjection. Unfortunately, "temperance" has come to be associated only with consumption of alcoholic beverages, even though it has a much broader meaning in Scripture. We must be aware that gluttony is not only a psychological disorder, but a sinful behavior as well.

Americans spend billions of dollars a year on diet aids of one type or another. Unfortunately the success rate of these weight loss programs is very low. The average long-term outcome from diets is a gain of 105 percent of the weight lost. That is, individuals end up weighing more than when they started to diet. Such people typically diet repeatedly. Unfortunately, this losing and gaining of weight may damage the cardiovascular system, so the person would be better off remaining fat. It is more important to change regular eating habits than to lose weight quickly on some exotic diet.

Some of the weight-loss group programs also have moderate success. Overeaters Anonymous (<http://www.oa.org>), Take Off Pounds Sensibly (<http://www.tops.org>), and Weight Watchers (<http://www.weightwatchers.com>) provide group pressure on members to lose weight. They give public praise for loss, and some of them give public disapproval for failure to lose. Studies have shown that the average weight loss for members remaining in these groups is 14 pounds. The problem is that more than two-thirds of those who begin drop out of the programs within two years. The most important thing people can do is to find a program that has a lifestyle they can follow the rest of their lives

*Eating too little.* The opposite of bulimia nervosa is a disorder in which individuals fail to eat enough over a long period of time, anorexia nervosa. This disorder is found primarily among adolescent girls and young women. Although the disorder was once quite rare, it has increased in recent years.

Since some anorexics literally starve themselves to death, some type of therapy is necessary immediately.

The most dramatic physical evidence of anorexia nervosa is weight loss. Anorexics beginning at a normal weight may drop to a weight of only fifty or sixty pounds. This disorder usually begins with a period of dieting, common among adolescent girls in our culture. However, anorexics have distorted body image (seeing themselves as fat), develop a great fear of becoming obese. Even though they have protruding ribs and claw-like hands, they continue to eat little and exercise vigorously to reduce even more. In the early stages, some have normal appetites and may even become preoccupied with food. They may cook elaborate meals for others and go through periods of bulimia, followed by self-induced vomiting so that they will not get fat. Menstrual periods stop and weight loss begins. As the disorder progresses, appetite for food disappears, sexual desire disappears, and the breasts and hips shrink to the point where the patient, when clothed, is unrecognizable as a female.

Anorexia nervosa is much rarer than obesity, but just as difficult to treat. Hospitalized patients frequently respond to treatment but relapse when discharged. Long-term studies indicate that more than 10 percent of the anorexics starve themselves to death and another 25 percent to 50 percent have recurrent episodes. One problem is that they see themselves as fat and are determined to lose weight. Another problem is that the appetite actually disappears, and then the person becomes too weak to eat. For more information on anorexia see the article on MedicineNet at [http://www.medicinenet.com/anorexia\\_nervosa/article.htm](http://www.medicinenet.com/anorexia_nervosa/article.htm).

With both overeating and undereating we must consider the God-like cognitive factors. Learning techniques using reinforcement bring about only temporary changes because the reinforcement must be maintained. If we can bring about cognitive changes, we may be able to bring about lasting changes.

*Eating poor diet.* Even when an abundance of food is available, perhaps especially with such abundance, people may eat poor diets. In such cultures, many foods are refined and this removes some of the essential nutrients. Then sugar, salt, MSG, and fat is added to make the foods taste better and sold in many fast food establishments for people in a hurry. Christians can make a contribution by suggesting better diets. In Chapter 1 we found that Daniel ran an experiment several thousand years ago showing that vegetables and water are better for people than are rich foods and wine (Daniel 1).

Since gluttony is also a sin, Christian missionaries need to bring a Christian perspective to bear on eating. Paul wrote, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...?” He pointed out that the Holy Spirit is in his people and that Jesus paid the price for them; he finished by saying, “Therefore honor God with your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Many people who would be appalled at someone damaging the church building made of wood or stone where God does not live are themselves guilty of destroying his temple themselves.

The Bible has much to say about food. During creation God said that he gave us (Genesis 1:29)

- Every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth;
- Every tree that has fruit with seed in it.

Even food guides such as the United States Department of Agriculture Food Guide Pyramid (<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>) have grains, vegetables, and fruits at their base, allowing other foods in much smaller quantities. Although one does not need to keep every ceremonial law found in scripture (Acts 10:9-23), it still has some excellent advice on food.

For further information about specific topics on hunger click on the following links to parts of Chapter 9 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Hull's Theory](#)

- [Fat Regulation](#)
- [Consequences of Severe Dieting](#)
- [Factors Influencing Fat Deposition](#)
- [Satiety](#)
- [The VMH rat](#)
- [Satiety Defects](#)

## Sexual Motivation

Nearly everyone discussing biological motivation includes the sexual drive but hastens to add that it is different from the other biological drives. It is not vital to the survival of the individual (but it is to the human race); it uses energy rather than restores it; and there are many restrictions (when, where, and with whom) on how it may be satisfied. These restrictions are not only cultural ones, but they may have moral and health implications as well.

**Factors to consider.** Sexual motivation is influenced by many things, but we will mention only the ones related to topics already discussed in this book.

*Physiological.* Two physiological factors have been implicated in sexual motivation: hormonal and neural. Hormonal factors are extremely important in determining sexual motivation in animals, but they play a relatively minor role in adult humans. Although some studies have found a small positive correlation between the level of estrogen in the bloodstream and likelihood of intercourse in women, other studies have found a negative correlation. Although castration before puberty may prevent copulation in males, most studies show little decrease in sexual motivation in adult males following castration-unless they think it will have an effect. Surprisingly, the one hormone that does affect sexual motivation in both men and women is testosterone (secreted by the adrenals as well as the testes). As long as there is a minimal level in the bloodstream, sexual motivation will be normal. These hormones do not elicit particular sexual behaviors but

produce a readiness to respond to sexual stimuli.

Neural factors are very important for sexual behavior in both men and women, although we do not have the same experimental data we have for hormones. In general, the more similar animals are to humans, the more neural mechanisms influence behavior and the less hormones influence it. Both the hypothalamus and the cortex are important in human sexual behavior. Chemicals at the synapses are also involved, but their role is far from clear at the moment.

*Sensory.* Sensation is obviously related to sexual motivation. As was noted previously, hormones produce a state of readiness to respond to sexual stimuli. Of course, almost any stimulus can be sexually arousing, depending on the experiences of the individual. However, visual stimuli have traditionally been the most sexually arousing to the male. This is the reason for the popularity of books, magazines, and movies capitalizing on presenting the nude female body or people in various sexual postures. Recently, more women are reporting being sexually aroused by visual stimuli. Traditionally, touch has been the most erotic stimulus for women. This is the reason for the popularity of petting, in which the male manually stimulates the various erogenous zones of the female, leading to her sexual arousal. The role of odors varies between persons.

*Learned.* Learning plays a very important role in sexual behavior. Although orgasmic responses are reflexively controlled, other sexual behaviors must be learned. This is the reason for the popularity of marriage manuals and books about sexual techniques. People do not innately know the sexual behaviors expected of them. These behaviors are different in different cultures. Each culture has its own set of stimuli which are considered to be erotic, and members of that culture learn sexual responses to them. For example, in some cultures the sight of a woman's breast is considered highly erotic, while in others it is not. In some cultures the smell of perspiration is considered highly erotic, while in others it may be considered offensive, so members of that culture do all they can to remove

it.

*Potential Problems.* There is a great variety of disorders of the sexual drive. Although there have been great changes recently in what our culture considers normal sexual behavior, the list of sexual disorders remains long (<http://web4health.info/en/answers/sex-menu.htm>; <http://www.depression-guide.com/sexual-disorders.htm>). Rather than trying to cover many of these, we will just consider sexual stress and maintaining sexual purity.

*Sexual stress.* Suppose that two missionaries have been working together for several months, but during the last three weeks they have been spending every available minute on the big project. They have eaten working lunches together and continued working after the others went home for the night. They realize that they are beginning to look forward to going to work more than they ever have before. Certainly they couldn't be falling in love, could they? They are missionaries, so sexual immorality, adultery, homosexual activity, or incest are not possible, are they? Why do they feel this way? What can they do to prevent this from happening? Here are answers to some of these questions.

*Missionaries?* Could it happen to them, missionaries? Of course, it could. They are human, aren't they? It is a natural human tendency to grow to like people with whom we spend time, so much so that even people taken hostage often grow to like their captors, and the captors grow to like their hostages. It is even more likely that missionaries will like people with whom they are working and that liking may become sexual attraction. People can gradually "slide" into sexual sin over a period of time. An example of this is found in the case of Amnon and Tamar where Amnon became obsessed with her "in the course of time" (2 Samuel 13).

Although it is rare, it can be "love (lust) at first sight." In this case people can "fall" into sexual sin rapidly. An example of this is David and Bathsheba. Rather than being out leading his army where he should have been, David stayed in

Jerusalem. Having trouble sleeping, he went for a walk on his roof and noticed a woman bathing. Rather than looking away, he sent someone to find out who she was. Instead of leaving it at knowing who she was, when he found out her husband was out fighting in the army, he had her come over. Then “he slept with her” (2 Samuel 11).

*Immorality or adultery?* Could missionaries get pulled into immorality or adultery? Of course they could, and the “slide” into it usually begins in harmless, innocent ways. For example, field directors are responsible to show attractive new single missionaries around. Or, a missionary feels sorry for the new missionaries who have no place to stay and invites them to live with him or her temporarily. Or, while talking with a long-term missionary friend a missionary finds out that the friend feels neglected at home, so he or she tries to give the friend some extra attention. Before they realize it, the two of them are sharing deep things, and this intimacy leads to increasing time together, and finally adultery.

It happens not only with other missionaries, but with nationals as well. It happens to both men and women. It happens with young and old. Missionaries who think they are invulnerable to sexual sin are actually the most vulnerable. 1 Corinthians 10:12 describes our vulnerability, but verse 13 promises God’s faithfulness in providing a way of escape. Attraction to other people is very likely to happen, and if missionaries do not know what to do, they may well find themselves in a position like King David, trying to cover up their sexual sin and causing serious problems for their entire family, field, and mission agency.

*Homosexual activity?* Could two missionaries begin a homosexual relationship? Yes, they can, and it can happen with either men or women, married or single, young or old. As a result of isolation and loneliness, people living together with same-sex partners may form emotionally dependent relationships. These rather exclusive relationships may become

possessive and lead to physical activity with sexual elements. An embrace may become more than just comforting.

This may progress into homosexual activity, so that the people involved have progressed into a sinful relationship. But even if it is stopped before reaching this level, confusion, guilt feelings, and the relationship itself need to be carefully examined.

*Why me?* You may ask, “Am I, as a missionary, more susceptible to sexual sin than someone back ‘home’?” You may be because of some of the facts of missionary life. That is why we talk about “sexual stress.”

- High stress. Stress and anxiety tend to make many men want sex, but many women want cuddling and rest. When refused, either may think the other does not care. Cultural stress decreases the control of sexual urges, especially in those who had problems at “home.”
- Lack of privacy. You may live in a “goldfish bowl” where nearly everything you do is watched and talked about. There may be no locks on the door, and sound may carry far outside the bedroom, even outside the house.
- Cultural taboos. You may live in a culture where the expectations for husband-wife behavior are quite different from your home country. You may not be able to display any affection in public, even to hold hands.
- More separation. The very nature of your work may mean the spouse has to be gone several nights a week. He or she may be tempted while away, and the partner tempted at home as well.
- Need for affection and touch. We all need touch, especially when stressed, and you may be basically alone where you are with no one to just put an arm around you in difficult times. You have left your support group behind and may not have developed a new one.

You need to remember that you are far from home, behind “enemy lines,” and the enemy will use whatever advantage he has.

*How can I prevent it?* Although sexual sin occurs among missionaries, it is not unavoidable. Here are some things you can do to make it less likely.

- Acknowledge your vulnerability. Until you do this, you will not be motivated to do anything to prevent it.
- Avoid triggering situations. Know what leads you to sexual temptations. If visual stimuli do, be careful what you see on TV, the computer monitor, etc. (King David needed to stay off roofs). If it is touch, be careful about physical contact. Once you begin the sexual slide, temptation becomes stronger the further you go.
- Pray. You pray. Ask others to pray. Pray with your spouse and ask your spouse to pray for you. You have a support group back “home,” so ask them to pray.
- Communicate with your spouse and regularly fulfill each other’s sexual needs. Talk regularly and frequently about how you feel about your relationship with each other.
- Have an accountability relationship. You also need a support group physically present who will look you in the eye and ask you regularly (weekly, if possible) about the purity of your sexual life. Remember that your capacity for self-deceit is great.
- Make a commitment to God. Read Leviticus 18-20 and 1 Corinthians 5-7. Note that they encourage you to be holy, and the way to be holy is to enjoy sex with your spouse and avoid it with anyone else. Make that commitment.
- Practice the presence of the omnipotent God. You may think that no one knows about what you are downloading from the Internet, but remember that God is there. Not only is he there, but he wants us to be holy and promises to strengthen us (Ephesians 3:16).

For more information about missionaries and sexual stress, [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_sexualstress.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_sexualstress.htm).

**Sexual Purity.** While watching TV, one missionary noticed that he picked up on something he saw or heard, and his thoughts become more sexual. Another missionary noticed how

handsome one of the men at the office was, and she began imagining... They were taken by surprise because missionaries like them are so deeply committed to Christ. They are on the frontlines of spiritual battles, taking Christ to people who have never heard. Such missionaries certainly would not get into sexual sin, would they?

Of course, they would. For centuries military personnel in any conflict have been notorious for their sexual immorality. Engaged in physical/ideological battles in strange cultures far from family, friends, community, and church, they engage in sexual exploits. Why would you expect any less temptation for you, as you engage in the spiritual battles against the forces of evil? You are lonely. With social support absent, emotional needs unmet, and living in a strange culture with greater sexual freedom than at home, why would Satan not take advantage of you as well?

*Same-Old. Same-Old. New-New!* The Bible specifies three intertwined sources of temptation, commonly called “the world, the flesh, and the devil.” Two of these are relatively unchanged since Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians, but one has changed dramatically during the last century,

- The devil, “...the ruler of the kingdom of the air” (Ephesians 2:2). As he has done for thousands of years, at some times the devil goes around as a roaring lion looking for someone to devour, but more often relative to sexual temptation he slips in almost unnoticed, sowing small seeds that will grow into sinful behavior.
- The flesh, “...gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts” (Ephesians 2:3). Missionaries are tempted simply because they are human. As James puts it, “Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed” (1:14). Human nature has not changed over the years, so people today are tempted just as they were when James wrote those words 200 years ago.

- The world “...when you followed the ways of this world” (Ephesians 2:2). The writer to the Romans (12: 2) warned to “not conform any longer to the pattern of this world.” The “ways of the world” and the “pattern of the world” have not changed relative to sexual temptation since Paul’s time. However these sexual temptations literally come through the air and the walls as the “prince of the power of the air” sends them into missionaries’ homes through radios, TV satellite receivers, email, and Internet connections.

The devil and the flesh are relatively unchanged, but technology in our world is new. Even after the invention of printing, missionaries could be quite effective in keeping obscene, pornographic, and suggestive material out of their homes. However, most missionaries today are required to have at least email, if not Internet connections. Since about 40% of all email is spam and about 30% of all spam is pornographic, about one in every eight emails is pornographic, and some of it will get through even the best filters. Filters block many pornographic sites on the Internet, but some still gets through—and pop-ups may suddenly appear on your screen at any time.

What can missionaries do in this new world to maintain sexual purity? As is so often the case, the answer to resisting temptation is in what we call the Great Commandment, originating when the Law was given to Moses and cited by Jesus himself.

*Love God.* The most important thing missionaries can do to maintain sexual purity is to love God with their whole beings, their heart, soul, strength, and mind (Luke 10, Deuteronomy 6). Relationship to God must take top priority.

- Have a daily, consistent devotional time to maintain relationship with God.
- Make a specific commitment to God to live a holy life free of sexual sin. Write this commitment down and place it where you will see it daily (desk, mirror, etc.)
- Study, meditate on, memorize, and apply Scripture on this topic.

*Love Others.* The second most important thing missionaries can do to maintain sexual purity is to love others (Luke 10, Leviticus 19). Love relationships with others must have a high priority as well. Relative to sexual purity this would include the following.

- Learn the cues in their host countries that signal sexual purity and sexual availability. These include such things as dress, eye contact, posture, gestures, and so forth.
- Be aware that even within cultures people vary widely on the meaning of touch.
- Be especially alert when in “high risk” situations, such as being alone with another person, spending prolonged time working with another person, and so forth.
- Meet weekly an accountability partner (or group) to answer specific questions about sexual purity.
- If married, make relationships with spouses of highest priority (of all people).
- If married, make the same commitment to spouses (relative to sexual purity) that you make to God.
- If married, be intentional about meeting the emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of your spouse.

*Love Yourself.* The third most important thing is to love themselves, to care for themselves as they care for others.

- Accept your own vulnerability. 1 Corinthians 10:12 reminds us that if we think we are standing firm, we must be careful or we will fall.
- List (actually write them down) sexual things you will not do, such as those found in Leviticus 18-20.
- List sexual things that may be permissible but not beneficial, things that may master you as in 1 Corinthians 6. Concentrate on “renewing your mind” as described in Colossians 3 and in Ephesians 4.
- Avoid danger zones for you. If you know that you are tempted visually, do not watch videos or TV shows that you know will contain graphic sexual images. If you know that

you are tempted verbally, do not visit Internet chat rooms or read explicit romance novels.

- Develop an early warning system to increase your awareness of problems coming. Knowing that you will be talking with an accountability partner is likely to make you more aware of danger zones. If you are married and feel the slightest attraction for someone other than your spouse, take action immediately.
- Develop a plan for combating temptations which will occur in spite of your attempts to avoid them.

Joseph was a handsome, single, young man with hormones raging (just past puberty) when he was taken to a different culture. When his boss' wife asked him to have sex with her, he politely refused and gave her good reasons for his refusal. He refused her repeated requests. One time when he went to work and they were alone in the house, she grabbed his coat and asked for sex, but he left his coat and ran out of the house. You can maintain your sexual purity too, but you may have to run from a person, or your computer! For more information on maintaining sexual purity see [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_sexualpurity.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_sexualpurity.htm).

For further information about specific topics in sexual motivation click on the following links to parts of Chapter 16 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Sexual Development](#)
- [Normal Sexual Development in Childhood](#)
- [Puberty](#)
- [Adult Sexual Arousal](#)
- [What Causes Sexual Excitement?](#)
- [Orgasm](#)
- [Sex in Marriage](#)

## Other Biological Motives

We have many other biological motives. They do not have as great an impact on our lives and behavior as to the needs for food and sex. As physiological needs, we are often unaware of the ways our bodies meet these needs until what the body does automatically does not fully meet them. Here are a few examples.

- Need for air. We do not have to think about breathing most of the time because we do so automatically. However, if something prevents us from breathing, within seconds we become keenly aware of the need and take whatever action restores our ability to breathe.
- Need for water. We do not have to "remember" to drink most of the time because we get thirsty, look for water, and drink it. However, if no water is available, within a day or so, we will be consciously aware of it and driven to do nearly anything to get water.
- Need to maintain constant temperature. We usually do not have to think about this because our bodies perspire, dilate or constrict blood vessels, and make us shiver to maintain the temperature. However, when we shiver enough in the cold or feel the heat in the warm, we are likely to move to shelter or change clothing.
- Need to sleep. No one has to tell us when it is time to sleep, we just fall asleep. However, when we do not get enough, we become aware of it and take action to stay awake if we want to—or to get more comfortable if we want to sleep.
- Need to avoid pain. We have an unconditioned response to withdraw from pain. However, if that does not remove the pain, we take voluntary action to remove the painful stimulus.

The list of such needs can go on and on, but most of these needs are automatically monitored by our bodies themselves.

For further information about specific topics on other biological motives click on the following links to parts of Chapter 9 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Thirst](#)
- [Pleasure and Pain](#)
- ["Pleasure Centers" in the Brain](#)
- [Happiness](#)
- [Motivational Conflicts](#)
- [Stress-Induced Behavior](#)
- [Summary: Biological Motives](#)

### Cognitive Motivation

Humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow developed a broad theory of motivation and recognized that people at their best were God-like. Writing about people having "peak" experiences in *Toward a Psychology of Being*, he said, "The person at the peak is godlike not only in senses that I have touched upon already but in certain other ways as well..." (p. 92). As a result of growing up in a Jewish home, he developed a worldview similar to a Christian one. One of his major contributions to psychology was his hierarchy of motives ([http://www.abraham-maslow.com/m\\_motivation/Biography.asp](http://www.abraham-maslow.com/m_motivation/Biography.asp)).

### Hierarchy of Motives

Maslow suggested that there were two types of motivation; deficiency motivation and growth motivation. A deficiency motive (need) is inactive in the healthy person, is preferred over other satisfactions, causes illness when not satisfied, cures illness when restored, and prevents illness when present. These needs are organized in a hierarchy so that as each need is met, a higher need emerges.

**Physiological needs.** At the lowest and broadest level

are the physiological needs discussed earlier in this chapter. These include such things as the need for air, water, food, shelter, sleep, and sex. When these needs are not met, they are dominant. For example, when being choked so that no air can reach their lungs, people think only about getting air, not about their self-esteem.

**Safety needs.** When the physiological needs are met, the safety needs (the other deficiency needs) emerge. Individuals now seek an orderly, predictable, organized world. If the physiological needs are met, the unmet safety needs become dominant. People need a predictable world so that they feel safe, secure, and stable. For example, even if missionaries are well fed and have adequate housing, they are not thinking about realizing their potential if they live in fear of robbery, assault, and political turmoil. Maslow had these safety needs at the second level of his hierarchy as follows.

SAFETY NEEDS

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

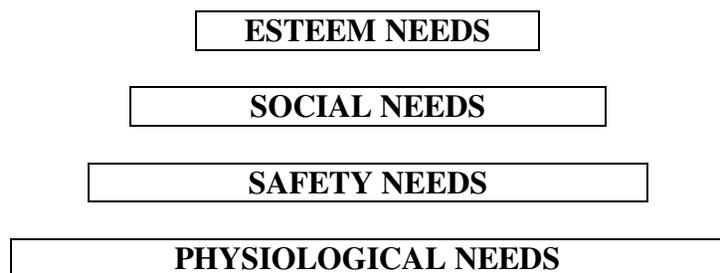
**Social needs.** After the deficiency needs are met, the growth needs emerge. The first ones are the social needs of love and belongingness. The needs to love and be loved and to belong and be accepted become dominant. Missionaries who feel safe and secure are probably not thinking about living up to their potential if they have no close friends whom they love and with whom they belong. People want to become part of groups to avoid loneliness and alienation. This is the third level of Maslow's hierarchy as follows.

SOCIAL NEEDS

SAFETY NEEDS

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

**Esteem needs.** After the social needs are met, the esteem needs emerge. People who feel secure and feel like they belong soon become concerned about their own self-esteem and about receiving recognition from others. The needs to achieve, to be and feel competent, and to be respected by others become dominant. Missionaries at this level need to feel like they are winning people to Christ and making disciples. This is the fourth level of Maslow's hierarchy as follows.



**Self-Actualization.** Finally, after the esteem needs are met, the self-actualization needs appear. People now want to live up to their fullest potential. Missionaries want to become more and more God-like personally and fulfill their unique contribution to God's kingdom.

These people are now motivated primarily by moving toward self-actualization, toward realizing their potential, fulfilling their mission in life, knowing and accepting themselves, and becoming more unified. Maslow found these mature people to have a superior perception of reality; increased acceptance of self, others, and nature; more spontaneity; problem-centering; desire for privacy; autonomy; freshness of appreciation; creativeness; peak experiences; improved interpersonal relations; identification with humanity; and a more democratic character structure.

He drew up a list of the attributes of these people, which he called B-values (being values, growth needs, or meta-needs). He noted that these are the attributes assigned to most

conceptions of a god and that the person is godlike. As Christians, we agree that these are the attributes of God, but God is the original and humans are the copies. It is amazing that a non-Christian studying the finest human beings he could find would come up with such a complete list of the attributes of God. Of course, this is the reverse of the process we used in chapter 2, where we looked at the attributes of God to see which of them we could see in humans.

Not only is Maslow's list a list of the basic attributes of God, but Christians are commanded to be like God in many of these ways. B-values Maslow listed included wholeness, perfection, completion, justice, aliveness, richness, simplicity, beauty, goodness, uniqueness, effortlessness, playfulness, truth, honesty, reality, and self-sufficiency. Although most of these are obviously attributes of God, two of them need further elaboration. By "playfulness," Maslow does not mean frivolousness, but having a sense of humor or joy, and God certainly has that. The one attribute Maslow found that is not to be characteristic of us is self-sufficiency. Our sufficiency is of God, so our attempts at self-justification and self-righteousness always fail. Of course, this does not mean we are not to take care of ourselves, or that we are not responsible for our behavior. It simply means we cannot do it all on our own.



**Peak Experiences.** Though they were not a part of his hierarchy, Maslow wrote much about "peak" experiences.

These ecstatic or spiritual experiences are special times during which people sense that they are a part of something far larger than they are. Several of these experiences are described in Scripture.

Paul, early missionary, describes an experience in which a man was caught up into the third heaven, paradise, where he heard indescribable things. He was so confused that he was not even sure if he was in his body or out of it. He did not even feel like he was permitted to talk about what had happened (2 Corinthians 12:2-5).

This may happen to several people at the same time. Peter, James, and John were on a mountain with Jesus when something incredible happened. Again there was some confusion about what happened and the order in which it happened. One account of it says that the men were very sleepy, and another says that they fell to the ground, terrified. However, in all accounts, they said it was good to be there, and they did not talk about it (Matthew 17:2; Luke 9:29).

Peak experiences may occur in everyday life even in the absence of any unusual circumstances. For example, one lady had a peak experience just sitting at the breakfast table filled with dirty dishes one morning after her husband and children had left for work and school. When she sat down, she began thinking about the wonderful relationship with her husband and the success of her children in every aspect of their lives. She had an ecstatic, spiritual experience of basking in God's love for her.

For further information about specific topics in Maslow's theory click on the following links to parts of Chapter 9 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Maslow's Motivational Psychology](#)
- [Self-Actualizers](#)
- [Maslow's Pyramid](#)
- [B-needs and D-needs](#)

- [The Peak Experience](#)
- [The "Mystical Experience" in Religion](#)
- [Maslow's Advice on Self-Actualization](#)
- [Theory Z](#)
- [Criticisms of Maslow's Theory](#)
- [Summary: Maslow's Motivational Psychology](#)

### Love and Loneliness

Maslow placed the social needs, love and belongingness in the middle of his hierarchy. These two topics are of great importance to Christian missionaries and need further discussion.

*Love.* Before the last half of the twentieth century psychologists said little about love. About 1980 I checked the indexes of 39 general psychology textbooks by different authors. I found that 56 percent of them did not consider the topic of love important enough to include in the index. Twenty percent of the texts treated love by comparing it to love in animals or in terms of sexual love, and another ten percent treated it as an emotion. Love was most frequently discussed in terms of Harlow's work with love in monkeys. Fifteen percent of the texts dealt with love in terms of Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs, and only two of these six books had a fairly well-rounded discussion of love.

Maslow described two types of love, D-love and B-love. D-love (deficiency love, love need, selfish love) is found when the person feels the absence of others and hungers for affectionate relationships with other people. B-love (love for the being of another person, unheeding love, unselfish love) is a richer, "higher," more valuable experience than D-love. B-lovers are less jealous or threatened and "create" their partners. Such love is welcomed into consciousness and enjoyed without end.

As Christians, we can say that B-love and agape love are descriptions of the image of God in humans. This love is in

itself a motivation. It is what motivated God to send his Son into the world to redeem us (John 3:16), and he expects us, created in his image, to show this kind of love toward others (John 13:34). Missionaries must help the people they serve develop this kind of motivation in their lives. Our love is to be like God's love, not only in loving our friends, but our enemies as well.

Maslow said he found an inner nature that was good (perhaps neutral, but certainly not evil) but was not a strong and overpowering force. Even though it was denied and suppressed, it persisted and forever pressed for actualization. We can see this as the image of God remaining in us and wanting to be realized. We must encourage this growth motivation in our counselees and not just be content with solving their most pressing problems.

**Lost in Translation.** Who would know more about things getting lost in translation than missionaries serving in places other than their passport culture? Such missionaries are keenly aware of trying to explain the concepts of Christianity in cultures which may not even have the concept, much less have words for the concept.

The problem in understanding what is taking place between Jesus and Peter is that English has only one word for love. Jesus and Peter in this case begin the conversation using different words for love, and only on the third time do they use the same word.

In English we may say “I love hamburgers,” “I love you,” and “I love God.” We use the same word for quite different kinds of love. Other cultures often have a richer vocabulary when it comes to love. To understand the different aspects of love for single and married people we need to at least realize that there are different kinds of love.

**Three Dimensions of Love.** In the 1980s Psychologist Robert Sternberg used factor analysis, a complicated statistical procedure, to study different kinds of love. After analyzing many different ways that love was used in sentences, he

concluded that there were primarily three different dimensions of love. He called them decision/commitment, intimacy, and passion.

The Greek language in which John records the conversation between Peter has a variety of words for different kinds of love. That is what Peter and Jesus were disagreeing over. The three Greek words describing what Sternberg “discovered” a few years ago are agape, phileo, and eros. Peter and John were using agape and phileo 2000 years ago talking about different dimensions of love.

*Agape (Decision/Commitment).* In John 21:15 the first time Jesus asked, “Peter, do you love me?” Jesus used the Greek word “agape.” Considering scripture passages that use agape is the best way to learn what agape love is.

- God loves (agape). John 3:16, “God so loved the world...”
- Jesus loves (agape). John 15:9, “As the father has loved (agape) me, so have I loved (agape) you.”
- God commands us to love (agape). John 13:34, “As I have loved (agape) you, so you must love (agape) one another.”
- Sinners can love (agape). Luke 6:32, “Even sinners love (agape) those who love (agape) them.”
- Evil people love (agape). John 3:9, “Men loved (agape) darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.”
- Demas loved (agape). 2 Timothy 4:10, “Demas, because he loved (agape) this world has deserted me.”
- Agape love is best defined in the “love” chapter, 1 Corinthians 13. “Love (agape) is patient, love (agape) is kind...”

Of course, agape occurs many more times in the New Testament, but these passages illustrate its meaning. Agape love involves making a choice and a making a commitment to that choice. The traditional marriage vows were all about agape love. They include commitment to the other person “for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness or in health, until death do us part.” There is no mention of only as long as you arouse me sexually or as long as I like you.

Descriptions of agape love include such words as unconditional, thinking, fidelity, caring, decision, faithful, cognitive, and mental. This is the cognitive part of love in which individuals make decisions to commit themselves to another person for life. Single missionaries are encouraged to love people with agape love.

*Phileo (Intimacy).* In John 21:15 when Peter replied to Jesus, “You know that I love you. Peter used the Greek word “phileo” rather than agape (which Jesus had used). Again considering scripture passages that use phileo is the best way to learn what phileo love is.

- God loves (phileo). John 5:20, “The Father loves (phileo) the Son.”
- Jesus loves (phileo). John 11:3, “The sisters sent word to Jesus, ‘Lord, the one you love (phileo) is sick.’”
- People love (Phileo). John 16:27, “The father himself loves (phileo) you because you have loved (phileo) me.”
- People love (phileo). Romans 12:10, “be devoted to one another in brotherly love.”
- People may love (phileo) too much. Matthew 10:37, “Anyone who loves (phileo) father, mother, son, or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”
- People may love (phileo) wrong things. 1 Timothy 6:10, “The love (phileo) of money is a root of all kinds of evil.”

Of course, phileo occurs more times in the New Testament, but these passages illustrate its meaning. Phileo love is what we would call close friendship. Philadelphia is a city in Pennsylvania today, a city in Asia Minor in New Testament times, and a Greek word usually translated “brotherly love.”

Descriptions of phileo love include words such as closeness, bonded, connected, communication, support, sharing, feelings, and warmth. This is the emotional part of love in which individuals share intimately (not sexually). Single missionaries are encouraged to love people with phileo love.

*Eros (Passion).* In Greek mythology Eros was the god of sexual love worshiped as a fertility deity. It is not surprising that the Greek word “eros” does not appear in the Bible. However, the Old Testament has several erotic passages that describe such sensuality.

- Proverbs 5:18-19, “Rejoice with the wife of your youth. Let her breasts satisfy you at all times and be ravished always with her love.”
- Song of Songs 5:4, “My lover put his hand through the latch opening and my heart began to pound for him.”
- Song of Songs 7:7-8, “Your body is like a palm tree and your breasts like clusters of the fruit. I said, ‘I will climb the palm tree and take hold of its fruit.’”
- Genesis 29:17-21, “Rachel was lovely in form and beautiful...Jacob served seven years to get her, but it seemed like only a few days. He said to Laban, ‘Give me my wife. My time is completed and I want to lie with her.’”

Descriptions of erotic (eros) love include such words as sexual arousal, touching, hot, physical, petting, oral sex, and sexual intercourse. This is the motivational part of sex which leads to sexual relations. Currently such relationships are often called “friends with benefits.” The couple again intends it to be just physical intercourse one time with no emotional involvement. Of course, single missionaries are discouraged from such love.

Contemporary English uses “passion” as referring to any powerful, compelling emotion driving a person, such as a “passion for souls.” Missionaries are urged to express this. For more information about what is lost in translation see <http://www.missionarycare.com/singles/love.htm>.

*Loneliness.* Maslow noted that people need to feel like they belonged to a group which cared for them. From a Christian perspective we are all a part of the body of Christ, the church. Paul, an early missionary, wrote to several early churches emphasizing that though Christians have different gifts, they are all one body and each member belongs to all the

others (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; Ephesians 4:11-13).

Unfortunately, sometimes missionaries know that they are a part of this body, but they do not feel like they are—they feel lonely. This loneliness may occur when they are in their host country, and few from their own culture are there to make them feel they belong. It also may occur when they return home, and no one seems to understand.

You may be one of these lonely missionaries. People around you are friendly and greet you with a smile. However, you find it difficult, seemingly impossible, to have any really meaningful interaction with others. You would like to meet new people and make deep friendships, but you just can't bring yourself to take part in social activities to make friends.

Feeling unloved and unwanted, you are lonely. But how could you be lonely when there are people all around you? Isn't God always with you so that you will not be lonely? Can missionaries be lonely? What can you do?

*How can I be lonely?* You are certainly not alone if you live in a city of millions of people. However, loneliness has nothing to do with being alone; it has to do with relationships. If you live in a village of a hundred people, you are much less likely to be lonely than if you live in a city of a million people. You are likely to know the names of everyone you meet in that village, but you may never meet anyone you know in that city.

You may be relatively new to the culture in which you live so that you find it difficult to have meaningful relationships with the nationals. You have not yet internalized enough of the culture to feel at ease with close relationships in it. Or you may have been in that culture for many years, even the leader of your group, and still be lonely. Being the leader changes your relationships with everyone in the group and it is "lonely at the top."

*Can God's people be lonely?* You may think, "Isn't God with me everywhere? I'm part of the family of God so how can I be lonely?" God is with you everywhere, but you

need human relationships as well. You are part of God's family, but you may still not have the deep friendships you desire with other members of his family. You can still be lonely. Here are some examples.

- Adam. Even before sin entered humanity, God noted that it was not good for Adam to be alone, so God created Eve as a companion with whom Adam could be in relationship (Genesis 2).
- David. In the Psalms David said, "My friends and companions avoid me...my neighbors stay far away" (31:11), and "look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me" (142:4).

*Do other missionaries feel this way?* Everyone feels lonely at times, and missionaries are no exception. Living in a strange culture away from family and friends, most people feel lonely.

Near the end of his second letter to Timothy, Paul (a veteran missionary) wrote about several things that made him feel lonely.

- Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me (2 Timothy 4:10).
- Crescens has gone to Galatia (2 Timothy 4:10).
- Titus (has gone) to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10).
- At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me (2 Timothy 4:16).

*What causes loneliness?* Loneliness is common because it has so many causes. These causes may be found in your situation or within you. Here are some possible causes.

- Your moving. Part of being a missionary is moving from one place to another, either reentering your passport culture repeatedly or moving from one culture to another.
- Friends moving. If you do not move, other people from your agency are likely to. Expatriates are constantly on the move.

- Away from family and friends. Part of working cross-culturally is living in a place far from acquaintances in your past.
- Expectations not met. Perhaps you had heard how friendly people were in your host culture, but you find them quite distant.
- Rejected. You may not be accepted by the people you came to serve and feel rejected even by people serving in your agency.
- Discriminated against. You came to serve, but you find that political or social forces in your host country discriminate against you because of your passport country, your race, or your religion.
- Surface relationships. 1. You long to share deeply with others, but you are not able to find anyone in your agency or in your host culture who wants to do so.
- Surface relationships. 2. You do not want to become too close to anyone because you know that either they or you will be moving soon.
- Lack of social skills. You do not understand how to interact well in your host culture—or maybe your passport one.

*What can you do to get over loneliness?* The good news about loneliness is that you CAN take steps yourself to get over it. It is the only “disorder” that can be cured by adding two or more cases together! However, the more lonely you feel, the harder it is to take the steps needed, so remember that it takes time, effort, and commitment. You may need the help of a counselor to begin to take those steps.

Basically what you want to do is to find the cause (perhaps from the ones listed above) and then do things to counteract that cause. You may have to make changes in your situation or changes in yourself. Do not wait for your feelings of loneliness to go away—act first, and the change in feelings will come later. Here are some suggestions.

- Look for ways to get involved with people around you, such as eating with them, sitting near them, exercising with them.

- Put yourself in situations where you will meet new people, such as joining a club, attending a new church and doing volunteer work with others.
- Develop your social skills, practice getting to know others, and become vulnerable enough to let people know you.
- Do not assume new relationships will be the same as old ones. Look at each new person from a new perspective.
- Respond to others and their interests, but do not pretend to be interested in something you are not. People will sense that.

Here is a point to consider. Modern communication technology, such as e-mail, instant messaging, webcams, VoIP, and low international phone rates has resulted in some people becoming so interested in maintaining old relationships that they fail to build new ones. These distant relationships may make us think that we do not need intimate face-to-face relationships. This is not the case. Even though you may be able to hear and even see the person, it is not the same as interacting with a real person. Trying to maintain such a relationship is often not satisfying and may result in not developing adequate relationships with others. For more information about loneliness see

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_loneliness.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_loneliness.htm).

### **Compassion Fatigue**

An article in *Family Practice Management* published by the American Academy of Family Physicians defines compassion fatigue as “a deep physical, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion accompanied by acute emotional pain”

<http://www.aafp.org/fpm/2000/0400/p39.html>.

Compassion fatigue is a combination of burnout and secondary trauma. In classical burnout missionaries cope by withdrawing and becoming less compassionate; however, missionaries with compassion fatigue continue to give fully to their work with nationals. They often feel like they are being

pulled irresistibly down by a whirlpool, and they are powerless to stop. These people may be viewed as incredibly dedicated and successful missionaries by others, but they often do not feel that way about themselves. Here are some of their major symptoms.

- Feelings of depression and hopelessness
- No feelings of accomplishment and joy
- Blaming and complaining about others
- Increasing irritability and anger
- Nightmares and other sleep problems
- Startled by unexpected sounds
- Personal and professional life not separate
- Intrusive frightening thoughts

Neither burnout nor secondary trauma are approved medical diagnoses, rather they are lay terms, as is “compassion fatigue.” Compassion fatigue is also sometimes used to describe an organization characterized by high absenteeism, turnover, and interpersonal conflict, or to describe the decrease over time of a whole country’s donations to victims of disasters such as earthquakes or floods. Here it is used to describe individuals showing signs of burnout and secondary trauma.

#### ***What does the Bible say about compassion fatigue?***

The Bible never uses the term “compassion fatigue,” but Moses is a good example in that he continues for years until he finally breaks under it. Moses was not a missionary, but he was a Third Culture Kid who was leading a group of cross-cultural workers as they transitioned from one culture to another. At about the time of receiving the Ten Commandments, he shows tendencies toward compassion fatigue.

- Exodus 18. Only a couple of months out of Egypt and before receiving the commandments, Moses’ father-in-law told him, “What you are doing is not good... you will only wear yourself out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone” (vs. 17-18).

- Exodus 32. A few weeks later as he was coming down Mt. Sinai with the commandments, Moses became so angry with the people that he destroyed the tablets on which God had written them.
- Exodus 34 and Deuteronomy 9. Moses went back up Mt. Sinai and spent nearly six weeks prostrate before God interceding for the people, but neither eating bread nor drinking water. A plague on the people followed.
- Numbers 11. On their way from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh Barnea the people complained, so God sent fire on them. Moses again interceded and then told God, “I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me... put me to death right now—if I have found favor in your eyes—and do not let me face my own ruin” (vs. 14-15).

One would think that Moses would change. However, 40 years later at Kadesh Barnea he was again leading the children of those he led at Mt. Sinai. The people were again complaining. Moses and his brother interceded, and they left the tent following God’s directions. However, when Moses spoke to the people he struck the rock twice with his staff rather than speaking to it as God had told him. This disobedient outburst resulted in Moses not being allowed to lead the people into the promised land (Numbers 20).

***Do I have compassion fatigue?*** Of course, you can look at the major symptoms above to get a general idea. Fortunately, the best measure of compassion fatigue is available online free of charge at [http://www.proqol.org/ProQol\\_Test.html](http://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html). It is available in about a dozen languages and is called the ProQuol, Professional Quality of Live Scale. The English version comes in a self-scoring format which includes scales for both burnout and secondary trauma. This test has high internal reliability but no research on validity. When scoring the test, be sure to reverse the scores for the items indicated on the burnout scale. Your scores will tell you if you are low, average, or high on both burnout and secondary trauma.

***What causes compassion fatigue?*** The major causes of compassion fatigue are not having time to do what needs to be done while serving others who suffer from many sources of traumatic stress. Missionaries may find that their time is taken by trying to meet the demands of headquarters, committees, field directors, nationals, governmental red tape, families, etc. They are serving people who suffer from illness, violence, poverty, alcohol, corrupt government, etc.

Missionaries try to get more time by eliminating things that would help them cope. They often engage in less and less of the following:

- Prayer, meditation, reading the Word
- Breaks through the day, and restful lunch (they read email, return phone calls, etc.)
- Time with friends, spouse, and children
- Exercise, sleep, and relaxed meals
- Hobbies and other outside interests

Everyone has exactly 24 hours in every day, and each person has to decide how he or she is going to use that time. Missionaries who spend all their time doing “God’s work” should remember that going beyond a certain point, the harder they work the less they accomplish. Coffee breaks were not given because employers cared for the workers, but because research showed that people who took them accomplished more than others who did not. During World War I Britain required people to work seven days a week, until research showed that people who worked six days a week (i.e. enjoyed a Sabbath) and had a day of rest accomplished more than those who worked seven.

***Things to do to get over compassion fatigue?*** The logical place to begin is with what Moses’ father-in-law suggested. First, Jethro listed Moses’ roles: be the people’s representative before God, teach them the decrees and laws, show them how to live, show them their duties. Second, Jethro told Moses to select men who were capable, feared God, were trustworthy, and would not take dishonest gain. Then Moses

was to appoint these men as officials in a hierarchy over groups of 10s, 50s, 100s, and 1000s (Exodus 18:19-23). In other words, delegate much of the work to others.

Later when Moses was complaining to God about the heavy load of carrying the people, God told Moses to choose 70 elders who were leaders and officials. Moses was to bring them to the Tent so that God could put the Spirit on them to help carry the burden of the people (Numbers 11:16-17). This was the same advice Jethro had suggested long before.

This is still great advice today, especially for people like Moses who seem to think that saving the world depends on them alone. All of us need others. Here are some further suggestions.

- Reaffirm your commitment to Christ, including daily time in the Word, meditation, and prayer as well as a weekly Sabbath (Matthew 22: 37).
- Reaffirm your commitment to others, including time for family, colleagues, and nationals (Matthew 22:39).
- Reaffirm your commitment to maintaining the temple of the Holy Spirit (your body), including eating right, getting daily rest, and exercising daily.
- Clarify your personal boundaries.
- Share your feelings with colleagues who can share theirs with you.
- Follow God’s call on your life even when it means saying “no” to good things.
- Develop a support system of people around you who listen well and care.

***Things to stop doing to get over compassion fatigue?***

In addition to doing the things mentioned above, one should

- Stop blaming others. People at headquarters, your field director, or your principal may act in ways that you disapprove of, but people are not responsible for how you react.
- Stop complaining. When you talk with other discontented people, it only makes you feel worse. You may have heard

that misery loves company; it should be stated that “misery loves miserable company.” Discontented people do not want others spreading cheer.

- Stop making big decisions. Do not decide to quit being a missionary, buy a luxury car, get a divorce, or any major life decision. You will be doubly sorry later.
- Stop looking for a quick fix, such as an affair, drugs, etc.

### Sins of the Spirit

Many of the physiological motives are involved in what have been called the “sins of the flesh.” These are primarily sins actually committed by the body, such as eating too much or having sexual relations with someone other than one’s spouse. They are external and may be observed by someone other than the person committing them.

Sins involving cognitive motives are more covert than overt. They are more what we would call the sins of the spirit than the sins of the flesh. They are less likely to be frowned upon, even by Christians, because they are less obvious and more widely practiced. We must remember that the Bible deals not only with stealing, but also with coveting; not only with murder, but also with anger; not only with adultery, but also with lust. Although we feel more comfortable condemning the sins of the flesh, we must also deal with the sins of the spirit.

An excellent list of these sins is the traditional list of the seven cardinal or seven deadly sins. In the 1970s Henry Fairlie wrote a book about their manifestation today, noting that all of them are demonstrations of love that has gone wrong. Although it is natural for humans to love what pleases them, in sin this love is misplaced, weakened, or distorted. Pride, envy, and anger are sins of perverted love, love directed in a false manner toward oneself. Sloth is a defective love because it is not given in a proper measure. Greed, gluttony, and lust are sins of excessive love in that they interrupt one's capacity to love other deserving objects. Each of the seven deadly sins as expressed

in life today.

**Pride.** Pride is not reasonable and justified self-esteem, but an overwhelming opinion of one's own qualities. Near-synonyms include words such as vanity, conceit, haughtiness, egotism, arrogance, boastfulness, selfishness, and self-glorification. Pride, however, may not be expressed in such nasty ways. It may be expressed in our self-righteousness or even in our "humility."

Pride has been made more acceptable in the individualism and achievement orientation of our culture. Rather than emphasizing cooperation and the good of the group, we emphasize competition and the rank of the individual in the group. Pride may be expressed in having things others do not, appearing better than others, or knowing things others do not. Pride may express itself in racism, saying that one's race, and therefore oneself, is better than other races. As missionaries work with others, they must be alert for signs of pride and deal with it.

**Envy.** Envy grows out of coveting and being unable to have the desired object. Envy is more than just coveting what another person has. It is not being able to have it because it is under the control of another. No one easily confesses to envy because it seems to be the nastiest and meanest of the sins. Furthermore, it can never bring gratification--no enjoyment, only endless self-torment as its appetite increases. Envy only makes us dissatisfied with the unique gifts/talents God has given us!

Envy assumes that everyone should be able to do, experience, and enjoy everything anyone else can do, experience, or enjoy. Not only must we be able to read poetry, we must be able to write it, so we take courses in "creative writing" even though we have no creativity. We take courses in "self-expression" even though we have no artistic talent. Then when we do not do well, we take revenge. We destroy the rules of poetry and call ourselves poets, or we make a noise and call ourselves musicians. Envy is not merely grieving because of

another's good, but also wanting to pull the other person down. This leads to resentment, backbiting, spite, and accusation. We should develop the talents we have but not expect to be "all-talented."

**Anger.** Anger arises as a defense of ourselves in situations where we lose esteem. It is the response to humiliation. Our voices rise, eyes blaze, bodies stiffen, fingers point, and feet stamp. In more "primitive" times objects were thrown, but now it is words that are hurled. Unfortunately, words may do more permanent damage than physical objects. Anger leaves a residue of hatred and a desire for revenge in the person who gets hit with it.

Christians have had great difficulty in handling anger because the Bible at times gives it unqualified acceptance and at other times gives it qualified acceptance. Some have concluded that anger is justifiable as a reflection of God's anger at sin and human suffering, but that it is not justifiable if it is a response to personal offense. Often this is the case. Others have argued that since God's anger is personal and is aroused by people, humans must have the same quality. When affected by sins of oppression, we become angry in the way that God does. However, they note that we are not to take vengeance, for that is God's place. Others have disagreed, saying that anger as a result of personal offense finds no justification in Scripture. God is holy, so opposition to his will is sin, but humans are tainted by the Fall, and opposition to their will is not sin.

**Sloth.** Slothfulness is very difficult to define because it is the extreme of idleness and laziness. The Latin term *acedia* can be translated "without care." Physical sloth is an indifference to work, with increased laziness, idleness, and indolence. Mental sloth is a lack of feeling, boredom, apathy, and lack of caring. Spiritual sloth is an indifference to our duties to God. It is described by terms such as indifference, apathy, despair, faintheartedness, and desirelessness. The slothful person has no purpose, cares for nothing, enjoys nothing, hates nothing, lives for nothing, believes in nothing, interferes with

nothing, and seeks to know nothing.

Unfortunately, slothfulness is difficult to recognize because it has become so much the norm. At one time people took pride in their work, but now one hears such phrases as "minimum work for minimum pay," and society places social sanctions against anyone who produces too much. We now have more leisure time than any other generation, but this has led to boredom rather than growth. In every role and occupation we find people who do not care.

**Greed.** Greed refers to an inordinate desire, an insatiable longing to possess something. We usually think of it in terms of money, in terms of the miser counting his gold, running his hands through the coins and embracing the piles of money. However, greed is the love of possessing anything, and is a sin common in the middle class. Most of the merchandise we find in boutiques and shopping malls no one really needs. We have been affected by advertising so that we come to the point where we just "have to have" some given item. Then, the more we get, the more we want.

The sin of covetousness is mentioned in the Ten Commandments. The apostle Paul called the love of money (greed) the root of all evil. The most insidious thing about greed is that it can never be satisfied. We always need just a little bit more. As our incomes and free time increase, we typically give a smaller and smaller proportion of them to the Lord. We neglect our families for greed, saying we are laboring to get more money for them. Success is usually defined in terms of money.

**Gluttony.** Gluttons are those who exhibit an almost insatiable desire and great capacity for engorgement. Gluttony is usually associated with eating but does not need to be restricted to this alone. We sometimes use the phrases "a glutton for punishment" or "a glutton for work" to describe someone with an insatiable desire for these things. However, here we will concentrate on gluttony in terms of food.

We typically think of gluttons as fat people whose

whole life is ordered around food. However, gluttony can also be found in many other people, if we think of it as an inordinate interest in food. Obsessive dieters may be just as gluttonous as obese persons. Dieters who constantly think about food, gaze at it in the refrigerator, talk of little else, and hurry to the kitchen to eat the carefully measured cottage cheese are also gluttons. The health food addicts may be just as gluttonous if their whole life revolves around food. They may talk of little other than the dangers of food additives or the wholesomeness of sunflower seeds. This consuming interest in food is disproportionate and unnatural, a form of gluttony just as much as overeating.

**Lust.** Lust is an overpowering appetite or craving for something, usually associated with a great yearning for sex. This is, of course, associated with sexual motivation discussed earlier in this chapter. As we saw, lust may express itself in actual immoral sexual behavior, and we must deal with that.

However, we must also deal with the lust which is expressed in nothing more than fantasy. For example, a "holy man" came down from his platform and said that he had not looked upon a woman in thirty years. Since that was the first thing he said, it is logical to assume that women were the major topic of his thought life for those thirty years. People may never express the lustful thoughts in overt behavior but be just as consumed by them as those engaging in adultery or homosexual relations.

### **Fruit of the Spirit**

Living for Christ should result in the fruit of the spirit, rather than the sins of the spirit, being found in our lives. Although they do not perfectly correspond, there is a great similarity between the fruit of the spirit listed in Galatians 5, the attributes of God considered in Chapter 2 of this book, and the characteristics of self-actualizing people considered earlier in this chapter. From our Christian perspective, we do not actualize ourselves, but God actualizes us as we mature. We

become more like him. Furthermore, the fruit of the spirit is, in many cases, the opposite of the sins of the spirit. Galatians 5 lists nine characteristics of the fruit of the spirit..

**Love.** As we have already seen, God is love. He sent his son because he loved us, and Christ told us to love each other as he loved us. Maslow found B-love and agape love in the individuals he studied. He found people becoming more God-like. Love is the opposite of sloth. Although we usually think of slothfulness as laziness, we saw that its essence is in not caring, not caring about anything. Love is the opposite of this. It is unselfish caring for the other person.

**Joy.** Although we seem to miss this attribute of God, he is a joyful God. Jesus said that he wanted his own joy to be in us that our joy might be full. Maslow found this characteristic in his self-actualizing people in what he called playfulness. In fact, joy was one of the terms he used to define it, along with fun, amusement, gaiety, humor, and exuberance.

**Peace.** God is a God of peace. Jesus said that he had told us certain things that we might have peace, and that he had given his peace to us. Maslow called this attribute completion, which is roughly synonymous with fulfillment, finality or a feeling of "it is finished." Peace is the opposite of envy. People who want something another person has can never be at peace with themselves.

**Patience.** All of us have experienced God's patience. Even when we fail him he gives us a second chance, then a third, a fourth, and so forth. We are likewise told to be patient with others and in waiting for Christ's return.

**Kindness.** God is a God of kindness, for He is merciful to us, kind to us even when we do not deserve it. We are repeatedly told to be kind to others. Although Maslow does not use the term kindness in his list of Being values, he does use "benevolence" in describing goodness. Kindness is the opposite of greed. Greed has its essence in getting for oneself, while kindness is in giving to others.

**Goodness.** The term goodness appears in all three lists.

God is described in the Bible as being good. Maslow found goodness in the self-actualizing people he studied. Goodness is the opposite of pride, or the realization of pride. Pride strongly emphasizes self-righteousness, while goodness is righteousness in itself.

**Faithfulness.** As we saw previously, God is a faithful God. He keeps his covenants and expects us to keep ours. Maslow found justice in those he studied, and he defined justice in terms of fairness and "oughtness." If lust is defined in terms of adulterous thoughts, faithfulness is its opposite, and we are to be faithful in keeping our agreements.

**Gentleness.** In Psalm 18, David talks about God's gentleness. God is described as a shepherd who gently leads his people. The apostle Paul talked about the gentleness of Christ. Gentleness is the opposite of anger, at least of the expression of anger.

**Self-control.** Of course, God has self-control. He cannot lose control. Furthermore, he is in control of everything else. Maslow found something closely related to this when he talked about self-sufficiency, although we would see this as self-control taken too far. Self-control is the opposite of gluttony. Gluttons are controlled by their appetites rather than controlling their appetites.

For further information about specific topics in cognitive motivation click on the following links to parts of Chapter 9 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Competence Motivation](#)
- [Curiosity](#)
- [The Joy of Processing](#)
- [Complexity and Preference: A Hedgehog Theory](#)
- [Cognitive Consistency](#)
- [Festinger's Theory of Cognitive Dissonance](#)
- [Psychological Reactance](#)
- [Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation](#)

- [Reverse Psychology](#)
- [Willpower](#)
- [Avoiding Distractions](#)
- [Summary: Cognitive Motives](#)

### Conclusion

Human beings have many motives that arouse and direct behavior. Some of these motives are much like those of animals, and other motives are in the God-like similarities of humans to God. However, motives in both categories may lead to sinful behavior ranging from the sins of the flesh to the sins of the spirit.

## Chapter 7

### Emotion

#### Emotion from a Christian Perspective

Successive (James-Lange)

Simultaneous (Cannon-Bard)

Both (Schachter-Singer)

#### Physiological Arousal

Respiration Increases

Heartbeat Increases

Salivation Decreases

Digestion Decreases

Others

#### Conscious Experience (Cognitive Label)

Anger

Happiness

Laughter

Guilt

Grief

#### Expressive Behavior

Parts 4 of Chapter 9 in Dewey's introductory text is relevant.

- [Chapter 09: Motivation and Emotion](#)

(Chapter 13—Emotion, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant.)

Another major area of psychology is emotion which is closely related to motivation in the last chapter. In fact, the root “moti” is obvious in both. This topic completes coverage of the three “elements” the early structuralists studied when Wundt and his colleagues set out to study the structure of consciousness and began psychology. When they reduced consciousness to its elements through introspection, they concluded that the three elements were sensations (covered in Chapter 4), images (cognitions covered in Chapter 5), and affective states (emotions in Chapter 7). Although the structural school of psychology disappeared from the scene more than a century ago, sensations, cognitions, and emotions are still a vital part of psychology.

Emotion is comprised of a combination of physiological responses, conscious experiences, and expressive behaviors. Although psychologists basically agree on these three components, they disagree on the relationship between the three, especially the order in which they occur.

#### Emotion from a Christian Perspective

Emotion fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the Figure 7:1. It should be obvious that the physiological response aspect of emotion fits under the animal-like side at the lower left part (Physiological.... Emotion). The expressive behavior part could be placed there as well as noted near the top of the left column where psychology is defined.

Likewise, the conscious experience component fits well under the Godlike part on the lower right of Figure 7:1 (Emotion...Conscious). Conscious experience is a mental process or cognition also found above it in the right column.

Figure 7:1 Emotion from a Christian perspective.

HUMANS

Created . . . . . in the. . . . . Image of God  
 Like Animals . . . . . Like God

Overt Behavior. . . . .Definition. . . . .Mental Processes

Understand. . . . .Goals. . . . .Make people  
 Creation . . . . . like God

Psychoanalysis. . . . .Systems. . . . .Humanistic  
 Behaviorism . . . . . Psychology

Experimental . . . . .Methods . . . . .Descriptive

Physical. . . . .The Person . . . . .Spiritual

Immaturity. . . . .Development. . . . .Maturity

Sensation . . . . .Awareness . . . . .Perception  
 (States of Consciousness)

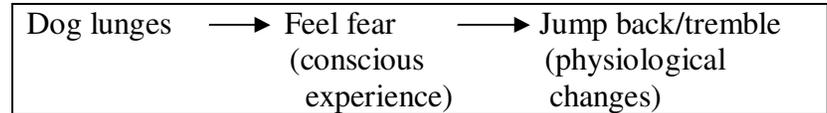
Learning . . . . .Intellect . . . . .Cognition  
 (Memory)

Biological . . . . .Motivation. . . . .Cognitive

**Physiological.** . . . . .**Emotion.** . . . . .**Conscious**

Theories of emotion usually mention these physiological changes and conscious experiences, but the theories disagree over which comes first in emotion. For example, if people were

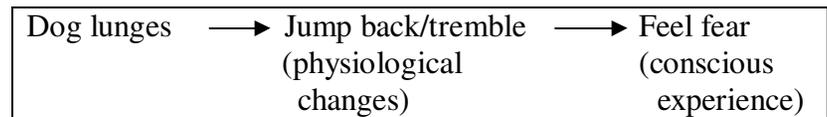
walking along a sidewalk and suddenly a snarling dog lunged against the fence beside them, most people would say that they were afraid and then jumped back trembling. That is, the conscious experience occurred first followed by the physiological changes. This is often called the common sense theory as shown below.



Here are the major theories proposed since psychology began in the nineteenth century.

**Successive (James-Lange)**

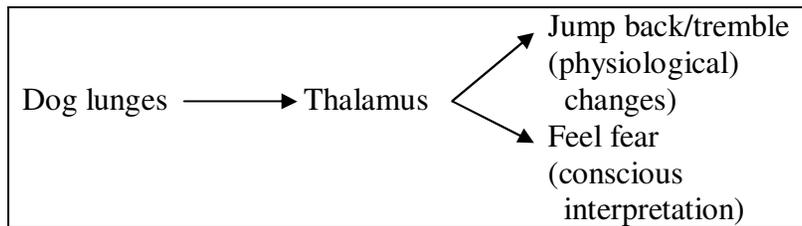
During the late nineteenth century William James and Carl Lange proposed that physiological changes occurred first followed by the conscious experience, exactly opposite of the common sense theory. In our example, if people were walking along a sidewalk and suddenly a snarling dog lunged against the fence beside them and, without thinking, they jumped back, then they noticed that they were shaking all over and their hearts were pounding. It is only when they noticed the trembling that they felt the fear as shown below.



Though common sense would tell us that it is our fear that caused us to tremble the James-Lange theory remained basically unchallenged in psychology for nearly 40 years. For more information on the James-Lange theory see [http://www.psychwiki.com/wiki/James-Lange\\_Theory\\_of\\_Emotion](http://www.psychwiki.com/wiki/James-Lange_Theory_of_Emotion).

### Simultaneous (Cannon-Bard)

During the first half of the twentieth century Walter Canon and Philip Bard proposed that the physiological responses and conscious experiences were parallel processes that occurred independent of each other. By then the thalamus had been discovered as the “switchboard” of the brain through which most senses traveled on the way to higher centers. Thus, when the dog lunged at people, the neural impulses went to the thalamus. The thalamus then simultaneously sent impulses that caused them to jump back, began to tremble, and felt the fear all at the same time. Neither one occurred first, and neither one depended on the other as shown below.

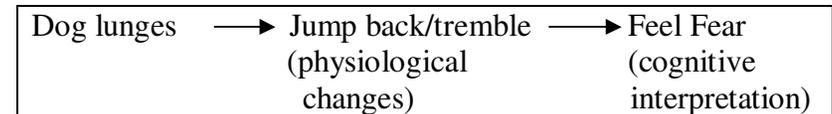


The James-Lange and the Cannon-Bard theories remained the two most popular theories in psychology for another 40 years. Some research favored one theory and other research favored the other, but neither was shown to be the best. For more information on the Canon-Bard theory see [http://www.ehow.com/about\\_6678726\\_cannon\\_bard-theory.html](http://www.ehow.com/about_6678726_cannon_bard-theory.html).

### Both (Schachter-Singer)

In the last half of the twentieth century as the cognitive revolution took place in psychology, Stanley Schachter and Jerome Singer proposed a two-factor theory of emotion

combining the other two theories. Since the physiological reactions in all emotions are so similar they believed that individuals had to interpret what the emotion was. That is, when the dog jumped at people they trembled, and when they gave the cognitive label “I’m afraid,” they felt the fear as shown below.



If people noted that they were trembling and their heart was pounding while they were kissing an attractive member of the opposite sex (rather than jumping back from a dog), they would likely have used the cognitive label, “I’m in love.” For more information on the Schachter-Singer theory see [http://www.psychwiki.com/wiki/The\\_Schachter-Singer\\_Theory\\_of\\_Emotion](http://www.psychwiki.com/wiki/The_Schachter-Singer_Theory_of_Emotion).

Now in the first half of the twenty-first century after another 40 years of research, these three theories of emotion appear in many general psychology textbooks. No theory has emerged as the one that explains everything. This is not the place to try to decide which theory is best; however, it is the place to note that all three of the theories include both physiological changes and conscious experiences.

### Physiological Changes

The physiological changes that take place when people become emotionally aroused are controlled by the autonomic nervous system. This system usually operates without people thinking about it or even being aware that it is doing so. Just as its name says, it is autonomous. It regulates many of the glands and smooth muscles inside the body, such as the pancreas, the liver, the heart, the arteries, and the bladder.

For further information on the autonomic nervous system see

<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/auto.html>.

The autonomic nervous system has two parts, the parasympathetic division and the sympathetic division. The parasympathetic division is prominent during most of the time while the people are carrying out the routine tasks of everyday life. This system has a calming effect on the body to conserve energy during everyday life. It can operate to stimulate just one part of the body at a time, such as stimulating digestion after a meal without affecting heart rate.

The sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system becomes dominant whenever something happens to arouse emotion. When people are frightened, angry, or challenged, the sympathetic division arouses nearly all of the glands and muscles it controls. This system operates as a unit, so that all systems are ready to meet the situation that has come up. It operates as a unit because it has many interconnections near the spinal cord, uses long-lasting noradrenaline as a neurotransmitter, and causes the adrenal glands to secrete adrenaline and noradrenaline, stress hormones, which are carried all over the body by the bloodstream. This general arousal prepares individuals for action, for fight, or for flight. Here are some of the things that occur.

### **Respiration Increases**

When people become emotional, they burn more energy so they need more oxygen. The sympathetic nervous system makes them breathe deeper and more frequently to provide the needed energy. Although people may not notice the changes in their own breathing until someone else calls their attention to it, it is a sign of high emotion.

### **Heart Rate Increases**

To carry nourishment to the muscles, the heart rate accelerates. Other people may not be able to detect this

pounding heart, but people in highly emotional states who pause to look for it, are likely to realize that they have rapid heart rates.

### **Digestion Slows**

To send energy to the muscles, blood is shunted away from the gut and digestion is inhibited. The sympathetic nervous system innervates the stomach so people in emotional states may say they “have butterflies” in their stomach as they become aware of this stimulation.

### **Salivation Decreases**

As part of the slowing of digestion the sympathetic nervous system decreases salivation. During emotional times people notice that their mouth is dry and they have trouble speaking. Tense speakers often carry water to the podium with them.

### **Perspiration Increases**

Burning the extra calories creates additional heat, so the sympathetic system increases perspiration to evaporate and cool the body. During emotional times people may notice even sweaty palms.

### **Pupils Dilate**

To let in more light, the sympathetic nervous system causes the pupils of the eyes to dilate. Of course, during emotional periods people are unlikely to notice this, but others talking with them can observe the intensity of the emotion by watching the pupils.

This list of changes brought about by the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system can go on and on. The

idea is that it is preparing the body to act, to fight or flee. <http://free-books-online.org/psychology/introduction-to-psychology/emotions-ii-physiological-changes-during-emotions/>.

For further information about specific topics in emotion click on the following links to parts of Chapter 9 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Emotion](#)
- [Evolutionary Theories](#)
- [The James/Lange theory](#)
- [Facial Expression](#)
- [Facial Expression in Robots](#)
- [Tears](#)
- [Should Stress be a Sub-topic of Emotion?](#)
- [Limbic Origins of Emotion](#)
- [Hemispheric Differences in Expression of Emotion](#)
- [Emotion Becomes "Tractable" to Neuroscience](#)
- [Summary: Emotions](#)

### Conscious Experience (Cognitive Label)

Just as there are many physiological changes during emotion, there are many emotions that people report having. The list can reach into the thousands as shown at <http://www.eqi.org/fw.htm>. However, only four common emotions are considered here: Anger, happiness, grief and guilt.

### Anger

When Jonah is mentioned, we usually think of his disobedience. In reality Jonah was a cross-cultural missionary whose ministry was incredibly successful. After some hesitation, he went into the large, important city where God had called him and preached the message God had given him. The

people, including the king, responded by fasting, praying, and giving up their evil ways. However, instead of returning to his passport country with exciting reports of the salvation of 120,000 people, he sat down to pout.

Jonah's attitudes did not match his successful ministry. He became angry, and his anger generalized to many different categories of people and things.

- He was angry with the people group to whom God had called him to minister. It was an evil city, one which a fellow prophet had pointed out was filled with liars, killers, and thieves (Nahum 3:1). Jonah's anger had turned to hatred, and though he preached to them, he really wanted them destroyed because they had been so cruel to his people.
- He was angry with God. He said to God, "I knew it! That is why I didn't want to come in the first place. I knew that you were a loving, compassionate God who would forgive them!" God did not destroy the people as he had hoped; Jonah asked God to take his life; and then he went outside to city and sat down to see what would happen (4:1-5).
- He was angry with the vine when it withered and no longer gave him shade (4:6-9). If living today, he would be angry with the electricity when it went off, with the computer when it crashed, and with the car when it quit.

Like many people you know, perhaps including yourself, Jonah had a problem with anger. Let us consider whether or not anger is sinful, why we get angry, what we can do with the anger, and whether or not we can change people who make us angry.

*Is anger sinful?* Some Christians maintain that if we are truly spiritual, we will never become angry, or never express it if we do. However, the Bible approves of anger in some instances, but with warnings about it. We must never forget that "anger" is only one letter away from "danger." Even as Jonah was praying to God and mentioning his grace and compassion, he pointed out that God was slow to anger (4:2).

- Jesus was angry on occasion, but also warned about it. When people were watching him to see if they could accuse him of healing on the Sabbath, he “looked around at them in anger,” was distressed about their attitude, and went ahead and healed the man (Mark 3; 1-6). However, he also said that people angry at someone (perhaps without cause) were subject to judgment (Matthew 5:22).
- Both Old and New Testaments tell us, “In your anger, do not sin.” (Psalm 4:4; Ephesians 4:26). Paul tells the Ephesians to get over their anger soon, and continues on telling them to “get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger” (4:31).
- Both Old and New Testaments point out the importance of being “slow to anger.” As noted above, Jonah said that God was slow to anger. James notes that we should be “quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” if we want righteousness (James 1:19).

Anger is one of those things that may be sinful at some times and not at others, so we must be very careful of the danger of falling into sin when we become angry.

**Why do we get angry?** Here are a few of the many reasons people become angry.

- Genetics. Just as some people are born with a predisposition toward depression (another emotion), some people may be born with a predisposition to respond with anger. Things that would be shrugged off by most people result in anger.
- Learning. Others see the expression of anger modeled inappropriately as they are growing up and/or are rewarded for angry behavior themselves, so they learn to respond with anger.
- Control. Still others have discovered that when they respond with anger, they can manipulate other people, so they use it as a means of control.
- Frustration. One of the responses to having something, or someone, keep us from getting what we want is anger.

- Injustice. Of course, most people have experienced anger being aroused when they perceive injustice being done, especially to someone for whom they care deeply.

**What do we do with anger?** Cultures vary widely in their prescriptions for how to handle anger, and those prescriptions change with time and place.

- Suppression. From the time of Plato through the Puritans to the present, some people in western culture have said that you must suppress anger at all costs. You can control it; therefore you must control it. Living in silent submission changes nothing, and such people may progress to chronic bitterness—or occasionally even to a sudden outburst.
- Catharsis. Likewise, others have said that it is unhealthy for you to control your anger, so you should not be expected to control it. In fact, if you do control it, you may become physically ill or emotionally disturbed. If you just express your anger and get it out of your system, you will feel relieved and all will be OK. Phineas (Joshua 22:13-20) is a good example of this approach. He was ready to go to war with the other tribes (reminiscent of his action in Numbers 25), and he launched into a “How could you, how could you” tirade. Unfortunately, research shows that expressing your anger may become a habit. Your relief is short-lived, and you become more likely to respond with rage in the future.
- Both. What is needed is neither complete suppression nor unbridled expression, but a controlled expression. Rather than the result being bitterness or rage, anger can result in appropriate confrontation. A good example of this is found in the answer to Phineas (Joshua 22:21-29) as shown in the next section.

**What are some guidelines for expressing anger?**

Phineas had unjustly accused the people of building another altar, displeasing God, and perhaps bringing destruction on everyone (Joshua 22). We do not know the name or names of the persons who answered him, but their principles can be

expressed in a double acrostic of the English vowels AEIOU.

- A: Affirm the Almighty (v. 22). They began by declaring their allegiance to God. This means that the goal of pleasing God is one that both groups have in common.
- E: Explain your Excogitating (a big word for thinking that starts with an “E”) (vs. 23-29). They elaborate on their thinking to explain their motivations and intentions. They seem to overdo it and go through the explanation too many times, but often that is necessary if the other party is also upset.
- I: “I” messages (not “you” messages) on the Issue (vs. 23-29). Their presentation is done in the first person with “we,” “us,” and “our” (plural of “I”) occurring 21 times. They talked about their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, rather than pointing their fingers and saying, “You....” They also stuck to the issue of the memorial, rather than accusing Phineas and his group of offending God themselves by what they were doing.
- O: Open to being the Offender (v. 23). They also remained open to the possibility that they had done something wrong, “If we have....” Remember, you may be the one in the wrong, and you may be the one who has to repent.
- U: Unity before Unanimity (v. 30-31). They were not trying to persuade Phineas and his group that their position was right but really wanted to get back into fellowship with them. It worked. Everyone was pleased, placated, and praised God.

***How can we change people who make us angry?*** You can’t change anyone else, but you can change yourself. The anger is yours, and only you can determine how you react to what other people do. Your anger can serve you, or it can destroy you. Anger, like other emotions, involves your mind, your body, your spirit, and your behavior.

- Mind. Change how you perceive and interpret things. For example, instead of blaming the other person, consider how you have reacted inappropriately in similar situations in the past. For example, instead of thinking how bad the other person is, think about how his or her day may be going badly.
- Body. Learn some relaxation and cooling-off techniques that will calm your body down. For example, pause, take a few deep breaths, and intentionally relax the muscles you feel tensing throughout your body.
- Spirit. Missionaries, like other Christians, would know that things such as prayer, reading Scripture, and meditation are spiritually uplifting, helpful with anger.
- Behavior. Learn new habits and skills to help you respond in an anger-producing situation. For example, instead of raising your voice, silently count to 10 (or 20, or whatever it takes). Instead of sulking or pouting, get some exercise by taking a walk or jog. Instead of arguing, engage in some enjoyable distraction (hobby, game, etc.) for a while.

We do not know if Jonah ever resolved his anger, but we do know that we do not have to leave our anger unresolved and become bitter as he did.

## **Happiness**

You may have noticed that some missionaries are always unhappy, comparing themselves with others and wishing they had what others have. The list of things they wish for seems to be endless, including such things as an ability to speak the language better, better housing, higher salary, larger classes, fewer committee assignments, more spirituality, more people attending their church, less paperwork, a better vehicle, and so forth.

If you are completely honest, you have probably noticed the same thing in yourself. You have wanted what someone

else has. When you get it, you feel happy for a short time; then you want more—or you want something else.

This never-ending cycle is as old as humanity itself. In Genesis 3 the serpent appealed to Eve by noting that if she ate the forbidden fruit she would be like God. She was already made in God's image, but she wanted more. She ate, and sin entered.

In Genesis 4 Cain wanted the same blessing Abel had received, so he killed his brother (as if that would get God's blessing). Read on through the heroes of the faith in Genesis.

- Abraham: his wife wanted the child that her maid had (Genesis 16).
- Isaac: one son wanted the blessing the other one got. (Genesis 27).
- Jacob: ten sons wanted the attention their younger brother had (Genesis 37).

Over and over unhappy people compared themselves with others and envied what others had. Since this phenomenon is so pervasive and is found throughout history, let us look at the relationship between happiness, comparison, and envy.

**Happiness.** The second paragraph of the U. S. Declaration of Independence begins with "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." One must remember that this is a political statement, not Scripture. All people are not created equal except at the foot of the cross.

Believing that all people should be equal, contemporary Americans frequently make comparisons and are unhappy to find that people are not equal. One must also note that the Declaration says only that one has the right to pursue happiness (not that everyone will find it).

Happiness depends on two factors.

- First, happiness depends on your past experience, especially your recent past experience. For example, suppose you have lived in an apartment with 900 square feet for five

years and your agency gives you one with 1200 square feet. It will feel very large, and you will be much happier with it—for a while. However, you will soon adapt to the new size, and your happiness will drop back to what it was in the smaller apartment. The same is true for an increase in salary, fewer committees, a new vehicle, and so forth. There is always an increase in happiness, followed by a gradual return to the original level as you adapt.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 refers to this when it says, "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income." No matter how much money you make, how large living space you have, or what kind of vehicle you get, adaptation will occur, and you will want more.

- Second, your happiness also depends on what other people have.

**Comparison.** You may be satisfied with what you have until you find out what others have. Using the apartment example, you may feel a little cramped in your 900 square foot apartment but not even be thinking about how small it is until you walk into a couple of your colleagues new apartments and find that they have more space than you—both of them have nearly 1200 square feet!

People usually compare themselves with those they consider to be equal to, or slightly above, them. When they find out that those others have more, they become dissatisfied with what had made them happy.

This is illustrated in the parable Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 20. He told about the owner of a vineyard who early in the morning agreed to pay several men a denarius for a day's work. Four more times during the day he hired more workers and sent them in. When he paid everyone a denarius at the end of the day, the men hired early were unhappy and complained. They were happy with their wages until they found out what the others were paid.

These comparisons where we feel like we have come up short often lead not only to unhappiness, but also to envy.

**Envy.** Rather than just feeling dissatisfied, we want what the other people have—we envy them. Envy grows out of coveting and being unable to have the desired object, such as the 1200 square foot apartment. Envy is more than just coveting what another person has. It is not being able to have the larger apartment because someone else has it. No one easily confesses to such envy because it seems to be the nastiest and meanest of the seven cardinal sins.

Furthermore, envy can never result in gratification—no enjoyment, only endless self-torment as its appetite increases. Envy is not merely wanting another's good, but wanting to pull the other person down. This leads to resentment, backbiting, spite, accusation, hatred, and even murder, as we saw with Cain and Abel.

Envy eventually spreads to all of our attitudes and relationships. King Saul's envy of David after the Goliath episode is well known. Note in 1 Samuel 18 how this envy spread to other things about David.

- Son Jonathan's love for David (v. 3)
- Songs about Saul and David (v 8)
- David's relationship with God (v 14)
- David's success in everything (v 15, 30)
- Daughter Michal's love (v 20, 28)

Also note how his behavior spread to other relationships.

- Tried to kill David twice (18:10-11)
- Told Jonathan and attendants to kill David (19:1)
- Accused Michal of deception (19:17)
- Tried to kill Jonathan (20:33)

Envious people do not even really love themselves. They are not grateful for, or happy in, what they are or what they have. This sin is deadly, less because it destroys people than because it will not let them live. It does not let them live as themselves grateful for the qualities and talents that God has given them, making the best and most rewarding use of those gifts. Their degradation of others is a reflection of their

degradation of themselves. These people wind up alienated from themselves as well as others and “miss the party” like the elder brother of the prodigal son in Luke 15.

**What can one do?** Few people readily admit their sin of envy. It is so filled with self, wanting something because someone else has it, that it seems to be completely mean and nasty. Whenever we notice differences between us and others, we are likely to begin making comparisons, and those comparisons often lead to envy. Since few of us escape feelings of envy, what can we do when the Spirit makes us aware of our envy? What can we do to avoid falling into this trap?

- Confess and repent. As with any other sin, we are to confess it, and God has promised to forgive (1 John 1). If we deny our sin, we deceive ourselves and remain in it. When we are forgiven, we are to repent, not only to feel sorrow for the wrong we have done but also to turn from the sin itself. Following are ways to help you turn from envy, to avoid it rather than be trapped by it.
- Compare self with self. If you must make comparisons, compare yourself with yourself. Galatians 4:6 says, “Each man should examine his own conduct for himself; then he can measure his achievement by comparing himself with himself and not with anyone else.” Compare your apartment, salary, vehicle, and so forth now with what you had 10 or 20 years ago, not with what others have.
- Compare with those who have less. Rather than comparing yourself with people who have more, compare yourself with those who have less. Compare your apartment with the living conditions of the homeless. Compare your salary with the unemployed. Compare your vehicle with those who have no vehicle at all. Just as comparing yourself with those who are better off creates envy, so comparing yourself with those less well-off increases contentment. In fact, as you “count your blessings,” you may be motivated to share them with others. Such sharing will increase your satisfaction even more!

- Accept that nothing (no thing) brings lasting happiness. No matter what you have, you will soon adapt to it and want something better, whether it is housing, salary, vehicle, position, language ability, people in church, and so forth. Research in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century showed that relationships were most highly correlated with happiness. Specifically the following relationships:
  - With God: having a meaningful religious faith.
  - With others: having close friendships or a satisfying marriage.
  - With yourself: having high self-esteem, being optimistic, getting enough sleep and exercise.
 Although you cannot find happiness by pursuing it, happiness may find you as you are careful about comparisons, avoid envy, and keep the Great Commandment to love God and to love others as you love yourself.

## Laughter

Most people like a good laugh, but they do not realize that such a laugh is really very good for them in many ways. Laughter is a great help to leaders in maintaining team unity, but it is valuable in many other ways including physical health, mental health, and social relationships in general.

**Physical Health.** People often say that laughter is the best medicine, and that is often literally the case. Laughter brings healing and renewal through the following physical changes.

- It relaxes muscles all over the body, and that relaxation may last for up to an hour.
- It lowers stress hormones which have an effect on the whole body.
- It releases endorphins which make people feel good and may even relieve pain.
- It boosts the immune system making it less likely that individuals will become ill.

- Although blood pressure may rise briefly during laughter, such laughter lowers blood pressure overall.
- It helps people relax and fall asleep.
- It has many of the effects of exercise (although it cannot replace exercise).

**Mental Health.** Laughter is good for mind as well as body. Here are some mental health benefits.

- It makes individuals feel good so they can keep an optimistic outlook.
- It reduces anxiety, fear, anger, and sadness.
- It helps people relax so they can stay focused to complete tasks.
- It allows individuals to see things from a more realistic point of view.
- It creates psychological distance to keep people from feeling overwhelmed.

**Social Relationships.** Shared laughter is good medicine for social relationships. It is a requirement for strong relationships and has the following effects.

- It produces positive feelings to strengthen emotional connections.
- It produces a bond which protects against stress and disagreements.
- It allows individuals to lower their defensiveness so that they can disregard criticisms and doubts.
- It lowers inhibitions so that people stop holding back and avoiding others.
- It lets individuals be more spontaneous and express their true feelings.

In general mutual laughter heals resentments and hurts helping to unite people during difficult times and see each other's points of view.

**Laughter in the Bible.** Not all laughter is good for us. The Bible mentions two kinds. Basically "laughing at" someone is bad, and "laughing with" someone is good.

Laughing at someone in scorn or ridicule is not good medicine. Here are some examples.

- They will laugh at him saying... (Psalm 52:6).
- I have become a laughingstock to my friends (Job 12:4).
- But they laughed at him (Matthew 9:24).

Here are some examples of laughter as good medicine.

- He will fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy (Job 8:21).
- A feast is made for laughter (Ecclesiastes 10:19).
- Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with shouts of joy (Psalm 126:2).

The same event may produce both kinds of laughter in the same people at different times. This was the case with Abraham and Sarah in events surrounding the birth of Isaac. When God told them they would have a child, both laughed in derision.

- Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself... (Genesis 17:17).
- Sarah laughed to herself as she thought about it (Genesis 18:12).
- God was not pleased with their laughter and rebuked them—and then rebuked Sarah’s lie about it (Genesis 18:13-15).

After Isaac was born, Sarah laughed, but this time it was healthy laughter.

- Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me” (Genesis 21:6).
- At God’s command, Abraham gave the name Isaac (Laughter) to the son Sarah had borne (Genesis 17:19 and Genesis 21:3).

Who says that God has no sense of humor?

**Jesus’ Humor.** Asking parents to name their child “Laughter” after they laughed in derision when told they would have a baby shows God’s sense of humor. Likewise, we find Jesus’ sense of humor as he talked to the two disciples on the

road to Emmaus (Luke 24). Here are the events from their point of view.

- They were walking along the road when a man they did not recognize joined them (vv15-16).
- Jesus asked them what they were talking about, as if he did not know (v 17).
- One of them asked Jesus if he knew what had happened in Jerusalem (v18).
- Jesus asked, “What things?” as if he did not know (v19).
- They told him about the crucifixion, as well as their dashed hopes, and confusion (vv19-24).
- Jesus called them foolish, rebuked them, and asked if Christ had to suffer (vv 25-26).
- Then he explained prophetic Scriptures, still not revealing who he was (v 27).
- When they neared home, he pretended he was going on, still not telling (v28).
- They urged him to stay with them, so he did, still not telling (v29).
- As they ate with him, he gave thanks and broke bread—and suddenly they recognized him! (vv30-31).
- Then he disappeared! (v31).

Of course, then they remembered cues that should have let them know who he was. Imagine yourself in Jesus place watching their puzzlement and laughing inside!

**Getting Started.** Anyone can get in on laughter which is free, fun, and easy to use. Living in another culture provides many things to laugh about. Here are some tips on getting started.

- Count your blessings. It is harder to begin laughing when thinking about things that make you sad, so literally write down a list of things you are thankful for, such as medicines that prevent or cure diseases.

- Smile at people. Like laughter, smiling is contagious in most cultures. People will often return your smile, and that may lead to laughter.
- Laugh at yourself. Stop taking yourself so seriously. Instead of trying to hide your embarrassing moments, share them with others so that everyone, colleagues, nationals and even you can get a good laugh.
- Move toward laughter. Sometimes laughter is the result of an “inside” joke for a small group, but more often it is “public,” and people enjoy telling it again. If you do not understand, ask, “What’s so funny?” Not understanding humor often occurs before you know the culture well.
- Keep things in perspective. We cannot control many things that happen to us, especially the actions of other people toward us. Rather than getting angry, laugh about those absurdities in life in both your passport and host cultures.
- Read the comics. I enjoy “Pickles” because it pokes fun at people my age. The cover on one of the books of those comic strips on our table says, “The older I get, the better I was.”
- Watch a funny TV show that you like. “Americas Funniest Videos” makes me laugh out loud, but my wife empathizes with people who fall down or run into things. DVDs of your favorite funny shows are probably available.
- Hang out with funny people. Find other missionaries who can laugh at themselves and at the absurdities of life and can find humor in a variety of things.
- Spend some time with children. Young TCKs know how to play and take life lightly. They can laugh at nearly anything.
- Post reminders to “lighten up” on your office wall or screen saver. How about a picture of yourself with a mustache drawn on it? How can you take yourself seriously if you see that all the time?

- Do something silly. Help someone wash their car and end up with spraying each other with water!
- Put on a silly skit for others on your team. Of course, in the skit, poke fun at your own agency—not malicious fun, but humorous fun!
- Share your language goofs!! Thinking they are talking about being embarrassed, Americans learning Spanish often tell people they are pregnant (embarazada). Beware of false cognates.

The more you laugh, the better it is for you! Have fun laughing at yourself.

## Guilt

Perhaps you have been feeling guilty lately but are not sure why. People are suffering. They are dying without Christ. Your work seems to make little difference. You are having difficulty maintaining a consistent devotional life. You just feel guilty about so many things that it is interfering with your work. You begin to wonder if you are guilty.

***Am I guilty?*** This is the crucial question. All possible combinations of guilt and guilt feelings are possible. You may be guilty and not feel guilty, you may feel guilty and not be guilty, or you may be guilty and feel guilty. Any one of these is likely to interfere with your work as a missionary. You want to reach the place where you are not guilty and do not feel guilty.

The Bible says much about being guilty. A look in a concordance at “guilt” and “guilty” will reveal dozens of verses about being guilty of sin. When you break one of God’s commands, you are guilty—whether you feel guilty or not. If you are guilty, something needs to be done about the guilt, and we will discuss that later.

***Why do I feel so guilty?*** Of course, you may feel guilty because you are guilty, and that is good. Although the Bible says much about *being* guilty, it says little about *feeling* guilty. If you feel guilty because you are guilty, you just need to do

something about the sin. However, many people feel guilty without being guilty. In fact, the guilt feelings may even be *stronger* when there is no guilt. Here are a few examples of things other than sin that may produce guilt feelings:

- Falling short of your own expectations. This often happens during the first term, especially for perfectionists.
- Falling short of other's expectations. Your church, your family, headquarters, and field director may expect more of you than you can possibly do.
- Not forgiving yourself. After God has forgiven your sin, you may not be able to forgive yourself even though your guilt is gone.
- Guilt trips by other people. Martha tried to "lay a guilt trip" on Mary for not working hard enough in Luke 10, and she even tried to get Jesus to join her.
- Oversensitive conscience. A good conscience will produce guilt when you sin; however, part of your conscience is learned in your culture, and you may feel guilty for many things that have nothing to do with sin.
- Survivor guilt. You may have gone through a traumatic situation and may feel guilty that you survived when others did not, or feel guilty about what you had to do to survive.
- Satan himself. Remember that Satan is the "accuser of the brothers" in 1 Peter 5 and Revelation 12. His accusations can make you feel guilty.
- Temptation. Although we are never promised that we will be beyond temptation, missionaries may feel guilty for being tempted to lie, cheat, or be sexually unfaithful.

Shame, rather than guilt, often brings on these guilt feelings. Guilt means that you have broken God's command, fallen short of his expectations. Shame means that you have fallen short of the expectations of someone other than God. It may have begun when you walked through a mud puddle, soiling your new shoes. Your parents said, "Shame on you, you should have known better." Perhaps there was no way for you to have

known, and the Bible does not forbid walking in puddles, but you felt guilty.

***Isn't guilt bad?*** Of course it is. That's a major goal of missions, to tell people in other cultures that God has solved the sin problem.

Aren't guilt feelings bad too? They may or may not be. If they are caused by things other than sin, such as some of the examples given in the previous section, they are also bad. They will interfere with the missionary's goal of telling others the good news.

Guilt feelings as a result of sin are good. These guilt feelings provide motivation for doing something about the sin in your life. Without them people seldom come to Christ and often have great difficulty in society, perhaps becoming antisocial personalities (psychopaths) and getting into serious legal trouble. Such guilt feelings tend to be strongest immediately after sin is committed, then to decrease as rationalizations are generated. You then no longer feel the guilt, at least not nearly as much, and your "heart is hardened," making you much less likely to do something about the sin.

***Are guilt feelings worse for missionaries?*** Guilt feelings may be worse for missionaries because of some special situations.

- Living standards. Some missionaries live quite affluently compared to the people they minister to and may feel guilty about their wealth. This is becoming less so as missionaries go to large cities.
- Suffering. Many of the people missionaries work with are suffering compared to Western standards, and all their needs simply cannot be met.
- Children's education. Although MKs do better academically than non-MKs "back home," missionaries may feel like they are not providing an adequate education.

- Aging parents. Since missionaries are out of their home country and do not have large financial resources, they may feel guilty about not caring for aging parents.
- Civil authorities. How can a missionary get anything done in a society where the local value system may conflict with that of the missionary? For example, what is the difference between a gratuity and a bribe?

People in their own cultures often have problems dealing with their affluence, the suffering of others, their children's education, their aging parents, and their government, so the difference is one of degree, not of kind.

***What can I do about guilt?*** The natural response to realizing you are guilty is to try to hide or rationalize, such as Adam and Eve did. However, that will not solve the problem. Missionaries are familiar with what to do about sin, but here is a review of the steps.

- Confession. Certainly confess your sins to God. You may also want to confess to people you have harmed as well. Confession usually should be only to those actually affected by the sin rather than to the general public.
- Repentance. Repentance is more than being sorry for your sins; it is a change of purpose or a change of mind. We are to turn from our sinful ways to God. After forgiving her, Jesus told the woman taken in adultery to sin no more.
- Faith. Christ paid the penalty for our sins, and we must trust him for this.
- Restitution. As far as possible, try to make right the wrong you have done. If you have stolen something, you can usually return it. Of course, if you have destroyed another's reputation, you may not be able to rebuild it.

***What can I do about guilt feelings?*** That depends on the cause. If the guilt feelings are because of sin, follow the steps reviewed above. If the guilt feelings are because of other factors, you need to deal with each one individually. Let's consider a couple of examples.

First-term missionaries often have very high expectations about what they will accomplish and feel guilty that they do not achieve their personal goals. In this case, they need to talk with an experienced missionary and set more realistic goals. Of course, they may still not lower their expectations, thinking that they are different, that their ministry will be more effective.

If the goals set for you by others are too high, ask to have them lowered. One teacher felt guilty for not spending the required number of minutes on each subject until she realized that the required number of minutes each day was an hour and twenty minutes longer than she had the children in class. The principal lowered the number of required minutes.

***What if the guilt feelings don't go away?*** Guilt feelings that you have had for a long time as a result of sin may become conditioned responses and remain even after the sin is forgiven. Just as Pavlov's dogs salivated to the sound of a bell, so you may feel guilty when some event triggers the guilt feelings, even after the sin is forgiven and the guilt itself is gone. These responses gradually decrease and stop over time.

If they do not go away, you may need to talk with your pastor or a counselor about why they are still there. You may have hidden things under layer after layer of rationalization and may need someone else to help you sort it all out.

A related question is how to lead a consistent Christian life to keep from becoming guilty again. Two things are very important. First, maintain a consistent daily devotional life. Missionaries report that this is their most difficult "spiritual" activity. Second, get into an accountability relationship with others to check on each other weekly, or at some other regular interval. Agree with the others, as to what you will hold each other accountable for and give this meeting a high priority in your life. Include daily devotions in any accountability plan.

Christ died for our sins and there is no condemnation in Christ. There is no need to be hindered by guilt or guilt feelings.

## Grief

Although we commonly think of grief as related to the death of a loved one, there are many other causes of grief. The dictionary defines grief as the “intense emotional suffering caused by loss of any kind.” Missionaries experience many losses that other people do not, so those people do not understand. There is no funeral or other ritual to assist in grieving over these losses. Missionaries may offer true, but over-spiritualized, platitudes in denial of the losses they experience. When people are dying and losing everything, we do not question their denial, anger, or depression before they come to accept their loss. Regarding losses other than death, missionaries may carry a load of unexpressed, unresolved grief.

More important than the “objective” severity of the loss is each person’s own interpretation of the loss. Leaving a pet may seem like a minor event to most people, but those who have had that pet for years may experience much grief. Here are several losses that may increase grief for missionaries.

**Things?** Everyone understands the loss of friends and family, but what about the house, the car, the supermarket, the school, the pets, the newspaper, and the toys? All of these, and more, are lost as you leave your passport country to become missionaries. Any, or all, may cause grief.

You may develop two homes, one in your passport country and one on the field. When you come “home,” people there cannot understand that you feel the loss of the smells, the foods, the animals, the friendliness of the people, and the music of the country where you have been serving. Losing these may cause grief when you return to your passport country.

**Transfers?** Headquarters calls, and you move to another field. You lose everything you have come to love over the last months or years. Grief comes again. Perhaps this culture has become home to your teens, and when you move to the new field, your older adolescents remain with other

missionaries to finish school. They may be old enough to marry a national and stay behind forever—another loss and more grief.

The field committee asks you to take over a project that has not been handled well by another missionary. However, that means leaving what you have been doing so effectively—another loss. Your new project does not take off and the one you left also declines—more grief.

**Transitions?** You knew that being a missionary would mean moving even more often than other people do in our mobile culture. Built into long-term missionary life are usually at least two moves every five years, four years on the field and one at home. In addition are the countless moves to different fields, to different places on the same field, to different states on home assignment, etc. The list of transitions seems endless.

People sometimes say IBM means “I’ve Been Moved.” In the same way, MAF may seem to mean “Move Again, Friend,” or WGM may seem to mean “We’ve Gotta Move.” Missionaries are always saying good-bye, multiple good-byes to people, places, possessions and pets—grieving for all.

The hardest transitions seem to be premature departures. How do you say goodbye when you don’t want to leave? What if there has been a moral lapse? What if you have not been able to stand up under the emotional strain? What if headquarters just said to leave your assignment or to leave the mission? What if you are leaving in an evacuation? More grief.

**Travel?** Travel is exciting to many people, but to missionaries on deputation, it can be dreary. You have been away from home for several years on the field, and now you are away even more. When overseas you could not get home for the funeral of a friend (no money, no flight available, no time free), but now that you are at home, you cannot get back to the field for a funeral there—unresolved grief in both cases.

Before airplanes, travel time was a time to work through the loss, through grief. It took at least days, if not weeks, to get from country to country whether traveling by ship, train, or horse-drawn vehicle. Today missionaries finish packing, step

onto the plane, and in a few hours are at their destination. They have had no time to work through the loss.

**Time?** That brings us to the time it takes to grieve. Grieving rituals are different in different cultures, so grief is expected to take different times in each. Grieving always takes time, sometimes much time. It may take a few days for leaving things, weeks for leaving friends, and months for the death of a loved one. Some people say that such bereavement should be over in a couple months, but it often takes much longer. Those who try to short-circuit the grieving process may experience problems years later.

**Triggers?** Long after your time of grieving seems to be over, you may suddenly feel the loss intensely again. “Triggers” (stimuli that bring back memories of the lost person, place, or thing) surprise you by suddenly reactivating the grief. You may not even realize that you saw, heard, or smelled something that brought back memories of the loss. Smell is especially likely to do this, and you will not even know why you thought of that person, place, possession, or pet.

Anniversaries are particularly difficult, especially wedding anniversaries. Birthday anniversaries are another difficult time. “First’s” are also difficult, such as the first Christmas or first family reunion. Related events in others’ lives may be difficult, such as the birth of a friend’s child bringing back the loss of your own—years later, when you thought the grief was gone.

**Trauma?** Missionaries may be more likely to experience traumatic situations. Other cultures may be more likely to have assault, political unrest, evacuations, bombings, killings, kidnappings, and so forth. When this happens to a missionary, others also become involved, and rightly so. Even though they did not experience the trauma firsthand, those helping also often grieve over the loss caused by the trauma.

**Theology?** When people in business get moved, they blame the company. When people in the military get moved, they blame the government. When missionaries get moved,

they may blame not only administrators at headquarters, but also God himself. After all people have prayed about the move and have determined that it is God’s will. God called us; he made us move, and it is his fault. Naomi’s statements about God in Ruth 1:20-21 are excellent examples. Returning missionaries may feel just as she did.

***What can we do about it?***

- Be honest. The loss and grief you experience is real. Do not deny it; it really hurts. Do not over spiritualize it and say what a privilege it is to suffer for Jesus, if it is not. Be honest and open about your feelings of loss.
- Be informed. Reading this book and other material about grief helps you become informed. Realize that all of these “Ts” are especially relevant to missionaries.
- Be Christian. Too often Christians deny their feelings of grief. They may quote 1 Thessalonians 4:13 as saying that we are not “to grieve like the rest of men.” Do not stop there because the rest of the verse is “who have no hope.” We grieve, but like people who have hope. Look at what the Bible says:
  - Abraham grieved. Genesis 23:2
  - Jacob grieved. Genesis 37:35
  - David grieved. 2 Samuel 18:33
  - Jesus grieved. John 11:35. “Jesus wept” is one of the shortest but most important verses in the Bible. If he wept at the funeral of a friend, we certainly can grieve about our losses.
- Be missionaries. We have an excellent example of people saying good-bye to missionaries in Acts 20:17-21:1. Paul talked extensively about his leaving them, and then beginning in verse 36, note what they did:
  - They said their good-byes.
  - They knelt.
  - They prayed.
  - They wept.

- They embraced.
- They kissed.
- They went to the ship.
- They tore themselves away.

This is a good example of the grief expressed at the parting of a missionary. Paul had ministered to them two years, and such grief is normal and expected. If you do not express the grief over your losses, it may remain unresolved and return to hinder your work. Be honest informed Christian missionaries relative to your loss and grief.

### **Expressive Behavior**

The physiological responses during emotion are probably quite similar from culture to culture. The conscious experiences during emotion probably are influenced somewhat by a person's culture. The expressive behavior during motivation is even more likely to be influenced by a person's culture. This may even be true in such things as facial expressions.

In the 1994 *Psychological Bulletin* James Russell published an article titled "Is there universal recognition of emotion from facial expression? A review of the cross-cultural studies."

<http://www2.bc.edu/~russeljm/publications/psyc-bull1994.pdf>. At the end of this 40-page article summarizing more than 100 studies, he concluded that we still cannot answer this question definitively. On page 136 he said, "This is a topic on which opinions can differ. The merits of alternative explanations cannot now be decided on the basis of the empirical evidence available."

Even though some missionaries may think they are able to recognize whether anger, happiness, grief, or guilt is being expressed in the faces of people in their host country, few would be likely to say that was possible for more than a dozen

or so emotions. The differences in other behavioral expressions are probably even larger and more varied across cultures.

Missionaries are often cautioned to be aware of what kinds of gestures they make with their hands. What may be the sign that everything is all right in one culture may be an obscene gesture in another. However, even much more subtle behaviors such as handing something with the wrong hand can be an insult.

Some cultures encourage the open free expression of emotions while other cultures forbid showing emotion at all, even when alone. Emotional expression must be understood as a social/cultural phenomenon, not just as a physiological/cognitive one. There is no need to further elaborate this here. Anyone living in different cultures can provide numerous examples. Further information can be found at the following.

<http://www.davidmatsumoto.com/content/Matsumoto%202008%20HK%20Conference.pdf>

Stanford University has a Culture and Emotions Lab which specializes in this very area. Dozens of their publications are available in PDF format at the following.

<http://www-psych.stanford.edu/~tsailab/publications.htm>.

### **Conclusion**

By its definition, which includes both physiological responses and conscious experiences, emotion fits easily into the Christian perspective used in this book. The major theories of emotion also fit into the same perspective. The final part of the definition, expressive behavior, is also an important aspect for people living in other cultures because cultures vary so much in how they allow emotion to be expressed.

Emotion is the last of the traditional "academic" subjects that have been part of psychology from its beginning. The following chapters are about the more applied aspects of psychology. Although psychology has always had its

application in some ways, World War II toward the middle of the twentieth century brought psychology to the forefront of treating people with psychological/emotional problems.

## Chapter 8

### Health and Stress

Health from a Christian Perspective

Maintaining Health

Most Important: Love God

Second Most Important: Love Others as Yourself

Third Most Important: Love Yourself

Stress

Coping with Stress

Culture Stress

Change Stress

Separation Stress

“Difficult” Leader Stress

Traumatic Stress

Part 1 of Chapter 14 in Dewey’s introductory text is relevant.

- [Chapter 14: Frontiers of Psychology](#)

(Chapter 14—Stress and Health, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant.)

The previous chapters in this book have been about the major academic areas psychology has studied, such as development, awareness, intellect, motivation, and emotion. This chapter turns to some of the areas to which psychology has

been applied, health and stress.

Psychology is the study of behavior and mental processes, and some of the greatest health risks are behaviors. A leading cause of illness and premature death is smoking tobacco, a behavior. Since the 1960s, smoking in the USA has steadily declined for about four decades as psychologists studied why people began smoking, why they did not stop smoking, and how smokers could be helped. This change in behavior has been a major victory in public health as the percentage of smoking adults had been cut in half.

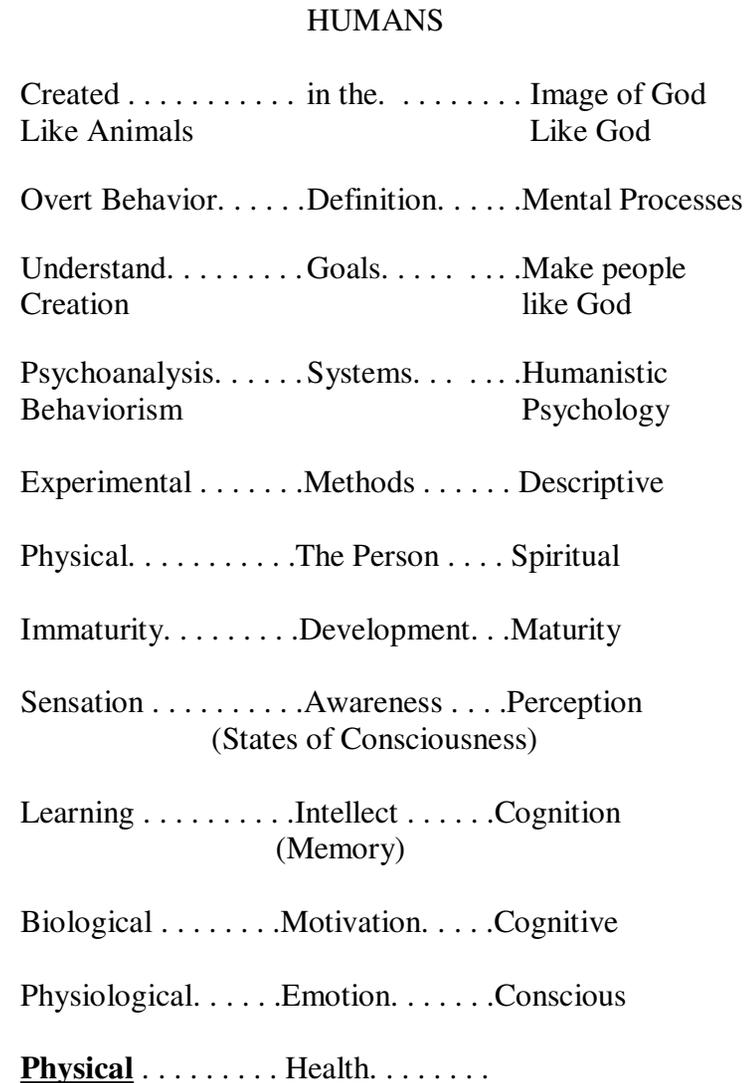
Unfortunately, during this same time, the number of adult Americans who are obese has more than doubled (<http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=108401>). This change is also the result of behaviors, eating more calories while burning fewer of them. Also, unfortunately, the smoking rate apparently stopped dropping in about 2005, and about 20% of adults continue to smoke, causing about 440,000 premature deaths each year ([http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5935a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm5935a3\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5935a3.htm?s_cid=mm5935a3_w)). Much remains to be done in changing these harmful behaviors.

Stress is also a major factor in health. Stress makes people more susceptible to disease by compromising the immune system so that they cannot fight off illness. It also increases the probability of such major killers as heart disease and cancer. Many helpful links to items about stress are on (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/stress.html>).

### Health from a Christian Perspective

Health fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 8:1 (Physical...Health). As noted previously, our bodies are similar to those of animals. Research with animals has led to major improvements in both human health and veterinary care.

Figure 8:1 Health from a Christian perspective.



This chapter primarily includes material about physical health and fitness and coping with stress. The next chapter considers primarily material about mental health.

### Maintaining Health

A missionary asked, “What do you do when there are so many things to do, and not enough people to do them, and there’s no way to prioritize because everything’s a priority? This seems like a no-win situation and can lead to quick burnout. Because of such a high level of ministry responsibilities on the field, there’s no time for rest, renewal, or recreation, much less trying to be proactive and keep the body in shape, or to have quality time with the family.” In this one paragraph the missionary has touched on the most important factors relating to maintaining mental and physical health.

The missionary was right in talking about priorities. Some people may say “prioritize your schedule,” but it is much more important to “schedule your priorities.” When individuals prioritize their schedules, they constantly feel under great stress, but they may accomplish little of lasting value. They may become those who are constantly putting out fires, rather than preventing the fires in the first place. Prevention is better than cure.

### Most Important: Love God

Jesus was asked this question in Mathew 22 when an expert in the law asked him which commandment was the greatest. Jesus told him to love God with all his heart, soul, and mind. Of course, Jesus was quoting Deuteronomy 5 where Moses had told the people to love God with all their soul, heart, and strength. The command to love God motivationally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively has been around for centuries, and it is still valid today.

Some may say that this command is certainly relevant to spiritual condition, but what does it have to do with mental and physical health? Consider the following quotes from an article by Harold Koenig in the *Journal of the American Medical*

*Association* in October, 2000. (<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/284/13/1708>).

- “More than 850 studies have now examined the relationship between religious involvement and various aspects of mental health. Between two thirds and three quarters of these have found that people experience better mental health and adapt more successfully to stress if they are religious.”
- “An additional 350 studies have examined religious involvement and health. The majority of these have found that religious people are physically healthier, lead healthier lifestyles, and require fewer health services. The magnitude of the possible impact on physical health—particularly survival—may approximate that of abstaining from cigarette smoking, or adding 7 to 14 years to life.”

The best thing for maintaining mental and physical health is to place a relationship with God on the schedule first. This should be time for at least the following:

- Spending time with him
- Talking to him in prayer
- Listening to him through meditating on his Word
- Seeking forgiveness and reconciliation

Like missionaries, Daniel lived and worked in a culture different from the one in which he was reared. With his packed schedule of doing an outstanding job as one of the three top administrators in the nation, one might think that Daniel would not have much time for God. However, his custom was to be on his knees thanking God for what he had done and asking for his help three times a day (Daniel 6).

### Second Most Important: Love Others (As Yourself)

When asked what was most important in Matthew 22, Jesus went on to say that the second most important was much like it, to love your neighbor as yourself. Of course, this had also been around for centuries as Jesus was quoting from Leviticus 19. This is especially relevant for missionaries as

Jesus emphasized in John 13:34-35, that people will know we are his disciples by how we love each other.

No recent evidence is needed to support this. We have known for years that a social support system is one of the most important factors in maintaining health (<http://www.personalityresearch.org/papers/clark.html>). This includes a variety of people. The specific persons depend on a person's situation in life, but probably include some of the following.

- Your spouse
- Your children and teenagers
- Fellow missionaries
- Nationals
- Aging parents
- Etc.

Maintaining mental and physical health means placing relationships with fellow Christians as the second thing on the schedule. This should be time for at least the following:

- Spending time with them
- Talking to them
- Listening to them
- Seeking forgiveness and reconciliation

When faced with a crisis of life and death proportions, Daniel had a long-term relationship with three other expatriates to whom he could turn to ask for urgent prayers. Their prayers were answered (Daniel 2).

### **Third Most Important: Love Yourself**

Jesus said we should love our neighbor as we loved ourselves. Like loving God and loving our neighbor, loving ourselves means at least the following:

- Setting aside some time for yourself
- Thinking correctly about yourself (your self-talk, as a person made in God's image)

- Generally taking care of God's temple (our bodies)
 

God dwelt in the tabernacle, then in the temple, and now dwells in us. The apostle Paul pointed out that our bodies were the temple of the Holy Spirit so we should honor God with our body (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). So the question becomes, how are we doing in taking care of God's temple? That includes at least the following:
- Eating right. At creation (Genesis 1) God gave us all the seed-bearing plants and fruit trees to eat—that is grains, vegetables and fruits. That is very much like the recommendations of the US Department of Agriculture's food pyramid (<http://www.mypyramid.gov>). After the Fall when we began eating meat, God put a number of restrictions on what kinds of meat and what parts of the animals we could eat. As a college student in a culture very different from home, Daniel questioned the food in the cafeteria. He proposed and conducted an experiment showing that vegetables and water are healthier than rich food and alcohol, an experiment repeated with the same results many times over the centuries (Daniel 1).
- Getting rest. God instituted a day of rest in each week in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). This was a day in which no one in the household was to do any work, a day of restoration in each week. Jesus later pointed out that the Sabbath was made for us, not us for the Sabbath (Mark 2). New research points out that sleep (rest) is an essential component of a long and healthy life ([http://www.health.harvard.edu/press\\_releases/importance\\_of\\_sleep\\_and\\_health](http://www.health.harvard.edu/press_releases/importance_of_sleep_and_health)). Although two kings had difficulty sleeping (Daniel 2 & 4), there is no indication that Daniel ever had that problem even though his circumstances were far more dangerous than those of either king.
- Exercising regularly. Although not mentioned as much as food and rest, Paul wrote that physical training is of some value (not as valuable as godliness, which is valuable for both this life and the next). When he wrote that, there were

not so many “labor saving” devices so that people got sufficient exercise in the tasks of daily living. Today we do not, so it is best for us to schedule exercise in our day. We have to stretch things somewhat to find an example of exercise in the book of Daniel. Although we do not recommend walking in fiery furnaces (Daniel 3), we do recommend walking, running, playing a favorite sport, etc. past the point of perspiration for at least a half hour several times a week

(<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/exercise/HQ01676>).

Some may wonder what eating, rest, and exercise have to do with mental health. In general psychology the three major categories to help cope with stress:

- Social support (Priority 2)
- Aerobic exercise (Priority 3)
- Time for relaxation (Priority 3)

Six characteristics of happy people are that they tend to have the following:

- A meaningful faith (Priority 1)
- Close friendship or a satisfying marriage (Priority 2)
- Good sleep and exercise (Priority 3)
- Work and leisure that engage their skills (Priority 3)
- High self-esteem (created in God’s image)
- Optimism

For further information about specific topics in health psychology click on the following links to parts of Chapter 14 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Psychology and Medicine](#)
- [Clues from Hypnosis and Placebo Effects](#)
- [Psychoneuroimmunology](#)
- [Psychology in Hospitals](#)
- [Rehabilitation Counseling](#)
- [Psychiatric Rehabilitation](#)
- [Behavioral Medicine](#)

- [Behavioral Treatment of Pain](#)
- [Health Psychology](#)

### Stress

From the time they first followed Jesus, Christian workers have faced great stress. Soon after they were called and appointed to ministry, the disciples found their ministry to the crowds so pressing that they did not even have time to eat (Mark 3:20). Nearly a year later, the stress was still so great that they did not have time to eat, and they could not escape the crowds even when they tried (Mark 6:31-33).

Paul, first missionary to the Gentiles, listed some of his stressful situations for us.

- Worked hard, labored, toiled
- Imprisoned repeatedly
- Beaten, lashed, stoned
- Constantly on the move
- Shipwrecked, a night in the sea
- In danger from own countrymen
- Danger in the city, danger in the country
- Danger from “false brothers”
- Went without sleep
- Hungry, thirsty
- Cold, lacked clothing
- Pressure of the concern for the churches (2 Corinthians 11:23-28)

Stress is a process involving environmental events (stressors), our own reactions to the stress, and the resources we use to cope with the stress. Think of this like the bills received in the mail. Example 1: You have \$500 in the bank (resources), and you receive 20 bills totaling \$800 due immediately (events), so you panic (high stress reaction). Example 2: You have \$5000 in the bank (resources), but you receive 20 bills totaling \$800 due immediately (events), but

you have little concern (low stress reaction). Note that the stress felt depends both on the events and on resources. So to cope with the stress either decrease the stressful events or increase resources or both.

Some stressors (events) are always present in the background, such as noise, heat, insects, poverty, discrimination, minority status, and we are not even aware of them. Other stressors are the almost daily irritating hassles of life, such as traffic jams, waiting in lines, fender benders, struggling with language in new situations, loneliness, computers down, difficult co-workers, and bureaucracy (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/stress.html>). People feel the strain whenever these occur. Still other stressors are major life changes experienced by nearly everyone at some time, such as death of a family member, moving to a new church or field of service, serious illness or accident, and divorce of close friends (or yourself). People struggle with them when they happen. Finally, some Christian workers experience life-threatening stressors, such as assault, tornadoes, deadly diseases, earthquakes, evacuation, floods, or war. The effects of these traumas can be long lasting.

Even positive things, such as marriage, the birth of a child, and promotion can be stressful. They require change or adaptation and draw on a person's resources.

Some people react to stress with physical symptoms, such as headache, stomachache, diarrhea, and so forth. Other people react with psychological symptoms such as anxiety, difficulty concentrating, depression, and so forth. Still others react with behavioral symptoms such as driving too fast, picking fights, overeating, going on spending sprees, and so forth. Stress can affect many areas of our lives.

## Coping with Stress

Remember that coping with the stress demands either a decrease in the stressful events or an increase in resources for coping with the stress or both.

- Changing the time you do things may decrease the stressors. Shopping at a different time may decrease the traffic jams, result in fewer lines at the market, and make a fender bender less likely.
- Stress is cumulative, so try to space out stressful events rather than clumping them together. For example, if you have to deal with a difficult co-worker, do not schedule the meeting right after a shopping trip that is likely to involve long lines and traffic jams.
- Background stressors may sometimes be decreased with things at hand. If noise is constantly draining away your energy, listening to soothing music through a set of headphones may eliminate that source of stress.
- Anticipating and preparing for stressful situations serves to inoculate you against the stress reactions. If you are in a situation that may call for an evacuation, develop a plan for knowing the time to evacuate, evacuation routes, and alternative means of evacuation. If kidnapping is likely, take steps to avoid it, and learn how to act if kidnapped.
- God is our major resource for coping with stress. Do not neglect reading God's Word because the Holy Spirit often illuminates passages of Scripture relative to the stressful situation you are in. Search the Scripture for what God has already said about your situation.
- Pray for yourself in stressful times. Prayers of intercession for others are wonderful, but at times you need prayers of petition for yourself. Christian workers who spend much time in intercession need not feel guilty for petitioning God for their own needs.
- Meditate after you have asked God for direction. Listen for the answer. Sometimes the Spirit uses a memorized

- passage of Scripture, a word from a fellow Christian, or an event that occurs in your life to direct your coping efforts.
- Ask others to pray for you. These may range from unspoken requests to detailed explanations. Ask people to commit to pray for you by name during specific days or specific times of great stress.
  - Research shows that social support is the single most important human means of increasing resources to combat stress. The fellowship of believers in Christ is an invaluable source of strength for the most difficult stresses you face.
  - Use your problem-solving skills to help reduce your stress. Read about the stressful area in your life. Talk with others who have experienced the same types of stress. Brainstorm solutions yourself, comb books for ideas, and ask others for possible solutions. Select a potential solution, try it out, and evaluate whether or not it works; then adjust it if necessary or try a new solution. Repeat the process as often as necessary.
  - Take time for a healthy diversion. You may need time to cool off a while or recharge before trying to cope any more. You may need a time to rest in addition to your Sabbath each week. Spend some time on reading, listening to music, enjoying a hobby, playing a favorite sport, or doing other things that you enjoy.
  - On the other hand, don't procrastinate. Procrastinating can also cause increased stress, so set reasonable deadlines for yourself to complete your personal and professional responsibilities.
  - Get some exercise. God gave us reactions to stress that prepare us for flight or fight. Running, swimming, walking rapidly, or playing active sports are analogous to flight.
  - Take time for adequate rest and relaxation. Remember that God made the Sabbath for us as humans, and be sure you take that day of rest, relaxation, and restoration each week, whether it is on Sunday or another day of the week.

- Sleep is a major coping resource for dealing with stress. Take time to sleep, and if you are having difficulty sleeping, learn about ways to get better sleep.
- Monitor self-talk. Be sure you have helpful thoughts so that you are an encouraging "coach" to yourself. A mean, cruel, discouraging coach may say something like, "That is really a dumb idea. It'll never work. There's no point even trying it." A caring, hopeful, encouraging coach would say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
- Pour out your soul. Express your thoughts and/or feelings in any of several ways. These include journaling, writing letters to friends, praying, composing poems or songs, singing songs or reading Psalms that reflect your thoughts or feelings.
- Use relaxation techniques of stretching and/or breathing, and/or imagining one of your favorite places as described in our anxiety brochure.
- Learn how to appropriately say, "No," to reduce lower priority demands on your time. God's people can appropriately refuse the requests of others. At times Jesus himself dismissed the crowd and went off by himself to pray, and he even often withdrew for prayer when people came to hear and be healed (Matthew 14:22-23, Luke 5:15-16). He chose to say, "No," to one kind of request to meet a higher priority.
- Delegate some of the responsibility to someone else, such as Jesus did when he sent out the disciples (Matthew 10).
- Ask for what you need from others. Jesus told his followers to ask, seek, and knock to get things they needed (Matthew 7). Asking for help from others may be a blessing to them. Sacrifices on their part may be spiritually helpful to them.

For more information about stress, see the many links at

<http://www.medicinenet.com/stress/article.htm>.

Also click on the following links to parts of Chapter 14 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Stress](#)
- [Selye's Concept of a "General Adaptation Syndrome"](#)
- [Common Stressors](#)
- [Cognitive Effects of Stress](#)
- [Eustress](#)
- [The Role of Emotion in Stress](#)
- [Stress Reduction](#)

## Culture Stress

Missionaries often feel tired, anxious, discouraged, isolated, angry, and homesick but cannot think of any reason why they should feel that way. They have been on the field for several years, but these feelings always seem to be there, increasing and decreasing. They wonder what could be causing them. It could be culture stress. They might say, "I know about culture shock, but what is culture stress?" What is the difference between culture stress and culture shock? What causes culture stress? What are its effects? What can be done about it? Can it be prevented? Here are answers to some of these questions.

**What is culture stress?** Culture stress is the stress that occurs when people change to a different way of living in a new culture. It is what they experience as they move beyond understanding the culture to making it their own so that they accept the customs, becoming comfortable and at home with them. If they are trying to become a real part of the culture, to become bicultural, they are likely to experience culture stress as they assimilate some of the conventions to the point that they feel natural.

Of course, some who live in a "missionary ghetto" may experience little culture stress. Early modern missionaries often lived in compounds, which were physically identifiable as missionary ghettos. Today, even though some missionaries live physically in a national community, they have primarily relationships with other missionaries. A missionary subculture

may develop which becomes focused on itself and preoccupied with group concerns so that the missionaries experience little culture stress. Those trying to become an integral part of the national community are the ones who experience the greatest culture stress.

**How is culture stress different from culture shock?** As culture shock was originally defined (honeymoon, crisis, recovery, adjustment), culture stress was considered to be a part of it. However, the word "shock" connotes something sudden and short-lived. Thus, many people today think of culture shock as the crisis stage (confusion, disorientation, and lack of control) and the recovery stage (language and cultural cues more familiar). These stages begin when the new missionary leaves the enthusiastic, exciting, optimistic tourist mode, usually beginning in a few weeks, worsening for about six months, and basically ending within a year or two.

Culture stress is the adjustment stage in which people accept the new environment, adopting new ways of thinking and doing things so that they feel like they belong to the new culture. This takes years, and some missionaries never complete it. This may go on and on.

**What causes culture stress?** Many factors enter into the amount of culture stress one feels while living in another culture. Here are some of the major ones.

- **Involvement.** The more you become personally involved in the culture, the more culture stress you may feel. The tourist, the business person or someone from the diplomatic corps not committed to being the incarnation of Christ in that culture, may feel little culture stress.
- **Values.** The greater the differences in values between your home culture and your host culture, the greater the stress. Values of cleanliness, responsibility, and use of time may cause stress for years. Cultures may appear similar on the surface but have broad differences in deeper values.
- **Communication.** Learning the meanings of words and rules of grammar are only a small part of being able to

communicate effectively. The whole way of thinking, the common knowledge base, and the use of non-verbals are necessary and come only with great familiarity with the culture.

- Temperament. The greater the difference in your personality and the average personality in the culture, the greater the stress. A reserved person may find it difficult to feel at home where most people are outgoing extroverts. An extrovert may never feel at ease in a reserved culture.
- Entry and re-entry. Most missionaries, unlike immigrants, live in two cultures and may never feel fully at home in either. Every few years they change their place of residence, never fully adapting to the culture they are in at the time.
- Children. The more your children internalize the values of your host culture and the more you realize that they will be quite different from you, the more stress you may feel.
- Multinational teams. Although effectiveness of the ministry may increase, working together in your mission with people from cultures other than your host culture often adds to the culture stress.

***What are the results of culture stress?*** Many of the results of culture stress are the same as those of any other stress.

- Feelings of anxiety, confusion, disorientation, uncertainty, insecurity, and helplessness
- Fatigue, tiredness, lack of motivation, lethargy, lack of joy
- Illness (stress suppresses the immune system), concern about germs, fear of what might be in the food
- Disappointment, lack of fulfillment, discouragement, feeling hurt, feeling inadequate, feeling “out of it”
- Anger, irritability, contempt for the host culture, resentment (perhaps toward God), feelings of superiority or inferiority
- Rejection of the host culture, the mission board, even of God.
- Homesickness

- Etc.

Some people seem to believe that they can adapt to anything, even continual stress, without it hurting them. It just does not work that way. In the 1930s, stress researcher Hans Selye put rats under many different kinds of stress. He kept some in a refrigerator, others in an oven, made some swim for hours a day, injected others with chemicals, others with bacteria, etc. The results were almost always the same. The rats went through the same cycle. First was the alarm reaction in which resources were mobilized. Then came the resistance stage in which it seemed like an adequate adjustment had been made. But if the stressor was intense enough or long enough, sooner or later the stage of exhaustion occurred when the resources were depleted, and the rats collapsed. If the stressor continued, they died. Many have seen people who seemed to be making an adequate adjustment suddenly break down. Uninterrupted stress of enough intensity leads to exhaustion sooner or later in most individuals.

***What can be done about culture stress?*** Much can be done to decrease culture stress and make it manageable.

- Recognition. Realize that culture stress is inevitable for those attempting to become at home in a host culture, and look at what factors cause you the most stress.
- Acceptance. Admit that the host culture is a valid way of life, a means of bringing Christ to the people who live in it.
- Communication. Beware of isolating yourself from everyone in your home culture, those with whom you can relax and be yourself, those with whom you can talk.
- Escape. You need daily, weekly, and annual respites. God made the Sabbath for people, so be sure you keep it. Reading, music, hikes, worship (not leading it), and vacations are necessary.
- Identity. Know who you are and what you will allow to be changed about you. Acculturation inherently involves changes in your personality, so determine the unchangeables.

- **Activity.** Since stress prepares you for fight or flight, and as a missionary you can probably do neither, you must have some physical activity to use that energy. Sports, an exercise plan, and active games with family or friends can reduce stress.
- **Befriend a national family.** Get close to a national family just for fun, not to learn or evangelize. Learn how to have fun in that culture.

***Can culture stress be prevented?*** The answer to this is simple and short. No! Stress in general cannot be prevented because we all experience it in life. Trying to become at home in another culture is always a challenging venture.

However, like other stress, it can be managed, decreased to a level with which you can live; stress without distress. The factors that help missionaries cope with stress are summarized in the three enduring things mentioned by Paul at the end of 1 Corinthians 13.

- **Faith.** In addition to faith in God, faith in yourself as a person created in God's image and called into his service will help you cope.
- **Hope.** Rather than feeling helpless, having not only the hope of eternity with God, but also hope in your future, knowing that he has good plans for you, will help you cope.
- **Love.** Finally, having both God's love and the love of his people to give you support in the stressful situations you face daily, will help you cope.

Stress is a part of life, and everyone learns how to manage it or suffers the consequences. Remember that not everyone can become at home in two cultures, and it typically takes a very long time for those who do it successfully.

### **Change Stress**

Jonah faced change in his life when God told him to become the first cross-cultural missionary by going east and confronting Nineveh (Jonah 1). Jonah went west. When he

finally obeyed, the people in Nineveh responded to his message and repented. However, rather than rejoicing, Jonah became disillusioned and angry because of God's grace and compassion for a despised people group. Though succeeding outwardly, he failed inwardly.

At the beginning of his second term of missionary service (Acts 15) Paul suggested to Barnabas that they go back and visit people where they had been before to see how everyone was doing. However, as recorded in the verses immediately following that, Paul wound up going with Silas (rather than Barnabas), going to Macedonia (rather than to Asia), and meeting new people (rather than visit people they had seen before). Paul adapted to the changes and became a successful missionary, both inwardly and outwardly.

***Know that change happens.*** Even if life seems to be predictable and stable at the present time, sooner or later missionaries will probably have to cope with such changes as Paul did in Acts 15-16. Someone has said that the only thing that does not change is change itself. This has been true of cross-cultural missionaries from the beginning. Some people thrive on change and seek it out, but others dread change and struggle through it when it comes. Most people want enough change to keep life interesting, but not so much as to make them uneasy.

What can one do to get through those inevitable changes that happen in life? Of course, change itself is not the problem; the problem is in how we deal with it when it happens. Here are some ways to cope.

***Anchor to a point of stability.*** The Bible is clear that our point of stability is in God himself.

- I the Lord do not change... (Malachi 3:6).
- He will never leave you or forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6).
- Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).
- I am the alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End (Revelation 22:13).

To successfully adapt to change, we must keep our commitment to God up-to-date. Without this secure anchor, we may become like Jonah rather than like Paul.

**Expect emotions.** When people face change, and emotions of all kinds come flooding in, they may say, “I don’t understand why this has affected me so much.” One moment they are laughing, and the next they are crying because they are normal. Nearly every emotion occurs during change. Here are some of the most common, illustrated in Paul’s life as he experienced great change at the end of his third term.

- Uncertainty about the future may result in fear, worry, anxiety, apprehension, dread, self-doubt, or panic. Paul said he was going to Jerusalem, not knowing what would happen to him there (Acts 20:22).
- Being forced to change may result in stress, anger, frustration, or hostility. Paul felt compelled by the Spirit (Acts 20:22).
- Looking at what you are losing may result in sadness, depression, despondency, or despair. Paul wept as he was about to leave (Acts 20:36).
- Considering new opportunities may result in joy, elation, or happiness. Paul said he looked forward to finishing the course and completing his task (Acts 20:24).

Note that Paul acknowledged his emotions, and this allowed him to cope and continue with his work. These emotions may overlap, or some find themselves on a pendulum swinging back and forth between them. We need to acknowledge and express emotions as we hold on to our anchor. Trying to build a dam to hold them inside may result in the dam bursting and the emotions spilling out.

**Take time to grieve.** Losses are real. It is all right (even necessary) to do all the things Paul and the elders from Ephesus did as they departed from friends in Acts 20:37-38.

- Wept
- Embraced
- Kissed

- **Grieved**

Coming to terms with losses and adjusting to change takes time. Trying to rush through without getting closure on what missionaries are leaving will make it hard to enter their new roles.

**Swim with the current.** When individuals feel like they are being swept along in a torrent of change, they should swim with the current as long as it is not taking them away from the work God called them to do. If a person is called to put God’s word into the language of the people, he may insist on using a quill pen and parchment to make copies of it (or even a Gutenberg press or even moveable type). However, learning to use the computer will make work more effective.

We have proverbs expressing this.

- When the wind blows, don’t build windbreaks; build windmills.
- If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.
- When the river flows, don’t just build a dam; put in a hydroelectric generator.

Swimming upstream may simply exhaust a swimmer while going with the flow may accomplish his purpose. Stubborn rigidity may be defeating while flexibility may get missionaries through the torrent. The only time not to harness the energy of the current is if it is carrying them away from what God has called them to do. In this case, they may have to swim across the current and get out of the water.

**Find friends.** Pride makes some people try to cope alone, a most difficult thing to do. Sharing with other people is a great help. Bravery may mean having the courage to ask for help when needed. Here are some people who can swim with you or throw you a life jacket.

- People who have been through the change you are facing. They may have helpful suggestions to cope or mentor you through those changes.
- Your family (missionary, church, and biological) cares, so someone in that family will listen to you and help.

- Close friends whom you trust deeply will allow you to express your fears and frustrations, and they may offer ways to cope.
- Member care people in your organization can help you function through its changes.
- Pastors or counselors with no connection to your organization can bring an outside objectivity not found within your agency. When facing new dangers in Jerusalem, Paul called on the elders of the Ephesian Church (Acts 20:17).

**Focus on the good.** Every change has both good and bad in it. Those in ministry may be leaving friends, but they will also make new friends. They may have to leave a task they know well, but they will also learn to do something new. Focus on good new things.

All of us have the choice of looking back at what we are leaving or looking ahead to where we are going. Paul wanted to finish the course, to complete the task. Keeping attention on God's call keeps us moving in the right direction. Concentrating on him and his goodness as our point of stability, we can navigate change. Remember that every glass that is half empty is also half full. Optimists may make as many mistakes as pessimists, but they have a lot more fun getting where they are going.

**Take one step at a time.** When missionaries begin to feel overwhelmed by the size of the change, they need to break the experience up into smaller parts. It may seem hopeless to walk across the continent, but many people have done it, always one step at a time.

The new assignment may be to begin a school in a village that has never had one. While we all went to school, starting one may be a task that seems hopeless. Take it step by step.

- Find a place to meet.
- Select a curriculum.
- Hire some teachers.

- Etc.
- Take care of yourself.** During change some people forget to care for themselves. They need to care of themselves in every way, spiritually, socially, physically.
- Have a daily devotional time.
  - Spend time daily with spouse and family.
  - Schedule time with other missionaries.
  - Eat good healthy meals.
  - Exercise several times a week.
  - Get rest by keeping a Sabbath.

**Remember that it will end.** Every stream or river ends at a lake, sea, or ocean sooner or later. Likewise, every torrent of change comes to an end, and then people will experience feelings of stability and normalcy again. Keeping this in mind is a deterrent to feeling helplessly swept along in the current.

When people move to a new position in a different city, they may ask how long it will be before it really feels like home. Although some people make it sooner, it takes a full year for many to adapt to the change. It may not feel like home until missionaries have gone through every season, every holiday, etc.

### Separation Stress

Whenever people in ministry are separated, disagreements are likely to occur. The most famous case is probably when Thomas refused to believe what the other disciples told him about Jesus' resurrection (John 20). Of course, the same was true of other disciples as well (Mark 16, Luke 24).

This has especially been true relative to missions. Even after Peter became convinced about the Gospel being for the Gentiles and witnessed them receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 10), the other early Christians not there at the time were critical of his actions (Acts 11). A major crisis arose in the early church after Paul and Barnabas returned from their first term of

missionary service and had not required the Gentile Christians to be circumcised (Acts 15).

These disagreements and misunderstandings still occur today among missionaries in general but may be especially difficult for husbands and wives experiencing separations related to their missionary ministry. In these days of air travel, absences of a few days or a few weeks are very common, as are even longer absences. This is true not only on the field but perhaps even more so when on home assignment. One spouse or the other may be gone nearly every weekend or several weeks at a time raising support. Although these absences may be more frequent today, the reactions of individuals to them have not changed. What are some of the difficulties that may occur? What can be done to minimize these difficulties?

***It always happens when you are gone.*** For the spouse left at home, it seems like that is the time crises are most likely to occur. A pipe breaks. The car will not start. The computer locks up and will not reboot. The kids get sick. The teacher wants to talk to a parent about a problem at school. The list goes on and on. Whether such things happen more frequently when a spouse is gone or not, they at least seem to. Here are a few steps one can take to cope with this situation.

- Develop a “practical” support group. Make a list of people you can call on to help with the car, the computer, illness, and other problems.
- Use whatever means of communication you have available to contact your spouse. E-mail can usually bring a response in a few hours. A cell phone can often get an immediate response.
- Ask older missionaries who have lived in the same area for suggestions on how they coped with such situations.
- Lower your expectations. Rather than trying to fix everything, let something go.

***I need your stability.*** Marriage is about sharing life, and today that is more possible than ever before. When one spouse feels the need to discuss a situation with the other, the sooner

they can do that, the better. When both spouses share in the decision, both have responsibility for the outcome. With our varied means of communication one can contact a spouse virtually anywhere within a few hours, and the traveling spouse should make that possible. Do not hesitate to spend whatever money is necessary to communicate. Here are a few ways that can be done.

- Cell phones. Do not turn them off unless absolutely necessary for an agreed on length of time. When you do, return the call as soon as possible.
- E-mail. Check your e-mail on an agreed-on schedule and reply immediately.
- Fax. Leave word with whoever receives your fax messages to get them to you as soon as possible and reply immediately.
- Even if there is no “emergency,” communicate on an agreed schedule.

***What about the children?*** Children, like spouses, have various reactions to a parent being gone. They may become angry, lonely, moody, disobedient, withdrawn, and so forth. Here are some ways to cope with these.

- Communicate I. The traveling parent can talk by phone personally, e-mail a message to each child, or add a special message to a fax.
- Communicate II. The parent at home can encourage communication with the children by asking, sharing, and being vulnerable.
- Discipline must be administered immediately, not when the absent parent returns. If possible, spouses should communicate before it is given.

***I get so angry.*** The spouse left at home may become angry at the traveling spouse or angry at God. One may feel abandoned, that the absent spouse is gone because she or he really wants to be. Even if agreed to beforehand, one may feel anger at God for calling the spouse away. Such feelings must be faced, and so must thoughts about the absent spouse. Talk

with others about them, beginning with the object of your anger. If necessary, with permission, talk with selected others.

- With the spouse
- With God
- With a support group
- With a counselor

***We seem to have less and less in common.*** Of course, separated marriage partners do. People involved in different activities become concerned about different issues and develop different interests. A strong marriage requires common interests, and that will require intentionally maintaining these.

- Openly discuss with each other what is happening and what interests you want to nurture together.
- Choose interests that you value in your marriage.
- Choose friends that you each value, people with whom you are both comfortable and have similar interests.

***I get so lonely.*** Of course. Both partners are alone, so both are likely to be lonely. To combat this, intentionally plan how to combat the loneliness.

- Tell each other about your loneliness.
- Find activities that help decrease the loneliness. For some it may be watching a video, for others having friends in, and for still others, reading a book.
- Both journal about your feelings of loneliness while apart, and then share your journals with each other when together.
- Communicate frequently via e-mail and telephone.

***I can't believe I'm attracted to \_\_\_\_.*** Although being attracted to someone other than your spouse takes many people by surprise the first time it happens, it is very common. This attraction may be either sexual or emotional. As one song put it, "When I'm not near the girl (guy) I love, I love the girl (guy) I'm near." Typically we come to like the people we interact with most, which is usually our spouse. If a person feels vulnerable in this area, he/she is. Individuals who do not feel

vulnerable may be even more vulnerable than those who do feel it. Such attraction must not be tolerated in any way.

- Be honest with yourself about it.
- Be honest with God about it.
- Find an accountability partner (or group) of the same gender to call you regularly to ask for a report.

***It's so good to have you home, so why are we arguing now?*** Separated couples have been looking forward to being together for several days or weeks, and now they find themselves in an argument. What is the problem? Remember that both are probably physically and emotionally exhausted from all the things we have discussed. The spouse who stayed at home has been carrying the load usually carried by two people. The spouse who traveled is tired from work, travel, and perhaps jet lag and intestinal disturbances from getting some of the flora and/or fauna from the local water.

- Both need to realize what the situation is.
- Both need to be especially patient with each other.
- If disagreements begin, it is best to shelve discussion until both have time to get rested, perhaps taking turns covering for each other while the other rests.
- Celebrate your reunion (when you are rested) in some special way.

***We need to talk.*** Missionaries, of all people, should know the importance of debriefing. They consider it routine when they reenter their passport country, and it is the same for any transition. Coming home from a few days or weeks is also a reentry, and both marriage partners need the chance to debrief this minor transition. Again, communication is of greatest importance, so debrief each other.

- Look at your journals, and tell each other everything about your separation.
- Consider how this fits in to your life story together.
- Decide what changes this may imply for your lives together in the future.

- Make specific plans for how you will cope with separation next time.

### “Difficult” Leader Stress

Missionaries are sometimes surprised that one of their leaders is a major source of stress. Such missionaries arrived on their field expecting that those in authority over them will help them cope with stress, but they are blindsided by finding difficult leaders who add to their stress there.

**Who are the difficult leaders?** A poor leader can be anyone who has authority over missionaries. Here are a few examples.

- Principals who supervise teachers and other staff at mission schools.
- Field directors who direct the activities of missionaries over a whole country.
- In the passport country department heads who make decisions that influence the lives of missionaries around the world.
- National church leaders who have authority over the activities of expatriate missionaries.

**How did they become leaders?** They became leaders just like the good leaders did—someone thought they would do well. Unfortunately, not all leaders are good at leading. Here are some possible reasons why they became leaders.

- Years of service. People may have been put in leadership positions because they had much experience, rather than because they were good leaders.
- Need. When leadership positions opened up and someone was needed immediately, the best available person may have been given the position.
- Nepotism. A missionary may have been given the leadership position because he or she was related to someone higher up in the agency.

- Peter Principle. Missionaries outstanding in previous positions may have been “promoted” until they reached their level of incompetence, and then they stayed there for the rest of their time of service.

**Are there examples in the Bible?** The Bible has two excellent examples of TCKs serving under difficult national leaders in host countries. One such example is Joseph’s service under several Egyptian leaders.

- Sold into slavery. His brothers hated him, were jealous of him, plotted to kill him, dropped him into a cistern, and finally sold him to a passing caravan of merchants. When they reached Egypt, the merchants sold Joseph to Potiphar, captain of the guard (Genesis 37).
- Falsely accused. Although he refused her seductive attempts, Potiphar’s wife accused Joseph of attempting to rape her. He was put in prison (Genesis 39).
- Forgotten. While in prison Joseph correctly interpreted the dream of another prisoner. Joseph asked the man to remember him and mention him to Pharaoh. Unfortunately, the man forgot about Joseph (Genesis 40).

Another example of a TCK is Daniel’s service under four different leaders from three different cultures (Daniel 1-6). Carried off to another culture, Daniel’s ability to serve under difficult leaders began to emerge even as a youth during his three years of higher education. Here are some of the challenges Daniel faced.

- Religious issues. While Daniel was in training, the king declared that students had to eat specific foods. Daniel resolved not to eat foods that would defile him (Daniel 1).
- “Impossible” demands and threats if those were not met (Nebuchadnezzar). The king demanded that Daniel and others do something no one could do. Without telling them his dream, he demanded that they describe and interpret it—or they would all be killed (Daniel 2).
- Poor judgment and rash decisions (Darius). Darius the Mede took over the kingdom and retained Daniel, a man he

intended to place over the whole kingdom. Lower administrators persuaded Darius to issue a decree that would result in Daniel's death if he continued to worship his God (Daniel 6).

***What can missionaries do?*** Niebuhr's serenity prayer describes two options, "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." Joseph and Daniel used both of these options.

The first option is to accept things one cannot change. As a slave and prisoner, Joseph was not able to change anything. He just accepted his situation and served the best he could wherever he was and in whatever situation he found himself. Daniel sometimes chose to do this as well.

- Joseph, when sold into slavery. Potiphar noticed that Joseph, living in his house, was true to his own God and that God blessed him. Joseph evidently chose to serve his master well rather than to wallow in self-pity. He became Potiphar's trusted attendant and was ultimately in charge of everything Potiphar had (Genesis 39: 1-6).
- Joseph, when accused. Joseph also evidently chose to serve the warden well in prison rather than to wallow in self-pity—he was put in charge of running everything in the prison (Genesis 39:20-23).
- Joseph, when forgotten. Joseph just continued serving in the prison. Finally, two full years later, when Pharaoh had a dream and asked for an interpreter, the man suddenly remembered Joseph. Pharaoh immediately sent for Joseph in the dungeon, asked him to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, and ultimately put him in charge of the entire country of Egypt. Again Joseph served his master well and coordinated preparations for disaster (Genesis 41).
- Daniel, under Darius. Daniel was thrown into the lions' den as Darius said, "May your God rescue you." It is interesting to note that Darius was so distraught he could not sleep while Daniel was with the lions. When God saved Daniel,

Darius was so overjoyed that he issued a decree that everyone in his kingdom must reverence God. Daniel continued to prosper the rest of Darius' reign as well as the reign of Cyrus the Persian (Daniel 6).

Paul, an early missionary who also served in difficult situations, wrote about having the serenity to accept them: "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances...the secret of being content in any and every situation" (Philippians 4:11-13). He described some of his difficult situations in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.

The second option the serenity prayer suggests is to change the things one can. Daniel did this when he could.

- Daniel, facing religious issues. Determined not to violate his convictions, Daniel asked the chief official for a food exemption, but the official refused. Daniel then proposed an experiment to the guard who took direct care of him. When the experiment showed that vegetables and water were better than the rich diet, the guard changed their diet, without telling his superiors. Daniel and his three friends graduated at the top of their class and entered the king's service (Daniel 1). This approach may be risky because officials may see such actions as insubordination and become very angry.
- Daniel facing an "impossible" situation. Daniel again showed his ability to serve under a difficult leader. Note the three steps he took in Daniel 2). First, he spoke to the commander of the guard "with wisdom and tact" (v. 14). Second, he asked the king, his difficult leader, for time (v. 16). Third, he asked his friends to pray (v. 18). Finally, God answered, and then Daniel praised and thanked him (v. 19-23). Daniel was made ruler over Babylon in charge of all the king's advisors (v. 48).

Daniel's procedure here is commendable. Using wisdom and tact, he asked everyone involved for permission, he asked people to pray, and then he thanked God.

One option not mentioned in the serenity prayer is for missionaries just to quit and return to their passport countries. Some do that. This may be necessary in some circumstances when false leaders thwart God's call to service. Jesus gave strong warnings about false prophets, false Christs, and false teachers. He noted that there will be many such people and that they will deceive many. Some of these people may be in leadership positions. Jim Jones (People's Temple) had a successful cross-cultural ministry in Indianapolis and was a charismatic leader taking his people to California and Guyana. Unfortunately, his followers all died of suicide/murder in Jonestown Guyana in 1978.

An excellent book about serving under leaders, good or difficult, is *Leading from the Second Chair: Serving Your Church, Fulfilling Your Role, and Realizing Your Dreams* by Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson published by Jossey Bass, 2005.

### Traumatic Stress

Some may look at this heading and say, "I've experienced some traumatic things as a missionary, but what in the world are PTSD and CISD? Does trauma affect children like it does adults? What happens to those who help the traumatized? Is there anything we can do to help prevent serious problems following trauma?"

**What is trauma?** People who respond with intense fear, helplessness or horror when they are confronted with something that involves the threat of death or serious injury to themselves or others experience trauma. This may be something people actually experienced themselves or something they witnessed.

Although this can happen to anyone anywhere in the world in the form of accident, assault, rape, etc., missionaries in some cultures are more likely to have such experiences, and less likely to have someone who knows how to help them at the most crucial time. Missionaries are often more likely to

experience conflicts, such as guerilla warfare, coups, and evacuations. They may also be more likely to live where natural disasters, such as typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, occur frequently. They may also live through epidemics, such as cholera, typhoid, or malaria. Terrorism, kidnapping, and being held hostage are more common in mission settings. If missionaries do not experience the trauma firsthand, they often witness it in national friends.

**What is PTSD?** Although nearly everyone living through such events has some symptoms for a week or two, some have much longer-lasting minor symptoms that do not interfere with their lives. However, some experiencing severe trauma develop Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and their symptoms are:

- Re-experiencing the traumatic event in the form of having recurring images or thoughts, or distressing dreams, feeling as if the event is happening again, and reacting physiologically to stimuli associated with the event or similar to the event
- Avoiding things associated with the trauma, such as conversations, activities, places, people or feeling detached from others, unable to experience emotions, and unable to remember significant parts of the trauma
- Experiencing symptoms of increased arousal, such as being easily startled, unable to sleep, irritable or angry, and having difficulty concentrating

These symptoms may occur immediately or be delayed for months or years. They may last for a few months or for many years. PTSD has been called combat fatigue and shell shock when found among the military in combat (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml>).

**What is CISD?** Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) is a method of helping prevent PTSD from developing in someone who has experienced trauma. CISD is a structured group meeting ideally conducted by a trained professional

between 24 and 72 hours after the crisis. A day is needed for the shock and numbness to wear off and for the people to rest and attend to immediate needs. After three days people begin to “seal off” emotionally and distance themselves from the trauma. Unfortunately, with airline scheduling problems, needed visas, lack of funds, etc., trained professionals may not be available within 72 hours, so those present **but not directly involved in the crisis** may want to deal with trying to prevent PTSD. Here are the outlines of a CISD which usually takes two or three hours (<http://www.icisf.org/>).

- **Introduction.** Explain the purpose of CISD, discuss what will and will not be held confidential, make sure that only those directly involved in the crisis are present and that all directly involved are present, give opportunity for questions, and have prayer together. (If some do not want to participate, point out to them that they may not need help, but they may be helpful to others in the group.)
- **History.** If the people involved know each other well, this step may be omitted. However, if they are not part of an already established group, having each one briefly give a personal testimony, family history, personal background (education, work, marriage, children, happiest times, most stressful times, strengths, and weaknesses) may be helpful.
- **Facts.** Ask each member of the group to tell about what happened and what his or her role was. This may include anything from watching helplessly as someone died to pulling people from the wreckage and saving their lives.
- **Thoughts.** Ask members of the group to give the first thought they remember after they stopped behaving automatically. It may be something as simple as worrying about a pet or as complex as wondering what would happen to their child if they died.
- **Reactions.** Ask each person to talk at a more emotional level about his or her experience, perhaps by asking, “What was the worst part of it for you?”

- **Symptoms.** Ask members to describe any symptoms they experienced during and after the event, such as disturbed sleep, lack of appetite, or poor concentration.
- **Spiritual struggles.** Experiencing trauma may impact members’ faith in God or concept of God. Indicate that it is safe to report questions about God. You may want to pray with them, even repeat some of the Psalms of David as he questioned God.
- **Education.** Summarize the meeting and note that their symptoms are normal for anyone who has experienced severe stress; then give them some techniques to help reduce stress. Tell briefly about PTSD and note that common reactions to trauma are feelings of anger, anxiety, denial, depression, guilt, grief, tension, and gastrointestinal problems.
- **Referral.** Finally, encourage participants who experience continuing problems to see a mental health professional for CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management), because you have just given first aid, not full treatment.

***What about children and trauma?*** Children are also affected by trauma and need care much like adults. Parents, teachers, pastors, and friends of the family may be most helpful to children.

- The presence of supportive loving adults is the greatest need of traumatized children. Children find the greatest comfort in knowing that they will not be left alone, that someone will be there for them whenever needed.
- Children need to be given enough information to comfort them but not so many details that it increases the trauma. Always tell children the truth; covering up the facts leads to distrust later on.
- Like adults, children need to be able to process what has happened to them with other children their own age. Also like adults, they need a facilitator present—a supportive, loving adult.

The general health of the family influences how severely the trauma will affect the child. Children from dysfunctional families are much more vulnerable to the effects of traumatic situations.

***Does debriefing affect the helpers?*** Yes. The debriefers must be debriefed. Leading a debriefing is an emotionally draining experience, and anyone doing it is very likely to experience the very symptoms they have heard others describe. They need some way to process what they have been through themselves, again within 24-72 hours. If not, the debriefers may well experience compassion fatigue and become cynical or emotionally “walled-off” themselves.

This does not need to be another full CISD but may be an informal way to talk through what has happened to them. They should have people praying for them. They should not schedule other emotionally demanding events after the debriefing so that they will have time themselves to debrief. If possible, the debriefers should work in pairs so that they can get together later and debrief each other.

***What can we do to prevent trauma?*** Agencies should have contingency plans for potentially traumatizing situations. Decisions should already be made on such questions as to whether or not ransom will be paid, who will go to help people in traumatic situations, who will speak for the mission during crisis times, and so forth.

Missionaries should know how to act to minimize danger. For example, they should know where flash floods are likely to occur, and avoid those roads when they see clouds in the mountains. Or tagging luggage: “Dr. Jonathan Q. Smith, PhD, Executive Director, Important Mission International” is a much more inviting target for hostage takers than is “John Smith, 123 The Lane.”

Each person should know what to do if a potentially dangerous situation occurs. For example, what do you do if an earthquake occurs? Running from a brick building is not wise. What do you do if you are taken hostage? Those early minutes

of captivity are some of the most dangerous, and resistance in the face of overwhelming odds may result in becoming a corpse.

We live in a fallen world, and trauma cannot always be avoided. However, by using the best resources that we have available and the spiritual resources that God supplies, we can emerge from the situation only scarred to some extent, but not total casualties.

For many good links to more information about trauma go to <http://www.trauma-pages.com/>.

### Conclusion

Psychology is not only the science of behavior and mental processes but also is the application of that science to real problems people face. This chapter showed how psychology has been applied to help people improve their general physical health and how it has been applied to help people cope with stress in their lives.

Missionaries have stressful lives for many reasons, not least of which is living in a “foreign” culture. Some of this stress is just the everyday hassle to get things done, but some of it is because of political turmoil and safety issues of living in unstable host cultures.

## Chapter 9

# Mental Health and Personality

Mental Health from a Christian Perspective

Personality Theories

Psychoanalytic

Humanistic

Behavioral

Cognitive

Disorders

Anxiety Disorders

Mood Disorders

Schizophrenic Disorders

Personality Disorders

Therapy

Psychoanalytic

Humanistic

Behavioral

Cognitive

Counseling for Missionaries

Member Care

Reentry

Debriefing

Chapters 11, 12, and 13 in Dewey's introductory text are relevant.

- [Chapter 11: Personality](#)
- [Chapter 12: Abnormal Psychology](#)
- [Chapter 13: Therapies](#)

(Chapter 15—Personality, Chapter 16—Psychological Disorders, and Chapter 17—Therapy, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition are also relevant.)

Another applied area of psychology is mental illness and mental health. Although psychology is very diverse in its study of behavior and mental processes, many people think of it as primarily about mental illness and therapy. At its beginning in 1879, modern psychology was not about therapy at all. During the first half of the twentieth century a few psychologists became interested in mental illness and therapy, primarily because of Sigmund Freud the psychoanalyst.

However, during World War II as the need for clinicians grew rapidly because of “shell shock” (now called PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) psychologists were increasingly called in to help the overloaded physicians. The army then began training clinical psychologists, and the field grew rapidly in civilian life after the war. During the last half of the century many psychologists emphasized the treatment of mental illness and focused on negative emotions such as depression and anxiety.

About the turn of the century some psychologists began writing about the necessity of developing a positive psychology. The January 2000 issue of the *American Psychologist* was a special issue containing 15 articles about such things as happiness, optimism, and wisdom. The introductory article is available at <http://www.bdp-gus.de/gus/Positive-Psychologie-Aufruf-2000.pdf>.

### Mental Health from a Christian Perspective

Figure 9:1 Mental Health from a Christian perspective.

#### HUMANS

Created . . . . . in the. . . . . Image of God  
Like Animals . . . . . Like God

Overt Behavior. . . . .Definition. . . . .Mental Processes

Understand. . . . .Goals. . . . . Make people  
Creation . . . . . like God

Psychoanalysis. . . . .Systems. . . . .Humanistic  
Behaviorism . . . . . Psychology

Experimental . . . . .Methods . . . . . Descriptive

Physical. . . . .The Person . . . . .Spiritual

Immaturity. . . . .Development. . . Maturity

Sensation . . . . .Awareness . . . Perception  
(States of Consciousness)

Learning . . . . .Intellect . . . . .Cognition  
(Memory)

Biological . . . . .Motivation. . . . .Cognitive

Physiological. . . . .Emotion. . . . .Conscious

Physical . . . . . Health. . . . . **Mental**

Mental health fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 9:1 (Health....Mental). The

definition of psychology includes the study of our Godlike mental processes, so mental health clearly fits on the lower right side of our perspective.

Although helping people to develop their Godlike attributes is our goal as Christians, this chapter will primarily be about the personality theories psychologists have developed to explain the psychological disorders people have as well as to provide guidance to treat such disorders.

### Personality Theories

Personality is how all of the areas we have discussed are integrated in a whole person. Each of the systems of psychology discussed in the Prologue has an approach to personality so this section is specifically about psychoanalytic, humanistic, behavioral, and cognitive theories of personality. Three of these approaches were presented in the Prologue in terms of their assumptions, definitions, goals, and methods; but we will review them briefly here relative to personality theory.

#### Psychoanalytic

Freud maintained that the mind had three levels of consciousness.

- Conscious. What a person is aware of at the moment
- Preconscious. What a person can bring into consciousness at any time, commonly called memory
- Unconscious. Things that a person cannot bring into consciousness

Freud proposed three structures of personality.

- The id, which is an innate unconscious reservoir of energy seeking instant gratification. It operates on the pleasure principle.
- The ego, which is the rational part of personality on all three levels of consciousness. It develops as a child copes with the world. It operates on the reality principle, tries to gratify

the id's desires, and is basically what we have called cognition.

- The superego, which is the moral part of personality on all three levels of consciousness. It demands consideration of right and wrong and strives for perfection. It is basically what people call the conscience.

Because the id and the superego are often in conflict, the ego is frequently caught trying to resolve these differences so that the pleasure seeking id can be satisfied in ways acceptable to the superego. Of course, this all takes place unconsciously so that people have no idea why they feel anxious. However, as they develop through several psychosexual stages, people develop defense mechanisms to reduce the anxiety. More detail in Freud's own words is available below.

*A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* by Sigmund Freud, translated by G. Stanley Hall (1920) is available at (<http://www.questia.com/read/102189232?title=A%20General%20Introduction%20to%20Psychoanalysis>).

Several more of Freud's books are available at <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/search?author=freud&amode=words>.

For further information about specific topics in psychoanalysis click on the following links to parts of Chapter 11 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Freudian Theory](#)
- [Freud's Divisions of The Psyche](#)
- [The Id](#)
- [The Ego](#)
- [The Super-Ego](#)
- [Repression](#)
- [Defense Mechanisms](#)
- [Freud's Sexual Theory](#)

- [The Psychosexual Stages, According to Freud](#)
- [The "Family Drama"](#)
- [Evaluating Freud](#)
- [Summary: Freud's Theory](#)
- [Carl Jung](#)
- [Jung's Theory](#)
- [Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious](#)
- [Jung's Personality Typology](#)
- [Evaluating Jung](#)
- [Alfred Adler's Theory](#)
- [Inferiority Feelings](#)
- [The Style of Life](#)
- [Karen Horney's Theory](#)
- [Horney's Emphasis on Family Life](#)
- [Erik Erikson](#)
- [Erikson's Psychosocial Stages](#)
- [Ego or Self-Concept Psychology](#)
- [Summary: NeoFreudian Theories](#)

## Humanistic

As noted in the Prologue, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow became leaders in a movement to emphasize the Godlike aspects of human beings. This movement became known as humanistic psychology or the third force. Neither man developed a theory as complex as Freud's, but they both emphasized positive aspects of persons. Since people are basically good, fundamentally free to make choices, basically rational, and aware of themselves, they will realize their potential if the right conditions are present in their lives.

Maslow emphasized helping people move through the steps in his hierarchy of needs toward the goal of self-actualization. Rogers believed that people could be helped by being genuine as well as experiencing acceptance and empathy. People who experience these grow toward reaching their potential.

Articles and books by Rogers and Maslow are not yet in the public domain to be posted on-line, but lists of their writings are found at <http://www.nrogers.com/CRRBiblio.pdf>, and [http://www.maslow.org/sub/m\\_bib.htm](http://www.maslow.org/sub/m_bib.htm). Many of the books are available on-line used at reasonable prices.

## Behavioral

Behaviorists did not make major contributions to personality theory, but they did attempt to offer some explanations. John Dollard and Neal Miller wrote *Personality and Psychotherapy* in the early 1950s. They attempted to account for personality in an analysis of the stimulus-response psychology of the behaviorists at mid-century. However, rather than just beginning with behavioral concepts, they tried to provide an explanation of some to the psychoanalytic therapy of the day (<http://nealmiller.org/?p=259>). Therefore, they produced a book that appealed to neither the psychoanalysts nor the behaviorists.

A few years later Joseph Wolpe wrote *The Practice of Behavior Therapy* and promoted the technique of systematic desensitization. This was an actual application of the concepts of stimulus-response psychology to the analysis of personality and used behavioral techniques to treat people. Though failing as an overall approach to personality, behavioral techniques were soon united with some cognitive concepts and cognitive-behavioral therapy became very popular ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive\\_behavioral\\_therapy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_behavioral_therapy)).

## Cognitive

In the 1960s, George Kelly wrote *A Theory of Personality*, a cognitive theory, in a style that read like a geometry book with a general postulate and logically derived corollaries. It was virtually ignored; however, a few years later

Aaron Beck began writing influential books with “Cognitive Therapy” in the title and founded the Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research (<http://www.beckinstitute.org/>). Cognitive therapy is firmly entrenched today but is often combined with other approaches as well, such as cognitive-behavioral or cognitive-social.

For further information about personality in general, click on the following links to parts of Chapter 11 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [What is Personality?](#)
- [Trait Theories](#)
- [Traits vs. Types](#)
- [Cattell and Factor Analysis](#)
- [The Trait Stability Debate](#)
- [A Convergence on 5 Basic Traits](#)
- [Genetic Influences on Personality?](#)
- [Bouchard's Research on Identical Twins](#)
- [Personality Tests](#)
- [The MMPI](#)
- [Dissociative Identity Disorder](#)
- [Summary: What is Personality?](#)

## Disorders

Theories of personality are of interest in their own right, but most people use them to explain normal behavior and psychological disorders as well as to suggest treatments. Two common disorders among missionaries, as among people in general, are anxiety and depression (one of the mood disorders).

## Anxiety Disorders

People with anxiety disorders worry more than usual. Rather than worrying only about such things as the unstable

political situation or the safety of their children, they seem to be anxious about everything. They even worry about such things as car repairs and having enough money for retirement. Sometimes their hands get cold and clammy, and they begin to have trouble sleeping. They begin to wonder about such questions as these: Can I have anxiety if I am really committed to Christ? What causes anxiety? Will I ever get over it? What can I do to prevent and get rid of it? Some of these questions need consideration.

***Can committed missionaries have anxiety?*** The first missionary, Paul, certainly did: “When I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless” (1 Thessalonians 5:5 NIV). Paul had only been able to teach the Scriptures for three weeks (Acts 17:2-3) before he was driven out of town, and he was concerned that the church would not last. The word for “stand it no longer” means “to cover, or conceal” (like a roof). Paul is saying that when he could conceal it no longer, he sent Timothy back to find out how they were doing (1 Thessalonians 5:1-2).

Paul had the same feelings about the Philippian church, the one he had started just before the church in Thessalonica. Paul wrote, “I think it necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus . . . so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety” (Philippians 2:25-28 NIV).

This was a general feeling for Paul as a missionary. After a long list of stressful events, he wrote, “Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches (2 Corinthians 11:28 NIV).

***What does the Bible say about anxiety?*** Although the Bible has much to say about anxiety, the King James Version never uses the words “worry” or “anxiety,” but a modern translation does. Solomon wrote, “An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up” (Proverbs 12:25). Jesus also warned us that in the last days we must “Be careful, or your heart will be weighed down with . . . the anxieties of life”

(Luke 21:34). Anxiety often results in depression, and both of these are most unpleasant emotions that distress us.

Not only is anxiety unpleasant, but it also has negative consequences in our lives. In explaining the parable of the sower Jesus pointed out, “The worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it (the word), making it unfruitful” (Matthew 13:22). Wealth may not be a problem in the lives of missionaries, but the worries of life may well make them unfruitful. We will consider other things the Bible says about anxiety later.

***Will I ever get over anxiety?*** Some people report feeling anxious all their lives, others just for several months or years. Stress often makes anxiety worse. Missionaries can control the level of their anxiety, but they must remember that some anxiety is a normal part of life, and they have to deal with it as it arises, perhaps on a daily basis.

***What can I do about anxiety?*** The most important thing is to do something; do not just wait for it to go away. Notice that Paul did something about his concern for the Thessalonians. He sent Timothy to strengthen and encourage them. After that he wrote them letters. He did the same thing with the Philippians. When we pinpoint the cause of our anxiety, we should do something about it.

The Bible tells us to take our anxieties to God. Paul, who sent Epaphroditus to see the Philippians to reduce his anxiety, also told them, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6 NIV). Then God’s peace could come into their thoughts and feelings.

Peter also acknowledged that we will have anxiety and told us, “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6). The writer of Ecclesiastes said, “So then, banish anxiety from your heart” (Ecclesiastes 11:10).

Sometimes, however, even after putting our worries on God the physiological responses that are a part of anxiety still occur.

Learning relaxation techniques such as the following can decrease these responses.

- Deep, relaxed breathing
- Tensing and relaxing muscles
- Shrugging and rotating your shoulders

**Who can I see for help?** If self-help does not work, the kind of treatment received depends on whom a person sees for help.

- Pastor. Missionaries, like other Christians, often think their feelings of anxiety and worry have a spiritual basis, indicating a lack of faith. Such feelings may, and a “spiritual check-up” with your pastor is a good place to begin. If this works, fine. But if it does not, then it is good to see a mental health professional.
- Psychologist/Counselor. Anxiety may be caused by your way of thinking about things. A psychologist or other counselor may be able to help you change your way of thinking, and such cognitive therapy may be an effective treatment for anxiety.
- Psychiatrist. Drugs, hormonal imbalance or other physical factors can cause anxiety. A psychiatrist is in the best position to evaluate such symptoms. A psychiatrist may also prescribe a minor tranquilizer to reduce intense anxiety temporarily so that you can learn to deal with it effectively.

**Can I prevent anxiety?** People can decrease anxiety by trying to take measures to prevent problems, but such actions seldom completely prevent anxiety. An example is Paul and the Thessalonians. He noted that he had tried to prepare them for the problems he knew were coming, “In fact, when we were with you we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know” (3:4). Thus Paul tried to anticipate problems, and he took steps to prevent the church from falling away. However, he still was not sure, and he sent Timothy to find out how they were doing. Even after Timothy’s encouragement and glowing report, Paul still said,

“Night and day we pray earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith” (3:10). He seemed still to have some anxiety about their faith, but it was no longer at the point where he could not stand it.

Missionaries can use their anxiety as a motivation to do something about the problem, which will often lower anxiety. This will be less distressing and make them more fruitful.

More information about anxiety is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_anxiety.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_anxiety.htm), and [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss\\_anxiety.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss_anxiety.htm).

**Panic Attacks.** A panic attacks occur when, without warning, individuals experience intense fear that occurs suddenly and for no apparent reason. It is one of the most unpleasant, terrifying, and upsetting experiences individuals can have. Although the attack is usually over in a few minutes, it may take people days to fully get over it, and those individuals may fear having another one.

The American Psychological Association notes that “Many people experience occasional panic attacks, and if you have had one or two such attacks, there probably isn’t any reason to worry” (<http://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety/panic-disorder.aspx#>).

However, people who continue to have them are diagnosed with panic disorder, about 1 in every 75 people. To get some indication of whether you have cause for concern you may want to take the Panic Disorder Severity Scale. A self-report form of that scale is at <http://serene.me.uk/tests/pdss.pdf>. This is just a screening test, but if you score above ten, it is a good idea to look for professional help.

For some unknown reason, during a panic attack the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system arouses the whole body. Its neurons are interconnected so it arouses glands and smooth muscles all over, including the adrenal glands. Adrenalin (epinephrine) from those glands flows

throughout the body through the blood stream. The heart pounds, breathing increases, sweat glands secrete, pupils dilate, etc. All of this unexpected arousal is terrifying. It can occur even while asleep.

*What are the symptoms of a panic attack?* As would be expected from what scientists know about the sympathetic nervous system, the symptoms are:

- Heart palpitations or racing heart
- Feeling sweaty or having chills
- Shortness of breath, hyperventilation, or feeling of choking
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Dizziness, lightheaded, or feeling faint
- Nausea or stomachache
- Trembling or shaking
- Numbness or tingling in hands and fingers
- Fear of losing control, going insane, or dying

*What does the Bible say about panic attacks?* The Bible has several references to panic. Some are about soldiers in battle panicking, deserting, and running away. Others are about people terrified by disease or fire. Still others are about horses fleeing in fear. All of these have someone terrified of a known problem and getting away as fast as possible.

However, the Bible says nothing about panic attacks. Such attacks are internal rather than external. The persons experiencing them are keenly aware of the feelings of panic but often try not to express those feelings. Most people are embarrassed to show the signs of panic when no “reason” is apparent.

*What will panic attacks do to one’s ministry?* The immediate effects of panic attacks on missionary ministry are obvious. Whether missionaries are teaching, preaching, counseling, or interacting in any other way with people, their effectiveness will decrease when they experience the symptoms above. People interacting with the missionary will wonder what is wrong.

Later effects, after recovering from the attack, include the following.

- Avoidance. The missionary may quit doing anything, including ministry, that may trigger an attack.
- Anticipatory anxiety. The missionary may become anxious just thinking about having another attack.
- Agoraphobia. Afraid of having an attack when people are around, the missionary may avoid people and crowds, even to the extent of staying home nearly all the time.

*How can panic attacks be treated?* The good news is that most, 70% to 90% of people who have even frequent attacks, find relief. Just knowing about the nervous and hormonal basis of the attacks helps. Here are some things to do.

- Renew your commitment to God and ask him to help you.
- Avoid caffeine and other habit forming drugs, especially stimulants.
- Get a half-hour of aerobic exercise daily.
- Learn stress management techniques, such as deep breathing.
- Learn relaxation techniques, such as breathing retraining and positive visualization.
- Remind yourself that attacks have a physical basis and decrease irrational thoughts.
- Gradually increase exposure to situations that have triggered attacks.
- Consult a physician about the possibility of anti-anxiety or anti-depressant drugs.

*How can panic attacks be prevented?* The bad news is that attacks cannot be completely prevented. Remember that the American Psychological Association said that “Many people experience occasional panic attacks.” Sometimes the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system just arouses the body.

The good news is that many of the things missionaries can do to treat it also can prevent it.

- Meditate on God’s word and prayer each day to maintain your relationship with him.
- Eat a healthy balanced diet while avoiding caffeine and other drugs.
- Exercise daily and get needed sleep.
- Minimize over-the-counter supplements and herbal remedies which may contain a variety of chemicals.
- Avoid stressful situations and manage stress when it does occur.

*Can missionaries with panic attacks lead normal lives?*

Of course, the good news is that they can lead normal, productive lives of service.

Unfortunately, missionaries may feel shame or guilt thinking they lack the faith needed to keep the attacks away. They self-diagnose the problem as a spiritual one rather than a physical one. Their concern may increase the probability of more attacks.

Missionaries are unlikely to feel guilty if they have diabetes because their pancreas secreting too little insulin. Just as there is no need to feel guilty if the pancreas is not aroused enough by the sympathetic nervous system, there is no need to feel guilty when the sympathetic nervous system and adrenal glands provide too much stimulation to organs all over the body.

Given that things may trigger the sympathetic branch at “random” times when missionaries do not expect it, these missionaries need a plan to calm that system. Here are some suggestions.

- When you feel one “symptom,” do not let your anxiety about it bring on a full-blown attack. For example, if you notice that your breathing has changed, do not worry about it and bring on a full attack.
- Learn how to decrease or stop an attack if a full one does occur. Note the ways attacks can be treated above.
- Avoid triggers if possible, and respond to them immediately if they do occur.

- Replace negative thoughts, such as “My faith is weak” with realistic, positive ways of viewing attacks.
- Join or begin a support group so you can share with others facing the same.

*What does the Bible say that would help a panic attack?*

The Bible has many promises and passages that help reduce anxiety and increase confidence and comfort. Make a list of verses that are particularly meaningful to you and memorize some of them to recall when a panic attack strikes. Here are some suggestions.

- 1 Peter 5:7. Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.
- Philippians 4:6. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication...
- John 14:1. Don’t let your hearts be troubled, believe in God...

This list could go on and on, but these are passages that speak to me. Develop a list through which the Holy Spirit speaks to you, and then memorize them. God can use his Word to calm you enough to prevent such attacks and help you control them.

Also for further information about anxiety disorders click on the following links to parts of Chapter 12 in Dewey’s on-line text.

- [Anxiety Disorders](#)
- [Panic Attacks](#)

### **Mood Disorders—Depression**

Depressed people realize that they have been feeling really sad, tired, discouraged about the future, unable to concentrate for some time, and they begin to wonder what is wrong. They just wish they could feel happy and enjoy life again. They begin to wonder about such questions as these. Certainly committed Christian missionaries could not be

depressed, could they? Wouldn't God keep them from that? Should you pray? See someone for counsel? See your physician? Will you get better? How long will you feel like this? Let's consider some of these questions.

***Can God's people be depressed?*** Depression is the "common cold" of psychological disorders. About 20 of every 100 women and about 10 of every 100 men experience clinical depression at some time in their lives. Christians sometimes deny that they feel depressed, but many do, as did God's choice people thousands of years ago.

- David, king: "How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?...My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction" (Psalm 13:2; 31:10 NIV).
- Job, layman: "Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb?...I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil" (Job 3:11, 26 NIV).
- Elijah, prophet: "I have had enough, Lord. Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors (1 Kings 19:4 NIV).
- Jonah, missionary: "O, Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live" (Jonah 4:3 NIV).

***Can committed missionaries today be depressed?***

Maybe heroes and heroines of the faith in Bible times became depressed, but what about some of our great missionary founders. Examples of what they said show their feelings:

- A. B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance: I fell "into the slough of despond so deep that...work was impossible...I wandered about deeply depressed. All things in life looked dark and withered."
- Adoniram Judson, missionary to Burma: "God is to me the Great Unknown. I believe in him, but I find him not."
- Mary Morrison, wife of Robert Morrison (China) Robert wrote, "My poor afflicted Mary...She walks in darkness and has no light."

- David Brainerd, missionary to native Americans: "I live in the most lonely melancholy desert...My soul was weary of life. I longed for death, beyond measure."

***Will I ever get over depression?*** The good news is that although depressed people often feel so bad that it seems hopeless, most people recover from their depressions in a few months to a year or more without professional help. Depressions come, and, usually within months, they go. The bad news is that when people become depressed, the condition may interfere with their work and relationships. Some become so hopeless that they may try to take their own lives before they start to improve. Some types of depression do not get better without treatment; in fact, they can get worse. Other bad news is that about half the people who have depression once have it again.

***What can I do about depression?*** Many people begin by trying to treat it themselves. Here are some things you might do:

- ***If you have not been doing all the things listed below as preventives, do them.***
- Replace negative with positive thoughts.
- Keep a journal of what you think and feel.
- Give yourself affirmations.
- Listen to relaxing music.
- Get more light or less heat.
- Change your normal routine.
- Set realistic goals and record reaching them weekly.

***Who can I see for help?*** If self-help does not work, the kind of treatment you receive depends on whom you see for help.

- Pastor. Missionaries, like other Christians, often think their feelings of sadness, guilt, and worthlessness have a spiritual basis. A talk with your pastor for a "spiritual check-up" is a good place to begin. If this spiritual treatment works, fine.

But if it does not, then it is good to see a mental health professional.

- Psychiatrist. Depression may have as its cause a chemical imbalance, and psychiatrists tend to emphasize chemical treatment. If your depression is caused by your blood pressure medication, for example, that may need to be changed. If you have an imbalance in the serotonin in your brain, an antidepressant, such as Prozac or Zoloft, may help.
- Psychologist/Counselor. Depression may be caused by your way of thinking about things. Cognitive therapy, which helps you change the way you think about things, is widely used by psychologists and other counselors, and it may help your depression.

We have come to expect instant fixes for any problems we have, and people must be aware that none of these professionals can bring about a cure in a few days. All of these usually take several weeks, but they do often shorten the depression. In addition, depression may have several causes, so that people need several different kinds of treatment at the same time. They can pray long, but if depression is a result of their way of thinking or a side effect of a medication, God may answer prayer through counseling and/or appropriate medication.

More information about depression is at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_depression.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_depression.htm), and at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss\\_depression.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/ss_depression.htm).

Also for further information about mood disorders click on the following links to parts of Chapter 12 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Mania](#)
- [The Bipolar Disorder \("Manic-Depression"\)](#)
- [Depression](#)
- [Mania](#)

## Schizophrenic Disorders

Some people become so disturbed that they lose contact with reality.

- They may have disorganized thinking in which they have false beliefs called delusions, such as that they are Jesus Christ. No matter what evidence is given, they continue to believe.
- They may have disturbed perceptions in which they have hallucinations, sensory experiences with no stimulus. They hear things or see things that are not there.
- They may express emotions that are completely inappropriate for the situation, such as laughing when told that a family member has died or becoming sad when told that someone has donated large amounts of money to their support.

For further information about schizophrenia click on the following links to parts of Chapter 12 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Schizophrenia](#)
- [Types of Schizophrenia](#)
- [Paranoid Schizophrenia](#)
- [Causes of Schizophrenia](#)

## Personality Disorders

Personality disorders are long-lasting, inflexible behavior patterns that disturb social functioning. Because they persist for so long and interfere with group functioning, they are difficult for missionaries. All of them are difficult, but probably the most disruptive is the borderline personality disorder. Such people soon become "high maintenance" in that their instability soon requires all the time of people in leadership over them (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/borderline-personality-disorder-fact-sheet/index.shtml>).

For further information about personality disorders click on the following links to parts of Chapter 12 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Personality Disorders](#)
- [The Antisocial Personality](#)
- [Categorization of Intellectual Disability](#)
- [Summary: Axis 2 of DSM-IV](#)

Finally, remember that disorders are culturally defined, change with the context, and change from time to time. People in some cultures go around naked all the time while in other cultures they would be arrested for doing so. People in many cultures may consider killing other people to be unacceptable, but when war breaks out with another tribe, killing people from that tribe may be highly desired.

In the United States homosexual activity was considered a disorder from 1952 through 1973. However, in December of 1973 enough members of the American Psychiatric Association no longer viewed it as a disorder, so it just became an alternate lifestyle. In the 1960s a child who tended to get distracted, was restless, and interrupted was called rambunctious or perhaps labeled as having "Minimal Brain Dysfunction." However in 1980 the American Psychiatric Association viewed it as a disorder and called it attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), now a common diagnosis for active children.

For further general information about disorders click on the following links to parts of Chapter 11 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Defining Abnormal Behavior](#)
- [Mental Disorders as "Harmful Dysfunctions"](#)
- [Szasz and the "Myth of Mental Illness"](#)
- [Deinstitutionalization](#)
- [DSM: The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual](#)
- [The Five Axes of DSM-IV](#)

- [Summary: Defining Abnormal Behavior](#)

## Therapy

As mentioned previously, each theoretical approach to personality has proposed what causes psychological disorders and suggested what needs to be done to treat those disorders.

## Psychoanalytic

Psychoanalytic approaches to personality propose that the causes of psychological disorders are conflicts at the unconscious level, often as a result of past experiences. Therefore these approaches use methods which they believe will reveal what is going on in the unconscious. Since people cannot directly access their unconscious voluntarily, psychoanalysts use methods such as the following.

- Free Association. Patients relax and say whatever comes into their minds whether or not it is "acceptable."
- Dream Analysis. Patients report their dreams and psychoanalysts "interpret" what the covert content of the dreams means about the unconscious conflicts.
- Interpretation of Resistance. If patients hesitate during a session or "forget" to come to a session, psychoanalysts interpret this as resistance to allowing something into consciousness.

Using these and related means of getting at what is happening in the unconscious, psychoanalysts say that patients improve.

For further information about psychoanalytic therapy click on the following links to parts of Chapter 13 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [The Psychodynamic Approach](#)
- [The Cathartic Method](#)

- [Freud Discovers Childhood Sexual Abuse](#)
- [Windows to the Unconscious](#)
- [Free Association](#)
- ["Freudian Slips" and Other Errors](#)
- [Dream Interpretation](#)
- [Psychoanalysis](#)
- [Jungian Therapy](#)
- [Personifying Aspects of the Unconscious](#)
- [The Adlerian Approach](#)
- [Analysis of the Style of Life](#)
- [Autoestimation](#)
- [Adler's Therapy](#)
- [Karen Horney and Self-Analysis](#)
- [Summary: Psychodynamic Therapies](#)

### Humanistic

Humanistic approaches to personality assume that people have innate resources for growth toward actualization of their potential. Disorders are caused by something not allowing this growth to occur. Humanistic psychologists also emphasize the future rather than the past, consider conscious thoughts, and help clients accept responsibility for their own lives. Though they do not restrict themselves to particular methods, humanistic therapists emphasize acceptance, empathy, and genuineness.

For further information about humanistic therapy click on the following links to parts of Chapter 13 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Rogerian Counseling](#)
- [Directions of Movement in Successful Therapy](#)
- [How Rogerian Therapy Works](#)
- [Criticisms of Rogers](#)

### Behavioral

Behaviorists assume that the cause of psychological disorders is that people have learned incorrect responses at some time in their past. Of course, the obvious thing is to have the people learn to stop making these incorrect responses or to have them substitute appropriate responses in their place.

The "Learning" section of chapter five contains descriptions of how techniques of both classical conditioning and operant learning are applied to extinguish some responses and reinforce others to make them more likely.

For further information about behavioral therapy click on the following links to parts of Chapter 13 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [The Medical Model versus Behavior Therapy](#)
- [The "Broom Lady"](#)
- [Extinction of CERs in Therapy](#)
- [Desensitization Therapy](#)
- [Exposure Therapies](#)
- [Sensitization](#)
- [Covert Sensitization](#)
- [Modeling and Behavior Rehearsal](#)
- [Beck's Therapy for Depression](#)
- [Behavioral Contracting in Therapy](#)
- [Summary: Behavior Therapies](#)

### Cognitive

Cognitive theories of personality propose that psychological disorders are the result of faulty thinking. People who hold incorrect beliefs about themselves and others or who have faulty ways of thinking about what happens to them develop disorders. Their faulty thinking leads to inappropriate emotions and behavior.

Of course, the way to help these people is to correct

their beliefs about themselves and their ways of thinking. Psychologists may challenge incorrect beliefs and teach better ways of thinking.

For further information about cognitive therapy click on the following links to parts of Chapter 13 in Dewey's on-line text.

- [Ellis and Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy \(REBT\)](#)
- [The A-B-C-D-E Mnemonic](#)
- [Ten Irrational Ideas](#)
- [Criticisms of Ellis and REBT](#)
- [Paradoxical Therapies](#)

As mentioned previously psychologists often combine these major approaches, and they have also developed other theories of personality. In addition, psychiatrists treat the same disorders, usually from a physiological perspective. Psychiatrists often maintain that the disorders are caused by a chemical imbalance in the body so they often prescribe psychoactive drugs to correct that imbalance.

This is often confusing to missionaries who are looking for help. They do not know what is wrong—they just want something to help. Here is information for those people.

### Counseling for Missionaries

Suppose you have been struggling with a problem for some time and cannot seem to solve it. You have thought about going to someone for counseling, but you have reservations. Does that mean there is something wrong with you? What does the Bible say? To whom do you go? Will what you say get back to headquarters? Here are answers to some of these questions.

***Does needing counseling mean that something is wrong with me?*** In our individualistic culture, some people believe that if you need help solving a problem, then you must

be weak, not spiritual enough, or even mentally ill. That is not the case. We all need help from others just to know how to solve some of the normal problems that are a part of life. How should I discipline my children? What is my responsibility to my aging parents? How can I solve this conflict with my spouse?

A counselor will not make the decision for you but will help you explore your dilemma to make the decision. He or she may provide information, suggest action you can take, explore the implications of the various options you have, and so forth.

***What does the Bible say about counseling?*** The Bible makes it clear that you may receive good or bad counsel, and it is up to you to seek out good counsel. Christ was called the “Wonderful Counselor” (Isaiah 9). As Jesus was leaving, he promised “another Counselor” would come to be with us forever, the Holy Spirit (John 14-16). This other comforter, the “Paraclete” is “one called or sent for to assist another.” A counselor is basically a helper, one to come alongside in time of need. We are repeatedly urged to seek counsel from the Lord.

In addition, we are told to have many counselors at the human level. Even Solomon with all his wisdom often advised having counselors, many counselors (Proverbs 11:14, 12:15, 13:10, 15:22, 20:18, 24:6). Of course, we are also warned not to take the counsel of the wicked.

***What kind of counselor should I see?*** There are more than half a dozen different types of people you may choose. All will counsel you, but various ones have different “tools” they are more likely to use.

- Wise lay person. You may simply want to talk with someone you believe has experienced much in life and is very wise. This person is likely to give advice and urge you to take a particular course of action.
- Pastor/pastoral counselor. People in this role are likely to look for spiritual problems and are more likely to pray with

you, lay hands on you, anoint you with oil, or apply Scripture to your situation.

- Clinical psychologist /counseling psychologist / counselor. These individuals are most likely to talk with you and help to detect problems in your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- Clinical social worker. This individual is likely to look at your relationships with others as a source of your problem.
- Psychiatrist. This is a person trained as a physician and is more likely to look for a physical basis for your problem, to give you medication to improve your thinking or emotional balance.

Ideally all of these individuals should look at all causes, spiritual, psychological, social, and physical, but each has his or her emphasis. You may even want to talk to two at the same time, telling each that you are seeing another. Find someone who is competent, in whom you have confidence, and to whom you can relate.

If the person you first talk with is unable to help, feel free to see someone else. Of course, continue with the first person long enough to find out whether or not the treatment works. All approaches may take several sessions for noticeable improvement to occur.

***Should I see someone inside or outside the mission?***

This is up to you. The important thing is to find a competent person to whom you can relate, and these kinds of people are found both within mission organizations and outside them. It is a matter of personal preference, but find someone who really listens—to be heard often means to be healed.

One study found that a person's missionary status influenced whether counsel was preferred from within or outside the organization. Missionaries in candidacy or pre-field orientation tended to prefer counsel from someone within the organization. Missionaries who had experienced significant difficulties on the field preferred counsel from someone not affiliated with the mission.

***Should I see a professional?*** Again, this is up to you. The idea that persons are qualified to give counsel only because of their education and credentials from a governmental agency is a modern Western one. For most of history, people simply sought counsel from those they perceived as wise.

Today agencies license or certify professionals who have met specified educational standards and have had a minimum of supervised experience. These credentials assure you that the person has met the criteria of some board of the state.

Dozens of studies have been done comparing professional and paraprofessional helpers, and the research has usually not found significant differences in the outcome of the two. The paraprofessionals, people with some counseling training, were usually just as effective as the professionals in helping people resolve most problems.

Of course, if you are thinking about harming yourself, see a professional who can evaluate how likely you are to do so and who can take effective steps to prevent harm.

***Will what I say be kept confidential?*** That is something you want to establish before you begin talking about your issue. This is usually done at the first session when you will be given an informed consent statement if you see a professional. This statement should have in writing the procedures that will be followed while you are seeing the professional, including the confidentiality policy.

In most states in the USA professionals are legally required to break confidentiality if harm is involved or if ordered to do so in a court of law, such as in a custody dispute for children.

Most informed consent statements will have the following limitations on confidentiality:

- If you say you intend to harm yourself, the counselor will take whatever steps are necessary to prevent that, including telling others.

- If you say you intend to harm someone else, the counselor will inform the intended victim and authorities where you live and where the intended victim lives.
- If you report abuse of some helpless person, such as a child, or aging adult, the counselor will report that to protective services.
- If a judge compels a counselor to reveal something in court, most counselors will do so.

Of course, the informed consent statement may include other conditions as well, so read it carefully before signing it. The statement is meant to make it clear to all involved when confidence will be broken.

If someone else (insurance company, governmental agency) is paying for you to be counseled, they will at least be told that you are talking to the counselor, and most require some diagnosis as well. That becomes a part of your medical record.

More information about counseling is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_counseling.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_counseling.htm).

## Member Care

Missionaries may have heard about member care, but wonder about it. They are doing all right and wonder why anyone would need help. What is member care anyway? Since God cares for them, why would missionaries need member care from other people? If missionaries did need it, who would give it to them? How would missionaries go about getting such care, if they ever did need it?

**What is member care?** Many words can be used to describe what takes place in member care. Some of those words are friendship, encouragement, affirmation, help, and fellowship as well as sharing, communicating, visiting, guiding, comforting, counseling, and debriefing. All of these, and more, are facets of member care given by someone who understands the special needs of missionaries.

Of course, all Christians have the care given by the Holy Spirit, the one whom Jesus promised in John 14-16. Translated “comforter,” “counselor,” or “advocate,” the Greek word (paraclete) literally means one called or sent for to assist another, someone who has been invited to stand by our side.

In addition to the Holy Spirit, God often uses other people to come alongside and help us, whether we are missionaries or in other vocations. Most people in the passport country have others they can call on for help, whether pastor, counselor, or friends in a small group—such as a Bible study group. Among missionaries who are members of some mission agency or church, the term used for this process of having someone come alongside to offer help is “member care.” This may be something as routine as a regularly scheduled visit from a pastor asking, “How are you doing?” Or it may be as rare as a psychologist rushing to get to an individual within a couple days for a trauma debriefing to help prevent post-traumatic stress disorder.

**Who needs member care?** In modern individualistic western cultures where people learn to “make it on their own,” even Christians may believe that they do not need help from anyone except God. They may believe that asking for help is a sign of immaturity or weakness, a lack of faith or spirituality, or perhaps a symptom of illness—either mental or physical.

At the training sessions during the orientation of his twelve disciples Jesus told them where to go, what to take, what to do, and how to deal with conflict. He was not kidding when he went on to tell them to be on their guard because he was sending them out like sheep among wolves (Matthew 10). Today as many face the wolves of missionary life whether they are malaria, dengue fever, parasites, depression, anxiety, conflict, burnout, grief, guilt, temptations, assault, the violent death of a colleague, or demonic forces, they may need someone to come and stand by their side.

At the similar orientation session for the seventy-two others, Jesus sent them out in twos (Luke 10). No one went

alone. First Church in Antioch commissioned Paul and Barnabas to leave on their first term (the first missionaries), and as they left, John went with them as well (Acts 13). When Paul and Barnabas could not agree on who should go along with them on their second term, they parted company and went out as two missionary teams of two each (Acts 15). There were no “Lone Rangers” (even the Lone Ranger had Tonto, his national companion). Instead of being a sign of weakness, a lack of faith, or a symptom of illness, asking someone for help is a sign of normality, reality, and health.

**Who gives member care?** Of course, anyone who cares can give member care. It may be a high school friend, a distant relative, a retired neighbor from your childhood, or anyone else. However, most often member care comes from four major sources.

- **Your Sending Church.** Ideally much member care comes from your home church. Members can send letters, call you by telephone, send packages of special things you miss, communicate with you by e-mail, and come visit you. Unfortunately, in these days of much education (going to college and then to seminary) missionaries often lose close connections with their home churches. They may have not really bonded with the last church attended before going overseas so that the churches commissioning them may not really feel like their sending church. Thus they may receive little member care.
- **Other Missionaries.** The people most likely to deeply understand what you are going through and be able to empathize with you are other missionaries. The missionaries you work with are the ones best able to come alongside, but if you share too much, that may affect your working relationships. You may be able to form a bond with missionaries from other agencies in the area, if there are others nearby.
- **Your Agency.** Many medium-size and large agencies now have people whose assignment is to give member care.

These may be pastors, veteran missionaries, counselors, and so forth. They may be at centers in different parts of the world, or they may travel from country to country giving care to missionaries in that agency.

- **Member Care Specialists.** At times you may prefer to talk with someone completely outside your agency. You may have personal problems that you do not want to share with anyone in the agency or for which you think there is no help in the agency. Pastors, counselors, social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists who specialize in missionary care are available to come alongside and help.

*How do I get member care?* **Ask for it. Tell people when you need help. Find someone you can ask for help when you face the wolves of missionary life.**

- **Your Sending Church.** If you do not feel like you have a sending church, ask a church to play that role for you. Tell them you want to be “their missionary,” and ask for care from them. You may even want a coalition of churches geographically near each other to be your “sending church” and furlough in their area. Tell them that re-entry and furlough are difficult, and you want their help especially during that time. Tell them that you need letters and phone calls while on the field; then tell them when you are getting too much e-mail so that they will not expect immediate, personal replies.
- **Other Missionaries.** Form support groups with others on your field in your agency or nearby. Meet regularly for Bible study, prayer, and general care for each other. Form accountability relationships with two or three others.
- **Your Agency.** Tell your administrators when you need care. Ask them to find someone to give you regular pastoral care if they do not already have someone playing that role.
- **Member Care Specialists.** Some organizations specialize in supplying on-field care for missionaries. This may involve a cost, or the care may be free. Other organizations provide care in sending countries, places where you can temporarily

withdraw from the battle and receive help from mental health professionals.

An entire book about member care, *Missionary Member Care: An Introduction* is available free of charge at <http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#mmcintro>.

## Reentry

As missionaries approach the end of their time of service, they are excited about going “home” to the country and church that sent them to another culture as a missionary. Of course, they will miss the people they have been ministering to while they have been in their host country, but they begin to daydream about what it will be like to be greeted by friends and family when they arrive home.

This is usual for everyone who has been away from home a while. However, many times missionaries’ expectations are so high that they experience high re-entry stress. When they get “home,” you may find themselves feeling lonely, isolated, disillusioned, misunderstood, depressed and irritated with people back home as well as with their own culture. Therefore missionaries should look at how they can prevent some of these feelings by leaving well, entering well, and being aware of some of the pitfalls in going home.

**Leaving Well.** One of the things that may increase re-entry stress is not leaving the mission field correctly. The last part of Acts 20 gives us a good example of missionaries leaving well. Paul had spent three years in Ephesus and was headed back to his passport country and headquarters in Jerusalem. Dave Pollock is fond of saying that to leave well persons should build a “RAFT.” How did Paul fulfill that acronym?

- **Reconciliation.** When leaving, you may try to deal with tensions in relationships by ignoring them, hoping they will just disappear. However, they do not. We carry them inside, and they interfere with new relationships. If we ever

spend time with the other party again, the tensions will still be there and even harder to settle. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders how he had lived among them the whole time he was there and that he never even took support from them but was always giving.

- **Affirmation.** Let others know how you respect and appreciate them by telling them how important their friendship has been and how you enjoyed working with them. As you acknowledge how people have blessed you, you will become aware of what you have gained. Paul commits the Ephesians to God’s grace and warns them of potential difficulties.
- **Farewells.** Say good-bye to people, pets, places, and possessions. Take pictures and small reminders of the good things that have happened to you. After Paul was done speaking, they all prayed, wept, embraced, kissed, went to the ship, and tore themselves away.
- **Think destination.** While saying your good-byes, begin thinking realistically about where you are going. Think of it as a visit to the place you used to call home and imagine realistically what it will be like there. Paul wanted to be in Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost, but he also realized that there were hardships facing him there.

One thing that is particularly difficult is being forced to leave the field before missionaries really want to. This can be because of health problems in the missionary or family members, difficulty with a teenager, and a host of other things. In such cases feelings of failure, depression, discouragement, resentment, and guilt may surface. In such cases it helps to acknowledge grief, face present realities, draw a healthy line on the past, and commit to the present task.

**Traveling.** Airplanes are wonderful for getting home in a hurry, but they provide little time to “leave” a host country in an individual’s thinking. There is little time to grieve losses and anticipate arrival when flying home, and sometimes people are still “traveling” in their thinking even when their bodies have

arrived back home. In one sense many people are still transitioning for several days or weeks after they arrive home. They unpack their suitcases long before they unpack their minds.

Although Paul was in a hurry to leave to get home in time, he had time to think as he traveled. Remember that he was covering more than 600 miles by ship at the mercy of the winds, and he had to make a “connection” (find another ship headed his way) after the first 200 miles. People back home may not understand and think it is extravagant, but a week in Hawaii or in Europe on the way home is a good way to transition more effectively.

**Re-Entering Well.** Of course, the first steps to re-entering well are to build a good RAFT and allow some time to transition on the way home. Then missionaries can find out if their expectations are realistic or not. Their expectations form the basis for evaluating everything back home, and everyone has expectations even if they deny them.

Unfortunately expectations may be based on what was true one, two or four years ago. However, during that time everything has changed—individuals, their friends and family, their church, and their culture.

- You have changed. Before you left, you drove your car to the corner store, threw away food, and discarded plastic bags without thinking. Now you walk half a mile, take food home from the restaurant, and hoard bags. Paul had changed, and he told the people in his passport country about persecuting followers of the Way, being struck blind on the road, and then being sent to the Gentiles (Acts 22)
- Your friends and family have changed. You used to belong to the group, know where you fit with everyone, and friends confided in you and listened to you. While you were gone, new people came into the group, and your friends are involved in different activities. You now feel like a marginal person, do not understand the jokes others laugh at, and misinterpret some of the things they say and do.

- Your church has changed. When you left, it may have seemed to be such a mission-minded church, but now no one seems very interested in missions. When you try to talk about your mission experience, people may listen politely for a few minutes, then launch into an excited conversation about how the local football team is doing. When Paul came home from his first term (Acts 15) of missionary service, people from the church maintained that his converts were not saved. At the end of Paul’s third term (Acts 22) people in his own denomination were excited. However, when he went to the big church in town, the people basically listened politely until he mentioned his missionary call; then they called for his death.
- Your culture has changed. Alvin Toffler wrote *Future Shock* to point out that cultures now change so fast that even the people living in them can barely keep up with the changes. People gone for several years often return to a culture quite different from the one they left. Something as simple as walking into a store and buying something can be overwhelming.

More information about Reentry is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_reentry.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_reentry.htm).

### Debriefing

Some may say, “I already know about debriefing because I’ve been through it several times. As I left for home, the field director asked me to rate the adequacy of my housing, whether or not I felt overworked, how my kids got along in school, how many people came to Christ under my ministry... Then I did nearly the same thing again at headquarters with someone there.”

That is one kind of debrief, an organizational debrief. That is necessary for the agency to gather information, and it is done primarily for the good of the agency. However, even more

important is a personal debrief, one done primarily for the person's own good. This debrief may be done individually or as part of a group of people who have been through similar experiences, such as a traumatic experience or returning to a passport country. It is an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of personal experiences as well as changes within one's personal life and that of his/her family.

Jonah, an early cross-cultural missionary, had just been part of a city-wide revival in Nineveh, but he was filled with anger. God himself debriefed Jonah, asking him, "Do you have a right to be angry?" Jonah apparently did not reply but went off to sulk a while. After more things went wrong, God again asked, "Do you have a right to be angry?" This time Jonah finally let all his anger out so that God and he could deal with it together.

Of course, debriefing is also good after a great experience. When the 72 returned from their evangelistic campaign (Luke 10:17), they were filled with joy and enthusiastic that even the demons had submitted. At this point, Jesus cautioned them not to get carried away with the power they had experienced, but with the fact that their names were written in heaven.

**Why Debrief?** This personal debrief is particularly helpful in times of crisis or transition to help bring closure to an earlier chapter in life and to help leave behind any emotional "baggage" that accumulated during that time. The debriefing time helps missionaries do three things.

- **Verbalize.** Expressing thoughts and feelings verbally clarifies both. As you talk with others, you may find that you do not like what you hear yourself saying.
- **Normalize.** Whether in a group or with someone who understands your situation, you are likely to find that you are not alone in what you think and feel. You will come to realize that such thoughts and feelings are normal, that others have the same ones.
- **Contextualize.** A good debrief helps you put your experiences into the context of your life. You can relate

those experiences to earlier events in your life and see how God is using them to prepare you for the future.

Missionaries may not be angry like Jonah was, but their experience may have left them frightened, discouraged, exhausted, emotionally drained, or any number of things. Here are several questions that will help.

**Where are you?** God asked this question of the man in the garden in Genesis 3:9. Since God knew where the man was, why ask the question? To get the man to express where he was—not where he was geographically, but where he was psychologically and spiritually. Note that the man answers by telling what he experienced (heard God), what he felt (was afraid), and what he did (hid).

Ask yourself the following BASIC questions.

- **Behaviorally.** Are your actions what you want them to be?
- **Affectively.** Are you satisfied with your feelings, your emotions?
- **Spiritually.** Is your relationship with God alive and growing?
- **Interpersonally.** Are your relationships with your family and/or colleagues positive?
- **Cognitively.** Can you concentrate, thinking clearly and logically?

**What have you done?** God asked this question of the woman in the garden in Genesis 3:13. As with the man, God knew what the woman had done. However, he wanted her to say it, to confess. She did, but she blamed the serpent for her wrong actions. If people have done bad things, God wants repentance, not rationalization or projection.

In Luke 9:10 we find the apostles returning from their first short-term evangelistic assignment and reporting to Jesus what they had done, good things. Again, Jesus did not stop them from reporting what had happened because it was good for them to talk, to verbalize it. It was also good for them to hear what the others had to report as well, to normalize their own experiences.

After the first long-term cross-cultural missionary assignment, Paul and Barnabas told their sending church and other churches they visited on the way to Jerusalem about the conversions taking place under their ministry (Acts 14:27; 15:3).

**Where have you been?** An angel asked Hagar, “Where have you come from?” (Genesis 16:8). The angel was not puzzled about finding this woman along a road in the desert and was not simply wondering what village she was from. The angel wanted Hagar to know where she had been emotionally, and Hagar realized that.

Hagar replied, “I am running away from...” Sometimes missionaries run away from people who mistreat them when they try to help. In fact, it is often those people help the most that turn on them and hurt them the most.

After missionaries have talked about their experience, they may find that sometimes God wants them to shake the dust off their feet and leave, and at other times he will say, “Go back...and submit,” as the angel told Hagar. However, God always wants verbalization (confession) and submission to him.

As people think about where they have been, they need to consider how these past events fit in with their life story. How is God using them to make them into the persons he wants them to be?

**Where are you going?** The angel went on to ask Hagar, “Where are you going?” (Genesis 16:8). Hagar did not even attempt to answer this question. However, the angel told Hagar where she should go and what she should do. Hagar obeyed.

At the end of Acts 15 Paul suggested to Barnabas that they return to the towns they had visited on their first term of missionary service to see how their converts were doing. Paul had some ideas about who to take, where to go, and what to do. However, as you know, the future was dramatically different. He took Silas, went to Europe, and planted more churches.

It is good for us to think about where we are going and make plans for the future, but we must remain open to other plans God may have for us. If he wants us elsewhere doing other things, he will stop us. Then he will send us to a different place to do something different. In chapter 16 the Holy Spirit stopped Paul from going particular places and gave him a vision of where he was to go.

**What has God done with you?** This question is not one we find directly asked by anyone in Scripture, but it is a question we find returning missionaries answering to particular groups.

- When Paul and Barnabas returned to their sending church at the end of their first term of missionary service, they “reported all that God had done with them” (Acts 14:27). During missionary service God works in people’s lives and changes them. The Greek word “meta” is used hundreds of times in the New Testament and is the simple word for “with.” Just as Jeremiah talks about what the potter does with the clay, we need to become aware of what God has done with us. (Unfortunately, a few modern translations have translated “meta” as “through,” but it basically means “with.”)
- When Paul and Barnabas reached Jerusalem, they again “reported all that God had done with them” (Acts 15: 4). They had seen God work and were firmly convinced that anyone could be saved by grace, even without following all the Jewish customs.

Note that Paul and Barnabas reported this to their sending church and to the leaders at headquarters, but they did not report this to the people in the churches they visited along the way. Some things are better shared only with others who understand what God does with people who serve him in other cultures.

More information about debriefing is at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_debriefing.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_debriefing.htm).

### Conclusion

Mental health fits into our Christian perspective right opposite physical health. Since it involves mental processes, it fits well under the Godlike aspects of human beings.

The leading systems of psychology have all developed theories of personality to show how all aspects of persons are interrelated. These theories serve to explain behavior, both normal and abnormal. In addition, they suggest ways to help cure psychological disorders when people display abnormal behavior.

Psychologists and counselors who hold all of these theories provide member care. It is often confusing to know which kind of therapist to see, but it is good to know that most people holding these positions are helpful. The major variable seems to be finding someone in whom individuals have confidence and in whom they can confide.

## Chapter 10

### Social Psychology

Social Psychology from a Christian Perspective

Social Influence

Leadership

Differences

Nepotism

Social Relations

Relationships

Rejection and Betrayal

Conflict

Passive-Aggressive Behavior

Forgiveness

Reconciliation

Saying Goodbye

Chapter 15 in Dewey's introductory text is relevant.

- [Chapter 15: Social Psychology](#)

(Chapter 18—Social Psychology, in Myers 8<sup>th</sup> edition is also relevant.)

The content area chapters in this book began with a chapter about the person as a physical/spiritual being (Chapter 2). The first section of that chapter was about how human

beings are like animals physically, physiological psychology. That part of the chapter was the overlap between psychology and biology.

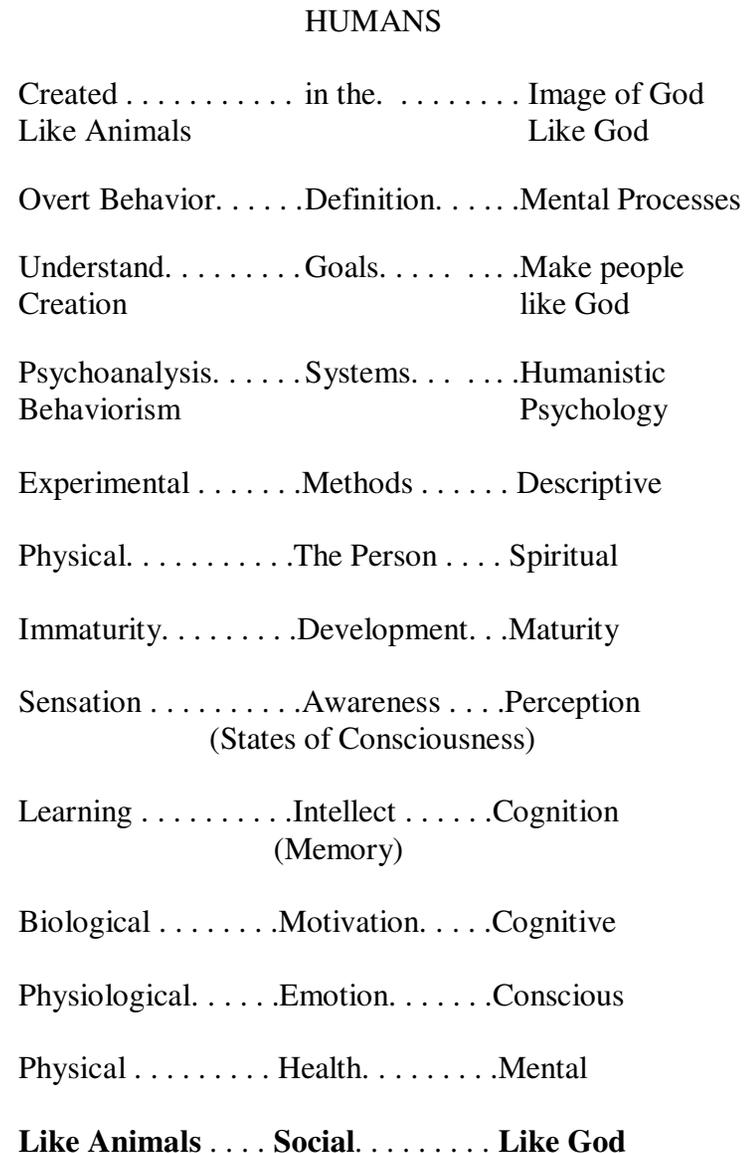
This last content area chapter is about the person as a social being, in relationship with other human beings. It is the overlap between psychology and sociology. Previous chapters have considered the behavior of individuals, but this one looks at the behaviors of people in relationship to others, the individual in society.

The outlines of most of the chapters in this book are similar to those in introductory psychology books. However, the outline of social psychology chapters varies widely between authors. Dewey has four sections, and Myers has three sections but with different topics. After placing social psychology in a Christian perspective, this chapter includes material covered in the last two sections of Myers text, social influence and social relations.

**Social Psychology from a Christian Perspective**

Social psychology fits into our Christian perspective as shown in the lower part of Figure 10:1. Some animals have status hierarchies that are very similar to what we see among human beings. For example, in a flock of five chickens, the highest status chicken can peck any of the other four. The second highest chicken cannot peck the top one but can peck any of the three below. This continues on down through the whole flock to the bottom chicken who can peck none of the others. This is so similar to such hierarchies in humans that we use the term “pecking order” to describe people in similar hierarchies. Of course, such hierarchies in primates are much more complex.

Figure 10:1 Social Psychology from a Christian perspective.



Some people have made rather direct comparisons between animals and humans. In *The Naked Ape: A Zoologists Study of the Human Animal* Desmond Morris pointed out many parallels between humans and animals ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/12/newsid\\_3116000/3116329.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/12/newsid_3116000/3116329.stm)). He later went on to write *Intimate Behavior* in which he described twelve steps humans go through to bond just as animals form pair-bonds through elaborate rituals, such as birds do in “courting.” Donald Joy then wrote *Bonding* to place these steps in a Christian perspective (<http://www.lns.cornell.edu/~sjr/bonding.html>).

As beings created in God’s image, people are also God-like. God is a trinity of persons, three in one. He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This social aspect of God is revealed in the first chapter of the Bible where, before creating humans, God was a social being communing with himself when he said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...” (Genesis 1:26). He then created humans, male and female, in his own image (Genesis 1:27).

The first thing in all of creation that was not good was that Adam was alone (Genesis 2:18), and this was before the Fall into sin (Genesis 3). God brought birds and animals to Adam who named them, but not one of them was adequate to satisfy his loneliness (Genesis 2:19-20). Only another person, also made in God’s image, could satisfy his loneliness.

### Social Influence

Social psychologists have repeatedly demonstrated the great power of social influence. All one had to do is look around and see that generally people in given groups dress, talk, and behave almost alike. On university campuses it often looks like the dress code requires everyone to wear blue jeans and talk on the cell phone as they walk. At a corporate headquarters and

on Wall Street it often looks like a dress code requires people to wear suits and to carry a blackberry. When we know how to dress, talk, and behave, life runs smoothly for us, and most of us conform to the norms. However, the same principles apply to dissenters who leave the group and form their own group of rebels who may become terrorists. In their training it may look like their dress code requires members to wear camouflage outfits and to study explosives.

Over the years social psychologists have conducted several classic experiments demonstrating the power of conformity and obedience.

- Muzafer Sherif asked people sitting in a dark room how much a point of light was moving. It was not moving at all, but people’s answers were influenced by what others reported ([Sherif \(1936\): Group Norms and Conformity](#)).
- Solomon Asch asked people to choose which one of three lines that was the same length as a standard line. The majority chose an obviously incorrect line if it was the one chosen by others ([Asch \(1951\): Conformity](#)).
- Stanley Milgram found that most people were willing to administer painful, and perhaps very dangerous, electric shocks to research participants when ordered to do so by an “experimenter” ([Obedience: Milgram \(1963\)](#)).

Though these experiments have been dramatic, much more common among missionaries are relationships between leaders and followers and the differences between missionaries from different generations.

### Leadership

At some time or other most missionaries are in a position of leadership: planting churches, directing a work team, or teaching in school (or Sunday school, or English). They may feel pressure from above to reach goals and pressure from below to help those they supervise meet their needs. What are they to do? In such a position of leadership, Nehemiah gives

good answers. Who was Nehemiah? What did he do? How did he lead? When did he lead? Why did he lead? Did he succeed? Although not everyone has the same style and uses the same methods, Nehemiah is one example of Godly leadership.

**Who was Nehemiah?** Like missionaries, Nehemiah was living in another culture, working in a position of responsibility there. He was cupbearer to the king. When visitors arrived from his passport country, he inquired about the people back home and about the capitol city.

However, much more important than his occupational title were his personal characteristics. When he heard that the people back home were disgraced and the walls of the city were burned and broken, he wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed.

He was:

- Compassionate. He wept and mourned for his people and his country.
- Caring. He fasted, prayed, and took action, encouraging the people.
- Committed. He got the job done, cared for his people, and was faithful to God.
- Consistent. Even those he reprimanded could find nothing negative to say about him.
- Courageous. He persevered in the face of threats, ridicule, and opposition from both the outside and inside.

For nearly a century some of his people must have said, “Somebody ought to do something about those walls.” Others must have replied, “Nothing can be done.” Because of his character, Nehemiah felt responsible to take some action.

**What did he do?** The most obvious answer to this is that he built the wall. Although little had been accomplished in 90 years, he had the wall completed in only 52 days, less than two months.

More important than building the wall was that, as their leader, he took care of his people. He was concerned about:

- Safety. He directed them in defending themselves from people of other cultures opposed their work.

- Justice. When people of their passport culture took advantage of them back home by charging exorbitant interest rates, Nehemiah confronted the lenders.
- Spiritual renewal. He saw that someone led his people in hearing God’s word, confession, worship, celebration, and praise.
- Consolidation of his gains. Nehemiah did not leave the capitol city nearly empty but got one in ten of the families to volunteer to live there.
- Forethought. He anticipated needs and drafted plans to avoid pitfalls.

**How did he lead?** More important than being cupbearer to the king (who he was) or that he built the wall in 52 days (what he did) is how he did it. He did it all in ways that brought glory to God and a sense of fulfillment to those under his supervision. Here are some of the ways he did it:

- Prayed. After he first heard the bad news and reacted to it, we have recorded his prayer of adoration, confession, reminder of the covenant, and petition for success.
- Overcame his fears. Although he was very much afraid of what the king in the culture where he was living and working would say, he responded when the king asked about his problem. He knew that the king would probably not be very excited about rebuilding the capitol of a conquered nation—Nehemiah’s passport country.
- Was tactfully open to superiors. He began by appropriately addressing the king and then sharing his problem at the king’s request. He responded to each of the king’s questions by asking more and more from him, including letters of recommendation.
- Shared his vision. After deciding what should be done, he shared his vision with the local leaders in his passport country.
- Gave God the glory. From the beginning he acknowledged that his success was due to God’s grace.

- Faced ridicule. When people of other cultures mocked and ridiculed him and the people he was leading, he again affirmed his confidence in God.
- Delegated the work. He assigned people to work on various parts of the wall—often the parts in front of their own houses. What motivation—those who did poor workmanship or did not complete their part of the wall would be the first to suffer the consequences of their lack of diligence.
- Emphasized cooperation rather than competition. He had forty distinct groups working together on a project, something of a miracle for those who have tried to get even two churches or mission agencies to work together.
- Faced opposition realistically. When the people of other cultures became incensed so that they despised and ridiculed Nehemiah's work force, he responded with prayer and the posting of guards.
- Encouraged his workers. He acknowledged their fears and reminded them of their great awesome God.
- Developed contingency plans. He had half of the people working and the others standing guard. He further arranged for defenders to come at once to the sounding of the trumpet when those at another part of the wall were threatened.
- Confronted internal dissention. When the controversy arose over people from the home country charging the workers interest, he immediately called a large meeting to resolve the issue.
- Did not take the perks. Nehemiah did not lord it over his workers but out of reverence for God did not take even the food to which he was entitled, nor did he acquire any land.
- Kept to the task. Rather than taking the perks, he said, "Instead, I devoted myself to the work on this wall." (Nehemiah 5:16)

Notice that most of the "how he did it" things were more about his character than they were about techniques for motivating his workers to get the job done. Also note that after

the wall was built Nehemiah was not the one to read God's word to the people, but he stepped aside for Ezra to do so.

More information about leadership is at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_leadership.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_leadership.htm).

## Differences

Missionaries who grew up in different generations say things like, "I just don't understand them at all." "They are so different from me and from the missionaries who came to the field when I did." "The way they think just doesn't make any sense at all to me."

This section explores questions such as, Who are we? Are we really different? If so, how are we different? Why are we different? Can we work together effectively?

**Who are we?** The Pew Foundation has studied the characteristics of people born at different times in the United States. Three groups of such people are now in the missionary force and a fourth one also often serves on mission boards.

- Builders. People born between 1928 and 1945, before the end of World War II, were intent on building a comfortable lifestyle and building America into an economic and military super-power. As missionaries they were (and are) hardworking, committed, frugal, and ready to go anywhere at any time and do anything necessary to take the gospel to all people groups. Most of them are retired, but some are now on mission boards with oversight over current workers.
- Boomers. People born during the two decades following World War II (1945-1965) were the baby boom, the "war babies." Born into prosperity, they became well-educated, questioning, protesting, idealistic, and tolerant of many different lifestyles. As missionaries they brought specialized knowledge, a desire to continue their personal and professional development, and a greater emphasis on caring for their families.

- Busters. People born during the next decade and a half (1965-1980) were called the baby busters because there were fewer of them. The baby busters (sometimes called Generation X), children of the boomers, grew up in a world different from that of any previous generation. Many who came from broken homes and were victims of violence now feel alienated, forgotten, cheated, and disillusioned with life. As missionaries looking for meaning in life, they are interested in spiritual things, open, honest, and aware of their needs. As such they make good team members.
- Millennials. People born since 1981 have been called the millennials (sometimes called Generation Y) because they were growing up at the end of the millennium. The most digitally-savvy, always-connected generation, they treat their multi-tasking, hand-held gadgets like parts of their own bodies: 80% sleep with their cell phone in or by the bed, 75% have social network sites. They are confident, connected, and open to change. As missionaries they do not want to “pay their dues” but to play an important role in important tasks now. They want access to information and immediate feedback as they strive to work in the grand scheme of things. A good summary of the characteristics of millennials from the standpoint of leaders is at <http://www.growingleaders.com/index.php/articles/127.html> The most complete yet readable current report is by the Pew Foundation at <http://pewsocialtrends.org/assets/pdf/millennials-confident-connected-open-to-change.pdf>. Even more information is at <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/>.

The Pew study found scores of similarities and differences. The major result that stands out is that the millennials are usually not markedly different from all the others. Rather, the differences are on a continuum, one in the order of the generations. For example, here are some questions about technology.

When asked, “Do you have a profile on a social networking site?” the percent answering yes is as follows (p. 25):

- Millennials: 75%
- Busters: 50%
- Boomers: 30%
- Builders: 6%

When asked, “Have you ever placed your cell phone on or right next to your bed while sleeping?” the percent answering yes is (p. 32):

- Millennials: 83%
- Busters: 68%
- Boomers: 50%
- Builders: 20%

Note that all the generations use technology, but some use it more than others. The same is true of nearly all of the questions asked in the Pew study, and the order of the generations is nearly always the same. Following are some specific ways the millennials are at one end of the continuum.

#### *Technology (Chapter 4)*

- More likely to text
- More likely to have cell phone only
- More likely to connect wireless to the Internet when away from home or work
- More likely to use twitter
- More likely to text while driving
- More likely to play video games
- Less likely to read newspapers

Most of these are differences with no moral or religious implications, but they do have great implications about communication. If boomers primarily communicate via email and millennials do so through texting, they may miss important messages. All generations on a field need to agree on some way to communicate so that information sent is always received.

*Everyday Life (Chapters 5, 6, and 7)*

- More likely to have tattoos
- More likely to have body piercing
- More likely to quit/change jobs
- Less likely to marry by 30
- Less likely to have “old fashioned” values about marriage/family

Though most of these have no moral or religious implications, the differences in everyday life may have more emotional potential than the mechanical differences in technology. Teams would do well to discuss how important these are to each other.

*Politics (Chapter 8)*

- More likely to be liberal
- More likely to approve of big government
- More likely to want government to solve problems
- More likely to approve of the way society is going
- Less likely to want religion in schools
- Less likely to vote

Political differences may be a minefield. Most people do not change their political views by discussion, so this topic is probably best left alone, just agree to disagree.

*Morality (Chapters 8 and 9)*

- More likely to approve of abortion
- More likely to approve of homosexual behavior
- More likely to approve of pornography
- More likely to believe in evolution
- Less likely to think Hollywood threatens Christian values

Missionaries of different generations are likely to differ on whether particular actions are right or wrong. The above issues divide people in the USA, and they may well divide missionaries on the field. It is best if each agency has positions

on the most important issues, and then missionaries can decide if they can serve under those conditions. Such question should be asked, and fields should know what moral positions people take before they begin serving.

*Religion (Chapter 9)*

- Less likely to join church
- Less likely to attend services
- Less likely to say Bible is God’s Word
- Less likely to pray daily
- Less likely to say religion is important
- Less likely to have certain belief in God

Disagreements about religious beliefs and expected behaviors are central to the missionary enterprise. How can people who do not belong to a church and do not attend church services be church planters? How can people who do not believe in God and say that religion is not important be missionaries? Such issues must be addressed in the selection procedures of the agencies.

***How are we different?*** Builders, boomers, busters, and millennials are different in too many ways to discuss here. However, here are some of the major differences between builders and busters especially relevant to missions. Of course, the boomers are somewhere between the builders and the busters on many issues. The millennials are beyond the busters on their end, and they have additional differences. All of these differences are generalizations that are not true in every case, but they are often found in members of each group.

- Length of service. Builders are likely to be “career” missionaries who expect to spend their lives with one people group or agency. Busters are often short-term missionaries who expect to work on a project for a few years at the most, then return home.
- Loyalty to agency. Builders are likely to stay with their mission for life no matter what. Busters may leave when they become dissatisfied with something in the mission.

- Word meanings. The missionary “family” may mean life-long commitment to certain values. Builders are more likely to think of that “family” in terms of support and relationships.
- Expected leadership. Builders usually respond well to authoritarian leadership, such as sitting in rows and accepting what the Bible expert tells them. Busters often want participatory leadership, such as sitting in a circle for Bible study, a circle in which anyone’s interpretation of Scripture is as valid as any other.
- Orientation. Builders are often task oriented and want to get the job done. Busters are likely to be socially-emotionally oriented and believe that relationships are more important than turning in a good report to headquarters at the end of the year.
- Women’s roles. Women builders usually see their role as supporting their husbands. Women busters typically want to work in equal authority with their husbands.
- Choosing an agency. Builders frequently go with an agency to which they are called or one serving a people or country to which they are called. Busters tend to go with an agency that seems the most caring—a mission that will care for them.
- Expectations of agency. Builders often ask, “What can I do for my mission?” They wonder whether the job will be big enough. Busters are more likely to ask, “What can my mission do for me?” They wonder whether the benefits package will be big enough.
- Attitude toward nationals. Builders are likely to take positions of leadership and be somewhat reluctant to turn responsibility over to the nationals. Busters often work well under the authority of the national leadership.
- Attitude toward conflict. Builders tend to deny that they are in conflict or approach the conflict indirectly. Busters usually openly acknowledge the presence of conflict and approach its resolution directly.

- Need for care. Builders tend to be independent and self-sufficient, saying they can make it on their own. Busters are much more likely to admit openly that they need help.
- Learning styles. Builders tend to be cognitive and emphasize such things as correct theology and biblical interpretation. Busters are often experiential and want time to experience God, to meditate and to relate to him.
- Spirituality and discipline. Builders are often highly disciplined and have their devotions daily. Although very interested in spiritual things, busters often find it difficult to maintain a consistent devotional life.

These differences, and many others, are not just minor ones but may be large enough to cause significant disagreement between builders and busters. On the one hand, builders may think of busters as immature, lazy, materialistic, lacking ethics or morality, disrespectful, and emotionally unstable. On the other hand busters may think of builders as rigid, inflexible, old-fashioned, cautious, predictable, boring, and more interested in the past than in the future.

*Can we work together?* Not only can builders, boomers, busters, and millennials work together, they must work together. They all have strengths and weaknesses, and their strengths complement each other. However, rather than seeing themselves as being complementary, they often view themselves in conflict. Rather than complimenting each other for strong points, they tend to criticize each other for weak points.

How can builders and busters can work together to help fulfill the Great Commission? To make disciples we need to be both rational and relational. On the one hand, the modernism-influenced cognitive builders may be so intent on getting the job done that they offend the very people they are trying to reach. On the other hand, the postmodernism-influenced experiential busters may spend so much time chatting with the people they are trying to reach that they do not get the job done before they leave.

Builders may spend an entire career in a relational culture and never win enough people to produce a national church filled with disciples. Busters may spend a term making great friends with people and bring them to Christ, but never actually disciple people there to leave a strong national church. However, working together effectively, with the career builders giving stability to the procession of short-term busters, may result in a sound national church.

There have always been, and will remain, generational differences between older and younger people. However these differences between builders, boomers, busters, and millennials are much deeper (cultural) issues, and they must be resolved to some extent for maximum effectiveness in carrying out the Great Commission. As these individuals from different generations form “multicultural” teams, they will find that they have the differences in the cultural values discussed here as well as other differences (music, worship style, dress, etc). However, they will also discover that their core values are the same, and their goal is the same—making disciples of all people groups.

### **Nepotism**

Suppose that the field director’s nephew is coming to teach at the international school for a year. Knowing that a long-term family will be returning to their passport country for a year, the field director assigns his nephew’s family to their beautiful, large home for that year. If he does this, no one else will have to move unnecessarily.

About a month later another family serving on the field is really angry that the field director showed so much favoritism to his nephew. This family had already served three years of their four-year term, and they had hoped they could move into that beautiful home which was so much larger—and it had a pool as well. They start complaining about the blatant nepotism shown by the field director.

***What is nepotism?*** Nepotism is showing favoritism toward relatives based on that relationship rather than on objective factors such as ability or merit. For example, nepotism would be hiring a person with a master’s degree in fashion design as an elementary principal because she is the niece of the school board chairman rather than hiring an applicant with a doctoral degree in education who has taught elementary school for a decade.

This family-based favoritism over competence often leads to low morale, low productivity, and a seeming lack of integrity to some.

***Did it occur in Bible times?*** Of course, it did. It was part of the Jewish culture in the Old Testament. In fact, it was the major factor in people becoming priests or kings.

The whole book of Leviticus details the system of laws governing the Levites. Priests had to be descendants of Aaron, brother of Moses, and of the tribe of Levi. Sometimes the children of priests were good, and at other times they were bad, unfit to be priests. The sons of Eli the priest (1 Samuel 1-4) were also serving as priests, but they treated the Lord’s offering with contempt and seduced the women serving at the entrance to God’s house. Nepotism did not lead to good.

Before Israel was ruled by kings, Gideon realized that political power should not depend on nepotism. When the Israelites asked Gideon, his son, and his grandson to rule over them, Gideon said he would not do so and neither would his son (Judges 8:22-23).

After Israel began being ruled by kings, the king’s oldest son became the next king unless there was a coup. After division of the kingdom, the Northern Kingdom (Israel) had all evil kings. Nepotism did not lead to good. Sometimes a good king in the Southern Kingdom (Judah) had a good son, but other times the son was evil. Here are some examples from over 200 years of successive rulers of Judah.

- Uzziah, good (52 years, 2 Chronicles 26)
- Jotham, good (16 years, 2 Chronicles 27)

- Ahaz, evil (16 years, 2 Chronicles 28)
- Hezekiah, good (29 years, 2 Chronicles 29-32)
- Manasseh, evil (55 years, 2 Chronicles 33)
- Amon, evil (2 years, 2 Chronicles 33)
- Josiah, good (31 years, 2 Chronicles 34-35)

***Did it occur in the church?*** Of course it did. In fact, that is where the term “nepotism” originated. The Latin word *nepos* means “nephew” or “grandchild.” The suffix *-ism* comes from the favoritism popes showed to their relatives in appointing them to positions in the church.

Since the popes had taken vows of chastity and had no children of their own, they most often appointed their nephews (*nepos*) to become cardinals. The cardinals then chose a new pope when one died, and it was often another cardinal in the family—thus papal “dynasties.”

This practice began shortly after 1000 AD and continued until Pope Paul III appointed two nephews (one 14 years old and the other 16 years old) as cardinals. A papal bull in 1692 finally prohibited appointing more than one qualified relative as cardinal. The practice of promoting family members continues to some extent in many churches today.

***Did it occur in missions?*** It has been happening in missions since the second term of Christian missionary service (Acts 15:36-41). Paul proposed a second term to Barnabas, a teammate on their first term. Barnabas wanted to take his cousin, John Mark. Paul did not think it was wise to take someone who had deserted them during their first term. Paul and Barnabas parted company, and Barnabas took John Mark with him to a different place of service.

Nepotism still occurs in missions today, probably most often when third culture kids (TCKs) want to return to the culture where they grew up—it is home to them! Of course, their parents (and perhaps other relatives) are often still there and are likely to be in leadership roles since they are more mature and have had more experience there than most others on the field. When the TCKs arrive, they often find that being a

missionary on that field is quite different from being a TCK. Many of them are rather disappointed. Their parents may then favor them in an attempt to make the experience better for their TCKs.

***What is the solution?*** This is a very difficult problem because we want to avoid favoritism toward family members on the one hand and discrimination against family members on the other. About 40% of the states in the USA have nepotism laws against hiring people for state positions. The other 60% do not have such laws because they want to avoid discrimination.

Some corporations, educational institutions, and agencies have nepotism rules, but others do not. Treating people fairly is difficult when those making the decisions are obviously biased. Walking the fine line between favoritism and discrimination is never easy, but here are some suggestions.

- The best “solution” is to not be in a position where nepotism can occur. That is, do not serve where you are supervising a family member or one is supervising you. However, since that is not always possible, the following may help.
- Acknowledge to yourself that nepotism does happen and that you could be guilty of it yourself. It is only “natural” for people to want the best for their own family members.
- Bring up to the group the possibility of nepotism happening. This brings it out into the open where it can be discussed by everyone.
- Talk with people on all sides of the question. Tell them that you want to be fair, guilty neither of favoritism toward family members nor of discriminating against them. Ask if they think you are doing either.
- Treat all applicants exactly the same. Openly announce that positions, housing, and so forth are available and ask people to apply for them.
- Leave a paper trail. When you communicate via email or other written announcements, you have everything in writing. Follow up each oral communication (personal

meeting, telephone or skype conversation) with a written summary.

- Get the opinion of a person not involved, someone outside your agency if possible. That way you have the unbiased judgments of an objective individual.

These may not prevent accusations of nepotism, but at least keep a record of attempts to avoid it.

More information about nepotism is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_nepotism.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_nepotism.htm).

### Social Relations

The previous section was about how we influence each other. Another important issue is how we relate to each other. The general section about relationships is first followed by sections on conflict, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Surprising as it is to some, conflict between missionaries is very common, so missionaries need to know how to forgive and reconcile. The last section is on saying goodbye, something missionaries do very frequently.

### Relationships

Making and maintaining friendships on the field has been so difficult. However, missionaries who have difficulty doing so begin to wonder if there is something wrong with themselves. Why are relationships so difficult? What do relationships have to do with the Great Commission anyway? How can people make friends? What if some friendships just don't work?

***What do relationships have to do with the Great Commission?*** They are central to it. In the Great Commission Jesus told us to go and make disciples of all people groups. If people are going to become disciples, they have to recognize that missionaries are disciples—and want to become like them.

Jesus said that people will know that people are his disciples if they love each other (John 13:35). In the previous verse, he had called his command to “love one another,” a new command, but it was really a re-newed command. It was first given back in Leviticus, then quoted by Jesus when he was asked about the Greatest Commandment. He said to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself.

Certainly the Great Commission involves preaching and teaching people to love God. However, that may be easier than obeying that second great command, the command to love each other. When nationals look at friendships among missionaries, do they say, “Look how they love each other”? If not, perhaps friendships need some improvement so that you can better carry out the Great Commission of making disciples. If people do not recognize that you are disciples and want to become like you, your ministry may be quite fruitless.

***Why are missionary friendships so difficult?*** Making and maintaining friendships is difficult for most people. People are different in many ways and may feel threatened or may let stereotypes keep them from forming close friendships. Some people are morning types; others evening types. Some work fast and have everything done early; others complete things at the last minute. People have different personality traits, such as some being extraverts and others introverts. Some people are quite mature; others immature. In addition to these general factors, other more specific ones make it even more difficult for missionaries to develop and maintain close friendships.

- Time. In your “home” country everyone is busy, but on the field there is even more to keep you busy. The hassles of everyday life, such as getting and preparing food, paying bills and getting things repaired all take longer. You have to maintain relationships with supporters.
- Mobility. At “home” people move, but changing your residence every few years is built into missionary life—on the field four years, home one; or perhaps on the field two years, home six months. At home, deputation keeps you on

the road. On the field, you frequently move even during your term.

- **Expectations.** Although people back “home” disappoint you, other missionaries may do so even more often because you expect more of them. They ought to know what you need and meet that need. Where is their love?

We have a good example of this in the disciples who were an evangelism team of twelve to reach Palestine. Jesus was the field director. The disciples had been called, had gone through the selection process, had left their jobs, had gone through orientation, and had gone out in teams of two. They had gone through training and had served for nearly three years. One would certainly expect that they would have things down pretty well.

As we pick up the story in Mark 9, the disciples had been arguing about who was the greatest. Jesus calls them around and points out that whoever wants to be first has to be last and servant of all. In Mark 10 they meet the rich young man who would not give up his possessions. When Peter points out that the disciples had given up home and family to travel and spread the good news, Jesus agrees and reviews the teaching about the first being last and the last first. Even after two clear lessons, as they travel on toward Jerusalem, James and John (or their mother) ask to be first in the kingdom. When the other ten hear about this, they become indignant with James and John—those two should know better! However, rather than scolding them, Jesus calls the disciples around and again reviews the lesson: whoever wants to be great must be the servant of others.

***How do we form such relationships?*** To live so that people will know that we are his disciples by our love for each other is not easy in today’s world, but it can be done. Of course, no person can be intimate friends with everyone, so after we have chosen people with whom we would like to develop such a relationship, try the following to form friendships.

- **Time.** Friendships take time. Your response may be that you just do not have time, that you have to prioritize your schedule. If you believe it is important for people to recognize that you are his disciples, you may want to start scheduling your priorities. Time allotted each week to developing missionary relationships will make you more effective, less likely to quit missionary work, more likely to be happy, and less likely to become ill.
- **Affirmation.** One can live for several weeks on one good compliment. However, most of us go for months without giving or receiving any. When was the last time you gave a firm compliment to build someone up and strengthen relationships?
- **Trust.** Spending time together in an affirming atmosphere is likely soon to lead to the development of trust. As time increases so may the trust—but you must be very careful never to betray a trust. Trust takes months or years to build, and only seconds to destroy.
- **Communication.** Some people have never really had someone give full attention and really listen. Sometimes we hear what people are saying with words, but not with their hearts.
- **Vulnerability.** When trustworthy people care and really listen, we tend to open up and become more vulnerable, more honest with each other rather than being “on guard.”

We all need a group of supporting friends. People from individualistic Western cultures often think that all they need for their ministry is “Jesus and me,” but they are suffering from “angel syndrome,” believing that they do not have the same needs as ordinary people just because they have been called into the Lord’s service.

***Do it!*** As is so often the case, we know what we should do, we just don’t do it. In Luke 10 an expert in the law asks Jesus what he has to do for eternal life. Jesus asks him what was in the law. The man replies by giving the great commandment, including, “love your neighbor as yourself.”

Jesus tells him he is right, “Do this and you will live.” However, trying to justify his lack of relationships, the man asks who his neighbor is. Jesus tells the story (a cross-cultural one, at that) about the Samaritan who helped after the two religious men had ignored the man in need. When Jesus asks who was the neighbor, the expert in the law answers correctly. Jesus again tells him to go and do the same.

Like the expert in the law, our problem is often not in finding out what to do, but in actually doing what we see to be right. In Mark 12 another teacher commenting on Jesus giving the great commandment observes that to love God and “to love your neighbor as you love yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices” (v. 33). Jesus notes that this is a wise answer. That is, loving our neighbor may be more important than many of the “professional missionary” things we do.

Spending much time in the “business” of missionary work may be a symptom that one is avoiding the hard work of building and maintaining relationships--that one is trying to fill the need for close human relationships with “busy-ness.” The single most helpful earthly resource for combating stress is social support—feeling comfortable sharing with others and then actually sharing with others who are positive and supportive.

If more missionaries developed intimate friendship relationships, they would be happier, healthier, and would require less missionary care. By the missionaries’ love for each other, nationals would recognize that they were Jesus’ disciples and may want to become disciples as well.

More information about relationships is at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_relationships.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_relationships.htm)

### Rejection and Betrayal

Most missionaries know Isaiah said that Jesus would be “despised and rejected” by people (Isaiah 53). They know John said that “his own did not receive him,” that Judas “betrayed him,” and that the people he came to save shouted “crucify him” (John 1, 18 and 19). All of that was necessary for Jesus to die for people’s sins, but some of these missionaries do not think it will happen to them as they go to spread the good news of salvation and to give food to the hungry. Unfortunately, many missionaries find themselves rejected and betrayed by those they came to serve.

***How often does this happen?*** Only God knows. Such rejection and betrayal often leads to feelings of inadequacy and failure which few people discuss openly. Although there appears to be no research on this topic for missionaries, in the 1990s research on pastors who read *Christianity Today*, *Leadership*, and *Your Church* magazines found that about a quarter of the pastors had been terminated or forced to resign by their church—and a quarter of those had experienced it more than once. In addition, a third of all the pastors said the pastor serving before them had been forced out—and a third of those forced out left the ministry for good. Clearly, the rejection of Christian workers is not rare.

***Were cross-cultural workers in the Bible rejected and betrayed?*** Of course they were! The Bible contains many examples, but here are just a few from the life of Moses in the Old Testament and Paul in the New Testament.

Moses had been sent by God to bring the Israelites out of Egypt (Exodus 3). Here are a few of the problems he faced.

- His brother and his sister “began to talk against Moses” because of his wife (Numbers 12).
- The people “raised their voices,” “wept aloud,” “grumbled against Moses,” “grew in impatience,” “gathered in opposition,” and wanted to go back to Egypt (Numbers 14, 20, and 21).
- Korah “became insolent” and led 250 community leaders to oppose Moses. This resulted in the earth opening and

swallowing the 250 men and their families. The next day others in the community still grumbled, and a plague killed 14,700 of them (Numbers 16).

Talking about Paul, God said, “This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles...and the people of Israel (Acts 9). As Paul began to do this, he had good results on Cyprus, and things began well in Pisidian Antioch where he was invited to speak again the next week (Acts 13:1-42). However, people soon began to turn on Paul.

- In Antioch, some of the Jews became jealous and “talked abusively” against Paul. People of the city “stirred up persecution”...and “expelled them from their region” (Acts 13:43-52)
- In Iconium, at first many Jews and Gentiles believed. However, later “there was a plot afoot” to “mistreat them and stone them,” so they left town (Acts 14:1-7).
- In Lystra, things were going so well that the people there thought Paul was a god! However, the crowd eventually stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city because they thought he was dead (Acts 14:8-20).

**What happens?** As noted above, a wide variety of things can occur, ranging from “talking against” people to killing them. In addition, today’s technology makes many new things possible.

- Damaging emails can be sent at once to hundreds of people, including colleagues or supporters.
- Anonymous nasty letters mailed directly to missionaries may hurt incredibly.
- Innuendo of scandal posted on Facebook or other social networks can wreck missionary reputations.
- Critics can use smart phones to “tweet” damaging text messages to thousands.

There seems to be virtually no limit to how rejection and betrayal can occur.

**Who does it?** Only people who have personal relationships can betray missionaries, just as Judas, a trusted

disciple, betrayed Jesus. In *Why*, a song about this event, Michael Card says, “Only a friend can betray a friend, a stranger has nothing to gain, and only a friend comes close enough to ever cause so much pain.” Usually the deeper the relationship, the greater is the devastation of the betrayal. Here are some examples.

- Students. Many teachers find students they have known and trusted for years have ridiculed and betrayed them.
- Congregations. Many pastors have been shocked when small groups persuade entire congregations to ask them to leave.
- Pastors. Missionaries supervising national pastors may find those pastors rejecting or betraying them.
- Patients. Medical missionaries may find that people whose lives they save betray them.
- The Poor. Relief workers may find themselves rejected or betrayed by those who most needed the food they provided.
- Missionaries. Field directors who came to lead the field may find that missionaries they came to serve reject them—and even betray them.

**Why do they do it?** Sin is at the root, but it may be expressed in a variety of forms as we can see in the following examples from the Bible and modern missionaries.

- Jealousy. The Jews in Antioch were jealous of the crowds Paul drew (Acts 13:45). These Jews then followed Paul from city to city (Acts 14).
- Dislike. Aaron and Miriam did not like Moses wife (Number 12).
- Fear and want. The people who criticized Moses were frightened by the lack of water (Numbers 20-21).
- Revenge. Students may reject or betray teachers who discipline them or demand high standards.
- Greed. Patients may sue physicians to get whatever money they can.

**What can one do?** “An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure” is a common saying that is relevant here. Keeping good relationships with people is always important, but it is especially so in a culture that emphasizes such relationships. Missionaries must not become so task-oriented that they neglect meeting social needs. Missionaries rejected or betrayed by those they serve can do the following.

- Pray for the offenders. Both Jesus and Moses prayed for those who mistreated them, both asking God to forgive the offenders. Moses went so far as to ask God to “blot me out of the book” if he did not forgive the people (Exodus 32:32). Jesus asked God to forgive those who crucified him because they did not realize what they were doing (Luke 23:34).
- Forgive them. Of course, both Jesus and Paul forgave those who had rejected or betrayed them as well.
- Revisit them. Because people in Antioch, Iconium, and Lysytra had persecuted him, plotted against him and stoned him, one might have thought that Paul would avoid returning. However, Paul made it a point to return home through all three places, encouraging and strengthening believers there (Acts 14:21-22).
- Find a mediator. If effective in the culture where missionaries serve, they may use the three step procedure that Jesus proposed. First, go to the offending person alone. If that does not work, they may take one or two others and go back to the offending person. Finally, if even that does not work, they may bring it before the church (Matthew 18:15-17).
- Resolve disagreements as soon as possible. Festering wounds, even if imaginary, can develop into deadly relationships when left alone.
- Do not say or do anything that one might regret later. In the heat of an intense discussion filled with anger, it is much better to remain silent than to vent all the hurt and

frustration one feels at the moment. Take time to think and pray about what to say or do.

- Have other missionaries who can help you as you respond. Personal attacks on missionaries and their ministry usually cloud judgments. Missionaries need close friends to evaluate the attacks and help devise a response.

Finally, remember that God used Judas’ money-making betrayal combined with Jesus’ obedient submission to save a sinful world.

### **Conflict**

No one has to convince missionaries that conflict exists in missions. It has been a part of missions since the very beginning in the early chapters of the book of Acts. Not only has there been conflict, but the basic issues are still the same in that there are cultural conflicts which bring disagreement between missionaries and headquarters as well as conflicts between individual missionaries on the field. Why do missionaries have conflict? What should they do about it? What steps can they take to resolve it? What do they do if you feel like we are attacked? What if it cannot be resolved?

**Why do we have conflict?** Conflict is normal whenever people who hold different opinions are in a close relationship. Conflict occurs whenever people who care have different opinions on important issues. The more the people care and the more important the issue, the more intense the conflict. Conflicts are simply a fact of life, and they are destructive only if not handled correctly.

An example of conflict is recorded in Acts 15. Paul and Barnabas returned from their first term of service to the local church that had commissioned them in Antioch. They held a mission conference and told about all that God had done through them. Everything went well for a long time until men from the culture in which headquarters was located visited the church in Antioch.

These men began teaching that unless the men who had responded to the message preached by Paul and Barnabas were circumcised, they were not saved. The issue was whether or not this “custom taught by Moses” was a cultural issue or a salvation issue. Thus we have a situation in which missionaries who cared deeply (Paul and Barnabas) disagreed with others on an important question (salvation). This brought the missionaries into “sharp dispute and debate with them” (v.2).

***What should we do about conflict?*** The conflict needs to be resolved as quickly as possible. In Matthew 5, Jesus noted that if you are offering your gift to God at the altar and suddenly remember that there is an unresolved conflict with another believer, you should leave your gift there, go settle the conflict, then return to offer your gift to God. We are to settle matters quickly, but we should carefully pick the time and place to be reconciled. Sometimes the conflict is still at a high emotional pitch, and it would be best to wait a while before approaching the other person. If other people are around, it is best not to involve them in the dispute. The important thing, though, is to resolve the conflict soon because the feelings aroused by unresolved conflict soon become established and are more difficult to change.

***What steps do we take to resolve it?*** Jesus gave a three-step procedure to use in resolving conflict in Matthew 18. In American culture as in much of Western culture where we tend to think linearly, it is usually most appropriate to take these three steps in sequence. ***However, if the conflict is with someone of a different culture, be sure to consult with someone raised in that culture before trying to resolve the conflict.*** These steps in this order may not be culturally appropriate in that situation, and the conflict may only be worsened if you do all of them in this order. The steps Jesus gave are:

- Approach the person alone. Often the two of you can resolve the conflict by yourselves and your friendship will

be stronger than ever before. Of course, you must choose the time, situation, and manner of approach carefully.

- Find a mediator. If a direct approach does not work, or if it is not appropriate in the culture, you should choose a mediator. Again, choose a mediator carefully, one that you believe both parties will see as unbiased and in which both will have confidence.
- Take it to the church. If neither you nor the mediator can bring about resolution, the issue should be brought before the larger body. After the church comes to a decision, both of you are to accept the decision. The church is instructed to treat either party who does not abide by the decision as being outside the church.

As we look again at the conflict in Acts 15, Paul and Barnabas were in “sharp dispute and debate” with the visiting teachers but were unable to settle the conflict alone. They apparently called in mediators there in Antioch, but they were also unable to settle the conflict. So, Paul, Barnabas, and some other believers were sent to headquarters in Jerusalem to settle the conflict.

***How do we go about resolving it?*** Assuming that the issue is an important one and that persons involved have carefully chosen the time and situation, here are some guidelines found in Acts 15 that will help resolve the conflict, whether it is two alone or it is a whole body of believers.

- Give both sides a chance to present. Paul and Barnabas presented their position, then the Pharisees presented theirs.
- Give time for adequate discussion. This was a crucial issue (salvation) so there was “much discussion.”
- Be quiet. Note that “the whole assembly became silent” as they listened to the discussion. Too often in such situations there is an undercurrent of whispering in the crowd.
- Listen. “They listened.” There is a big difference between being quiet and really listening. Put yourself in the other’s place and really try to hear and understand what the other side is saying. Too often we “turn them off,” let our minds

wander, think about what we are going to say in reply, or just doze off in a long discussion.

- Allow others to finish. “When they finished, James spoke up.” Do not interrupt until others have finished.
- Keep to the issue. The issue here was whether or not circumcision was necessary for salvation. Imagine all the other issues that could have been proposed from the books of the law! Also discuss the issue, not personalities.
- Express feelings appropriately. There is no report of verbal attacks or counterattacks during the discussion.
- Apply scripture. There may be differing interpretations, but certainly at least look at what the Bible has to say. James quoted from Amos 9.
- Propose a solution. James said, “It is my judgment, therefore, that...”
- Settle on essentials. They all agreed on several items and wrote a letter.
- Accept the decision. When the delegation delivered the letter back to the church at Antioch, “The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.”
- Reaffirm your friendship. “After spending some time there” for fellowship, they were sent off “with the blessing of peace.”

***What if the conflict is not resolved?*** Sometimes conflicts cannot be resolved, and the options then are either “agree to disagree,” or part company. Just after the good conflict resolution in Acts 15, we find an irreconcilable conflict between Paul and Barnabas. In planning to go back for another term of missionary service, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them. Paul did not, and they had “a sharp disagreement.” Apparently Paul was task-oriented and did not want to take a chance on someone quitting, but Barnabas was people-oriented and did not want hurt feelings.

We are not told how they tried to resolve the conflict, but they were not able to do so, and “they parted company.” Of course, God works in all things to accomplish his purposes. He

sent Barnabas and Mark to Cyprus, while Paul and Silas went to Syria. Note that later Paul changed his mind about Mark and asked to have him visit (2 Timothy 4:11). God uses our conflicts to advance his work.

More information about conflict is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_conflict.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_conflict.htm).

### **Passive-Aggressive Behavior**

People who appear to support the requests of others but do not perform the requested action correctly or soon enough are displaying passive-aggressive behavior. They may even seem to be enthusiastic about the idea, but they use overt behavior to express what they do not want to say verbally. Rather than expressing their opposition in words, they use procrastination, forgetfulness, and inefficiency to avoid complying with the request.

Along with the passive resistance these people have a pattern of negative attitudes. They may complain about feeling cheated, unappreciated, and misunderstood as they blame their failures on others. They may be sullen, irritable, cynical, and argumentative. Some professionals have characterized passive-aggressive behavior as “hostile cooperation,” “angry kindness,” or “covert assertiveness.” This behavior appears most often in the workplace and in social situations, but it may also occur in marriage and/or family situations.

For many years both the World Health Organization (agency of the United Nations) and the American Psychiatric Association listed Passive-Aggressive Personality Disorder. However, in 1994 the American Psychiatric Association removed passive-aggressive from the list of disorders and placed it in an appendix of items for further study. Therefore, most nations consider it as a disorder, but mental health professionals in the USA do not. However, even if it is not a disorder, passive-aggressive behavior is very difficult to cope with.

***Is it in the Bible?*** Most people look at the lost (prodigal) son who returned to his father as the focus of that story in Luke 15. However, his older brother also had major problems. Even though he is not labeled as “passive-aggressive,” the older son certainly shows passive aggressive behavior as follows.

- Resisted carrying out routine social tasks: he refused to go to his brother’s party (v. 28).
- Complained of being unappreciated by others: his father never gave him a party (v. 29).
- Was sullen and argumentative: he argued with his father (v. 29).
- Criticized and scorned authority: he criticized his father’s party for the squandering son (v. 30).
- Expressed envy and resentment toward those more fortunate: he resented that the fatted calf was killed for his brother (v. 30).
- Voiced exaggerated complaints of personal misfortune: he had “slaved” for years (v. 29).

***What are the symptoms?*** By definition the passive-aggressive person has (1) a pattern of passive resistance to carrying out requested actions and (2) a pattern of negativistic attitudes (an alternate name is negativistic personality disorder). The following are even more specific passive-aggressive actions.

- Deliberate inefficiency, dawdling, laziness, inflexibility, ignoring of others
- Procrastination, stubbornness, resisting suggestions, disregarding instructions
- Pretending forgetfulness, putting things on the “back burner,” making excuses
- Losing things, discovering things too late,
- Sullenness, hostility, anger, argumentativeness
- Complaining, resentment, feeling unappreciated, irritableness, cynicism

- Blaming others, feeling cheated
- Overt sabotage, sulking
- Working poorly or slowly, being tardy or absent
- Repeatedly apologizing, asking forgiveness and promising to do better next time—but not really changing

The list can go on and on. Whether they are conscious of it or not, the goal is to do something that slows or prevents the action from being done or undermines the success of others.

***Who can be passive-aggressive?*** Anyone who is in a relationship with you may be passive-aggressive toward you.

- It may be someone above you, such as your field director, a mentor, a committee chair, or an administrator in the home office.
- It may be someone below you, such as a student in your class, a new missionary you are orienting, or your own child or adolescent.
- It may be someone at your own level, such as a fellow missionary, a colleague where you teach, a friend, or even your spouse.

The higher the commitment and the closer the relationship, the more the passive-aggressive behavior will affect your life. For example, if your spouse or teenager does not want missionary life, it will disrupt your life more than if a student in your class or a new missionary is unhappy.

Missionaries may show passive-aggressive behavior to avoid the stress of confrontation. In 1983 Dorothy Gish asked 547 missionaries to rate 65 items that cause stress, and “confronting others when necessary” was the one rated most stressful. Sixteen years later Joan Carter repeated the study with the same items plus some additional ones. The 306 missionaries still placed confronting others at the top of the list.

Passive-aggressive behavior can stop a project just like confrontation can, but it can do so with less stress. Missionaries who do not want to oppose a program overtly can just not get their part done so that the project fails. After that they can

apologize for their tardiness, ask forgiveness, and they have still accomplished what they wanted in the first place.

**What can you do?** Remember that this pattern of behavior has “worked” for many years for the passive-aggressive people. Even though their behavior has an impact on you it is not *about* you. Do not take it personally. Your goal is to create a climate of safe and open communication. The following may help.

- Keep an open mind, avoid being defensive, and acknowledge that some of the concerns may be legitimate.
- Be empathetic but still request more appropriate behavior.
- Concretely define what you expect, and ask the person to paraphrase your wants.
- Do not accept, excuse, or reward poor performance.
- Tactfully challenge distortions but do not argue over them.
- Make sure that he or she understands that you care for him or her personally and are not just seeking control.
- Remember that if you become viewed as an opponent, the objectionable behavior is likely to increase.

Finally, if you do not succeed, do not blame yourself. If people do not want to change, they do not. Remember that you did not cause the passive-aggressive behavior. For more information about passive aggressive behavior go to [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_passiveaggressive.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_passiveaggressive.htm).

## Forgiveness

Suppose that Bill asked fellow missionaries, his closest friends to pray for him. They prayed with Bill for the last six months as he developed a plan to reach the people in their city. It was successful beyond Bill’s wildest dreams. But now his friends had a book coming out about his plan—claiming it as their own! Of course, he was glad for the success in reaching people, but how could they have done that? Could he ever

forgive them? Even if he could forgive them, could he ever forget it, or could he ever really trust them again?

**How could they have done that?** Being hurt by someone you love is inevitable. Sometimes the people hurting you do it intentionally, planning it carefully and then carrying out their plot. Other times they do something without forethought. Most often they do not intend to hurt you and do not even know they have done so. The Old Testament clearly distinguishes between intentional and unintentional sins.

Having a brother or sister turn on the other is as old as the human race itself, as found in the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4. It occurred repeatedly in the book of Genesis, as shown in the life of Joseph and his brothers who first planned to kill him, but then decided just to sell him as a slave. How could they have done that?

Sometimes missionaries are the ones who is amazed at what they themselves do. The first missionary, Paul, wrote about this in himself in Romans 7. He just did not understand why he did what he did. He did not do the things he wanted to do, but he did the things he hated. Paul was saying, “How could I have done that?”

**What if I can’t forgive?** When praying the Lord’s Prayer, we ask God to forgive us as we forgive others. Following that prayer in Matthew 6, Jesus said that if we forgive people who sin against us, he will forgive us. However, if we do not forgive others, he will not forgive us. He illustrated this in Matthew 18 with the parable of the unforgiving servant when Peter asked about how often to forgive. The one not forgiven was the one who did not forgive.

The goal is always forgiveness, but the time it takes to reach that goal may be very different for different offenses and for different people. We must be careful not to rush into a premature, shallow forgiveness, in which we say, “I forgive you,” but still really hold the offense against the other person. Generally the more serious the offense, the longer it takes to reach genuine forgiveness. If someone “borrows” an everyday

dish without asking and breaks it, forgiveness may come quickly. If the dish was a treasured family heirloom, the forgiveness may take longer. If the offense is sexual abuse of a child or adolescent, the forgiveness may take years or decades. We must not rush into premature forgiveness.

People often cite Joseph's clear forgiveness of his brothers in the last chapter of Genesis as an example of how we should forgive. Remember that it was more than 20 years after the offense when he first saw his brothers, and the first time he saw them (Genesis 42) he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. By the time they came the second time, he was ready to begin to deal with forgiveness.

***What if I can't forget?*** We will probably never actually forget. Forgiveness does not mean that we are no longer able to remember the incident. Some people say we should "forgive and forget." Others quote Jeremiah 31:34 and Hebrews 10:17, pointing out that God forgives and forgets.

Of course, this does not mean that God literally cannot remember that the events ever happened. If that were the case, God would no longer be all knowing. He still knows that the sin occurred, but he no longer holds it against the person. He does not develop amnesia, but he will never bring that sin up again.

Of course, not having the memory constantly occurring as it once did may be a result of forgiveness, but it is not the means of forgiveness. Forgiveness literally means to "give up" or "give away." The dictionary defines it as "to give up resentment against" someone. Forgiving someone frees you from being consumed with resentment about the offense, but it does not erase the memory. People may need that memory to avoid future abuses from an unrepentant person. God does not erase our memories, but he redeems them so that we can get on with our lives.

Joseph pointed out that his brothers had intended to harm him, but that God used it for good. He had not forgotten

what happened 40 years earlier, but he no longer carried the resentment and wanted to punish them (Genesis 50).

***What if they don't ask for forgiveness?*** This is a difficult situation. It is complicated to try to come to terms with someone unwilling to accept responsibility for actions that have offended or hurt you. We are often tempted to become resentful. Unfortunately, carrying around the resentment and bitterness is a heavy burden, and that burden is on you, not the one who offended. You may be carrying such a load related to someone you will never see again; that person may even be dead. Being willing to forgive, being open to forgiving when they repent, or forgiving before God even if you cannot see the person lifts the load from you.

Thus, granting forgiveness, or turning the final judgment to God, is often more for your own sake than for those you forgive. Joseph granted forgiveness to his brothers even though they did not ask for it. The burden was taken from him, and he could get on with his life. If you continue to carry that load, many times you are granting the offender the power to continue to make you miserable and limit your effectiveness.

***Why is it so hard to ask forgiveness?*** The basic problem is usually pride. People have to admit that they have done something wrong, and that is very difficult to do. Many people find it much easier just to sweep the matter under the rug and say that the offense did not really matter that much, but it does. Until forgiveness is sought, something remains to hinder any relationship.

Since they move so often, some missionaries find it easy to just leave, thinking that the offense will be forgotten. However, that is not the case. The matter will still be there in the relationship whenever they meet again. Asking, giving, and receiving forgiveness are especially important parts of saying good-bye when leaving the field to return home.

***Why is it sometimes so hard to accept forgiveness?*** This also often goes back to pride. We often feel like we must do something to earn forgiveness. Forgiving others is against

our concept of justice in which people should suffer for the wrong they have done. Forgiving others does not come naturally to humans. However, God gives forgiveness to everyone who asks because Christ paid the debt through his suffering on the cross. The Bible clearly states that forgiveness is by grace, through faith, and even that is God's gift to us. Although we can repent and make restitution, we can never earn our forgiveness, only accept it.

In Genesis 50 Joseph's brothers had not really accepted his forgiveness 17 years after Joseph had granted it to them. They were still carrying feelings of guilt and fear for an offense that was forgiven. They asked for something (forgiveness) that had been granted nearly two decades before.

More about forgiveness is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_forgiveness.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_forgiveness.htm).

## Reconciliation

Suppose that after their serious disagreement Bill and the other missionaries settled their differences. They all asked for, received, and granted forgiveness, but something still seems wrong. Although none of them sense any anger in the relationship, their friendship is not the same as it was before. Since forgiveness literally means to "give up," to "give away," or "to give up resentment against" someone, it is a necessary first step in reconciliation—but much more is possible. What can we do, how do we do it, and what are some possible results?

*Go and be reconciled.* Earlier in his ministry Jesus had told his disciples that while they were worshiping him in the sanctuary they might remember that a fellow Christian had something against them. If that happened, they were to leave their place of worship and, "First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:24). Reconciliation should take place as soon as possible after we realize we need it. Of course, one must be careful not to

attempt it immediately after the offense while emotions are still highly aroused and may interfere.

Reconciliation literally means to "bring together again." The dictionary defines it as "to make friendly again or win over to a friendly attitude." Although forgiveness has occurred, friendship may not have yet been restored, and that is what is missing. Forgiveness may involve only one person, but reconciliation always takes two.

Note that here we are talking about restoring a relationship between you and someone you know has something against you. We are not talking about the situation in Matthew 18 which involves you having something against another person.

*How do I do it?* People are sometimes unsure of how to go about actually moving toward reconciliation. Fred DiBlasio has developed several steps he uses to help people through forgiveness and into reconciliation. After defining, considering Scriptures on, and explaining forgiveness and reconciliation, he introduces the following steps. Then after reviewing the steps, he asks if the people want to go through them toward reconciliation. If so, they proceed. If not, they wait.

- The offender states and explains the offense. He or she clearly, specifically, and explicitly states the act for which he or she is seeking forgiveness and reconciliation. He or she then follows with an explanation of the reason behind the offensive behavior.
- Both parties ask questions and receive answers about what happened, and this information may begin to bring them together.
- The offended shares his or her emotional reaction (with the permission of the offender). This ventilating of feelings in detail often leads to the offender being more empathic.
- The offender then paraphrases what was said and proposes a plan. Expressing the feelings in other words usually leads to even greater empathy, and then he or she proposes a plan

- (including specific changes and means of accountability) that will eliminate the behavior.
- The offended then identifies with the offender. Realizing that he or she is not completely faultless, the offended may be able to identify with some of the guilt, loneliness, etc. that the offender has experienced since the act.
  - Both persons must agree on what forgiveness and the first steps toward reconciliation mean. Granting forgiveness means that the offense can never again be used as a weapon—it is a letting go, but not necessarily forgetting. The one receiving forgiveness must remember that he or she has agreed to be accountable and not repeat the offense.
  - The offender then makes a formal request for forgiveness and reconciliation for the action in question. This may include asking God as well and the formal recording of the date, time and place of the request.
  - The offended then either grants, or refuses to grant, forgiveness and movement toward reconciliation. If granted, it is recorded with the request. If not granted, the process stops here and may be resumed at a later time.

This cycle is then repeated as often as necessary until all offensive actions have been discussed. It usually includes both parties taking turns being the offended and the offender. However, no one is allowed to pressure another person to ask forgiveness for perceived wrong behavior. Also remember that although forgiveness is final in this process, much emotion may remain and full reconciliation may take much more time.

*Will everything be the same?* Certainly not immediately, and perhaps never. Remember that this is just the beginning of reconciliation, and it may take months or years to complete. Trust takes a long time to develop. Just one wrong act may destroy it, and then it will take even longer to develop again. Sometimes it never fully develops after it has been destroyed. The following will help rebuild trust.

- Carry out every detail of the plan you have proposed to see that the offensive behavior will not be repeated.

- Be completely accountable as you have proposed.
- If you do engage in some wrong action, apologize immediately and sincerely.
- Always keep your word on other things.
- Be completely and consistently trustworthy in all dealings with others.
- Trust others yourself.
- Be openly and consistently cooperative.

John Mark had deserted the first missionary team to take the gospel to other cultures. Although his uncle Barnabas wanted to take his nephew when the team went back for a second term, Paul had not yet reconciled with Mark and would not take Mark on his team. However, forgiveness and reconciliation came later as indicated by Paul saying, “Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry” (2 Timothy 4:11).

***What if the person refuses?*** Sometimes the person refuses, as was the case with Samuel and Saul in 1 Samuel 15. Although Saul’s repentance (“I have sinned... Now I beg you, forgive my sin...” vs. 24-25) sounds sincere, it came only after two denials in which he blamed the soldiers (vs. 13-15; 20-21). After that incident, Samuel never went to see Saul again (v. 35). Some offenses are so serious, and some requests for forgiveness are so insincere, that the process stops and never begins again.

Whether the process continues depends on such things as the seriousness and duration of the offense. For example, it is much easier to reconcile after an argument over forgetting a spouse at the store than it is over adultery. Likewise it is easier (though still very difficult) to forgive a spouse over a single act of adultery on impulse than over a long affair with “a friend.”

Sometimes the process ends because the other person simply refuses. Such a refusal may be temporary, or it may be permanent. All that God asks of people is that they sincerely repent, enlist the aid of a mediator, and try everything they know to do. Reconciliation takes two people, and the other person may continue to refuse. Paul, that early missionary, put

it so well in the last half of Romans 12. He said, “Be devoted to one another (v. 10)... Live in harmony with one another (v. 16)... If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone” (v. 18). The ideal is to be reconciled to everyone, but sometimes individuals have done everything they can do and it still does not happen. God does not hold them responsible for someone else’s refusal to proceed.

More about reconciliation is at [http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_reconciliation.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_reconciliation.htm).

### Saying Goodbye

One missionary said, “I am tired of making friendships and then moving all over; to me it is not worth the effort. On furlough I know I am leaving, so why try?”

Another said, “I don’t know how to deal with the changes that surround the arrival and departure of staff members on the field. Especially with short-termers coming and going, it seems like we are always expanding and contracting to include so many different people on our team.... How do we love deeply yet hold lightly?” Here are some answers.

***Is this a new problem?*** No, this problem has been around as long as missionaries have. A look at Paul and his relationships with the people of Ephesus shows us some of the problems with saying goodbye.

Paul was apparently in Ephesus only a short time near the end of this second term. After speaking in the synagogue, Paul left a couple in Ephesus to continue the work. People asked him to spend more time there, but he declined, saying he could come back if it was God’s will (Acts 18:19-21). He and his co-workers there had to say goodbye.

Near the beginning of his third term, Paul again went to Ephesus. After more than two years of evangelism,

discipleship, spiritual warfare, and encouragement Paul again said goodbye and left. He traveled to Macedonia with a multinational team of seven others (Acts 19:1-20:1). Again he and the disciples he left there had to say goodbye.

Near the end of his third term, Paul decided not to stop at Ephesus even though he was passing close by because he was in a hurry. However, he did stop a few miles south of Ephesus and sent for the elders of the Ephesian church so that he could meet with them briefly. Then they again had to say goodbye. In this instance we are told more about the nature of the goodbye: They wept, embraced, kissed, grieved, and finally tore themselves away (Acts 20:16-21:1). Saying multiple goodbyes to coworkers is nothing new for missionaries.

***Is it getting worse?*** It is probably no more difficult for each individual, but it may well be that people have to say goodbye more often than they did in Paul’s day. Changes in the last half of the twentieth century have made short-term missions to any part of the world a reality. Before the advent of reasonably priced air travel since 1950, just reaching many mission fields often took several weeks crossing the ocean by ship. Today people can be on any mission field in the world in a matter of hours, a couple days at the most.

One type of short-term mission increasing in recent years is one where a person comes to a field for several months or a year or two to help out generally or to complete a particular project. These people have no intention of staying long-term and are most common among people born since the mid 1960s. In this case there is time to develop a relationship, but the missionaries on the field may be reluctant to do so knowing that the short-term person will soon be gone.

***Do we just quit building deep relationships?*** Some people try to cope by simply becoming detached or “hardened.” By not getting deeply involved with their fellow missionaries they decrease the pain of having to say goodbye. This coping mechanism may reduce the pain of goodbyes, but the person

becoming detached, the person who is “rejected,” and the gospel message are all harmed by this.

Jesus commanded us to love each other as he loved us. Loving and being loved are important to both our mental and physical health. When deep relationships are avoided, both parties lose a part of their potential support system. In addition, Jesus pointed out that this was how others would know that we are his disciples. Thus, by not developing these relationships, we make it less likely that people will see Jesus in us (John 13:34-35).

***How do we love deeply yet hold lightly?*** Since saying goodbye is a normal part of life, especially missionary life, we can take steps to minimize the pain.

- Change your perspective. Rather than concentrating on the negative aspects of anticipating parting, it is better to concentrate on the positive aspects of the current relationship. As Tennyson said, it is better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all.
- Look for people who “click.” When you find people with the same values, same aspirations, same commitment, etc., become close friends even if it seems there is no “future” in the friendship. One couple we met more than a decade ago when visiting a field are still good friends. We have become one of their supporters, visited them on the field again, made contact at conferences, had them in our home while on home assignment. We have spent hours talking and sharing deeply.
- Become intimate sooner. Third culture kids of all types (missionary, military, etc.) become experts at this. When they meet each other and realize their common background, they begin to share at a deeper level much sooner than those raised in a single culture. With practice, anyone can develop this capacity.
- Communicate while apart. This has always been possible, but is much easier with the invention of e-mail in recent years. However, e-mail is a mixed blessing.

- On the positive side, friendships can be continued at virtually no financial cost even when people are far apart. (In fact, relationships can be initiated without ever meeting personally, and that may become a problem.)
- On the negative side, some people become so busy keeping old friendships alive that they fail to make new ones. Some missionaries communicate via e-mail daily with old friends, but spend little time with the people living near them currently. Thus, they fail to continue to make new friends.
- Grieve your losses. It is all right (even necessary) to do all the things Paul and the elders from Ephesus did:
  - Wept
  - Embraced
  - Kissed
  - Tore away
- Pick up where you leave off. After you become good friends, you can pick up your friendship where it was when you parted. You still have the same values, aspirations, concerns, etc., so all you need to do is get an update on what you have been doing, and your relationship continues from there.
- Remember that relationships give hope. At creation God built parting into the family. When a young man and young woman grow up, they leave their father and mother and cleave to each other (Genesis 2). Most people do not refuse to have children because their children mature and leave; they look forward to reuniting with their children both here on earth and in heaven. We also look forward to reuniting with other loved ones in heaven.

More about saying goodbye is at

[http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br\\_sayinggoodbye.htm](http://www.missionarycare.com/brochures/br_sayinggoodbye.htm).

## Conclusion

This chapter completes the major topics in general psychology as the book has ranged from the biological aspects of human beings to the sociological aspects. People live not only in the physical world around them but also in the social world of other individuals and groups around them. This chapter has considered how people influence each other as well as their relationships with each other, especially conflict.

The chapter ended with something missionaries do often, say goodbye. Some goodbyes are “forever,” and some are for only a short time. However, all are difficult. Even ending a book is a kind of goodbye. The good news is that books can be valuable resources that a reader can return to time and time again. That is our prayer for this book.

## ...about the Author

Ron Koteskey and his wife, Bonnie, are often asked who they are and what they do. They have prepared the following information to answer those questions.

We taught for 35 years in Christian colleges as well as in public and Christian elementary schools. Bonnie taught elementary school as well as teacher education at the college level, and Ron taught psychology at the undergraduate level in college. Our three children are all married and have families of their own. As member care consultants with GO InterNational of Wilmore, KY, we are now retired and, as volunteers, we provide member care for missionaries. We are not licensed health care professionals, but we emphasize care, encouragement, growth, and prevention of problems rather than treatment of severe problems. We provide such care to anyone, anytime, and anywhere at no charge for our time, usually providing our own transportation to the nearest airport and asking that those we are helping provide ground transportation, lodging, and food. Rather than working as professionals for pay, we provide member care as amateurs in the original sense of the word—out of love rather than for money. We have a mailing list of about 175 prayer supporters as well as about 55 financial supporters.

We do whatever we can to help missionaries. We do not belong to any sending agency but help others as someone with no official connection to their agency. Listed below are things we are currently doing, but we are always open to new ways to help. Let us begin with the most general forms of help,

continue with helping missionaries through their years of service, and end with specific ministries.

**Websites.** We have two websites, [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com) and [www.crossculturalworkers.com](http://www.crossculturalworkers.com). Both websites contain brochures and books which people anywhere in the world can visit to read, download, print, copy and distribute the information free of charge to anyone who can use it. [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com) freely uses the term “missionary” and is easily found when people search for missionary care. [www.crossculturalworkers.com](http://www.crossculturalworkers.com) never uses the term “missionary” so that anyone working in a culture where accessing material on missionaries would endanger their ministry can visit freely.

**Brochures.** Both websites contain 70 “brochures” on topics relevant to living in other cultures and working as missionaries. These brochures may be downloaded as .pdf files and distributed to anyone as long as they given to others free of charge.

**E-books.** Both websites contain E-books which can be downloaded free of charge by anyone, anytime, anywhere.

- *What Missionaries Ought to Know...: A Handbook for Life and Service* is a compilation of many of the brochures about missionary life.
- *Missionary Marriage Issues* is a compilation of many of the brochures about married life on the field.
- *Before you get “Home”:* *Preparing for Reentry* is written for use several months before returning.
- *Coming “Home”:* *The Reentry Transition* can be used as preparation for debriefing in a group, when being debriefed, or to debrief yourself.
- *Reentry after Short-Term Missionary Service* is for people serving from a week to a couple years.

- *We’re Going Home: Reentry for Elementary Children* is a story and activities for children 6-12 years of age.
- *I Don’t Want to Go Home: Parent’s Guide for Reentry for Elementary Children* is a companion book written specifically for parents to help them assist in their children’s reentry.
- *Third Culture Kids and Adolescence: Cultural Creations* is written specifically for adolescent TCKs but is also applicable to other adolescents.
- *Understanding Adolescence* is a companion book written specifically for parents of adolescents.
- *Raising Resilient MKs: Resources for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers* was edited by Joyce Bowers and first published by ACSI in 1998.
- *Psychology for Missionaries* is written for missionaries who want to know how general psychology is relevant for them.
- *Missionary Singles Issues* is written for unmarried missionaries about some issues different from people who are married.
- *Missionaries and Bribes* is to help missionaries make decisions and discriminate between bribes and extortion.
- *Bribery and the Bible* was written by Richard Langston and published by Campus Crusade Asia Limited in 1991.
- *Missionary Member Care: An Introduction* is written to answer questions about missionary member care and how to become involved in it.

**Database.** A database with more than 850 references to published material about missionary member care is on [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com). Those visiting this database can find reading lists or annotated bibliographies on any of more than 100 topics. They can also find lists of materials published by particular authors.

**Missionary Care by Radio.** Trans World Radio broadcasts in 180 languages to reach people through radio. TWR has begun a daily 15-minute program in English with broadcasts reaching from Central Asia through North Africa, and you can find out more by visiting [www.membercareradio.com](http://www.membercareradio.com). TWR is adapting the brochures to a format suitable for broadcast to let Christians working in this area of the world know that they are neither alone nor forgotten.

**Orientation.** In an effort to decrease attrition, we participate in the training of new missionaries. We have made presentations on expectations, generational differences, moral purity, and conflict resolution. Of course, during our time at orientation we are available to talk privately with any missionary candidates who want to see us.

**Seminars.** We present information on various topics to a variety of missionary groups. We have done seminars on third culture kids, leadership, generational differences, conflict, anger, adolescence, maintaining mental and physical health, maintaining sexual purity, and psychology from a Christian perspective. We have made these presentations to groups as varied as the entire missionary force of one agency, missionaries on a field, seminary students, university students, field directors, national pastors, retirees, and appointees.

**Missionaries in Our Home.** Missionaries have stopped by our home to discuss issues that concern them. We have talked with individuals and couples about a variety of topics ranging from grief to interpersonal relationships to debriefing when they return to the states. These are often people who have met us in larger group settings such as conferences, retreats, orientations, seminars, or perhaps discovered us on our web page.

### **Missionaries on the Field (from Our Home).**

Missionaries serving on their fields are unable to stop by our home, so we have communicated with them in a variety of ways. Of course, telephone conversations are always helpful, and long distance rates between most countries are now quite reasonable. E-mail is free, but the time between sending a message and receiving a reply may be rather long. Skype is free and instantaneous.

**On-Site Visits.** At the invitation of missionaries, we visit them on the field to help them cope with various issues. We do this only if everyone involved wants us to come, and we have the blessing of the mission agency. At these times we have talked with individuals, couples, and groups of missionaries. We are not sent by the agency, but go only when invited by the missionaries themselves.

**Care of Missionaries in a Geographical Area.** We want to provide care for missionaries from several different agencies in a given place. We go on a regular basis to the same missionaries so that they will get to know us and feel free to talk with us, rather than just going to help in a crisis situation. We visit Bolivia whenever invited, usually talking with 30-35 missionaries from about five different mission agencies each time.

**Reentry.** We facilitate reentry retreats for missionaries in transition as they return to the USA. This includes a group debriefing as we talk for two days about where they have been, where they are now and where they are going.

**Missionary Kids.** Since we live near a college that has a rather large number of TCKs, we were very involved with them while we were teaching at the college. Of course, now that we are retired and travel more, we are unable to keep up the same active relationship. However, we do let them know that

we are available to help them however we can, and they contact us for everything from taxes to borrowing things to personal problems.