

## **THE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALITY AND MENTAL HEALTH**

### **FORGIVENESS: HEALING THE SPIRIT GROUP – Dr. Carlos Miura, MD, FRCPC**

Forgiveness is a spiritual concept common to all spiritual beliefs that has entered into psychiatry about twenty years ago. The main first point I teach to the residents of the Secure Treatment Unit in Brockville is the return of the guilt to the abuser. The STU was designed by Dr. John Bradford, MD as a jail that had therapeutic hospital staff at a psychiatric hospital level.

I personally abandoned internal medicine when I was working in post graduate studies in Cleveland, Ohio at Case-Western Reserve University. I couldn't take people dying in despair and me having no answers.

I was interested to learn about death and dying and came to Combermer to a missionary group, Madanna House, where there was a person who was dying of Cancer but joyfully instead of with despair.

Later on I learned to do counselling on my own, but it was too painful and I decided to learn psychiatry. I feel at the present moment that I have been able to unite psychiatry and spirituality principles and I believe it can be used with different kinds of spiritual beliefs.

I noticed that the AA concepts are very attuned to what I teach, but the main clarification I had to make is the awareness that we do have two higher powers. The first higher power is the positive one that is kind, gentle, supportive, caring, merciful, gives directions, and give consequences for healthy growth and healing.

The negative higher power is the one that is only interested in punishment to destroy you, not to heal you. This is a higher power that loves cheating, lying, and deception with a final pull of controlling and ultimate destruction.

The positive higher power has the purpose to help a person get involved in healthy, loving, and forgiving relations.

The negative higher power brings usually a paranoid, destructive, murdering, suicidal relationship.

In the development of a child, the child always blames himself or herself if a traumatic event happens. Be it loss of a parent from death or suicide, experiences of physical or sexual abuse, disintegration of the family unit, or loss of family connections.

Experience of abuse or loss is followed by self punishment after experiencing helplessness. The purpose of punishment in this case is the return of the original healthy situation. This is often unconscious and has to be made conscious through questioning.

I learned a lot from Dr. Davanloo Sifneos and MANN. My addition to the regular shortened dynamics psychotherapy concepts happened through the use of mental imagery to drain the guilt, the shame, anger, fear by picturing these emotions as mountain icebergs that melt once the inner child sends out through the therapist's interpretation that he or she is not guilty of the painful event.

This is the major difference between the people that say only "it's not your guilt", "it's not your fault."

Somehow there has to be a disposition that I call "victim exhaustion." Victim exhaustion is the awareness that after many, many years of desperate suffering and self punishment things have not changed and instead of improving, things got worse.

When things got worse and have not improved and you are totally exhausted, you have reached the point of shift. Look for Plan B..

The main shift has to be in the role from scapegoat to freedom and to belonging.

The scapegoat is a biblical term that happened in the temple. The Rabbi, after listening to all the sins of the people of Israel, prayed over the goat and gave the goat all the sins. After that the man who was in charge of taking the goat took the goat to the desert and returned. The goat died and everybody was happy. The sins were forgiven. Please read it in the Book of Leviticus.

The importance of all this is to wake up to the fact that we are all scapegoats. At one time or another we have been left wounded by events and we still carry those events in us and have buried them, have drunk to forgive them, or have taken activities such as getting rich and control so that whatever happened will not happen again.

The key thing is to change role from being the cesspool, the garbage can, or the toilet seat so your higher power has a chance to recycle all the stuff that you believe you were in charge of.

This move is called "baptism of humility." It is to let go of the grandiosity of the inner child to believe that he or she is in charge of recycling in the world.

Humility is the path for interior healing. Humility is a path for freedom.

Sheila, one of the secretaries at the STU, in typing the story of perfect clean was laughing her head off.

Shirley, another secretary at the STU, gave me all the concepts of healing that I have been teaching through her typing of the consultations I have made.

On the other hand, I have tried to explain this to big shots, very learned people with PhD and many letters after their names, and they were not interested or they didn't get it. My purpose is to share these concepts so that someday you may get it and not only will you understand it, but you may be able to apply it in your life in regards to working with the people you talk with but mainly to be able to do so you can apply it in your life so that you have a deep understanding of these concepts.

To be able to understand I would like to suggest a reading by Catherine Dougherty. The book is entitled *Poustinia*. It has to do with interior silence so that you can listen.

I have found no-one else teaches these concepts in a systemic way in books. I believe the beauty of this is that residents at the STU can get it on the first day of the consult and experience freedom, relief, and peace and can say "this is better than street drugs."

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Carlos Miura, MD, FRCPC

#### Two Wolves

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two "wolves" inside us all.

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."