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# How Pastoral Psychology Complements Inner Healing

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## *On the Road to Emmaus*

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. *But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.* And he said to them, “What is this conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. . . . So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further but they constrained him, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. *And their eyes were opened and they recognized him;* And he vanished out of their sight. They rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they told what had happened on the road, and how *he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.* Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:13-17, 28-32)

## *The Journey towards Inner Healing*

Inner healing requires a decision: a decision to release inner unhappiness and find peace of mind, body, heart, and soul. A person searching for such peace is similar to a traveler on a journey. Once he has made the decision to make the journey he begins to reflect on the journey itself, on what is happening to him along the way. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, the traveler begins to realize that the events that occur along the way have their own importance. If these events are ignored he may miss the point of the journey and in the end be unprepared for his destination.<sup>1</sup>

This paper will address an integrative approach to the psychological journey a person takes in his decision to find peace of mind, body, heart, and soul. Some of the many psychological road blocks or obstacles a traveler may encounter on this journey will be discussed as well as the travelers' ability to recognize them and navigate around them. Once the traveler is aware of the road blocks in his life, he can then reflect on them and “little by little come to recognize” the triggers that may be causing his inner unhappiness and lack of peace. Eventually, he will begin to understand the difference between true happiness and the world's many substitutes for happiness. Once these psychological

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<sup>1</sup> W. Barry and W. Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, 66.

roadblocks are removed, the traveler can be free to take action and follow the road that leads him on his spiritual journey, on the road to perfection, his final destination.

*St. Ignatius' Psychological Journey*

St. Ignatius was such a traveler. Along his journey he realized the importance of his own experiences of temptations, scruples, and delusions. Reflecting on such experiences eventually led him to develop his principles for the discernment of spirits and make him a master travel guide for others on the difficult spiritual road to perfection.<sup>2</sup>

On his psychological journey after his conversion, Ignatius had not yet developed his ability to discern or even comprehend the meaning of many virtues, like patience, charity, or humility. He did identify with one thought, however, and that was to do great things for God's glory. One day while riding his mule along the road from Navarette to Montserrat, he encountered a Moor. They rode together and spoke about Our Lady. The Moor believed that Our Lady was a Virgin at the time of Jesus' birth but could not believe that she remained so afterwards. Ignatius attempted to argue with the Moor but could not convince him otherwise. The Moor rode on hastily and Ignatius began to reflect on the event. Ignatius felt discontent in his soul, and unhappiness thinking that he had failed in his duty to defend Our Lady's honor. These emotions and thoughts led him to become angry at the Moor which triggered a desire in him to search out the Moor and "give him a taste of his dagger."<sup>3</sup> Ignatius had a psychological block in his ability to find true peace and happiness after his meeting with the Moor. His thoughts of murder were triggered by his past beliefs and his desire to achieve renown through feats of arms and chivalry.<sup>4</sup> This thinking pattern created in Ignatius a block so that he could not see the road ahead clearly.

At this point of his psychological journey Ignatius makes an unusual decision: He decides not to behave in the way he has behaved in the past. Instead, he chooses to release his own emotions of inner unhappiness and thoughts of control in dealing with the Moor, and he chooses to focus on fate. Since Ignatius did not yet have the spiritual maturity to discern the Will of God, he relied on fate by allowing his mule to decide which road to take; the road to kill the Moor; or the road to leave the Moor in peace. This detachment in his decision-making set the stage for a moment of grace that saved him from his natural inclination. Ignatius' natural inclination was to seek retribution in order to defend Our Lady's honor, but by demonstrating detachment in his decision-making he was able to be receptive to God's grace. As a result of Ignatius' decision to let fate choose his course, the Lord met Ignatius in his spiritual immaturity and guided the mule in the opposite direction of the Moor.

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<sup>2</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, vii.

<sup>3</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> T. Gallagher, *Discernment of Spirits for Every Day Life*, 11.

*Psychological Roadblocks on the Journey*

According to *St. Ignatius' Own Story as told to Luis Gonzalez de Carmara*, the Lord dealt with Ignatius' soul at the time of this journey with the Moor "although still blind."<sup>5</sup> Ignatius describes this blindness as lacking a spiritual view with the eyes of faith.<sup>6</sup> He could see through his human eyes but not through God's eyes, not unlike the disciples on the road to Emmaus. This spiritual blindness was dimmed even further by various psychological road blocks encountered during his life's journey. Ignatius admits in his own story that, up until his twenty-sixth year of life, "he was a man given over to the vanities of the world, and took a special delight in the exercise of arms, with a great and vain desire of winning glory."<sup>7</sup> Ignatius believed that the only way to win glory was to fight with arms. As a result of this ingrained belief system, events such as his encounter with the Moor filtered through this belief system, with Ignatius instinctively choosing the same solutions as he had in the past: to fight. What caused Ignatius' belief system to change?

*Making Sense of our Belief Systems*

Before we can understand what caused Ignatius' belief system to change, we must first look at how our belief systems develop. From a psychological perspective our belief systems (what we think) are formed as a result of many factors over the course of our life, such as genetics, environmental factors, cultural beliefs, trauma and all our life experiences. This mental processing determines our thinking and ultimately how we behave. To help us understand our behaviors better, cognitive psychologists have developed many theories to try to comprehend how our thinking patterns affect our behaviors. Their goal is to help us create change in our thinking patterns in order to better match our behaviors with our values. As St. Paul reminds us: "I do not understand my own actions ... I can will what is right, but I cannot do it ... For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." (Rom 7:16-20) As Catholics and Christians, our objective is to put on the mind of Christ; that is, to think with Christ's values and to have our behaviors reflect our Christian beliefs.

**THINKING IS BELIEVING**



*Diagram A*

According to the above theory a person's beliefs about a situation (A) can automatically cause him to behave in a predetermined way (C). In other words, it is the person's interpretation of the situation that controls their behavior and not the person's reason. In a

<sup>5</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, 13.

<sup>6</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, 13.

<sup>7</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, 7.

sense their behavior is already determined given the situation. Even when a person knows intellectually (core values) that a behavior is wrong, events from their past experience induce them to believe they have no choice but to behave as they always have; therefore they believe they are powerless over the situation. Remember, because of his belief system, Ignatius' first thought was that he had no choice but to fight the Moor.

Let us look at the example of a young dad named Jim. Jim came home from work, tired and angry because he was reprimanded at work by his boss. When Jim opened the door to his home, a rubber ball thrown by his ten year-old son soared toward his head. Despite Jim's core belief that violence is wrong, Jim's immediate response was to hit his son for throwing the ball at him. Even though the ten year-old did not intend to hit his father, Jim's behavior was automatic. In hitting his son, Jim is imitating his own father's behavior since his father would hit him without asking any questions. Likewise, as Jim's son's belief system develops throughout his youth, similar experiences will inform him to believe that he too should hit first and ask questions later.

As one's beliefs become reinforced through repeated negative behaviors during one's lifetime, a biological change can occur in the wiring of the brain that can cause a future automatic response (behavior) when a similar event occurs later in life. This type of thinking pattern can lead to victim thinking, a type of thinking pattern which leads the person to believe that they are blameless for their actions since they are a victim themselves. Such a belief system renders the person powerless in controlling their actions and can instill a sense of hopelessness that their thinking and therefore their behaviors can never change. Satan wants us to believe we cannot change the way we think and behave. He has been feeding us this lie since the beginning of time –and it is a lie! God designed the body so perfectly that change is possible at any age. We can change our way of thinking just like Ignatius did in his encounter with the Moor.

### *A New Way of Thinking*

To form a new way of thinking we must take into consideration the process that occurs between the Event (A) and the Behavior (C). This processing occurs in our belief systems and even though our belief systems have been formed by the time we are adults they are malleable and can change. This is great news since our behaviors do not have to be determined by our old interpretations of the situation any longer, and we are not powerless over our actions. In other words, there is hope.

### *How Does our Belief System Work?*

Imagine a box where all our beliefs are stored since birth. These beliefs become reinforced either positively or negatively by our own self-talk, attitudes, childhood tapes (negative messages received during our developmental years by parents; peers; teachers; and other influential people in our lives), and personal filter system (% of negative vs. positive beliefs). The belief system then interprets events that occur in our lives. In turn, our behaviors - emotional, physical, and spiritual - become linked to these interpretations.

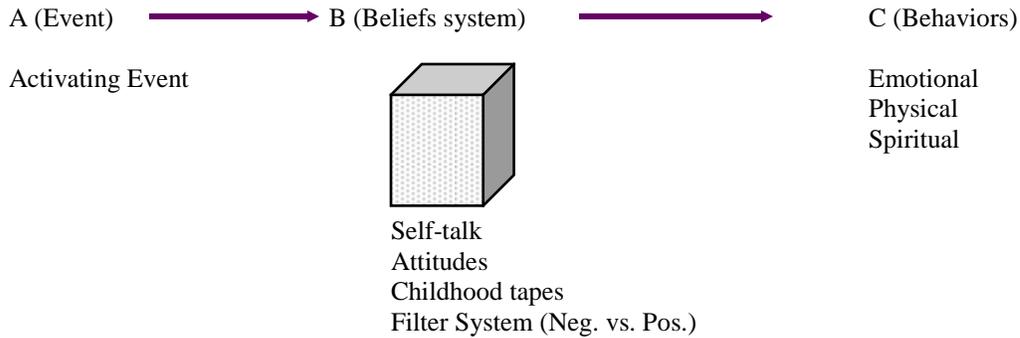


Diagram B

Let us now revisit the story of Jim. When his son threw the rubber ball towards him as he opened the door to enter his home, Jim was emotionally angry and hurt from being humiliated by his boss at work. He was also fearful that he might get fired from his job. Physically, Jim had a headache from the pressure and tension he was under as a result of his job. Spiritually, he was angry at God for being so mistreated at work and had not prayed for months. Jim was in so much pain that he struck out at his son.

*How did Jim's Belief System Develop?*

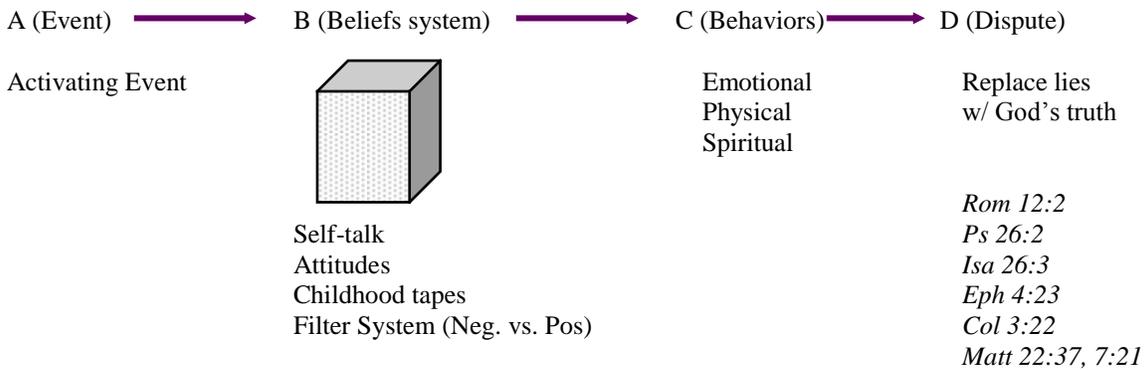
As a boy growing up, Jim's father would yell and hit him without Jim understanding why. Jim's father told him that he would never be successful in life. Jim began to lack confidence in his own abilities. In addition, whenever he would help his dad, his father would never encourage him but he would constantly criticize and correct him. Jim's belief system became filled with negativity about his own self-worth and competence. As a result, whenever Jim would make a mistake at work he would tell himself that he was no good and the tapes of his father's criticism would play in his head. Consequently, Jim's behaviors were mediated both by his core beliefs (I'm defective; I'm unlovable) and by imitating what he observed and experienced from his own father. Since Jim's filter system was more negative than positive, whenever Jim did do something well and he was praised, he would reject the praise and diminish his accomplishments. Jim's belief system interpreted events in his life through a negative filter so that even positive happenings were tainted negatively.

When Jim opened the door to his home and was almost hit by the ball that his son threw, Jim interpreted the event through his negative filter as a direct attack on him by his son. Such a direct attack caused him to react automatically by hitting his son. This act of violence by Jim towards his son demonstrates a widely held hypothesis about violence. Much violence is an attempt to overcome shame. "If I feel dismissed and put down by someone, a quick way to boost my sense of self is by instilling fear in that person through violence. Violence re-establishes a sense of power. When Jim got hit by the ball, he suddenly felt again like a powerless little boy being abused by his dad. Now he had the control to strike out and feel powerful, and that is what he did.

*How do Our Belief Systems Become Blocked?*

Imagine a car that has a clogged fuel filter. The filter can become so clogged that the engine may stall while driving or not even start at all. Our belief systems are not much different. When our belief systems become dirty or clogged with too much negativity our thinking gets stuck and can become stalled (distorted) or paralyzed by fear. Such was the case with Francis.

Francis had a fun-loving personality but like Jim, he struggled all his life with a powerful conflict with his father. In all likelihood, Francis' father was also critical of him during his developmental years creating in Francis a negative belief system that led him to believe (through his childhood tapes and self-talk) that he could do nothing right. His thinking became stalled with thoughts of self-hatred. Francis suffered from a serious psychological block that led to passive/aggressive behaviors and self-defeating attitudes. Francis constantly used disparaging remarks against himself; he had an utter lack of personal hygiene and appearance, and he abused himself physically. In addition, he suffered from severe anxiety about his salvation.<sup>8</sup> As a result of Francis' negative belief system, he sought out and identified with others who suffered from self-hatred. Francis, however, had great faith and loved God, which helped balance his negative beliefs with some positive ones. Francis, like Ignatius, made a decision one day to release his inner unhappiness and find peace of mind, body, heart, and soul. He decided to replace the lies in his belief system about himself with God's truth.<sup>9</sup>



*Diagram C*

*Making a Decision to be Healed - Mind and Heart Meet*

How did Ignatius and Francis replace the lies in their belief system with God's truth? According to Fulton Sheen, "Every conversion starts with a crisis: with a moment or a situation involving some kind of suffering, physical, moral or spiritual."<sup>10</sup> Ignatius, after being wounded in battle, began to identify with the lives of certain saints. He noticed that "when he was thinking of the things of the world he was filled with delight, but when

<sup>8</sup> B. Groeschel, *Stumbling Blocks Stepping Stones*, 104.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 12:2: "Do not be conformed to the world but transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God what is good and acceptable and perfect." See Appendix, below, for more Scripture quotations.

<sup>10</sup> F. Sheen, *Peace of Soul*, 224.

afterwards he dismissed them from weariness, he was dry and dissatisfied. And when the thought of going barefoot to Jerusalem and of eating nothing but herbs and performing the other rigors he saw that the saints had performed, he was consoled, not only when he entertained these thoughts but even after dismissing them he remained cheerful and satisfied.”<sup>11</sup> This awareness by Ignatius did not occur instantaneously but was part of a cognitive process of replacing old beliefs with new ones. The more he read the lives of the saints, the less he wanted to read his secular romance novels. In fact, had Ignatius not been wounded he may not have had the opportunity to read the lives of the saints nor to reflect upon his past life as he did. On the day of the encounter with the Moor, Ignatius awareness allowed him to make the decision to release his inner unhappiness and find peace of mind, body, heart, and soul. Through this crisis, Ignatius unlocked his mind so that the Divine Physician, Jesus, could heal his heart.

Francis likewise responded to God’s grace with all his heart, mind and soul during his moral crisis of self hatred. In his suffering he allowed God to transform his weakness of self-hatred into a strength. Francis learned that the antidote to attitudes built on self-hate is love of God.<sup>12</sup> Love of God is reciprocal, as he discovered, for it not only involves loving God but it is also the acceptance of God’s love. As a result of accepting God’s love, Francis replaced his negative beliefs of self-hatred with positive beliefs of loving God and his neighbor, especially the poor. This change in his belief system was so radical and complete that he accepted God’s love for him in the miracle of the stigmata and became one of the greatest saints in history, St. Francis of Assisi.

Both saints faced crisis in their lives and were broken. In their brokenness, they had to make a decision whether or not to release their inner unhappiness and receive peace of mind, body, heart, and soul. Ignatius and Francis could make such a decision because they realized their own helplessness and were certain that God, the Divine Physician, alone could heal them. Sheen states: “the voice of God causes discontent within the soul in order that the soul may search further and be saved. It embarrasses the soul, for it shows us the truth, tears off all the masks and masquerades of hypocrisy. But it consoles the soul too, by affecting a harmony with self, with others, and with God. It is for man to decide - to accept or reject the voice he hears.”<sup>13</sup>

#### *One Day His Eyes Were Opened a Little*

At the time of his journey with the Moor, Ignatius heard the voice of God through the lives of the saints, but not directly. *Ignatius’ Own Story* tells us that the Lord dealt with his soul “although still blind.” Ignatius narrates, however, that it was not until he reflected on his whole life that “one day his eyes were opened a little.”<sup>14</sup>

Crisis led Ignatius and Francis to reflect on their past lives so that they could become aware of the negative beliefs that may have blocked their spiritual growth to holiness, their inner healing. These reflections helped them to know themselves better. By knowing

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<sup>11</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius’ Own Story*, 10.

<sup>12</sup> B. Groeschel, *Stumbling Blocks Stepping Stones*, 100.

<sup>13</sup> F. Sheen, *Peace of Soul*, 227.

<sup>14</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius’ Own Story*, 13.

themselves better, they came to recognize the triggers that caused their inner unhappiness and lack of peace. With this recognition they could make the decision to release their inner unhappiness and allow the Divine Physician to heal their brokenness. Furthermore, with this self-knowledge they could replace their past negative beliefs with more positive and virtuous beliefs so that their cognitive filters could process future events in their lives according to Christ's values not the world's values. Step by step, Ignatius reveals that as he reflected on his life he came to recognize the difference between the two spirits that moved him, the one being from the evil spirit and the other from God.<sup>15</sup> Ignatius and Francis understood the difference between true happiness and the world's many substitutes for happiness. They became free of their psychological blocks so they could follow the road that led them to spiritual perfection, their final destination.

*Reflecting on Life's Journey: An Integrated Psychology*

Psychology that is practiced with a Catholic integrative approach, values the dignity of the person, not just as a human being but also as a spiritual being. With this view it is normal for Catholic psychotherapists to draw upon the wisdom of such saints as Ignatius and Francis by recommending to their clients a comparable course of treatment as these saints followed naturally. That is, to allow the person, through the direction of a Catholic psychotherapist, to reflect on their life by constructing an integrative timeline.

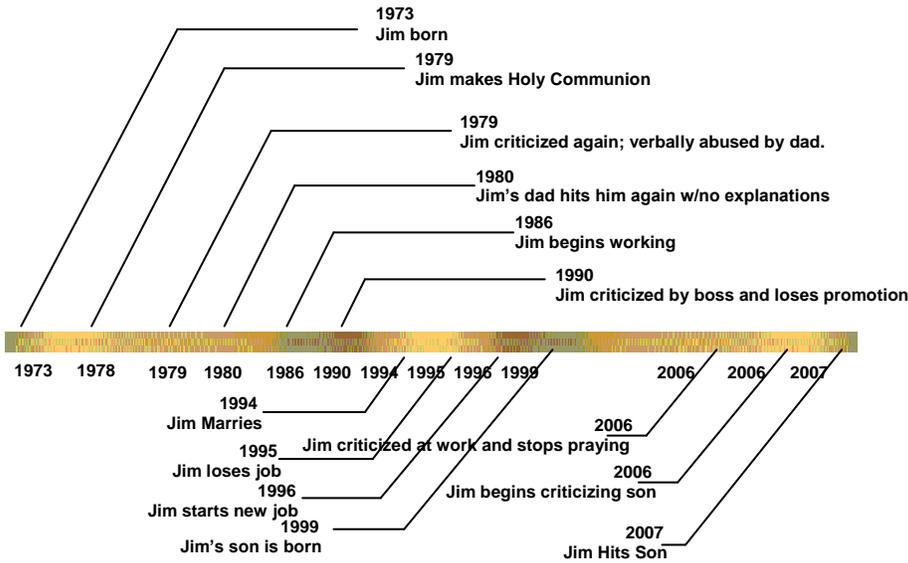
*What is a Timeline?*

A timeline tells the story of a person's life in chronological order. As the person reflects on significant life events (Physical, Psychological, and Spiritual) those events are recorded by the Psychotherapist. The Psychotherapist allows the person to recall and reflect on these events while they process the different cognitive beliefs and emotions that may be associated with the particular events. In addition, the person can also examine what they learned or concluded based on those events. The Psychotherapist can then challenge any distorted beliefs that may arise which may be triggering negative patterns of behaviors. In other words, the Psychotherapist can help the person identify any beliefs that may be blocking them from finding inner happiness.

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<sup>15</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, 15.

**Jim's Timeline:**



*Diagram D*

*What Does an Integrative Timeline Look Like?*

As the person is working with a Catholic psychotherapist they also meet with a Spiritual director. Together, the psychotherapist and director become fellow travelers along the road of their psychological and spiritual journey. The traveler reflects on his life from both a psychological and a spiritual perspective. While they process the negative beliefs and behaviors of their past, spiritual direction gives them the opportunity through prayer and spiritual guidance to seek God's forgiveness and mercy. As the realization of past sins comes to mind in therapy and direction, the person can seek healing grace from God through the sacrament of reconciliation. The psychotherapist can guide them to recognize and eradicate any psychological blocks that may be preventing them from awareness of God's love and keeping them in the bondage of sin,<sup>16</sup> while the spiritual director can guide them to discern the movements of their heart. This integrative timeline can help the person recognize the triggers in their life that may be clogging their filter system of beliefs. Together the psychotherapist and the spiritual director can help the person create positive and virtuous internal messages that can help change any harmful attitudes that may remain. The combination of reflecting on one's life through an integrative timeline and praying with a spiritual director for discernment can engage not only the physical senses of the human person but also the spiritual senses so that one day their eyes, ears, smell, touch, and taste of God's love can be opened a little to receive inner healing. Such was the case for Ned.

<sup>16</sup> W. Young, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, 10.

*The Clean Garage: A Case Study*

Ned grew up in an intact family with several siblings. His family was comparatively poor and Ned learned at an early age to work hard. As a result of having less materialism than his peers Ned was bullied by the other kids. Ned stayed close to home and his mom, which resulted in a lack of separation from her and how she felt and experienced the world. He soon lacked confidence in his own identity, had a poor self-image, and was ashamed of his poverty. His poor self-image caused him much pain and robbed him of some of the joy and freedom he could have been enjoying as a child. Though he was close to his parents he did not feel emotionally supported by them since they struggled with their own issues of self-worth and poverty. Ned, now a seminarian, sought therapy in order to deal with issues of intimacy, a clear sense of identity, and his sense of feeling unloved. In addition, Ned harbored some anger and resentment towards his parents for their lack of emotional support.

Ned entered into a therapeutic relationship to begin an integrated timeline of his life. Simultaneously, while he met once a week with a Catholic psychotherapist, every other week he met with his spiritual director. During his journey, Ned discovered several psychological blocks in his belief system that formed as a result of his early years of development. These blocks clogged his ability to form healthy intimate relationships with others and with God. He stated that his pattern of behavior was to study and work hard in order to gain the love of others. In addition, he felt that no one could love or take care of him as well as he could for himself. Ned's physical and spiritual senses were dulled as a result of these blocks. For example, during a prayer for Jesus' healing touch upon him, Ned had an image of Jesus about to touch him but recoiled from the touch. Ned stated that emotionally he feared being touched. In fact, when others got too close to him emotionally, he admitted that he pulled away and isolated himself.

After Ned became aware of his emotional block to touch during his therapy session, he reflected on it with his spiritual director, who guided him to prayer. While in the Marian Chapel during prayer, Ned noticed a new plant with a note on it that said "Don't take this away, I will take care of it." Ned said that it brought back an intimate prayer time he had with Our Lady when she told him she would take care of him and protect him. This reminder of Our Lady's love and protection for him brought real peace and inner healing of his fear of emotional touch. Like the woman with the hemorrhage who reached out from the crowd and touched the hem of the garment of Jesus (Matt 9:20-22), Ned reached out to Our Lady and received emotional support from her to have the strength to receive the loving touch of Jesus in other painful areas of his life.

As Ned progressed in his integrative timeline, he came to realize his own parent's struggles during their youth. In particular, he developed more compassion for his mother who struggled with her own compulsions, in particular the compulsion to collect things to excess with the inability to ever throw anything away. Growing up, this struggle caused Ned great shame and embarrassment. Ned did not feel comfortable bringing friends to his home as a result. As Ned began to replace his negative thoughts of shame with positive thoughts of compassion towards his mom, he decided to pay his family a visit. During

this visit, Ned helped his mom clean out the family garage. He admitted that he was discouraged in cleaning the garage because it seemed that the junk would never end. In addition, he said that in the mess, past memories of shame triggered in him persistent sexual temptations, which he had not experienced for many weeks. As a result of working through his timeline and praying in spiritual direction Ned recognized the disordered triggers that caused these temptations and turned once again to Mary who lovingly received him in his weakness as he mourned his disorderedness with her. As he continued to clean the garage, with Mary's help he felt confident that he could resist the temptations though they continued to come.

Halfway through his visit the bulk of the mess was cleaned out of the garage. Finally near the end of his visit, Ned removed the final remnants and the garage was totally clean. It was at that moment that he received a tremendous grace of inner healing. He looked at his mother and noticed that she appeared truly joyful to see the clean garage. Ned said that for the first time, his eyes were opened a little and though he could still see the mess of his past life with his mind, he was now able to see his mother with his heart. He shifted his focus from the mess of the past to loving his mother in the present as a person and not just a mom. This vision caused him great joy. At that graced moment it was a turning point in their relationship. It was also a turning point in the road of his journey of inner healing. Ned loved and felt loved. He valued his identity as a loving son not only with his mom but also with God. In addition, Ned remarked that after he could see the cleanliness of the garage his sexual temptations never returned for the remainder of his time at home.

### *Conclusion*

What do Ignatius, Francis and Ned have in common? After all three men faced a crisis in their lives, they each in turn made a decision to release their inner unhappiness and find peace of mind, body, heart, and soul. They replaced the lies in their belief systems with God's truth. And like the disciples on the road to Emmaus they encountered Christ on their journey of healing and recognized Him in the breaking of the bread so that their eyes were opened. It was on their journey on the road to perfection that they met the Word of God and their hearts burned within them.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, be open to all whom the Lord may send you in your healing ministry, for "He who receives anyone whom I send receives me; and he who receives me receives him who sent me." (John 13:20)

Finally, only the Divine Physician, Jesus, can heal our wounds. However, the Lord works through the natural and in His mercy He allows earthly physicians, like priests, spiritual directors, and counselors to be His instruments of healing. Through that healing, the Divine Physician can elevate the person's soul to the supernatural so that they can be saved. And if one perseveres, God will correct all our distorted self-images and let us see clearly in the mirror of truth. God promises that this truth will set us free (John 8:32).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> D. Sulmasy, *The Healer's Calling*, 82.

<sup>18</sup> D. Sulmasy, *The Healer's Calling*, 87.

*REFLECTIONS*

What psychological blocks do I experience in my life? What has helped me to learn about these blocks in this teaching? What might help me to grow further in this knowledge?

How might an Integrative timeline be employed as a pastoral means toward healing psychological blocks? Can I see how I might do this?

## Appendix

### *Unblocking Our Belief Systems with God's Truth*

#### **What I Think about Myself** *(Distorted Beliefs)*

#### **What is True about Me According to God's Truth** *(Scriptures)*

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| 1. I am unworthy/unacceptable              | I am accepted/worthy<br>(Rom 12:2, Ps 139)   |
| 2. I am alone                              | I am never alone<br>(Heb 13:5, Rom 8:38-39)  |
| 3. I feel like a failure/inadequate        | I am adequate<br>(2 Cor 3:5-6, Phil 4:13)  |
| 4. I have no confidence                    | I have all the boldness/confidence I need<br>(Prov 3:26, 14:26, 28:1; Eph 3:17; Heb 10:19)     |
| 5. I feel responsible for my life          | God is responsible and faithful to me<br>(Phil 1:6, 2:13; 2 Thess 3:3; Ps 138:8)               |
| 6. I am confused/think I am going crazy    | I have the mind of Christ<br>(1 Cor 2:16; 2 Tim 1:7)   |
| 7. I am depressed/hopeless                 | I have all the hope I need<br>(Rom 15:13; Ps 16:11, 27:13, 31:24)                              |
| 8. I am not good enough/imperfect          | I am perfect in Christ<br>(Heb 10:14, Col 2:13)  |
| 9. There is nothing special about me       | I have been chosen/set apart by God<br>(Ps 139; 1 Cor 1:30, 6:11; Eph 1:4; Heb 10:10, 14)      |
| 10. I don't have enough                    | I lack nothing<br>(Ps 23:1, Phil 4:19)   |
| 11. I am a fearful/anxious person          | I am free from fear<br>(Ps 34:4, 2 Tim 1:7, 1 Pet 5:7, 1 John 4:18)                            |
| 12. I lack faith                           | I have all the faith I need<br>(Rom 12:3)  |
| 13. I am a weak person                     | I am strong in Christ<br>(Dan 11:32, Ps 37:34, Phil 4:13)                                      |
| 14. I am defeated                          | I am victorious<br>(Rom 8:37, 2 Cor 2:14, 1 John 5:4)  |
| 15. I am not very smart                    | I have God's wisdom<br>(Prov 2:6-7, 1 Cor 1:30)  |
| 16. I am in bondage                        | I am free in Christ<br>(Ps 32:7, 2 Cor 3:17, John 8:36)  |
| 17. I am miserable                         | I have God's comfort<br>(John 15:6, 16:7; 2 Cor 1:3-4)   |
| 18. I have no one to take care of me       | I am protected/safe<br>(Ps 32:7)   |
| 19. I am unloved                           | I am very loved<br>(John 15:9; Rom 8:38-39; 1 John 14:10-11)                                   |
| 20. I am unwanted/I don't belong to anyone | I have been adopted by God; I am His child<br>(Rom 8:16-17, Gal 4:5, Eph 1:5, 1 John 3:2)      |
| 21. I feel guilty                          | I am totally forgiven/redeemed<br>(Ps 103:12; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14, 20; Heb 10:7)                 |
| 22. I am a sinner                          | I have been declared holy, righteous and justified<br>(Rom 3:24; 1 Cor 1:30, 6:11; 2 Cor 5:21) |
| 23. I have no strength                     | I have God's power; the Holy Spirit dwells in me<br>(Acts 1:8, Eph 1:19, Eph 3:16, Rom 8:9-11) |

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| 24. I can't reach God               | I have direct access to God<br>(Eph 2:6; 1 Pet 2:5, 9)                                   |
| 25. There is no direction/plan      | I am created for good works; God knows my way<br>(Ps 37:23, 138:8; John 10:10; Eph 2:10) |
| 26. I feel like nothing will change | I have been given a brand new life<br>(2 Cor 5:7)  |
| 27. I am afraid of Satan            | I have authority over Satan<br>(Luke 10:19)  |
| 28. Sin overpowers me               | I am dead to sin<br>(Rom 6:11)   |

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