

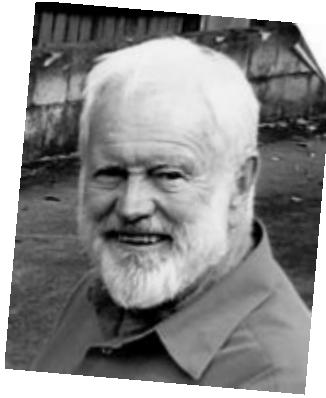


# THE BOOK OF EVAN

*The work and life of  
Evan McAra Sherrard*

E-book edition

KEITH TUDOR  
EDITOR



The Book of Evan:  
The work and life of  
Evan McAra Sherrard

*Keith Tudor | Editor*

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*E-book edition*

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**The Book of Evan: The work and life of Evan McAra Sherrard**

*Editor: Keith Tudor*

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## Foreword

ISABELLE SHERRARD

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It is with great pleasure — and, of course, considerable sadness — that I write this foreword for this book about Evan. I think I knew Evan better than anyone else in the whole world. I first knew of Evan after I moved to Christchurch at the end of 1950. Fortunately for me, my father decided to buy a house in Sumner, where Evan’s family lived. Evan told me later that he was first attracted to me because of my white ankle socks and my brown legs! He first asked me to go out with him when I was 17. Fortunately for me, he never had another girlfriend, so I was never overtaken! I am very appreciative of my 60 years with Evan and, overall, we had a very good life together. He was my best friend.

I am glad that this book has been created. It has been fun to work with Keith, often ending our work with a conversation over a glass of red wine. Together we located Evan’s writings out of boxes and folders from the clutter of Evan’s life — at his funeral I accurately described him as a “man of clutter”! As editor of this book, Keith deserves the credit and joy this completed project deserves. To Keith, I say, well done indeed and thanks.

Evan would want this book to truly reflect the person he was, and I think it does that well. Born in 1934 he did not have an easy physical life, beginning with painful ears as a toddler, so he knew how challenging everyday living can be for people generally. From his early days, initially assisted by his dad, he actively integrated his body and mind in a way that prevented him from becoming negative or bitter. He deeply loved his life,

was open to new ideas and willing to change the course of his own development. In my view he matured well as he became older: as a serious, young, newly ordained clergyman, he tended to have a conservative outlook on most things.



*Evan and Isabelle Sherrard. Wedding Day, 1959*

I think he found his place in life working in psychotherapy and in adult education. He was an effective educator with adult students, especially those who were keen to learn. The same would be true of his therapy work, I think. He certainly listened to me when I needed to talk, sometimes for a long time, and he was often a wise guide on those occasions. I hope he found me the same for him.

For our two adult children and their families and certainly for me, Evan's death has left a large hole, but in our own individual ways, each of us

appreciates having had Evan in our lives. He certainly contributed greatly to who we are as human beings who live positively in this world.

Enjoy *The Book of Evan*.

# Poroporoaki: A bridge between two worlds

HAARE WILLIAMS

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Kua whatia nei te manawapu tapaeru  
E rere i runga i te waiata o nga parirau o te kotuku rerenga tahi  
Kawea ki to moenga roa, haere ki te ariki  
E te hoa haere takoto mai.

Standing here under the flag-staff with the emblems of our nation billowing and blowing in the wind, we stand unified with a history behind and a future in front of us. Looking out to Kororareka shrouded in the breaking light, we face new day and the promise that is Waitangi, signed on this spot on 6th February, 1840, under the emblems of one nation and two people: “He iwi kotahi tatau”.

Here, the view tells us to look back to where we have come, where we are now and to see ourselves making the cross-over beyond with our whanau, friends and grandchildren and a nation with a unified vision.

A totara casts a long and benevolent shadow across our landscape, one that straddles the two congruent sides of the bridge, Ngā Ao e Rua: te Ao Māori, and te Ao Pākehā, our two worlds in unison.

And like the kaumatua at the heart of Tane’s kingdom, he watches his children with compassion, always humane. He’ll also be “Te kotuku rerenga tahi, the white heron of a single-flight, seen only once in a life-time.” The

bridge waves and bids us to go well on this hikoi from the high ground of a new millennium.

It is sad to leave, but we also rejoice the golden moments of time, place and of space that welds us in spirit and minds to leave and to say “Goodbye, Evan, dear friend.” Evan was a torch-bearer, out front for fairness. He earned the distinction of being called kaumatua, always adding to the mana of his extended branches; called on to do many things as mediator to settle whanau and tribal squabbles; to be around in moments of loss, of peril, and in moments of triumph and joy as “He totara whakaruruhau”, a sheltering totara. In mediation, a kaumatua is more than an empathic listener.

A moment for me with Evan, never to be forgotten, has to be the bilingual pre-dawn karakia we shared on that altar spot of the Treaty signing, 172 years before, where, in the serenity of space, we made a pledge to do our bit to increase understanding and acceptance of the Treaty in 1840 and now as we faced the predawn for a new New Zealand Aotearoa that is equal for all.

Evan’s virtuosity was just being good, the sort of goodness that makes us come away richer. Goodness is a request and a quest, as he put it: “We have the power to enable and ennoble ourselves and others by just being good.” Evan left us a bridge, a legacy for crossing the ripping tides of Waitangi.

“Now cracks a noble heart. Good night sweet prince,  
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.”

(Shakespeare *Hamlet*, Act 5, Scene 2, lines 338-339)

From this threshold in the present, we make the crossing into the future by fixing our sights squarely on the past. “God reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us ministry and reconciliation.” (Corinthians 5:18)

Sleep now, sweet Evan, farewell.

## Introduction to the e-book edition

KEITH TUDOR

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I am delighted to have the opportunity to publish this book online, and to make it freely available to colleagues all over the world.

Evan was a man of many parts, as is reflected in this book. His work and life touched many people, especially in Aotearoa New Zealand, but also colleagues all over the world, some of whom knew him better than his work, which is why I am especially pleased that this version of *The Book of Evan* will enable his ideas and example to continue to influence and inspire people.

In having the opportunity to publish an e-book edition of this book, I am grateful to the Sherrard family and especially Isabelle Sherrard, Evan's wife, for supporting and, indeed, enabling this project. I also wish to acknowledge the work of Peter Biggs, who published the previous (hard copy) edition of the book, in reformatting that version to make it compatible with and presentable in this medium; and to my colleagues at Tuwhera, AUT's open publishing platform, and especially Luqman Hayes, for their work in making this accessible.

The only differences between this edition and the previous edition is that, as this version can be searched by the reader, there is no need for an editor's index (of authors cited or subjects). The footnotes that accompanied the original text at the bottom of the same page have been moved to sit nearer to their placeholder in the text. Otherwise, the text remains the same – although, of course, it will change in the mind of the reader and, in that

way, Evan's work, life and words will continue to develop and contribute to the world he so loved.



# Introduction

## KEITH TUDOR

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In many ways Evan McAra Sherrard was a Renaissance man: a master of not one but several trades, specifically, agriculture, ministry, education, and psychotherapy, and he liked the fact that he had several strings to his bow. As he put it, he was “biologically, theologically and psychologically trained and qualified.” (Sherrard, 1991, in Chapter 4).

He himself described his “basic sense of identity” as:

a healing minister of religion. I am not big on sermons or talking at people, I prefer working with people and talking with them. I have always been a low profile, non-traditional minister as much as I have been a high profile unconventional psychotherapist. The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has always regarded me as a specialist minister in the field of counselling. I now have the status of a Minister Emeritus (retired). (Sherrard, 2015)<sup>1</sup>

[1. Ed. This document was a “career time-line” which Evan provided for me.]

Elsewhere, he said that “my personal competence is as a psychotherapist” (Sherrard, 2015, in Chapter 3).

Evan was a man for all people, though it is safe to say that he was more concerned about those who are oppressed and distressed, as much of his writing demonstrates. In reading through his papers, and especially those

from his early days as a Minister in The First Church of Otago in Dunedin, I was struck by his respect for the children who attended the services in that he would ensure that his addresses to them were always on the theme of his sermon and the service, and that he would find way to include them, often putting them centre stage. (The subjects of these addresses are noted in the *Bibliography*).

He was compassionate, open-hearted, thoughtful, and generous, as many of his family, friends, colleagues, trainees, supervises, and clients can attest. I have heard a number of stories from people who had at some point in their lives received a letter or an e-mail from Evan which they had appreciated and found comforting as he seemed to find a language that was both personal (to them) and, at the same time, also beyond the personal. One example of this was to a colleague after her husband's death:

I've had computer and internet troubles. While clearing my backlog discovered that Howard has died and his funeral was this afternoon.

I am saddened to hear this. His pain and distress is now behind him, a relief for him. Your pain will take time to leave you.

I felt so privileged to have you share so intimately with me about his illness and how together you were facing and dealing with his decline in vitality.

Over time, recently, I have become more aware of the depth of loss from the death of an intimate loved one. It is much more than psycho-social loss. Our bodies, our organic structures are deeply disturbed. I know there is research (which I have not done full justice to) supporting my developing understanding of how my intimate physical partner in contact with me each night as we sleep balances and modifies much of my bodily functions. Without conscious awareness of doing it our bodies tune in to each other to assist in the regulation of things like blood pressure, heart rate, breathing, deep muscle relaxation and digestion. When disease or illness interrupts our natural processes, throwing them out of order, our partner suffers also in subtle bodily ways. We do not feel so good. When there is the loss by death our bodies suffer organically and the grief adjustment includes our body being involved.

As you adjust to being without the bodily presence of your beloved Howard know that I am sending you loving supportive energy. Hopefully you will be aware of the presence of support from many others as well. May your journey through grief flow smoothly. It will not be painless. I have seen your strength and know you will manage aided by the support and love from family and friends.



*Evan, 1938*

Evan was also sensitive to situations. In 1988, after working for 12 years for Presbyterian Support Services (formerly Presbyterian Social Services Association), he resigned:

This was a year of unprecedented industrial relations trouble at the Presbyterian Support Services. Management and service workers clashed badly. Workers felt powerless to influence managers and unionised. As a manager in the system with full sympathy for worker concerns I found the values clash too intolerably painful and my integrity required me to resign. (Sherrard, 2015)

Whilst he was very patient, a great listener, and highly empathic, he could also be sharp and challenging, and many of us benefitted from such

contributions to our learning! Of course, Evan wasn't perfect, as his daughter, Susan, observes wryly in her contribution to the book in Chapter 16.

Evan did not have an easy early life, especially in what he later described as the “difficult territory” of the world of feelings. In a talk he gave on love in 2009, he reflected that:

when I was growing up, in a good Presbyterian home, feelings were frowned on. The idea was that feelings were a sign of weakness, mature humans mastered their feelings. The reasoning mind was the mark of being human. Feelings were brutish: animal like.... I was 30 before I realised God created us with feelings, and they were natural and normal. Then I had to learn how to show my feelings appropriately. And, because of my poor beginnings I still have some difficulty. (Sherrard, 2009)

He went on to comment on love and the language of love:

You know, the best time to learn a language is when you are little and you just follow and imitate big people. The language of love, or of feelings — emotions is the same. We learn best when we are young and have good, healthy examples to follow.... I did not learn how to express my feelings well. In my home feelings were not recognised, we all just sat on them. I knew my mother loved me, but I never felt it. My mother did not show her feelings. She did not show me affection, and, just before she died, she apologised for that. But I had figured out that she loved me. I had used my reason to work that out. She loved me but she couldn't show it. She never learned how. She couldn't be affectionate. She never cuddled me. And, I missed it. In the Bible it says: “We love because God first loved us.” (1 John 4: 19-21) That's true about love. We have to learn how to do it and God is the primary teacher by example. (Sherrard, *ibid.*)

He also makes this point in one of his sermons “Self-love” (Sherrard, 2012, in Chapter 3).

In a biographical summary that he wrote in the early 1960s, Evan comments about his lack of interest in sport (and the importance of sport in New

Zealand culture), but that he found an outlet for activities in the Boy Scout movement:



*Evan in the Boy Scouts, 1951*

Here sports did not really count and I was quite capable and enjoyed all scouting activities. Indeed it was an area in which I could and did find the satisfaction of obtaining my desires for leadership and significance. At 16, I became a King Scout and was selected to attend the World Scout Jamboree in Austria in 1951. (Sherrard, 1963)

In part, because of this start in life, Evan was highly committed to self-development, especially with regard to feelings and the body, and to experiential learning. As Isabelle put it, he was “a person of education”, as distinct from training (see Chapter 11). He was very aware of his own

limitations and deficits. In his “career time-line”, he noted that, after a couple of years as director of The Cameron Centre in Dunedin (see Chapter 6):

My skill base and preparatory training is exhausted by the demands and needs for service emerging in the city. Two years training in Texas was insufficient. I seek and cannot find local assistance to make good my deficits. I accepted an unsolicited and totally unanticipated invitation to help Herb Hillebrand run a three month program of clinical training at the University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan (June, July, August). Herb had had a short term contract with the Theological Hall, Knox College, Dunedin, to provide and demonstrate clinical pastoral education for theological students preparing for the Presbyterian ministry. We knew him and his family in Dunedin and I went and stayed and worked with him in Ann Arbor checking out possibilities for further training back in the USA. (Sherrard, 2015)

The result of Evan “checking out possibilities for further training” led him to training in transactional analysis, and in other approaches to psychology and therapy, including primal integration. Going through Evan’s papers after his death, I came across references to and often his own extensive notes on a wide range of training courses he had attended over many years. Whilst he was open to the esoteric, he was very grounded and liked the fact that his foundation was in and on the land. In putting together his “career time line” for this book he himself commented that:

the task reinforced what I have always known and appreciated — the significance and importance of my agricultural ... and agricultural science beginnings. It is the substantial foundation of my theological and social psychology and psychotherapy career. Without the emphasis of my “feet on the ground” start I could have been in danger of “losing my head in the clouds” in theology and psychology. (Sherrard, 2015)

Evan was a man for all seasons, though his own final season was sadly cut short. In some ways he was old fashioned — he was one of the few preachers who still referred to and followed the Old and New Testament readings as the lectionary (see his sermons in Chapter 3). In other ways, he

moved with the times, and kept developing. In one sermon, on “Colonialism” (reproduced in Chapter 3), he refers to his “theologically-conservative period” and his later, his “theologically-radical period” — and was willing to review and change his mind, as he did with regard to the state registration of psychotherapists (see Chapter 10). He described himself as a “progressive Christian” and I think that this adjective describes his approach to other areas of his life.

I first met Evan in December 2006 when, as part of a visit to Aotearoa New Zealand, I ran a workshop on transactional analysis, which he attended. He sat and participated quietly; nevertheless, I felt his bright blue eyes watching me attentively. I didn’t get to know him well until 2009 after I and my family had emigrated here. It was only then that I came to know just how influential he was, not only in the transactional analysis community, but also in the wider psychotherapy community in this country. He was especially pleased that I had come to take up a position in the then Department of Psychotherapy at Auckland University of Technology, including the role of Programme Leader of a programme which he had founded and also led (see Chapter 8). For my part, I was delighted to have these connections with him, and was — and still am — profoundly appreciative of his and Isabelle’s warm welcome of me and my family: my wife Louise, my son Saul, and my daughter Esther, each of whom had their own relationship with him. I will never forget Saul’s discussion with Evan about whether saying “blessings”, for instance, over food, implied the existence of a superordinate being, and Evan’s genuine interest in Saul’s ideas. I will also always appreciate Evan’s kindness towards Esther; as I was putting this book together, Esther said simply: “I liked Evan; he was fun!” I also appreciated Evan’s support of Louise — a relationship that has also informed this book, as Louise has read it closely, for which it is better and, for which, as ever, I am most grateful.

As well as being a good friend, he was a supportive colleague, especially in transactional analysis, and also a staunch comrade with regard to the politics of psychotherapy. For example, for a number of reasons, Evan had been a strong advocate of psychotherapists seeking state registration and, thereby, protection of their title. However, in response to the reality, attitudes, and activities of the Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand, a “responsible authority” under the Health Practitioners

Competence Assurance Act 2003, a number of colleagues founded the organisation of Independently Registered Psychotherapy Practitioners (IRPP) (see Fay, 2011). Evan was a member of the IRPP and an ally in the fight for pluralism in the organisation of psychotherapy in this country, and wrote about what he referred to as his “uie” (U-turn) on this issue (Sherrard, 2011), a contribution which is reproduced in Chapter 13.

As I got to know Evan over what was to be the last six years of his life, I came to appreciate his intellectual as well as his professional range; his reflexivity, openness, and humility; his huge influence in a number fields, and the esteem in which he was held by colleagues across the board (including those who disagreed with each other); his perspicacity, sharpness, and ability to challenge colleagues kindly but firmly; and his good humour, and the mischievous twinkle in those bright blue eyes. As I came to know him and others who had been influenced by him, I also got a sense that, whilst many people in the field of psychotherapy had appreciated his teaching, and supervision, mainly through their direct contact with him, for others he was less known and even underrated, in part because he did not publish — and I imagined this to be the case with regard to his ministerial work. In response to this, I began to ask him more about his ideas about theory, especially ’though not confined to our common interest in and language of transactional analysis.

Thus this book began: as part of a project to extract from Evan some of the writing that I knew he had done, but about which he was both typically humble and slightly evasive, as well as to honour his life and work — while he was still alive. During the early part of 2015, and with the benefit of having obtained some resources from Auckland University of Technology for transcribing interviews, and the support of both Dr Jonathan Fay and Dr Philip Carter, each of whom had knowledge of different aspects of Evan’s professional life, I broached the subject of the book with Evan and Isabelle one afternoon over tea and cake — Evan had a sweet tooth! — and showed him the first draft of the proposed contents. He was initially quiet, and then his face broke into a broad grin: he was both delighted and appreciative. He and Isabelle immediately got involved and gave me not only some of his writing, but also a list of people whom I should consult.

Despite his failing health, Evan remained supportive of the project, and in what was one of our last e-mail exchanges about this, wrote: “Your plans



for our book sound great.... please keep going. Many thanks, go well.”  
(personal [e-mail] communication, 22nd August 2015)

The original plan was for each of us (Jonathan, Phil, and myself) to record interviews with Evan about different aspects of his life, to transcribe and edit these interviews, and to interweave them with his own writings. In the event we recorded only three interviews before his death, and did not have the benefit of sharing the transcripts with him. We did, nevertheless, begin the process of encouraging Evan to engage with and review his own work and in getting copies of his writing, both published and unpublished, a process that has continued after his death. In this I am particularly grateful for the complete cooperation and trust of Isabelle, who, amongst other courtesies, gave me open access to Evan’s paper and computer files, a privilege that yielded not only several more sermons and papers (which are published here), but also other papers which have helped me to get to know more of the man, and to shape the whole book. Following his death and funeral, I lost some energy for the project in that I had originally conceived of doing this with Evan. However, as I discussed this with Isabelle and, as she and the family sorted through Evan’s things, and “discovered” more and more of his papers in boxes from the attic and garage, I realised that I would and could not have produced this book in Evan’s lifetime. In talking with colleagues, I heard of Evan’s presentations and contributions on a number of topics and would then ask him “Are you sure you don’t have that paper on such and such anywhere?” In response, I usually got a shrug of the shoulders, a slightly enigmatic smile, and an offer of another glass of Pinot Noir! His genuine humility, and perhaps a sense of having moved on from his earlier work, led him to be less interested in his work and legacy than others were and are.

Since Evan’s death, I have had the privilege and pleasure of working more closely with Isabelle and, in doing so, have appreciated her generosity, been grateful for and touched by her confidence, impressed by her phenomenal memory for dates and places, and appreciative both of her directness and sense of humour — tēna koe, Isabelle.

## **The organisation and structure of the book**

Thus, having had access to all Evan's work, I have had the delightful, if somewhat daunting task of selecting material for the book and organising it into a coherent whole, in the course of which, I have had to make certain decisions, again, in consultation with Isabelle and the Sherrard family. I decided to exclude personal and professional correspondence (with the one exception of a letter Evan wrote to Lloyd Geering, which is reproduced, with Lloyd's permission, in Chapter 15); his papers and notes about rituals;<sup>2</sup> and a fairly extensive collection of PowerPoint presentations.<sup>3</sup>

[2. These include bedside and home communions; blessings; celebrations; funeral tributes; and naming ceremonies.]

[3. These include those on cognitive behavioural therapy (2005); colonisation (2007); body watch — the new biology (2008); body watch (energy psychology) (2008); love (2009); a transactional analysis "take" on placebos and nocebos (2009); transcendence (2009); couples' secrets (2011); prayer and quantum physics (2011); the film *Blink* and intuition (2011); and understanding love and other addictions (2011).]

As it stands, this book reflects Evan's various trades or vocations, as well as his personal life, and is organised in eight, roughly chronological Parts, encompassing: agriculture; ministry; education; transactional analysis; psychodrama; the psychotherapy community; his health; and friendship. Like the man, this book has a broad scope and is slightly unusual for that fact. I only hope that readers who initially might be drawn to a particular area of Evan's life will also be interested to read across his life and work. As a result of my reading of his papers, one of the greater appreciations I have about the man is just how interested he was in life, and in integration: from quite early on he was including biological and psychological insights in his sermons, and his work in and reflections on transactional analysis and psychodrama include theology (see Chapter 10). In that spirit, and in order to promote coherence and cross reading, in editing the book as a whole, I have made footnotes (which I distinguish from Evan's own notes, by prefacing them with the annotation "Ed."), have included cross-references to other work reproduced in the book, compiled a bibliography at the end of the book, and created an index [in the printed edition].

Each Part is introduced with some entries from his curriculum vitae (cv) or "career time line" as he referred to it, relevant to that subject. As these different aspects of Evan's life overlapped, so some of the professional and personal entries overlap and are, therefore, repeated. Following this there is a brief introduction to the chapters in that Part.

Most of the chapters comprise Evan's own writings, which have been only lightly edited for consistency. Where the original writing was more in note form, for instance, his notes on a transactional analysis of God (in Chapter 10), I have edited more, and included relevant references. With regard to his sermons, for the most part I have retained his style (which include the preacher's sentence fragments, and words highlighted for rhetorical emphasis), while, at the same time, editing them into a coherent whole. As part of this, I have introduced footnotes to provide references and, where necessary, some explanation of context and terms. I have maintained the original conception of the book having a reflective piece in each Part, one of which (Chapter 9 regarding transactional analysis) is based on the edited transcript of an interview I did with Evan, and another (Chapter 11 regarding psychodrama) is based on an interview conducted with colleagues by Phil. With regard to other Parts, I, Isabelle and Jonathan, asked other colleagues and friends to reflect on Evan's contribution in that particular field (Chapters 2, 5, 7, 14 and 18).

The book is blessed by having a poroporoaki, words of farewell, from Haare Williams who was a friend of Evan's. I am most grateful to Haare for offering this — tēna koe, Haare.

**Part I** focuses on agriculture, about which Evan had many things to say and an abundance of funny stories. Unfortunately, we have no recordings of these and so I have represented this beginning to Evan's career in Chapter 1 by means of one of his sermons, on Biology, and a review of the film *The Ground We Won* (Smith & Prior, 2015), which he wrote with Isabelle (and which was to be the last piece of his writing published in his lifetime). In the brief biographical note that accompanied the review, he wrote that he "learned the pastoral care of farm animals before changing to training as a clergyman and the pastoral care of people" (Sherrard & Sherrard, 2015, p. 89), and, indeed, his academic record at Lincoln College shows that he achieved an "A" in Animal Physiology and Health (as well as in Agricultural Microbiology). This is followed in Chapter 2 by some reflections by Alan Nordmeyer and Robin Plummer, two of Evan's friends with whom he studied at Lincoln College, and by Colin Wrennell, a psychodramatist and farmer.

**Part II**, on ministry, comprises one chapter of a selection of Evan's sermons, which encompass just over 50 years (Chapter 3), and another of

his writing in the form of talks and papers on aspects of applied theology (Chapter 4). As a practicing minister, Evan wrote a lot of sermons and it soon became clear that these could constitute another book in their own right. A list of his sermons is included in the Bibliography. I selected those that appear in Chapter 3 to reflect the number of years over which he preached, and to illustrate Evan's range of interests and the links he made in them to other aspects of his life and his work (here, sickness, death, cancer, the concept of "winners", healing, suffering, grief, and the unconscious); his theological interests (worship, epiphany, theism, Pentecost, Ash Wednesday, the historical Jesus); and his wider social vision (represented here by sermons on colonialism, and political activism). This breadth and depth is continued in the talks and papers in Chapter 4, which encompass: homosexuality, which Evan begins with a biological perspective but which soon demonstrates his sociological and psychological sensitivities; a film review of *Once Were Warriors*, in which he draws out its religious imagery and theology; on healing in the Church, in which he advocates a 21st century healing ministry based on that of Jesus'; the essence of Christianity, in which he manages to distil quite complex theological and psychological ideas to the audience of a Schools' Conference; and his last theological paper, "A Song about Mary", the mother of Jesus, a figure on whom Evan reflected a lot in the last years of his life. These two chapters are followed by one containing some reflections on Evan's ministry from Revd. Lloyd Geering, Dr Allan Davidson, Revd. Roger Hey, and a poem by Revd Glynn Cardy, which Glynn read at Evan's funeral service. Evan himself was typically self-effacing about his theological talents, at one point claiming that his ideas were somewhat derivative of others. I suggest that Evan's sermons and theological papers show not only his concern, as a progressive Christian, about worship, prayer, the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and, generally, the application of Christianity to modern life, but also a real skill in presenting old and new ideas in new ways.

**Part III** on education comprises three chapters which reflect the three areas in which Evan made major contributions to education: clinical pastoral education (Chapter 6); human development training in Presbyterian Support Services (Chapter 7), regarding which I am particularly appreciate of Don Reekie's input; and the establishment of a psychotherapy training programme at the then Auckland Institute of Technology (now Auckland University of Technology (Chapter 8). In addition to being a visionary

educationalist, Evan was a great facilitator, as the following story from Roger Wiig illustrates:

In the 1970s I was an Education Consultant with the Church's Department of Christian Education. I had completed one five year term and had agreed to the process that would review my position and make a decision about my re-appointment. The Committee responsible forgot about the review and its timing. As the date of reappointment came near I found out that they were making enquiries about how I was handling the job and that they were not consulting me (as had been agreed). At that time we were to meet in Wellington for a staff training event with Evan as its facilitator. The event had just got underway when Evan turned to me and said: "Roger, you are looking as if you are feeling flat." Surprised by the insight I agreed. Evan then asked: "So what are you angry about?" Well, my anger about the review process poured out! At the end of it Evan offered some wisdom that has been of value for my practice of ministry ever since. He said, in his unique, quiet way: "Power is only of value if it is shared."

Amongst other things, including Evan's concern about personal potency and power, this vignette reflects one of the differences between education and training, the difference between which is the subject of some considerable debate, and, although Evan favoured education over training, he was an accredited trainer in two fields — transactional analysis and psychodrama.

Evan was a leading light in two worlds within the field of the psychotherapy: transactional analysis and psychodrama, in each of which Evan trained and qualified, both as a clinician and as a trainer and supervisor. *Part IV* represents his work in transactional analysis, in which Evan originally trained and qualified in the 1970s. The first chapter in this Part, Chapter 9, is an edited and expanded version of a conversation he and I had about his journey in transactional analysis. As I acknowledge in my introduction to the chapter, the conversation, which we had planned to continue, was cut short by his death. Despite this being, in my mind, (only) part one of two parts, the chapter is not only informative in terms of the influences on Evan, what Traue (1990/2001) referred to as "ancestors of the mind", it also captures his sense of humour. Traditionally, psychotherapy

has had a somewhat ambivalent relationship with religion and spirituality (for a summary of which, as well as some recent research on which, see Florence, 2016). In his life and work, Evan bridged what for many is a philosophical, theological, and methodological gap, and it is, therefore, significant that two of the three contributions in Chapter 10 represent his attempts to put spirituality on the map within transactional analysis. A third paper, although second in the chapter, again reflects his interest in integration as he makes sense of ego states (from transactional analysis) and role theory (from psychodrama).

*Part V* represents Evan's involvement in psychodrama. It is introduced by means of a discussion between Dale Herron and Isabelle (who also did some training in psychodrama), with Phil Carter, in which they discuss Evan's involvement in psychodrama (Chapter 11). Chapter 12 comprises three papers on psychodrama: the first, an abridged version of Evan's thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment for his certification as a Psychodramatist with the Australia New Zealand Psychodrama Association (ANZPA); the second and third, his papers on supervision and training, both submitted in partial fulfilment for his accreditation as a Training Educator Practitioner of Psychodrama with ANZPA (the third is also an abridged paper). I am grateful both to the ANZPA ([www.anzpa.org](http://www.anzpa.org)) and to Isabelle for their permission to reproduce these papers. Whilst these are substantial contributions, they are by no means all of Evan's work in psychodrama, which folder on his computer also included training notes; contributions to policies and procedures, and various statements; assessment and examiner's reports; as well as feedback and comments on papers colleagues had written. In amongst these, I came across a little gem, which, again, reflects Evan's integration of different aspects of his life. One such was a paragraph which was filed under the title "God of the Psychodramatic Space":

Omnipotence, etc., is part of what humans have invented for God. Remember, God can exist as a non-existent reality in your personal thought world. God does not exist out there, objectively as a divine being somewhere in space. But in your own subjective head space he or she can be as real as any of your thought world. I find God a very comforting presence in my mind even though I know he does not exist out there. He is a good parent to me in my head space. I have useful conversations with him, as I do with my

own father who has been dead over fifty years. The interesting thing I have observed in these conversations is while I know they are being produced in my own head, it is more than me making up what the other is saying to me. Sometimes they say what I don't want to hear and there is wisdom I know I didn't make up. Where does that other side in the conversation come from? It is a mystery to me. Over time I have learned to trust the Otherness in our conversation. So I have my inner, private God, who I know is not public nor objectively existent.

This is what replaces the projected mythical divine entity out there — God. (Sherrard, 2013)

Evan was a respected elder of the psychotherapeutic community as a whole, and, in 1992, was given the highest recognition that the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) bestows: an Honorary Life Membership, the full citation for which is reproduced in Chapter 14. The first chapter in this part — *Part VI* — reproduces an unpublished paper he wrote about the nature of authority in counselling, and a published chapter on his “Uie” or u-turn on state registration of psychotherapists, which he wrote for a book I edited on pluralism and partnership in psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand (Tudor, 2011), and which he titled, somewhat mischievously, “Once Was a Psychotherapist” (Chapter 13). The second chapter comprises a number of reflections from colleagues in the psychotherapy community (Chapter 14). I think it is interesting and not at all surprising that, between them, they capture what was summarised in the citation for his Honorary Life Membership, which recognised and honoured not only Evan's achievements, but also the man:

A value held strongly by Evan has been to see work to be done and do it, keeping himself in the background, with no interest in any personal kudos. Yet for many it is the man rather than the deeds that is foreground. In his life time of work for humankind, as pastoral counsellor, chaplain, minister of the Presbyterian Church, educator, and psychotherapist, perhaps Evan's greatest gift is his person, his warmth and integrity, humility, passion, humour and love. (NZAP, 1991)

At this point the book foregrounds the man as it takes a turn from Evan's more public life to his personal life, with two parts devoted to health and

friendships. Throughout his life, Evan had to manage various issues concerning his health and illness, and generally did so with great fortitude and dignity. He also became increasingly public about these issues, and indeed this reflects the significance of the health and illness of someone in the healing and helping professions, a point that Isabelle makes in her introduction to *Part VII*. The first chapter comprises a letter Evan wrote to Lloyd Geering about Lloyd's own illness; and a paper, originally a long letter, about Evan's own health status and experience of ill health and illness (Chapter 15). The following two chapters offer personal commentaries and reflections on Evan's health from his daughter Susan (Chapter 16) and Isabelle (Chapter 17).

The last part of the book — *Part VIII* — concerns friendship and comprises a chapter in which a number of Evan's friends comment on their relationships with him (Chapter 18). I am particularly grateful to Susan Shaw for her retrospective piece which acknowledges a number of threads, including the project of this book.

As I was finishing the manuscript of the book, I did a last search through Evan's files, in the course of which I found a short piece entitled "Credo" which, from the date, must have been one of the last things he wrote; as it seemed appropriate that Evan should have the last word, this forms a postscript.

## **Acknowledgements**

When I initially presented the idea of the book to Evan and Isabelle, they gave me a number of names of people to invite; later, following Evan's funeral, I also asked for and/or received a number of contributions from people who had known Evan over many years. My acknowledgments and thanks go to Margaret Bowater, A. Roy Bowden, Glynn Cardy, Philip Carter, Joan Dallaway (who sadly died before this book was published), Allan Davidson, Grant Dillon, Hans Everts, Priscilla Everts, Jonathan Fay, Lloyd Geering, Dale Herron, Robyn Hewland, Roger Hey, Peter Hubbard, Valerie Hunton, Rex Hunton, Lesley King, Robin Lane, Sheila Larsen, Seán Manning, John McAlpine, Dorothy McCarrison, Alan Nordmeyer, John O'Connor, Helen Palmer, Robin Plummer, Margaret Poutu Morice, Brigitte Puls, Don Reekie, Bev Silvester-Clark, Susan Shaw, Isabelle Sherrard,



Susan Sherrard, Shirley Webber, Roger Wiig, Haare Williams, Ondra Williams, and Colin Wrennell, for their contributions to honouring the works and life of this wonderful man.

In terms of the production of the book, I am grateful to a number of people and organisations:

- Firstly, to Evan and Isabelle for their responsiveness to the project, which I can honestly say has been a labour of love. Although it's involved a lot of work and has been by far my biggest book project to date, it has also been hugely informative and a lot of fun. I am also aware that other members of the Sherrard family have supported Isabelle's continuing engagement with the project, especially Susan and Michael, and that others have supported them in this.
- To Auckland University of Technology, and specifically the School of Public Health and Psychosocial Studies, for its financial support of the project, which enabled us to have interviews transcribed and documents scanned and edited, in which respect I am particularly grateful to Ellie Flourie, and Jyoti Smith.
- To Jonathan Fay and Philip Carter, each of whom represent(ed) different aspects of Evan's work and life, and who helped to draw together the different elements of particular Parts of the book: Jonathan on education, and Phil on psychodrama.
- To Susan Shaw, both a close friend of the family and a good colleague of mine, from whose support, sensitivity, and editorial skills both the book and I have benefited.
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- To Peter Biggs, the publisher, for his support of the project, patience, and skill in converting a manuscript into the fine, finished product you, the reader, have in your hands.
- As this was always going to be a project that was more about due acknowledgement than commercial viability, Jonathan, Phil and I approached a number of organisations with whom Evan was significantly involved in order to fund the initial production costs and to ensure a reasonable ongoing cover price, and so to:

- Aotearoa New Zealand Transactional Analysis Association (formerly New Zealand Transactional Analysis Association)
  - Auckland Transactional Analysis Education (formerly the Auckland Transactional Analysis Training Institute)
  - The Community of St. Luke, Auckland
  - The School of Public Health and Psychosocial Studies, Auckland University of Technology.
- To my own family — Louise, Saul, and Esther — for supporting me in this project, which is also personal to them in that they also knew Evan personally; I hope that in these pages they, as others, will find reflections of and some of the “back story” to some of their conversations with and experiences of Evan.
  - Finally, and profoundly, to Evan’s family — Isabelle, Susan, Michael, Pete, Cate, Oscar, and Molly — for sharing this remarkable man with so many people over so many years. I only hope that this contribution serves them as a record of Evan’s work and life for those who were fortunate enough to have known him directly, and for others who knew him indirectly, as well as for those further afield and, indeed, for future generations.

Kua hinga te totara i te wao nui a Tane — The totara has fallen in the forest of Tane. It is now up to those of us who survive to take the space that is made by the falling of this mighty totara, and to take forward the fruits of Evan’s labour and life.

Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna tatou katoa.

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Part I

AGRICULTURE

# Introduction

## KEITH TUDOR

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- 1951* Evan obtains School certificate
- 1952* He obtains University entrance
- 1953* He obtains Higher School certificate
- 1954-1959* He is a rural field cadet (RFC), undertaking farm and classroom training
- 1954* He works on Rex Street's sheep and beef property, Te Maire Landing, Taumarunui
- 1954* He is invited by Herb Caselberg to join Arnold Bryant, Stu Pickering and Noel Thomson to experiment changing from the RFC programme at Lincoln College to an Agricultural Degree
- 1955* He is a resident at Lincoln College, attends Canterbury College, Christchurch to do Agricultural Intermediate; leaves his original RFC group
- 1955-1956* He works on Frank Bagley's dairy property, Eltham
- 1956* He works on Alex Donaldson's mixed cropping property, Wakanui, Ashburton
- 1957* He takes degree course classes at Lincoln College, and is active in the Student Association

*1957-1958* He works on Bernie Cooper's dairy property, Waikite Valley, Rotorua

*1958* He continues his degree course classes at Lincoln College

*1958* He discontinues the RFC programme to enter Presbyterian Ministry Training; but as an entry degree is required he finishes the Lincoln course

*1958-1959* He works in the Entomology Division (aphids research), Department of Science and Industrial Research, Lincoln College

*1960* He completes degree course classes and graduates with a Bachelor in Agricultural Science.



*Student Association Executive at Canterbury Agricultural College, 1958. Evan is seated on the right.*

Evan's background in agriculture and agricultural science is hugely important in understanding his life and work. As he himself put it, commenting on his career time line:

As I put this ... together, the task reinforced what I have always known and appreciated — the significance and importance of my agricultural (RFC) and agricultural science beginnings. It is the substantial foundation of my theological and social psychology and psychotherapy career. Without the emphasis of my “feet on the ground” start I could have been in danger of “losing my head in the clouds” in theology and psychology. (Sherrard, 2015)

The chapters in this Part comprise a sermon of Evan's on Biology, and a review of the film *The Ground We Won*, which he wrote with Isabelle (Chapter 1), and some reflections from two friends from Lincoln College, Alan Nordmeyer and Robin Plummer, and one from a psychodrama colleague and farmer, Colin Wrennell (Chapter 2).





*Robin (third row from the top, left), Evan (next to Robin), and Alan (standing behind Evan). Lincoln College, 1955.*

Evan maintained his strong association with the land throughout his life and, indeed, according to his wishes, his ashes were scattered “on land, sea,

and pasture”.

## *Chapter 1*

### Papers related to agriculture

EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **Biology (2008)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — First preached 6th July, 2008, at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

#### *Lectionary*

Old Testament: Genesis 24: 34-38, 42-49 The selection of Rebekah for Isaac

New Testament: Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30 The call of Jesus

Last week I shared some thinking about Jesus which emerged for me as I considered the matter of colonisation. This week I would like to share some theological consequences of considering some new thinking on Biology. I am not going to try to tie it in with our lectionary readings for today. That was possible last week but not today.

You may be aware that my first career before responding to a call to the ministry was in agriculture. My first field of study was in biology. I've kept an interest ever since.

For me it was a major shift from Lincoln College to the Theological Hall in Dunedin. The Scottish accent of the Professor of Theology was difficult enough but when he pronounced Hebrew words for an abstract idea he was discussing, I couldn't even take lecture notes. I couldn't spell them and I hadn't a clue what was being talked about or where he was heading. However, my confusion aside, down there I was amazed at the biological ignorance of some fellow theology students. Driven by theological ideology they sincerely believed there was no death in the Garden of Eden.

Of course, in the first place I doubted the existence of the Garden of Eden. For them, it was a real place, and had been around until Adam and Eve were expelled for disobedience and introducing sin. Then it was closed to humans. And, it was a place of perfection — how things were meant to be. I would ask if there were holes in the leaves growing in the garden. No way! Were there butterflies? Of course, it was a place of beauty! So, what did the caterpillars which became the butterflies, eat?

As a trained agricultural ecologist understanding the complex inter-relationship of climate, soil, micro-organisms, plants and animals I could not conceive of a biological system in which there was no death. Carbon would be so quickly locked up by living creatures, without the release death and decomposition provides, that all life would come to an end anyway. Death is an essential part of the biological life cycle. That biological awareness is unchanged, and I hope the ignorance of past theological students has changed, but some aspects of biology are radically different from the 1950s.

Recently I have been catching up on the changes. Especially in regard to the other professional hat I wear — psychotherapy. In the last decade, particularly, because of technological advances we are beginning to know more and more about brain biology. CAT scans, MRI and such, are allowing us to examine the brain at work — something we could never previously do. You can imagine how important it is to know how the brain works, in a profession which aims to provide healing for those with damage or wounds to their mind and spirit. Are our methods and interventions in keeping with brain function and with our new understandings of biology?

In catching up I have been preparing presentations which I have been giving here at St Luke's over the last year, under the heading of Body Watch 1, 2,

and 3. I have been doing this to encourage my colleagues and trainees in the field to watch this space. New information is coming forward thick and fast. We need to keep up with it. Now, my formal training was in the 1950s. I do not claim any current expertise so I have been trying to break down the technical information I have been following into digestible chunks for my friends and colleagues. I want to distil out a few of the theological consequences of this thinking to share this morning.

This week I own my indebtedness to Bruce Lipton, a molecular biologist who is one of several leading thinkers in the field of biology to be challenging old approaches to the field and suggesting new directions. I recommend his book, *The Biology of Belief*.<sup>2</sup> You can see from a title like this there are more than hints at a theological connection.

[2. Ed. — Lipton, B. (2005). *The biology of belief: Unleashing the power of consciousness, matter and miracles*. Santa Rosa, CA: Mountain of Love.]

There are two major shifts in biological thinking. One is the shift from the primacy of DNA or genetic determinism to a new science, epigenetics, or the influence of the environment on genes. The second is the shift from following a Newtonian physics as the basis of biology to Quantum physics as the basis. Let me unpackage these shifts.

You would appreciate in agriculture we were interested in animal and plant breeding in the hopes of getting more wool, more meat, more milk, more grass, and more wheat for flour, and so on. How did inheritance work? We knew Gregor Mendel's laws of dominant and recessive genes, and we knew about MIA the double helix chain of protein molecules as the basis of genes. In the '50s it was early days, but, we were getting at the biochemistry although there was a lot to learn. Clearly it had to do with genes, and in the minds of many, it still does. Genes determine who and what we are. There is a gene for this and gene for that. There continues to be great excitement as scientists report finding yet another gene for obesity or for cancer, or heart failure, or laziness, or determination, or depression, or intelligence. The excitement is from hope that knowing genetic causes to all these sort of things we might be able to develop cures or treatments or ways of enhancing the useful traits. And, further behind that, genes relieve us of any is responsibility. I got an unlucky hand of genes. Mum and dad got together and passed on their cancer genes. I had nothing to do with that, but I carry the can. In a sense I am a victim of this chance.

Quirkily for us Presbyterians it's a biological version of our old Westminster Confession of Faith "predestination" doctrine. God predetermined how you would turn out. For us, either God or your genes predestined us. You know what we did with that Calvinistic doctrine — we gave ourselves exception from it and took back our responsibility for how we live life. But we still hold to the notion that our genes determine who we are. There was this cartoon, a prisoner standing in the dock before the judge wearing his wig and robes saying: "Don't blame me, your honour, my genes made me do it!"

Current biological thinking recognises it is not as simple as determination by genes. Of course genes have a lot to do with whether you are a boy or girl, short or tall, fair or dark. But it is not simple or straightforward and it is not yet fully understood. Thinking there was money in it, a biological science firm set out to make clones of people's pets. Pets are much loved but Fido doesn't last long. They are the same genetically, therefore it was expected that Fido's clone would be exactly the same as Fido and you could carry on having Fido with you as long as you liked.

But the clones did not turn out the same — sometimes it was even a different colour. Here comes epigenetics. The scientists trying to make the clones said, something environmental must have stepped in and changed the outcome. Epigenetics is studying the environmental factors.

Here in Auckland we have one of the world's leading centres for epigenetic study into human development — the Liggins Institute at the University of Auckland Medical School, headed by Dr Peter Gluckman. For example, they found that sometimes a first baby growing in the womb didn't get full-on nutrition. The mother's blood supply had not opened up fully, yet. So the baby perceived it was growing in a world short of food. To prepare for this coming situation a gene was turned on which means food reserves are laid down whenever there is any extra going round. You could say this is a good precaution when facing a world of food shortage, but, while the baby is correct about its immediate world of the womb, it is mistaken about the world it is coming to. It emerges into a world well supplied with food. And, true to form, it lays down fat reserves. Because the gene has done its work this person now has a tendency to obesity. But, it is a mistake to say there is a gene for obesity. Bruce Lipton was going to entitle his book *The Biology of Perception* but he realised we can have misperceptions about the world.

So, he chose the word belief instead of perception. Using these terms, we could say the baby believes he is going to a world of food shortage. This belief has significant influence on his developing body. This proposition has profound biological implications. Suppose you are a bit poorly, from whatever reason, if you believe that you are the victim of your genes and have been dealt a bad hand, and you are stuck with it, how might your biology go with this pessimism?

On the other hand, you are a bit poorly and you believe God's intention for you is a full happy life and that whatever happens God cares about you, how might your biology respond to that optimistic belief? Now, how to deal with the shift from a Newtonian model of the physics underlying biology to quantum physics? This is more difficult to get my head around, and explain simply. It is like this — a Newtonian belief system is based on understanding the universe is made up of material or matter, that is hard stuff. Reduced to rock bottom, it is made up of atoms. These are the smallest bits of matter there are, and we know from chemistry that the different elements that constitute our universe have different sorts of atoms ranging from simple to increasingly complex. In seeking to understand the nature of the atom, our Lord Ernest Rutherford described it as a little solar system of a matter: little particles, electrons, circled the nucleus, like earth and the other planets rotating round the sun. This nucleus of the atom was in turn made up of a cluster of atomic particles he called protons and neutrons.

Recent experimental research by physicists confirms that Rutherford's assumptions are wrong. The atom is not made up of matter at all. There is no stuff in it. There are no protons or neutrons. What is there is pure energy, whirling, vibrating, dancing forms of energy they are calling quarks and gluons. There is no-thing in an atom. Energy is a word that is as hard to get our heads around as is the word God. Energy, however, is not in doubt because it appears all around us as hard stuff — rocks and water and gas. But that is appearance only. Our sense organs, eyes, ears, touch have evolved over billions of years to perceive these things in the universe.

You know there are sounds we can't hear, colours we can't see, scents we can't smell, x-rays we can't feel? There is more to our world than we are able to be aware of. Physicists reckon we only know 5% of the universe. Space is not empty. It is filled with dark matter, imperceptible to our senses or to our instruments. Thank goodness or we would never see the stars, or

across the interior of this building to enjoy the colour of the windows. So, what does the shift from a Newtonian material model of the atom to the energy based model mean in biology?

If our universe is based on material stuff, we are faced with limits — only one thing can occupy a space at any one time, something cannot be in two places at once, to move something we have to make contact with it somehow to give it a push, it won't move on its own. In the energy world of atoms these sorts of limits don't seem to be always the rule. At the quantum level of the universe strange things take place. We are only just finding out. Lipton suggests our biology responds to pure energy signals as well as the energy in signals from chemical or electrical forms of matter which is only energy dancing in different rhythms. That will mean Biologists are going to have to include the “unheard of”, until now, if and when they accept the energy basis of the universe. They will have to include thought, belief, meditation and prayer in their considerations of the nature of human life on this planet, for these things all have to do with energy and from a quantum perspective they have an existence as substantial as a concrete block.

It seems many scientists have difficulty recognising that. We, in the Church, on either side of the theological divide, conservative or liberal, have not been coming to terms with this new thinking about how we are made and how we function and the place of prayer and belief in our life. It is all so new and people like Bruce Lipton give us a lead and a challenge. We members of the mid-week Communion group, each Wednesday ... have been considering the nine ideas Lloyd Geering presented in a TVNZ documentary earlier this year.<sup>3</sup>

[3. Ed.— Oomen, M. (Director). (2007). *The last Western heretic* [TV programme]. Wellington: Aotearoa New Zealand: TVNZ.]

He has given us the impression that he thinks of prayer as an outdated practice of talking to a heavenly being who does not really exist. We find this idea disappointing and a bit thin. For us, prayer has to do with generating a caring, loving attitude and focusing supportive energy in the direction of the person or persons we are praying for. We are not into having a chat with the Almighty. Within the Community of St Luke, in different contexts, we are attending to the how and what of prayer. We can add the energy dimension.



This has been a very quick romp through some ideas from a new approach to biology. Hopefully I have been able to suggest there are some useful and important implications for those of us who have theological interests. We might want to watch this space, and take it further.

### **Film review of *The Ground We Won* (2015)<sup>4</sup>**

[4. Ed. — Sherrard, E., & Sherrard, I. (2015). [Review of the film *The ground we won*, produced by M. Smith and directed by C. Pryor]. *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*, 19(1), 87-89.]

*Evan M. Sherrard and Isabelle Sherrard*

Rugby and farming are so much symbols of national identity in New Zealand that it is good to have the opportunity of an unsentimental film, made by husband and wife Christopher Pryor and Miriam Smith, and self-confessed rugby outsiders, to offer a reflection of what one reviewer has referred to as “an overplayed mythology”. (Gosden, 2015)



*The Ground We Won (2015). With much profanity and mateship, a rugby team of New Zealand farmers struggle to redeem themselves from a long run of stinging losses.*

**Evan:** I worked a summer season on a dairy farm in Waikete Valley next to Reporoa. That was in the 1950s and there have been huge changes in farming since then. Nevertheless this movie strikes as being absolutely authentic. There is no gloss: the farming background is starkly black-and-white real. It is not *Country Calendar* in its gorgeous technicolour and spectacular scenery, with happy farmers and contented animals. This is raw, unvarnished country life that townies rarely get to see.

We see the relentless routine round-up of the herd for milking in dismal fog and rain. We are taken into milking sheds and see cows relieved of heavy udders. I missed seeing the raised tail and a large deposit of manure splatter on the concrete which is also usually part of the scene. We see preparations for winter feeding and the planting of fodder crops, and the feeding out.

(This means eking out the food saved for winter, such as hay and silage, and apportioning out the growing fodder crops using a moveable electric fence, as shown in the film poster.) We see the mindful care of animals in harsh conditions: the coarse but kindly assistance at a difficult calving; and raising calves taken off their mothers. We see ordinary blokes, farmers, having to act as god, making life and death decisions.

Against this background, the Reporoa Rugby Football Club provides its farmer members with an outlet of activity in which all sophistication is lost. The film is uncouth to the extreme with non-stop swearing, binge beer drinking, and crude bonding rituals. The responsibility farmers have for heavy-duty decision-making can be shelved during the rugby match: play to win, within the rules, and play hard, and, with the game over, party hard. The hard game of rugby demands rules, and they must be known and followed; and, as we see with a dad who coaches the junior rugby team, this is firmly inculcated in the next generation.

While it appears that there are no limits to activities during the after-match play time, it seems to me that there are unspoken rules such as no physical cruelty and mates are to give supportive encouragement. Sadly, there seems to be no awareness of the organic damage of excessive alcohol use, of the difficulty facing an addictive personality trying to avoid such abuse, of the pressure this hard play places on family budgets and the potential for damage to relationships within the family.

Just as the film portrays farming in its black-and-white harshness, with no softening of reality, so it presents its protagonists — Peanut, Slug, Broomy, Socks, etc. — in their honest reality, but with no judgement. It simply tells it as it is. In this sense, this is great fly-on-the wall, warts 'n' all reality. I recommend this movie, but go prepared to have your sensibilities disturbed.

**Isabelle:** At one point whilst watching this movie I almost walked out, but, in the end, I lasted the distance. Why did I almost walk out?

Well, it is an accurate reflection of part of the New Zealand rural male culture which I wish were different. It is enormously male! It's rugby and beer, but not racing. There is almost a complete absence of women in this film: some cheer on the Reporoa team at the final match, one drives the bus, and a group make sandwiches in the club rooms. Then there is the stripper!

I do not know if this stripper would actually go to Reporoa or not. I nearly walked out because of the extreme male domination portrayed in this film: it was disturbing because much of it is accurate.

There are some positives. Regardless of the result of the match and the amount of beer drunk the night before, the cows have to be milked each morning, and calves need help to be born whether they are dead or alive. Farmers are dedicated to their work and this film shows this to be true. Some aspects of cattle farming are brutal to watch on screen — as is the male bonding in the changing shed.

Another positive, which is also poignant, were the scenes involving a man with seven-year-old twin boys. As someone who grew up from the age of six without my mother, I could relate to these boys also growing up without a mother. I remember making my own boring jam or cheese sandwiches before I went to school. Both my dad and the dad in this film were, in the main, “good enough” parents, but the lack of any feminine influence in the home is the bother. The dad in the movie was good with his boys and made a point of getting them to wear clean undies. This and other moments in the film included some very funny lines.

This film generates much food for thought. On a personal level, and given my particular family history and circumstances, it was evocative. More broadly, it shows what is sometimes seen to be the backbone of our country — and yet it is partial. There are many great rural women who, at least in this film, get very little acknowledgement. Each and every All Black has had to start by playing in teams like Reporoa or Rangiora, and these are largely male preserves. Of course, I recognise this, and acknowledge that the producer of the film is a woman; nevertheless, I think that the film could and would have been richer with more women, and a more feminine — even feminist — influence.

## References

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*Friends from Agricultural College — Robin Plummer and  
Alan Nordmeyer, with Pam Plummer, Isabelle and Evan,  
c. 2001*

## *Chapter 2*

### Memories of Evan from Lincoln College and from a farm

ALAN NORDMEYER, ROBIN PLUMMER, AND COLIN  
WRENNALL

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#### *Alan Nordmeyer writes*

My first meeting with Evan was on the steps of a Days' motor bus in Christchurch in February 1957. We sat together and yarned, on our way to start the degree course in agriculture at Lincoln.

The yarns I have forgotten long ago — they were probably about the farms we had worked on and the money we had earned (about £8 pounds a week in those days) — but Evan I have not forgotten. I have many good memories of an earnest, honest, and perspicacious person, with a genuine interest in people.

There were 16 of us in that 1957 degree course and the field trips involved travelling in the University Austin truck, converted to carry students on two slab seats attached to the outer walls of the deck. Evan was the driver. The roads through to the Te Anau land development areas were not sealed, and we had our first taste of pure mountain air — and lots of it. The brakes on the Austin were of genuine farm quality, and there were some memorable

sounds of changing down gears on steep descents. It was as well we had a perspicacious driver up front who could double de-clutch and pray at the same time!

In addition to being a good driver, Evan was a good debater. He could take any side and provide a pretty convincing argument that he was right. That skill paid off in 1959 when the Lincoln team won the Joynt Scroll debating contest between New Zealand universities and, as part of that team, Evan earned a University “Blue”.

After Lincoln, we all went different ways but Evan and I would meet up every couple of years. In my mind he really didn't change. At College, we learnt from each others' mistakes; later in life, we were further educated by our own mistakes. When Evan and I met, the yarns were much the same, embellished by age, but not tarnished by times since we first met on the step of that bus.

### ***Robin Plummer writes***

I recall us all meeting up at Ivy Hall in 1957, the hall of residence at Lincoln College, to be allocated our rooms. Evan and I were to share a room together which was fine with both of us. Evan however was seldom in residence; he had other commitments in Christchurch — with nurse Isabelle we were told.

Evan had a little car which used to know the way to Christchurch and the nurses' home by heart. This all ended up with a wedding with Alan Nordmeyer and myself supporting Evan, Alan as best man and myself as a groomsman; a great wedding. We gave Evan some gardening tools, a very appropriate present for an agriculture student we thought.

Evan was an ex Rural Field Cadet, and had already been through the mill with a year's study and farm assignments. As a result, he was a more mature person than the rest of us. The RFC had decided to transfer some of their cadets to the bachelor of agriculture science degree course and as a result Evan joined us in our second year.

Evan was nominated to be our driver in a shaky old Bedford bus as we travelled around the country looking at farms, crops and sheep farming

systems. Evan took his duties very seriously and didn't indulge as we made pub stops; the rest of us were very pleased he was the driver!

I recall one of highlights in our second year was a trip with our Botany lecturer Jack Veal to Cass to study plants and ecological systems. This was a good trip until Jack decided we all needed to climb a nearby mountain to study tussock grasslands. He said we could make the trip in one day but hadn't counted on our Malayan colleagues Ani, Zain and Soo taking their time!

We hit some rough country and it soon became apparent that we wouldn't make it back to camp unless we hot footed it down. Evan, Alan and Bill and some others, including Ani, Zain and Soo, decided they would stay on the mountain and camp the night. Evan bought all his scout skills into play and organised the small gang, with Evan the father figure. Bill recalls that he had an oil skin coat which proved useful for covering three of the party. He also had a bag of Minties, sufficient to pass round. They made it through the night, but were cold and miserable. The next morning they awoke to find that if they had gone much further they would have hit a sheer drop onto rocks below, a narrow escape. They all arrived back safe and sound, thanks in part to Evan.

Evan completed his degree but hadn't told anyone of his next step to Knox Theological College, a far cry from farming. However, I know that Evan found his agriculture training a real bed rock that kept him in touch with reality as he completed his theological study. Later in life he often used to say that doing the agriculture degree and his experience on farms set him up for his later career in ministry and caring for people.

### ***Colin Wrennall writes***

#### *A day on the farm with Evan*

I first met Evan when he was teaching TA 101 and 202 introductory courses in 1989. It was at the St Luke's Community Centre. During that course I was triggered into a range of early childhood experiences. I talked to Evan about it at the lunch break and he taught me to just sit there and just stroke my arm. He was teaching me the subtleness of self-soothing, at the same time enabling me to keep working with the material that he was presenting.



My next experience of Evan was as my trainer in the Auckland Psychodrama Training Centre and then he was also my mentor as I entered and progressed through the AUT Psychotherapy Training Programme. We went on to develop a supervisor-supervisee relationship that extended over a ten year period, during which time he supervised my clinical work, the writing of my social and cultural atom paper, and the early formation of my psychodrama thesis. He had a huge generosity and empathy towards my reading and writing disability and went into bat for me with the psychodrama Board of Examiners to endeavour to get them to modify their examination system so as to allow me to present my thesis by either video or by visual presentation. During this process he wrote a long letter of introduction and rationale for my presenting in this unique way to which he generously gave his time and commitment freely. As our supervisory relationship matured over the years, he had always held an authentic enquiry into my farming operation. Evan had originally started out as a cadet in Lincoln Bachelor of Agricultural Science. Many of our supervision sessions were characterised by an update on my bull-farming operation in Northland, and the academic approach that I had to it: the computerised models and the technical calculations that I was using to manage the farm. Evan always seemed to enjoy this, and, in the latter stages of our supervisory relationship, Evan expressed an interest in seeing the property and the intensive bull operation.

I thought about this a number of times and one day after the end of our supervision contract I decided that I wanted to get together to show him my farm in which he had shown such a genuine interest. I contacted him and said “You’ve always expressed an interest — how about we do it?” He rose to the invitation with great delight. We arranged to meet and I picked him up at 6.30am from his home at Blockhouse Bay, Auckland. I arrived at his door. He was ready with his gumboots, raincoat, and a bag with his range of medical needs and requirements. He was warm, excited and delighted to be going. We set off and drove 150 kms to Paparoa. The day was grey cloudy and cold. We arrived at the shed, and got changed into wet-weather gear and gumboots. He climbed onto the back of my quad bike with two heading dogs sitting up beside him; he delighted in their company. Every so often one would stick her wet nose into his face as we moved around the farm attending to feeding the six mobs of bulls. He was full of questions and interest and the experience strongly activated his early farming memories.

He was well-informed about modern farming terms and technologies, interested in the species of grasses growing, fertilizer history, and how the farming operation was managed. Throughout our conversations he brought back a range of important early memories and stories of spending school holidays on his Uncle Norman and Aunty Doris's farm: the place that formed most of his early farming interests. As we got to moving the last mob, the weather closed in with a heavy downpour. We headed for the hay barn for shelter.

We sat together in the shed; the wind was blowing through the gaps and he recalled his entry into the Lincoln Bachelor of Agricultural Science as a Rural Field Cadet. Sitting in the shed with old hay sacks reactivated a story of his when he worked for an employer; how, on the wet Winter days, he was required to cut up the old wheat bags that had rat-chewed holes in them, using them to patch the still usable bags, for economy's sake. As we waited for the storm to blow over, the topic arose of his transition to his ministry. He recalled that, as he was sewing the bags, he had this life-changing experience of being called to serve God. He talked about knowing in that moment his chosen farming career was no longer for him in the way that it had been, and that he needed to follow this calling. Sitting with him hearing about this transition point in his life was a deeply moving moment. The rural training programme had required that he pay a £3,000 bond on entry. He realized that neither he nor his family had the money to repay the bond, and that he had to approach the university's management, Isabelle and his family, his Aunt and Uncle to tell them about his decision. After some deliberation the university decided to relinquish his requirement to repay the bond. He talked with a deeply felt expression and gratitude about their generosity to him which allowed him to further his calling to God and how they had relieved him of the requirement because of his chosen path.

By this time the storm had broken and we returned to the shed and had a hearty lunch. It was 2.00pm in the afternoon, the weather cleared and the next task in front of us was to draft a mob of sixty Angus breeding heifers for the stock agent and buyer. He had great delight in holding a conversation with Leo the stock agent, a fit lean young man in his early thirties who was most impressed at Evan's inquiring mind, his stamina and interest in what was occurring. Leo expressed to me later how much he could clearly see the mana that Evan carried as a man, and held several

conversations with me over the following year about his conversation with Evan. We returned the heifers to their paddocks with Evan sitting on the back of the bike with two wet dogs and then headed back to Auckland. We had a delightful 1¾ hour drive back discussing life on the farm, psychodrama, and a range of social issues. It will always be a memory that I hold fondly — my day with Evan on my farm.



## Part II

# MINISTRY



# Introduction

## KEITH TUDOR

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*1957* Evan decides to take up ministry

*1960-1962* He studies at the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand  
Theological Hall, Knox College, Opoho, Dunedin

*1961-1962* He gains Summer supply parish experience at Trinity, St  
Heliers Auckland

*1962* He graduates with a Diploma of Theology

*1963* He takes up a vacancy at Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne,  
Northern Ireland, UK

*1963-1965* He studies at the Institute of Religion, Texas Medical Center,  
Houston, Texas, USA

*1963* He is student chaplain to Hermann Charity Hospital, serving mainly  
African and Latin Americans. Isabelle works as a Graduate Nurse in  
the heart intensive care unit, Methodist Hospital, Houston

*1965* Evan graduates with a Master of Sacred Theology, with a minor in  
Pastoral Care, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist  
University, Dallas, Texas, and as a Certified Clinical Theological  
Educator, Institute of Religion, Houston

*1965 (August 8th)* Evan and Isabelle's daughter, Susan Mary, is born, in Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland

*1965* Evan is ordained and inducted to being an Associate Minister, First Church of Otago, Dunedin. Isabelle works as a part-time night duty nurse, Chalet Hospital, Dunedin

*1967* The Cameron Centre is opened with Evan as its founding director

*1967 (June, 26th)* Evan and Isabelle's son, Michael John, is born in Dunedin

*1969 (June-August)* Evan assists Herb Hillebrand to run a three month program of clinical training at the University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

*1970-1975* He is chaplain supervisor, C. S. Mott Children's Hospital, University Hospital, Ann Arbor

*1970* He joins the Michigan Episcopal Training Network, Brighton, Michigan

*1972* Isabelle completes her registration as a nurse in Michigan, is employed at University Hospital, Ann Arbor, as a nurse, then as head nurse of the Urology and Hematology Unit

*1976* Evan, Isabelle and the family return home to New Zealand

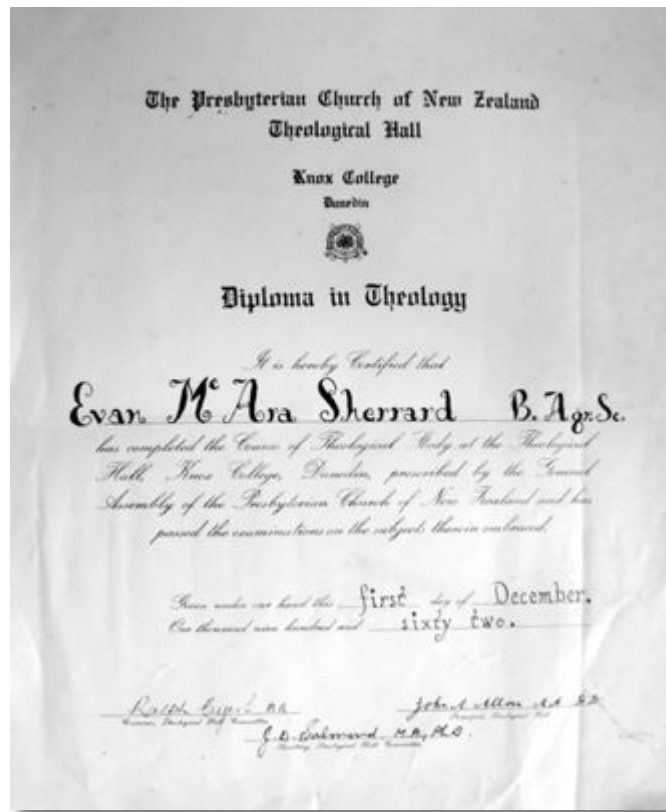
*1976-1988* Evan is employed by the Auckland Presbyterian Social Services Association

*1976* — as interim chaplain, Middlemore Hospital

*1977-1988* — as leader of the Human Development Team

*1988* He resigns from Presbyterian Support Services

*1988-2015* He enjoys "semi-semi-retirement ... [including] some Church commitments, ... [and] some reading and writing of theological thinking" (Sherrard, 2015).



*Diploma in Theology, Presbyterian Church, Knox College, 1962*

In his ministry, both as a minister and in retirement — or in “semi-semi-retirement”, as he described it — Evan moved from embracing a conservative Christianity to a progressive Christianity, a shift that echoed and was paralleled in the rest of his life — as Isabelle said: “As a young man and a minister, Evan was somewhat conservative; this included voting [for the] National [Party]. It was only later that he became more liberal and even radical.” (personal communication, 18th September, 2016)

Evan particularly appreciated, supported and followed the work of Lloyd Geering, with whom he had studied when Geering went to teach at Knox College, Dunedin, in 1960. Looking at Evan’s bookshelves, it was clear that this was so (and as someone who has also studied and retained an interest in philosophy and theology, I am grateful to have inherited some of Evan’s copies of Geering’s books).



In terms of his religious faith, Evan was very influenced by Geering's nine ideas, namely, that:

1. We created the concept of God
2. Jesus was not divine
3. The resurrection was symbolic, not real
4. There is no life after death
5. The Bible is not divinely inspired; it is often wrong
6. Fundamentalism is a danger to the world
7. Religious beliefs develop over time
8. We need a new ethic and new rituals
9. The new God is our planet.<sup>1</sup>

[1. Ed. — Oomen, M. (Director). (2007, 1st November). *The last Western heretic: A documentary on the ideas of Lloyd Geering*. Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand: TVNZ.]

Compared to geology, the study of *geo* (the earth and its substance, including rocks, which we can weigh and put under a microscope, and, of course, agriculture), Evan viewed theology, the study of *theos* (God), while ultimately impossible, still worthwhile — see also his paper on *A Transactional Analysis of God* (Sherrard, 2005 in Chapter 10). He viewed theology fundamentally as the study of how humans have thought about their experiences of God, and organised and systematised their thinking over time; and that, in order to do this, theology needs to distinguish between factual or scientific statements of observations which can be independently verified, and statements of faith such as theological doctrines. As far as the central doctrine of the Trinity was concerned, Evan's progressive Christianity understood this as ways human beings have experienced God: the broad sweep experiences of a creation/creator God, as the Father; those intimate, personal experiences of God as the Son; and the inspirational, insightful and momentary experiences of God as the Holy Spirit. At the same, as an "agricultural theologian" (p. 111 below), his theology and ministry was grounded in agriculture – and, increasingly, psychology. This is beautifully represented in the images on his stole (p. 45 above) of the cross and a helix (representing religion and science) and the cross and the lamb (representing religion and agriculture).

The chapters in this Part comprise 16 of Evan's sermons (Chapter 3), and five papers and a film review (Chapter 4), which span just over 50 years,

though slightly more of them are from the last 20 years of Evan's life, and show a maturity that comes with age and reflexivity. As Roger Hey puts it in his contribution: "Evan's theological framework seemed to be formed from his educational journey and studies on human personality, not the other way round." A complete list of Evan's sermons may be found in the Bibliography. Following Evan's own ministerial and theological writing, in Chapter 5, Revd Professor Lloyd Geering, Dr Allan Davidson, Revd Roger Hey, and Revd Glynn Cardy offer their various reflections on Evan and his ministry.

## *Chapter 3*

### **Sermons**

EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **St. Patrick's Day (1963)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — First preached 17th March, 1963, at Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne, Northern Ireland, UK.]

“Jesus said, I am the vine, you are the branches.” (John 15:5)

There is no need for me to tell you that today is St Patrick's Day. In the *Book of Public Worship* issued by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland it is suggested that today a sermon on St Patrick's life and work in Ireland would be appropriate. But I do not consider myself an appropriate person to deliver such a sermon.

In New Zealand, St Patrick's Day is very much a Roman Catholic celebration — this is obvious when you can see brown-skinned Māori sporting green ribbons and wearing shamrocks. St Patrick, as far as New Zealanders are concerned, is the figurehead of Roman Catholic Ireland. He is the symbol of Irish nationalism.

In this part of the world you are well aware of what nationalism is, of the intense feelings of national pride, of race consciousness, of the desire for self-rule without any interference, of the desire to obtain for one's own country all the benefits of the modern world.

This very human and widespread pride in one's own nation that has played such a large part in your own history here, this desire for independence for the community of one's own choosing, this nationalism is sweeping much of the world today.

We are aware of the difficulties which are raised for colonial powers as the younger nations of the world demand their freedom and independence. But it is a problem shared by the Christian church.

In many of the areas of the world, among the coloured peoples of the world, Christianity with its faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is believed to be the religion of the European races. Many of these young countries, as they throw off the European yoke, throw out Christianity too.

Christianity is associated in many cases with the hated white overlords, and as white rule goes there follows a great upsurge in that the Western way of life is the Christian way of life.

We must admit that it is very confusing for some of these coloured peoples of the world when they study European ways of life to discover that the so-called Christian countries of the world have often prayed to God for his support and his power to gain a victory over their local Christian enemies who have been praying for support from the same God.

Which nation does God favour?

Of course, we would like to think that it was ours. Because, naturally, we all like to think that ours is the best. So this is the question I would like to discuss with you this morning. Can any nation claim or expect special support of favour from God?

What does the Bible teach us? In the Old Testament we find that the Jews believed themselves to be God's own chosen nation. God did not choose to show himself to the Egyptians or the Assyrians or Babylonians. God revealed himself to the Jews. And he made an agreement with them. They were to be his obedient people and he would be their God. This was the Covenant agreement.

Just as in New Zealand Roman Catholic Irishmen can be symbolized by St Patrick, so the people of Israel in the Old Testament are often symbolised by the figure of a vine or a vineyard. This is clear from our Old Testament reading. Israel was a vineyard or a vine which God carefully looked after. But as the prophets clearly saw there was no harvest in the vineyard of Israel.

God looked for sweet fruit in the vineyard but all he found was a bitter throw-back. God chose Israel, expecting something from it — but he never got it, even when he sent his own son.

But how typical of men the Jews were — always looking to their privileges never their responsibilities, always glorying in their greatness, ignoring their faults and weaknesses. On the whole it's true of every one of us.

The one thing the Jews really remembered was that God had chosen them, in this did they glory. They forgot he expected something. Just as we often do.

So in the false security of this belief, they got very choosy themselves. They were most particular not to mix with any other people except in business and politics. Among strict Jews this practice of being exclusive is still held today.

So we can understand St Peter's difficulty in meeting with Cornelius, the non-Jew, the Gentile dog. Peter had to be shown that God has not national favourites. Now, since Jesus Christ, all is different. And Peter had quite a job explaining his activities with Cornelius to his brother Jewish Christians.

There is no nationalism in Christianity — God is the God of the whole world, Jesus Christ is saviour of all men. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. So in the New Testament we find no national barriers and distinctions. No chosen nation. Instead what we find is that the church has taken the place of the nation. No longer is it a special people — the children of Israel — it is the members of the church. Not a nation but a body of believers. No longer is Israel the vine. Jesus Christ is the vine and we are branches from which God expects his fruit.

The church is the New Israel in the New Testament. The new covenant agreement with God is that as members of the church we are his people and he is our God. And each one of us enters into this agreement with a solemn

promise to God. First our parents making it at our baptism and we confirming it later.

So for Christians the church comes first for it is the body of Christ and God's own people. Yet for most of us the church is just one part of our way of life. We go to a service of worship each Sunday, and we are asked to give financial support, or help in various organisations. The church is part of living in a Christian nation. It's part of our national customs.

Christianity is a matter of good living and so helps us to be good citizens — I have been told. So there are many people who believe that the church is the foundation of the State. But the New Testament never spends any time advising its readers to be good Roman citizens, good subjects of the emperor. Its main emphasis is to tell the members of the church to be the church — not members of a nation.

If there is anything I can tell you about St Patrick's Day it would be this. St Patrick was a great Christian saint, a truly wonderful man, because he was first and foremost not a statesman but a churchman (and not of the Roman Catholic church either). National pride or interests did not concern him — his first concern was to bring the people of Ireland to the Christian church. His work established in Ireland one of the most important churches in the history of Christianity. His whole life, from his conversion, was one of obedient service to God's commands. It was a service to help the people of Ireland. This help lay mainly in establishing the church there and bringing the people of Ireland into the Church of Christ. Patrick believed that men and women can develop their full potentialities and grow to full maturity with fully integrated personalities only if they are Christians and Patrick knew that we can only be Christians in the community of the church. The importance of the church for Christians has always been helped by the great Christian leaders throughout history. As Cyprian of Carthage said: "No one can have God for his father if he does not have the church as his mother."

Very few people today would regard themselves first and foremost as members of the church. The first thing we think of ourselves today is as an individual. We are quite happy to think of ourselves as branches on Jesus the vine because each branch is quite different and separate from the next one. Yet today we think of ourselves as branches — we even have doubts about being connected to any other branch by a main stem because that is

an invisible connection and we are not sure if it is there at all. But the Bible clearly teaches that Christians are members of a community which has one common life stream — Jesus Christ. Apart from the community of Jesus Christ we are nothing. What the Gospel of John means by this vine of Jesus Christ is the church. It is not an illustration of how we are joined together. And the church is a community united in all its differences — because there are differences between its members — by a common love, a love for God and one's neighbour.

As God's community, the church has an important place in the world. Because it has something of God's own nature about it the church then is expected by its Lord to reach out in love to all mankind. As God reached out to all men who are sinners. This is the fruitful activity God expects. That as a community or nation the church carries on God's forgiving and loving and reconciling task as we see it in Jesus Christ. As Jesus Christ received and welcomed men in loving, making them feel wanted and restoring their personal dignity by telling them of God's forgiveness, so is our task as a church.

Hence as Christians we members of the church cannot put our country or nation first. Nations can fall and perish — the Bible tells us to expect that. Indeed the church even seems to function best when the going is hard, when the nation is against the church.

Easy conditions can make us soft and unfruitful. God needs to purge his branches at times and increase their productivity. But as Christians in a nation we can pray for our country — asking God to bring all citizens to Jesus Christ and his church, asking that our country may be a fruitful church community.

But never let us Christians lose sight of the fact that the church comes first, and God expects fruit from us.

O Christ, the true Vine and source of life, ever giving thyself that the world may live; who also has taught us that those who would follow thee must be ready to lose their lives for thy sake; grant us so to receive within our souls the power of thine eternal sacrifice that in sharing thy cup we may share thy glory and at the last be made perfect in thy love.<sup>2</sup>

[2. Ed. — From *The book of common prayer* (see [http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1928/grey\\_book-4.htm](http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1928/grey_book-4.htm)), Part VI Prayers, verse 17.]



*Evan's first licensing ceremony, Christchurch, 1962*

### **Sickness unto death (1965)<sup>3</sup>**

[3. Ed. — First preached 31st October, 1965 at The First Church of Otago, Dunedin.

#### *Texts*

John 11:4

Ezekiel 18:14-24



But when Jesus heard it he said, “This sickness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the son of man may be glorified by means of it.”

Almighty God, whose word is light and life unto those who receive it, we pray thee to enliven us with thy word through the power of the Holy Spirit who can enlighten on understanding, to thy glory. Amen.

Before leaving for America I had quite an aversion to giving sermons titles. Too often it seemed the titles were inappropriate or misleading. In American churches it is the usual regular practice to give a sermon a title and after some resistance I fell in with the pattern — because I came to see that the title can serve to encapsulate the thought which is being presented, or indicate the theme.

Today’s title, “Sickness unto Death” may not be the best for this whole sermon but it points to the core of what we will be considering and above all it allows me to give credit to the man whose thinking has influenced this sermon. Sickness unto Death is the title of a book by Søren Kierkegaard.... The book was written just over 100 years ago by its Danish author, a philosopher-theologian whose genius as a thinker has only recently been widely recognised. In his study of John 11, which we read this morning, Kierkegaard was puzzled not by the miracle of the raising of Lazarus but by a curious feature of the story.

Let us have a look at our Bible text again to consider the story of Lazarus. At the time Jesus was in retreat at Bethany, outside Jerusalem, across the Jordan. He was familiar with the place which seemed very meaningful to him, and it was a place where he was loved. One of the members [of the community], Lazarus, had fallen sick. His sisters watched and waited. They sent a message to Jesus just to tell him — [they] had hopes of a cure. When Jesus heard — [he had a] strange response. “Sickness not unto death”. [I have] no idea whether this got back to the sisters. Jesus reassured the disciples — [this was] not a fatal illness. [The disciples were] contented with Jesus’s comment [but were] surprise[d] when Jesus makes his later announcement. As the story goes on, Jesus goes to Bethany and eventually Lazarus was raised from the dead. The point of the story that struck Kierkegaard was that Jesus said that the sickness was not unto death. *But Lazarus died.*

By the time Jesus reached the scene Lazarus's body was decomposing. According to the King James' Version of the Bible, it "stinketh". There was no mistake that Lazarus died. Yet Jesus said his sickness was not unto death. Was Jesus mistaken? This was the puzzling thing. Had Jesus committed the error which doctors are careful to avoid of making a decision without seeing the patient?

Kierkegaard came to the conclusion that there was far more involved than a flesh and blood illness or death of the body. After all — Lazarus died a second time. Kierkegaard decided there was something deeper behind this phrase that this sickness was not unto death because the sickness was not unto death because the sickness did kill this man — hence Jesus must have been concerned with something more significant than death of the body. Kierkegaard set out to discover what a sickness unto death would be — if it wasn't physical illness or bodily death. The result was that Kierkegaard set out on an analysis of SIN. It is sin which kills and destroys. It is sin that is the sickness which leads to death.

Put simply, Kierkegaard's idea of sin is the failure of men to be timely themselves before God.

Very broadly speaking this failure can be of two sorts. In most of us it is a mixture of both — at different times and in different matters. We can fail to be our true selves before God by claiming too much for ourselves. We try to be more than we truly are, i.e., to fail to recognise or admit our limits. We take too much on to ourselves. Here's an illustration:

### *Self quiz*

How easily and honestly can I admit that I have made a mistake — as a parent to my children? as a teenager to my friends? as a professional man to my client?

Do I use softer words than "mistake"? We may say "made a blunder", or "goofed", rather than I made a mistake as a result of overstepping my place or my ability.

Jesus — our model of a sinless man — was tempted to overstep the bounds of his humanity. Remember how he was tempted as a miracle worker

turning stones to bread, to be a wonder showman jumping from the temple roof unhurt.

I once heard a psychiatrist say that Jesus was the only man content to be human, everyone else plays at being God.

We try to do too much — to build a home overnight, to change the world single-handedly. We presume too much, to impress others and ourselves. We adopt superior airs and over-confident manners. We claim more than we ought and assume rights that do not properly belong to us. So we fail to be our true selves in the sight of God. We can fail to be our true selves before by being less than we truly are by depreciating ourselves too much, i.e., by not living up to our capacities. We run ourselves down.

*Self-knowledge test — A one question quiz*

Am I embarrassed or placed in an awkward spot when somebody draws attention to my abilities or something I have managed to do well?

Often we don't like our strengths and abilities to be commented on. We would rather these weren't brought to our attention for two reasons:

1. We don't really believe in our own ability — we don't trust ourselves. We won't give anything a go. We always expect to fail or something to go wrong. In other words, we don't believe that God in his goodness has given us any worthwhile qualities at all.
2. We don't want to have to face our responsibilities. If we have talents and abilities we are responsible for them. This often means that we have to put ourselves out for the sake of using our talents properly. I had something to say on this matter in that famous parable on the talents, and the man who buried his. So by being more and being less than we truly are, in the sight of God we sin — we are not being how we were created to be.

For Kierkegaard, if we fail to be the people we were created to be — by failing to live up to all our possible potential or by overstepping our real limits — then we are not truly ourselves before God. In other words this is as good as being dead in God's sight. Sin — our failure to be our true selves before God — is the sickness unto death. The story of Lazarus does not end

with death. Lazarus was not sick unto death. He was saved from death by the great giver of life — Jesus. As he was saved, so too can we be saved.

The life — the giving love of Christ is a power handed on to Christ's Church — a present, living power through the Holy Spirit, so that in the church people can find a place, should find a place — where it is possible for them to accept their limits and their strengths and to find their lives transformed: from the sickness of living death to the glory of eternal life.

Lazarus points the way — in a great dramatic event he symbolizes what is possible for us all: the power Christ to transform our lives. It's great not to have to live beyond ourselves but to relax and accept our limits. It's great to be able to live up to the joy of every talent we possess and let them blossom and flourish for God's sake. This is as possible for us today or Lazarus in the days when our Lord was on earth.

### **Good grief (1966)<sup>4</sup>**

[4. Ed. — First preached 17th July, 1966, at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin.]

As men and women we spend a great deal of our time and energy establishing those things that make a life worthwhile for us: a home, with wife or husband, and children, or friends and companions. An interesting job with money and possessions, physical fitness, creative hobbies and security for the future. A good reputation, popularity and a circle of helpful acquaintances.

Each of us has our own particular interests and things which mean a great deal to us. But then, as men and women, we are very vulnerable, for suddenly, almost with no warning, something beyond our control comes along, and with almost no fault of our own, we lose something of great significance to us. We lose our job, we lose our health, or we lose our investments and security. Or we lose a leg, or we lose face, or we get a promotion and lose our circle of friends. Or we lose our home in a fire, or a pet, or we lose a child, or a wife or husband through death.

Because we are humans living in a world bigger than ourselves which gets beyond our control, we can lose something precious and our lives can be devastated by the loss. If the loss is very great and the foundations of our

life are shaken — then we are plunged into grief. However, to be precise, we are thrown into a situation of grief whenever we experience a loss, however small. But because we are well able to cope with the small, day by day losses which give rise to less intense grief, we hardly recognise it as such. We don't think to call our reactions to minor disappointments grief for we reserve this word for those times when we are really deeply hurt by a loss. And we have done this to such an extent that we usually only think of grief in connection with a loss through death. But, in fact, we go through the same process with any significant loss in our lives.

Now does our faith have anything to do with our times of grief? Yes indeed. For our faith — our way of looking at life and dealing with it to a large extent determines how we will cope with grief when it comes to us. But here is the important point for us to remember. No matter what our faith is the natural response to any major loss in our lives is grief.

Having a Christian faith does not remove grief. But having a Christian faith means we are better equipped to work through our grief. This is a very important distinction. Too often it is suggested by some religious folk that Christians do not experience grief. So much so that many a person suffering from grief worries as to whether their faith is genuine or not. But grief is a natural part of the way God has created this world. It is a built-in response in men and women through which they can adjust to their loss. The difference is that there is a good way to grieve and a bad way to grieve. And for the Christian it should be good grief. I believe this is what is behind Paul's words in his first letter to the church folk in Thessalonica: "Do not grieve like men having no hope."<sup>5</sup>

[5. Ed. — 1 Thessalonians 4:13.]

There is no suggestion here that we should not grieve. But rather that we should not grieve like men having no hope. That is — grieve in a bad way. Granger Westberg, a Lutheran minister in America who has studied this subject extensively and written on it would like permission to add to Paul's words a positive statement so it reads, "Do not grieve like men having no hope but for goodness sake grieve." For scientific studies over the last 20 years have clearly shown that those who do not effectively work through their grief are left with some degree of abnormality in their lives.

And so it is very important for the grief-stricken person to face up to the struggle of dealing with his sorrow. If he does not he will not be able to live as effectively as before, he may develop some peculiar ways of behaving or even end up with some form of physical illness. On the other hand, those who wrestle with the problems and pain of their loss openly and honestly are more likely to come through their grief experience, with a stronger, deeper personality and better able to help others in the turmoil of life.

And every grief experience calls the man of faith to re-examine his own religious convictions. For the devastation of his loss tests the effectiveness of his beliefs. It is in such times of testing that those who are able to affirm and appreciate the reality of the Christian God — the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ — who are the ones most likely to come through the experience with their faith enriched and with a good adjustment to their loss.



*Evan in Houston, Texas, 1964*

## **When things get out of hand (1966)<sup>6</sup>**

[6. Ed. — First preached 6th November 1966 at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, at a service which was also broadcast on national radio.]

Tonight I want to speak on the subject “when things get out of hand”. In Luke’s Gospel, chapter 12 verse 22 we read how Jesus concluded his story with, “Therefore I bid you put away anxious thoughts about food to keep you alive and clothes to cover your body.” Before we begin, let us pray: “May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight O God, our strength and redeemer. Amen”

Cancer is the word that strikes fear in most of us. In one family I know it is an unmentionable word. A word to be avoided — for this pitiless ravaging disease has brought immeasurable distress into that home. Cancer is a disease each of us hopes to avoid because, despite the wonderful cures which doctors can often bring about, so increasing our hope and chances of recovery, it is a disease of a sinister nature — quietly and insidiously creeping through our bodies until it makes its unwelcome presence felt, sometimes too late for medical science ...

I mention cancer because it seems to me to be the very epitome of a situation which gets out of hand. Indeed, it is a disease in which the cells of normal healthy tissues in our bodies get out of hand and grow and spread in uncontrolled confusion, choking and disrupting normal body activity until usually chaos brings death.

Cancer typifies the uncontrollable in life. It represents that which has got out of hand to strike a blow at our well-ordered lives, shattering hopes and dreams, disrupting accepted patterns and confusing our regular way of life.

Cancer is the silent, menacing enemy lurking in the realms of dim possibility, until, unexpected it leaps with frightening size into stark reality in our life. It represents that in life which we always know in our minds could happen to us but we never believed would, until out of the blue it comes.

For many of us it probably won’t be cancer but some other disease, perhaps a heart attack or a stroke. For many of us it may not be as severe or happen to our bodily health. It may be a burglary, a fire in the house, a motor

accident, the failure of some investment, an unavoidable and unpredictable dismissal from a job.

In so many different ways, in some many different degrees things can get out of hand, life can go to pieces — our plans and hopes are wrecked.

Of course this was just what happened to the rich man in Jesus story — only more drastically, for the scythe of death mowed him down just when he was at the high point of his hopes and expectations. This rich man is the perfect example of the anxious man for whom things have got out of hand. No doubt there are some who reading this parable of Jesus wish they had half this fellow's luck. He had so much that he didn't know what to do with it all. But the irony of it is just this point that things got out of hand for him too. He had too much of a good thing.

Prolific harvests threw his storage arrangements into confusion. He couldn't fit it all in so he debated with himself —

*“What am I to do?”* “I haven't the space to store my produce”, he anxiously wailed. “This is what I will do”, said he, “I'll pull down my storehouses and build them bigger. I will collect in them all my corn and other goods, and then say to myself, 'Man, you have plenty of good things laid by, enough for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and enjoy yourself'.”

But just as he had come to this decision, God said “You fool, this very night you must surrender your life.”

Do you see how this man represents all of us who like to have things well in hand, under control, with everything in its place. This man became most anxious when the extra yield was too much for him to store. His is the anxiety of a man who must have his world kept secure by being ordered and predictable and under his control. He is worried by his surplus — debating with himself — “What am I to do?” He is a man so unsure of himself that he has to tell himself to pull down the old storehouses to build bigger — and then he has to tell himself take like easy, drink and enjoy yourself.

He is a man who has to convince himself, for he has a great deal of uneasiness and uncertainty in his mind. It is this uneasiness over the insecurity of life which is the focus of the parable and Jesus conclusion to his disciples: When he says I bid you to put away anxious thoughts about food to keep you alive and clothes to cover your body.



It is the *anxious attitude* towards life which Jesus is speaking to — he is not advocating irresponsibility over providing for one's daily needs nor suggesting that food will drop into a person's mouth or shirts will fall onto their back without effort or work.

Jesus Christ also speaks of anxieties within the Church. He said to his disciples, therefore I bid you to put away anxious thoughts. He is warning that anxious thoughts over its material welfare hinders the Church, the people of God, from engaging in their mission of service to the world. Jesus Christ in this discourse also speaks to nations giving a warning in this parable that uneasy anxious nations will not really find security by accumulating ever greater wealth and power.

How is the anxiety to be overcome — when things do get out of hand? There is no easy answer. It is not by achieving security through finding a new and even tighter way of controlling things. But rather by finding a new sense of values so that one can triumph over things: so that things, while important, don't matter as much as more basic Christian values like love and trustworthiness.

Nor is it by achieving stoic self-discipline by assuming hard-won self-sufficiency and independence over one's environment. But rather by participating in all that life brings of both Joy and Suffering as one participates in the new order of Christian faith which is living in commitment, in full confidence and hope, of God's trustworthiness.

Let me share some poetry with you.

Happy are those who can relieve  
suffering with prayer  
Happy those who can rely on God  
to see them through.  
They can wait patiently for the end  
But we who have put our faith  
in the goodness of man  
and now see man's image debas'd  
lower than the wolf or hog —  
Where can we turn for consolation? <sup>7</sup>

[7. Ed. — Read, H. (1946). Ode written during the Battle of Dunkirk, May 1940. In *Collection of poems*. London, UK: Faber & Faber.

This trust is not idle idealism. It is the very stuff of Christianity — which has supported many thousands in their moment of crisis. Because in Jesus we have the perfect example of the non-anxious man. Things got out of hand in his life — so we might say: Betrayed, forsaken, deserted, beaten, hanged, His teaching and pattern for a way of life apparently inappropriate for our world. Yet it is our faith, that God raised him from the dead — in triumph.

What God did for Christ when things got out of hand — he can do for us — if we have faith.

## **Rains or refugees? (1968)<sup>8</sup>**

[8. Ed. — First preached 16th June, 1968, at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin.]

### *Texts*

Old Testament: Micah 6: 6-16

New Testament: John 4: 19-26

Today's title would, at first light, give us indication that our subject concerns Christian worship. But this is what I invite you to make the focus of your attention:

- Rains — which I choose as a symbol of the ritual religious observances of the Old Testament and whose sacrificial slaughter even in the time of Micah, the prophet, was considered unsuitable as an expression of true worship.
- Refugees — which I choose as representing not only man's inhumanity to man but also a focus of men's concern towards their fellows in distress, and this concern put into action is a way of real worship.

Let us pray: "Lord, guide our thoughts, open our eyes, deepen our understanding, increase our sensitivity to the direction of your Holy Spirit that through Him our lives might take on new extents of devotion and commitment, and be shown new visas of service. Through Jesus Christ Our Redeemer. Amen."

Only very recently I was told by an elder of the church, a very well educated and intelligent man, that he received less and less from attending a service of worship. Fortunately, he is not a member of First Church. In saying this, he was not blaming the minister, in fact, he commented with appreciation on the effort that his minister went to in preparing and conducting the service. And he went on to say that he knew he was not going to the service to hear the minister or in the hope of getting something out of it for himself, but that the intention of anyone attending a church worship service was to worship God. Knowing this was the point of greatest worry to the elder. He said, I am finding that more and more I feel that I can worship God more effectively outside of a church building at other times than 7 and 11am on a Sunday. He went on to say that he often felt he was worshipping God best when he was helping someone else. I believe this elder was putting into words the dilemma that many loyal Christians find themselves in today. The church service does not really answer their needs to feel that they are effectively worshipping God.

What is worship? It is generally recognised that the purpose of worship is to establish a contract between man and his God, to express this relationship by some formalised symbols, and to maintain a developing relation between them. Worship is a time of meeting between a faithful believer and his God — when men pay their respects of homage and reverence to the power which is for greater than themselves. Worship provides an opportunity for the follower to demonstrate his loyalty to his God, to declare the worth he gives to the place God has in his life. In worship men join with other like-minded men, and in association, in communion with each other meet their God and undertake a conversation with Him.

Now the big questions for us are:

- Is the way we go about our present form of worship the most effective way to achieve all those things?
- Does it help us establish a contact with God?
- Does it express, symbolically, in ways that are meaningful, understood and appreciated our relationship to the Almighty?
- Does it help us maintain this contact, and develop and deepen the relationship?
- Do our present ways provide a really effective meeting ground where we show our loyalty and declare how much God is worth to us?

The elder I mentioned to begin with said he was beginning to come to the conclusion that the answer to these sort of questions was, no! He was beginning to feel that he could do these things better on other occasions, at other times and places.

Let us look at what we do in our present services of worship. We come into a specially built place with a certain interior plan and design. We sit in long seats, in rows, facing a noted man up in the front. I suppose the purpose of this plan and design is to be able to see and hear the man up front. Does it have anything to do with our ability to worship? Is it designed to be too helpful? And then we come at 7 or 11 am on Sunday. Are there any special reasons for those times, apart from habit, and convenience, because public transport is now geared to our 11 o'clock service? Is this time of the day or day of the week better than any others to help us to worship? When we arrive we find most of our time is spent sitting listening to the man up front. Is this designed to help us meet our God — or does he do our worshipping for us? Because in our tradition we don't need a priest to act as an intermediary, to arrange the contact as it were. We believe we can do this for ourselves? Are we able to? Do we have the opportunity? IS the man up front a help or hindrance to us?

A large bulk of the listening time is spent in hearing the Bible read and the preaching of a sermon. How were these intended to help our worship? Are these practises carried over from days when there were few books and fewer who could read? Then a scripture passage was read, then explained in the sermon, along with other instruction, and prodding and prompting to behave in certain ways or follow certain religious living. Today, is this practice a helpful way of expressing our relationship to, or developing our contact with God? What is the value and purpose of our present practices? Do we see our present ways as necessary to keep our side with God?

Like the Jews of Micah's time who tried to ensure God's favour with all sorts of religious rites and ritual like the sacrificial slaughter of rams and calves and the animals, like pouring oil onto the ground and burning wheat and fruit. Even then Micah was able to see that ritual ceremonies were not an effective way of worship, of expressing loyalty, humble reverence or demonstrating the worth the people gave to God.

Instead worship is an attitude we adopt in our whole way of living — in which we do justice, loving kindness and walk humbly with our master, and so I suggest refugees to contrast with rains.

Refugees in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Vietnam, the displaced persons of the world represent a problem calling for justice, crying out for loving-kindness, and in view of their situation we ought to walk very humbly, with no degree of self-righteousness or complacency or self-satisfaction. Does our attitude towards refugees and the other problems of humanity better measure our real worship than the ritualised, formal church services whose motions we regularly go through?

Now it might appear that I have a pretty hopeless view on our present services of worship. It might appear that I am very critical of them and doubtful of their value. Actually worship is so important to me that I believe we need to expose our present practises to some very searching questions in order to improve our ways so that we can worship better. I assume that we are all here because we want to worship; we want to be in contact with God, to express our relationship with Him and to develop it. We want to show him our loyalty and reverence; we want to meet and serve him. I would hope that you would want to do this better than we are now. Or are you really satisfied? It would be for our own good if we could evaluate how effective you think our present ways of worship are. We are considering the possibility of some research into this and may invite your assistance. Today we desperately need to be able to worship well, to know our Lord God, to be in touch with him, to receive his power and comfort and guidance in our lives for the world. Our worship should provide this — I hope you will be willing to help us work at making improvements. In the name of the Father

...



*Evan in dog collar, 1965*

### **Unconscious influence (n.d.)<sup>9</sup>**

[9. Ed. — This sermon remains undated, but, from the presentation of the original typed manuscript, it appears to have been written sometime in the 1980s, possibly between 1985 and 1987]

“Then went in also that other disciple.” (John 20:8)

There are two kinds of influence working in the world. There is the influence that is consciously exerted, when a man deliberately tries to persuade, or compel another to certain line of action. But there is another kind of influence exerted unconsciously by every person on all with whom

they come into contact. We have all met men and women in whose presence, altogether independent of what they may say, all that is best in us is somehow drawn to the top, with whom we feel not only easy, but natural to admire and covert whatsoever things are, pure, lovely, and of good report. There are men and women, on the other hand, whose influence we feel no less strongly, but which we shrink from defining even to ourselves, though it is intelligibly summed up when we say it is exactly the reverse of that.

Now, that kind of influence in one or other of these directions is exerted by everybody in a greater or lesser degree. It is independent of speech, and may even belie one's actual words. It is not the result of a deliberate intention. It is an atmosphere, a radiation which surrounds a character and affects others, not by the ordinary channels but in ways far more subtle and delicate, by the instincts, the intuitions, and all the most sensitive filaments of the soul. As the message springs off into the air from the Wireless Tower in circles miles wide, so does character, for good or evil, send its invisible waves in all directions.

Mark Rutherford in *Miriam's Schooling*<sup>10</sup> tells us of an old man who, one Sunday afternoon, when he was twenty years of age, met a woman in a London street and looked her in the face. Neither he nor she stopped for an instant; he looked, passed on, and never saw her again. He married and had children and grandchildren, but that woman's face never left him. A thousand times he appealed to it; a thousand times did it sit in judgement upon him; a thousand times did its sacred beauty in his eyes redeem him from evil. Yet he never knew her, and had never heard her speak!

[10. Ed. — Rutherford, M. (2008). *Miriam's schooling*. London, UK: Dodo Press.]

This unconscious influence is infinitely more potent for good or evil than all that is ever done by taking thought. In *nature* it is the constant and silent forces that are by far the greatest. The *light* that visits us so silently every morning produces effects far more wide reaching and beneficent than the *lightning* which splits the skies.

So it is in the realm of character. *Words* may be misunderstood and actions may be misinterpreted, but the atmosphere — I do not know what else to call it — the influence that radiates from one honest soul transparently trying to live up to the highest that he knows, touches and blesses all those

who come near him. We all know men and women who rarely or never have the phrases of religion on their lips and yet their lives are telling on us, beyond all that they ever suspect, for the very things that religion stands for. If deliberate effort has redeemed its thousands, the aroma and fragrance of a noble and godly life has inspired its tens of thousands.

It is this sort of influence which reveals a man better than anything else. There is no counterfeiting the wireless influence of a truly good life. It is what we really are that determines the influence we exert. You may bend a piece of soft iron into horse-shoe shape, polish its ends and paint it red, but that does not make it a magnet. So for his own ends, an evil-minded man may observe all the conventions of society, and may do many things that are reckoned unto him for righteousness, but he cannot reverse his magnetism. He cannot make himself attract. That is why the villains and hypocrites of history have not exploited and deceived the world far more than they have done. The instincts of men, and far more, the instincts of women and children, have cried out in warning against them, even when they seemed most plausible and sincere. It is God's merciful provision to prevent the hypocrites and the tricksters from inheriting the earth.

The natural question — “But am I to be held responsible for the influence that I exert unwittingly upon others?” is already answered. “Yes you are!” It is quite true that courts of law take no cognisance of a criminal's influence for evil, of the lives he may have blasted in his progress. He has to answer simply for what he has done. But there is a scrutiny of God at once more just and more searching than any human court, and we cannot but be responsible to Him for the influence we exert unconsciously on others, since that is the one outward effect of character about which there can be, in the long run, no mistake.

It is just here that the whole reality and significance of true religion becomes apparent. The commission of Jesus to every disciple whose life He has touched with His Spirit is “Ye are the light of the world.” Now what does a light do but shine? There is no thought of effort in the figure. What Christ meant was that Christian men, and women, beyond all the good they try to do (about which we are not speaking at all, meantime) ought to be such that their unconscious influence would tell constantly for righteousness, and truth, and honour, and every quality and interest of the Kingdom of Heaven.



This is an opportunity of service that is open to the humblest disciple. We may not be able to do much conscious good, but we can enshrine Christ's image in our hearts, and that will tell. We have no authority or station, it may be, to influence our fellows directly, but there is a personal magnetism streaming constantly from a sincere character and a consecrated life. The truest help we can give our fellows in the long run, is to live our lives as nobly and purely as by God's Grace we can. For no man, not even the humblest and most self-distrustful of us, liveth unto himself.

One of America's too little-known poets, E. R. Sill, has a haunting verse about life which may fitly end our lesson:

Forenoon and afternoon and night, — Forenoon  
And afternoon, and night, —  
Forenoon, and — what!  
The empty song repeats itself. No more?  
Yea, that is Life: make this forenoon sublime,  
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,  
And Time is conquered, and thy crown is won.<sup>11</sup>

[11. Ed. — Sill, E. R. (1896). Life. In W. G. Horder (Ed.), *The treasury of American sacred song with notes explanatory and biographical* (p. 255). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.]

That is the secret of unconscious influence. Make this forenoon sublime, this afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer.

## **Faithful winners (1998)<sup>12</sup>**

[12. Ed. — First preached 5th July, 1998, at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

### *Readings*

2 Kings 5:1-14

Luke 10: 1-11, 16-20

There are momentous things going on all around us. It is Assembly Sunday — this Assembly is going to be very important for our faith community of St Luke's. Our minister David [Clark] is in Jerusalem, where a decision to

expand the limits of the city is going to increase tension in that part of the world.

Back home here, right on this site, the resource consent difficulty continues and our plans for development and expansion of our mission continue to be frustrated.

Yet, in the midst of all these *big* things I want to begin with a focus on a little girl. A little girl who played a bit part in a big drama from long ago.

Some weeks ago, when David asked me if I would preach today, while he was away, he gave me the Bible readings set down for today and I read them and then let them sit within to see what would emerge. This wonderful drama of the healing of Naaman the leper was an old and familiar story — one from my childhood.

Maybe it was allowing my child memories to have their sway that brought the little girl to the forefront of my mind, and there she stayed. I haven't been able to shake her out to focus on more spectacular things. The story of Naaman is one I associate with my father's telling, and I suspect he gave emphasis to the little girl in light of his young audience. Or, did I as a little person myself naturally identify with any child in any story. Whatever, the little girl stuck in my head.

The story of Naaman does not seem to have much cosmic significance. It is a story of nationalistic pride, a more favourable account of Israel compared to Armenia, more powerful men of god, the one true god associated with Israel, and a more potent river, the Jordan.

If we had read the story right through we would find it to be a morality tale, because although the prophet's servant thought his master was turning down a good thing, he thought he could cash in.

After Naaman left, heading home cured, converted to worshipping the one true God, the prophet's servant ran after him, said his master had changed his mind and would now accept some of the gifts of gold and clothing, on account of the arrival of the prophet's guild.

Naaman obliged, only too happily, and the servant staggered home secretly with his booty. Foolish servant, greed must have made him forget, because how could he have not known, the prophet saw all, as is the nature of prophets. And when confronted with his ill-gotten gains, Elisha told him

that in exchange for the goods, he could have Naaman's leprosy, and his skin turned white as snow.

Anyway, in the midst of this story is the little girl. A little Israelite girl. As was common, she had been carried off in one of the Armenian raids, taken into slavery, and ended up as the attendant to the great general Naaman's wife. How was a little person going to deal with such a situation? Anything we come up with is really speculation. We do not have enough detail in the Old Testament to know for sure. I suspect she was very resilient. Children were not so sheltered in those days. They quickly matured and took on adult responsibilities. Women and children would talk about what it meant to be captured by a raiding party. With the adaptability of children, I suspect that our little nameless girl accepted her situation, soon came to terms with it and made the best of it.

It would seem that she had become part of the family and entered fully into their life. She was intimate with her new mistress. Maybe it was childish enthusiasm, a pride in her native land and its powerful men of god — the prophets — and maybe it was true compassion for the distress of her mistress which had her blurt out one day — If only my lord was with the prophet in Samaria, He would cure him of his leprosy. That is all she had to say to play her part in the drama. It was enough. And we know the rest.

The point of this story, told to the people of Israel in their holy writings is that through the work of the prophet an enemy military leader comes to acknowledge their lord god, and commits himself to faithful worship. This, in contrast to the backsliding and faithlessness of the chosen people of god. And this came to pass because the little girl kept her faith and had compassion for a man with a socially cruel disease.

So, I want to bring to your attention the matter of winners and losers because this little girl sat in the forefront of my mind I came to see her as a winner. We are all too familiar with winning and losing. In these momentous times there are going to be winners and losers. Coming out of our Presbyterian General Assembly, there will be winners and losers. In Jerusalem there are winners and losers. In our resource consent dispute there are going to be winners and losers. It seems to be the way the world is set up — for someone to win, someone has to lose. But, that is not how it needs to be.

I come from a psychological theory called transactional analysis, developed by Eric Berne.<sup>13</sup> He claims we can all be winners, and this does not require others to be losers. For some, this idea seems nonsense. I think it was the Dodo in Alice in Wonderland who said, “All have won, so all must be given prizes.” It is not Dodo thinking to say all can win.

[13. Ed. — See Part IV.]

Berne was a student of human nature. He was particularly interested in what he called the life scripts people live. He suggests that each of us, more or less unconsciously, at an early age, set up a notion of what sort of life we are to live. Like a script for a play or a movie. From very near the beginning of life some people set out to be winners. Some set out to be losers. And, some, lots, set out to be the “also-rans” and construct a banal script for themselves, neither winning nor losing.

Berne has a simple, and delightful, definition of a winner. A winner, he says, is someone who knows what to do when they lose. In this world no one can win them all. In this world of no favourites, [the Father in heaven] “sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.”<sup>14</sup> A winner may plan to go on a picnic, and it rains. But the winner knows how to get on with living, and what to do even though it is raining — they have fun indoors, or, like the grandma I know, whose grandchildren came out from England only once to spend a couple of weeks here in the summer, she was determined to have as much fun with them as possible. It was miserably wet summer. She designed wonderful adventures and explorations in the rain, taking plenty of towels and dry clothes and warm food. They all had a ball. She was a winner.

[14. Ed. — Matthew 5:45.]

A loser, says Berne, is someone who does not know what to do when they win. In this world you cannot lose them all. A loser plans to go on a picnic, and the sun shines. It is a beautiful day. But, the loser cannot enjoy it. They spend the day worrying about whether they secured all the windows back at home, or blaming someone for not bringing the salt to put on the tomatoes, or complaining about the ants or the bugs or the heat or the noisy neighbours in the next picnic site. So, a loser gets nowhere in life.

In this sense, winners and losers do not have to be spectacular. Little, insignificant people can be as much winners as those we normally regard as

winners — famous celebrity sports people, or the rich and powerful shakers and makers. Sometimes it is the little people who best know what to do when they lose, rather than the big and important. Naaman, the outstanding Armenian general was nearly a loser. Given a winning opportunity he nearly did not take it. The little girl knew how to get on with life, even when she was in a situation of major loss.

Each individual defines her or his own terms of winning or losing. It is not for me to make that determination. Let me tell you about “Joe”, a loser who became a winner. Of course his name and details are changed to protect his identity and maintain confidentiality, but the essentials are true.

Joe was the only child of a wealthy widow. Mother was highly ambitious for Joe. He was to follow his father’s footsteps in medicine, make fame and fortune, and keep the family name prominent. Early on Joe recognized that his task in life was to make his mother happy by pleasing her. He accepted her ambitions for him, and made them his own. He grew to be a big, gentle man, sporty and sensitive, very good and thoughtful to his mother, but not intellectually clever. He did not get in to medical school.

Now he’s a loser. Winning, or success, by mother or Joe’s definition is, at least, becoming a doctor. Dismayed, Joe attempts dental school, with no success, but he finds he has some ability as a dental mechanic, and eventually, with mother’s help, sets up a little business making false teeth, crowns and other dental bits and pieces. During his student days in Dunedin he is wooed, and won by a young woman, surprise, very like his mother, ambitious and organising. He could only father daughters and the family name would be lost. He was unable to satisfy his wife’s expectations and hopes, she withdrew and the marriage collapsed, because he couldn’t be a man for her. He was failing to please and make women happy. Even his daughters disdained him.

So I met him for counselling. He was severely depressed and under psychiatric care and medication. He came declaring his life had fallen to pieces. He didn’t know what to do next. He thought suicide an attractive option. He felt guilt-ridden for letting his mother down and adding to the tragedy of her life with the early, accidental death of her husband. She had gone to her grave unhappy, and there was now no way to make up for it. By his own account, his own definition, he was a loser.

Eric Berne would have classed Joe's a hamartic script — that is, a tragic loser script of the “after” process variety. That is, his tragedies began after a certain point in time. After Joe did not get into medical school, he was on the road to being a loser.

You and I standing objectively outside his system can see that if he were to redefine his goals he could be a winner. You do not have to be a wonderful medicine man to be a winner. While that makes adult sense and we could say it to him and he could know it in his head as logical and correct it would not help him to change.

The script we choose to live lies deep in the child foundations of our personality. We have to go to those parts of our being to make change. What we did with Joe was use some make-believe, something most children enjoy. For several sessions Joe came along and engaged in fully fantasizing living life. As a world-famous doctor, we even had him receiving an international award at a prestigious banquet which his mother attended. He imagined the speeches, the medallion and ribbon placed around his neck, his speech of reply. Outside the hall he was jostled by a crowd of reporters, he stumbled, fell back off the sidewalk into the front of a passing taxi, and was killed. The funeral was a major make-believe event. At it, his mother was grief stricken, but proud and happy with all his achievements. He had succeeded in pleasing her. The eulogy summarized his life's work. He had been a winner. There was an imaginary committal and burial.

Then we said to Joe, now the dream of being a great doctor is dead and buried, how are you going to live now? The next counselling sessions were to plan and support the reconstruction of his life. Last I knew of Joe was that he had retired early, was enjoying many social activities, was in a voluntary agency, had found a very compatible companion, had reconnected with one of his daughters and saw a lot of her and his grandchildren. He jogged daily, was out of psychiatric care and off medication and he was meeting the day-to-day challenges of ordinary living in a successful and optimistic way. He was a winner.

As Eric Berne would have said, he was a frog who turned into a prince. Eric Berne's notion was we all start out as princes or princesses of the universe, but it was not long before we met a witch or a wizard on the way who told

us we were frogs, and we believed them and lived under that spell, and our task is to recover our original condition.

Berne, a modern day Jew, has echoes of our master Jew, Jesus, whose gospel is to do with people becoming winners, recovering our original status as children of god and living accordingly. So, in these momentous times, we can be winners. No matter what decisions emerge from the general assembly we can get on with life, knowing what to do for the best if we lose. In Jerusalem, despite continuing Israeli oppression the Palestinians can and do live as winners, getting on with life and persisting in the peace process. With our continuing frustrations over resource consent we can and do live as winners, getting on with what we can do and persistently seeking ways forward in which all parties can be winners.

In our own quiet ways we can all be faithful winners, like the little girl who enabled the warrior Naaman become healed.

Oh! PS. Berne also said, a winner hears a bird sing everyday!

## **Epiphany (2006)<sup>15</sup>**

[15. Ed. — First preached 29th January, 2006, at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

### *Lectionary*

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 18:15-20, (Psalms 111; 1 Corinthians 8: 1-13)

New Testament: Mark 1: 21-28

Well, here we are. Still in the season of Epiphany. Fourth Sunday actually. As you know the Church uses an annual rotation of different seasons to celebrate, review and reflect on the major themes of our faith tradition. So, we are still reviewing and reworking the theme of Epiphany.

Technically, in the strict and narrow sense, in our Western Church traditions, the Epiphany was the manifestation of the divinity of the baby boy, Jesus, to the three wise men or magi, or in some traditions three kings from the East.

Under the hat of my other profession, psychotherapy, epiphany is a word less used, but it is occasionally used to refer to those intense “ah-ha” moments of deep insight when a client sees with striking clarity the truth of their condition, how patterns of behaviour and choices and relationships have produced the outcome and consequences they experience in their lives. With this insight they are able to make sense of what has been going on for them.

Our readings in today’s lectionary keep on the theme of this manifestation of deep truth — of epiphany. That is, there is something out there being manifest in what can be observed, having deep meaning to be seen and grasped — by those who can.

The Old Testament reading is a warning to those who would declare their understanding of the meaning of a manifestation of God’s intentions — that God will take a dim view of those who make claims that are off track. We’ll know who was right because it will turn out the way they say if they are in synch with God. I need to take this warning seriously as I share my thinking with you today.

Now, as you know, Mark’s Gospel, our second reading, has nothing about Jesus’ birth. Yet, here in the very first chapter we have an epiphany. Someone recognises Jesus as having to do with divinity. That person we would say today, had a mental illness, then, they said, he had an unclean spirit. As Jesus went about healing him Jesus’ manifest godly power and this crazy man saw that and grasped the depth of what it meant — the unclean spirits would come to an end. And, protesting about being destroyed, they recognized Jesus as the Holy One of God.

So, what did the mentally ill man see that those healthy ones standing around looking on, did not see? Interesting what we see and don’t see, isn’t it?

We’ve just come back from a couple of days ago from a cruise in the deep south, Antarctica and the fjords of Chile. And, it was remarkable how John, one of the English men was unable to see a whale, even towards the end of our trip after we had been able to see many whales. It was late evening, still quite light in those southern latitudes. The ship had been quietly, slowly shadowing a pair of whales who were very close and easily seen. But, not by John. The people around him became very determined and enthusiastic



to help him see them. First they got him a seat by the floor to ceiling window. He'd been among those injured in a storm as we approached Cape Horn. From his grandstand, front seat those around him pointing excitedly at these whales as they surfaced for air, describing to him what to look for.

I do not know what he was expecting or looking for, but, he just did not see them. They are not easy to spot. These whales barely broke the surface to get a breath. So, not much of their body showed. But, as they do come up they expel their breath in a short sharp burst and like us on a frosty morning breathing out our warm air you can see it like a puff of steam. Often their breath catches up some water which spouts up into the air as they exhale. Literally, "there she blows". And, there is a great swirl of water and the outline of a great broad back, and stubby little fin, sliding under the surface. Spectacular. But John could not see it, even with help.

I must not turn this into a travel talk, but does this illustrate a point? The manifestation of God's presence with us could be right out there in front of us, as plain as a whale swimming in a Southern ocean, and we, in our grandstand seat cannot see it. Furthermore, the only one who does see it others think is crazy.

What did the three wise men see when at last they reached their goal?

It is a great story isn't it. Putting all the problems about reality and factuality aside, it has a dramatic construction. These men were early scientists, investigators. They had come to the conclusion that something of cosmic significance was in the air, or more particularly, in the sky. They came to a hypothesis that something epoch-making was happening, perhaps a new king, a new leader for humanity was arriving, being born. They had to check out their speculation and set out on a journey to see for themselves what was happening.

When they got close to their destination they did the diplomatic thing rather than cause an international incident by crossing borders carelessly. They checked out with King Herod, who enlisted his scholars to track down where such a momentous event was likely. With a likely location they were off on their journey again, arriving in Bethlehem soon after Jesus' birth. They were straight off to the stable and what did they see? What was manifest that convinced them this baby was God incarnate, because they had an epiphany. Forever after people would have to think differently about

the truth and reality of human existence, because, now God was with us, in human flesh, “pleased as human with humans to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel”. The Incarnation, the central core of Christian thinking, had happened, and, with it. enormous complications to our theological thinking.

It is an enormous problem for theistic thinking this event of incarnation. Because of this, and other such problems I personally have taken to calling myself an a-theist, that is, someone who cannot go along with theistic thinking. As I have been talking with him about it for some time, when inviting me to preach today my friend David Clark suggested I might use this opportunity to share some of my ideas about this with you. It is a big topic and I can only touch on it.

Theism is a very technical way of thinking about God. So in saying I am a-theistic does not mean I do not believe in God, it means I do not believe in the theistic way of thinking about God. Now, what is the theistic way?<sup>16</sup>

[16. Ed. — See also see Chapter 10.]

Theism hold that God exists completely separately from this universe of space and time that we live in. God is a uniquely different entity way out there, address unknown, and completely inaccessible to us. This God is the creator. At a word, or whatever, God brings the whole universe into being. This world becomes the platform on which we humans can live out our existence. We are creatures, God the creator. God, as our creator, is interested in how we live our lives. Without fully acknowledging it, theists think of God like some ancient oriental potentate who makes the laws regulating life and acts as judge of our behaviour. God has made the laws known through the agency of prophets. In this regard all the three great monotheistic religions hold similar beliefs.

When Christians introduce the incarnation we part company with our Jewish and Islamic relatives. They, rightly point out you cannot be theistic and have an incarnation: creator and created do not mix. They have to be held separate. Incarnation goes something like this: at the right time God decides to come down to earth and take on human flesh and blood, live out his life, die and return to, heaven, wherever God exists. Now, to be crude — that is rough and simplistic — the mechanics of this enterprise of incarnation raise huge questions which Christian theologians have struggled with and still struggle with if you hold a theist basis for thinking of God.

While God was on earth, in Jesus, what happened to his place as Creator at that unknown address. Did God just vacate the place? When he came here to be in Jesus did God condense so that all of God was in Jesus, or just some bits? Did God split down the middle, half staying at home being creator and half going to be in Jesus, a creature. Does a split like this make two Gods? How could Jesus the man fit all of God into himself? Wouldn't a human burst at the seams? Or, did Jesus just appear to be a man? On they go. Big questions.

You know our Church history: at times how you answered some of these sort of questions made you orthodox or a heretic, and heretics facing some rather nasty, unchristian ends, like burning at a stake.

We have to develop other ways of thinking of God to overcome the difficulties of theism. Ways where God and the Universe are more integrated.

One quick further travel observation. We paid a visit to Puerto Eden, a small place, with a population of 174 people, settled 40 or 50 years ago, to house the remnant of the local indigenous people. They were brought together to help preserve their culture. Now only about 10 full-blooded Indians remain. It is a sad place with declining population and declining culture. As we climbed ashore from the small zodiacs ferrying us from the ship anchored in the bay, the first sight was a nativity scene. Christmas decorations had not yet been taken down. It was one of the roughest, crudest nativity scene I have ever seen. I mean there was no finesse, no polish, nothing refined or dignified. There was roughly cut plywood and crudely painted figures silhouetting Mother and Father, ox ass and sheep as backdrops, and in the centre, placed on carelessly strewn dried grasses, a worn doll wrapped in a baby blanket. Round this doll was a circle of about a dozen Christmas tree lights.

It was one of the more powerful nativity statements I have seen. The intention could not be plainer. The focus was completely on the Christ Child with its halo of lights. No other figure or feature in the scene drew attention. Even the traditional Madonna was subdued.

Was this what the wise men saw in Bethlehem? A baby? Was the baby the focus of their attention? Was the manifestation of divine incarnation in the baby Jesus? This is how the Church has understood the incarnation of God

for most of its history. This is how we have been trained to see it and how the indigenous people of Puerto Eden presented it. The focus is on Jesus. That is how we traditionally know God is with us, or, at least how we know God was with us, for about 30 years, 2000 years ago. What if the incarnation means more than that ancient episode in human history? What if the incarnation really means God with us, and has always been with us? Though we didn't know this until Jesus time.

And God is still with us. None of that theistic stuff of a separation of creator-creatures, and of God coming into the world for a short period of time and taking off again. God has always been around in human existence. This is mind-blowing stuff, epoch-making. Maybe that's what the wise men saw? God was manifest in the whole of that scene in the stable. Not just the baby. That was their epiphany.

- God was in and through, alongside the newly delivered mother. Perhaps a girl not long passed puberty, pregnant in a most suspicious way, and socially questionable.<sup>17</sup>  
[17. Ed. — See also *Song about Mary* in Chapter 4.]
- God was in and through, alongside the older tradesman father, forced by government decree to endure a long journey on some pretext like many displaced labourers forced into conscripted service, and yet willing, lovingly to protect, care and provide for his younger spouse.
- God was in and through, alongside the vulnerable new born boy, reliant on responsible competent parents to grow to full potential, maturity and wisdom.
- God was in and through, alongside the inn keeper who, although crammed full with guests still found a way to accommodate a needy couple with a woman going into labour.
- God was in and through, alongside simple, uneducated shepherds who sensed something was going on of a cosmic scale and left their flocks to attend to something more important and judged to be of greater value.

Just think of what it could do to how we live with each other and the world we live in, if we believed that God was incarnate throughout the whole of our universe, and not just localised in Jesus. It could be a very powerful epiphany indeed.



*Evan, Susan, Isabelle, and Michael, Dunedin, 1968*

## **Colonialism (2008)<sup>18</sup>**

[18. Ed. — First preached 29th June, 2008, at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

### *Lectionary*

Old Testament: Genesis 22: 1-14 Abraham's test, sacrifice Isaac

New Testament: Matthew 10: 40-42 Sending out the Disciples

Last year I was involved in thinking through the matter of colonialism. There was an unexpected outcome. I got to appreciate and understand Jesus of Nazareth in new and deeper ways. I want to share that with you today.

The background, briefly, was this. I belong to an organisation [the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists] which is working hard and effectively to actively honour our commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and have Māori with us as full partners in our enterprise. There was an incident, which I was present for, in which a Māori elder was told by a

Pākehā to stop being repetitive; he'd already informed us [about what he was saying] and so, sit down. I was left struggling to make sense of this outburst. In one way, it was doing what the leader had been encouraging us to do, to engage with each other — to be honest and impulsive, and less censoring of ourselves. I was taken back to learn that those Māori who were present experienced that event as colonialism at work in our midst. I clearly had much to learn and appreciate about colonialism for I had not seen it that way. So I set to work to remedy my shortcoming. Eventually, I prepared a presentation on the topic and gave it here one night last year. For this sermon, I have distilled from that hour and a half, and hope it is not in danger of over simplification.

It so happens that at that same time, last year, I was making my way through John Dominic Crossan's books tracing the historic Jesus.<sup>19</sup> It was an extraordinary co-incidence. In my younger theologically-conservative period I would have said it was the leading of the Holy Spirit. Now, in my later theologically-radical period I would say it was the leading of the Holy Spirit. I have no better way of speaking of such remarkable random chance simultaneous happenstance.

[19. Ed. — Judging by Evan's bookshelves, these were: Crossan, J. D. (1991). *The historical Jesus: The life of a Mediterranean Jewish peasant*. San Francisco, CA: Harper. Crossan, J. D. (1994). *Jesus: A revolutionary biography*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne.

Crossan does not speak of colonialism, using that word, but he describes it. That was the context into which Jesus was born — Galilee colonised by the Romans, in exact parallels to Aotearoa colonised by the British. Crossan's word is rural commercialisation. We here, I think, can translate his phrase with the word, colonialism, and there is a connection. A large Roman country estate, farm or land holding was called a *colonia*, from which we get our word colony. Romans organised large land holdings, farm estates, *colonia*, for commercial purposes. These large farms were to make money for the aristocracy. This was the Roman way. The other traditional arrangement of agrarian society was that the power figures wealthy aristocracy, usually living in towns or cities, took the surplus farm produce off the rural peasants by way of tax or rent. That's how it had been through the land of Israel's long history of being under the rule of foreign powers. Jewish peasantry was used to these forms of taxation and of losing their surplus farm production. While unhappy, they usually put up with it. Crossan points out in something like 400 years there was only one peasant

uprising. While under the Romans, in less than 200 years, there were at least three major local wars from Jewish peasant revolt which were very costly to both sides.

The difference between the previous traditional arrangements of rural society in Galilee and the arrangements made by the Romans, was they took the land off the peasants to make these large farms. Taking the land is taking their livelihood. We'd call that colonisation, Crossan calls it "rural commercialisation". Here is the essence of what happened to both Māori in Aotearoa and Jewish peasants in Galilee — by fair means or foul, land was taken off them. Both Jews and Māori have a sense of sacredness about land. For the Jews Galilee was part of the Promised Land God led them to and helped them conquer after they escaped slavery in Egypt. When they finally settled in the Promised Land, it was divided up among the 12 tribes, descending from the 12 sons of Israel, and further divided among the heads of each household within the tribe, so all the Children of Israel had a share or a stake in the land. Land was a gift of God to be held in trust as a heritage for future generations. Today, instead of our Old Testament lectionary reading we could have had the story of Naboth's Vineyard (1 Kings 21).

King Ahab wanted to extend his palace veggie garden. There was a vineyard in the way. Naboth had it. So the king went to Naboth and offered to get him an alternative replacement vineyard or to give him a fair market price for it. Naboth was appalled by this request. He had inherited this land from his ancestors and he was duty bound to pass it on to his descendants — it was not for buying or selling or exchanging. No deal. King Ahab went into a mighty sulk and his wife Jezebel told him to buck up because she would fix it for him. And, she did, by engineering to have Naboth accused of treason; he was stoned to death and the king got the vineyard. This well-known story perfectly illustrates the Jewish attitude to land, it was not a capital item to be bought or sold and the good Jew should not be alienated from the rightful inheritance.

This meant Jewish peasants were spread out over the land. Some of their holdings must have shrunk over the years of family inheritance so that the farms were not economic units that they could live off. But they would be big enough as a veggie garden so at least they could get a subsistence living which they often had to supplement by labouring on other farms, or

developing the skills of an artisan, being a blacksmith, or a weaver, or a potter, or a carpenter on the side. All had work, all had food, all had a place in the community — families were strong, healthy and self-sufficient with the vulnerable and dependent well looked after. This was especially so in Galilee, because it was such a rich and fertile countryside.

Then along came the Romans who took the land they wanted to build their large commercial farms with no concern for human cost. Humans were expendable. Jewish rural society was dislocated and completely devastated. There was starvation and sickness. Men and women were unemployed. Families broke down. People were pushed out of their homes and displaced. Some fled to the towns and cities looking for food, shelter, work — most to become beggars and scavengers on the scrap heap of society. Some took to the hills and wilderness to become bandits and outlaws, or, there to form guerrilla bands of resistance fighters hunted by the Roman army, or, there to join the increasing number of religious communities begun by self-styled messianic prophets who claimed to know the way to God's favour by living in various forms of harsh self-discipline. These groups were often hunted by Jewish religious authorities wanting to keep in favour with the Romans, by quelling any seeming dissidence. I leave it to you to see the parallels for Māori in Aotearoa.

So that was the world Jesus was born into: a world of Jewish rural peasants devalued, disrupted, displaced, dis-spirited, disheartened, diseased and hopeless. Jesus was raised in Nazareth of Galilee, a rural village, by a mother and artisan father who must have been quite exceptional to have brought up such an exceptional young man. Our records suggest he was an extraordinarily gifted visionary, healer, and teacher with a warm and loving personality who made a profound impact on others. He embraced human life in its fullness, and enjoyed a good time, and convivial company. In his teaching through one-liners, storytelling, and parables with catchy and unexpected punch-lines, he offered a vision of God and how human life should be lived which was new, fresh, inspiring, captivating, and authoritative. No wonder some of his contemporaries said he was from God, and still later others said he was God. Not surprising then, that people began to follow him, both literally, as he moved around, and metaphorically living out his teaching. They gathered in small groups or communities, but, it was



not haphazard, fortuitous. Instead it seems to have been part of a deliberate strategy of Jesus — something he programmed.

Our New Testament reading, from Matthew's Gospel (10: 40-42) is from the section where Jesus is instructing his disciples on how they are to carry out this program — where they are to go, what they are to say, what they are to wear and take with them, where they are to stay and for how long.

It was a program focused on undoing the damage of Roman colonialism on Jewish peasants. Jesus was passionately concerned for his disadvantaged fellows, especially those most down and out. Jesus and his disciples could not undo the political and economic structures for the peasants, so they were aiming for psychosocial recovery with accompanying good health, how they thought of themselves, how they could value each other, how they could experience God as still with them. This energetic compassion shown by Jesus came to be seen as a mirror reflecting God's compassion.

So, what was the program, the remedy to colonialism's destruction? It was to spread the message:

“Get together to support and sustain yourselves. Share what you have, food, shelter, clothing. Treat each other as being of equal value, whether you are men, women or children. Eat together, love and respect each other. Organise yourselves to be God's care-taking agents to each other. Don't wait for or expect outside intervention. By looking after each other you are being members of the Kingdom of Heaven, you are part of God's holy community. Live this way and God's new order is already being established: regardless of how the Romans have set things up, and the Jewish authorities collude with it.”

Hearing and experiencing this would be a bit of a tonic, and effective pick-me-up. Where Jesus and his disciples went, people were healed. Jesus touched lives, the disheartened were encouraged, the dis-spirited revived, the sick made well, the hungry fed, the homeless sheltered, the cold warmed, the devalued elevated. It was a message that took on. Jesus was very popular in Galilee. Little groups or communities of followers sprang up counteracting the social dis-ease of the times. I think the power of Jesus message was that originally it was directed to the immediate situation ordinary rural Jews faced because of what I identify as colonialism.

That's why, knowing about the colonialism of Galilee by the Romans has given me a new and I think, better, way of understand Jesus of Nazareth, the definitive point of my faith.

## **Jesus and Paul — The consummate political activists (2009)<sup>20</sup>**

[20. Ed. — First preached 25th January, 2009, at St. Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

### *Texts*

Jonah 3: 1-5, 10

Mark 1: 14-20

I'm told today in the Church Year is the commemoration of the Conversion of St Paul: a truly historic event in Christianity. In fact, without St Paul, and his conversion, we would not be here today, in this sort of building, doing these religious activities, in the name of a Christian community.

Jesus got the Christian message going; Paul got the Christian church going.

At least that's how the consensus of church history scholarship seems to be moving. The very early church was a Jewish sect. Its members were Jews who were connected to the synagogue system but who recognised Jesus as an inspired teacher. Such a group might well have fizzled out under the weight of the dominant Jewish culture. Paul opened the church to the Gentiles and included non-Jews from anywhere within the Roman Empire. He was inclusive. He was against Christians having to observe Jewish practice in order to be Christian. He thus opened Christianity to the whole of the Western world.

None of the lectionary readings set for today focus on the event of Paul's conversion. I'm not sure what motivated those who select the readings to have chosen the ones they have. However, I do see a common theme — that is, inclusion.

Jonah, that fascinating little book in the Old Testament was written about the time of its sister, companion book, Ruth, both to counter the excessive exclusivity of the Jews of the time. Both books remind the Jews that God

had dealings with wider connections in the world than Jewry. Ruth, the great Jewish king David's grandmother was not a Jew.

Jonah was sent on a mission by God to the gentile city of Nineveh, with a message for them to repent and turn from their ungodly ways, and he, Jonah, a good Jew, did not want to go. So, he took off by ship to the other side of the world. You know the story, the great storm came up and the sailors threw the Jonah causing it overboard to get rid of the back luck. And the whale swallowed Jonah and took him to dry land to continue his mission. And he did. Jonah went to Nineveh and warned the city — in forty days you are for it. The king and nobles of the city listened and repented, and attempted to show God they were sincere by fasting and putting on sack cloth and ashes. And God saw their turn around and changed his mind about destroying them and spared them. And Jonah, the good Hebrew, was mightily peeved that they were saved.

God is inclusive. God is not parochial.

The New Testament reading from the Gospel of Mark is the story about the beginning of the mission Jesus was sent on, to share his inclusive message: “the kingdom of God has come near, repent and believe the good news.” And, then, Jesus calls on the first few people to become his assistants to spread the message, using the metaphor of making fishermen the fishers of men. Catchy but, unfortunately Mark has something of a sexist style. The point is — God wants the good life for everyone who will respond. That's an inclusive message.

The next thing I need to clear as I set the context for what I would like to share with you is to deal with the matter of plagiarism. The issue has created a bit of a huha lately in the radio media. I need to say I have no original thought in my head about this subject. My thinking is totally inspired by others. I stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before or ahead of me and stimulated me with information and ideas and ways of expressing themselves. I don't directly quote them; I don't think I steal from them. So I don't give references. I do acknowledge their influence. Today that influence and information comes mostly from John Dominic Crossen.

Last year in our midweek communion group we watched under David Clark's leadership a series of video-tapes of John Dominic Crossen sharing his understanding of the nature of the original Christian community

immediately after the death of Jesus, taking us up to Paul who was the earliest to write anything we have in the New Testament. I found this leprechaunish Irishman informative and inspiring, no less for the eloquence of eyes and facial expressions, than the content of his words. He was recorded speaking to a live audience without notes for several hours over a weekend summarising the outcome of his historical research into who Jesus was, who and how Jesus' followers were organised and what the beginning of the Christian community was like when we have no hard-data historical evidence for it. It was something to see this man of thorough scholarly integrity flowing with his ideas, presenting his evidence and reasoning for the conclusions he has come to. Every now and then he'd pause to collect his wits in response to the audience he was speaking to, and going on elaborating his line of thought from the mass of material he has gathered on what that ancient world in the time of Jesus was like.

The last video of Crossan we saw was played by David at one of the Friday night series, Voices Within. It was on "Paul — the Appealing or Appalling Apostle?" For Crossan, the careful historian, Paul is the appealing apostle, and, in the video we are given all the objective, scholarly, unemotional, reasons for this conclusion. The last bit of Crossan's video presentation is his enactment of Paul's conversational engagement with a pagan inquirer in some city of Asia Minor, modern Turkey, where Paul is living out his mission to communicate the Christian message, and is very appealing. And I just loved Crossan's facial expressions as he played out that bit. He gives a lead-in to this whole scene. One of the first things to note is Paul's "in Christ" mantra. It is a very significant phrase used by Paul. When I was doing my theological training in Dunedin in the early 1960s, Professor John Allen referred to it as Paul's "in Christ mysticism". It was thought to be a kind of mysterious spiritual link Christians could have with the Risen Jesus Christ which they could experience as a sense of connection with him. But Crossan suggests it is a term referring to a very down-to-earth awareness of committed membership in a local Christian community. If you are "in Christ" you are an active member of say, Priscilla and Aquila's group in Ephesus around the year 50AD, or of, say, St Luke's Community, 130 Remuera Road, Auckland, New Zealand in the year 2009. It refers to here and now reality, feet-on-the-ground stuff, not pie-in-the-sky spiritual stuff. And by active it means a participant in a politically-focused community.

For John Dominic Crossan, Jesus was a political activist with a program. Jesus declared the Kingdom of God had come near, so repent and believe the good news.

Next, a word about repentance. For us, repentance involves remorse, or contrition and sorrow for wrong doing. So, from that understanding, we hear Jesus' message as something like: the Kingdom of God has come near, therefore be sorry and remorseful for how you have been behaving, apologise to God, and stop doing it and believe in the good news that God is going to save you from the fate you deserve. Whereas, to the people of the New Testament times the word we translate as repentance simply meant change your mind-set, change the way you see things. So [for them] Jesus' message is: the Kingdom of God has come near, change the way you see kingdoms, believe the good news: a new political era is here. Jesus' listeners were all too familiar with Herod's Kingdom and the Roman Empire. Jesus recognised that those political systems were life crushing for ordinary folk, the Jewish peasants of Galilee. But, he said, a new Kingdom is near which is life-enhancing, change your mind-set about kingdoms, and believe the good news that this newly arrived Kingdom of God is a real possibility for you to find new life.

Jesus' program was to counter the damaging influence of Herod's puppet kingdom within the Roman Empire. Herod was one of the local Jewish upper class taking advantage of Roman practices of colonisation to become Mr Big, or Herod the Great. By setting up the Kingdom of God Jesus was offering a completely different, non-violent ordering of local society. It was an alternative form of government of human affairs which was quite oppositional in effect to Herod's Kingdom. And, although he espoused non-violent means of establishing his Kingdom, Jesus was a threatening menace to establishment authorities and ended up being executed. Any form of alternative government was unwelcome, as it would disturb power and profits for the incumbents.

Herod's rule I summarise as the winner takes all and the devil takes the hindmost. Upper class Jews, including religious authorities, went along with this, it was to their benefit. And they did not want to rock the boat with the ruthless Roman overlords, who would take it out on them as well as any lower class rebels.

Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God was one of radical equality, the same justice for all, especially the justice of equal distribution of the means of livelihood, food, clothing, housing, employment, safe and secure family life in which to bring up children and care for the sick, infirm and aged. Government was to ensure this happened. And, while this Kingdom was not yet established in any geopolitical way, these principles could be put into practice in small informal groupings. Motivated by love, as demonstrated as being nature of God, people could get together to help each other in this distributive justice way, as Crossan puts it. Within little communities, followers of Jesus could share food, clothing, shelter and support and sustain each other in the hard times. We continue to symbolise the sharing of food practiced in the early Christian communities with the sacrament of Communion. Especially the members of those communities could provide healing for one another: healing from the physical, psycho-social and spiritual wounds suffered under Herod's government: wounds caused by poverty, malnutrition, loss of shelter, unemployment, loss of land for farming or gardening, family breakdown, or the burden of crippling taxes.

And, it seems to Crossan, that Jesus had a strategic program to set up these communities. He sent out his core followers to go out, two by two, dressed in a particular way, to take the good news and build small groups out in the countryside. And, Paul continued to follow that program, not in the Jewish countryside but in gentile cities through the Roman Empire. So, there is Paul, out in the gentile world inviting people to come into the new, alternative Kingdom of God, and be "in Christ", committed to a small supportive community centred around love and distributive justice, because that is the Jesus way as directed by God.

And, Crossan acts out a short scenario:

*Inquirer:* Are you saying that if I commit to the community they will commit to me?

Paul: Uh-hu.

*Inquirer:* In this community everyone is absolutely equal?

Paul: Uh-hu.

*Inquirer:* If I lost everything they would provide food and shelter?

Paul: Uh-hu.

*Inquirer:* If they lost everything I would be expected to help them?

Paul: Uh-hu.

*Inquirer:* If they were sick or injured I would care for them?

Paul: Uh-hu.

*Inquirer:* If I was sick or injured they would care for me?

Paul: Uh-hu.

That's Paul, the appealing apostle with the message of the Christian way.

## **A modern man faces Pentecost (2010)<sup>21</sup>**

[21. Ed. — First preached 23rd May, 2010, at Iona Presbyterian Church, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland.]

### *Texts*

Old Testament: Genesis 11:1-9

New Testament: Acts 2:1-8

It is always a difficulty for me when I accept responsibility to produce a sermon based on the scripture readings for the day — to think of how I can lead your thoughts, now, today, on what was written 2—3,000 years ago. So, I have called this “A Modern Man Faces Pentecost”. By Pentecost we mean that event, described in the *Book of Acts* — that is, the Acts of the Apostles. We read this morning, of the promised arrival of the Holy Spirit descending on the gathered disciples in a spectacle of wind and fire. It was fifty days — hence the word “Pentecost” — after the resurrection of Christ and ten days after he ascended into heaven, when he had instructed the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came. This is a difficult enough story for me, a modern man, without the added problem of a quite different story of the arrival of the Holy Spirit in John's Gospel (20: 21). There, it is reported, on the first of Christ's early appearances to his disciples, on the evening of the morning when Mary Magdalene saw Christ at the site of the empty tomb, on the first day of the week, Christ breathed

on the disciples, saying receive the Holy Spirit. But that is another story, which I will not get into.

The story in Acts is difficult enough. The disciples are together in one house when there is a sound like a tornado, and with a great rushing of wind tongues as of fire split up and descended on each one. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, such that everyone in the city of Jerusalem no matter what their native language, who crowded around to see what was going on could understand the Christian message preached by Peter. On that day three thousand persons were baptised and joined the church. That is a mind-boggling logistical exercise given the narrowness of ancient Jerusalem and its alley-ways and the intense dislike the Romans had for any excited crowds getting together for whatever reason. Jerusalem was an occupied capital city. Historically, we know, the Romans were down on any commotion of any ongoing kind, they would have been out in full force within minutes. So, here I am, a modern man, faced with this story of Pentecost. What do I make of it?

Let me introduce my father. He too was a modern man — although he was born three centuries ago, in the 1890s. He was modern in that he kept up with things. He did not live to see television, but knew it was coming. He had witnessed the introduction of aeroplanes, since their earliest beginnings until the latest Royal Air Force jet fighter brought on tour to New Zealand by a Kiwi pilot who had been in my father's Sea Scout troop. Dad arranged for us, me and him, to go and see it at Wigram. What a thrill. He predicted the progress of medicine would mean they would one day be able to operate on a human heart and repair it. He never lived to see it, but I have benefited from that advance. Space travel, he thought was science fiction nonsense, so I don't know what he would have made of the first man on the moon.

He was a good Presbyterian Christian, a session clerk and Sunday school superintendent for many years. I clearly remember sharing my disturbance with him as I studied in biology at University. I told him that science could allow for the remote possibility of virgin birth, but any offspring would have to be female. So, what was I to do with the story of Jesus' birth from a virgin mother? As a young modern man keeping up with the progress of science I was in conflict with the doctrinal faith statements of the Church and the ways of the universe I was learning at university. Not an uncommon difficulty for many young students. In talking with my Dad I decided to



give up believing the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. And, Dad said it was fine with him, so long as I had thought long and deep about it and was not being disrespectfully oppositional. But, for him, Dad said God could do anything and for the purpose of Jesus coming into the world, God arranged a virgin birth. And he would hold to that belief. It had served him through his life and was a comfort to him to know God was all powerful and wise.

I have deep respect for my Dad. However, I have not been able to hold to his simple faith that God can do anything he wants to. So, he had the simple faith that, whatever story the Bible tells — it is likely to be fact. But that leaves me to struggle with so much. Is it right for me in a sermon to tell you of my struggles and doubt? I don't think it is, so I am going to share with you my certainties.

Let us start with the first reading from scripture this morning — the story of the Tower of Babel and the confusing of languages. This is an easy one for me, no struggle. I understand this story to be a myth. Now a myth is a very important kind of story with a bad press. Myths are debunked as untrue. Myths are stories explaining how the world is the way it is and the Bible is full of such stories. How is it that there are all these different languages among humankind? Why would that be? Well, let me tell you the story about the city of Babel. Once upon a time, long, long ago, everyone lived in a big happy family moving out of the East. When they got to a plain in the land of Shinar they settled down and eventually decided to build a city with some of the excellent building material found there. They would build a big city, with a tower in the centre, right up to the heavens and they planned to make a name for themselves, because when they got to the heavens they would get to where god lives and have direct access to god and there would be no stopping them on earth. But, God saw right through their scheme and what they were up to and decided to stop them by confusing their language so they could not understand what each other was saying, so they left off building the city and scattered over the face of the earth.

I certainly do not believe the things in this story ever happened in the way it is told. And, I certainly do believe it tells an important truth about people. I certainly believe that if you cannot communicate clearly and effectively your working enterprises will break down. The Tower of Babel is an important myth. It sends out several warnings to us, packaged in a way we

can take in and remember. But, was there ever such a city and endeavour — no.

As a modern man do I treat the story of Pentecost in the same way? Yes! I think it is a kind of myth. It is a made-up story to explain the way the Christian world is, and how it got to be this way. Do I think there was a time of rushing wind, and tongues of fire and disciples who could speak so everyone in Jerusalem could hear them in their own language? No.

Certainly not! But I certainly believe the truth told in the story. That is the truth that some time — probably a lot more than 50 days — after the resurrection of Christ a new spirit emerged in the life of the disciples. These wimps became outspokenly powerful, standing up and speaking out for Jesus. And people understood what they were saying because they made sense to their listeners using their own terms. They came out of hiding and found courage. They were no longer ashamed that Jesus, their leader, had been executed — what a scandal! In fact, in faith, they began to develop a way of seeing that Jesus was God incarnate and that all he did to introduce the Kingdom of God, was purposeful, especially his willing death. And in this new spirit they began to tell others openly, boldly and with authority. As they did so, they knew and felt a spiritual presence with, and, in them enabling them to go forth into all the world and proclaim this good news.

Would my Dad be happy with how I face Pentecost? With how I read the Bible? I suspect not. For him it could all happen the way the story describes it — rushing wind, tongues of flame, speaking in every language, and 3,000 converts in one day. His simple faith in God allowed for those sort of things to happen. And I respect his faith choice. But for me I do not want to strain my sense of credulity. My faith must sit beside my modern knowing about the world with comfortable integrity. My knowledge of biology must sit comfortably with the story of the Virgin Birth. It does if I take that story as a myth, not telling facts but telling the truth of God in Jesus coming into the world. My knowledge of the history and geography of Jerusalem under Roman occupation must sit comfortably with the story of Pentecost, and it does if I take that story as myth not telling facts but telling the truth about the Holy Spirit coming into the disciples.

I certainly do believe in the Holy Spirit. I am not sure about that name though. It leads people to think of some sort of individual, and especially as one of our faith formulas talks of God in three persons. The Holy Spirit is

one of those persons. There is a story that did not make it into the New Testament and joins other rejects in the Apocrypha. I couldn't track down the detail but from memory it went something like this. The disciples and the Virgin Mary were together in a house when there was a commotion and a couple of disciples rushed into the room to declare that they had managed to catch hold of the Holy Spirit before he slipped away on them and they had him tied to the bed-post and to come through and meet him before he got away again. Yuck! I am glad that story did not make the cut for the New Testament. I would not call that story a myth. It is certainly not offering a way of understanding a truth about how the Christian world is like it is. It is just fanciful, lacking in facts and untrue.

So, as I face Pentecost I am certain I know what I call the spirit of God. I have felt this vague, mysterious sense give me courage in my time of trial; I feel it support me with loving energy in time of need; and it provides me with guidance. But, it is all very ordinary and down-to-earth — no rushing wind, no tongue of fire, and having this sense of spirit gives me no escape from the tough things on life's journey. My guess is, that may be how it is for you, too.

### **Ash Wednesday (2011)<sup>22</sup>**

[22. Ed. — First preached on Ash Wednesday, 9th March, 2011, at St. Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

#### *Texts*

Old Testament Joel 2: 12-18

New Testament Matthew 6: 1-6

In our Presbyterian system of organisation the highest grouping is representative ministers and elders meeting in General Assembly, with the Moderator of that body being our highest church-person of the time. The last General Assembly was last October in Christchurch and there was debate about it meeting there, then, following the first, September earthquake. And it was held there, out of solidarity with our Christchurch brothers and sisters, and because of their preparations, it was held in a school assembly hall, instead of then damaged and now ruined Knox

Church. I have been told that at the closing service the Moderator concluded in a bright, celebratory mood, saying; Thankfully God had held his hand over Christchurch and there was no loss of life in the city. I wonder what he is saying now, after February's earthquake.

Of course, that was just his metaphor of God, but some found it offensive at the time and made complaint. What is his picture of God? It seems pretty medieval. It is even older than that, right back to the Old Testament day in our reading from Joel. To us here at St Luke's it is not a pretty picture: God who behaves like a petulant human tyrant. In our community of faith we are seeking to be progressive. We want our religious and theological thinking to keep up with all the other human disciplines, we do not want medieval medicine, or law, or education. We do not want medieval pictures of God in a three tiered universe; living in heaven above, with hell far below, and ruling the earth between by pulling strings. We struggle to find new, satisfying images, progressing our thinking to keep up with the age we live in.

So, what are we to make of what we are here doing today, celebrating Ash Wednesday. How much more medieval could we be? This is not even true blue Presbyterian. Imagine what Ian Paisley would say about this papist practice. That's where I first saw it: in the USA in our ecumenical hospital chapel when the catholic employees in the hospital would turn up for Ash Wednesday services and come out from the mass with a black cross marked on their foreheads. Traditionally Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lenten. And traditionally Lenten was a season of going without. It was a time of penance, of remorsefully recognising our human sinfulness which was the reason Christ had to die a sacrificial death on the cross to atone for us and restore us to God's goodwill. It was a time to prepare ourselves spiritually for this great Easter event. How can we be progressive about Ash Wednesday?

There are some traditions I am happy to go back in time to repeat. Each week, for the most part, I celebrate Communion, the Eucharist, The Last Supper, with you here at St. Luke's. In our orders of service we often use literally or by implication the words of the institution of this sacrament: on the night in which he was betrayed Jesus had a meal with his disciples when he took bread which he broke and shared, and lifted the cup of wine which he shared, instructing them to do this to remember him. This is a hugely

important symbolic act, central to my faith, which I repeat over and over. And, in one way or another, this has been happening in the Church for two thousand years. How can we be progressive about this traditional activity?

It is about the meaning we give to it. In some large sections of the Church this symbolic action in the sacrament of breaking bread and drinking wine is taken to mean the bodily sacrifice of Jesus being killed on the cross is being repeated and the bread becomes his body and the wine becomes his blood. The sacrificial death is made again, and again. That's medieval thinking and not progressive. For me the bread and wine are symbols of the physical execution of Jesus, his body was broken and his blood split on a cross; the Roman way of killing social reformers and making a public example of how misguided and powerless they were. It displays how far Jesus was willing to go to institute his Kingdom of God in a non-violent loving way. It was divine activity. It was the God of Love in action. It was not an act of sacrifice to appease a righteous demanding God. Instead God is there in the execution experiencing the inhuman brutality and cruelty as they seek to extinguish loving-kindness.

My image of God is of God being fully present in the dust and rubble of Christchurch. Present in the sobbing of the bereaved, in their shocked, speechless agony. Present with the couple in the Sumner bus as they are crushed by falling masonry. Present with the Samoan man frantically heaving blocks of stone aside to pull out someone just buried by collapsing brickwork. Present in the tireless work of rescue workers searching for living survivors in the debris of modern buildings. God is fully present in our human suffering and care giving.

Now, back to Ash Wednesday: how do I do some progressive thinking about this medieval custom? Well, what are the ashes? Traditionally they come from burning last year's Palm Sunday palm branches brought into a church to recapture and celebrate that event in the life of Jesus. Mostly the palms come in the form of fronds woven into little crosses. In ancient days palm fronds were used like flags to welcome or pay honour to dignitaries, kings, high priests, consuls, generals and the like. They were a symbol of exaltation, as I say, like little flags put in the hands of the crowd at a parade to wave at Santa Claus, or the winning football team. So, some of Jesus' disciples who were with him, a small number — the Roman authorities would not have tolerated many gathering together at Passover time in or

around Jerusalem — took palm branches to wave at him as he symbolically selected an ass to ride on into the city: an ass, the beast of the pacifist, not a horse, the beast of the warrior. Even so, he was declaring himself a political activist to the Romans, and signing his death warrant. By the end of the week he was dead — publicly humiliated — executed on a cross. The victorious exaltation of his followers, their expectations of God doing something miraculous through this man Jesus, their hopes and dreams of a new realm — the Kingdom of God being instituted were dashed — palms of triumph turned to ashes. Like the Moderator of the General Assembly their image of God was misguided. God does not produce miracles of salvation — never has, never will. Men and women produce salvation from calamity and bring in new forms of humanitarian government. Pure chance of ten determines who is killed and who walks away. And, God is caught up in the disasters. God was there in the crucifixion, God is there in the tumbled wreckage of Christchurch, God is in the ashes of the palm branches, God is in the dust and rubble — Christchurch's ashes. It is out of these ashes that miracles grow.

So, hopefully you can see, why, I, a progressive Christian, am willing to engage in this old Ash Wednesday practice of having a cross of ashes marked on my head. Any discomfort I have comes from our New Testament reading — am I making a public sign of piety? I think by wearing the cross in public I am declaring my allegiance to the Christian faith tradition, not a claim of piety. That is more tolerable and I want the blessing of God in the Ashes. As I begin this Lenten season I will be following the suggestion I heard from David Clark, it will not be a time of giving anything up, instead I will be taking something on — a task of preparing some theological writing. How progressive Christians can think about atonement and the need for the cross. But, that assignment awaits, now to Ash Wednesday.

## **Healing (2011)<sup>23</sup>**

[23. Ed. — First preached 25th September, 2011, at St. Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

*Text*

New Testament: Mark 6: 53-56

Healing has been a topic very much to the fore in my life lately.

I heard a brief report on the National Radio that recent scientific studies showed laughter was very good for our health and had healing qualities as it released natural pain-killing endorphins into our blood stream. I snorted to myself that that was nothing new. When I was working and studying in Michigan in the early 1970s there was an intriguing report I have a vague memory of. It was of some well-regarded medico who got what was then considered a fatal cancer. He decided on some extra treatment of his own, so gave up what he was doing to focus on his project, rented a secluded hospital room, a film projector and heaps of comedy movies which he played over and over, laughing himself silly and arrested the growth of the cancer. So laughter being considered a good medicine is not news. It has been known to be effective for some time, and that laughter releases endorphins.

I think what still gets some people is that the mind can have some influence over the body. Our culture still seems disbelieving that our state of mind can have anything to do with this very material body we live in. The old saying of mind over matter is still very much scorned, and, rightly so. If it was just a case of thinking about good things, believing and hoping, and they came to pass wouldn't this be a great world, and wouldn't we live comfortable, disease-free lives? Because mind over matter does not seem to happen in clear-cut spectacular ways we dismiss it entirely. We throw the baby out with the bathwater.

That different states of mind contribute to healing seems appreciated in some medical circles. At the end of last month, Pamela [Day, the receptionist at St. Luke's] sent around an invitation to members of the St Luke's community over 65 years of age asking for volunteers to participate in a piece of research being done by the [University of Auckland] Medical School. The research is to see what sort of influence a state of mind can have on the healing of wounds. This is a very important matter for those of us with older bodies if we ever need surgery or suffer broken skin. What sort of state of mind works best? How they are going to get us into different states of mind is by getting different ones of us to write about different selected feelings for 20 minutes for three days running. Previous studies with college-age students have shown that different states of mind produced

by writing about different sorts of feelings do have their effects. Does the same thing apply with older people?

If we put our minds to it, we can easily imagine the state of mind the people of Gennesaret got into when they heard the healer Jesus from Nazareth was in town: our reading from Mark's Gospel. They rushed around collecting up their sick friends and relatives, got them on stretches if necessary, to get them into Jesus' presence. Some folk had lost all vitality and needed to be carried to wherever they heard he was. And, they laid out the sick in the marketplaces and begged Jesus to allow them to simply touch the fringe of his cloak, and those who did were healed. What must have been their state of mind? I'm not so sure that we can easily imagine the state of mind of the people of Gennesaret. In order to put our minds to it we first have to remember this place was a fertile stretch of land rich in farm produce around the North West corner of the rich Lake of Galilee teeming with fish. And, next, we have to remember that for several generations the Roman Empire had displaced the local citizens off their small inherited plots of land in order to establish large commercial farms and vineyards and, amidst the plenty now grown for the profit of a few favoured families, the local peasants did not have enough land to even scratch out a subsistence living and were starving. And, next, we have to remember the locals could no longer go down to the lake and catch a few fish to feed hungry mouths, because the whole fishing industry had been commercialised for profit for the Roman Empire and all catches of fish were policed and taxed, and dried and exported, and the locals starved in sight of rich fishing grounds.

Are you starting to get your minds around what it might have been like? It is a huge task of imagination for me to get into the state of mind of a weakened, able-bodied, unemployed, homeless, poverty-stricken, starving peasant with a sick family and nowhere to go to find food. I would be rushing around in desperation and hope to catch up with this man Jesus: the man who was declaring the good news that the Kingdom of God was here and the man who had a reputation for healing the sick. I'd be carrying my sick kids and putting them in a place they could touch the fringe of his cloak as he passed. I'd be listening very carefully as he told me the answer to my needs was cooperative sharing and active mutual collaborative caring in small groups organised along lines of total equality of value and status between men and women, old and young. I'd be listening as he told me that



in the Kingdom of God there is enough food to go round, enough clothing, enough shelter if we share what we have equally and distribute it justly.

Thank God, here today in Auckland, life is completely different to that of Galilee under the Roman Empire in the time of Jesus. So, in what state of mind do we come to this service of healing at St. Luke's? What has me rushing around to be where Jesus is offering healing from what makes me sick? Clearly Jesus is not here. He died two thousand years ago. I don't find it helpful to think of him being somewhere out there, unseen, in a metaphysical spiritual form, intervening to look after us. That's too spooky for me. But his continuing influence is real and substantial and helpful to me. What he started and demonstrated as a way to live lovingly and caringly for others — that's real and tangible for me. It is the Kingdom of God in action for our place and times. The kingdom comes in the form of an active community where healing continues to be offered in the way Jesus set it up: mutual, supportive caretaking. In such an environment I am assisted to get into a state of mind where my sickness is relieved.

If I put my mind to it, that is giving it my thoughtful attention, there are many things going on in Aotearoa New Zealand that sicken me, some man-made and some the results of nature, like earth-quakes, cancer, Alzheimer's, Aspergers. Those natural things give me bad-enough sickness, the man-made are so much worse because humans should know better. The sort of man-made things are violence against women and children, mistreatment of minority groups, our punitive prison justice system, our emphasis on profits over people, our high rates of suicide, our exploitation and pollution of the countryside to name just a few.

When I come to St. Luke's I know this community does not stand for any of that, in fact, members of this community actively counteract that bad, sickening stuff. That helps my state of mind as does joining in symbolic activity like participating in communion where I share with others breaking and eating bread and drinking poured out wine representing Jesus' willingness to give up his life to be consistent with his program of non-violent caring-sharing for each other as members of his Kingdom. When I put my mind to this mystery of Jesus I find I begin to get close to that state of mind in which my sickness seems to leave me and I sense peace.

## **Killed by a dancing girl (2012)<sup>24</sup>**

[24. Ed. — First preached 15th July, 2012, at St. Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

### *Texts*

Old Testament: 2 Sam 6: 1-5, 12b-19

New Testament: Mark 6: 14-29

I am amongst those preachers who follow the lectionary, that is those prescribed readings from the scriptures assigned to each Sunday of the year. It is a discipline designed to prevent preachers getting stuck on their particular hobbyhorse and riding it to death. But the downside is trying to find something meaningful in the readings for the day. And what is the connection between the Old Testament reading for today from Samuel about David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant as it was carried into Jerusalem and the New Testament reading about the death of John the Baptist?

The only common point in the two stories is dancing. But, what different dancing! One carried out in a state of ecstasy, the other, according to tradition, quite erotic. My creativity and ingenuity has deserted me when it comes to finding relevance for today in these stories of dance. So, I am going to take a different track. I want to briefly tell you of my first experience of ministry after graduation from the Theological Hall in Dunedin. In 1962, Isabelle and I went to Northern Ireland where we both traced family roots, and I had a short period of providing stated supply for the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland in the housing estate of Craigy Hill, just out of Larne.

It was an experimental housing estate having a mix of Catholics and Protestants. It was all new building and carefully laid out streets. The church I worked in was architecturally designed to demonstrate a time in Irish history when Protestants and Catholics experienced a common persecution from the English establishment. Because we were both non-conformist, Presbyterians and Catholics were prohibited from holding religious services of worship on pain of imprisonment and worse. But that did not stop my ancestors. They kept meeting for worship on a Sunday by

holding their services in different farmers' barns around the countryside. The congregation would gather by different families taking different routes through the country: some taking this lane, others that, others again crossing fields keeping to hedgerows.

Hopefully that is an introduction to considering our New Testament lesson from Mark's Gospel. Some of you are aware I have been very stimulated by the thinking of Dr Alexander Shaia, who spoke over several Sunday evenings here at St. Luke's earlier this year. Dr Shaia has provided me with a new perspective on the Gospels which I am enjoying following.<sup>25</sup>

[25. Ed. — Shaia, A., J., & Gaugy, M. L. (2010). *The hidden power of the Gospels*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.]

His perspective is that there is one Gospel, one story of the Good News of Jesus the Christ. It is told in four chapters: our traditional Matthew, Mark, Luke-Acts and John. Each of these four tell the same story in their four different ways in order to address four different difficulties the early church faced in its first one hundred years or so. There were four different historical crises confronting the first Jews who accepted Jesus as the Christ. Each was a different spiritual crisis, which challenged the faith of the first followers of "The Way" as early Christianity was called. Shaia suggests that each gospel was written as a handbook to assist the target audience live through the crisis. What does the story of the Risen Messiah, the Christ, teach us about how to overcome these spiritual crises? So each gospel has a different slant each designed to address the different historic circumstance.

Shaia understands that Mark's gospel, the first written, was addressed to the Jews of Christian persuasion in the city of Rome in the 60s of the first century of the Common Era. Their situation was horrendous. Roman Soldiers were going from door to door of Jewish homes in the Jewish quarter of Rome, after the great fire when Nero was supposed to have fiddled. And they asked, "Are you a believer of the Christ?" The answer "Yes" meant that the whole household, men, women, children, slaves, were taken straight off to the Circus Maximus, pegged down in the sand of the arena, splashed with blood, and hungry dogs were set loose to feed on them. Parents had to watch their children die first.

Is that a spiritual crisis, or what? That is a real test of faith! My ancestors sneaking around the country lanes dodging the English establishment in

Northern Ireland to go to worship in a barn seems like peanuts.

And, if you were a Jew in Nero's Rome when he blamed the Christians for the fire and the soldiers knocked on your door and you could say, "No I am not a Christ believer", you were asked, "... and who do you know who is?" Whoever you named was taken off to the Circus with no chance to explain themselves. The Roman cruelty was calculated. But it did not stop the growth of followers of The Way.

We do not have accurate records, but it is estimated that in those few years of Nero's persecution all the Christian Jews of Rome were killed, including Peter and Paul. Tradition has it that Peter successfully escaped the city but on the way met the Risen Lord who asked, "Quo vadis — where are you going?" And so Peter returned to the city be crucified upside down. Shaia suggests Mark was written to inspire and assist the Roman Jews who accepted Jesus the Christ to deal with their suffering. He suggests we read Mark to learn lessons from the written story of the life and teachings of the Risen Christ on how to deal with suffering. I have never been invited to read it that way before and I am benefiting from doing so.

Suffering does not come only in the form of Nero's persecutions. What is the equivalent today of the knock on the door that completely disrupts your life as you have known it, throwing you into confusion, gut-wrenching discomfort, disbelief, shock, horror: with your faith challenged? Is it the police officer knocking on your door at three in the morning to tell you your son has been killed in a road accident on his way home from a night shift? Is it the doctor telling you the lump in your breast is a nasty cancer? Is it the newspaper report that the company you have invested all your retirement savings has gone broke? Is it your son telling you, his wife has left him, and taking your grand-children to live with another man? Is it the earthquake that destroys your home and you find your insurance company has gone broke from so many claims? We could go on and on. One such moment for Isabelle and I was the telephone call telling us our daughter was in a helicopter going to hospital with a spinal cord injury.

How are we to take such moments, when suffering comes unwelcome into our lives? What did Mark say to the Roman Christians? Can I summarise Mark's gospel in a few minutes of talking? No way! This guidebook for living the spiritual life of a follower of Jesus the Christ when faced with

suffering does not yield its secrets quickly. For now, let's go back to the death of John the Baptist. The Jews of the Mediterranean world of Mark's time would have known of this man, John the Baptist. He is there at the beginning of Mark's story, chapter 1 verse 2, and he keeps getting mentioned throughout the document.

John is a faithful servant of God: he lives a good clean life, eats locusts and honey and wears a hair shirt out in the wilderness beside the River Jordan. He suffers hardship for God and Jesus. Some scholars think he mentored Jesus. He is a risk taker, and tells it like it is, and condemns the Jewish upper class and religious teachers, and pulls no punches with King Herod, who throws John in prison for criticising him for marrying his sister-in-law. Mark paints a lurid picture of the upper class and how shallow their life-and-death decision-making can be, and a dancing girl at a birthday party can have John beheaded. This has been the subject of many paintings and music: Salome's dance. It is a very dramatic story. Mark is saying to the Roman Jews, the politics of the King in Galilee were very superficial, but deadly: the Emperor in Rome is no different politically; he, too, is shallow, but deadly, very deadly.

The tragedies in life may have no more significant cause than some girl dancing at a birthday party. And, God does not step in to stop the tragedy. It is not in the nature of God to intervene in these situations. This is a timeless, troubling lesson to be confronted with. I have often heard in my work someone say, God didn't help me out. But, that does not mean God has abandoned us. Throughout Mark's gospel Jesus patiently, persistently, teaches his followers that he, the Messiah, will end up being executed, and will rise again: death will not be his end with them.

What this teaching meant eluded them while he was with them. Understandably, it was all too confusing. Take heart if we too are confused. It eluded and confused even Peter right to the day of Jesus' crucifixion. What it meant slowly dawned on Peter and Jesus' other followers after Jesus was dead and they experienced that he had not gone: he was still with them as the Risen Christ. Mark's lesson to the Christians in Rome, is the Risen Christ is with you in the Circus Maximus. In faith, there is something here greater than life itself. It is the mystery of love, the mystery of God. God never abandons us even if a dancing girl should be the death of us.

## **Self-love (2012)<sup>26</sup>**

[26. Ed. — First preached 4th November, 2012, at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.]

### *Texts*

Old Testament: Psalm 146

New Testament: Mark 12: 28-34

Once again, as I begin, I need to seek your indulgence, a bit of a pattern of mine. This time, please allow me to share some of my personal history to illustrate this sermon, which I'm calling self-love, a difficult and complex topic that emerges out of our reading today from Mark's Gospel about the second great commandment. Convention has it that good preachers avoid mentioning themselves. I have heaps of examples illustrating this topic from my casework, but I have no permission to breach confidentiality, so I won't. So, I have given permission to myself to tell you about me as I deal with the topic, and I seek your permission to indulge me.

Are there any here today who participated in the first workshop Isabelle and I ran at St. Lukes?

It was in 1976. I can't remember the details myself, date, title, numbers, which part of the old buildings it was held in. But I clearly remember the focus, it was on building self-esteem, and some of the activities we designed to achieve this. When we made our evaluation of this event, we considered the rationale behind doing it was accurate. In so far as, dear old Don Glenny, minister at the time, had had to soothe some ruffled feathers. He had had to deal with some very disturbed people who found themselves very conflicted. They were convinced that improving people's self-esteem would lead to self-centeredness, to the sin of pride, and inconsideration of others. This conviction is totally understandable for well-bred Calvinists, and many Presbyterians. We were brought up to regard ourselves, we humans, as totally bad, fallen, and unredeemable except for faith in Christ. Self-love is a difficult and complex topic in our tradition.

I say, "we", when telling you of evaluating that event, because a three person-working group from St. Luke's, with Don Glennie, and I from the Presbyterian Support Services Association, were holding regular meetings

to work out how we could set up a joint project to be called a Life Enrichment Programme. It was an ambitious vision based on Jesus' claim that he had come to give people life, "life in abundance" (John 10:10). This project never came to fruition. At the end of 1976, Don left for Dunedin and we were left waiting for the next minister. Eventually our planning and dreams emerged as the Human Development Team, and which, eventually located here. In that early Life Enrichment Planning Team we were all agreed that we observed that many people had low self-esteem and that this did not lead to a life of abundant living. Instead, people closed down becoming restricted and limited in their range of living. We wanted to overcome that effect and so held a workshop on building self-esteem. In my mind that was connected with Jesus' great commandment, we read today in Mark's gospel: "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'." (Mark 12: 30-31)

Aye, that's the rub, as they say: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. If you do not love yourself very much then your neighbour is in for short change. That is at the root of my concern to assist people to love themselves to the full. Loving yourself spills over into loving others. In my experience, healthy self-love does not lead to self-centeredness and inconsideration of others. I am sure you will have noticed that I slipped the word "healthy" into that sentence. It is a way of acknowledging there is a common idea, out there, that self-love is undesirable, or something to be avoided. So, I might get around that idea if I call some self-love healthy in contrast to unhealthy self-love. Unhealthy self-love is self-centred, inconsiderate of others, arrogant and prideful. But you see, anyone demonstrating those flaws I would not say loved themselves. Love does not act that way. Paul made it very clear, two thousand years ago. He wrote, "Love is patient: love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude." (1 Corinthians 13:4) That clearly sets some limits on how we are to behave towards others. If self-love leads to any of these — unkindness, arrogance, rudeness— it is not love. It is playing with words to call it, unhealthy self-love. Speaking plainly, it is self-centeredness, not self-love. Notice how I am avoiding using the words egotism and narcissism. In the psychological world these words are sometimes used in convoluted and contradictory ways. They are not helpful.

What is self-love? We can apply Paul's words here. It means being patient with yourself, being kind to yourself, not being rude to yourself, that is, not calling yourself names and judging yourself harshly and unsympathetically. Not being boastful and arrogant with yourself means being realistic about who you are, not overlooking weakness and flaws, and being patient and kind to yourself. Add to that, Paul says, love does not insist on its own way. So, self-love includes holding back, limiting yourself. All this, about self-love is easy to say and hard to do. If we seek to follow Jesus' second commandment: to love our neighbour as ourself, we have to love ourself. It is not so simple.

It is not simple to do. We have to learn how to love ourselves. Just as we had to learn to feed ourselves, walk and talk. There is an inner urge, something of an instinct. But we have to have someone to copy. You've heard that wonderful old true story about Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor's experiment in the early 1200s. The great argument amongst the scholars of his day was what language it was natural for humans to speak, Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament, and the first Adam, or Greek, the language of the New Testament, and Jesus the second Adam. It was obvious that children of German parents spoke German when they were old enough because they copied their parents, similarly French, Dutch, Italian children. So the Emperor obtained several orphaned babies and arranged to have them raised in his palace by wet nurses, who on pain of instant death, under constant watch by soldiers, were not to speak in front of these babies, giving them nothing to copy. The idea being when they naturally began to speak it would be our basic language, Hebrew or Greek, and the problem solved. This experiment failed as none of the babies survived despite the best of everything in the Emperor's palace. This is well known in medical history as one of the early observations about how important the first loving contacts are in the life of a baby. The wet nurses made no significant connection with the babies. In fear of their lives, they did the minimum — fed, changed and put them down. The babies died of a condition they called at the time, marasmus — failure to thrive in the midst of plenty.

I'd like to follow that up with reference to another New Testament truth: we love, because he first loved us (1 John 4:19). This is another observation which today is fairly widely accepted — we, humans, love because we first experienced love from another. Children who were not loved are rarely able



to give love. Our experiences at the beginning of life have profound effect upon us. Our capacity for self-love begins in our home of origin.

## **Geering and Feuerbach (2014)<sup>27</sup>**

[27. Ed. — First preached 3rd June, 2014, at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, on the occasion of Revd. Glynn Cardy's induction.]

Glynn, thank you for offering me the privilege of contributing the sermon on the occasion of your induction. And, suggesting that I did not need to robe. I take it that wearing a suit symbolises reducing the distinction between ordained and lay. It fits with our St Luke's community culture where we seek to merge a range of differences and zip together seamlessly, as a unified whole.

It was nearly a year ago that I was introduced to Ludwig Feuerbach. Sir Lloyd Geering was giving the Michael King memorial lecture at the Auckland Readers and Writers' Festival. He was summarising the central themes of his book *From The Big Bang to God*.<sup>28</sup>

[8. Ed. — Geering, L. (2013). *From the big bang to God: Our awe-inspiring journey of evolution*. Salem,OR: Polebridge Press.]

Feuerbach is in this book in the extract of our non-scriptural reading, tonight. I did not meet Feuerbach in my theological training in Dunedin in the early 1960s. To be fair, he might have been mentioned, but I have no recall. At that time of beginning my theological thinking I was not ready for Feuerbach. I could not have managed him or his proposals. He was not right for me. Now, fifty years on I lap him up. He is right for my thinking now. He was not, then.

On reflection I have become aware of how my theological thinking has changed. Each stage has been right for me, at the time, as I have progressed through my thinking. My own experience has taught me that there is no one right way of thinking theologically, each way is right for each individual in their setting, time and place.

So, what about Feuerbach and his *Essence of Christianity*?<sup>29</sup> His focus is on the doctrine of incarnation. This doctrine is certainly unique to Christianity. Of the three great streams of faith tradition coming from the common

ancestral source, Abraham, we, Christians are the only one to have notions of the incarnation, to Jews and Muslims it is nonsense: that God comes to dwell on the surface of planet earth embodied, in the flesh of the man, Jesus of Nazareth.

29. Ed. — Feuerbach, L. (1854). *The essence of Christianity* (M. Evans, Trans.). London, UK: John Chapman. (Original work published 1841)

Most of us have got some kind of concrete thinking — like, you can't be in two places at once. So, the thought of God leaving, His dwelling place, coming to live in a human body is just too much. It means leaving Heaven empty. This strains belief and Jews and Muslims can't handle it.

Understandably. Truth is, it is hard for us thinking Christians too. We deal with the difficulty by claiming it as a matter of faith, as in John's Gospel. Feuerbach does not waste his time or energy trying to make sense of the mechanics of the incarnation. His interest is on what it means.

What grows out of such a core doctrine? If God comes to earth and takes on a human body it means humans are supremely valuable, in God's schema. It is people, people, people, who are important. For Feuerbach this is part of the essence of Christianity — humans occupy the highest place of value. So, the focus of a Christian society's endeavours is the improvement of human life for everyone.

From my observation the majority of the society I live in has as its highest value the accumulation of money. Money, often called the economy, is as God. The need to make money "lords it over" many of my fellow citizens in New Zealand. Whereas, in Feuerbach's essence of Christianity, human wellbeing is the highest value. This takes priority over the making of money. Improving the quality of human life, will cost money and profits will go down. This loss does not fit with capitalism. But, what is most important for us Christians?

It is hard for Christians seeking to follow The Way. The Way of Jesus, of sharing possessions and loving cooperation, selfless service and equality. It is hard, because we have to live in the environment of a monetarist economy. This is a world focused on dominance by an elite and the accumulation of materialist wealth. It requires of us, as Christians, to accommodate and to compromise to live in a world of money.

Another outcome of the incarnation for Feuerbach is to reclaim for humans, those values and capacities usually attributed to God. The attributes of God, in a lot of theological thinking, are considered to be beyond the range of human capacity. We describe God as being love, justice, compassion, forgiveness. And, tend to think of humans as less capable of these highest of values. In fact, in my Calvinistic, Presbyterian background humans were considered totally depraved and sinful. In this way of theological thinking we are so bad it required a supreme effort by God to save us from our deserved punishment. God sent his own son to die a sacrificial death as our substitute.

Glynn, I am sure that if we had not progressed from this kind of Calvinistic theological thinking you would not have chosen to join the Community of St Luke. I certainly no longer think we humans are as bad as my father and grandfather thought, and they had good reason — two world wars.

Feuerbach recovered for us a sense of human goodness, returning us to the declaration in the creation story — God saw everything he had made and indeed it was very good. But, here we come to the dangerous part, if we rest on this claim of goodness without acting with goodness we become delusional and narcissistic. We need to put others first. You know, as in the way of the theological thinking of Philippians: “look not to your own interests but to the interests of others”. And, we need to act out the qualities we once attributed to God. We need to act with love, with kindness, out of compassion and forgiveness. We, humans, are capable of this.

It is from our human hands that the improvement in the quality of human life and wellbeing will come. We must not wait hoping that God in heaven will intervene to make it good. That by his hand the hungry of South Auckland will be fed. No way. As is said, God has no hands other than ours. We must empty our self-interest and serve our fellows as demonstrated by the loving compassion of our God incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth.



*Agnes Dei*  
*A gift from Isabelle to Evan on his 80th birthday, 2014*

## Chapter 4

### Theological papers EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **Anselm and human guilt (1964)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — A paper published in December 1964 as the feature article in *The Log*, a monthly magazine published by the Student Council of Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.]

The question asked is: Whether the problem of human guilt is adequately dealt with in and sounds treatment of sin and salvation? My answer is no. I propose to substantiate my answer by briefly considering Anselm's treatment of sin and salvation and then to consider how guilt is most adequately dealt with according to today's understanding and to measure Anselm against this.<sup>2</sup>

[2. Ed. — Anselm (1033-1109) was a Benedictine monk, abbot, philosopher and theologian of the Catholic Church, and Archbishop of Canterbury, England, from 1093 to his death.]

## I

Sin, for Anselm, is a voluntary defection of the rational will. The turmoil of man's affections is not stressed by Anselm.<sup>3</sup> The state of sinlessness, which is "the sole and entire honour which we owe to God", is that of "justice or rectitude of the will, which makes men just are upright in heart, that is, in

will.”<sup>4</sup> Such a narrow view of sin is inadequate. In moving away from the Augustinian approach Anselm underestimates the bondage of the will to the affections. In operating from such a formal scheme which pictures as being wrong rational choices of the will, Anselm fails to do justice to the burgeoning grip of sin which holds man in unchosen and unwanted bondage. For all Anselm’s emphasis on the gravity of sin, he fails to do justice to its true nature, largely because his perspective is focused on the predicament of God as Creator — Just and Loving — rather than the predicament of man. Thus Anselm writes in *Cur Deus Homo* with a peculiar lack of compassion (one of the first necessities in dealing with guilt). This is a puzzling point, because in some writings, e.g., Eadmer’s *The Life and Conversation of St Anselm*,<sup>5</sup> Anselm is portrayed as warm and sensitive. Guilt, from Anselm’s view of sin, is the fact that man has violated and offended God’s honour by some defection of the rational will.

[3. Williams, G. H. (1960). *Anselm, communion and atonement*. St Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.]

[4. Anselm. (1956). *Cur deus homo* [Why God became man]. In E. R. Fairweather (Ed.), *Library of Christian classics Vol X: A scholastic miscellany: Anselm to Ockham, I, XI*, p. 119. (Ed. — Evan refers to this hereafter as “Cur Deus Homo”.)]

[5. Eadmer. (1956). In Fairweather, op. cit.]

Anselm regards sin, such as it is for him, with utmost seriousness. There are only two alternatives by which God can be true to his own justice and vindicate his honour: punishment or satisfaction. Man cannot make satisfaction, and he properly deserves punishment. Out of grace God determines a scheme whereby satisfaction can be made, and concomitantly the perfect number of inhabitants for the heavenly city can be found. A consequent necessity — that God become man — follows this determination. The God-Man’s sinless life gave God full honour in itself. As well, the sinless God-man in being freely and fully obedient drew death upon himself, which he was not obliged to suffer. This death merited an infinite reward, which is the second person of the Trinity willingly transferred as a gift to the sons of Adam as satisfaction for the offence to God’s honour caused by men guilty of sin. The forgiveness of what men owe God is given through the satisfaction merited by Christ’s death and willed by him as a gift to men. The thrust of Anselm’s scheme is that this forgiveness is not the result of “cheap grace”.

In *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm only implies how this grace can be shared by men. “But Holy Scripture everywhere teaches us the way to attain a share in such great grace, and how we are to live under it”.<sup>6</sup> Indeed *Cur Deus Homo* is a work presupposing the means by which men share in this grace. Anselm’s work is to justify, rationally, by an explanation of the faith, those means of grace known to and practiced by his contemporaries. G. H. Williams has carefully shown that the implications in *Cur Deus Homo* and the practices of the Church in Anselm’s time in regard to the means of grace are closely linked. He has found this to be centred in the ecology of the sacramental institutions of the church at that time. This was a “penitential-Eucharistic” focus. That is, Anselm and his contemporaries enjoyed the subjective experience and appropriation of forgiveness of their guilt in the sacraments of the mediaeval church, especially those of penance and Eucharist. According to Williams, baptism by this time it lost much of its earlier significance and had become associated with the preparatory work of prevenient grace by which man’s “original” or “natural” sin was dealt with, setting man free to exercise his rational will to God’s due honour.<sup>7</sup> For Anselm, penance was not a means of dealing with sin but was associated with Christ’s perfect obedience, by which the forgiving fruits were merited. Most important of all, the penitent man partook of and incorporated this benefit to the repeated sacrament of the altar.<sup>8</sup>

[6. *Cur Deus Homo*, op. cit., II, XIX, p. 181.]

[7. Williams, op. cit., pp. 41-42.]

[8. Ibid.]

In brief we have considered Anselm’s treatment of sin and salvation. Already I have cursorily criticised his treatment of sin; what of his treatment of salvation? It would be outside the scope of this paper to evaluate the reception of Anselm’s treatment of sin and salvation by his own day, and to decide whether it was then considered to deal adequately with the experience of guilt. Our concern must be with the present, and whether Anselm is adequate for today.

Anselm was writing a background of an effectively functioning sacramental system within the church which, as Williams puts it, had reached a mature point in a “penitential-Eucharistic” focus. So Anselm gave a formulated, theological expression of what men in the church were already experiencing. It is too much to expect Anselm’s treatment to be received with appreciation today when there is no background of experience, such as

the ecology of sacraments out of which he wrote, to which men can refer. For me Anselm's scheme is a remote piece of mythological, cosmic computation perpetrated outside the world of history and everyday life. This remoteness is magnified by Anselm's Christology. Christ, according to Anselm, seems like a romanticised mechanical robot, omniscient, strangely dichotomous in suffering and impassibility, and empowered for but incapable of willing disobedience.

Thus, while Anselm attempts to indicate the seriousness of sin and the infinite measure which was needed to bring forgiveness to men, his treatment does not bring this home impressively today. In the very chapter in which endeavours to make clear this magnitude,<sup>9</sup> he displays the attitude which causes me to be unimpressed by his claim of costly forgiveness. In "dialogue" with Boso,<sup>10</sup> Anselm asks if he, Boso, would be willing to say the totality of creation if it were clearly proposed to him that the salvation depended on his killing that Man (the God-Man, Christ). Boso is not prepared to do this and is commended by Anselm. Despite the need imposed by his scheme that Christ's murderers be ignorant (thus conditioning Boso's negative reply to the rhetorical question) I see a clear attitude of detachment and dispassionateness over the predicament of man which weakens his claims for costliness. Anselm's God is not agonisingly concerned for his creature's state. Even the words mercy and grace, used by Anselm in reference to God, have a formal orderliness about them and no emotive content. There is no risk, nor struggle, nor involvement, no mixing it up with the sordid side of human existence in the reconciling activity of Anselm's God. The stable at Bethlehem is clean, sweet and aseptic. Anselm's treatment of salvation is calculated and assured and was introduced into history by God and operation is remote, ordered and formal as the movements of the mass.

[9. *Cur Deus Homo*, op. cit., II, XIV.]

[10. Ed. — *Cur Deus Homo* is written in the form of a dialogue between Anselm and one of his students, Boso.]

The cost of Anselm's forgiveness is the cost of Abraham's ram standing docily in the thicket, or of a paschal lamb without a bleat. Costliness for Anselm comes at the point of who the "lamb" was. Anselm further fails in his attempt to impress this idea costliness by failing to deal with the Resurrection. Apart from the brief mention that it was within God's power to lay down his life as the God-Man and to take it up again, the



Resurrection is not important in the structure of his scheme.<sup>11</sup> Whereas, for me, the Resurrection highlights and vindicates the costliness of the enormous risk, of the struggle to be responsible (obedient), of the involvement with the misery of men's existence, of the willingness to bear the burdens of humanity, of the work of Christ which took him to the Cross. As with his treatment of sin, Anselm is inadequate in his treatment of salvation and thus fails to have an effective base for dealing with guilt.

[11. *Cur Deus Homo*, op. cit., IX, XI.]

## II

How can guilt be dealt with? In attempting a brief answer I hope it will come clear how this scholastic presentation of atonement, represented by Anselm, had such an influence in place of importance in the church for so long. Guilt is a very complex phenomenon. In the first place, it is real. Men are aware that they violate some form of order, whether it has been codified or not, or whether it is a natural order or has been imposed on men. One of the suggestions of psychoanalysis is that the sense of order within a man can become the root of guilt. Within their own "mythology" psychoanalysts have structured an area in man's psychic organism which they call the Super-ego. Crudely speaking, the Super-ego is educated by both external and internal agents to hold a form of order in regard to the structure of what constitutes acceptable living. If this order is unrealistic or rigid or harsh, guilt will result as it is violated by the Ego, which attempts to mediate all the forces and factors operating on the person so as to produce healthy life activity. Treatment involves an educative process, either to strengthen the Ego or to create a realistic and discriminating Super-ego.

Existential psychology regards this explanation of human life as insufficient. The school holds that man is a structured being thrown into existence in a world of multiple possibilities, in the face of which he must respond with an authentic regard to his structure. The choices which man makes often will not be authentic, and guilt will result. Yet there are always the other possibilities which were open to him but which his finite structure did not allow him to follow. By virtue of his contingency he is guilty of omission. Guilt, then, becomes a part of man's structure with which he must deal authentically, and it will always be part of the nature of his existence, like anxiety. In spite of this, existential psychology says that men must have

the courage to be to live in this state with an understanding of its nature. Guilt can be understood as a combination of these two views. It is an affect state and part of man's structure, as well as the fact of violation of order. To deal with guilt we have to deal with the affect as well as the violation. (To be thorough-going this paper would need to include a consideration of what would constitute a legitimate order this would mean a consideration of the doctrine of creation, but this is beyond the scope of the present task.) Guilt can follow the violation of an illegitimate order, and imposed law, or whatever men presume God requires. Therefore I will confine myself to the "mechanics" of guilt and how it can be dealt with.

In dealing with guilt we are dealing with an affect state, that is, our man feels because he has violated some order. So it is as important to deal with the feeling as with the violation; I venture to say even more important. The violation can never be un-committed. The milk spilt, period. The important thing is how man deals with his violations. The natural tendency is for men to try to deal with their violations by expiation. This is the root of all sacrificial systems, penance structures, and "works-righteousness" attitudes. Today, Hobart Mowrer, a psychologist, advocates something like a form of penance. He holds that guilt can be worked off.<sup>12</sup> But the history of human experience has been unsatisfied by this. It is to Anselm's credit that he holds that repentance and penance are not satisfaction of God's honour. The violation stands and the effect produced is only covered over — which is an ineffectual way of dealing with it. Again, as Anselm indicates, it is ineffectual to say "God forgives", or even "I forgive", in a casual way. This, too, is cheap glossing over. The violation cannot be casually set aside as forgiveness is offered.

12. Ed. — Evan was most likely referring to Mowrer, O. H. (1961). *The crisis in psychiatry and religion*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.]

How is forgiveness made meaningful? As I see it, and sense of self-worth is the key. When a man experiences guilt he suffers self-depreciation. Self-worth cannot be restored by a cheap offer of grace. It is part of man's structure to strive for positive sense regard with himself and for a sense of significance within the structure of the universe. When guilt depreciates the sense, a vicious cycle can develop, especially if the man depends on external sources for this sense. In order to restore a sense of worth man, in his striving, will commit another violation. Bondage results because he is

looking for a sense of self-worth based on criteria from some external source. In striving to meet or impress further the source of criteria, violations occur because man is being inauthentic. Guilt results and can only be dealt with as self-worth is restored or made authentic to a man.

The costliness principle comes at this point. It is a tremendously costly thing to convince a man of his self-worth in spite of violations he has committed. The initiative must come from without. It comes as another man, a significant other, reaches out with some personal risk and cost to establish a relationship and to demonstrate experientially that despite the violations the guilty one is worth this much. Theologically, this is represented in the Incarnation, death and resurrection of our Lord. It is an affirmation that in and of himself man means this much to God. Fit it was “while we were still sinners” that God did this.<sup>13</sup>

[13. Ed. — Romans 5:8.]

The continuation of this work is the responsibility of the church. Each member of the fellowship of the redeemed moves out to initiate these transforming relationships and confer the experience of a sense of worth upon another in bondage. Theologically, this is represented by the Pentecost event and the Church as the vehicle of the Holy Spirit. This event is totally ignored by Anselm in his writings as having any place in the scheme of redemption. Yet Anselm’s whole life centred in the institution of the church and the community of the monastery. By not recognising the importance of the church in his explicit writings on atonement, Anselm inadequately deals with the problem of men’s guilt.

What of the violation? How is it treated, in dealing with guilt? In the risky, costly involvement to restoring man’s self-worth, the violation is already dealt with. The violation itself is always beyond recall. But because of the violation, men have arrived at the position where they need salvation. That they need saving indicates God’s recognition of the violation. In dealing with any guilty person, authentic recognition of his violation is required. No violation can really be glossed over, for each violation of order brings its own judgement and its own particular suffering. Justice is never violated with impunity. The consequences of a violation may continue long after forgiveness has been appropriated. But it is sufficient to say that the costliness of Christ’s life and death, and the costliness to his followers in the

church, is a measure indicating that the violation has been taken seriously by God, even though he has dealt with it in an unexpected way.

My concern as a pastor dealing with guilt comes when I hear, with staggering frequency, “I know God forgives me, but I cannot forgive myself.” It is all too easy for people to have heard of God’s costly forgiveness through the death of Christ, but yet not to have incorporated this into their own being. This is my fear with Anselm. In his own way he has shown how God dealt justly with the violations of men, but simply to say that a costly reparation of cosmic dimension was made in order to forgive is not enough. Certainly the violation has been dealt with. However, I doubt that the demonstration of this, even with rational proof, has any efficacy in dealing adequately with guilt. We know that Anselm did not simply say this and hope for good results, but that he was supported by a whole ecology of sacraments. Anselm’s focus on the violation is well served by this ecology, because man’s sinful violations are being met constantly by participation in the “penitential-Eucharist”, where Christ’s obedient sacrificial death repeatedly makes merit enough available for the satisfaction of God. In their turn, Protestants believe that their sinful violations were not being held against them because of the imputed merit of Christ — by faith alone, an idea based on the evidence of Christ’s life and death. Whilst both these views were long-lasting, I doubt that they are adequate in dealing with guilt. While in these schemes justice is met in regards to the violation, the affective state of man is not consciously dealt with.

To conclude this section on the means of dealing with guilt I propose to return to the psychoanalytic view of guilt. This is warranted because Tillich, responding to what he understands of this view, considers that Anselm has done justice to man’s psychological structure and has therefore presented the most effective doctrine on atonement in Western Christianity.<sup>14</sup> It appears that Tillich’s concept of man’s basic psychological structures includes a conscience which accepts a need for punishment as a condition of forgiveness if a sense of having violated justice is to be avoided. This is only one form of psychological dynamic in men, and a questionable one. It is very authoritarian. That is, man’s psychic comfort is maintained by a constant attention in order to avoid conflict which has been earlier conditioned, by a continued sense of self-worth based on external “authorities”. This conditioning of the Super-ego has been accomplished in

the early development of the personality by some external “authority figure” or figures. Approval from these external sources has conditioned the person’s sense of worth to depend on external sources for this sense of worth. This, in my view, is not the intention God has for man, and is less than the optimum possibility of his structure. It is a state of bondage and sin.

[14. Tillich, P. (1957). *Systematic theology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.]

Paul Pruyser, a theologian at the Menninger foundation, has given some consideration to the psychological structures behind various theories of atonement.<sup>15</sup> He considers that a preponderance of guilt feelings and a sense of transgression and disobedience as the essence of human misery would be the climate in which Anselmian doctrines would grow. In such climates children are brought up great strictness in regard to moral demands, which are enforced with punishment or threat of punishment. Once a Super-ego is produced out of these conditions, any conflict and encounters with the Ego will result in guilt. Then a self-adjustment process begins. To eliminate such feelings of guilt, which are most uncomfortable, the Ego uses the means of self-punishment or seeks external punishment, expiation, retribution and the like. Pruyser says, “The situation of the self in this type of conflict has been described as ‘I am no good — I will be harmed!’ ”<sup>16</sup> This is the bondage of authoritarianism, the sin for a long period in Western Christendom. It is exactly this tone and attitude that I find in *Cur Deus Homo*. It is the attitude considered earlier in regard to Boso. I conclude, despite this very brief study, that the strong case can be made that Anselm’s treatment of sin and salvation may lead to a climate in which man’s bondage of guilt is increased. Anselm’s emphasis on the infinite debt man, his emphasis on punishment or satisfaction, and a scheme based on strict orderliness, lead to authoritarianism. That Anselm makes no reference to any motif of reconciling man from the bondage of the law reinforces my opinion.

[15. Pruyser, W. P. (1964). *Anxiety, guilt and shame in the theories of atonement*. Mimeographed paper, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas.]

[16. *Ibid*, p. 6.]

I have endeavoured to show that Anselm’s treatment of both sin and salvation is inadequate. Not only are the thought-forms of Anselm’s age hard to grasp, but also the background ecology of his church life is unavailable to us today. Thus both his means of expression and his means of

appropriation are ineffectual for us. But, more seriously, the psychological climate in which Anselm lived and which he perpetuated in his scheme of Cur Deus Homo, does not adequately deal with guilt, but instead has every possibility of imposing men further under its tyranny and disease.

### **Homosexuality: A Christian perspective (1991)<sup>17</sup>**

[17. Ed. — This paper is based on a lecture given in March 1991, at St Luke's Presbyterian Church, Remuera, Auckland. Evan's notes on the subject date back to 1978; the lecture was subsequently published, along with other contributions, in a leaflet produced by the Community of St Luke's in 1997 (see Bibliography).]

This is a continuation of the series of talks on “Homosexuality — a Christian Perspective”. And I should say that it is my perspective, but I am a Christian, so that makes it a Christian perspective, “a Christian” meaning me. I don't propose to be speaking for any other dimension of the Community: this is my Christian perspective.

I am biologically, theologically and psychologically trained and qualified. Biologically I am qualified in agricultural science and although it is a long time since I have been actively pursuing biology from that perspective it has formed a very important background and foundation to the way I think and operate. I think of myself all the time as an agricultural theologian and an agricultural psychotherapist.

Because agriculture is a pragmatic and an empirical science, if things don't fit in the field for me then I discard the theories or the hypotheses. They have to be seen by me to actually apply out there in the real world. This has meant that when, in my experience as a psychotherapist, I have come across situations that simply don't fit the ideologies that I have been taught, then I have given away the ideology. I want you to know that perspective.

In my farming days I remember with some amazement being on a place where we were breeding rams for sale, and had hundreds of lambs that we raised through their first year and then sold them. On several occasions I noted behaviour that I thought was animal homosexuality; as these rams all crowded together in these paddocks they would often engage in what looked like homosexual behaviour. As I thought about it more closely I don't think it was that at all, and it would be a mistake for people making

those kinds of observations to think of that as homosexual behaviour in animals. I am indebted in a lot of my early thinking, although it is somewhat suspect in some areas, to Desmond Morris, a zoologist, who has looked at human behaviour from a zoologist's point of view, and who takes considerable exception to us using the metaphor of the jungle to refer to aberrant and unpleasant kinds of human behaviour when we compare our cities to a jungle. He says that they should be more properly compared to a zoo where we keep animals in an unnatural environment as a result of which they behave "unnaturally". So here we were, packing 100 ram lambs and young hogget rams into a small space — quite an artificial and unnatural kind of environment — and if they behaved in that homosexual way I think it was an aberration of the circumstances that we as farmers pushed them into.

Then in my theological training in 1960 at Knox College, Dunedin, there was intense discussion among the students and staff there about the nature and place and situation of homosexuality. One of my earliest introductory lectures in psychodynamic theory was from our Church History Professor, Dr Helmut Rex, who introduced me to the Freudian theory of homosexuality. Today it is considered to have been quite overthrown, but the point he was making was that, if we can attribute homosexuality to any cause besides free choice in the individual, it takes on a completely different moral dimension. So that, if for reasons of nurture, in that particular theoretical frame of reference, an individual has been raised in such a way as to turn out homosexual, that is a non-blame situation, and the Church and others, including moralists, should not impose the notion that homosexuals are sinful, wayward people. They have got into that situation by something other than their own free choice.

So from very early times, those kinds of crude beginnings, I have been concerned about homosexuality. I have seen it and been interested in it, but most particularly of course during my psychological career as a psychotherapist. I have met many homosexual people, and, as a cross-section, it has been my experience and observation that they are no better, no worse, no healthier and no sicker than other people. I think in fact it was too late that in 1973 the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality as a mental illness from their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, which is their "bible" of diagnostic terms.<sup>18</sup>

[18. Ed. — American Psychiatric Association. (1987). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders — III* (Text revised edition). Washington, DC: Author.]

So I say that homosexuals are no healthier, no sicker, no more sinner, no more saint than I am. They are just ordinary people. In my experience and observation, apart from their sexual orientation, the only other thing that they have in common to distinguish them from those of us who are heterosexual, is their suffering.

I think that the community treats homosexuality appallingly. If any of you have sat where I have on many an occasion, when someone with a homosexual orientation is coming to terms with that fact in their life, and is going through the anguish of what that means, you would never think that homosexuality is wilful or deliberate or sinful or amoral or immoral behaviour. There is too much anguish in it to be a self-chosen thing. I am afraid that if the Church — and I have to align myself as a member of the Christian community — looks at what it has done, it will see that it has contributed a great deal to the suffering of these people. So I want you to know from the outset where I am coming from, what my bias is, and what my feelings are.

With that introduction I would like to move on and share some themes with you in a discussion-like way. It is not my style to read papers nor to present things very formally. I would like to be fairly relaxed and just discuss things with you. I would like as a beginning to share some building blocks with you as we think about this whole topic, and I would like to begin with some basic biological facts.

### **THE BASIC HUMAN ANATOMY**

The first one I want to share with you is the basic model of human anatomy. The basic form of the human body is female. The male body is an adaptation, a modification of that body. I am not sure whether you are aware of that, but if there is no modification in the process of our development from the time of our conception, if there is not process whether that body is modified, we turn out female — we have a female body. We might have male genetic structure even, but if down the course of its development certain ingredients are missing we turn out with a female body.



So the start of it all then is our genetic composition, what we happen to get by way of chromosomes. I as a male happened to get the short end of the straw of one of these sets of chromosomes — I got a Y-chromosome — that's got a chunk missing. Because it has got a chunk missing, my body modified from that of the female form into this male form that I have now.

But it modified only after an incredible sequence of events during the gestation that I experienced in my mother's womb. I started out with an X- and a Y-chromosome. If I had received from my father a sperm with an X-chromosome, I would have been truly female. But I got the short end one, so that Y-chromosome coupling with the X-chromosome which is all that my mother could give me, meant that I turned out male.

I turned out male because with that building block somewhere in early gestation the cells of the gonads — which could go in either direction, becoming either the testes for the male or the ovaries for the female — at a particular point began to produce androgen, a male hormone — like product. That male product means that the growing embryo develops male features.

Now without that male hormone, even though I had an X- and a Y-chromosome, my body would go on and turn out female. So that hormone is very important to the anatomy that I end up with — my body structure and the kind of way I am shaped and the way I function. I would like you to keep that in mind because it is now considered that not only does the presence of that male hormone help form the shape of my body, it also conditions certain tendencies of my brain and the behaviour I might later develop.

So that's the first sort of biological fact.

## **TWO RHYTHMS**

The second biological fact that I would like to bring to your attention is that we must distinguish between two rhythms of our body. All of biology is a marvelous kind of rhythm. It is an amazingly orchestrated, synchronistic dance where rhythm interacts with rhythm. My heart beats in a rhythm, my brainwaves function in a rhythm, my lungs and respiration function in a rhythm and they all interlock to make in this orchestrated system of rhythm, me, and who I am. I am all rhythm. Some of these rhythms are of short

duration; my heart beats so many beats per minute, my brainwaves are going rapidly so many times per second. But other slower rhythms might take a day or two to complete and some may take many months. One of these longer rhythms is the reproductive cycle and the rhythm of reproduction.

Women, of course, are very familiar with this. They live with their periods and the indication that a particular cycle has come to an end and that another will soon begin. So the reproductive cycle is organized around the shedding of an egg from the ovary into the body system — drawn into and down the fallopian tube where, if it meets a sperm coming up the tube, conception may take place.

It has then got to go through the next remarkable set of circumstances of lodging in the uterus. This has been prepared for it, with the renewal of the lining that receives it and nurtures and nourishes that growing egg. If it is not fertilized the egg passes on — it doesn't lodge, it doesn't nidate or nest, it is sloughed off. The lining that the body has made to receive this fertilized ovum and the growing embryo is passed out of the body with the monthly cycle. Then the body prepares itself again and so it recycles.

That reproductive cycle fits, of course, with another cycle, the one we call the sexual response cycle. They are not the same thing and we must separate them and realise that they are two different activities.

The sexual response cycle is of shorter duration and doesn't happen on a kind of regular basis like the monthly cycle of menstruation. The sexual response cycle is triggered by some kind of arousal mechanism. It is quiescent — the genitals are quiescent until, on some triggering mechanism which involves our brain, we start to get aroused. We go through a phase of excitation and then there is a plateau period when our arousal is such that it could taper off or move on to the next phase of climax. Then at climax there is this intense sense of gratification, of fulfilment, and this is followed by a phase of relaxation. That is the sexual response cycle and that is different from, although obviously intimately connected with, the reproductive cycle. We are not clear whether men have a reproductive cycle. Women certainly do as they have the biological apparatus for nurturing the embryo.

I was first introduced by an old teacher of mine in the United States many years ago to the fact that he felt, and was aware that life worked in rhythms

and in cycles of energy and quietness. There were times when he felt robust and times when he felt that he was slow and sluggish. But he didn't worry about that because he claimed that he understood the cyclic nature of his life. In a day or two's time he would feel robust and energetic again. We certainly don't seem to have any awareness that there are male equivalents to the female sexual reproductive cycle, but one of the myths that we certainly do have is that men are ready for sex at any time, that the sexual cycle is always awake. That clearly is not so.

Following years of research into human sexual behaviour in the laboratory situation Masters and Johnson published in 1966 their major work *Human Sexual Response*.<sup>19</sup> They pointed out that we men are much more fragile than the image we like to give in terms of our robustness and our readiness and our capacity to engage in the sexual cycle. So it is not true that at any time a man can just step in and fit in to the reproductive cycle of a woman. We just don't, as simply and easily as that, get on with it. They emphasised that the myth that men are able to do this has been quite destructive to men and women understanding themselves and being able to fully enjoy each other's company. The responsibility has been made too much that of the male, and many male egos and psyches cannot carry that pressure. They just don't stand up too well under it.

[19. Ed. — Masters, W. H., & Johnson, V. E. (1966). *Human sexual response*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co.

One thing about the human reproductive cycle that's an important difference is that there is no oestrus period or season such as we find on the farm. Most of you know that bitches come on heat every now and then and are, of course, a bit of worry to their owners because at that particular time they send out odours and other signals to the neighbourhood that they are ready. This is their fertile period and they invite all the local dogs to come around from far and near to mate and keep the species going. At that time the female is willing to stand and make herself available — present her genitals for the sexual cycle — but at other times most female animals are not available to the male. For this part, the male does not seem to be aroused. But anyways, not having the equipment to grasp, most male animals are hard pressed to rape the female animal. The female will simply move away. It has to be, as it were, conditioned by this hormone cycle to stand and be receptive. There is not an oestrus cycle for human beings.

## **SURVIVAL FITNESS**

Now the next little biological piece of information that I would like to put in place here is the question of what we might call survival fitness, or how these various features of nature seem to fit. How do these particular characteristics, or qualities, or features of any animal species give it a survival advantage?

Our notion is an evolutionary one which suggests that if a particular anatomical feature is not serving a useful purpose then it kind of dies out. The genetic carriers of that particular feature just fail to survive. Survival of the fittest suggests, then, that there has to be some worthwhile purpose, some way in which this feature, this behaviour, this function serves the survival interests of the species. So here it is that we can understand an oestrus period in the animal reproductive cycle which serves the purpose of ensuring that reproduction does occur, that the male sperm and the female ovum do get together because the behaviour of the male and female are compatible at that time. So having an oestrus cycle is quite important. Well, what has taken its place for humans if it is not there?

There are today a number of women who are increasingly in touch with their bodies and taking time to learn about themselves. They can identify when they are ovulating — something that most women have no idea about at all. Yet we are at a bit of a disadvantage if at that crucial moment of potential fertility there is no sexual response, no impregnation with sperm, no conception and thus no ongoing reproduction for the species. So what takes its place in the human situation?

It would seem that of all animals we are the species that enjoys sex.

I don't know how zoologists determine that, because when I observed some farm animals, they seem to get satisfaction out of what was occurring. But I suppose there is a risk of imposing a kind of anthropological perspective on animals. How would I know if they were enjoying it or not? It is hard to tell if a horse has a smile on its face. But it seemed that they were often very contented by the whole process. However, on the other hand, cats are a different breed, aren't they, and you know how much cats wail about the whole process!

The pleasure principle in the human sexual cycle is apparently a very important one. The fact that we have intense pleasure as a result of our

sexual activity seems to be one of the ways in which nature has ensured that fertilization does take place. Humans engage in the sexual response cycle frequently, not only for the pleasure of that even in itself — which therefore increases the chances of fertilization and the continued ongoing of the species — but for other important advantages, for instance the bonding that occurs as a result of it.

Again Masters and Johnson pointed out that the pleasure bond is a very important biological factor because as a species we are one of the slowest to develop and our young are most vulnerable. It takes a long time before the human animal is independent enough both to reproduce and to look after him or herself out there in the wild. We need long term care and it is quite a task. It is clear that unassisted out there in nature we would be at a considerable disadvantage from having one parent. So the pleasure bond that sex provides to a male and female to unite and stay together and work co-operatively together is a very important feature in ensuring that there is support and cooperation for this long task of raising the young human young. I want to take that a bit further a little later on.

These, then, are some of the basic building blocks of biological fact that I would like to introduce to you.

### **A DISTINCTIVE RHYTHM**

Now, just to take one of the lines that we can develop from all this: the sexual response cycle is the one human biological rhythm that is capable of voluntary interruption for a lifetime without damage to the organism. Think of some of the other rhythms that you can't interrupt for very long. How long can you hold your breath? You can't interrupt that for very long. How long can you go without food? A lot longer, but you can't go without food indefinitely.

It would seem then that the biological rhythms that we have most control over have often been imbued with a kind of special significance in society. We have isolated them and often made them the feature of religious or other culturally important phenomena. And so we give to virginity and chastity high status — at least I should say in certain quarters of our culture we do. We give special emphasis to some of these cycles, certainly the interruption of them.

But I am wondering if we are going to get into the notion of what's normal and what's abnormal, is it normal to interrupt such a cycle when it obviously has, as I have been explaining, some real value — the pleasure bonding value? So, when you interrupt that, it would seem to me to be a little unnatural to spend a lifetime in chastity, or a lifetime in which you do not experience the full completion of this cycle, but put it aside for some religious value.

That's the sort of imposition that I think comes from an ideology and doesn't fit the farmyard facts I was talking about before. I am not too sure, you see, about things like virginity and restraint and not completing the sexual act, but this is, often, something that we would like to impose on the homosexual community. We would like to say to them "Okay, maybe you can't help the origins of your orientation, but shouldn't you just restrain yourselves and not engage in this unnatural act? Wouldn't that be the best way to go about it?"

I am suggesting that it is not natural to invite them to restrain. What might the advantage be, then, in terms of this business of survival of the fittest, and the notion in evolutionary theory that there has got to be some advantage?

### **WHAT IS HOMOSEXUALITY?**

Let's just think a bit more about homosexuality. What is it? Homosexuality, as we understand it technically now, is descriptive of the orientation that a person has. A homosexual person has an orientation towards the same gender as the person is himself or herself. Homo comes from the word that we have in homogeneous — it means the same as. It has nothing to do with "man" or "male". Hetero has to do with different or other than. So a homosexual person is one who has an orientation, a sexual preference if you like, towards the same gender. And a heterosexual is a person who has an arousal or an interest in a person of the opposite gender. That is really all it means technically. Unfortunately, of course, we have loaded the world homosexual with pejorative qualifications and all sorts of innuendoes that are bad news.

Let me say again, we are not at all clear about the origins of homosexuality. Nor do we have access to precise statistics. It has always been difficult to

get accurate statistics, especially in societies where homosexuality has been illegal. But in the general population it would look as though between 10% and 15% are homosexual in orientation.

The question is then asked — how does that serve the interests of the survival of the race if there is this number in the population who, because of their sexual preference, are not wanting to engage in the sexual response cycle with the opposite sex and who do not contribute to reproduction as a result?

We know that this is not altogether the case. There are many homosexual men who father children and enjoy parenting and who set about ensuring that they have children. However, if you are at the exclusive end of the homosexual range you would not be contributing to reproduction. So some people think, again, it is unnatural. You see, the natural course of things in the minds of these people is for men and women to pair off and contribute to the procreation of the race.

### **A SOCIOBIOLOGICAL THEORY**

I want to suggest that we look at theories such as are found in sociobiology where attention is given to the whole community, say of the anthill. There are forms of ants whose task it is and whose kind of role it is in that society to be guards or soldiers. They go out and deal with any threat, even at the risk of losing their own lives. They do it on behalf of the whole community and they serve the whole community. They themselves don't contribute sexually to the reproduction of the species but they are needed if the species is to go on. Now I am suggesting that, years ago when we were evolving somewhere on the plains of Africa, homosexuals would not have been out of place at all. They would have had a contribution to make.

I am going to engage in a little bit of speculation — it is my own and it's quite personal to me, but I am going to offer this to you to think about. You see, I think, as I look at cultural history, that the exclusivity of partnership is a fairly recent thing. It is certainly a predominant feature of male dominated society, and particularly in those cultures where there is a male dominant god and in societies that subjugate women. Exclusivity of partnership was important in societies where women were regarded as property and kept in the interests of being used to procreate 'my' family, where 'my' daughter

was a commodity, and where her virginity was important, so that the 'goods were not soiled' that I had to offer to a prospective husband who paid me for it in dowries. Let's face it, during a lot of our earlier cultural history women were treated like chattels, and exclusivity of sexual partnering probably belongs more to that type of culture.

But that wouldn't have been the case thousands of years ago as we were evolving as a species. There it was everybody pulling together like the members of the anthill. We had to co-operate to find food, to find shelter. Male anthropologists suggest that the reason we developed speech, upright posture and all the human characteristics that mark us out from other animals, was because the male hunters had to be co-operative. It is just as easily suggested by female anthropologists, and probably truer, that we learned language and co-operative skills, our upright posture, and our ways of using our hands in order to raise our children, because if we didn't raise our children we didn't survive. All the hunting in the world would not have brought us to this point today in evolutionary terms.

So, it was probably more important that there was co-operative activity in child-caring, child-raising, and there everybody was important and men stood guard, and women stood guard, and women gathered and men hunted. Everybody probably had a part to play and we weren't too interested in whether there was this particular mate and this particular person for reproduction purposes, but we were probably bonded together because of the pleasure principle that we enjoy in the human sex response cycle. Men and women bonded together into these units. So it wouldn't really matter whether the homosexual male, or the homosexual female contributed to reproduction purposes. We were united in our effort to keep the group, the band, together and to work co-operatively with each other. So I suggest that there could be quite a survival advantage. We don't have to worry about whether every member of the species is engaged in reproduction, so long as every member of the species is bonded in the common good, co-operatively working together for the survival of the whole, rather than for their individual lives.

I have no difficulty in being questioned whether it is unnatural that homosexuals don't engage in contributing towards procreation, as that doesn't seem to be an unnatural thing to me.



## ISSUES OF ORIGIN

Now what of some of these other things that get raised in the whole issue of homosexuality today — issues of origin? How come this orientation is there? In the past the nurture theory has outweighed all other aspects in the nurture/nature argument. We thought that perhaps homosexuals were the result of some kind of nurturing factor, such as they were the children of over-dominating women and weak men, or absent fathers who provided a poor role model on which no male would want to model themselves. Here was this powerful dominating woman — we wanted to be more like her. Those kinds of psychoanalytic Freudian theories have been seen to be quite defective in very careful and extensive studies that have indicated that there seems to be no one psycho-social cause. Things like seduction — the seduction theory that they were misled somewhere down the line — those kinds of explanations are not borne out in the analyses that have now been carried out.

The thing that is being pointed to more and more is a bio-chemical origin to the homosexual tendency. As I have mentioned, at a particular critical point in foetal development, if there isn't the presence of a male hormone, my body will feminize, even if I have X/Y chromosomes. There is an area in the brain that governs human sexual activity and behaviour. For men, if it is not masculinized, it will remain female. For a woman, if at the same sort of period there is the presence of male hormone, although they have XX chromosomes and have female bodies, their brain will be masculinized. The brain is perhaps, one of the main sex organs of our body. By the time we are born, we could have a strongly masculinised brain in a woman's body. Or, if we have a man's body we could be born with a strongly, moderately, or weakly feminised brain that is a brain that didn't get the male hormone that it needed at the crucial stage of foetal development in order to become masculinised.

It seems that at birth we have this tendency built in. On top of that, nurture then takes over to influence nature. With a tendency to a homosexual gender orientation, nurture may clinch the process. Then some of the psycho-social influences may have real impact. But we have to face the mystery of sexual attraction in the first place. It is unclear what contributes to what is sexually arousing in people. Amongst heterosexual males there are comments such as "he's a leg man" or "he's a breast man". These

indicate that different body features appeal to different people. Not all men are attracted to every woman.

An ex-patriate New Zealander, John Money, is researching this area of sexual attraction.<sup>20</sup> He suggests two dimensions to the process: above the belt and below the belt factors. Above the belt our head and heart are involved. Below the belt involves lust. When both areas are in agreement the person can feel harmonious. When there is conflict it can spell trouble. So it is a complex question of what our particular sexual attraction is going to be.

[20. Ed. — Money, J. (1986). *Lovemaps: Clinical concepts of sexual/erotic health and pathology. Paraphilia, and gender transposition in childhood, adolescence, and maturity*. New York, NY: Irvington. Money, J. (1988). *Gay, straight, and in-between: The sexology of erotic orientation*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.]

This brings me to the Kinsey Report(s).<sup>21</sup> In his report on his research into the sexual behaviour of American men, Kinsey found that there was wide range of attraction. If you think of the normal bell-shaped ends of any scale. In terms of sexual attraction then, it would be natural to expect not too many people to be at either the exclusively heterosexual end or the exclusively homosexual end of the scale. If it were not for social and cultural conditioning it might be more normal for most people to be somewhere in between and to be to some extent bi-sexual in their orientation to sexual attraction. Kinsey found a range and suggested a continuum from one extreme to the other with most people placing themselves somewhere along the range between homosexuality and heterosexuality.

[21. Kinsey, A. C. (1948). *Sexual behavior in the human male*. Philadelphia, PA: Saunders. Kinsey, A. C. (1953). *Sexual behavior in the human female*. Philadelphia, PA: Saunders.]

## **Grace, by any other name.**

### **Film review of *Once Were Warriors* (1994)<sup>22</sup>**

[22. Ed. — This was originally published in *Crosslink*, the monthly newsletter of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, which ran from 1989 to 1996 under the editorship of Roger Wiigg. In the same year as the review appeared, *Crosslink* won the prestigious Gutenberg Award from the Australasian Religious Press Association for being the best religious publication in Australasia, an award on which Evan's name appears in association with this review.]

*Once Were Warriors* is becoming one of New Zealand's best known locally produced movies, with good cause. With large audiences it is making lots of money. It is a well-made movie cinematographically. It arrests attention and evokes emotion. Its content disturbs and offends. Its storyline is brutally real. It has aroused a storm of debate and controversy over its portrayal of domestic violence and poverty in the urban Māori community. But, as far as I am aware there has been no comment on its theological significance.

We put it on our must see but won't like list, and waited until we felt up to viewing it. When we did it was up to expectation and more. I came away emotionally overwhelmed, disturbed and excited. It was breath taking in the awful violence depicted and stunning as a parable of the Christian gospel.

Yes, thanks to Stuart Vogel, I do go to movies, open to the Word of God they might have for me. And, yes, thanks Alun Richards, I am on the look-out for new pictures of the Gospel with a carrier-wave appropriate to today's culture. I personally found *Once Were Warriors* speaking to me in an awesome way through its contemporary pictures.

It was so New Testament. The traditional motifs are so powerfully present I find it difficult to believe they are not carefully designed and intended. I have seen no commentaries or reviews which would indicate this. As far as I am aware neither author Alan Duff, nor Riwia Brown and Lee Tamahori, the film makers, have suggested so. However, it seems too much a coincidence.

Perhaps, understandably, the sociological perspective has been given such priority because of its powerful impact, given the community's concern about domestic violence and poverty that few have given attention to the theological level of interpretation which the movie presents. It would be a pity if this was to be overlooked in current discussions and I belatedly offer a comment or two.

Cosmologically, *Once Were Warriors* is the age-old story of the battle between the forces of good and evil, light and dark, set in a New Zealand ghetto. It addresses the questions this universal conflict raises. Who wins in this universe, and, by what means? How can there be salvation for men who are enslaved by brutish ignorance, dark forces and false gods? What is the outcome of men who live the myth of might being right, the might and right of masculine muscle power? How can there be salvation for women trapped

in this male system, ignorantly colluding with it, seduced by the same myth and gratified by the attentions of mighty males?

The answer is revealed in the movie. It is love which transforms, converts and saves. This is the cosmic theme of the Christian Gospel.

The daughter, Grace, is the Christ-figure in *Once Were Warriors*. Grace, the same name as in the hymn, Amazing Grace. Coincidence? This young woman is the gentle, consistent lover-of-others, who hates evil and seeks the good. She is there for others even though they do not deserve her love. She stands in for others; gathers the little children protectively; tells stories to inspire and inform; associates with the homeless; suffers abuse and ridicule. All these activities are traditionally associated with Jesus of Nazareth.

Eventually Grace is betrayed by a midnight kiss from a member of the inner circle of family intimates [Uncle Bully]. The rape crucifies her. She suffers her defilement in silence, desperately seeking that it all might pass. There seems no escape from the world she lives in. It is peopled by insubstantial figures engaged in trivial pursuits. Even the film representatives of the Christian Church are holier-than-thou characters too preoccupied with heavenly things to notice her. There is no Good Samaritan to attend to her. Her cup does not pass.

Alone, deserted, the victim of a travesty of justice she dies on a tree. Again, remarkable parallels with Jesus.

Mother, Beth, like the Prodigal son, who's gone off to waste her inheritance in a far country, has been coming to herself. She has been experiencing growing doubts about her life style and the myth of male might. Hers is a growing metanoia, a profound change in her personality, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Her conversion is clinched by Grace's death. In the end she is saved by Grace.

One of the film's most exquisite scenes is Beth's discovery of Grace's death. Her wail of anguish is heart-rending. In her desperation she clutches at the body cut down and lowered into her arms. We viewers experience a true-life pieta. This is no renaissance style pieta of serene sadness or pity, (with due respect to Michaelangelo's craftsmanship). The mother's agonising pain of grief is also the pain of new birth. Beth realises the

costliness of love and in the hospital corridor we see the emerging new woman.

Beth takes Grace home. She returns to her “father’s house”. The tangi is in the whare tipuna. The elders receive her and her children, back with unconditional love, no judgment. Like the father of the Prodigal they have been waiting. Amidst the farewells is the celebration of life. Hope of a new future begins to rise, weak and vulnerable. Will it last? Can it be maintained? The film leaves us with the dawning of this fragile hope and no definitive answer.

The growing strength of the new life is adequately presented, however, as clear, clean brilliant gem-like cameos in that otherwise still sordid world of brutality and beer. There is Beth presiding at a meal table, with full plates of vegetables and lamb set in front of her reconciled family. The camera zooms in to focus on the loaf of bread being divided. Mother suggests they say Grace. The youngest child exuberantly shouts the name of his sister, Grace. It is a memorial meal, a Passover marking the transition from bondage to freedom, a Communion marking the restoration of a broken and estranged family joined in remembrance.

Beth repairs Grace’s book. It was her treasure, the manuscripts of those stories by which she gave meaning to her world. It was her confidant into which she poured out her truth. At the time of her death it had been torn in two. I was reminded of the story of the Temple Veil being torn in two from top to bottom at Jesus’ death. There was no longer anything separating God and people. From the repaired book there came the true story, nothing separated her mother and brothers from the cause of Grace’s death. Her betrayal is recounted, the Judas is identified, and, in a parallel to one of the New Testament stories about Judas’s fate, this Judas, [Uncle Bully], in the end, “falls headlong to the ground and his bowels gushed out”. [Acts 1:18]

In the meantime, the father in *Once Were Warriors*, Jake, is the unsaved, tormented soul dimly aware of the hell he co-creates and lives in. He soothes his pain with beer surrounded by his mates who support his myth of muscle power. Their measure of the love and esteem he is held in is by the number of jugs of beer donated by bar patrons to blot out his anguish over Grace’s death. Yet by his own admission he is a slave, from a line of slaves,

who doesn't know the saving power of Grace to move him to a winner's or warrior's way of life.

The most powerful and striking theological motif of *Once Were Warriors* is Jewish, Old Testament, in origin, that of the Suffering Servant from the Book of Isaiah. This was the theme the early Jewish followers of Jesus used to make sense of his death. In this movie, as I have suggested, Grace takes this role. I can take practically the whole of Isaiah chapter 53 and apply it to Grace. Its immediate application is within the context of her own family, especially her mother and brothers. However, the particularity of this family and what happened for them has a universal application as well.

Salvation through the love of the Suffering Servant is the Christian way and is a timeless principle. It is not only a one-off figure and event in history. For Christians, Jesus of Nazareth is the supreme example and embodiment of salvation through the Suffering servant's activity. It includes more than a metaphysical matter of balancing the heavenly account books of divine justice by Jesus making it right for me with God by suffering on my behalf. To revel in that sort of salvation seems the height of self-centeredness. Salvation must also include a here and now effect. We need to be saved from our personal equivalents of the scenes portrayed in *Once Were Warriors*. Inhumanity and violence take many more forms than male muscular mayhem.

I prefer to understand salvation through the love of a Suffering Servant as a principle which needs to happen again and again in the lives of people in their own immediate context. So, in this film, Grace lovingly suffers for her family. Those members of her family who take advantage of what her death offers are saved from their enslavement to false myths. They did this when they came to themselves and faced into the destruction and death that their loveless way of life brought in their lives and changed or converted as a result.

Then in faith they stepped out, however falteringly, into a new life. Beth was heading to become a suffering servant for others. Salvation in this sense includes taking up the servant role of loving action for others even at the cost of suffering if need be.

This universal principle of salvation represented by Grace applies to me as well as to the imaginary Heke family. There is no doubt the Hekes represent

a dreadful fact of life in the Māori ghetto of New Zealand. Grace represents some wonderfully patient and forbearing Māori in New Zealand society. So, if I take Isaiah 53:5 and apply it to me and to Grace it would read, she was wounded for my transgressions. My transgressions? Yes, my contributions, conscious and unconscious, as a middle-class Pākehā male, to the existence of poverty, false myths of male power and rights, domestic violence, the Māori underclass and all its misery in New Zealand. How many Māori, represented by Grace, have been wounded by my transgressions? “[U]pon her was the punishment that made us whole, and by her bruises we are healed.” Surely I deserve to be punished for my contribution to the inhumanity of New Zealand society, but Grace, and Māori like her, have suffered abuse and rejection for holding out for love in their relations with Pākehā like me. It is that loving patience, forbearance, indeed grace/Grace, that has saved our society from going up in flames on more than one occasion. If we take the opportunity offered by this Grace and come to ourselves we could be made whole and healed. Our community, no matter how divergent could be reconciled and restored. We, as in the film, could sit around the one table sharing the same loaf.

*Once Were Warriors* is a powerful movie. One I hope that will be appreciated for its theological value as much as for its awful portrayal of man’s inhumanity to people. I recommend its viewing to all in the Church.

## **Healing in the Church: A position paper (Lent 2009)<sup>23</sup>**

[23. Ed. — Written as an ongoing Lenten project for the Community of St Luke’s.]

### **INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE**

Healing is to be a theme in The Community of St Luke, Remuera, Auckland in the year of 2009, and discussion is invited. This paper is a position I am taking on the topic. Briefly, my position is that modelled on Jesus, healing has been part and parcel of the life of the Christian Community throughout its history, and we could well be more attentive to it, and more inclusive of activity designed to promote and induce healing than we are in St Luke’s today. This paper is intended to explain, justify, describe and suggest conditions which might contain and pertain to any such healing activity and invite discussion in response.

## **BACKGROUND**

### *Jesus*

There seems no question on the part of current historians of the early church, that Jesus, the man from Nazareth, who was later elevated by his followers, after his death, to the status of Christ (the Messiah) and eventually deified, was, among other roles, a healer with considerable potency and effectiveness attracting considerable attention because of his healing ability and actions. His healing activity does not seem to be a deliberate strategy to attract an audience, rather healing was an integral part of the Kingdom of God he initiated. Joining the Kingdom of God was to enter a realm of healing.<sup>24</sup>

[24. Evan — I am most indebted to John Dominic Crossan's work, especially his *The Birth of Christianity: Discovering what happened in the years immediately after the execution of Jesus* (Harper Collins, 1998).]

### *The Kingdom of God*

Jesus was a political activist. He was motivated by a deep spiritual awareness of the nature of God and the way human life could be lived. A skilled teacher, he set out proclaiming that the Kingdom of God had arrived. This Kingdom was organised in the form of small communities, the first of which was the group eventually stylised and known as the twelve disciples. During his life his followers carried out his carefully prescribed program of spreading the establishment of this Kingdom as an alternative to the established, colonising Roman Empire and the puppet Herodian Kingdom of Judea. The small communities forming the embryonic Kingdom had an agenda of self-help, non-violent, non-resistant activity of small, low profile meetings for sharing food, physical resources, support, teaching and healing and were committed to living the values of radical equality, embodying and enacting love.

### *The Early Church (From the time of the crucifixion to the circulation of the first written New Testament documents)*

Jesus' activities, especially proclaiming the Kingdom of God, were a threat to the political stability of the established Roman Empire and Herodian Kingdom. He was executed by crucifixion carried out by the Roman



authorities, who were aided and abetted by Jewish religious authorities. His disciple-followers, after initial confusion and faltering immediately following his death continued his program as if he were still present. Jesus had schooled his early followers to be independent of his presence in order to live out the program of the Kingdom of God by indicating to them that they would be able to do everything he was doing. I note this includes the capacity to heal. It seems to a historian such as Crossan that Jesus' program included the strategy of preparing his followers not to be leader dependent. Other revolutionary movements at the same time as Jesus were bands of men and women gathered around a charismatic prophetic type leader which soon dissipated on the leader's removal, for example, John the Baptist's followers.

The scholars of the Jesus Seminar have concluded that Jesus did not claim or promote himself as a divinely appointed leader, and certainly not as a part of the Trinitarian Godhead. However, he was without doubt an inspiring person with obvious spiritual power. It is not surprising that relatively quickly after Jesus' execution the early Christians deified him or, at least, considered that he was deity. It was common in those days to deify significant persons: consider the Roman Emperors. This tendency is recognised as the Euhemerus theory. This process of seeing Jesus as divine emerged for the early remnant followers from their ferment of reflection on their personal experiences with him while he was alive; what he had said and done with them. Also, it is clear they engaged in intense review of the Hebrew Scriptures and traditions making connections with Jesus and the spiritual ancestors and the definitive acts formative to the Jewish faith. So the early Christian communities saw Jesus as the culmination of the divine purposes at work throughout the lengthy history of the Children of Israel to such an extent that he became identified with that divine purpose as God incarnate.

Further, the continuing sense they had of the immediacy of his spiritual presence with them led to the construction of stories of his resurrection as a metaphor to give words to otherwise indescribable felt experiences. Further, they could use the stories of his resurrection to explain their continuing confidence in and commitment to his Kingdom of God program. Clearly a whole collection of stories about Jesus was being gathered in the different small continuing communities of the faithful and being communicated

orally. Eventually these stories were collated, edited, codified, organised and written up in continuous biographical narrative accounts of his life entitled Gospels and became part of the canon of the New Testament scriptures. The emphasis in the Gospels is not on accurate historical biography but on producing a responsive impact on the reader/hearers to the divine purposes at work in and through Jesus. In these collections there are many stories of Jesus' healing activity and they are given prominence and used as evidence of his divine nature and powers, and love and compassion for humanity.

## **DEFINITIONS**

In making my position clear it is crucial to make some clear definitions of how I am using key words. While there often is a conventional understanding of these words any examination of a variety of dictionaries and encyclopaedias suggests there is no one standard convention. Thus it is important to declare how I am using the words. And there is considerable entangling of ideas in the several words associated in this arena of healing. The key words are: healing, health, care, cure, disease, illness, wellness, sickness, treatment.

### *Health*

The World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of health is: "A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease." ([www.who.org](http://www.who.org)) Some add to the end of that sentence, "and the absence of disease or infirmity". This advocates perfection: who is ever in a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and, therefore, by this definition, healthy? I know people who have physical diseases and infirmities who also have a state of complete mental and social wellbeing. What do we call such people: healthily diseased? In our present state of knowledge there are some physical diseases and infirmities which are incurable, even untreatable. By the WHO definition we cannot think of people with such incurable conditions as healthy, perhaps we can use the word, well, to think of them? Wellness is not well defined either; some sources make it synonymous with health.

### *Wellness/wellbeing*

Wellness maybe considered as the experience a person achieves when living a balanced, “wholesome” life to the full potential of their limits.

Wholesome is the state of being full or complete with all contributing parts, body, mind and spirit, of the person’s life integrated into a whole.

### *Healing*

Healing is simply described as “restoring a person to health”, or “setting right” or “making whole and sound”. I am going to use a passage from David Clark’s sermon of 8th February 2009: “Medical anthropologists make a distinction between healing and curing. Healing goes with illness which refers to social meanings attached to the condition a person has: curing goes with disease which refers to the actual physical condition of a person.”

This is a very important distinction for us to make and hold to in this discussion. Healing might not encroach on medicine and might take place without medicine. And, healing may produce a cure as an outcome to the healing process, but not necessarily. People can achieve a high level of wellness without a cure of their disease. Cure, having to do with the physical body, inevitably is connected with medicine. In considering healing in the Church we are not setting out with an aim of curing anyone and clashing with medicine. We could consider cure a side-effect.

### *Cure*

Cure has been defined as a completely effective treatment for a disease. In other words, it is a procedure or substance which gets rid of the condition which results in a disease outcome.

### *Disease*

Disease is an abnormal condition of a living organism which impairs normal functioning of the body. A disease has specific signs and symptoms of that disturbed functioning.

### *Illness*

Illness is the subjective experience of a person with a disease. Some define illness as the opposite of good health, as ill-health or poor health. Some

even make illness synonymous with disease, which I think is wrong. Illness is how a person with a disease feels as a result of having that disease. We could say, it is the feeling of being sick, or as Kiwis put it, of being crook. It is to be noted that the feeling of being ill or sick or crook, is very much the same feeling whatever disease a person might have. This generalised feeling of unwellness, of being sick, is the product of the body's response to disease and not produced by the disease itself. A feverish high temperature is part of the body's defence system at work and feels much the same whether it is from a malaria infection, or a serious motor accident.

### *Care*

Care means to be concerned about or to look after another person and actively contribute to their wellbeing. It involves some degree of compassion, which is a concern for the suffering of others and taking action to do something to relieve it.

### *Treat or treatment*

Treatment is to subject a person to being handled in a procedure, or medical intervention designed to cure a disease. Treatment can be carried out with or without compassion and care. Some medical treatments and procedures can be carried out with a high degree of technical competence and achieve a cure of disease without the practitioner being caring.

### *Jesus' healing<sup>25</sup>*

[25. See the section in Crossan's book (op. cit.) devoted to healers and itinerants.]

It is safe to say Jesus engaged in the healing of illness, not in the treatment of disease, and that his concern was to restore people to wellness, if not health. As a side-effect he may have at the same time healed a disease. Of course, at the time of Jesus there would have been the full range of human disease; infections, burns, broken bones, trauma injuries, cuts and abrasions, dental troubles, neoplasms, childbirth difficulties, gynaecological troubles, organ malfunction, congenital deformities, degeneration and aging, neurological, mental and emotional illness, and so on. Jesus would have been confronted by such diseases and would have undoubtedly had compassion for the sufferers. Any engagement he had with them, I believe,

would have been to seek to heal any unwellness or any component of illness associated with the disease.

Some diseases, an impairment of normal bodily functioning, may have a relatively small component of illness, i.e., a subjective experience of feeling unwell, associated with them. While other diseases result in a significant degree of feeling pain and sickness and loss of mental functioning. Making this degree of discrimination between healing and curing may be considered pedantic semantics. However, I think it important to make these distinctions about Jesus and the characteristics of his healing activity because his behaviour stands as the model of how we might approach healing in the Church today. Jesus was constantly the man of love and compassion. That was his motivation. Curing, as suggested in the definitions can be carried out without any love or compassion. A cure may be the outcome of a simple, scientific curiosity to find the best means to overcome a disease effectively and efficiently by technological treatment interventions with the practitioner having no interest in the sick person. I believe the process of curing is most effective when it involves love and compassion.

#### **A CASE EXAMPLE OF JESUS HEALING A WOMAN**

If we considered the story of Jesus healing Simon's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-31), which David Clark discussed in his Sunday sermon, 8th February 2009, it would seem to be a report of the curing of disease: a fever. A fever would indicate it is the body's normal response to some infection which nevertheless impairs other normal bodily functioning. The woman was in bed, incapacitated, while her body defences battled infectious disease bugs. A war was raging in her body. Jesus took her by the hand and lifted her up and the fever left her and she began to serve them. (This is the bit that disturbed David: she got back into serving the men.) Is this a literal or figurative account?

If it is literal, then it is the record of a miraculous cure. Miraculous because if you have a fever and it leaves you, then it is going to take you some recovery time before you are up to serving anyone. I think the record makes it miraculous because it is unbelievable to me that there can be such an instantaneous physical change in body status, from incapacitating fever, to being up, fit and well. Also, hopefully no one is going to be so inconsiderate of you as to accept you getting straight back into the serving role

immediately after a fever has left you because you will have been “wiped out”, exhausted by the body’s battle. And, is this the point of Jesus’ healing activity to have Simon’s mother-in-law up and back into serving the men folk as soon as possible?

So, if we are into considering healing in the Church today, this is no model for us. We are not into miraculous curing. One, because that sort of thing can only be done by miracle workers, which we are not, and, two, because we are seeking a more profoundly meaningful purpose to any healing we seek to achieve, rather than the recovery of normal bodily functioning in order to have someone restored to servitude. (Although, I suppose there are some people who would say I’d rather be up and about waiting on guys than in bed with a fever which could be fatal.) My conclusion is that this story is figurative. It is a little thumbnail, symbolic picture of an early Christian Kingdom of God community where women are given equal status and attract as much consideration as men, unlike it was in the regular society of the day, and, where there is the companionship of serving, supporting and sharing food with one another, and healing for those laid low.

### **ILLNESS IN JESUS’ TIME AND PLACE**

I think that there was a large illness component to disease in Jesus’ time. Disease left people being very sick as well as it being a condition disturbing or impairing their normal bodily functions. Back to our definition: disease is an abnormal condition of a living organism which impairs normal bodily function; let us consider the abnormal conditions in which humans were living in Jesus’ time and place. Galilee, Jesus’ stomping ground, had been colonised by the Romans in their Empire building exploits. They dispossessed the Jewish peasants from their subsistent allotments in order to aggregate holdings of fertile land into large commercial farms capable of raising large profits for the fortunate few new owners; political cronies of the Emperor. Romans regarded the life of the peoples they conquered as cheap and expendable. They were incredibly harsh in quelling any disturbance, (two thousand crucifixions in a military reprisal to a minor peasant revolt) and conscienceless in inflicting pain and suffering in fact they were quite sadistically cruel to their conquered subjects. Homeless, unemployed and sick peasants would mean nothing to Roman and Jewish overlords.

From the comfort of Auckland in 2009 it is almost impossible to imagine the suffering such displacement would cause in the lives of the local population of Galilee. Our nearest source of enlightenment could come from our understanding of the effects of colonisation on our indigenous peoples who were uprooted and displaced by the early European settlers acquiring land by fair means and all too often by foul means. Both Māori in recent history and Jews in Galilee two and a bit millennia ago did not treat land as a capital item held for commercial purposes. To the Māori, land was their ancestress, Papatuanuku, Mother Earth, to the Jews it was the Promised Land divided amongst the households of the twelve tribes of Israel (see the story of Naboth's vineyard, 1 Kings 21:3). Both groups saw themselves as guardians or custodians of a gifted ancestral inheritance — land, and when they were dispossessed of it the resulting psychosocial distress was powerful and wide-spread in effect.

Obviously starvation and malnutrition was rife and caused sickness and disease, as did homelessness and inadequate shelter. Weakened bodies have lowered resistance to infections; organ systems are over-loaded and exhausted and go into dysfunction; injured limbs and skin fail to recover; infants fail to thrive and die; the elderly and infirm are defenseless and collapse and family units and social life is strained, weakened and disrupted. Under such circumstances there was a great malaise over Galilee with people being “sick unto death” (see the sermon with the same title in Chapter 8), and this was the context into which Jesus came bringing healing and the good news of God's dealing with humans. I suggest Jesus' concern was less for curing the diseases of the body and more for healing the sickness unto death which was prevalent. Healing the sickness of the times was part and parcel of his politico-theological message of the arrival of the Kingdom of God. The geo-political manifestation of the new Kingdom were the little communities gathering in households in rural Galilee with teaching and healing main components of their activities together. We have no idea what healing practices they might have engaged in except to speculate they would copy and emulate Jesus. Crossan believes there would have been the healing of companionship taking place within these small communities. This dimension of healing would add to the effectiveness of their more formal practices of healing. At St Luke's we should not underestimate the power of the healing of companionship for those coming within our membership.

## **WHAT JESUS HAD IN COMMON WITH OTHER HEALERS OF HIS DAY**

As a healer, apart from being exceptional, Jesus was not unusual. Shamanistic style healers and exorcists were and are common in the pre-scientific world. Jesus was in keeping with these. There were other healer/exorcists around in Galilee at the time of Jesus. It does seem that he was quite outstanding. And, the conditions which he healed were typical: fever, leprosy, paralysis, withered hand, bent back, haemorrhage, deafness and muteness, blindness and mental disturbance. At around the same time as Jesus in Galilee there was the most celebrated healing centre in the ancient world in Greece, at Epidaurus the Sanctuary of Asklepios in which careful records were kept. There these records indicate the same sorts of complaints were brought for healing. Even today at a healing centre such as Lourdes, the same sort of complaints are common. Crossen describes visiting Lourdes where there were heaps of crutches left by those miraculously cured but no prostheses, no wooden legs, were to be seen. Jesus used typical folk means of treatment: laying on of hands or touching, verbal commands, using spittle or mud. There is nothing for us to learn or copy from these techniques except to note the hypnotic dynamic to them as was present at Epidaurus and is at Lourdes. The hypnotic element is a most important component to healing. Trance, the consequence of hypnotic effects, is an altered state of consciousness which enhances healing. From what the Jesus Seminar scholars have to say about the authentic original voice prints of Jesus within the Gospel narratives, I think he would have been a most entrancing teacher greatly enabling his healing abilities.

## **HEALING**

### *Healing is natural*

Hippocrates, one of the West's earliest scientific-like observers about the human body, its functioning and healing, noted the natural capacity of the body to restore itself to a balanced state of wellness. The natural tendency of the human body, when wounded or malfunctioning is to heal. This observation from ancient Greece is still supported today. We will have all experienced the cuts and scratches in our skin to have healed over; colds and flu eventually leave and we recover; broken bones mend; nausea, vomiting and pain come to an end. Our bodies and organismic being have



an incredible capacity to defend against injury and invasion and when our defences are breached we have an incredible capacity to heal ourselves, restore ourselves, recuperate and recover normal functioning. Of course, there are limits to these capacities and our bodies and being can be overwhelmed and damaged irreversibly. We are made of vulnerable flesh and blood subject to wear and tear, overuse, abuse, and under use, injury, aging and deterioration. In the best of circumstances, biological life is inevitably a terminal condition; — death comes sooner or later to all living organisms.

### *Healing and medicine*

Our starting point is that healing is a natural function of the human organism. What contributes to this natural function? What can be done to enhance it? What can be done to ensure that it works and works effectively? Healing produces wellness, not necessarily cure. In our context, here and now in Auckland, it is taken for granted that the natural process of healing is aided, enhanced and ensured by seeking medical attention and treatment. Some of the earlier confidence our society had in medicine's capacity to aid healing is weakening and today people are turning to a variety of alternative means. The medical world has acted as though it had exclusive rights to healing, but even within that world today there is increasing recognition that non-medical contributions can be effective. When I was setting up a counselling service at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, in the mid 1960s, it was necessary for me to be formally introduced and vetted by the local British Medical Association, New Zealand Branch Chapter, so that I could be cleared to receive referrals from doctors. In those days it was forbidden for doctors to have any association with disapproved health practitioners such as chiropractors. Now Auckland University of Technology, in its Health Science Faculty, Department of Psychotherapy, has the MindBody Healthcare Programme, headed by Dr Brian Broom. We could well seek consultation and an association with him in any project at St Luke's.

### *Non-medical healing*

One of my earliest experiences of effective non-medical healing was as a student at the Institute of Religion in the Texas Medical Center, Houston, where I was training in pastoral theology in 1964, whom I shall refer to as

Chester (not his real name). Chester came to gain skills in hospital chaplaincy so that he could go out and spread his good fortune. Chester had had an aggressive malignant inoperable tumour in his brain growing in a way that could not be removed surgically. There were clear marks in his shiny bald skull of the attempted surgery to remove it. All other medical treatments were unsuccessful at getting rid of it and it was killing him. His doctors pronounced they could offer no more. He had spent all his available money on treatments and his wife had left him. In despair he had gone to one of the ubiquitous revival and healing services which abound in Texas and had been converted and healed. His tumour shrank and disappeared and all evidence of its presence left him, amazing his doctors who could not explain it but had to confirm his cure. There he was, alive and well, a student in our programme wanting to go out and convert and heal others. Medicine acknowledges rare, but not undoubted “spontaneous remissions” where there is not only healing but cure.

Chester greatly disturbed me. I had no difficulty with the fact of his cure. I accepted that as a mysterious reality. How had it happened? What was it about revival services and conversion that produced healing? What about all those who went to such services with the same hope and faith and did not have a healing? And, many other questions were raised with no immediate or easy answers forthcoming. Most disturbing was my sense that Chester was cured but not healed. I did not think he was well. There was no wholeness about him. There was no balance, he was fanatical in his drive to get into hospitals and produce conversions and healing. (He was a difficult student who thankfully I did not have to deal with directly.) It seemed to me that his motivation to go out on a ministry of conversion and healing was from unconscious self aggrandisement. It was going to be an ego-trip. He would be the saviour. He would be the instrument of healing. He was looking for the means to be able to call upon the Lord and bid healing to occur with a certainty that it would. What a power trip that would be. I do not want St. Luke's to be an outlet for megalomania.

### *Mysterious cure*

Can we identify the factors that go into a healing such as Chester's cure and replicate them? Are they so idiosyncratic that we cannot replicate them? Clearly, on top of the natural process of healing, the effective “extra” which

produced the cure, was a state of mind. All physical, pharmaceutical and dietary interventions had been exhausted. Mental activity and state of mind stuff gives the medical world difficulty because of the focus it places on the body. The standard methods of scientific research (randomised control trials) used by medical investigators do not lend themselves well to inquire into such mental phenomena. Psychological research using more qualitative methods allows for in-depth interviewing of subjects who have had such experiences and seeks to identify common themes or processes in them all. St Luke's could open any healing activities to research inquiry. Chester described his conversion, he responded to an "altar call" invitation from the revivalist preacher, went forward from his seat in the congregation, and "confessed his sin to God" on his knees at the altar with others, and "accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour". These are all mental activities. Then he told us he was enveloped in a deep sense of peace and contentment and a certainty that his prayer for healing would be answered affirmatively. This was a state of mind. And, he could hardly wait for the evidence of a shrinking tumour to be confirmed. We can think of Chester as being prototypical of this type of "healing experience".

*"Conversion", healing and "brain washing"*

In his book, *The Battle for the Mind*,<sup>26</sup> William Sargant reports on his investigations into revivalist conversions. Sargant found commonalities with the processes of "brain washing" or "mind-control" which was of current concern in those days for its use by communist authorities to obtain confessions of wrong doing from dissidents and protesters or prisoners of war, who then accepted and adhered to the proper, approved Party line. Briefly, the process is to destabilise the subject from all regular normal structures of daily activities and to put them in an environment provoking terrifying anxiety. Then, when the subject is considered to be at breaking point, a way out is offered by a kindly official: "make a confession and go straight". Nowadays a milder form is seen in TV programmes where there is bad cop and a good cop who work the suspect into making a confession "it will go better for you". Ian Ramage, a New Zealand Methodist clergyman, wrote a correction of Sargant's work, *The Battle of the Free Mind*,<sup>27</sup> in which he responded to what he viewed as Sargant's gross misinterpretation of John Wesley's conversions.

[26. Ed. — Sargant, W. (1957). *The battle for the mind*. New York, NY: Perennial Books.]

[27. Ed. — Ramage, I. (1967). *The battle for the free mind*. London, UK: Allen & Unwin.]

So, the revivalist technique is very similar. The congregation, sitting in austere surroundings, with entrancing rhythmic music are warned of human sin and failing, of God's implacable justice and wrath, of the perils of final judgment and the punishment of hell with everlasting pain, then the preacher offers a way out that will go better for you, come forward and make confession and accept Jesus as saviour, because he has stood in for you and taken the rap you deserved. When the subject surrenders to the hypnotic suggestions embedded in this sort of preaching they experience the promised peacefulness. An altered state of consciousness is the result. Healing might be the consequence of the relief which comes to the angst of hopelessness, despair and anxiety. Similar consequences result for alcoholics following the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Step programme when they accept that they are powerless to overcome their addiction and hand their lives over to a Power greater than themselves. In making that surrender they create an altered state of consciousness and are often able to begin important changes in their addictive behaviour: a healing, but, not a cure.

### *Snapping*

Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman continued the investigation of these changes with a sociological review of conversion experiences, in their book, entitled *Snapping*.<sup>28</sup> They choose this colloquial term to describe the phenomena of dramatic change in a person's life. The subjects of their investigations reported the experience, as if "something snapped inside". Their interest was to follow up the means by which cults gained converts. Noteworthy is their finding that the processes are very much the same, although the content is very different. Christian evangelists use very much the same techniques as the Hare Krishna recruiters, as do Scientologists, as did the Symbionese Liberation Army, or the Charles Manson family/gang. They also noted that many effective therapeutic techniques also utilised similar processes. This is frightening.

[28. Ed. — Conway, F., Siegelman, J. (1978). *Snapping*. New York, NY: Delta Books.]

### *Manipulation*

Their conclusion is that in so far as all successful techniques to recruit new members to whatever cult are similar, and that many successful therapeutic techniques have similarity to conversion techniques, it depends on what ends the techniques are being used for that matters, and thus an ethical judgment is involved in determining what is legitimate or moral and what is an immoral use. Along the lines of these concerns is the question of manipulation. There are those who consider any form of manipulation deprives people of free choice and so any technique which could be said to be manipulative is considered unethical by them. These charges of manipulation have been laid across the board at behaviourists, such as B. F. Skinner, and at non-directive, client-centred therapists such as Carl Rogers. Such diverse, eminent therapists admit to direct or indirect manipulation or persuasion in the pursuit of healing, and acknowledge all therapy has elements of this. They argue that, equally, all good parents who aim to teach their children how to live safely and effectively in the world, successfully use forms of manipulation or persuasion to achieve this parental objective.

### *Process not content*

Using the same techniques for producing a snapping effect people can be changed to health, wholesomeness and good, or for criminality, violence and evil. We would like to think that conversion to Christ is good, what about to Krishna, or Scientology? So, it is the process not the content that is the important thing when considering healing. It was with Jesus himself. The reports are that no one doubted he healed, some accepted he healed by the power of God, and some thought it was the power of Beelzebub. If the outcome of healing is health and wholesomeness and improved quality of life, does the content of the process matter? At St. Luke's we will not be saying any healing is through the power of Beelzebub. But, does it matter to whom we attribute the healing? Nature is probably the most accurate answer. May be God and Nature are one and the same? I think using the Christian formula could be quite important in developing the necessary altered state of consciousness in people coming to St. Luke's seeking healing. It could be part of the process. But, we need to remember that in and of itself such content makes no difference to the outcome which depends on process. To think the words are important is magical thinking: have we got the abracadabra or the spell right?

Another point to this process versus content matter — Conway and Siegelman found a psychologist who could produce the same effect as Christian Faith Healers who “slay in the spirit”. This is a technique where the healer steps forward to meet the person coming for healing and dramatically pronounces that “in the name of Christ I slay you in the spirit” or some such formula, and touches their forehead, whereupon the person literally collapses and falls to the floor. Often two of the healer’s assistants are in position by their side to support their fall, and especially if they fall backwards. Such a spectacular result is offered as proof of the power for healing held by the healer. It is offered as evidence that the spirit has overcome the evil forces making the person sick. This psychologist toured University campuses denouncing such faith healers as charlatans. He claimed he could produce the same effects and he declared he had no access to God or the Holy Spirit. So he would explain the psychological process behind such seeming power, then call for volunteers and demonstrate how he too could produce a dramatic fall following a formulaic pronouncement and it worked, even though the students and the volunteers in his audience knew it was a hypnotic trick. This takes us back to Chester and power- and ego-tripping; behaviour we do not want to get into at St. Luke’s. Are some “faith healers” in the business motivated by self-aggrandisement? Nevertheless, the altered state of consciousness resulting from being “slain in the spirit” could quite easily produce a healing result. “Process not content” is the issue. Despite the questionable motivation healing could result from producing the state of mind which leads to that outcome. At St. Luke’s we would aim for the necessary altered state of consciousness without techniques of conversion or slain in the spirit.

### *Altered state of consciousness*

What is an altered state of consciousness? Everyone is familiar with these, though possibly not this description or label. Every day we experience a state of wakeful awareness, and the opposite, a state of sleep with no consciousness. The state between wakefulness and going to sleep, and the reverse of going from sleep to wakefulness, are called hypnagogic states. These states have been given a lot of attention by psychologists and sleep scientists. We can experience some very strange sensations, see, hear, feel, and smell strange, unusual things that are not real or present except in our

imagination. Our minds seem to be letting go of our normally controlled awareness and we can have short bursts of amazing insight and creativity, as well as bursts of confusion and craziness, as our minds move from one state to the next, making odd connections and associations as they do, (as our mind does when creating dreams). Our bodies might jerk and twitch in uncontrolled ways unexpectedly in the hypnagogic state. There is no conscious awareness in sleep except for dreaming. Some remember their dreams in detail and some never do. Sleep scientists say we all dream in those stages of the sleep cycle called REM (Rapid Eye Movement). Dreaming is an altered state of consciousness in that for the vast majority when we dream we experience a form of consciousness in which we may engage in a lot of movement, speech and action, but our body remains motionless. There is a body-mind association with our various states of consciousness and the body dimension can and has and is being researched and measured, even more so now that we can observe the functioning of the living brain. Until very recently we could only study dead brains.

### *Altered states of consciousness and the body*

In each of the various states of consciousness we can enter there is a corresponding state of the body. This state of the body involves gross functioning such as heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, blood flow, hormone production, muscular tension and the subtle functioning of the nervous system and the brain, with neuronal circuitry and neurotransmitter production. One state of altered consciousness fairly easily appreciated is the state of meditation. In meditation a person mentally clears the mind of all normal thinking and consciousness and focuses on keeping an empty state of mindfulness open to sensing deepening awareness and connection with the universe, or, focuses on something (candle flame) or some thought or sound (a mantra or vision) to avoid distractions of thought and attain the sensation of unitary being with the universe. This sort of state of consciousness may be familiar as a prayer practice for some. In this state the physiology of the body is very different from that of ordinary consciousness, heart and breathing slow, blood pressure lowers, blood flow increases to internal organs and decreases to the periphery of the body, stress hormone production stops. In this state of quiet and rest the body can

recover and restore itself from the wear and tear of normal living activity; healing is enabled.

### *The hypnotic state*

Another state of consciousness, more debated about, is the hypnotic state. Some question that it is a state of mind, rather than a way in which the mind functions. I have been mostly influenced by the work of Milton Erickson, a psychiatrist who specialised in his own form of hypnotherapy. He did not put people into a sleep state of hypnosis. Instead it was an entranced state of mind, where there was an intense focus and awareness on what he, the therapist was saying, with a reduced interest in anything going on around the edges of consciousness, and a willingness to suspend judgement and the usual control of scepticism over ordinary thinking, with an increased openness to suggestion. For example, there might be a direction to imagine yourself in a peaceful, pleasant, safe place and there in front of you is a table loaded with all your favourite foods and such wonderful smells waft towards you that your mouth is watering. Indeed, in a well conducted trance induction a person's mouth would water. Erickson's art was to build such skillfully-crafted stories told in the right tone and pace of speech that his patients could enter fully into the experiences he contrived for them. All his stories were designed to induce states of mind with bodily experiences to alleviate the distresses the patients had brought to him for treatment. Amazing accounts of his successes have been collected, such as curing adult bed-wetters' distressing night behaviour when their normal day time control over body functions was lost and they wet the bed. The body-mind connection and involvement is clear in his work, while Erickson offered no explanations for why or how it worked in healing.

I am very comfortable with the notion of a hypnotic state. For many hypnosis is a word with bad connotations, raising images of stage, entertainment hypnosis, and of people being manipulated outside of their awareness to perform in humiliating ways. There are many parodies on "look into my eyes". Movies are made of the detective swinging his watch before the glassy-eyed suspect as he puts his questions. Then there are stories of unreal characters like Svengali, the evil hypnotist, and real characters such as Rasputin with stories of hypnotic powers. Hypnotic dynamics are part of the ordinary life of humans. Children playing make



believe, adults lost in a book, or in front of television are usually in trance states and open to suggestion. We go back to our earlier question, who might take advantage of a person in a trance state, and for what purpose? It is a matter of ethics. These states are open to misuse. Some more than others are gifted with the ability to induce trance and make powerful suggestions, any means used at St. Luke's to use hypnotic dimensions in healing should be carefully monitored.

There is no doubt about the reciprocal connection of mind and body. Stilling the body helps still the mind and an agitated mind agitates the body and a person cannot sit still. A simple, momentary experiment can be tried. Imagine a fresh lemon, imagine cutting it into slices, then imagine sucking one of the slices. The majority of people find that suspending credibility and entering into that suggestion causes their mouth to pucker up to some extent. But as yet we do not have an explanation of how the connection works. How does a mental process — imagining sucking a lemon — a product of the brain, work in the brain to have it send signals to the lining of the mouth and saliva glands instructing them to pucker up? The same physiology is at work as if a real slice of lemon was sucked. Research demonstrates that such hypnotic suggestions, carefully carried, are extremely potent in some people causing major body changes. Under hypnosis some people can undergo major surgery with little or no anaesthetic. Hypnotic reduction of pain is well known. It is because of the known power of hypnotic suggestion that I find it easy to appreciate that Jesus' command, "take up your bed and walk" had results.

There is a well-documented account of a young doctor, Albert Mason, whose consultant was unavailable to him for advice on treating a warty skin condition so he chose to use hypnosis, having heard that hypnosis works on warty skin conditions, and that it would cause no harm if it did not work. In a couple of weeks' time when the patient returned for follow up review his skin was clear and cured. When his senior consultant was brought in to confirm the cure and was shown before and after evidence the consultant was gobsmacked. This particular warty skin condition (congenital ichthyosis) was untreatable by known medical science at that time. The case was written up and published. The unfortunate young doctor was flooded with people coming for treatment of this skin complaint. He was never again successful. He explained that once he knew that particular warty skin

condition was untreatable he could never believe enough in hypnotherapy for it to work on that complaint again. This brings us to belief, which understanding and dealing with is part of the core business of the church. (By the way, a follow up years and years later of the man with the cured skin condition discovered that he had never been troubled by it again. It had not reoccurred.)

## **BELIEF**

Lloyd Geering, in his swan-song public lecture in Auckland recently, made a word study of the use of the word, belief. Currently, he observes the word is used as a synonym for opinion. Today, “I believe that ...” means “it is my opinion that ...”. So it is possible today to hear a fundamentalist style Christian ask, “Do you believe in the devil?” In effect, he is asking if in your opinion the devil exists. If you are to be saved you need a devil to be saved from. Not many years ago, such question would never be asked, observes Geering. To believe in the devil then meant to have aligned yourself with the devil and taken up the devil’s cause. Belief involved active commitment to what was believed in. Belief was not just a mental activity, a belief in ideas or words, but it was more — it was activity lived out on the playing fields of life. It was not just “orthodoxy”, the right words, but “orthoproxy”, the right actions. Unfortunately, our liberal tradition in the church has tended toward a focus on the right words/ideas to believe in, and, apart from dimensions in the social gospel cause, away from right actions as an expression of belief. We, Protestants, believe in being saved by faith, not by works. So, do we believe in healing as part of the life of the church? Is it just a good idea, or, is it also a cause to live for?

Once our young previously-successfully-curing-warty-skin-condition doctor lost his belief in the effectiveness of hypnotherapy; he lost his commitment to that cause and could not live it out. Hypnosis for this skin complaint was now a “head-trip” for him, not something he could walk with his feet on the ground doing it because he knew the condition was untreatable. I am now deeply indebted to the work of Bruce Lipton and must bring it in. Lipton is a cell biologist working at the molecular level and has written up some of his basic thinking in a book, *The Biology of Belief*.<sup>29</sup> He has also made DVDs of some of his presentations and lectures on this topic which visually

elaborate his written work. Through his work I have been able to update my original biological training in my Agricultural Science degree.

[29. Ed. — Lipton, B. (2005). *The biology of belief*. Fulton, CA: Mountain of Love Publishers.]

### *The biology of belief*

There have been some major paradigm shifts I was unfamiliar with. He introduced me to the new science of epigenetics, which studies the effect of environment on the cell, its development and functioning. Environment is more influential than originally appreciated in the days when genetic factors were considered the golden rule. Our genes are not the major factor we once considered them. They do not control the living cell. He introduced me to a clear, simple way of understanding proteins; the molecules of life. Proteins move and are the engines of the living cell. They literally drive all cell activity. Various protein molecules are spread throughout the cell membrane, that structure which is the skin of the cell protecting the interior from the external world, and is a barrier to anything within the cell from getting out. These protein molecules act as gateways, moving to open and close, letting selected things in and out of the cell. Like the sense organs embedded in our skin, our eyes, ears, nose, touch through which we sense or perceive our environment, some specialist proteins in the cell membrane have the equivalent of antenna waving in the surrounding fluid environment. These sense organs perceive signals in the cell environment announcing the presence of beneficial chemicals, like glucose, floating by. These chemicals are needed by the cell to live and function. Receiving such a signal announcing glucose, a protein gateway specialising in glucose, opens and allows the necessary stuff in. Lipton at first called this whole system the biology of perception: proteins in the cell membrane perceiving the right chemicals in the environment and opening to them or closing against them.

### *Perception can be misleading*

Later, Lipton observed that perceptions can be distorted. In his lecture presentations he uses an experiment to make this point. He shows his audience a map of the world, and invites people on the basis of this map to make comparisons and tell him which is bigger, Scandinavia or Brazil? On

the basis of the map shown Scandinavia is bigger, whereas in fact Brazil has the bigger land area. The map he shows is generally familiar and is produced by German map-makers who scale everything relative to Germany. Scandinavia is closer to Germany and shows up bigger, Brazil, further south, shows up smaller. Recognising that our senses can be deceived, Lipton used the word, belief rather than perception. On the basis of what we see on the map we believe Scandinavia is bigger than Brazil. This use of the word belief is what Geering points out to be an opinion. However, whether it be a belief or an opinion the cell may act on it. Crudely put, if it looks like glucose to the antenna the gate will open to it. The belief gets acted out. The cell commits itself to the belief it is glucose. Some nasties, like viruses and bacteria can mimic good stuff like glucose, and send out signals which deceive cell membrane proteins tricking them to open to them and the microbes get into the cell and we catch influenza. So, wrong belief can lead to our downfall.

### *Material and immaterial signals*

The next update Lipton provided for me was about the nature or structure of the signals which the gateway proteins pick up with their various antenna. In the illustration I used above I took a chemical, glucose — material, tangible stuff in solution that can dry out to a powder. But, is it really that sort of stuff? It is an organic compound made up of atoms linked around a configuration of Carbon. This is a traditional approach; a useful working model of how glucose is. However, with a new understanding of the physical basis of any chemical we have to have a model that is immaterial and intangible which recognises that there is no-thing, nothing in the atom. It is all energy. Lipton uses two pictures of atoms in his presentations, to make his point. One picture is the traditional model which he calls Newtonian after the great English genius Sir Isaac Newton. It shows the material, tangible stuff of the atom like a miniature solar system with electrons spinning around a central nucleus of protons and neutrons. The second picture is labelled the quantum atom, it is the new model of physics ushered in by the likes of Albert Einstein who mathematically worked out that mass (matter, material) is energy (immaterial, no-thing) in his famous  $E=mc^2$  equation. This second picture has a frame empty of anything. At its rock bottom, glucose is comprised of nothing but a whirling spinning dance

of interconnecting energies. Lipton predicts that as biologists take this new model on board it will lead to major changes. The antennas on the cell membrane gateway proteins respond to signals that are patterns of energy and basically non material. This opens up the possibility that there are gateway mechanisms in the cell membrane controlling the biological life of the cell which respond to other forms of energy out in the cell's environment, not just energies organised as chemical stuff; like the energies of thought and belief.

### *Prayer*

Enter a consideration of prayer — another core business of the church. Last year I made a presentation to St. Luke's about how ideas in quantum physics have helped me develop new insights and appreciation of the power of prayer to influence the human condition. Einstein was most disturbed that his mathematical leadings were taking him to the conclusion that there could be what he called "spooky action at a distance". That fits prayer having an effect over a distance. Albert found the direction his maths was going so alarming that he declared, "God does not play dice with the universe". He spent the rest of his life seeking the facts in the physical universe which humans had overlooked or had not yet found, on which to base a conclusion that what happens in the universe is entirely predictable and so our world is consistently reliable. Since his death his maths have been proved right by experiments physicists have been able to carry out. There is unpredictability, things can happen at a distance and take a direction never anticipated. Energy can behave in ways quite different from the laws of nature identified by Newton which have been the foundational understanding of our universe from his day until the quantum physicists. Our understanding of energy is far from complete but there is no doubt energy exists and makes things happen even though we don't know all the whys and wherefores: same with prayer. We know it exists and makes things happen even though we do not know all the whys and wherefores. Prayer, belief and energy are all entangled and defy our understanding but that is no reason for not turning to them. The community of St. Lukes can set up a powerful energy field to back up a ministry of healing.

### *Placebos*

To extend this business of belief we have to turn to the placebo effect. This is a recognised medical phenomenon in which the outcome of medical treatment is determined by what the patient believes the outcome of the treatment is going to be. It is particularly noted when there is a positive outcome to treatment which is known to the practitioners to be inefficacious because the prescribed medicine was only a sugar pill or a surgical intervention was literally only skin deep and play-acted but the patient did not know this. Clearly the beneficial outcome for the patient was “all in the mind”. This placebo effect is a pervasive phenomenon in medicine and as yet defies explanation. Understandably, Lipton gives the placebo effect much attention. It is a well-documented and studied effect with amazing results recorded. Unfortunately, there is still too much scoffing about the placebo “all-in-the-mind” effect within medicine because there is a “fake” quality to it. Nothing of pharmaceutical potency is used, and nothing substantial is done except to fool or trick the patient into believing they got the real thing. That gullible patients believe it shows a weakness in the patient and trickery in the practitioner.

Consequently, in the minds of many it is all dishonest, unethical and to be avoided. However, this concern for ethical purity misses the point — how does the mind produce such amazing results? Lipton suggests this question should be the subject of major scientific research within medicine. If we know how placebos work can we harness that ‘all-in-the-mind’ power to ethically heal patients?

### *Nocebos*

I have already noted the down-side of the biology of distorted perception or misbelief, the body or cell, can commit itself to the false belief and act on it to its detriment. The other side of the placebo effect is the nocebo effect — placebo from the Latin “I will please” and nocebo from “I will harm”. If it is “all-in-the-mind” and a person believes the care and treatment she is getting will work, it can also be “all-in-the-mind” that it is not going to work, and her biology will pick up what she believes and act on it. Lipton quotes Henry Ford on the power of the mind, “If you believe you can or if you believe you can’t ... you’re right.” Crudely, a person who is given some reason to believe the medicine he is prescribed, or the surgical procedure she is going to undergo is unlikely to do any good is likely to find that

prediction will come true. This nocebo phenomenon has also been recorded in medicine. Have people died because they had reason to believe they were going to die? There are records of people who have died, and post mortem examination finds no medical reason, and the explanation has been that they believed they were going to die. Anthropologists report witch doctor curses in prescientific communities from which people are known to have died without any apparent medical reason. There are stories of Australian Aboriginals dying after knowing they have had “the bone pointed” at them even when they have had counselling to overcome being superstitious. These are troublesome nocebo effects suggesting that significant others can knowingly or unknowingly remove a person’s sense of hope, or meaningfulness, or *raison d’être*, or belief in the strength of their vitality, and they come to harm.

### *The belief of practitioners*

Many years ago I heard of a piece of research into the placebo effect. The findings were that prescribed medication works best for patients if the doctor prescribing it believes it works. Doctors taking part in trials of new medication where placebo pills (fake pills) are used to compare and gauge the effectiveness of the new drug had difficulty in being sincere when prescribing what they knew was false medicine so they had to be shielded from knowing what was real and what was fake. However, in this sort of situation it showed up that if a doctor had formed a positive opinion (belief) about the effectiveness of the new medicine on trial, it worked better for patients than when some new medicine was prescribed by a doctor who was more neutral about it. The belief the doctor has in a medicine adds or detracts from its potency in patients. It is not just what the patient believes. How the inner belief of the doctor is communicated to the patient is a mystery, but it is a scientific observation that it happens. Perhaps we need to go back and reflect on the immaterial signals that touch on and effect cells and living organisms: energy fields.

What does this have to say to us about setting up a healing ministry at St. Luke’s? Clearly we have to promote and encourage positive belief in the possibility of a healing outcome in those who might come seeking healing. And, as important, those who front or support a healing ministry have to have a positive belief in the efficacy of such a ministry. In the liberal

tradition we tend to be less dogmatic in our beliefs (opinions) and how we express them, even though we might be totally committed to acting to provide a healing ministry. We tend to be less opinionated, more conciliatory, more accepting of alternatives. When we discuss how belief involves biology and consequently how belief may contribute to healing it might seem that all we have to do is to cultivate positive thinking. Lipton acknowledges that it is not as simple as that. Once respected as valuable, Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*<sup>30</sup> is considered somewhat flawed these days. Some of Peale's repetitive "techniques" for developing positive thinking are unacknowledged hypnotic means, auto-suggestion, and lead to a delusional "positive" world view in which negative and destructive dimensions of humanity become denied and overlooked as unreal. This sort of thinking is a delusion of perception. Peale is not a model for us. Developing absolute self-confidence with deliverance from suffering are not the goals we seek for a ministry of healing.

[30. Ed. — Peale, N. V. (1952). *The power of positive thinking*. London, UK: Simon and Schuster.]

### *Lack of faith*

Another down side to the quest for finding and using positive thinking to cultivate positive belief is the implication of weakness or inadequacy on the part of those who are unsuccessful. It is the "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief!" dynamic. If I can't believe there must be something wrong with me; help me. We know awful stories of those who have made visits to "faith healers" with unsuccessful outcomes, who have been blamed, directly or indirectly for their lack of faith being the reason for failure. In the liberal tradition these stories add to discomfort with the notion of healing ministry. In charismatic traditions those who have truly been "reborn of the spirit" are capable of doing all things, or, at least something amazing according to the particular "gift" they have been given. I am not into testing myself against being bitten by a poisonous snake — if such were available — to prove my faith; as goes on in some places in the Bible belt of the USA, with rattlesnakes. This sort of positive thinking or believing is not part of my view of the world of the spirit. How would we avoid these impressions getting hold with a ministry of healing at St. Luke's? We would have to avoid anyone feeling guilty or weak from supposed lack of faith.



### *Ineffective belief*

Lipton's suggestion for failure of belief is his observation that we have two minds. One is the self-aware conscious mind of rational thinking, and the other, the sub-conscious mind that attends to so much of our behaviour that is automatic, like our heart rate, or walking to the fridge for a snack while thinking of what to write in a position paper. At the conscious level I might fully think and believe "I can and will get rid of my cancer" but, at the sub-conscious level I might have an out-of-awareness belief that "I don't deserve better than my parents" lot in life which cancels out my conscious belief. As a psychotherapist I know the power of unconscious dynamics in the human condition and I appreciate Lipton's suggestion. However, it is a more sophisticated explanation for there is something wrong with me if I can't muster up enough faith/belief to achieve a healing.

What is wrong is my unconscious programming in infancy when I took on board, indiscriminately, negative ideas about myself and life picked up from the social environment I was raised in. The difference at this point is that I am not to blame for the content of my negative sub-conscious belief systems. My lack of belief-in-action is not my sin, but the result of being sinned against. Again, as a psychotherapist I know how difficult it is to correct these sub-conscious, subtle, negative self-defeating and damaging belief systems. At St. Luke's we would need a back-up counselling service as part of a ministry of healing to assist dealing with trouble in these human areas. And, again, assisting people to develop a positive self-image is part of the core business of the Church, it is the gospel: "God so loved the world." This goes with the preaching, teaching and sacramental ministry of St. Luke's. Part of combating lack of belief is education to combat the ignorance about the part the brain and mind play in body heal and wellbeing. Information about the possibilities offered by these new approaches to biology I have been presenting in this paper strengthens conscious level beliefs and can repair errors of perception held in the sub-conscious level. The Community of St. Luke's could administer courses which would be run by Bev Sylvester-Clark, who once joined me and Rod Mitchell in conversations with Alan Quigley about setting up healing services at St. Luke's, and who in the years since has developed with overseas colleagues a substantial educo-therapy programme on healing.

## *Conclusion*

So, what do I think a ministry of healing at St. Luke's might be like?

I think it should be under the oversight and monitoring of a specially established group which enlists the support of qualified people such as Dr Brian Broom, Bev Sylvester-Clark, and Keith Rowe. It should be backed up by competent counsellors and a prayer group and pastoral care oversight and follow-up of non-St. Luke's regulars.

I think there should be regular liturgical services in which people coming seeking a healing can be assisted by the structure, silences, entrancing pacing, ambiance and musical rhythms of the liturgy to enter states of consciousness conducive to liberating healing energies within their bodies because of hypnotic suggestion and the strengthening of positive belief systems within their minds because of teaching-preaching of the gospel and may be sacramental symbolism, and all within an energy field created by believers with their presence of love, compassion and prayer bringing God into the occasion.

## **The essence of Christianity (2012)<sup>31</sup>**

[31. Ed. — A presentation given 8th August, 2012, to a College and Chaplains' Schools' Conference, St Cuthbert's, Epsom, Auckland.]

I am invited to contribute to your reflection as you wrestle with the complex and challenging issues in the theme of this conference: "Balancing the Wheel: Exploring What Might it Means to Recalibrate Wellness, Wholeness and Holiness Within our Institutional and Individual Lives".

I appreciate the wide-ranging opportunities this theme offers. We could go to many different places exploring what it might mean to recalibrate those three arenas. We could go into a lengthy discussion to explore how we calibrate such areas in the first place, let alone how we recalibrate. Do we measure in metric terms, having left behind imperial standards or, do we count wellness in degrees? I have struggled to find a focus and direction in the breadth of this theme.

My invitation is to stimulate and challenge your thinking, but, about which of the several of the complex issues within the theme? Last Friday when I

got the final version of the program I saw I was down to facilitate this session. If I had prepared for that task I would have made this whole time more interactive. But, that is not how I have prepared. So, bear with me as I read my ideas out to you. I have also prepared a PowerPoint presentation to stimulate visual sensory receptors. I hope my ideas will be stimulating and challenging. I hope you will find them new and fresh. They are to me. I also found it a very challenging task getting my thoughts in order. I found it very stimulating and I hope you do too.

Here is my starting point an issue taken from your introductory statement:

We each work within educational institutions which are simultaneously balancing the demands of being businesses operating within a competitive market context, while also being, and trying to create, opportunities to live out our calling to model Christian discipleship for our learning communities.

It goes without saying, really, a Presbyterian Church School must be a commercially viable enterprise. I have nothing to contribute in that arena, except to reiterate to survive and exist it must be a successful business. It is not my forte to discuss this. I cannot be stimulating nor challenging on the business side of education. However, I will claim, in my career, to have run several, successful, small scale, self-sufficient educational activities which charged fees for income to cover costs. I have some sense, but no experience of a large-scale educational enterprise. My last endeavour was to establish the Department of Psychotherapy within the Faculty of Health of the Auckland Institute of Technology as it was then, but I was spared much of the budgetary burden under the setup of those days. So, I can understand some of what is involved in the complex of factors that go into the success, or commercial viability of a Church school.

That is not where my focus is going. I want to attend to the second half of the issue raised in the theme I have picked, that is: “living out our calling to model Christian discipleship”. This is the lead-in to what I would like to discuss with you and stimulate and challenge your thinking. I am calling my presentation: “The Essence of Christianity”.

I must hasten to disabuse you of any misleading impression here. I am not an erudite scholarly academic. I look to others to give a lead to my thinking

and this is the title of a book published in 1841 by Ludwig Feuerbach<sup>32</sup>, a German philosopher/theologian.

[32. Ed. — Feuerbach, L. (1854). *The essence of Christianity* (M. Evans, Trans.). London, UK: John Chapman. (Original work published 1841)

I need to back up and give you some background. In the 1950s I began my career as a Rural Field Cadet. It was a six-year cadetship under the State Services Commission to provide qualified specialists in the agricultural sector. Equal time was spent on farms as in the classroom. I qualified with a Bachelor in Agricultural Science from Lincoln Agricultural College of the University of New Zealand. About half way through my cadetship, while repairing chaff sacks in a barn on a farm in Ashburton on a very bleak winter's day, I had an experience that I can only describe in the unsatisfactory terms of tradition. It was a sense of call to the ministry of the Church. Eventually I responded to that call, left the cadetship, and moved on to train for the Presbyterian ministry on the entry qualification of my agricultural degree. I began in 1960 in Dunedin. To this day, I value my agricultural foundation as being of great importance in my career.

I found the world of theology so extraordinarily different. I found some people in it to be living in such a rarefied atmosphere as to appear as if their feet never touched the ground. To be crudely critical I found some to be so heavenly-minded they were of no earthly use to me. I have to live with my feet on the ground. In Dunedin, at the Theological Hall of Knox College, I was given some allowance for being fresh off the turnips. I did not have to take the traditional classic Biblical languages, Hebrew and Greek. Instead we were required to take a course in English, introducing us to the thought forms, which emerge from thinking in those languages. This course was being taught by a new teacher, starting at the same time, in 1960. He made a big impact on me. You know how it is not only the content of a teacher's course, nor the way they present their material, but there is something about the person; something about how they carry themselves, how they interact with you, how they live their life. I learned he was down to earth, had suffered greatly and had his faith fully tested, and had overcome many difficulties. At Knox Hall in Dunedin, for me, he modelled Christian discipleship in that educational institution. I continue to learn from him. He is Sir Lloyd Geering. Geering put me on to Feuerbach and *The Essence of Christianity* at the recent Auckland Festival of Readers and Writers, when

he delivered the Michael King Memorial lecture based on his most recent book: *From the Big Bang to God*.<sup>33</sup> It was awesome to see this 95-year-old man in action, lecturing. He has been a minister of the Presbyterian Church for 75 years, and never resigned, despite how he has been pushed around by the Church. In Wellington he was recently honoured for his birthday and anniversary of ordination. I recommend his book as an easy must-read textbook for all senior pupils of Presbyterian schools.

[33. Ed. — Geering, L. (2013). *From the big bang to God: Our awe-inspiring journey of evolution*. Salem,OR: Polebridge Press.]

I did not know about Feuerbach, and have had to do a crash course on him using the Internet. I will be putting what I learnt into my own words, or into Geering's words, rather than using the literarily translated English words of his original German.... I am indebted to Geering and here and there throughout this presentation I will quote him directly. Geering puts Ludwig Feuerbach along with the other two revolutionary thinkers shaping our Western cultural thought. First is Copernicus who established the rightful place of the planet earth in relation to the heavenly bodies. The stars do not revolve around us. And, then, Darwin, who established our rightful place in the biological world. We are not a special creature to which all others must bow down. We are simply animals who have arrived at the top branch of the evolutionary tree by randomly finding a good fit with our environment, by chance, over time.

For educated, thoughtful people these are not revolutionary ideas, it is, just how it is. Feuerbach, before Darwin and the principle of evolution was established, saw the development of theological thinking was progressive, evolutionary, but had progressed from the wrong starting point. If you have been brought up all your life to think of a monotheistic creator God existing somewhere up/out there, this will be your starting point. Then it follows that God made everything and has a hand in everything that goes on in this universe. Then it follows that God has designs and purposes for us humans, his creatures, to live up to and can be cross if we don't. Feuerbach suggests that instead of God creating us, humans have created the idea of God. In our cultural history, we did that a very long time ago, and for very understandable reasons. Geering, in his book, traces that evolutionary history of humans creating God. Feuerbach is revolutionary in the theological world where he puts God in his rightful place as a creature — as

an idea constructed by humans — and elevates humanity to the highest place, that of creator.

As a dyed-in-the wool Presbyterian minister that reversal takes my breath away. That information is hard to take in and believe. Especially, growing up with my Calvinistic heritage in which, human creatures were considered totally depraved. We cannot displace God. Adam originally spoiled the line of human creatures by his sinful disobedience and we have inherited his tendency to sin. And, our depravity is reinforced by the evidence of our own sinfulness. The New Zealand broadcaster, Kim Hill, when interviewing Geering, and hearing of this reversal of positions, which makes God but a creature, and elevates humanity to being the creator, exclaimed that this was extreme hubris. Geering agreed. No wonder Feuerbach was removed from his university and church positions. He is only just being reclaimed and reappreciated.

If you have been following this you will see that the question, “Does God exist?” is a “no brainer”. If we accept that God is our invention, there is no such independent entity or being behind the label G-o-d, God, existing up there, or out there, or anywhere. Except, for some, God lives as a very real identity in their imaginal world of thought. Feuerbach understood that God had existence in people’s minds. This was an extremely important dynamic in cultural development. That is, that communities need to have a centralising point of reference around which people can coalesce. This reference point holds the common values of what is right and wrong in human affairs. It is a symbol of what we acknowledge to be greater than ourselves, greater than any individual preference, and points to the highest lifestyle a society can aspire and commit to.

Religion, with its symbolising centre is an essential civilizing force in a society. It leads people to look beyond self-satisfaction and self-gratification to a greater good. So, while God, as an entity, does not exist, Feuerbach was not an atheist and did not support an atheist, iconoclastic break-down of religious values. Instead, for him, it was not so much we have to get rid of God, as, we have to upgrade how we value humans and human life. This, for him, was true religion.

Feuerbach’s central thinking is in his book *The Essence of Christianity*.<sup>34</sup> Christianity is a religious system of doctrinal beliefs or propositions. The

uniquely Christian doctrine for Feuerbach is the incarnation — God with us, in the flesh, and embodied in the man, Jesus of Nazareth. The proposition is that, in Jesus, God is present on the surface of planet earth in human form. You do not find this doctrine in the other monotheistic traditions, Judaism or Islam. It is the essence of Christianity. If God was incarnate in Jesus and this is the essence of Christianity we need to recalibrate how we value humanity. This is not easy for us to do because we have taken the existence of God for granted within our religious tradition.

[34. Ed. — Feuerbach, op. cit.]

And the bulk of Christianity has humanity as bad news. When, some two and a half thousand years ago, the Old Testament Hebrews invented their monotheistic God declaring him to be the one and only, a being with his own subjectivity, they built him up out of a composite of the highest human qualities known to them. Feuerbach understood that these human qualities were projected onto this imaginary being, God, and have been considered to be his attributes ever since. We humans, in our cultural tradition, have come to accept these attributes as the makeup of a real existent God. We know these qualities from the inside. We experience them because they are part of our make-up and originate within us, so it is natural to accept them as real in God. Indeed, for Feuerbach the study of God, usually called theology, should really be understood as anthropology — the study of human persons and our highest values, and how we can make the most out of life. We personify God projecting our known human qualities on to him.

Feuerbach published his book, *The Essence of Christianity*, with these ideas of projecting human qualities on to the construct of God, fifteen years before the birth of Sigmund Freud in 1856. Freud is considered by many as another revolutionary thinker who put the workings of the human mind into its proper perspective. Amongst other ideas he introduced the idea of transference, a particular form of projection in which we tend to experience other people in the here and now, as if they were like people from our past. In a transference situation we could project on to our present boss the way we felt we could never please our mum or dad when we were little and expect to be criticised and even punished and so interpret what the boss does and says to us in that light. Our relationship with our boss could be quite distorted. In my world of psychotherapy we know about projection. Transference has gathered connotations of negative projections, but there

are positive dimensions as well. As we go through our developmental stages growing up it is important to go through the idealising phase: my daddy is bigger than your daddy. He is big and strong. Even though I am weak and silly he always loves me and protects me from harm and if I get into trouble he knows what to do and can rescue me.

Over time, hopefully, we mature and learn to discriminate and drop unrealistic idealization, although it was necessary as we develop a healthy sense of self to feel the security of a strong one who cared for us when we were small and weak. We know any human quality, good or bad, can be projected onto another. By convention it is generally agreed that it is the good qualities which are the attributes of God. Indeed, I have heard it said the word God, g-o-d, comes from a contraction of the word good, g-o-o-d. I have doubts about that etymology. I do know of people who see God as cruel and heartless, indifferent to the sufferings of humanity. While this too is a projection, it is not generally held. In fact, the major attribute of God is love. Few consider God is cruel and heartless. Humans in our cultural tradition have created another figure on to which they project bad qualities. He is called Satan. We attribute evil to him. If we need to project feminine qualities, many people personalise them in the figure of Mary, Queen of Heaven.

Projection is a familiar human tendency. Geering suggests that Feuerbach understood that: “The attributes that comprise ‘God’ represent the projection of our highest moral qualities, such as love, justice, compassion and forgiveness onto a cosmic background.”<sup>35</sup> Further, according to Geering, Feuerbach said that we also project onto God all the abilities which we humans would like to possess, such as power, knowledge, being everywhere at the same time, lasting forever. In God, these things we wish for ourselves become the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence and eternity.

[35. Ed. — Geering, op. cit., p. 147.]

Another human tendency we are familiar with in the psychotherapy world is dualism. That is the difficulty we have to discriminate shades of gray. The tendency is to see things as either black or white, good or bad, right or wrong, winners or losers, day or night. It is either/or thinking, a mindset of one or other, a limited choice of two options, hence the term, dualism. When we put these two tendencies together, projection and dualism we have



an interesting situation in the case of God and humans. If we project all these good qualities onto God, what happens to the other polarity, the bad? We tend to get a split, good creator god/bad human creatures. We know about splitting in psychotherapy. It is another, natural part of growing up; of the developmental process.

An example, little Tom is in heaven. He and mother are together in the kitchen. It is warm and the air filled with delicious smells. He is helping her bake; the centre of her attention. Life is good. But, the phone goes, mother answers tucking it under her chin. It is father. He is having an awful morning at the office. The boss is being beastly. He thought to have a sandwich from lunch as comfort food only to discover his least favourite — cucumber. He rang to complain and to say he was going to stop this economy measure and go back to buying his lunch. It was salt in an old wound for mother. She hangs up, bursts into tears and begins banging and clattering the baking utensils, ignoring Tom. In a few moments it has gone from heaven to hell for him. Who is this woman who has suddenly arrived to take over the kitchen. It is not his mother. She even looks different, her face is not the same. He has unconsciously split this woman into good mother/bad mother. It may take Tom a life time to come to terms with this sort of experience and integrate the polarities into his understanding. Without knowing any of our psychotherapy awareness Feuerbach intuited these dynamics. According to Geering, he [Feuerbach] saw the problem it created when having projected our highest values onto a mythical being in the heavens humans have become divorced from appreciating those values in themselves. Hence the huge importance of the doctrine of the incarnation — the essence of Christianity. When we believe God was enfleshed in Jesus, and lived the human condition, it opens the way for us to reclaim that the highest human values apply to us. We can love as well as God. We can be as concerned for justice as God. We can be as compassionate as God. We can be just as forgiving as God.

And, as for those ideal divine attributes of omnipotence, and so on, no we can't be those things. They are quite unrealistic for any human being or collection of humans. Not even the comic-book, Superman comes close to these abilities. For me, in my life experience, there is no hard evidence of omnipotence anywhere from any source. Omnipotence is a human invention: an invention like the figure of a genie who lives in a lamp and

can grant you any conceivable wish, if you find and rub the lamp, like Aladdin did.

If we follow this lead from Feuerbach and Geering we need to reclaim those realistic human capacities we projected onto “God” and split off from ourselves. Making that split has impoverished our sense of who we are and leaves us feeling we are insignificant specks on an odd little planet circulating a third class star in one of the spiral arms of the Milky Way Galaxy. Or, it leads to our sense of Calvinistic depraved sinfulness.

Instead we need to recover a sense of how amazingly wonderful we are. As the Psalmist says: “We are made a little less than gods.” (Psalm 8) If gods are made-up, imaginary beings — not real — where does that leave us in the Psalmist’s declaration: we are as gods, and, not a little less than them? Now it matters what cultural tradition we follow if we are as gods. If we follow the belief system of our Greek and Roman forebears, the gods were a self-centred, self-serving lot, living out all the weakest, immoral human passions, while they engaged in epic struggles on a cosmic scale of strong versus weak, good versus evil, pain versus pleasure, faithfulness versus infidelity, honesty versus cheating and lies, enslavement versus liberation. It does matter what image of god we choose to model ourselves on.

I venture to suggest our Judeo-Christian tradition of a monotheistic god with robust moral sensitivities and values as demonstrated in Jesus, serves society best. Geering contends that Feuerbach knew this role “God” plays in human self-understanding. He says, of Feuerbach, (and, I think includes himself):

The role of God is to gather under one symbolic term all the moral values to which we feel bound to respond, along with all the laws of nature to which we are bound to submit. All of these in their sundry particular ways “lord it over us” or are as “God” to us.<sup>36</sup>

[36. Ed. — Geering, op. cit, p. 149.]

Let us consider these “moral values to which we feel bound to respond”, and the “laws of nature to which we are bound to submit”. As we identify the moral values and laws of nature which we choose to “lord it over us” or be as “God” to us, we touch on the theme of this conference as we calibrate wellness, wholeness and holiness. When we touch on the laws of nature we

have very little choice: submit to the law of gravity or fall. Except, because we seem ignorant of a lot of the more subtle laws of nature, we neglect to submit to them, and this brings sad consequences to do with our personal health, the health of our communities and the health of our environment.

As I observe New Zealand society and our moral values what seems to have happened is we have become more Godless. That old, invented God who never really existed, is quickly passing out of favour and has not been replaced with an acceptable centralising symbol holding us together. There is a vacuum. It is not that now “anything goes”. We are regulating ourselves with more and more laws and regulations made by our all too human governments. But these requirements do not serve as the role of God. What does for us now, is money. The New Testament advocacy was to be sure of what sort of treasure we were storing up because that would be where our hearts would be.

If our treasure was materialist that is where our attention and energies would be focussed; on storing up gold in a bank. And, the New Testament says you cannot serve two masters, it is God or Mammon. As God fades out in our society Mammon takes his place. What “lords it over us” and what is as “God” to us is money. Not the old people-centred values of love, compassion, justice and forgiveness. We serve money and worship money. Our attention and energies go to acquire more of it. Of course, today, we do not call it Mammon, our label is “the economy”.

What do you choose to attend to in our church schools? What is it that lords it over you, or is as God to you? Are they conscious choices or do they infiltrate unconsciously into our educational institutions from the outside world of the economy, the world we all have to live in, Quite the opposite of Kim Hill’s observation that this is supreme hubris, I find this thinking places an enormous responsibility on me, you, us. Without a God up there, the hands holding planet earth’s fate and wellbeing are human hands, yours and mine.

Now, when I see human need, I know there is no God out there who is going to relieve it, and I, you, we are responsible for contributing to providing relief with the same loving concern I used to attribute to God. We can “do” love as well as our idea of a loving God. Now, when there is an awful event that we once called an act of God, I know there is no such thing

as God behind it, I know it to be a random event of mindless nature leaving human suffering and misery in its wake and I know there is no God to wave a wand and make it all better, instead I, you, we are responsible to get in there and contribute proactively to cleaning it up and giving support, with the same compassion as we once attributed to God. We can do compassion as well as our idea of God being compassionate. Need I go on and make the case for justice and forgiveness?

Where else other than a church school can we inculcate these values and help the skill development of young people to effectively provide for meeting human need from human resources — what I call Christian discipleship? If we choose to follow the Feuerbach idea of the essence of Christianity and the values of this road we will be in a minority cultural stream within the dominant culture of capitalism, consumerism, and materialism, where else better than a church school to prepare young people to live as a minority group? There you are; as I end I am just beginning to deal with the theme of your conference.

I have sought to honour your invitation to me to stimulate and challenge you as you wrestle with these very important and difficult issues. I have taken you to the threshold of several different tracks and if you choose to follow any of them I will have succeeded in my task. I wish you well.

### **A song about Mary (2015)<sup>37</sup>**

[37. Ed. — Evan describes this as a Lenten project and, at Easter 2015, still as “work in progress”.]

It was my turn to “sing”. Glynn and I lead our midweek communion service at the community of St Luke’s. Whoever “sings” leads a time of stimulating those present to think at the edge of our understandings. It was before Christmas and thoughts were turning to the birth of Jesus. I thought it a good idea to share some of my thinking about Mary. This has been growing and I now think the mother of Jesus is a very significant figure in his life. To help organise my thoughts at this edge, I wrote a short piece, called “A song about Mary” to hand around those present at communion during Advent 2014. This written “song” builds on that first piece, extending and expanding it as a Lenten project in 2015. It follows the challenge, “don’t tell us what you don’t believe, and tell us what you do believe.” I used to be

quickly dismissive of Mary and the Virgin Birth story — Mary didn't have a virgin birth. So, what do I believe about Mary. I surprised myself. Maybe I will surprise you, too.

A bit about me, so you, the reader, can decide whether to go any further. I am a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. I am retired. In the Church I was recognised as a specialist minister of counselling and pastoral care. While I began my career in that field, I moved on to become a psychotherapist who also identified as a minister of healing.

I would call myself a progressive Christian. I focus on the man Jesus of Nazareth, This “Jesus of History” can only be known as a result of scholarly theological investigation of the Bible and thorough historical research into the geo-political context of his times. The Jesus of Faith is a quite different entity. It is a matter of faith to accept Jesus as part of the divine trinity of the God-head or to accept him as a man who could work supernatural miracles. History cannot be used to prove these matters of faith. My faith has changed radically over my life time's journey. My faith grew and developed over time and as the experiences of life accosted me demanding change in what I accepted as believable. I have the advantage of knowing so much more now than when I set out.

I hold the Bible as definitive for me as one source of my tradition of faith. I do not accept the Bible as the literal “Word of God”. Its documents are of human origins written at least 2,000 years ago in a place and times with vastly different world views and writing styles from ours, From our perspective it is a more or less totally unreliable source of historical information not having being written for that purpose, It is the story of the faith beliefs of those ancient authors whose knowledge of the world of nature was so limited.

For me, while there are “godly” dimensions in the universe I do not accept the existence of a divine heavenly entity “God”; a supernatural celestial being. I am not a theist - that is a believer in one intelligent, all powerful, creator God dwelling in a heavenly realm outside this universe and making interventions into our human space. Technically I could be categorised an atheist, but the label atheist carries connotations of someone dismissive of many Christian values which I hold dear.<sup>38</sup>

[38. Ed. — See papers in Chapter 10.]

I am completely reliant on the scholarship of others. I have no personal competence in the necessary linguistic skills, archaeological skills, historical skills, geo-political skills to make a firsthand study of the beginnings of the life of the man Jesus. I am dependent on the work of other authorities to provide me with the information I use to form my opinions. I draw heavily on the work of the Jesus Seminar, a collect of wide-ranging experts who voted on the words and actions attributed to Jesus in the five gospels — Mark, Matthew, Luke, John and Thomas — rating their historical accuracy on a scale of one to four (four being definitely unhistorical).<sup>39</sup> Others, who I regard as authorities, and on whose work I draw on include: Karen Armstrong, Marcus Borg, John Dominic Crosson, Lloyd Geering, Bernard Brandon Scott, James Veitch, (all of whom are members of the Jesus Seminar).

[39. Ed. — The Jesus Seminar was a group of around 150 critical scholars and layman, founded in 1985 by Robert Funk, under the auspices of the Westar Institute, Salem, Oregon. It was active in the 1980s and 1990s.]

My personal competence is as a psychotherapist. My services to this profession have been recognised and I am an honorary life member of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists. I was the first programme leader and one of the foundational teachers of what has now grown to be the Psychotherapy Department of the Faculty of Health & Environmental Sciences at Auckland University of Technology, the only one in the country. It is on the basis of this competence that I offer this Song about Mary. What I offer is pure conjecture. There is no direct historical evidence to substantiate my proposals. I only have what I know contributes to the development of a human being, and this awareness is a basic concern of psychotherapy. It is this awareness I apply in this song.

It seems the only agreement by scholars of any historically accurate detail in our Bible about the mother of Jesus is that her name was Mary. We have no reliable knowledge of Mary, Joseph, the birth of Jesus and his parenting from the Bible. The stories told there are not historical records of what happened. That was not the purpose for which they were written. They are very carefully crafted fabrications to communicate to people of the first and second century of the Common Era in the Mediterranean world, deep significant meaning about the origins of the extraordinary man Jesus. Our tendency to read the stories as if they are the equivalent of modern newspaper reporting of what happened is quite the wrong way to go.

I call on my psychotherapy background to deduce more about Mary. One of my disciplines is Transactional Analysis, an outgrowth of Freudian Psychoanalysis. The focus of our interest in this theoretical framework is on what goes on between people. What are their social transactions? What are they setting up to happen when they interact with others? To work that out we have to make an analysis of what we can see of what is going on. We work backwards from what we see going on in the present to deduce what might have gone on in the past in an individual's life.

So to understand anything about Mary I think we have to make an analysis from what we see produced in her life, that is, her son Jesus.

I think there would be pretty widespread agreement that parents have an influence on the sort of person we have turned out to be. Our early childhood experiences help to shape who we become. Some experiences turn out to have beneficial results for us, and some leave us with problematic results to have to deal with. Because, for most people they have no recall of their early childhood, there is a tendency to place little significance on that period of life. However, these experiences become part of the foundational repository forming our unconscious. Because our cognitive or cerebral abilities develop later after we learn to speak; thinking is internal mental conversation with our self; pre-verbal experience is not a thought process but a sensory one. We have feelings stimulated by the world we live in, we sense things even if we cannot think about what is going on. We sense a secure home, if that is where we live, or the tensions of an unhappy home, or the anxieties of a worried mother, or the grumpiness of an angry father. These make an impression on the child even if they are wordless. Infant Jesus would be no exception.

### **SO, WHAT SORT OF A PERSON WAS JESUS?**

I accept the scholars' description. Jesus was a Jew, a Galilean and a peasant. In his later life he was a sage, or wise teacher who moved about the countryside sharing his wisdom in catchy sayings or parables about the nature of God, the ways of God, the ways of human relationship with God and the ways of humans living with each other and with Romans and with Jewish religious authorities. As a result of modern, recent scholarship we do have a better idea of the historical Jesus, with what is called a voice print of the man. That is the sort of words, phrases and speech mannerisms that he

uniquely used and the sort of topics he talked about so we can distinguish what the real man said from what the fictitious Jesus said in the stories the Gospel writers made up about him.

Briefly, he was the sort of man with a passionate, active concern for the wellbeing of others, especially the socially poor and marginalised, and he was fully socially and gender egalitarian. Compared to the social context of his times he was radical in his valuing and treating women as equals. He was theologically and politically radically different from the social context — Israelite — in which he lived. I am only just coming to appreciate how radically different he was as a result of recently published work by Brandon Scott analysing the voice print of Jesus in his parables and one-line sayings. His way of imaging God was like no other, at the time or before it, or dare I say since his time. He was so radical his followers could not keep up and fell back on traditional and conventional ways of seeing God and of how to live in response to this conventional God: for example, keeping women subservient.

He exercised radical freedom and non-conformity in expressing his views and teaching, especially in regard to his eating cleanliness practices, he just was not kosher and kept the wrong company.

He also suggested to his fellow Galileans, who were oppressed outcasts and downcasts by Roman rule, a lifestyle of mutual self-help by sharing food, clothing, shelter, and support. Out of direct concern for sick and distressed members of the Galilean community he offered effective faith healing which he associated with political change and God's intention for humanity.

He seems to have enjoyed sensuality and conviviality as he was accused of over eating and drinking.

Where did this lifestyle come from? How did Mary contribute to this? Jesus the man was fully human, he was a man of his time, he had no access to extraordinary (superhuman) knowledge. It is a faith belief that Jesus had a distinctive advantage because he was God incarnate. I do not think it can be claimed that Jesus knew about radical equity because he had inside God awareness. I think this awareness would be shaped by his early childhood.

I think Jesus' extraordinary character and abilities would build independently on the foundational influence of his father and mother, he



would be sensing the world of his childhood environment and it would be part of his unconscious world view.

I do not consider that Jesus' attitude and values toward women, the marginalised, and the socially bottom class and "unclean" would spring from nothing, coming from out of the blue, from de novo. Who Mary was would shape much of who he was to become especially in regard to women. As a child Jesus would be exposed to his mother's character and behaviour.

And, he would be watching how his father treated and valued women as Joseph behaved with Mary. Remember, this was a cultural context in which I am lead to believe even now a daily prayer of pious Jewish men is to thank God they were not born a woman. In this sort of environment many women end up subdued, subservient and demure, while some over-compensate and become dominant, controlling and opinionated. Philp Roth's Portnoy complained that his Jewish mother would not allow him, as an adult, to flush the toilet until she had seen his bowel movement.<sup>40</sup>

[40. Ed. — Roth, P. (1969). *Portnoy's complaint*. New York, NY: Random House.]

From his experience of Mary Jesus would be unconsciously and wordlessly absorbing his impressions of womanhood and making them his standards. Many men measure women against their mothers - the women who raised them. Mary would be Jesus' unconscious model of the potential of women against whom he would form his judgements when he engaged with other women.

This is speculative reasoning, but I think based on reasonable assumptions. What is more powerful considering women is their place in a culture that is very concerned with being "clean" or "unclean" and "pure" or "impure". Because of menstruation and childbirth in some cultures women are periodically considered unclean. For some women the length of time of impurity can overshadow the pure time. So this association with the unclean can detract from women's standing in the community. This makes Jesus' treatment and valuing of women more radical. He was not big on cleanliness in the ritual sense. I have no conjecture about where Mary would be or what she would have demonstrated to Jesus in this regard of unclean periods and purification rituals.

I think of Mary living in her tight-knit Semitic village (Nazareth) as a mature, independent strongly self-assured and self-reliant woman,

intimately connecting with her neighbours and sensitively aware and actively responsive to their needs (feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, etc.) While socialised to be mindful and conforming to the community norms and mores (the cleanliness code) she would also have sufficient conviction and courage to be freely non-conformist to act on values she considered more important than regular village constraints. In a simple way she would model the lifestyle we see in Jesus (especially inclusivity). She would care for all those neighbours, whether they be considered “clean or unclean”, who were in need of food, clothing, shelter and support.

Such daring and defiance of village norms would need the support of a strong caring partner, who would join her in the enjoyment of healthy sensuality; eating, drinking, dancing, sex, fun and laughter. The Romans were quite indifferent to the misery of the marginalised indigenous local population. Jesus was clearly disturbed by this and compassionately acted to develop programmes of self-help under the heading of bringing in God’s Empire, in contrast to Rome’s Empire, thereby signing his own death warrant - he was a traitor, a rebel, a teacher of dangerous ideas.

I speculate this compassion developed from observing his mother and father breaking norms to include everyone in need as they shared what they were able of food, shelter and clothing.

I am aware there is no data to support any historicity to this speculation, but I think there is reasonable basis to make this sort of claim.

As I think of Mary in this way over time I have developed great respect and admiration of her as a woman, mother and marriage partner. I have overcome my excessive Protestant objections to what I think of as a dehumanised, over-spiritualised, portrayal of Mary, in Roman, Orthodox and Anglo-Catholic traditions. In the Mariolatry of some churches Mary is presented as the *Theotokos* meaning “The God-bearer”, or “the one who gives birth to the one who is God”, commonly translated as “Mother of God”. To qualify for this role theologians of the past needed to make her sinless to avoid tainting the God-child. Hence they constructed the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary in which belief system the “original sin” of disobedient Adam and Eve normally passed on from one generation to the next was miraculously inhibited for Mary. To avoid the tainting of

any possible sexual sinfulness Mary was presented as being and remaining a virgin. I once heard what I found to be quite repellent as an account of Mary's continual status as a virgin that her hymen remained intact after Jesus' birth. The doctrine of parthenogenesis and insistence on Mary's continuing virginity, despite Jesus undoubtedly having siblings, turns Mary into a freak of nature which I find revolting.

Here is more speculation about Mary's socio-cultural context. Nazareth was a small Israelite (Jewish) village only five kilometres, under an hour's walk, from the large Hellenistic (Greco-Roman) town of Sepphoris. This town is not mentioned in the New Testament. Modern scholarship knows a lot about it. Herod made it his capital city of Galilee. On Herod's death the Jews of Sepphoris seized the city. The Romans put down this revolt, selling rebellious Jews into slavery and burning the city down. It was a demonstration of Roman power and a warning against revolt. It was then rebuilt by the next Herod appointed by Rome as King of Galilee. Without doubt Mary and Joseph and their children would have known what had happened at Sepphoris. Indeed, I have heard scholarly suggestions that father Joseph, Jesus and brother James would have found work there as carpenters (not as we know carpenters in today's terms) in the rebuild of the city. They were more likely to have been conscripted to work there. This is what happened in the rebuild of a show place. This is behind the suggestion that Jesus was familiar with Hellenistic culture, thought forms, and Greek as the lingua franca of the Mediterranean world.

It is obvious that Jesus' preferred environment was the countryside and rural communities. However, he, and Mary, were not unfamiliar with what went on in the life of the town of Sepphoris in the time of the rural occupation and oppression of Galilee by Rome. The plight of rural peasants meant they flocked to town in the hope of work, scavenging food and sheltering in doorways, it was better than begging out in the country. I have heard it suggested that Mary's awareness of the history of Sepphoris is echoed in the Magnificat, Mary's song, recorded in Luke's Gospel (1:47-55)  
....<sup>41</sup>

[41. Ed. — At this point, there appear to be some missing pages.]

Remember, many ancient virgin birth stories were of supernatural males (gods) impregnating women they had carried off: crudely, divine rape. The story of the annunciation to Mary, by the angel, of God's intention to have

her conceive by God's spirit invited her to give consent and thereby avoided any sense of rape. From my awareness, this consent was necessary to make the story palatable to Jewish listeners; their God was not behaving like the rapacious pagan ones.

However, this picture of obtaining consent, from my perspective as a psychotherapist is very troublesome. The power differential between God and a village maiden is too extreme. In this story can you conceive of Mary declining? As well, she is being promised name and fame! Can you imagine the story writer having her saying to the angel, "No, not me thank you, pick an older woman who has experience with pregnancy, childbirth, breast feeding and child rearing"?

As I see it, from today's perspective, the weakness in the Bible story we have been given, is God was taking over Mary's womb, consent aside. It is a sort of celestial rent-a-womb takeover. The vision of Mary this story leaves in my mind is the opposite impression from the one I have been building up of a robust, self-confident not easily-pushed-around woman. The Gospel story tells me of a demure, compliant, obliging woman, who, in effect says, "Here I am; use me; however you want; do what you will!" To many this is an appealing picture. But to me, this story leads to a picture of Mary and her son, Jesus being pushovers; Mary sacrifices her womb and Jesus sacrifices his life. Whereas, I see both of them as strong self-determined activists. It is hard to get away from the impression from the Bible stories that both Mary and Jesus were pawns in the hand of God.

Some of the romantic, beautiful Christmas stories in the Bible may have an echo of history. For example, Joseph finding his betrothed Mary pregnant, and struggling with his sense of values and compassion for her, decides not "to put her away" and to continue into marriage. This suggests the possible history of an unplanned pregnancy for Mary with an unnamed father. A further echo of this possible historical situation was the later attempt by Jewish critics to discredit the Gospel virgin birth stories by suggesting Mary had consorted with a Roman soldier, named Panthera, who was Jesus' real father and not God. There was no planting of a divine seed in Mary's womb. She had intimacies with the enemy of the Jews. We know that rape is still part of warfare in today's Mediterranean world. It is quite possible Mary was raped by a Roman soldier out to demonstrate Rome's power over the local Galilean peasants.

These echoes of possible history all add up to Mary having a questionable pregnancy and having to live in the Galilean, Israelite village of Nazareth. This was at a time of a society regulated by honour/shame and clean/unclean codes. She would have faced disapproval even if it was tempered with understanding sympathy for her plight. How was she to live, shame-faced, head-lowered, quietly bearing her ignominy? Or, a head-up, eye-contactful, self-confident life of helping others supported and protected by her husband? What impression would her demeanour have made on young Jesus?

My guess is that Mary would have lived at full power, not in defiance of local norms, of honour/shame and clean/unclean, but from a sense of higher values (shared with her husband and family) of identifying with outcasts and compassionately and cooperatively working with them to live as best as the circumstances allowed. My personal conclusion is that only this sort of lifestyle by Jesus' parents would have resulted in the radical person he turned out to be.

Lastly, what to do with Jesus' apparent criticism or rejection of his mother and brothers? The Jesus Seminar seems to agree (only just) that Jesus did make comments critical of his mother and brothers and referring to the audience and those who believed in him and followed in his way as being his real mothers and brothers. Jesus often made surprising, counter-intuitive comments to provoke thinking. I think that is the nature of these remarks. It was more to stimulate his listeners than to report criticism of his family. In those times families were strongly hierarchical and held people to the conventions of patronage/clientele, honour/shame, and clean/unclean, so I think he was generalising and warning people against being held in bondage to the belief systems of parents and family. He was not speaking against Mary.

My song of Mary ends on the high note: Mary was a most exceptional woman.

## *Chapter 5*

### Reflections on Evan and ministry

GLYNN CARDY, ALLAN DAVIDSON, LLOYD GEERING  
AND ROGER HEY

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#### **Evan Sherrard**

*Lloyd Geering*

My association with Evan was quite unique for at one critical point (as I shall presently describe), our relationship of student and teacher became reversed. We both started at Knox College Theological Hall in the same year, 1960, he as a student and I as a teacher. I was then very much the junior partner on the teaching staff, being some 20 years younger than the others, three of whom had been my own teachers. Thus Evan and I, quite independently, were each feeling our way in a new environment.

Because Evan had been admitted to the Hall on the basis of his degree in Agricultural Science, rather than by the usual preparatory Arts degree, he was excused courses requiring the biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew. This meant that I had to plan for him and a few older students a special course in Old Testament for non-language students. I remember him telling me how, at first, he found it difficult to write essays, for he had had little practice in this during his agricultural courses. His later achievements, as

witnessed to in this book, reveal how well he soon overcame this initial hurdle.

After Evan's graduation from the Hall at the end of 1962 I lost personal touch with him while he was overseas pursuing postgraduate studies and, by the time he returned in late 1965 to be ordained as an Associate Minister of First Church Dunedin, the situation of each of us had changed dramatically. He was now a ministerial colleague with me in the Dunedin Presbytery and I had become Principal of the Theological Hall, most of whose staff were now my juniors. Moreover, his return coincided with the beginning of the very public theological controversy in which I became involved.<sup>1</sup>

[1. Ed. — See Geering, L. (1968). *God in the new world*. London, UK: Hodder & Stoughton. Veitch, J. (1990). *Faith in an age of turmoil: Essays in honour of Lloyd Geering*. London, UK: Oriental University Press. Pelly, R., & Stuart, P. (2006). *A religious atheist? Critical essays on the work of Lloyd Geering*. Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand: Otago University Press. Oomen, M. (Director). (2007, 1st November). *The last Western heretic: A documentary on the ideas of Lloyd Geering*. Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand: TVNZ. Morris, P., & Grimshaw, M. (Eds.). (2008). *Lloyd Geering reader: Prophet of modernity*. Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand: Victoria University Press.]

This debate became more and more heated during 1966, the very time when Evan was planning the establishment of the Cameron Centre at First Church, of which he became the Founding Director in 1967. Although it seemed that the ecclesiastical discord (at first focused on how to understand the resurrection of Jesus) had been hopefully resolved at the 1966 General Assembly, it burst into life again in early 1967 over the issue of humankind's immortality, and this time with even greater vigour.

As a result, just before Easter that year, I found myself being confronted in my study at Knox College by a high-powered ecclesiastical deputation, consisting of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Moderator of the Dunedin Presbytery, and the convenor of the Presbytery Students' Committee, who happened to be none other than Evan Sherrard! It was never made clear to me what this unexpected deputation was hoping to achieve and they found me in a very defensive mood. I told them I was happy to explain any of my statements that had caused offence and even suggested that if the church did not face up to the questions I had raised there was no future for it, but they said they did not wish to discuss theology. Then I even offered, somewhat reluctantly, to submit my resignation if they judged that to be necessary to restore the peace of the

church, but, again, they said that was not what they came for. Thus they left me in a state of confusion and deep depression. It did not escape my attention that, no doubt unintentionally, they had chosen Maundy Thursday for this confrontation, with the result that, as I drove up shortly afterwards with my family to our cottage in Cromwell for Easter, I could not help feeling I was facing my own “Garden of Gethsemane” experience, now that the whole church, including my friends, had turned against me.

But I was not the only one so disturbed, for so also was Evan. On my return to Dunedin, having observed my defensive attitude at the interview and sensing how I would be feeling, Evan came to me to explain his own uncomfortable dilemma on this occasion and how, as a junior in the deputation, he had felt unable to help me. It was his visit and counsel that helped me regain my confidence and initiated a healing process. Eventually, as is now well known, I was fully vindicated by the following General Assembly, but I remain forever grateful to Evan for the care I received from him during such a difficult period. Thereafter, as this book so well illustrates, Evan went on, with increasing skill, to assist countless others in the caring way that so marked his personality and his relationships with people.





*Evan and Isabelle, 1972*

## **The Reverend Evan Sherrard — Presbyterian Minister**

*Allan Davidson*

The 30th of September this year (2015) was the fiftieth anniversary of Evan's ordination into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. Over those fifty years the church, society and Evan changed in ways that could not have been anticipated. 1965 marked a highpoint for church membership; church union was in the air; liberals were in the ascendancy. Two years later, Lloyd Geering, Principal of the Presbyterian Theological Hall was

charged with teaching doctrinal error and disturbing the peace of the church. This was a watershed moment for the church. (Incidentally, in 1967, Evan was a member of the Church's Doctrine Committee which attempted to steer the church through this controversial time.) Over the years Evan found himself in a church becoming increasingly conservative; church union failed; the church became very different from the one he entered.

In his work as a counsellor, psychotherapist and teacher, Evan found a very fulfilling avenue for ministry outside the conventional parish structures. He was nevertheless following in the pathway of Jesus the healer, Jesus the wise man, Jesus the rabbi — the teacher. At the same time, Evan over many years gave astute counsel through the Auckland Presbytery's Pastoral Care Committee which had oversight of all its ministers.

In the evolving theology of Lloyd Geering and others, Evan found stimulating ways of hanging in with the church. Ever the explorer, Evan pushed out to new frontiers of belief.

In the Community of St Luke, Evan found a place of belonging, of affirmation, and openness to new ideas. In David Clark, St Luke's much beloved late minister, Evan found a friend and fellow traveller. He enjoyed David's off the wall humour and joined in David's deeper spiritual quest for authentic ways of believing and living. In the mid-week Wednesday Communion, Evan often took leadership, rejoicing in the weekly freedom to engage in heretical discussions. At the same time, this group perhaps surprisingly to some, prayed for those with whom they were connected personally, or through this Community; those who were ill, dying, grieving, or suffering. Prayer for Evan was not some magical ritual, asking an old man with a long white beard sitting on a cloud for healing. Prayer was a vital energy of people, giving expression to cries of concern that came from the heart.

In more recent years Evan has embraced Progressive Christianity, rejoicing in its exploration of the Christian tradition in fresh and compelling ways. Evan accepted the wisdom of the scholars in the Jesus Seminar, teasing out the words and way of Jesus from the multiple overlays of gospel writers, church fathers and theologians. Recently, no doubt surprisingly to some, Evan delved into his own exploration of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

In marking Evan's fiftieth anniversary of ordination, Andrew Norton, the Presbyterian moderator, congratulated Evan on behalf of 'the church that you have served so well'. Having stood on the edge of the national church for many years, Evan felt quite chuffed receiving this greeting.

We will miss Evan enormously, but we will keep him alive in our memories and in our hearts. He touched and influenced for good the lives of so many of us and so many others. He will continue to touch others through these influences. We give thanks for the life of this very special man.

## **Reflections on Evan Sherrard's contribution by a Practitioner Chaplain**

*Roger Hey*



*Evan with Revd Roger Hey at Michael and Cate's  
Wedding, Auckland, 2001*

The particular focus of this contribution to this part of the book on Evan's ministry came with a request for a comment on Evan's theological commitments. I've given this much thought these past few days, and don't recall discussing with Evan "theology" per se, theology in the abstract, as it were, much at all. Evan's theological framework seemed to be formed from his educational journey and studies on human personality, not the other way

round. He was definitely in the “liberal” camp, and he would likely prefer the more accurate word “progressive”. He saw keenly the oppression and damage to personality that can be made by restricting and negative religion, but his practise was not focused on furthering any particular theological position, rather — and acutely so in the supervisory context<sup>2</sup> — seeking the integrity of a student’s understanding of formal theology through that student’s own pastoral ministry, i.e., posing the question: “How does our ministerial behaviour accurately reflect our religious beliefs?” In my view, you find and see theology in our behaviour, more than our words.

[2. Ed. — See Chapter 7.]

Theologically speaking, Evan’s views appeared to be open-ended and exploratory. I remember a reflection he gave at our mid-week Communion service where he gave “a guestimate” on the personality of Mary, the mother of Jesus, based on our contemporary understandings of human personality, and what we might deduce of her from her son. Only the brave venture here! Evan’s words took us far forward from a traditional Presbyterian understanding of Mary’s role, and even of Catholic belief.<sup>3</sup>

[3. Ed. — See paper in Chapter 4.]

Evan’s extensive knowledge of human effort and achievement, of pain and tragedy, his experience of being with people struggling to address the sources of conflict and hurt in their lives, his formal education and pastoral experience must have left him with a great knowledge of the raw data of humanity to which theological thought must speak — resulting in Evan’s openness to new spiritual and religious thought, whatever the source.

For many of us today the old religious framing of the world and our place within the universe is crumbling away, being replaced by a spirit of universality, integrated with contemporary knowledge and concerns, turning us into hopeful, and loving pilgrims seeking to read the best signposts, old and new, for guidance. Evan would be among them.

My relationship with Evan changed when his son got serious about our daughter. In time Evan and I have delighted in being grandfathers to the same granddaughter, so the professional relationship with Evan became personal with the marriage within our two families, as a result of which our friendship blossomed.

One final memory of this man who has enriched my life professionally and personally so much was a winter's night when we both departed from a discussion group at St Luke's Presbyterian Church. By this time I knew he was seriously unwell. Evan was walking to Isabelle, who was waiting for him in their car. I watched his departing outline retreat as the dark night slowly swallowed him up. Then, he was gone.

## Poem

*Glynn Cardy*

It was to be a grand night  
that Evan and our group  
at St Luke's planned;  
fellow conspirators  
in the plot to blow up  
the factory called God  
with its creeds and confessions  
and constipation,  
and set free all those heretical  
mischievous ideas that  
bring a smile and  
a glimmer of hope  
to the human spirit.

We had a grand scheme,  
for that grand night  
(admittedly still in gestation),  
to take every pious word  
every sanctimonious act  
that our ancestors dished out  
as spiritual truth,  
and turn those words and acts upside-down  
so the faults, the cracks,  
in the so-called truth

would be plain for all to see;  
and upside-down the stuffing would fall out.

And then maybe, just maybe,  
a miracle would happen ...  
someone — a child? — would giggle,  
and people would begin to laugh —  
laugh 'til they rolled and cried —  
not derisively at the folly of our forebears,  
but at our own folly in believing them  
and in the wares they peddled,  
and in our own vulnerability  
which still creates saviours and almighty gods.

It would be the laughter of cleansing,  
the laughter of insurrection,  
the laughter of hope.  
Then came the best bit, eh Evan? —  
the party would begin.  
The laughter and truth-naming  
would turn into acts of love  
and compassion  
and healing  
and justice.

There would be chuckles in the chancel,  
and mercy in the Presbytery.  
We would feast and hug and remember  
that we are, at heart, brothers and sisters  
fellow pilgrims on this planet  
magical stardust  
in need of each other.

It would be a grand night;  
even John Knox would dance.  
It would be a grand night

when the factory called God blew up  
and we found out that God all along  
had been hidden  
in the messy profanity of our loves and lives.  
It would be a grand night.

May you rest in peace Evan  
and rise in our lives, our laughter and loves.



*Evan and Isabelle, 1999*





Part III

CLINICAL  
EDUCATION

# Introduction

## JONATHAN FAY AND KEITH TUDOR

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- 1965* Evan graduates as a Certified Clinical Theological Educator, Institute of Religion, Houston
- 1967* The Cameron Centre, Dunedin, is opened with Evan as its founding director
- 1969 (June-August)* He assists Herb Hillebrand to run a three month program of clinical training at the University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
- 1970-1975* He is chaplain supervisor, C. S. Mott Children's Hospital, University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
- 1970* He enrolls in a PhD program in adult educational psychology and organisational consultancy in the Education Faculty at the University of Michigan, with Dr Alan Menlo as his supervisor
- 1970* He joins the Michigan Episcopal Training Network. He trains in group dynamics and leadership skills with Dr Josephine Kelsey, Brighton, Michigan
- 1972* He reconfirms his full status as a Supervisor in the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education with written and oral submissions to examination in Chicago, Illinois, USA

He is elected as a Member of the American Pastoral Counselor Association

- 1973* He is appointed Visiting Professor of Pastoral Care to St John Seminary, Plymouth, Michigan teaching a course on Grief, Death and Dying to final year Deaconate, Roman Catholic students  
Evan and Isabelle decide that they have completed their career development and would return home to New Zealand, as part of which Evan discontinues his doctoral studies and converts all his credits to a Master's Degree. He graduates with a Master of Art (Education), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan
- 1976* Evan and Isabelle return to New Zealand and settle in Auckland  
Evan begins to conduct a series of clinical pastoral education courses for clergy and laity wishing to develop or improve their skills of pastoral care ministry in a range of denominations, in association with Gordon Hambly of Lifeline.
- 1977* He is employed by the Auckland Presbyterian Social Services Association as leader of the Human Development Team
- 1978* He is sub-contracted as a part-time field supervisor in the Department of Education, University of Auckland, to supervise the counselling field work of MA students, with Dr Hans Everts; also spends a year as a part-time interim lecturer in that program
- 1980* He is a fully Accredited Supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education with the New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education
- 1985* He spends a year in a work group developing a proposal to establish a psychotherapy training programme at Auckland Technology Institute (ATI), later to become Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT) (and later still Auckland University of Technology (AUT))<sup>1</sup>
- 1987* This proposal is endorsed by Dr Basil James, then Director General of Mental Health, and by the Academic Board of Studies at ATI; it is decided to establish a programme of psychotherapy training within the Faculty of Health Studies
- 1989* The Diploma in Psychotherapy accepts its first intake of students, with Evan as Programme Leader.

[1. Ed. — Auckland Technology Institute (ATI) (from 1963) in 1989 became Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT), and in 2000 Auckland University of Technology (AUT).]



*Certificate. Member of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, 1971*



*Certificate. M.A. (Ed.) from University of Michigan, 1973*

The chapters in this Part focus on Evan’s contribution to clinical education, that is, the education of clinicians, a term which encompasses pastors,

counsellors, psychologists, and psychotherapists.

Following some years of ministry at the First Church of Otago in Dunedin, Evan was appointed as director of The Cameron Centre. Modelled on the Cairnmillar Institute, Melbourne, and based in a purpose-designed and -built new building on the grounds of the First Church, with its own constitution and Board of Managers, it provided counselling services and community mental health education courses, including marriage preparation for First Church weddings. Evan's reflections on 30 years of the Centre forms the first paper in Chapter 6. Although he had undertaken some training in Rogerian, person-centred counselling when in Houston, Texas, 1963-1965, after a few years of working at The Cameron Centre, Evan was, by his own account, depleted (see main Introduction) He investigated possibilities for further training, as a result of which he ended up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and completing a training in clinical pastoral education. Two papers on this form the second part of Chapter 6.<sup>2</sup>

[2. Ed. — Other papers from this time include extensive and very honest evaluations (both Evan's own evaluations, as well as those from his trainers); course notes on *The Pastoral Care of Grief* (1970); and papers, for instance, on *Pastoral Training* (1974), *Feedback in a Learning Community* (n.d.), and *A Pastoral Theology of Death, Grief, and Suffering* (n.d). See also Bibliography.]

When Evan and his family returned to New Zealand in 1976, he took up a temporary position as a Hospital Chaplain at Middemore Hospital, Auckland. His experience and interest in pastoral education led him to offer short courses to clergy and laity, and later that year he was employed by the then Auckland Presbyterian Social Services Association to lead what was called the Human Development Team; reflections from people who knew Evan in that context form Chapter 7. In 1988 Evan resigned from (by then) Presbyterian Support Services; others also left and established the Human Development & Training Institute, and, while Evan was not formally not involved in this initiative, he supervised a number of the people involved and, as John O'Connor acknowledges, continued to be influential: "I was privileged some years after the Institute's founding, to take up a role as one of the Directors of this Institute and to benefit from Evan's vision, creativity, and educational ability." (personal [e-mail] communication, 10th September, 2016)

Just as clinical pastoral education led to human development training, so this approach to training led to the establishment of the psychotherapy

programme in 1989 at then Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT). This took an enormous amount of work, and Evan's papers reveal, as ever, both his vision and his attention to detail, and his influence on this programme may be seen to this day, some 25 years later, reflections on which form Chapter 8.

In addition to these major initiatives, Evan also supported and influenced other education and training in counselling Aotearoa New Zealand. Peter Hubbard and Helen Palmer write about his influence on their Institute of Psychosynthesis (in Chapter 14). Here Hans Everts' comments on Evan's contribution to the Counsellor Education Programme at the University of Auckland:

While Evan had only a part-time association with our post-graduate counsellor education programme, his contribution over a period of years was a significant one. He brought with him a philosophy of education that was distinctive, but was in harmony with our own in several respects. He was integrative and experiential. He emphasized the need for a sound, conceptual basis for professional activities, an openness to critique, and the validity of both counselling and psycho-therapeutic work. He contributed to our programme from his long term experience in professional practice as well as training. He taught and supervised with us from his detailed knowledge of transactional analysis, psychodrama, and spirituality; and he did all that with respect, warmth and dry humour.

At a concrete level, Evan acted as external examiner in a number of oral examinations and dissertations. He ran workshops on TA and other above-mentioned topics. We collaborated in hosting presentations by Dr Muriel James, visiting New Zealand as a leading exponent of TA. He developed with us a number of demonstration teaching videotapes. Working with Priscilla Everts, a long-term colleague, these tapes provided powerful portrayals of sensitive personal situations, handled in a caring but challenging manner. On various occasions he acted as a collegial consultant to our programme staff on matters of professional development. This precious relationship existed within the context of an enormous university system, where we represented a specialist, educational endeavour that very few others understood or cared about. Evan enriched our output, validated

our modus operandi, challenged our assumptions, and strengthened our team spirit.

At a personal level, it was deeply affirming to work with Evan as somebody who was basically on the same page, who helped me reflect critically on my work, and who uplifted me with his sparkling dry humour. Evan's contributions to our counsellor education programme are remembered warmly by all



*Certificate. The New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, 1973*

## *Chapter 6*

### Papers on clinical and pastoral education

EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **Thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Cameron Centre (1997)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — In Evan's papers, there were a number of versions of the original vision for the Cameron Centre, as well as various reports on the Centre over the years. This is the address he gave in June 1997, at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary service of the founding of the Centre.]

#### *Readings*

Old Testament: 1 Samuel 17: 31-49

New Testament: Mark 4:35-41

I'll never forget her. The young woman who hung back in the church doorway, just out there, clutching her thin coat round her, waiting till there was no one with me to ask for a date to come and see me. It was not just her eyes, though they were memorable: big, round, and frightened. It was her strangely wooden, expressionless face. As I got to know her over time it was always the same. Never a flicker of emotion, never an expression, a face stiff and still. After she had gone, following the young people



streaming over to the lounge, an old building previously on the site of the first Cameron Centre building, going to join them in the coffee club activities of that Sunday evening run by Syd Smale, one of the elders on door duty came over to me. He'd been standing quietly observing.

“Did that young woman make a time to see you?” he asked. “Yes”, I replied.

“Great”, he said. “I hope you can do something for her. Could you come and see me in my office before you see her I have some information about her which may be of help to you.”

He was the district child welfare officer. When I did meet with him he was most distressed. “That young woman, we failed badly”, he told me.

She was in our care all her life. When our welfare officers went to see how she was doing they never believed her story. They always believed her foster mother, until one day someone came in and said their conscience could not rest and they reported gross abuse. An investigation confirmed this situation and that very afternoon the girl was removed from the home. But, he said the damage was done. Now she needs a lot of help. We worked with this young woman, I'll call her Beth, over the next few years. We did what we could and I think we brought light and happiness into her life, more than she had ever known before. But I don't think we repaired the damage. We didn't know enough then.

She was the very sort of person and situation which the Cameron Centre was founded for. We began working with her before the first building was erected or opened and before the Cameron Centre organisation was even formerly in place. Notice I talk of we. The Cameron Centre was then first and foremost a team enterprise. There was the First Church side. That's where it began. With minister, Sandy McLean, and his assistant, Ross Miller, and their awareness that the changing city scene of Dunedin meant more and more disturbed and troubled people in the city centre, of which First Church was at the hub. Knox catered for the university end of town, and for students, First Church was to be for the city.

At an officer-bearers retreat, inspired by the vision Sandy and Ross put forward, they decided to offer an inner city ministry with a counselling service. Syd Smale, with inner city exposure and experience in Melbourne, was called to head the implementation of the vision after Sandy's enforced

retirement from ill health. Then, as I was finishing my training in Houston, Texas, in Pastoral Care and Counselling, I was sent a call to become Syd's associate to develop to the counselling side of the plan. Before I arrived Charlie Bowie, Director of what was then the Presbyterian Social Services Association, had become involved in the project, so, the Presbyterian Social Services joined in the scheme offering its staff and services to the team approach of this new ministry. Much of this was led and inspired through the efforts of Dr. Hugh Stevely, a First Church elder. It was amazing how well we all got on together. Even before the formalities of a constitution for the Cameron Centre, even before we had the name, or plans for the building, we were working together offering this new inner city ministry. Beth was an example of it.

Beth came to First Church attracted by the young adults programme run by Syd Smale. The young adults were warm and accepting, and Beth felt good in their friendly welcome. She knew I was providing counselling, observed me, gained confidence and asked for an appointment. An elder shared useful, background information, out of a deep concern for her wellbeing. PSSA staff helped find her more suitable accommodation and employment. Eventually a couple in the congregation, who'd come to Dunedin for him to study, took her into their family, befriending her — providing her with some sense of home. The woman gave Beth some feminine understanding and a place she could go to for some wholesome mothering. I provided counselling in which she gained some insight and self-awareness for problem solving, enhancing her relations, and developing some emotional fluency. As I said, her damage was early and very severe. Her improvement was only slight. She followed the befriending family when they moved north from Dunedin at the end of his studies. It is now many years since I last heard of her. What we offered was a total team effort.

That was the beginning, and now Cameron Centre has an outstanding reputation as a place of healing and health promotion. Naturally, over 30 years there have been many changes. First Church is no longer a partner. There have been many ups and downs, which I cannot speak to. Early this year I was privileged to hear Mary Cockburn, a Cameron Centre therapist, repeat a paper which was originally delivered in Vienna last year describing the current work of the Centre. It was awesome. I was very moved. Despite the differences over time, it seemed to me of have retained the same vision.

The same philosophy and faith, still lay behind the Cameron Centre. It has to do with the spirit of the place. As with anything of spirit, it is so ephemeral, so intangible, that words fail. So, like the Biblical writers who struggle to put into words profound human experience, I have to resort to story, to metaphor and figures of speech to convey meaning.

There are the disciples, out in a boat, in a violent storm. Remember, many of them were fishermen, they made their living on this stretch of water. Probably, it was one of their boats. Here they are, experienced men, so storm tossed and nearly swamped that they are terrified, frightened for their lives. It must have been a vicious storm. But, not so vicious, not so stormy that Jesus could not sleep through it. A truly remarkable man, or a remarkable boat to stay steady enough, and remarkable wind storm quiet enough, so someone could sleep. Maybe the story has been doctored up to make a point. Anyway, they have to wake Jesus up, they cry out, Teacher, don't you care that we perish? Twenty centuries later, Beth, all alone in a loveless sea, feeling about to be swamped cries out, "Does anyone care? I'm about to perish." Yes Beth, there were people who cared. People inspired by Jesus Christ. People who, two thousand years later, felt a desire to re-present Jesus and his healing love for others, in Dunedin.

The Church's ministry of pastoral care, which, in Dunedin, has been given form and expression, amongst others, in the Presbyterian Services and the Cameron Centre, is often based on the image of the shepherd. Pastoral care — shepherding. I spent a year being a shepherd, once. In New Zealand today being a shepherd is not very inspiring. In the middle east, even today, it is a much more robust occupation. Being a shepherd there is very demanding. Particularly back there in David's day, 3,000 years ago. As we read in our Old Testament lesson, David the shepherd boy had gained a lot of experience rescuing his flock, bare handed, from lions and bears. I never had anything which came as close to an adrenalin rush as that on my shepherd's beat in the hills outside Taumarunui. Shepherding gave David the background training to become the warrior king of Israel. It prepared him to slay Goliath. And it gave him the space and time to reflect on human existence and put it into poetry, Psalms. "The Lord is my shepherd", becomes evocative of a very powerful image: a caring God who will actively save us from the jaws and paws of lions and bears. Isn't lovely to

live in Dunedin free from the fear of such monsters. We can truly fear no evil here, in the shape of lions or bears.

Only forty years ago, Beth lived with a monster in Dunedin: a woman appointed by the state to take care of her; a monster who deliberately and maliciously ravaged her young innocence and her emotional development. She was brutally punished for crying, for laughing, for smiling, for frowning for showing any feeling. She ended up with a wooden face. All, because it turned out, the woman wanted to take revenge on the Child Welfare Department. In the privacy of that foster home there was no one to rescue Beth from the jaws or paws of that monster. I'd like to think that Child Care services do better now than then. It is hard to be assured, because, wouldn't you know, Beth's care giver was a good, regular church goer, she came with the best of recommendations. Love is of the essence of the Christian gospel. It is to be hoped that church goers know something of this. But Beth never experienced any love in her young life. It certainly was not enough to tell Beth, from this pulpit in Sunday preaching, that God loved her. Such an abstract idea is quite useless. Beth needed to experience love, to feel it, to know it. Trouble was, she had been so damaged that she was unable to trust it or recognise it when it was offered. She needed to enter into a total relearning experience over several years to make any substantial change, and, despite our best team effort then, we were not skilled or knowledgeable enough to make the difference. But, that was the spirit behind the Cameron Centre.

It was to be a place where love, the basic principle of the universe, revealed most fully in Jesus Christ could be experienced through human agency. God's love, Christ's love, is mediated through human beings. In my observation, in my experience, God's love has come to me most concretely through hands-on actions of other people. I know about mystical experiences. I've had some. I've heard the claims, I believe many. I've especially heard them from people like Beth, people shockingly abused in childhood. They've told things like, if it was not for the golden glow I felt, after the monsters had left me, I would not have survived. Few name such experiences as a divine presence. And they go on to tell me of their urge to do harm to themselves and others, and talk of suicide. Mystical experience and golden light is not enough for many people. Human agency is necessary to make God's love real.

Let us take David's psalm, the Shepherd psalm, a little further. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me." I like that bit about the rod and staff. It's very concrete. Otherwise, it's a bit metaphysical, out of this world for me. "Thou art with me" is a faith statement. I'm not sure about the Thou. I have to take it on faith. There is a lot of silence out there, when I talk to God. If there is any conversation, I know I'm only hearing the echo of my own voice. But a rod and a staff, now that's comforting. That's tangible. For me, when I have walked through valleys of the shadow of death, the rod and staff which comfort me, have been other people. God's rod and staff are other people, not a mystical metaphysic, a poetic metaphor, but real flesh and blood, people I can lean on, like a rod and staff, strong, dependable people who uphold me. That is how I've met the love of God — no doubt of it.

It is in people doing loving things, large and small acts: small acts of kindness, generosity of concern, a smile which gives some form of recognition, and "I'm with you", practical acts of thoughtfulness, people going out of their way when they did not need to, genuine interest in my welfare, a card, flowers, a gift of food, an unrushed visit which was non-taxing. We all need powerful, non-exploitative, non-sentimental experiences of active love in our lives. Love which is passionately caring, which will go to the length of snatching us from the lion's jaw or the bear's paw, risking life and limb to do so, a love which is powerful enough to stand up for us in the midst of violent storms and with a commanding presence shout "peace, be still", and hold us until the tumult dies down. Having received such love, we want to give it. Unless we have received such love, we cannot give it. "We love, because he first loved us", is a basic principle, expressed most fully in Jesus Christ, and passed on down the generations. Ideally we should first receive love at home, from our parents. But no family is ideal. Thank God, few are as bad as Beth's. That's why we need access to bigger communities in which the deficits of home can be made up by other caregivers. Our closest loved ones cannot do everything for us.

It starts, then, in committed, intimate relationships at home with the family, and spreads out, as we experience love from many different sources. One such source is the redemptive, reconciling community of First Church, another, the healing, supportive community of the Cameron Centre. May

God continue to bless the endeavours of both, as both communities act as agents of God's love.

***for those  
who need  
help***

Introducing—

**THE CAMERON  
CENTRE**

FOR  
PASTORAL  
COUNSELLING  
AND  
COMMUNITY  
CARE



The Cameron Centre is equipped to deal with problems associated with:—

- FAMILY CRISIS
- THE UNMARRIED MOTHER
- HOMELESS CHILDREN
- THE LONELY AND UNHAPPY
- THE GRIEF STRICKEN
- ANXIETY AND GUILT

The Cameron Centre, 415 Moray Place, is situated in the grounds of First Church. Telephone 77-115.

## **Clinical Pastoral Education — Notes (n.d.)<sup>2</sup>**

[2. Ed. — In Evan's papers, there were a number of undated papers and notes on clinical pastoral education. This is the most comprehensive of these.]

### **1. CPE IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

Simply, this is learning by doing. But, you can do ineffective, unproductive things over and over again without learning anything. You do not always learn by doing. What seems to be required to make experiential learning productive is reflection, or careful thought about what is done.

Experience + Reflection = Learning

The discipline of reflection produces new ideas, or new insight, or new images of the Way to do things. Out of reflection comes the input for change, for doing things differently, for deciding how to have new experiences. These new experiences are then subject to reflection, and so the process of growth or development is a sequence of doing and reflection.

Experience + Reflection learning new experience + Reflection =  
Learning

Disciplined reflection is not easy. CPE provides help for this through the supervisor and the various processes of supervision. Supervision is the teaching method of experiential education.

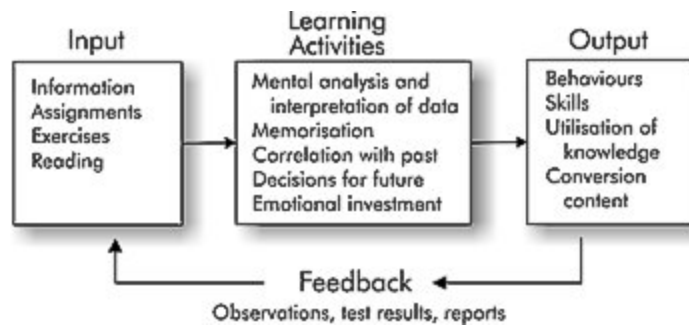
In one-to-one meetings, in groups with peers, through Written reports, students are helped, under supervision, to reflect on what they are doing, and from their reflections to learn and grow.

### **2. CPE IS A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO LEARNING**

A very simple picture of a system suggests it having three parts integrated by a feed-back process. The learner can be considered in a systems way:

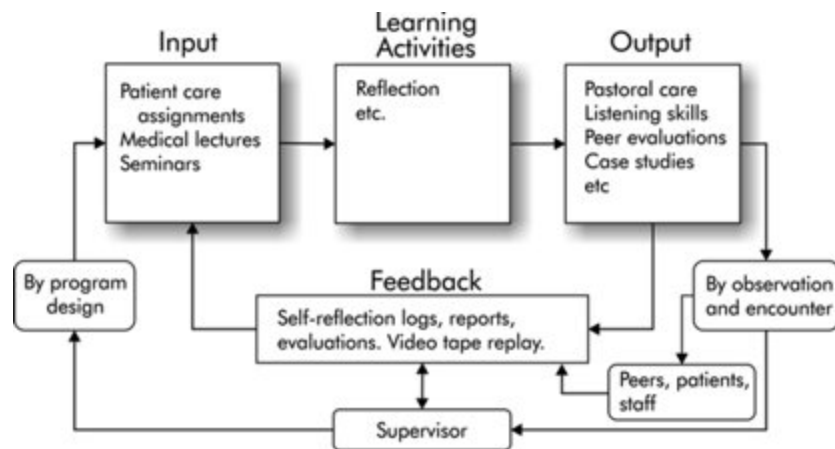


The learning activity goes on within the learner, and is revealed as having taken place when it shows up in various outcomes. In order for the learning activities to take place the learner requires various inputs of information, other people's reports of their experience, exposure to situations, and so on, plus feedback.



CPE the learner is helped, in supervision, to:

1. Identify his desired learning outcomes,
2. Obtain useful feedback in terms of his desired outcome,
3. Use a variety of inputs and experiences, and
4. Become efficient with his mental learning activities.



### 3. CPE IS GOAL-ORIENTATED LEARNING

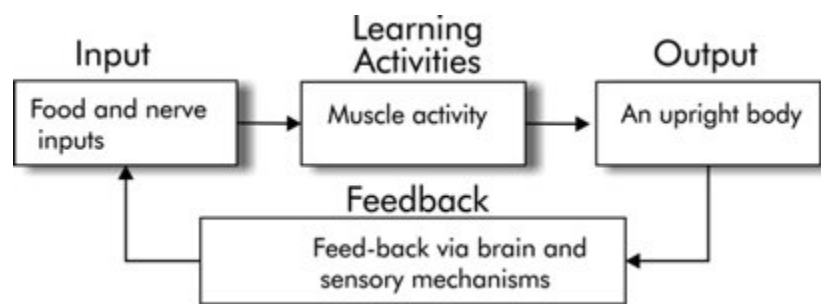
As a form of professional education, whose learners are adult, CPE proceeds on the basis of thoroughly defined goals established by each



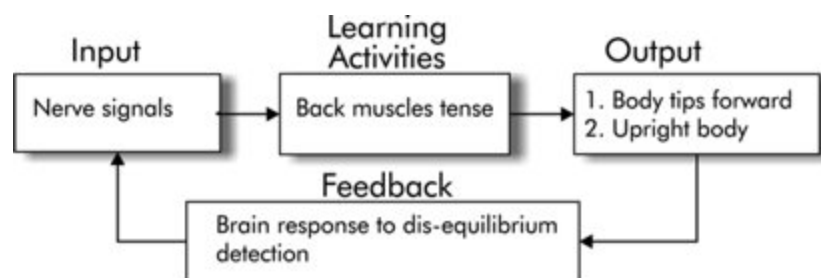
student, in negotiation with his supervisor. In the negotiation, some, quite desirable learning goals, may be judged to be outside the realm of CPE by the supervisor, and declined as program goals. Also, in CPE each supervisor will have educational intentions for his students, and will want some accomplishment of these to justify his involvement of time and energy.

The supervisor will introduce his goals into the negotiation, but in the end, the student sets his own learning objectives and forms an educational contract with his supervisor to meet them.

It is on the basis of these goals that feedback can be given and evaluations made. We must have a sense of where we are going, or anything goes, to the frustration of everyone. In setting our goals we need to be able to say how we will know that we have met them. And, if the learner is to have feedback from others, outside his system, he needs to be able to say what he will be doing, or how he will be behaving, when he has learned what he has set out to accomplish.



The feedback system is vital. By it the whole system is self-correcting in terms of the desired outcome.



So, when the body tips forward, we call this defining the terminal behavior of the learning process. A supervisor cannot see inside the student's head to assess what he has learned. Growth and development must show up, in some way, in what a person does. Even such an internal thing as self-

confidence, a good learning goal, shows up on the outside of person. In CPE the goals cluster around the pastoral dimensions of ministry, and learning achievements, whether in the area of attitudes and feelings, knowledge and ideas, skills and practice, identity and values, will show up in some outcome. It is on the basis of these outcomes that students can claim to have learned, and supervisors can make evaluations.

#### **4. CPE TAKES PLACE IN A LEARNING COMMUNITY**

Pastoral ministry has to do with other people. It seems that learning in this area is most productive when it is done in the company of others. Not only can others provide useful feed-back for our learning activities, they can accept us when we feel unsure of ourselves, they can support us when we feel discouraged, they can act as a pole of dialog in testing and trying out our ideas, they can mirror or reflect or model what we want to change or develop. All our interactions with others in the community become experiences on which we can reflect and learn, and transfer our learnings to other situations.

In CPE the peer group experience is a vital ingredient of the learning process. Having common objectives in coming together we can experience the inter-dependence of community, helping and being helped; trusting and being trusted; supporting and being supportive; risking and being risked with; revealing and being revealed to; affirming and being affirmed. In such an environment we can have powerful learning experiences.

#### **5. CPE IS LEARNING IN A REAL-LIFE SETTING**

The experiences from which students learn in CPE are direct, real-life situations. It is a clinical — not classroom — setting. The word, clinical, derives from “at the bedside”. The people with whom we have our experiences may not all be in bed. Nevertheless, we can have figurative “bed-side” experiences in which we get alongside people in their real-life situations, whether these people are patients, or patient’s relatives, hospital staff or members of our CPE community. We meet them where they are at, in many different situations — glad or sad, fearful or trusting, confused or clear, placid or acid, despairing or hopeful and we bring them ministry.

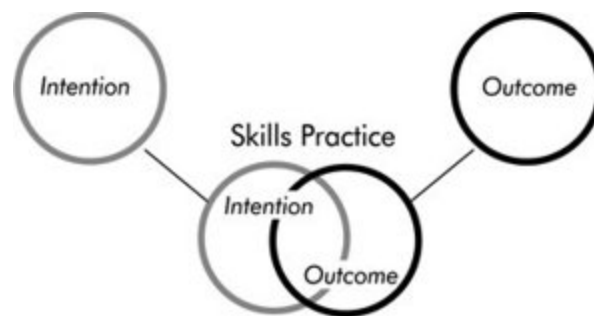
How we bring this ministry is part of what we are learning. Hence, first we bring a ministry — we experience being a minister, a chaplain — then we reflect on it. So the total environment of the medical center is the setting for our experiential learning. As it is a teaching center it is understood that many people here are learners, trying to do things; evaluating their experience; redesigning their efforts; trying again; making mistakes; experimenting with their skills as they develop competence.

However, because the hospital is a place where sick people are seeking relief, recovery and remedy from illness, any learning “experimentation” must be held with limits and ethical considerations.

We are not free to do anything at all with the people we meet “at the bedside”. How we behave must be governed by our values. In CPE we assume these values are derived from the Judeo-Christian heritage, and are open to reflection and exploration. Thus what we do must be consistent with a “caring” or “shepherding” or “pastoral” attitude as we find it best exemplified in the Scriptures.

## **6. CPE IS SKILLS-PRACTICE LEARNING**

CPE students, whatever their individual vocational goals, are usually well-intentioned people. But, what we intend to happen and what actually takes place are often different. On many occasions there is a gap between our intentions and the actual outcome of our behaviour designed to meet our intention. Skills practice is the effort to reduce this gap.



Rarely is there a complete overlap. Intentions are internal to us, while the outcome is external and subject to factors outside our control or influence, (such as other people’s intentions; other’s interpretation of my behavior; environmental limits; etc.), and can be expressed as:

Intention + My Behavior + External Factors = Actual Outcome.

In skills practice we try to discover ways of behaving or influencing the situation so that we have the best chance of succeeding with our intentions. In this way skills practice is focused on behavior or the way we do things.

However, there is more to skills practice. We may need to consider our intentions. It is possible that what we intend calls for behavior that is impossible to achieve. Or, what we intend takes no account of others or the external environment. Or, even, that what we really intend is the actual outcome when we think we intended something different. That is, we can set ourselves up for failure at the same time as we think we wanted the opposite. We can be unaware of our real intentions.

Our intentions are influenced by many internal factors, some of which we are aware, and some, unaware.

Aware factors	Unaware factors
Values	Prejudices and Stereotypes
Beliefs + Past conditioning	= Intentions
Assumptions, etc.	Emotions, etc.

In CPE skills practice includes a consideration of our intentions and a student is invited to bring as many factors to awareness as possible, so that, in full awareness, we intend the actual outcome of our behavior.

## 7. IN CPE THE LEARNER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LEARNING

A supervisor is a facilitator, or “tour guide” helping the learner along his course as he learns. The supervisor does not teach. All around us, all the time, in this learning community and learning environment, we are involved in happenings, from which we can learn. We can obtain new insights into ourselves, gain new knowledge and information, develop new skills, discover alternative behaviour, and so on. We each must do this for ourselves. No one can do it for us.

The student has to be prepared to work at learning. Not every experience yields a learning. It takes willingness and effort. What each of us learns is uniquely ours. Two students will learn two different things from the same one, shared experience. No one can control or determine what another will learn from an experience.

The most the supervisor can do is to set up opportunities for the students to have potentially valuable learning experiences, of many kinds, and then help the student make his or her own learning from it. Some of these experiences can be preplanned, many occur without arrangement simply from the clinical setting, and others are designed on the basis of the individual's progress. This latter way of planning experiences we call emergent design. Here the sequence of events is based on the learnings as they are made by the student. One learning leading to the next in a way that cannot be accurately predicted. In this way CPE includes elements of a planned curriculum with individualized, emergent design.

### **CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION (2006)**

I started my career in agriculture, a field I enjoyed greatly. Despite advice that I did not have the expected background, I applied for a Government Cadetship and was selected for six years of inter-woven farming and academic training. I qualified for a Bachelor of Agricultural Science in 1959, the year I married Isabelle — two fundamental experiences that shaped my life.

Half-way through those six years I experienced a “call” to the ministry while patching chaff bags on a mid-Canterbury farm. After eighteen months' confusion I applied for training as a Presbyterian minister and was granted release from my government bond and admission to study at the Presbyterian Theological Hall, Knox College, Dunedin. Those days of agricultural study, with its hands-on-experience and practical application of scientifically, pragmatically-based theory and knowledge with down-to-earth people has underpinned my ministry ever since.

Beginning in 1960, I gained an excellent theological education in Dunedin, but I finished the three-year course not really knowing what it meant to be a minister nor how to be a “Minister of the Word and Sacrament” with people, other than how to construct sermons of biblical exposition and how

to preach and conduct liturgy based on the *Book of Order*.<sup>3</sup> Coming from an agricultural scientific background with no university-level study of any classical subjects that were the norm for theological training for the Presbyterian ministry (such as history, philosophy or languages), I was excused from taking Greek or Hebrew and took substitute subjects instead. As a result, I did not qualify to graduate with a BD degree as did many of my fellow students.

[3. Ed. — This is a book of rules and procedure of the Presbyterian Church. The current version can be seen at [www.presbyterian.org.nz/sites/public\\_files/Oct.14.Book\\_of\\_Order\\_2014.pdf](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/sites/public_files/Oct.14.Book_of_Order_2014.pdf).]

During our courtship, I had promised Isabelle, that as soon as we had saved the necessary money, I would take her to meet her extended family of origin in Northern Ireland in order to find her roots and to gain knowledge of her mother, who died when Isabelle was a young child. To deal with his grief, Isabelle's father had refused to talk about her mother. Through hard work we had raised the money by the time I finished at the Hall. However, the Presbyterian Church would not give their approval to go. Had I been going to Scotland it would have been different. I pushed ahead and arranged for parish experience in Northern Ireland. Yielding to my insistence, the Church begrudgingly gave me permission to go "providing you do more study while overseas to justify your holiday." The difficulty for me, as far as we knew then, post-graduate studies in the UK required at least a BD for admission. Ian Wilson suggested that, on my return-journey to NZ, I undertake practical studies in pastoral care in a three-month course at the Institute of Religion, at the Medical Center, Houston, Texas. Reluctantly, for I had no desire to go the USA, taking up this idea seemed a compromise by which I could submit to the discipline of the Church which, in those days, I felt constrained to accommodate.

While in Northern Ireland, I had some sense of being at home (Northern Ireland being also part of my roots a generation further back). In contrast, Houston, Texas was an enormous cultural shock. The course of study at the Institute of Religion was like nothing I had ever experienced and blew me away. Here I was, a good Kiwi farm-boy, rather emotionally illiterate, being asked to examine my feelings and to recognise how they influenced my behaviour as a chaplain in a charity hospital still displaying the "Whites Only" and "Coloreds Only" signs; and then being asked what my theological thinking and biblical justification for that thinking was! My

world was turned upside-down and inside-out. I was even asked to examine what influence my parents might have had on all that thinking! It was radically life-changing. For a while even my wife did not know me.

Now, it must be remembered I was not undertaking a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) programme as we would understand it today. In the early 1960s, CPE did not exist as a recognised formal method. It was only after I completed my training in Houston that the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) was established, and CPE, as a discipline, became formalized and unified. Prior to that several groupings in the USA were conducting their form of CPE, however they called it, and it took some hard work to bring these often competing, even rival, training establishments together to initiate the ACPE in the USA. However, each establishment in their own way had been loyal to the vision and practice of Anton Boison, the founder of CPE, whose emphasis had been on developing effective pastors-in-ministry by having theological students study the “living human documents” (rather than extant documents) in clinical contexts under intensive supervision, and using means such as the Cabot case-conference method to bring an interdisciplinary dimension to the students’ experience.

I graduated in 1965 as a supervisor in Clinical Theological Education after completing a full course of training at the Institute of Religion in Houston, training that was endorsed by the Council of Southern Theological Seminaries (COSTS), a coalition formed by the five major seminaries of Texas. To graduate with this qualification, I was required to achieve a Master’s Degree. I was granted special admission (given my lack of a BD, but having a Bachelor Degree and a Diploma in Theology from Knox College) to pastoral studies at the Perkins School of Theology at the Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas, Texas. This involved travelling from Houston to Dallas once a week for a semester to undertake on-campus courses. My study at the Institute of Religion was the bulk of my extra-mural study. I had to rewrite, my thesis on CPE as a method of theological education, finishing this rewrite back in Northern Ireland after my USA student visa expired and while we awaited the birth of our first child, Susan, in August 1965. I eventually graduated with a STM in pastoral care.

So having gone to Houston for the northern summer of 1963 for only three-months study on route back to New Zealand, I fell in love with Texas, my

fellow students, the staff at the Institute, the medical center, the town and country folk of Texas and, above all, my CPE studies — so I stayed as long as I could! At last what I was to do as a minister was becoming clear; now being a minister of the Word and Sacrament with people meant something. I wrote up my new understanding in my thesis, which now, on re-reading, makes me cringe — it is so patriarchal and sexist. In those days, in Texas at least, pastoral studies and theology was a male preserve, and at the Institute of Religion a Protestant preserve. In less than five years that situation began to change dramatically.

Again, through the influence of Ian Wilson, I received a “call” to join the ministry team at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, specifically to set up a counselling ministry to the inner city of Dunedin. I had received a good introduction to pastoral counselling in Houston and was ready for the task. I was ordained and inducted to the position of Associate Minister in August 1965. The team there was excellent and in 1967 we opened the Cameron Centre, a new building and service which, with a shift in location and restructuring of administration, is still serving Dunedin today.

CPE had given me a way of thinking about and dealing with human situations that had become both an integral part of me and how I lived my life. However, I did not have much to do with formal CPE at the time, except indirectly. In those days in Dunedin the Presbyterian Church had appointed on a short-term contract an American CPE Chaplain Supervisor, Herb Hillebrand, to conduct pastoral care studies for the Theological Hall students. Isabelle and I found we had a natural affinity with Herb, Eleanor his wife, and family; we gave each other considerable mutual support. When Herb returned to the USA there was a gap in pastoral training in the Hall. The Presbyterian General Assembly following the recommendations of a special committee on Theological Education, on which I was the junior minister representative, decided that Pastoral Theology should be added to the Hall syllabus of studies and that a professor be appointed.

Incidentally, my activity in the special committee caused a stir. Following the methodological thinking in which I had been trained whilst in Houston, I kept asking questions e.g. what is our vision of the output of the educational enterprise we are commissioned to review; what sort of a minister are we preparing? In one way or another, I kept pushing this point until ruled out of order by the chairman. I believed that we were simply re-



arranging the deckchairs on a Titanic that would slowly sink; but, we were going to get a professor of pastoral theology.

To fill gap created by Herb's departure, Graham Robinson was hired in the interim and was nominated for the professor's position. Graham had many innovative ideas. He was on the staff of Dunedin Teachers' Training College and knew how to build an educational curriculum. He employed me to supervise some students for their practical assignments and to run seminars of theological reflection for groups. He was very close to CPE methods. At the General Assembly a surprise nomination for professor was made from the floor and carried. Ian Dixon, a lovely man, scholarly, gracious, but without any idea or experience of how to educate students in becoming pastors, was appointed and the history of CPE in the Presbyterian Church took a turn into the outer reaches. As a church we went back to studying extant documents written about humans. CPE then became an enterprise of individual supervisors setting up CPE programmes that were sometimes given a nod from the Churches, yet not one of the Churches ever fully embraced the method as part of the process of training men or women for ministry.

Meanwhile I had reached my limits at the Cameron Centre. Whilst I had a very good foundation, the demands for service outstripped what I had learnt in Texas. I had not been able to find adequate supervision in Dunedin. I had set up a network of people in various professions with whom I could consult on specific difficulties, but there was a shortage of trained or experienced clinical supervisors. I approached Dr Basil James, Professor of Psychological Medicine at Otago Medical School, who had a residency programme for psychiatry students; I asked him to give me supervision. He and his consultant team were overstretched and could not fit me in. Yet I came away strangely affirmed by a comment from Dr James: "Why haven't we been using you as a resource?" and he began sending me referrals. It was more than I could handle, I needed more "grunt".

Back in the USA, Herb Hillebrand, now in a new position as Head Chaplain Supervisor at University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan, heard on the grapevine that "Evan was going to be in America" — actually it wasn't me but, rather, Evan Pollard, a New Testament theologian, who was going! Herb sent me an urgent cablegram asking me if I could arrange to juggle my trip so as to spend three months with him supervising in the summer CPE

unit (June-August 1969), as one of his supervisory team could not make it, and having accepted all the students he found himself in a desperate position. To shorten a long complex story, I went. By now the ACPE had been established and my credentials needed to be formally recognised. I met with a special meeting of the Certification Committee of the Midwest Region but, given my lack of actual CPE involvement whilst in New Zealand, was granted only Provisional Supervisor status on the basis of my Texas certification. However it was a successful summer for all of us. I had another urgent meeting with the Certification Committee at the end of that unit to review my status. As I had not been able to do justice to the expected standard of paper work required for completion, it was a mutually acceptable decision for me to remain a Provisional Supervisor of ACPE.

Back in Dunedin: it had been a difficult absence for Isabelle and the children, so it was a relief to settle back into regular life at First Church. I had been greatly stimulated by my trip with many new ideas for the Cameron Centre but still not the “grunt” that I believed I needed. In early 1970, I was surprised to get a formal job offer from the Ann Arbor University Hospital. A position had come up for a chaplain supervisor at the C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital, and on the basis of my summer work there the job was mine for the taking. Again to shorten a long and complex story, I took it. As a family we immigrated to the USA where, for the next five years, CPE was the major part of my life and work, four CPE units a year at all levels, at one of the busiest and biggest CPE training centres in the USA. Herb Hillebrand was the Department Head, and Noel Brown was one of our residents-in-training and later a staff member. After my first CPE unit there, and as a full staff member with the opportunity to adequately prepare, I gained full status as a CPE Supervisor in the ACPE. So, emerging from my Cameron Centre experience, I had gone back to the USA with a full agenda for personal development to make good my deficits. In my spare time in Ann Arbor, I availed myself of many intensive and extensive learning opportunities. Isabelle, also, undertook major career development.

After five years in Ann Arbor we both felt we had come to the end of our need for personal development and decided to return to New Zealand, rather than go somewhere else in the USA. We came and settled in Auckland at the beginning of 1976. I immediately took up filling a vacancy at Middlemore Hospital chaplaincy on an interim basis while searching for

something more innovative. I was urged to do a repeat of establishing a Cameron Centre style project in Auckland, but I did not want to duplicate any already existing venture, including CPE. Instead I was very happy to join Gordon Hambly and to share in running the CPE programmes he was offering through the LifeLine-Interchurch Counselling Service. Some of our students from those early joint programmes went through the full CPE journey to become some of New Zealand's early home-grown supervisors e.g. Joan Dallaway, Marie Pollard and John McAlpine. Gordon gave me a very warm welcome, appreciating that with my full status in the American ACPE, our programmes could carry more weight. This was not to be the case for long.

ACPE had graduates all over the world, many of whom kept active their membership status and professional accountability with their American origins. Eventually, within ACPE, it was realized they could not do justice to this accountability outside the jurisdiction of their territorial boundaries. A delegation from the USA came to Australasia to tell those of us with USA ties that our days of being members of ACPE were coming to an end and that we would have to develop local ways of being accountable for running CPE. The indefatigable Ian Wilson, now of the Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy (IHC), and who had introduced CPE as the vehicle for training and certifying those qualifying for ecumenical chaplaincy positions in the public hospital system, prevailed on the Anglican Archbishop Johnson to call a national conference to address the situation of NZ training in pastoral theology, and CPE in particular. I agreed to be secretary to a work-group charged with implementing the conference outcomes.

The agreement was that CPE, being a worthwhile educational enterprise, and a whole variety of other pastoral training pursuits (e.g., various types of chaplaincy, counselling, and group-leadership training) could be bundled together. The various seminaries in New Zealand expressed interest in having their pastoral theology departments become involved in a co-operative way. It was an ambitious vision, but would have involved finance and commitment from major ecclesiastical administrations, all of whom had competing interests. The project never got off the ground. We CPE supervisors languished, cut off from any significant church/denominational support base until we ourselves acted to constitute our own local New

Zealand ACPE equivalent, and anticipated some connection with Australia. The various independent NZ CPE supervisors running their own programmes came together and mutually recognised each other's status and competence. The New Zealand Association for CPE (NZACPE) came into being.

My involvement in New Zealand CPE lessened with the arrival of Noel Brown and his family to work as my colleague in Presbyterian Support Services, Auckland. Noel's forte was CPE. Upon his arrival we divided up the workload: Noel would attend to both CPE and the strengthening of connections with the pastoral theology activities of local and national churches, whilst I would give more attention to the secular world of psychotherapy, in its broadest sense, taking a covert pastoral focus and Christian values with me. "Covert" because anything too explicit would have made me unacceptable and reduced my credibility with many in that world who saw the church as contributing significantly to the social and mental ills of the day. I would have to convince by proven results rather than by resorting to any claims of competence in the field. The covert action which gives me most satisfaction was when Joan Dallaway and I were involved in the planning and implementation of the pioneer course of formal training in psychotherapy at tertiary level within the Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT). There we were given the opportunity to design the educational methodology of that professional training programme; and we knowingly and consistently constructed the course on the CPE model.

So, although I have been overtly inactive in CPE for a couple of decades, apart from continuously supervising CPE supervisors, I have been engaged in a covert secular form of CPE i.e. clinically based, experiential education with a holistic perspective involving the whole person of the student in learning to care for and heal wounded others.

I love the CPE method: it is hands-on, down-to-earth, agricultural, ecological, redemptive, healing, transforming and spiritual — and it is part of me!

## *Chapter 7*

### **Human development training in Presbyterian Support Services**

MARGARET BOWATER, PRISCILLA EVERTS, JOHN  
MCALPINE, DON REEKIE

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#### ***Evan notes***

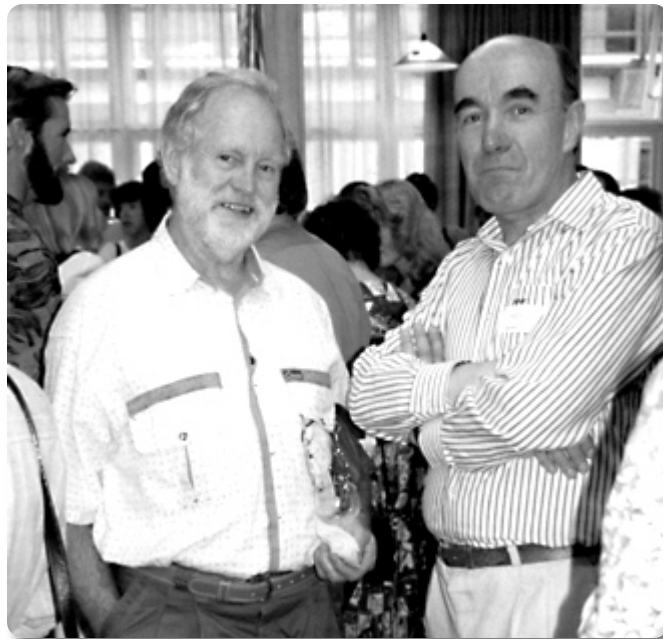
[That] the Human Development Training (HDT) team was established to provide direct counselling, therapy services to client self-referred and referred by others within and outside the PSSA [Presbyterian Social Services Association], and to develop and run courses on various dimensions of human development using our own staff or visiting experts. I ran introductory and second level courses in Transactional Analysis and treatment groups for troubled people using Transactional Analysis. We brought in overseas trainers and experts in a variety of topics and skills. Isabelle and I ran courses on Grief, Death and Dying. All these were well attended, publically appreciated and generated a self-sustaining income. We took these courses to other provincial centres around Auckland, Hamilton, Whangarei, Tauranga.

Counselling was subsidised by the Association. The counselling clients of our catchment demography could not afford to meet the

costs of staff salaries. My suggestion of a small fee for service, on a sliding scale of affordability took some debate before acceptance. By 1987 we had a team of 12 professional and three support, infrastructure staff. (Sherrard, 2015)

### ***Don Reekie writes***

In Evan's time at Presbyterian Support (1976-1988), he and the team were highly influential in a wide range of enterprises. Evan had a major influence on the development of the School of Social Work at the University of Auckland (UoA) and developments in social work in District Health Boards; major professional movement in both the New Zealand Association of Counsellors and the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists; providing back up counselling services in the aftermath of the Erebus DC 10 crash in 1979; and in the establishment and development of counselling and guidance counselling in the Education Department of the UoA. The courses had an enormous effect on standards, ethics and creativity levels in people-helping across the city and up and down the country. The hunger and enthusiasm of professionals in the field was very high. Evan was a leader who generated a work group around and including him and was absolutely committed to mutuality and reciprocity.



I worked alongside Evan from 1980 in both the Human Development Team (in Presbyterian Support) and within Psychodrama. We began men's personal development weekends and group work training in Auckland in the early 'eighties. From 1988 we shared a cooperative training triad with Dale Herron as Trainer Educator Practitioners (TEPs) in training with Dr Max Clayton, TEP.

Evan was a very good friend with whom I shared many hours of fine conversation and the teasing out of ideas. We shared a common heritage with family lines to MacGreggors and Rob Roy. We shared a theological perspective to our therapeutic and community enterprises and a view of ourselves as "minister". We were both registered psychologists.

Evan was a powerful influence in and on Presbyterian Support Services and the HDT team and, later its successor, the Human Development & Training Institute (HD&TI) had a huge influence on the people-helping services in Auckland and beyond. Evan's friends and contacts not only provided a raft of courses, mainly from the USA, which fed psychologists, psychotherapists, doctors, psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, teachers, ministers, priests, counsellors, school guidance counsellors, community workers and many others who worked with people. People participating in these course continued in the early eighties to come to the training courses which, by then, a team of five full-time, three half-time and two support staff were beginning to mount in counselling, transactional analysis, group work, tutoring, grief work, etc. We sponsored some psychodrama and sociodrama training, mounted the first training in neuro linguistic programming (NLP), and Milton Ericson's induction processes. We sponsored Kiwis trained and qualified internationally to teach to commence training in psychosynthesis, NLP, dance release therapy, Theatre of Spontaneity, and holistic healing processes, many of whom subsequently set up their own training schools. We established psychotherapy training with an internship in a purpose-designed suite

Following discussions in the HDT team, at the close of 1984, we initiated discussions that led to the founding of Auckland University of Technology's Department (now Discipline) of Psychotherapy. Evan and I

were chosen to represent PSS and we met with John Hinchcliffe, Vice Chancellor of what was then Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT), and John Harré, the Dean of Arts. We proposed a psychotherapy training that had two years in academic and developmental education at AIT with a third year being an internship at Support Services. We were warmly and astutely received and later told that in principle the concept could work for them. They asked for a full drafting of the whole course. Joan Dallaway was freed from her regular responsibilities for three weeks to produce a draft plan. This was developed and reviewed by team meetings. Within a month a proposal was given to AIT. They accepted it in principal and it began its journey through their processes of approval. Evan was to be seconded for a period to work up a realisable department with an undergraduate course in psychotherapy. In 1987 restructuring with Presbyterian Support Services (PSS) to a line management approach saw one of our colleagues in community services and her whole team treated in a manner exemplifying a failure to value the professional standards and self-managing (consensus style) teams throughout community services. All stood together and mounted an industrial dispute with the management of PSS. This took months to be resolved to our satisfaction. It became clear that we could not enter on the arrangement proposed and Evan left PSS, taking up a position at AIT to develop a three year course and establish the psychotherapy department in the Faculty of Health Sciences on AIT's North Shore Campus.

Evan's work at Support was continued strongly. He became one of our many tutor/trainers, one of approximately 60 who we employed on contract from a small beginning in 1980 through to 1990, when we withdrew together to establish a private company and institute to continue the service we had done within Support. Evan assisted in the processes of leaving Support with a reduced and Presbyterian targeted service and when we set up the HD&TI, he became a contracted tutor with significant influence on TA teaching in particular.

### ***Margaret Bowater writes***

I first met Evan in 1975, when I attended his first Transactional Analysis (TA) 101 weekend [see Part IV] When I later attended TA 202 courses in



Auckland, I observed how Evan constantly challenged experienced trainees to step into leadership roles. I became aware of the new Human Development Team at Presbyterian Social Services, led by Evan, offering a range of exciting new courses. He himself was qualified to Trainer level in Clinical Pastoral Education, Adult Education, Group Leadership, Theology, Transactional Analysis and Psychodrama.

I was next involved with Evan in 1978, at a consultation of trainers in the Group Life Laboratory movement, which provided group leadership training for clergy and community leaders under a subcommittee of the National Council of Churches. We were having trouble with some members who promoted attitudes derived from the Centrepoint Commune. Evan, along with Noel Brown and Joan Dallaway, proposed that we become a NZ Trainer Network with a code of ethics and a clear set of selection standards. This was adopted and I became Secretary. I learned a lot about ethics, groupwork, evaluation processes and experiential education from Evan and Noel [Brown] in many meetings and workshops during that time. They were like big brothers warmly sharing their skills and knowledge.

In 1984, the Human Development Team offered a new Internship in Counselling and Psychotherapy, the first such training course in Auckland. I applied, and was one of the six women selected. We had a life-changing year, attending many courses with leading therapists, local and international. Evan was not only our personal growth group trainer — in which role I found him somewhat daunting — but also a coach and teacher of listening skills and action methods. I heard later that he was learning as much as we were about the complexities of leading a group of strong women!

In 1988, I was appointed a member of the Human Development (HD) Team, and appreciated the warm, democratic atmosphere of discussions at Team meetings, in spite of the rising tensions with Senior Management of Presbyterian Support. I was privileged to be allocated as Evan's weekly "buddy" for a few months, during which I listened with dismay to his increasing distress about the way Management was seeking to undermine the vision of the Team as professional trainers of community service leaders. About May that year, Evan resigned in frustration, and took his energy to AIT, co-founding with Joan Dallaway and others the new psychotherapy training programme. There I attended his two year training

programme in Transactional Analysis; and the world International TA Conference which he chaired in November 1992.

The HD Team kept going, struggling to maintain the vision against pressure from the Management of Support, till all the clinicians resigned simultaneously in September 1990. In 1991 the new Human Development & Training Institute, led by Don Reekie, emerged to carry on the vision of high-quality community and counsellor training. We were glad to have Evan's backing and mentoring whenever we needed it, especially on ethics and tricky issues with students.

### ***Priscilla Everts writes***

Over a period of six years, I trained and worked with Evan at the Human Development and Training Section of Presbyterian Support. I first met him in a Clinical and Pastoral Education course, where I found myself to be the only lay person, and was constantly challenged by Evan not to be a “little country girl”, the best thing that could have happened to me as a trainee. Subsequent regular supervision with Evan over the next five years were marked by his skilful use of challenge matched by support and affirmation, by his empathy and insight, by his frequent referral to me of difficult clients, by our verbal jousting, and by his uproarious sense of humour. Evan's astute memory enabled him to refer back to events and experiences years earlier, which invariably proved relevant. His skilful modelling of both transactional analysis and psychodrama and his careful explanations helped me to develop these as major modalities in her own professional practice and supervision, both at HD&T and at the University of Auckland. At the same time, Evan led a warm and empathic team at HD&T, where birthdays and important occasions were celebrated, and hilarious parties held — featuring such challenging games as “hovering bunnies”, which requires participants to keep their teeth covered by their lips while enduring side splitting merriment. Even after Priscilla's departure from Presbyterian Support, the legacy of this rich professional and personal relationship enhanced her work until her ultimate retirement.

### ***John McAlpine writes***

In 1978, ten years after my ordination as a priest, I began a similar search as Evan's. My quest found me in Evan's presence; he was one of the supervisors in my first CPE unit, and I knew that I had found "gold", both in Evan and in the CPE learning method.

In 1981, and again in 1982, I undertook two more units of CPE. Again Evan was one of my supervisors. The 1982 unit focused exclusively on strengthening our counselling skills. This was the precursor of the psychotherapy internship that was offered through the Human Development Team at Presbyterian Support Services in 1984. I participated in this internship in 1985, and in the following year I became a part-time member of the Human Development Team with Evan as team leader. The Human Development Team resigned from Presbyterian Support Services in 1990 and evolved into the Human Development and Training Institute of New Zealand (HD&T). By this time Evan had moved to AIT, but he remained a passionate supporter of both the Directors and the educational philosophy and outreach of the HD&T Institute. He was my supervisor for some 18 years, between 1985 and 2013.

Evan was a compassionate therapist, an insightful supervisor, an innovative educator, a visionary leader, a persistent pursuer of justice, and a faithful disciple of the way of Jesus of Nazareth.



*Psychotherapy Department, Auckland Institute of  
Technology, 1991*

## *Chapter 8*

### **Evan and the Psychotherapy Training Programme at the Auckland Institute of Technology**

JOAN DALLAWAY, GRANT DILLON, JONATHAN FAY,  
LESLEY KING, MARGARET POUTU MORICE, JOHN  
O'CONNOR, BRIGITTE PULS, AND ONDRA WILLIAMS

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A handwritten memorandum in Evan's papers, dated 10/12/87, marks the beginning of this initiative:

(1) A meeting with Yvonne Shadbolt, Dean, Health Studies, and John Harré, Dean H&S? (General Studies) held on Fri 4 Dec. 87 at ATI North Shore Campus ended with a request from them that I provide 40 days administration time/coordinating service to get this proposed Psychotherapy course set up for running.

#### ***Jonathan Fay writes***

Evan was the father, the architect and founder of the psychotherapy training programme at Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT), which began in 1989. Evan was a man who walked his talk, consistently congruent, gentle, patient, humane, humanistic, and client-centred in his orientation, on a par with other masters of conversational psychotherapy such as Carl Rogers. His preference was for student-centred and experiential forms of learning,

and he brought to the new programme his experience and skills in transactional analysis, psychodrama, and person-centred psychotherapy. Typically, Evan led from the back, quietly putting together a team that included the diverse talents of Joan Dallaway (integrative psychotherapy), Lea Holford (Jungian psychotherapy), Graham Binstead (neuro-linguistic programming), Dale Herron (psychodrama), Brigitte Puls (gestalt), Lesley King (attachment theory and therapy), Ondra Williams (trauma therapy), and myself (psychodynamic psychotherapy) — an unruly bunch, lovingly and loyally managed and administered by Brigitte Ritschel of the Nursing Department. Facilitated by Evan, this team found its positive energy and synergy in the expansive excitement of being pioneers, bringing mature students from a wide variety of backgrounds and walks of life into the heart of the psychotherapy world and engaging them in a holistic, formative training that began at the very beginning with basic skills and culminated three tiers and three to six years later in a portfolio that included a clinical case study providing a portrait of the student's own psychotherapy work. As the popularity and reputation of the programme grew, it became a small, stand-alone Department within the wider Health Faculty. Distinctive features of the course included: the creation of a close-knit learning community; an emphasis on qualitative self-evaluation, peer-evaluation and staff evaluation; pass-fail feedback rather than formal grades; and an annual noho marae that typically included students' most serious efforts to remain faithful to Māori protocol, balanced by some exuberant homemade entertainment of a Saturday night, often featuring clever caricatures of Evan and the rest of the staff. This chapter comprises some memories of Evan in the early years of the psychotherapy training programme offered by a few staff and students from the early years, beginning with my own comments.

In 1990, Evan and Brigitte Ritschel interviewed me for a one day per week teaching position in the psychotherapy training programme at the Auckland Institute of Technology. By the time I took up the post in January 1991, this role had expanded to full-time, five days per week employment. Evan was a calm and centred person, warm and engaging, wry and funny, serious and spiritual, a mentor and made-to-measure father figure almost exactly 20 years my senior. I felt very fortunate that he agreed to become my individual psychotherapy supervisor. It was Evan who welcomed me into the “family” of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP), which has been my professional home away from home ever since. Evan

himself had arrived at the practice of psychotherapy through a number of years of study in the USA, followed by extensive practical counselling and psychotherapy experience in various settings in New Zealand. He was very hospitable in welcoming me with my overseas formal qualifications, which he made clear he considered a useful addition to the team, and a complement and counterpoint to his own expertise. Notwithstanding the heavy blows that life had recently dealt him with Susan's life-threatening, life-changing accident and his own battle with prostate cancer, Evan felt himself blessed. He lived a life remarkably free of envy. He assembled a strong and cohesive team from whom he was able to draw out our best by generously acknowledging and playing to each of our strengths. I was encouraged and given considerable latitude in designing and developing my own courses, teaching psychodynamic psychotherapy, psychopathologies, clinical populations, advanced theory and skills, depth psychology with Lea Holford, psychotherapy practice with Brigitte Puls, and co-leading experiential training groups over many years with Joan Dallaway, Lesley King, Ondra Williams, and Margot Solomon. Evan taught basic skills with Joan from 1989 until 2000, and always led a year long class in transactional analysis. As two men teaching on a course comprising mostly woman students and staff, Evan and I rarely taught together, but it was always a pleasure when we did. The photo, from 1991, is of the original staff group, resting after having just finished climbing Rangitoto, part of a memorable team-building day. If we look happy to be together, this not for the camera alone — we were.



*Staff of the psychotherapy training programme, ATI,  
c. 1989-90*

*From the left: Lesley King, Lea Holford, Brigitte Puls,  
Joan Dallaway, Brigitte Ritschel, Evan, and Jonathan Fay*

## ***Joan Dallaway writes***

Having recently completed a Clinical Pastoral Education programme in 1975 I sought a good supervisor, one who could handle both my clinical and my theological development. Who better than Evan! A Presbyterian Minister supervising a budding Anglican priest who wished to incorporate the best of human sciences in her ministry. At my initial meeting with Evan I saw a very laid back, relaxed man dressed in a beautifully home-knitted jersey. Then, could it be, I imagined a large pipe in his hands? I later learned of this being the persona Evan presented when he met new people. He had once smoked a pipe, smoking it during supervision! That of course was in times when attitudes to tobacco were more favourable than today.

Evan was well versed in educational psychology, transactional analysis and psychodrama. We established a strong supervisory contract, one that was to last over many years and change as our role relationships required. After approximately two years, Evan offered me the job of Education Officer to the newly established Human Development (Training) Section of Presbyterian Support Services (PSS) Northland. The Section was Evan, Moira, our devoted secretary, and myself. We would “listen” to the community needs and provide educational programmes for those “human events” with which all people struggle from time to time, such as “Death and dying”, and “Grief: The normal healthy response to stress, loss, or change”. These we offered to nurses at Greenlane and Middlemore Hospitals and then to the general public.

We approached the University of Auckland Community Education Programme and, through their funding, offered daytime supervisory training for professionals. In addition to these programmes Evan offered training in Transactional analysis 101, and psychodrama. Yes, he worked hard, and loved his work. All programmes were well attended, and soon the work of the Human Development Section of PSS Northland began to be well



known. Further staff were employed and professional training (clinical pastoral education) was given to chaplains, and other courses in dream work and psychodrama for those interested. Evan encouraged his staff to self develop, and to write their own educational events. He ran training events for professionals aimed at developing improved adult teaching skills. Of especial importance to his staff were the ways in which he practiced what he preached, such as: “take time out now, never let yourselves become stale, go for a walk in the park then return to what you were doing.”

It was during these years that the Catholic Orders were re-structuring themselves, post Vatican II. We were asked by many orders of religious Sisters to go help them with this task. Needless to say, leadership was a major issue for them. Evan created many educational exercises for them through which they could learn from their own experience. One such was this: the sisters had to divide into twos, one to imagine they were driving a dodgem car, the other in the back seat. As they proceeded, the instruction to lead the exercise was given. Evan took his part — in the back seat, Evan’s preferred style of leadership never changed from this.

During these years many agencies and individuals had asked the Human Development Team (HDT) to run a clinical training for learner counsellors or would be psychotherapists. This had originally been rejected as Evan thought this was Lifeline’s territory. Anyway finally, John Harré, the Dean of Health Studies at AIT, Peter McGeorge, the President of NZAP, Evan, and myself, met to put together a proposal which we could submit to AIT with a view to establish a certificate programme in counselling and psychotherapy. With the personnel and their existing programmes already on offer to the public, with very little tweeking, we were ready to go. It was to be offered beginning in the next Semester. It was to honour people’s spirituality, their culture, and to include the best of current knowledge of counselling and psychotherapy. The programme, extended over the years, became increasingly inclusive; and guess who always sat in the “back seat”, wearing the beautifully knitted sweater and, as it were, “smoking his pipe”? Yes, Evan!

***Lesley King writes***

My memories are both concrete (a few), and relational/process (mainly), which won't surprise those who know me! Specifically, I can see Evan opening the course on our first day, in a prefabricated building. I think Marion Jones from the Nursing Department cut the ribbon while Evan minded the scissors. I know he had spent a year or so before that in a wee shed, doggedly composing a course profile to fit AIT protocols.

I understand that, once given the go-ahead for the course, he hand-picked people with passion for the broad range of knowledge and personal competencies he envisioned and invited us to apply for part-time tutor positions, within the Nursing Department, where we were initially placed.

My main memory of Evan is of him quietly empowering the new team members towards individual excellence, no mean feat in a conservative, controlling institution. The image I have is of a shepherd with a crook, letting us independently walk ahead and find our direction, but, nevertheless, holding his crook out to mark the edge of the way as needed and to protect us from danger. He had a vision of where we were going: broad training for general psychotherapists, i.e., not tied to a specific ideology, and for people who could be increasingly widely available within the community. He led from the back, and never "pulled rank" as the creator of the programme.

He also was the buffer between us, all independent professionals used to being self-determining, and the institution hierarchy who insisted we comply with their structures. That was an uneasy alliance. I well remember my rage when I was told I could not return assignments until a nursing tutor had checked my marking! My educational principle was immediate feedback. The institute's rules took precedence. Evan held both respectfully and skillfully.

They were good days. We were all passionate and worked long and hard towards our common goal of excellence for students. Somewhere along the line an evaluation team gave the course very high acclaim, saying it was the result of the passion of the team. Evan had created a team who respected each other and believed in him and his vision.

It was hard work, at least for me. I remember my accountant calculating that, given the hours I was putting in to my paper (course), I was working for \$3 an hour! I don't think I worked harder than my colleagues.

Not long after its inception, some governmental initiative made a policy that all people applying to the programme had to be accepted. Personal attributes were not to be considered. I don't remember how we juggled that, but the programme survived. It was not the last time our values clashed with bureaucratic expediency.

Looking back I wonder how Evan held it all together while maintaining his positions in the psychotherapy and church communities and the family stresses of that period.

### ***Brigitte Puls writes***

As a private person, it is not easy for me to write publicly about my relationship with Evan. It contains many facets, like a kaleidoscope that, when held to the eye and the light, presents beautiful, ever-changing patterns. Here, I name only a few of the constellations that Evan and I created in our longer than 20 years of relationship.

I first met Evan in 1990. I will always remember the meeting. I had been invited to teach psychotherapy by the programme coordinator Gitti (Brigitte) Harré, and the initial meeting with Evan was for him to “check me out” for the role. I recall Evan as warm and welcoming, while at the same time clearly ascertaining whether I was the right person for teaching in the fledging psychotherapy programme. I appreciated how he was able to remain heart-connected while maintaining his ability to make the necessary professional assessment.

Looking back, I honour Evan for holding such a relational, engaged, interested and personal stance during this first meeting — and throughout the many years that we became colleagues on the AIT psychotherapy programme. Evan was warm, caring and passionate about psychotherapy, while also being able and willing to draw a line in the sand when students did not meet his expectations. Evan was especially passionate, of course, in teaching the specialty area of his core modality, transactional analysis. He was also a senior teacher in psychodrama and very interested in gestalt therapy and other modalities within psychotherapy.

Over time, Evan became a father figure for myself in a then still rather foreign country with two young sons and lacking a supportive male

presence. I felt affirmed, respected, supported and liked by Evan. Our relationship was easy; I do not remember many arguments. While both Evan and I can be “thick-headed”, we never really locked horns; our relationship was too smoothly flowing for this, continuing to emerge into new patterns just like a new constellation in a kaleidoscope does.

I shared a spiritual connection with Evan. I appreciated his Christian roots and the way in which he lived his spirituality in everyday life, with kindness and generosity. He did not hesitate for one second when I asked him, if he was willing to conduct the christening for my younger son. This ceremony became a beautiful and unifying extended family event, held in a luscious garden setting in Auckland. Evan made the occasion special in his spiritual robe and role, and was instrumental in creating ease. I will always remember this occasion as the brightest, most beautiful pattern in my kaleidoscope of relationship with Evan, and I will always treasure this memory of him.

Other bright moments in our relationship centre around Evan’s and my shared joy of good partying and dancing, leading to the odd dance together at the annual NZAP conference, and equally of him carrying out his professional role with thoughtful and heartfelt reflections on student progress and programme matters in the Monday staff meetings, and in my supervision and mentoring meetings with him in his private practice in Blockhouse Bay.

Over the last years of Evan’s life, after his retirement, I saw less of him. My last memory is of his huge tangi/funeral and of all the love and respect that poured from everyone’s heart in remembering and farewelling him.

Evan was one of the great pioneers of psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand. Without his vision (as well as that of others), the programme would not have been born. Evan stamped the training with a strong humanistic flavour that is one of its hallmarks and strengths. His legacy remains. Travel well, dear Evan.

### ***Ondra Williams writes***

The AUT programme was in its third year and I suspected I should be enrolling as a student rather than joining the staff, to all of whom I looked

up, but especially Joan and Evan.

For a year or two I shared a room with Evan and we taught a paper on “The Basic Skills and Principles of Psychotherapy”. It gradually dawned on me that he was treating me as an equal. As a result, my confidence grew. I became less afraid of making mistakes or not knowing what I thought I “should” know because Evan never gave me cause to feel anxious about my limitations. It was a delight to create a course and teach it with him. Huge differences in our training and experience seemed irrelevant to him. He took in each moment as it came, accepted it and saw the potential in it. That was the way he treated the students too: equal as people. Knowledge, training and experience did not form the basis of his respect for others. He related to the whole person, whoever he was with.

I think we all felt very honoured to be teaching with him. Yet, eventually, I realised that he felt honoured too. That’s how he was. For him to learn was far more exciting than to know. He had the beginner’s mind. He claimed his talents without minimising them — and, likewise, acknowledged with respect the talents of others. He wasn’t always right and he didn’t always know — but he never felt the need to hide that. What a lesson for those of us who feared the gaps in our knowledge. His wicked grin and an impish twinkle in his eye were reminders that his sense of fun was always lurking nearby. He seemed to feel totally comfortable with his own limitations as well as with those of others.

He could be trusted to be truthful, occasionally shockingly truthful, but when he gave an opinion or praise — or criticism — it was usually right on target. He treated both students and colleagues as equally deserving of respect and kindness. The hard truths he gave in a direct yet kind manner so that we knew this was a gift he was giving us, even if it hurt, not denying us the opportunity to reflect and learn and grow. He had a great ability to see the wood from the trees and could cut through lengthy discussions with a simple comment about an underlying issue.

Evan was one of those rare people who had a light touch that, once felt, lingers forever, and a depth of spirit grounded in an almost fearless openness to truth. Like a good friend, a good brother, a good father, a good therapist, a good teacher, all in one gentle, loving, humble person — an inspiration to students and staff at AUT, and to both young and old in the

profession, or those just dipping a toe in it for the first time. There could only ever be one Evan, but many of us have within us much of his gift of himself that we treasure.

### ***John O'Connor writes***

I was very sad to hear of Evan's passing. As I sat at his funeral, my memories went back to my time training with him in psychodrama in the early 1990s. I always experienced Evan as having a unique capacity for kindness, wisdom, and generous authority. He could be both blunt and loving at the same time: a rare gift. Though I did not spend a great deal of time with Evan, I encountered him often in the decades since my psychodrama training. Evan, along with Don Reekie and others, founded the Human Development & Training Institute (HD&TI), which grew out of Presbyterian Support Services. Some years after the founding of the Institute, I was privileged to take up a role as one of the Directors of this Institute and to benefit from Evan's vision, creativity, and educational ability. Similarly, as a student in the mid 1990s in the Diploma of Psychotherapy at the then Auckland Institute of Technology, during a time when Evan was still on the teaching staff in this programme, I was again enriched by Evan's foresight and creativity. After my graduation, it was Evan who blessed the building in which I commenced my first psychotherapy private practice. Reflecting on this, I suspect there are very few psychotherapists in Auckland, and perhaps in New Zealand, who have not in some way been touched and influenced by Evan's ability and generosity. I'm very aware as a current teacher on and now programme leader of the Master of Psychotherapy programme at Auckland University of Technology, that this programme stands on Evan's broad shoulders, as do all students and staff in the programme.

I last saw Evan a year before he died. It was at a friend's birthday celebration. Despite his failing health, Evan was his usual warm, playful self, and I was very struck by his interest and concern for my own welfare, despite any challenges he was experiencing. His love continued to shine through, and it is a treasured last memory that I have of him. It was indeed a privilege to know Evan and to have benefited from, and to continue to benefit from, his loving wisdom.

## ***Grant Dillon writes***

It was a night in the late 1990s. The event was a celebration dinner on graduation day for AUT psychotherapy students, at a function centre on the side of Maungawhau | Mt Eden. Newly graduated psychotherapists and their loved ones were partying, quite hard. The room was hot and the noise of raised voices deafening. The course had been long and challenging, and there was a sense of slightly manic relief in the air. Finally, these people who had struggled both personally and academically had a chance to let go.

Evan Sherrard rose to speak. He congratulated them; he told them how well earned their results had been, that they should enjoy themselves tonight. Then he said that they had better enjoy it, because, rather than being at the end of something, as they believed, they were at the beginning of a life of service, and of virtual enslavement to their clients; that until retirement, they would now never be quite as free as they had been in the past. Wherever they went, they would carry their clients with them, and when they returned from breaks, their clients would be there, waiting for them.

The room was much quieter when Evan sat down. I'm not sure it ever recovered its carnival atmosphere!

## ***Margaret Poutu Morice (Ngati Porou) writes***

In 2001, I was amongst the fortunate 1st Year Master's psychotherapy students to be taught "Introduction to Counselling Skills for Psychotherapy" ("Basic Skills") by Evan Sherrard and Joan Dallaway. It was their final joint lecturing engagement at AUT and they knew it. They both fronted that class with great confidence, warmth, and open-heartedness, extraordinary skill and sensitivity, spontaneity and humour. They were a graceful teaching duo that embodied their teaching material on basic relational therapeutic engagement beautifully and comprehensively. The whole lot of us loved Evan as a father. For us there was, quite simply, no other transference object of equal merit.

Evan was a kindly, patient, utterly safe and trustworthy teacher, mentor and role model supreme. It was all so congruently present in him. He humbly but assuredly introduced us to the fundamentals of therapeutic engagement,

working with us to develop our own self-knowledge and truth, closely and meticulously attended to by him.

Unusually, I was also amongst a cohort of Māori and Pasifika students who made up a group, so we bucked a certain trend and we knew it. Evan knew it too, and we felt his pride in our presence and in our achievement. He had faith in us and admiration for us and I never wanted to let him down individually, as indigenous, and as representative of tangata whenua. Evan never pushed the bicultural barrow but he accepted that there is an indigenous minority whose worldview challenges assumptions of authority by the colonial status quo and he honoured this challenge. He knew the time had come for psychotherapy to broaden its horizons and claim its heritage from this land, Aotearoa.

I loved being introduced to psychotherapy by Evan. It remains one of the outstanding learning experiences of my life. He walked his talk faithfully with effortless grace and ease and I will forever feel his benign presence with me.



*Evan, wearing a tiki, c.1985*





Part IV

TRANSACTIONAL  
ANALYSIS

# Introduction

## KEITH TUDOR

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- 1971* Evan begins training in transactional analysis with Dr Bill Wolfson, Detroit, Michigan
- 1975* He undertakes a month's residential training program at the Western Institute for Group and Family Therapy, with Bob and Mary Goulding to complete his training in transactional analysis and to prepare for his membership written and oral [Clinical Member] examinations
- 1975* He qualifies as a Clinical Member, and as a Provisional Teaching Member, International Transactional Analysis Association (ITAA)
- 1983* He becomes a Level 1 Transactional Analyst, specialising in clinical applications<sup>1</sup>
- [1. This was the result of the ITAA defining different fields of application to replace what had been a generic qualification (see Sherrard & Tudor, 2017).]
- 1989* He takes out a contract as a Provisional Teaching Member, ITAA, with Robin Maslen
- 1992* He chairs the International Transactional Analysis World Conference, held in Auckland, New Zealand
- 1995* He is certified as a Teaching Transactional Analyst (and later as a Supervising Transactional Analyst), with the ITAA

2001 He is co-founder and co-Director of the Auckland Transactional Analysis Training Institute (ATATI)

2014 He resigns and retires from ATATI.



*Certificate of Competency from International Transactional Analysis Association, USA, 1983*



*Certificate of Competency from Training and Certification Council of Transactional Analysis Inc., USA, 1995*

Evan was enormously influential in the development of transactional analysis in Aotearoa New Zealand and especially in Auckland. Margaret Bowater writes:

I first met Evan in 1975, when I attended his first Transactional Analysis (TA) 101 weekend in Hamilton. It blew my mind! He presented a systematic understanding of human relationships that immediately made sense to me; and as a teacher he showed warmth, wisdom and a wide vision of relationships applicable from parenting to international conflict resolution. I began to read TA literature and absorb its concepts.

She continues:

From 1993, for 22 years, Evan was my primary Supervisor till he died. He was a rock of integrity and support throughout my professional career, mentoring me, and other leaders in TA, through all the stages of international training in transactional analysis. Together we started and co-led the Auckland TA Interest Group, which met monthly at Epsom Teachers' College and then at St. Luke's Community Centre, from about 1997 onwards. In 2001, we were co-founders, with Janet Redmond, Anne Tucker and Graham Ure, of the Auckland TA Training Institute, promoting a variety of TA training courses in different venues.

Evan backed me all the way in my own teaching and writing in the field of Dreamwork<sup>2</sup>. We even co-wrote two articles for the International Transactional Analysis Association's *Transactional Analysis Journal, on Nightmares* (1999) and *Ethics of Dreamwork* (2012),<sup>3</sup> and he offered comments on my other articles for TAJ.

[2. Ed. — See Bowater, M. (2016). *Healing the nightmare, freeing the soul*. Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand: Calico Publishing.]

[3. Ed. — See Bibliography for full references.]

The first chapter in this Part is an edited version of a taped conversation I had with Evan in September 2015 (Chapter 8). I anticipated that I would make another recording which would have followed up on some of the points Evan made in the first conversation, but sadly, his death prevented that. Nonetheless, the chapter provides a good introduction to Evan's

experience in and of transactional analysis (TA). At one point in the chapter I remind Evan of saying that he “fell in love with TA”, and he certainly took to it. In supporting Evan’s application to become a clinical member (CM), his first trainer and supervisor, Bill Wolfson, wrote that:

Evan Sherrard is an extremely well-qualified, well-experienced, mature and knowledgeable CM candidate, who is a competent, and careful therapist. His commitment to TA is unequivocal, and has been expressed in his application of TA to the training of hospital chaplains.

Over the years, Evan wrote a lot about TA, though published relatively little (see Bibliography for what he did publish in the international *Transactional Analysis Journal*). It became somewhat of a standing joke between us whereby I would hear from colleagues that Evan had presented a paper on an aspect of TA (such as intuition, Cathexis/energy), or a topic which he had explored with regard to TA (grief, spirituality, psychodrama, and so on); I would then ask Evan, “So, do you have a copy of that paper?”, to which he would smile, look a bit vague, and generally demur from producing it! After he died, I came across a lot of paper and computer files of notes on these and other subjects as well as his summaries of articles and books, made clearly for his own learning but also often shared with students/trainees and colleagues. It was with both pleasure and sadness that I found two previously unpublished papers on TA and present them here (Chapter 9). The first brings Evan’s interest in and concern about spirituality together with TA; and the second the two approaches in psychotherapy with which he was most associated, i.e., TA and psychodrama. The third contribution is a write up of a presentation Evan made, originally in 2005, on a transactional analysis of God (to which Seán Manning refers in Chapter 14). Here, I have put this together with his notes and, as this contribution was originally presented to and aimed at transactional analysts and, therefore, contains some technical terms, I have edited and annotated it so as to give the general reader some explanation as well as references to TA literature.

## *Chapter 9*

### **Evan Sherrard and transactional analysis: A reflective dialogue**

EVAN SHERRARD WITH KEITH TUDOR

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This chapter is based on a recorded conversation with Evan in September 2015 which focused on his association with transactional analysis, though it is also informed by a number of other unrecorded conversations I had the good fortune to have with him.

What emerges from this transcribed conversation is a picture — or a part of a picture — of a man who was open to and challenged by learning. Reflecting on his experience of directing and working in the Cameron Centre in Dunedin, 1967-1969 (see Chapter 6), as noted in the Introduction, he wrote:

My skill base and preparatory training is exhausted by the demands and needs for service emerging in the city. Two years training [as a clinical theological educator] in Texas [1963-1965] was insufficient.... [and so] I accepted an unsolicited and totally unanticipated invitation to help Herb Hillebrand run a three months program of clinical training at the University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan [June-August 1969]. (Sherrard, 2015)

The next year, in May 1990, on the basis of a job offer from the University of Michigan Hospital, Evan and his family migrated to Ann Arbor,

Michigan, USA to take up the opportunity for more education and training in what Evan humbly and perhaps somewhat self-critically referred to as “the areas of my known deficiencies” (ibid). The education and training turned out to be predominantly transactional analysis.

Evan’s openness to learning was matched by his openness to being challenged and stimulated by his experience of learning, which, in turn, lead him to value experiential learning, and the development of intuition in the practitioner. As Rogers and Wood put it (1974) put it: “First there is experiencing, then there is theory” (p. 274).

I had been editing the transcript of our conversation while on a trip overseas and making some notes about aspects of what he had said on which I wanted him to elaborate. The next day I flew home to the news that he had died and, thus for me at least, the chapter has a somewhat unfinished quality. Bearing this in mind, I have re-edited the chapter, introducing some sub-headings in order to highlight the themes that emerged; re-ordering some passages so that the whole piece reads more clearly; and inserting some brief explanations of the people to which either Evan or I refer, as well as some citations and references. Any significant additions to the transcript are marked by the use of square brackets. I have also prefaced the transcript with a brief note about transactional analysis in order to contextualise some of the people and ideas to whom and to which Evan refers. In terms of the history of the development of transactional analysis in Aotearoa New Zealand, fortunately Evan had already left a legacy in the form of some notes (see Auckland Transactional Analysis Training Institute, 2016) and an informative and delightful recorded conversation with Charlotte Daellenbach (Daellenbach & Sherrard, 2011).

## **A brief note about transactional analysis**

In the early 1950s, Eric Berne (1910-1970) began working on the concept of ego states, and established a clinical seminar group in San Francisco, which, in 1958, became incorporated as the San Francisco Social Psychiatry Seminars, which, in turn, became the basis of the establishment of the International Transactional Analysis Association ([www.ityaa.org](http://www.ityaa.org)). These seminars drew a number of practitioners to Berne and his developing theories, including Claude Steiner, Bob and Mary Goulding, Jacqui Schiff,



and Jack Dusay. Whilst some of these people and others contributed to the development of transactional analysis theory, during Berne's lifetime it was only ever known as transactional analysis.

After Berne's death in 1970, however, a number of different "schools" or traditions emerged, which represented differences of theory and practice within transactional analysis (see Barnes, 1977), most of which also drew on influences outside transactional analysis (see Tudor & Hobbes, 2007). These were: the Classical School, which was associated with Berne and his immediate followers; the Redecision School, associated with Bob and Mary Goulding (Goulding & Goulding, 1979); and the Cathexis School, associated with Jacqui Schiff and her colleagues (Schiff & Schiff, 1971; Schiff et al., 1975) — and, indeed, until 2001, it was a requirement for certification (qualification) that all transactional analysis practitioners were familiar with the theory and practice of these three Schools. In the conversation Evan refers to Jacqui, who was the subject of an ethics charge as a result of the death of a client in her care (see Jacobs, 1994), and to Aaron Schiff, who was reparented by Jacqui. In their work on transactional analysis, Woollams and Brown (1978) expanded the original tripartite division by identifying other "schools", including: the Huron Valley Institute (with its emphasis on eclectic TA); the miniscript (with its emphasis on script process); radical psychiatry; and social transaction.

More recently, in what is now a third and even fourth generation of transactional analysis, other practitioners and writers have identified more traditions or approaches within transactional analysis (see Lee, 2001; Tudor & Hobbes, 2002, 2007; Campos, 2003), including the integrative tradition, which is associated with the work of Petrůska Clarkson (1992b) and Richard Erskine (Erskine & Moursund, 1988, 2003), to each of whom Evan also refers.



*TA conference, Christchurch 2004, Evan is second row up, fourth from the left*

## **The conversation**

*Keith:* Firstly, I want to thank you, Evan, for making this time to talk and, specifically, to talk with me about your experiences in and with transactional analysis (TA). Perhaps we might start with your first contact with TA?

*Evan:* Well, what sold me on TA was a presentation given in 1970 by Dr Bill Wolfson, a psychiatrist in Detroit, Michigan [and a Teaching Member of the International Transactional Analysis Association (ITAA)]. At the time, I was working as a chaplain and Bill ran a 101 [the official Introductory course to TA] for the chaplains' group. There was a kind of Chaplains' Association of South East Michigan, and that's where we all turned up. There were about 50 people there for four Monday nights when he went through the 101 syllabus. I was very impressed with this whole notion of Parent, Adult and Child ego states, and especially about how the Parent ego state had its current influence. I remember creating a list of some of the little slogans that I remembered receiving [as I grew up] that I thought were quite influential in shaping who I was. I was also impressed with the fact that you can redecide the early decisions you made, and that you don't

have to be stuck with these. It might not be easy to redecide but it can be done and that's the name of the game. So these were what made a big impression.

*Keith:* In your dialogue with Charlotte [Daellenbach] (Daellenbach & Sherrard, 2011), you said you “fell in love with TA” which gives the sense of your impression being a visceral experience perhaps more than an intellectual one.

*Evan:* Yes, that was a delightful thing. A number of us from the 101 said “We’d like to be part of the ongoing training group here” and once that was all settled we began training in 1971. Consequently, we had to drive 50 miles from Ann Arbor into Detroit in order to get the training from Bill. I found the trips into Detroit easy and comfortable: it was like going to see an old lover or friend.

*Keith:* Was this a group of chaplains or a mixed group Bill was training?

*Evan:* It started off with a core group of ministers from the chaplains’ group; the group I went through with were mainly ministers and chaplains; and Bill became my training supervisor.

*Keith:* Bill had trained with the Gouldings, who, in turn, had trained with Fritz Perls [the founder of gestalt therapy], and hence your knowledge and use of two chair work.

## **THE GOULDINGS, REDECISION, AND INTUITION**

*Evan:* Yes, and that was the climax of my training: to spend a month at Mount Madonna with the Gouldings. That was in May 1975. They wanted their place to be a very comfortable resort so that people who were there could just let themselves go into learning TA and not be bothered by the physical environment, so they had a cordon bleu chef who prepared our meals which were just fabulous! The rooms and the facilities were all there, including a big, heated swimming pool with a canopy over it so that, during the early spring when it was still quite cold, under the canopy it was wonderful. Most of the group used the pool quite a bit, in the early evening I seem to remember; and there was quite a bit of “carrying on” in the pool.

*Keith:* Umm . . . , pools seemed to feature in the early days of TA! Before and after the San Francisco TA Conference in 2014 I stayed with Claude Steiner at his house in Berkeley and saw his tiled plunge pool. Although it was empty and tiles were chipped, I could imagine it being full of people and fun; I could almost hear their laughter. It was a poignant picture of people splashing and smoking, and, I gather, without too much in the way of clothes!

*Evan:* That's right!

*Keith:* On a more serious note, what were the Gouldings like? I have different images of them, especially from the way they intervened and were, at least from my point of view, quite directive. I mention that in the context of your own background in person-centred, non directive counselling. How did that work for you? I guess I'm asking: what did you like about them, and what, if anything, didn't you like so much?

*Evan:* I was very impressed with their intuitive connection. Mary could finish a sentence for Bob, and Bob could finish a sentence for Mary, so they had a lot of intuitive experience in terms of how they worked and who could take over from whom. Bob sat in a big chair on one side of the room and Mary sat on the opposite side of the room in her big chair, and they could chip in with each other. I found that particularly attractive. I thought: "If I ever had a co-leader in a group I would want to get to the state where we anticipated and knew what each other did and how we worked and thought and where we were going". They came up with quite remarkable things, using intuition a lot — but it's difficult to explain, and that was one of the things I struggled with. I saw in Max Clayton [the psychodramatist (see Part V)] the same kind of intuitive competence, and, although I never asked the Gouldings, I remember asking Max on one occasion: "Why did you take that route with that particular person in the work you were doing?" He said: "I'd struggle to say exactly what led me to that" to which I responded: "You couldn't have processed the few clues you got as quickly as you did and yet you just jumped on to something." He admitted that there was a lot he went by intuitively, and I'm sure the Gouldings did too. I tried to talk with some of my other colleagues and certainly with Rex Hunton [a medical doctor] who said that, after years of seeing patients with physical ailments, when someone walked in the door, you kind of

appraised them totally, and you could say to yourself that this person's got cancer, that person's got digestive troubles, this person's got heart problems. And it's intuitive because you've seen enough of them over time, and you've built up a kind of body of experience on the basis of which you know something and, therefore, can jump in. That was one of the things I was hoping I could achieve at the end of my training: that I could do that kind of thing. That was very impressive about the Gouldings.

*Keith:* Did you get to that?

*Evan:* I think I'm close to it at times.

*Keith:* That's what I hear — and have seen: you are very intuitive and very skilled — and willing to challenge people. So it sounds like the training with Gouldings was helpful in developing that. It's also interesting that you are talking about intuition as that's where Berne started (see Berne, 1949/1977b, 1953/1977a). Did the Gouldings introduce you to Berne's idea about intuition?

*Evan:* Oh yes; those stories, yes. The Gouldings were incredibly loyal to Eric. They had an extraordinarily painful falling out shortly before his death and they were still unreconciled and there was still some alienation there particularly on Berne's side. They attempted to explain to Eric that they were not being disloyal to TA by going off and learning Gestalt activities from Fritz at Esalen, which, relatively speaking, is just round the corner from where they were, at Mount Madonna [both in California].

The month's long [residential training] time with the Gouldings terminated with an evening in which Bob and Mary, but Bob particularly, shared his journey with Eric. He went right back and talked about how he first got into it and so on and so forth. It was a confidential meeting in which he said: "I don't want this material publicised; you've got no right to tell anybody else my story: this is my story. I'm telling it to you, but you are not at liberty to pass it on." [While observing this confidence] essentially [the difference] was that they [the Gouldings] had been working with the Child ego state and felt that there was some failure to get through to the real Child; that what often you got was "current" in those terms: a current,

contemporary adult[/Adult] looking back at childhood, and talking about the childhood that you'd had and the difficulties you'd had with Parent decisions that you'd made, and that you'd make a change in the decision from your Adult. They [the Gouldings] said that that doesn't work. In our experience [they said] this is not the method that makes the change. We've got to get them [the client] back into their childhood state in order to get the redecision that would work. And how do you get them back there? Well [they said] we've been having a look at what Fritz does and we see a method [i.e., two chair work], so believe us, Eric, we're still committed to the TA schema, but we've found an adaption of Fritz's work that gets us there in way that we haven't found yet in TA. The closest that you get to it is when you get with a guy in a fox hole behind a table that's pushed up against your wall and you're sitting there with him and you're kind of reenacting the shell bursts and that sort of thing.<sup>1</sup> That comes closest to what we mean by getting the person back into their childhood state when they make the decision.

[1. Ed. — Although Evan implies that the Gouldings attributed this technique to transactional analysis, this example strikes me as more influenced by psychodrama than classical transactional analysis.]

*Keith:* Nevertheless, there is a sense that Berne felt that [the Gouldings' development of different techniques] as a sort of move away from TA and a betrayal.

*Evan:* Yes. Eric felt that they were going to Fritz and focusing so much on Fritz's method [that it] was a betrayal of TA; 'though they kept saying to him: "It is not. We have not betrayed you."

## **CATHEXIS AND BODYWORK**

*Keith:* I know that you were also influenced by the Cathexis "school" or tradition of TA, so I wonder if you could talk a bit about that?

*Evan:* I went to the Huron Valley Institute in Michigan, where Michael Woollams, Stan Brown, and Christie Hugie all worked, and were strongly influenced by Cathexis [see Woollams & Brown, 1978; Woollams, Brown, & Huige, 1974]. I think Michael had done some reparenting work with Jackie. I went there to training workshops, to get my hours up and that sort of thing and just to accumulate

experience. I went to wherever I could go that was budgetarily possible and preferably local so that I didn't have to drive hundreds of miles. I was lucky to be able to have all these influences available to me and this was clear in the work they did. For instance, they would ask you, as part of the work, to pick somebody to act as a mother for you right at this moment: "Look around and pick someone to be your mother". They would put you in pairs and you went with this person who was substitute mother or father and, um, cuddle up with them or whatever was appropriate, and they would feed you whilst you were in almost semi-trance state. They would feed you counteracting messages to those that you originally got. Some of those were very powerful practices, I thought, and I experienced them as such.

One of my very early experiences of training shortly after I returned to the States [in 1970] was bioenergetics, and that totally totally blew me away. I would say that was one of my major therapeutic turning points. I had this experience of volunteering to be the client in the demonstration and, um, found my body just took over: I was out of my head totally; totally out of my head and simply in my body, and the responses of my body were just giveaways, in the sense that, for example, in one of the stress postures that I was invited to get into I could not stop beating my fists together like this. The woman [therapist] simply said to me "Is that a kind of life habit, beating on yourself?" That's what I mean about my body giving me away.

*Keith:* The body doesn't lie.

*Evan:* That's right. I couldn't believe that this was what was going on, and I couldn't stop it. And then there were a few other bodily things in the next few minutes and, my goodness, I had experiences like I'd never had experiences ever before. They were powerful and they were permanent and what a difference they made in my life. So I was ready to give in to lots of these types of experiential-type things. I was willing to go along with the kind of regressive stuff that went with Cathexis; it felt to me as if this is filled a kind of organic hole that I needed. I'm too smart intellectually and I can fool myself. I can just totally lead myself up the garden path, no trouble, but when I go into this with my body I can't fool it.

*Keith:* That's a lovely way to put it.

So, in terms of these different tradition and their influence: the first contact and your first interest was in intuition (from Berne, via Bill Wolfson); then, from the Gouldings and the Gestalt influence, two chair work both within TA and psychodrama [see Part V]; then from Cathexis (the Schiffs via the Huron Valley Institute) you get your interest not only in the regressive and expressive side of things, but also in passivity, which you then took forward in writing the paper that formed the basis of your presentation for membership of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists ("the Association").

*Evan:* Yes. When I came back to New Zealand [in 1975] Basil James [a psychiatrist in Dunedin] urged me to get into the Association as soon as I could and told me how. Another fellow [who was supportive] was a Methodist minister who had done a lot of training in England under another English person. I can't recall the names but anyway he said "Look you've got time to write a paper that illustrates how you work and what you do." I thought "Yeah, I could put something up on passivity quite quickly. The theory's all laid out and back in New Zealand I had some current client work that I'm doing which is all around this person's passivity." So that's when I just got stuck in and produced a paper in a matter of a couple of weeks or something, and it went down well. I've forgotten all the detail of it, but the theory was classic to the passivity model. Now I had been fortunate with being in [the] Huron Valley [Institute] and that sort of thing. We had people such as Aaron Schiff who came and gave us a workshop so I got it right from the horse's mouth: literally we got his examples and how he had been and what passivity meant for him. It was great. First hand you know. So I felt I was very privileged that I had these opportunities. I think what I'm saying, what I'm trying to lead to, is that, for me, therapy has always been inclusive of the body.

In terms of my training, I wasn't just getting pure TA training. I was exposed to a lot of these other forms of therapy, and disciplines. Just pure "talk therapy", sitting and talking, and making absolutely no other kind of contact with the patient, seemed to me to be foreign. I was quite willing to touch people, carefully, very carefully but [nevertheless] to touch and hold.



*Keith:* In the dialogue you had with Charlotte (Daellenbach & Sherrard, 2011), I remember her talking about that: how she was trained to do that, and then, in turn, how she trained people to hold people appropriately.

The other thing that is emerging for me is how you have been so influenced by the personal contact with people. For instance, your reference to Aaron Schiff. Is that the sort of passion, the falling in love?

*Evan:* Yes, it was not only the personal contact but also how it resonated with me: his story of passivity and how it enveloped him and how he learned from it. It just resonated. I could see myself on some of his road, and that made a theory more authentic.

*Keith:* That's interesting because when I asked you earlier about being introduced to Berne's theory of the intuition, you said "Oh, yes, we were told those stories". I wonder if that was because it represented a training that was perhaps less focused on what you read than on the stories about how Berne developed intuition, which speaks to a more experiential learning in those days [1970-1975] than say in my training [1987-1994].

## **REDECISION AND CATHEXIS**

*Keith:* In terms of the two main traditions of TA in which you trained and are most influenced, was there any synergy between the two, in terms of any contact or dialogue between the Gouldings and the Schiffs?

*Evan:* None.

*Keith:* None?

*Evan:* Absolutely.

*Keith:* That surprises me, 'cos in a sense inviting regression is inviting cathexis.

*Evan:* I agree, but they [the Gouldings] were scathing about Jacqui [Schiff] personally and cathexis in general: absolutely scathing. Personally, I found that [to be] one of Bob's weaknesses: that he was so ad hominem in his criticisms of people. He didn't criticise their theory or

their practice, but he criticised them as a person, for example, I cringed when I heard him say: “Who in God’s name would want Jacqui Schiff as a mother?”

*Keith:* Did anyone challenge him about these attacks?

*Evan:* No, and I found that sort of thing very dismaying, but it was pretty common in the top ranks of TA: they were all pretty ad hominem in criticising each other.

*Keith:* You’ve spoken a little bit about Bob, both what you got and what you didn’t like. What was Mary like? What did you get from her?

*Evan:* Mary was a very insightful woman. I don’t have a recall of Mary in a motherly sort of way; I don’t have a warmth; I have an intellectual appreciation of Mary, of her competence and her skill. There were some very gentle and kindly things about her, but she was, how do I put it, she wasn’t a very feminine or motherly kind of person. One of the neat things she did for me was when I had a mock oral exam at the end of my time there. That was one of the climaxes, and you did that in front of the whole learning community. Each person did their bit and I remember at the end of my exam the whole community cheering and clapping and Mary putting her hand up and saying “Hold that sound in your ears. Hold that sound. Can you still hear it? Yes? Well hold it and play it to yourself before you go in for your exam.” So I remember that little piece of personal advice.

## **CLINICAL EXAMS AND BECOMING A TEACHING MEMBER**

*Keith:* You mentioned that you were doing the intensive training with the Gouldings in order to prepare you for taking your CTA [certified transactional analysis] exam that year because you were coming back to New Zealand. They also sponsored you as a PTSTA [a provisional teaching and supervising transactional analyst]. Did they remain your principle supervisors for your PTSTA?

*Evan:* Not really. I just could not afford to make the connections with them again, and it got too long: the distance was too much. Whenever I went back, I went to conferences that were on the West coast of the USA. I couldn’t afford to go further afield very often, but when there were

conferences on the West coast I would go and always made a point of reconnecting with them: saying hello and talking and that. But my formal training [as a teaching and supervising transactional analyst] didn't progress, and that's where I had this big blockage really. It wasn't until we [PTSTAs in New Zealand] had the assistance of Robin Maslen from Adelaide. It wasn't until he came on the scene and said to us: "Look. I'm on the ITAA council and I'm having my airfares paid to go over there. I will divert through Auckland." So the four of us in New Zealand who were looking to get there — Charlotte [Daellenbach], me, Gordon [Hewitt], and Peter [Reid]. We would all gather at our place in Auckland and Robin would come and give us supervision, and information from the inside about how the [ITAA] organisation was structured, and where it was going, and all that kind of thing that you needed: laid out for examination purposes.

*Keith:* So Robin was your main [principal] supervisor.

*Evan:* Yeah, in the end he was. Charlotte had the opportunity of training because of her annual trip back to Switzerland to her family, as she always timed that with annual [TA] conferences. She was a very regular attender of annual conferences and has remained so for years. So Charlotte had that route in and got her hours up quite quickly and. Gordon went and he lived at Metanoia [a psychotherapy training institute] in the UK.

*Keith:* With Petrūska [Clarkson], Sue [Fish] and Brian [Dobson], which was where I met him. That was in the late '80s.

*Evan:* Yes. He was with them for six months or more. So that's where he got his hours up.

*Keith:* What happened to Peter? Did he drop out of TA training?

*Evan:* No, Peter continued, but he did Jungian training as well, and was a very slowly pushing towards getting his credentials: quite slowly, and then he got cancer and died. Ken [Mellor] was very important and influential, and we [Isabelle and I] got on with him and his wife, Elizabeth. We ran lots of workshops with Ken through Presbyterian Social Services, but then he dismayed me.

*Keith:* How?

*Evan:* Well we had a workshop which had gone very well. Then, at the end of the afternoon, Ken said to me and to the whole group:

“Now I’m discovering other ways of achieving some of what we’ve been talking about here through TA, but in quicker and more effective ways; and if you would like, and if this would be alright with you, Evan, could anybody who wanted to come feel free to come tonight and we’ll give a demonstration and use your lounge if that’s alright Evan.”

So what could we say? We said “fine”. Then he and Elizabeth came over to our place and sort of took over the lounge, cleared the furniture out; got as many cushions as we could find; and set up his own little guru seat at the top end of this. Then people started arriving; we all went in to cushion city: all cross-legged on cushions all around the room. Ken took his place up on the exalted higher chair at the front of the room and proceeded to be a swami, and then came around initiating each person, and whispering a mantra into our ears. I was totally freaked out; I was sort of caught on the hop; I was speechless. “Wait a minute”, I thought. This is really quite outside the realm of our TA workshop that we’d had.

*Keith:* Also it wouldn’t have fitted with you theologically.

*Evan:* No!

*Keith:* It would have offended your Presbyterian sensibilities.

*Evan:* Yes. If this had got back to some of my more conservative board members [in Presbyterian Social Services], they would have been quite critical of this sort of thing. Also, I felt really quite betrayed by Ken because he did not tell me that this was where he was going, or what was going to be happening. So we ... we stopped inviting him.<sup>2</sup>

[2. Ed. — This did lead to something of a rupture between Evan and Ken, at least from Evan’s point of view. I (Keith) recently met Ken and Elizabeth at an Australasian Transactional Analysis Conference here in Auckland (November 2016), where they also met and reconnected with Isabelle, with mutual warmth and affection. Interestingly, the theme of the Conference was “Rupture, Repair, Restore”! Whilst I respect Evan’s experience, I also want to acknowledge that this was some time ago, and, I suspect, that if he had met Ken again today, he would have experienced him quite differently, and had the opportunity to clear the air. Following the conference and in the course of some correspondence with me about this, Ken and Elizabeth reported having been somewhat confused by the sudden break in what had been

a wonderfully warm and friendly relationship. Having now heard the reason for the rupture, they have a sense of closure about it. They also said that, at the time, they had no idea about the effect of their actions and regret their part in what had occurred.]

## **INTEGRATIVE TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS**

*Keith:* Your reference to Metanoia brings me your interest in Petrūska's work which, as you know, she named as integrative, at least in the TA context. Am I correct in remembering that you once told me that you and Margaret [Bowater] nominated her for the Eric Berne Memorial Award in Transactional Analysis for her work on the concept of physis [Clarkson, 1992a]?

*Evan:* Yeah.

*Keith:* But you never met her?

*Evan:* No, I didn't.

*Keith:* That's interesting, given that you've said very clearly that you tend to learn through experience and being in the same room. So your reading of and enthusiasm for Petrūska's work was quite different: this was a woman you only met through reading.

*Evan:* Yes that's true.

*Keith:* So there was clearly something about what she was writing that really chimed with you.

*Evan:* Yes, we used her book on the five [therapeutic] relationships [Clarkson, 1995] as a textbook at AUT [Auckland University of Technology]. Joan [Dallaway] particularly was taken by Petrūska's five relationship integrative model and made quite a bit of the transpersonal relationship. So, yes Petrūska came to us that way.

*Keith:* Given that you nominated her for the award on the basis of the article about physis, I wonder if there was something appealing to you about this concept in relation to your interest in theology and TA, and the interface between the two.

*Evan:* Yes, and the source of intuition. Where does that come from? If we open ourselves up and allow stuff just to come in to us, I'm surprised at what can come up. It's just incredible, and over time I've learned to

trust it being valuable and useful. Mind you, I've made some awful gaffes along the way: saying something too prematurely that jumped into my mind, and that hasn't been helpful; and then I've had to work hard to correct that as a therapeutic error, and had to find ways to repair that. But, on the whole I'm usually quite surprised by what comes to mind, what I allow to come out, and what it does to people, and the connections it's made. I haven't necessarily been tracking this and that, but then comes the connection.

*Keith:* Well, not consciously [tracking].

*Evan:* No, not consciously.

*Keith:* But somewhere you know. Some people talk about intuition being very fast thinking.

*Evan:* Yes, I think that was one of the things that was very appealing to me about Petrūska's work.

*Keith:* Yeah. I'm smiling because this is all joining up: you're talking about bringing it back to intuition and she talked about intuition and integration, so that's a nice cycle. Did you ever correspond with her about the Award?

*Evan:* No.

*Keith:* So you nominated her because you were moved to do so, and Margaret joined you in that?

*Evan:* Yes, yes.

*Keith:* I'm delighted to hear that because I knew Petrūska. I think she was quite brilliant — and problematic. Some of her writing is brilliant and some of it isn't, and, unfortunately, she refused to be edited. That relationship book is a case in point: it's unwieldy and, whilst it has interesting parts, there is much that needed to have been edited. Towards the end of her career she alienated a lot of people and, sadly, took herself out of community. Nevertheless, I do think that in the history of TA, she's somebody that should be acknowledged, and should have been honoured. It's strange that she wasn't ...

*Evan:* ... wasn't acknowledged.

*Keith:* If there's a case for a posthumous award, I think it would be her. Anyway, I appreciate you and Margaret acknowledging her.

*Evan:* Thank you.

That's part of ... I nearly dropped out of TA at the time that Jacqui Schiff was having her troubles. I felt that the organisation [the ITAA] was very sloppy and quite unethical to produce a code of ethics after the fact, [i.e.,] after she had been charged with a breach of ethics, and then to produce the code. I thought that was very badly handled. At that time, I was still very much linked up with Ken. We had a very close and lovely friendship. We would go over to Melbourne as a family and stay with Ken and Elizabeth in their home, so we were seeing a lot of each other. It was Ken who encouraged me to stick with the organisation and to acknowledge that a lot of what our mothers and fathers did was inappropriate, and that's the way of the world, and [that we need] to be tolerant of that. That's not to say that we should behave like them; we've got the opportunity now to change how we do things. Nevertheless, I thought she was very badly treated. Since then, I've since seen a more detailed reasoning of why some people were critical of her, I've seen more detailed accounting of her. I just thought that she was a courageous pioneer who was exploring and admitting she was in exploration mode. She didn't "know" it, she was finding out by doing. I thought that was quite courageous.

*Keith:* You've talked about your early training and influences. Who continued to influence you, perhaps through writing, in transactional analysis, after your primary training?

*Evan:* That's a good question. [pause] People like Richard Erskine [who has also developed integrative transactional analysis, see Erskine & Moursund, 1988, 2003]. I realise that my learning is chiefly through personal connection and personal involvement in things like workshops. I don't get much through my eyes and reading. I get it directly. So when, I think it was Charlotte who originally brought Richard out quite some time ago, I became the sort of person who followed Richard. So I followed a lot of what Richard was talking about in terms of types of relationship, and those sort of connections

[see Erskine, Moursund & Trautmann, 1999]. Those people made a lot of sense to me.

*Keith:* I realise that it's getting late; I suggest we leave it there for now. Thanks again, Evan. I look forward to part two.



*Evan at his last TA Training Residential, Kimi Ora, Kaiteriteri, 2013*

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## *Chapter 10*

### Papers on Transactional Analysis

EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **A new dimension for TA — Spiritual development (n.d.)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — From its style, this appears to be quite an early paper, although I haven't been able to date it. Reading and re-reading it, I did wonder if it was co-authored, but having consulted Isabelle and others, decided that it was more likely to be Evan's sole work and, in any case, was worth including. If any readers have any further information about this paper, please contact me at [keith.tudor@aut.ac.nz](mailto:keith.tudor@aut.ac.nz).]

No one who is familiar with Transactional Analysis (TA) would question that has been a useful tool in promoting genuine development in those who have engaged with it. For the purposes of this article, however, we will dwell, not on the many successes of TA, but upon a limitation which has caused it to be incomplete after a period of time to many practitioners and clients. Our thesis is that TA needs to adapt itself to an approach to the total being of man, an approach to man's innermost part, his soul.

We suggest that TA is in need of an awareness of spiritual development. Spiritual development is the process by which man discovers who he is, what he is to do with his life, and how he is to do it. The process is usually activated by a desire for genuine self-awareness. That desire leads to TA, to other forms of psychotherapy, to participation in organisational development courses, to learning stress management skills, to seeking

pastoral care or spiritual direction, to name only a few among many. In all cases spiritual development involves an effort, conscious or unconscious, to become wise (to know whom and what one is), to become effective (to perform that which is appropriate), and to become caring (to be sensitive to others and yet to enjoy oneself while doing so).

The traditional TA approach has been largely limited to a removal of obstacles to growth, to what is the first — called the Purgative — in a three-stage process of spiritual development. To say the same thing in another way: TA has in the past used a model of man that assumes he has two bodies, a physical body and an emotional/psychological body. That model does not address the “spiritual body” and its needs. The ordering of the physical and emotional bodies aids spiritual growth by removing obstacles, but does not produce positive growth; but rather a condition in which positive growth is possible. In the same way that psychological growth cannot be fostered by the mere satisfaction of physical needs, spiritual growth cannot be fostered by the satisfaction of psychological needs.

When one has acquired skills in TA or other modes of human development, he may come to believe that his work is over. In reality he has only reached one stage in his on-going spiritual development. It is as though one had cleared a garden plot, and expected automatically to reap a harvest, while disregarding the necessity to plant new seeds and to nurture and weed and cultivate them. A new and different set of concepts and skills is needed for the later stages of spiritual development.

### **THE CONSTANCY OF CHOICE**

Before going on to the stages of spiritual development, it may be helpful to pause to consider something of the nature of man. At every level of his development there is a choice, a choice which is consistent with but not necessarily determined by the preceding level. To start at or near the bottom, man is a living being, just as vegetables are living beings, but except in those cases where one is terribly afflicted by accident or disease, we do not refer to man as a vegetable. He is an animal. According to Aristotle, he is a rational animal, that is, an animal governed by reason rather than solely by his instincts, as brute animals are. To the extent that one is rational, he is more like a man and less like a brute.

The classifications may seem obvious, so far, but they continue and they continue in much the same way. The rational animal is either spiritual or hedonistic. Either one is consistent with being rational. Hedonistic men seek their own gratification. The ultimate end is to be satisfied with oneself. The spiritual man, on the other hand, tries to govern himself by standards outside himself. He seeks more than his own pleasure; he seeks answers to the three major spiritual questions: Who he is, what he is to do, and how he is to do it.

To say that one is spiritual is not to end the inquiry. The spiritual is divided into the holy and the demonic. The demonic is still spiritual, but it answers the three major spiritual questions with answers that are destructive, divisive or demeaning. As one example, Hitler answered for the German people by saying, "You are Nazis, a master race. What you will do is you will build a thousand year Reich. You will do so by conquering and exterminating non-Aryans and by dominating others." Those are answers, and they are answers to spiritual questions, but they can be recognised as demonic by their fruits, by what they led to.

The foregoing distinctions should be borne in mind in connection with the remainder of this article. What is presented is an abbreviated model of spiritual development, but its brevity should not suggest its inevitability. What actually happens is more a struggle than a simple unfolding. Good physical health may be used to work hard, to help others, or to bully one's neighbour. Psychological skills may be used for growth or for manipulation. Holy spirituality is a blessing, but demonic spirituality is a curse.

There is, however, a discernible development pattern for those who are able to attain to the state of being holy, spiritual, rational animals. It begins with the Still Point and proceeds through three stages that are called the Purgative, the Illuminative, and the Unitive. The particular circumstances of one person's life will of course not be the same as those of another, and there will be variations of time and intensity and choice, but there are guideposts which any traveller may find along the way.

### **THE STILL POINT**

The natural starting place for a discussion of human spirituality is the identification of that "something" in man which connects to the spiritual. In

the Middle Ages it was called the still point. The still point was seen as a Splinter of God, a spark of eternal good, given to each man to help guide him toward the true, the good, and the beautiful. Because the still point longs to expand, to become more fully connected with the spiritual, it imposes upon man the necessity of continually making choices. It is not satisfied with being comfortable; it wants man to grow wise, effective, and caring.

What the Middle Ages called the “still point” is called by other names in modern therapeutic disciplines. In Rogerian psychology, it is called the higher self; in Psychosynthesis, it is called the highest self; in Jungian analytic psychology, it is the Self (with a capital S — the “true” self); and in behavioural psychology, this “something” is the point of emitted (creative) and transcending behaviour.

By whatever name it may be called, the “something” that longs for the spiritual urges man to transcend his own limitations. It seeks to expand, and as obstacles are removed and it is permitted to do so, it goes through a process that falls into three distinct categories.<sup>2</sup> These categories are referred to as the purgative way, the illuminative way, and the unitive way.

[2. Ed. — These were first proposed as "hierarchical actions" by St. Bonaventure (1221-1274), an Italian mediaeval Franciscan, scholastic theologian and philosopher.]

## **THE PURGATIVE WAY**

In the purgative stage, one is principally engaged in discovering who he is by purging (freeing) himself of the messages given to him by his family, his society, and his times. His struggle is to accept reality as it truly is. The emotional and behavioural patterns of the purgative way involve learning to accept reality through the following levels:

### *1. The loss of innocence level*

One loses his innocence by:

- a. Discovering that “things” cannot bring sustained happiness.
- b. Becoming aware that we live in a wounded, imperfect world.
- c. A breaking (trauma) of the spirit — an acceptance of the fact that we grow through pain.

- d. Deciding that, despite his loss of innocence, he will continue to try to save himself and others.

## *2. The wounded child, mourning level*

At this level one seeks to save himself and others, and ultimately grows by:

- a. Seeking a “worldly” solution to man’s and his own problems.
- b. Accepting the fact that worldly solutions fail.
- c. Mourning over the further limitations he has discovered.
- d. Deciding that one cannot save others.

## *3. The narcissistic/meek level*

At this level one has come to terms with the world’s going to Hell, but is determined that he is not. He grows by:

- a. Developing an intense (narcissistic) preoccupation with himself, and striving to “develop” himself by his own strengths.
- b. Becoming aware that getting one’s way at all costs truly hurts oneself and others.
- c. Grieving for past dreams and action.
- d. Deciding to accept one’s own limitations (meekness).

By this point one has been purged of his misconceptions. He is also considerably humbled. He is prepared to embark on the illuminative way.

## **THE ILLUMINATIVE WAY**

The illuminative way is marked by an avoidance of confrontation. The individual examines life in the light of the reality already discovered through pain. He is engaged in making hard choices; he is learning to become effective. Because he is growing into a new kind of person he needs time and space. He needs comforting, understanding, nurturing and protection. He is like a new plant with vulnerable growth. He needs forgiveness from himself and from others. The three levels of the illuminative stage are:

## *4. The righteousness level*

At this level one cares more about getting things right than getting his own way. Having discarded earlier misconceptions, he is hungry to see things as they actually are is likely to go on a 'binge' of intellectual activity.

#### *5. The merciful level*

At this level one has come to appreciate how much he needs understanding and nurturing, so he is "merciful" and kind to others. He is patient with others' needs, particularly their need of time and space to develop. By becoming forgiving he becomes "forth giving" and acquires the capacity to let go of the obstacles (fears, resentments and hurts) that would impede his own development.

#### *6. The pure heart level*

Once one has come to respect his own needs and the needs of others, and has learned to forgive, he frees his heart from woundedness. Because he has no emotional burdens to poison himself with, he begins to actualise his potential. He has gotten his wounded self out of his way and can now go forth and make his contribution to his own life and to that of others.

An awareness of the existence of the Illuminative Stage can avoid misdiagnosing as psychological breakdowns what are in fact spiritual breakthroughs. At the righteousness level, a person might be thought to be resurrecting old oppressive messages about behaviour. Nothing could be further from the truth. The messages are not now imposed on the person by others but are derived from his own choice of values. At the merciful level, where one is learning to forgive himself and others, he might be thought of as allowing others to play games. Actually, he is respecting their need to work things out. At the pure heart level, a person might be accused of going back to earning his right to live by being good. Actually there is an imperative in the heart of the person to desire goodness in all forms.

Another opportunity for misdiagnosis should be mentioned. Between the different levels and between the different ways there are small dark nights, and major dark nights of the soul. One finds no comfort in



anything. Life seems empty. The soul is actually breaking through to new ground. What looks very much like a depression is actually a progression of the soul to a new level without yet having learned the joys of that level.

By the end of the illuminative stage, one has discarded a number of misconceptions, and has transcended his own woundedness, but he has not developed the skills to function effectively at this new level. There will be another dark night, but, after the dark night, he can enter into the unitive way.

### **THE UNITIVE WAY**

At this stage the individual knows who he is (in the sense that he has decided on his own values) and what he is to do (because, having overcome his own woundedness, he is free to make his own choices). Still, he is at a new level and is inexperienced in it. He is far more robust than he was at the tender beginning of the illuminative state, and his energies are concentrated on acquiring the skills to accomplish what he (now) freely chooses to do.

If his growth continues he becomes highly integrated and progresses through three levels:

#### *7. The peacemaking level*

At this level, because the person has come to learn how to be just to himself and to others, people turn to him and want to be with and to work with him. This level is also called the diligence level because all of one's behaviour is marked by effectiveness in accomplishing what one sets out to do.

#### *8. The right-seeking level*

In part because others do turn to him, and consequently he has so much to do, at this level the individual seeks the right way, the most positive, effective way, to accomplish what is set before him. This level is sometimes called the temperance level because the individual is highly selective and avoids useless, ineffectual work.

#### *9. The universal truth level*

At this level one becomes a defender of: all that is good and true and beautiful. He can defend them for himself, and is asked to defend them for others. He is sought out to help the innocent, to feed the hungry, to be an example of what is beautiful in human beings. This level is sometimes referred to as the chaste level (chastity, in this context, meaning seeking the right thing at the right time for the right reason). One who has reached this level has discovered not only who he is and what he is to do, but has also discovered how he is to do it — by caring and by sacrifice.

At this point, the garden we spoke of earlier is in bloom. Not only has the plot been cleared, and the seed planted; it has been weeded and nurtured and the person has burst forth with the actualisation of his potential.

No article of this length can do justice to the subject of spiritual development, and the foregoing is only a sketch or model, which is necessarily incomplete and over-simplified. With those qualifications, we hope we have indicated both the general nature of spiritual development and the need for TA to take that process into account.

TA has continually evaluated its weaknesses and has not hesitated to supplement its own theory with concepts from other disciplines. Note the introduction into TA practice of elements from Gestalt therapy, systems theory, body work, and hypnosis. The TA approach is a scientific one, and to prefer the hardest facts, even to our most precious illusions, is at the heart of science. It is our conviction that man's spiritual nature is a hard fact, and that we cannot ignore it and still address the full development of man. The traditional TA model of the physical and psychic bodies needs to be expanded to include the spiritual body as well.

### **TA and psychodrama: An exploration of the concepts of ego states and role (1985)<sup>3</sup>**

[3. Ed. — This paper was presented in October 1985 at the Fifth Annual TA Conference of Australia and New Zealand, Christchurch.]

#### **SYNOPSIS**

The construct of the ego state is fundamental to the theory and practice of Transactional Analysis (TA), as is role to psychodrama. Berne categorically denied that ego states were roles. However, careful examination of structural and functional definitions of ego states are confusing. In operation, functionally, ego states are closely parallel to roles. Acceptance of this similarity enriches the theory and practice of both disciplines.

## **INTEGRATION AND CONVICTION**

This paper makes a personal integration. For several years I have lived with an uneasy internal co-existence of two psychotherapeutic disciplines: TA and psychodrama. Fortunately, for comfort, they do allow cohabitation. TA provides an intellectual, theoretically framework to go with psychodrama's action practice. Theory and practice are good bedfellows. But, deep down it has never felt honest. I was either using TA in the service of psychodrama or vice versa. It was some sort of illicit union which has felt as though it could only be resolved by espousing one or the other and settling down to faithful monogamy.

I have long suspected that the root of my discontent and even, at times, disease, lies at the very heart of both disciplines, that is, at their central theoretical notions: ego states for TA and roles for psychodrama. From my observations, clinical experience, and thoughtful reflections, I have grown convinced that the notions of ego states and roles, while not synonymous, are referring to the exact same thing. Therefore, I do not have to choose between them. I can be coupled to both at their most fundamental points. The difficulty and dis-ease for me has been my self-doubt about their similarity. I have been thoroughly instructed by my teachers in both disciplines that ego states and roles do not refer to the same thing. I have, to date, chosen to believe them, at the price of some discomfort.

This paper represents my final conviction: finding a base from which to disagree with Eric Berne, mainly, and also with my other teachers; my "coming out" with a claim that Eric Berne was wrong in categorically stating that ego states have no relation to roles. My psychodrama teachers agreed with him. As some of them had personally met Eric and one even attended the San Francisco Social Psychiatry Seminars for a while when Eric was running them, who was I to disagree? Clearly Dr J. L. Moreno, founder of psychodrama, is prior. He makes no reference to ego states (that

I have found). It is Berne who takes a stand in relation to the notion of role. So, the main thrust of this paper is exploration of Berne's construct of ego states. This will be followed by a brief examination of Moreno's theory of role, and how both ego states and roles are co-related and might be used together.

## **ERIC BERNE AND EGO STATES**

Eric Berne's quest was for a quick, effective method of treatment. His theoretical ideas grew out of this quest. The starting point for him began with careful, empirical observation of his clients during clinical treatment sessions. In the mid 1950s Berne was treating the patient who inspired the notion of ego states. It is an event reported in the now famous "cowpoke story". The patient, a lawyer, reported to Berne a childhood incident in which he was holidaying on a dude ranch. He was dressed in a cowboy outfit and was helping a real cowboy unsaddle a horse. The cowboy looked at him and said, "Why, thanks, cowpoke!" Whereupon he replied, "I'm not really a cowpoke; I'm just a little boy." The patient then said to Berne, "That's just the way I feel now. Sometimes, I feel like I'm not really a lawyer; I'm just a little boy" (Berne, 1961, p. 33). To Berne this was the clinching evidence of two different ways the patient organised his thoughts, giving rise to two different lifestyles. There were two distinctively different states within his personality out of which he functioned in the different areas of his everyday life, law, and leisure. Both Berne and his patient could observe these two distinct behavioural phenomena as consistent patterns identifiable by voice tones and facial expressions (Dusay, 1977).

At that time an aspiring psychoanalyst, Eric Berne recognised that, in terms of the Freudian psychic apparatus, the two different states were both part of the ego. Thus, he labelled each of these observed behavioural/thinking phenomena an ego state. "Each state," commented John Dusay, "portrayed a distinct, conscious way of thinking, feeling, and behaving" (Dusay, 1977, p. 35). Later a third distinctive pattern was identified and the three basic, classic ego states of TA were distinguished. Originally, then, Berne empirically observed the way people functioned behaviourally and, from the three distinct patterns of phenomena he saw, as corroborated by others, his patients and seminar colleagues, he described and defined ego states. The notion of ego states, first, i.e., historically, referred to how people

function, to observable, behavioural phenomena. There is little difficulty with this. Berne's genius was to synthesise and organise his observations into a coherent theoretical system with his model of personality constructed around three distinctive states of the ego's functioning. In my experience few people have difficulty personally recognising and confirming these three distinct ways which they, and others around them, use to organise experience: a Parental ego state, an Adult ego state, and a Child ego state.

The problem emerges when Berne, the medically trained psychiatrist, pursues his thinking. With his experience of anatomy and physiology as a background, Berne constructs his theory on the assumption of where there is function there must be a structure to produce it. So he speculates, with good reason, at the time, based on the findings of the neurosurgeon Penfield and associates,<sup>4</sup> that humans all have built-in structures from which each of these three states arise.

[4. Ed. — Penfield, W. (1952). Memory mechanisms. *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry*, 67, 178-198.]

Penfield, W., & Jasper, H. (1954). *Epilepsy and the functional anatomy of the human brain*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co. Penfield, W., & Roberts, L. *Speech and brain mechanisms*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.]

I wish to quote extensively from Paul McCormick's monography *Ego States*, the first in a series commissioned by the ITAA (International Transactional Analysis Association) "as a summary of the main ideas and a guide to the literature" (McCormick, 1977, p. v) for candidates preparing for membership examination. The booklet is a sort of definitive summary of the primary sources. In it McCormick acknowledges the confusion Berne has left us:

Having observed that people can switch from one state to another, Parent, Adult, or Child, Berne hypothesized (my emphasis) that we all have three different psychic "organs"; that is, mental organizers of these states. He called them the archaeopsyché (the early mind), evidenced in Child behavior; the neopsyché (the new or current mind), evidenced in Adult functioning; and the exteropsyché (the mind programmed from without), evidenced in Parent behavior.

The history of Berne's use of the terms archeopsyché, neopsyché, and exteropsyché points up the difficulty in distinguished between

his structural model of the mind and his behavioral (functional) model. The latter is a far simpler one to validate. A literally structural model would require locating the specific neurophysiological components that activate the state in question. The behavioral requires only an external validation (by observing the subject's behaviour, the social responses to it), supported by a subjective corroboration from the person studied.

At first Berne did not object to making Parent (P), Adult (A), and Child (C) synonymous with extero-psyche, neo-psyche, and archa-psyche .... But by the time he wrote his first book on TA he was careful to distinguish ego states from their psychic "organs" .... P, A, and C, he said, are manifestations of their corresponding "organs". The "organs" themselves, like Freud's superego, ego, and id, have never been substantiated as discrete structures, and may never be.

Berne did not make clear whether he meant his "psychic organs" to be understood literally as neurophysiologically locatable structures, or whether he offered them only as theoretical constructs, which he understood superego, ego, and id to be. In his diagramming of ego states he distinguished "psychobiological structure" from "behavioral function", and perhaps he did hope that someday a surgeon would be able to trace the neurological boundaries of such a structure. But in his writings he did not predict the possibility of those tracings. And by the time he wrote his last book, *What Do You Say After You Say Hello?* (1972), he was no longer discussing psychic organs. In fact he was then defining structural analysis as the distinguishing of one feeling-and-behavior pattern from another ..., stressing the phenomenological and operational, and not the psychobiological. This imprecision in the theory seems not to have detracted at all from the usefulness of the P-A-C model as a functional one. It can serve us without our even postulating "psychic organs", the theory of which is at best unsettled. (McCormick, 1977, pp. 5-7)

**Both McCormick and Schiff acknowledge that Berne is the origin of confusion and difficulty in understanding Ego states. This seems to be because, although less speculative over time, his thinking holds to the**

presumption: function arises from structure. He reasons that because he can observe three different Ego states functioning in human behaviour there must be three psychological structures to human personality. This presumption, though not declared, underlies the opening paragraph of Chapter One, Structural Analysis in *Games People Play* part of which I quote:

Observation of spontaneous social activity ... reveals that from time to time people show noticeable changes in ... behavior ... often accompanied by shifts in feeling. In a given individual, a certain set of behavior patterns corresponds to one state of mind, while another set is related to a different psychic attitude, often inconsistent with the first. These changes and differences give rise to the idea of ego states.

In technical language, an ego state may be described phenomenologically as a coherent set of feelings, and operationally as a set of coherent behavior patterns. In more practical terms, it is a system of feelings accompanied by a related set of behavior patterns. Each individual seems to have available a limited repertoire of such ego states, which are not roles but psychological realities. This repertoire can be sorted into the following categories .... Technically these are called, extero psychic, neopsychic, and archaeopsychic ego states. Colloquially their exhibitions are called Parent, Adult, and Child. (Berne, 1964, p. 23)

## **EGO STATES AND ROLES**

While Berne does not here refer to his earlier conjectured psychic organs as the structures from which ego states arise, his use of his technical terms makes the connection. I think it is because Berne assumes the functioning ego state arises from this structural base he declares ego states are not roles but psychological realities. It seems that for something to be a psychological reality for him, it has to have something like a psychobiological origin rather than be something which arises from the way people function. Because a role is something which a person can put on and play out, it is not as substantial as what he regards as a psychological reality. Otherwise we have a puzzling statement and are left with the semantic question of how Berne defines a psychological reality. If we turn to another source we get some further light. In his discussion of role-playing

in *Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy*, his earliest TA book, Berne says:

Ego states must be differentiated from “roles”, unless the concept of role-playing is reduced to absurdity by including everything. The position of structural analysis should be defined in this respect.

When an accountant speaks at a Rotary Club dinner, he may act the way he thinks an accountant is expected to act. This is role-playing. But when he is concentrating on the column of figures in his office, he is not playing the role of an accountant, he is an accountant. (Berne 1961, p. 233)

In this example, Berne follows a common tendency to judge a person who “role-plays” as unreal, inauthentic, false. This seems to be behind his statement, “Ego states are not roles by psychological realities”. He suggests a role is not a psychological reality but something put on, assumed, a pretence. This is confirmed in his last book, *What Do You Do After You Say Hello?* (1972) where he distinguishes clearly “real living ... (from) merely playing the role ... Role-playing is the Child being phony, and is not real Self” (Berne, 1972, p. 249).

Berne is consistent in his other references to ego states and roles, denying that an ego state is a role. In the one place where he does say what a role is, rather than implying what it is not, he says, “A role is something like what Jung calls a persona, except that it is less opportunistic and more deeply rooted in the individual’s fantasies” (Berne. 1964, p. 41). Again here role is defined as something put on — the actor’s mask, the persona, as against something real and natural.

Berne is consistent in claiming ego states are not roles, from his own perspective of what a role is. But his is not the definition of role in the theory and practice of J. L. Moreno’s psychodrama. Moreno’s role is not like Jung’s persona. Berne seems unclear about the nature of role in psychodrama. This is surprising. Zerka Moreno, wife and colleague of Dr Moreno, personally described at a public meeting in Auckland how Eric Berne was a frequent visitor sitting at the back of the audience observing Moreno practising psychodrama at Beacon, New York. And how, after the session, both men would engage in deep conversation about matters of theory and practice. Berne makes reference to observing several



demonstrations of psychodrama conducted by J. L. Moreno and wrote a brief statement about TA and psychodrama. In it he is consistent in saying that “ego states are not synonymous with roles” and that a proper structural analysis of personality will confirm this difference (Berne, 1966, pp. 313-314). Despite his exposure to the method, and his published respect and admiration for Dr Moreno as the pioneer of action therapies (as cited in Greenberg, 1974), Berne does not write as if he understands role in the way psychodramatists do.

To summarise, Berne, it seems, bases his denial that ego states are roles on an assumption he appears to hold throughout his writing that ego states are a structural part of the being or make-up of the personality. He calls them natural phenomena and psychological realities, in contrast to roles, thereby implying roles are neither. In his pre-TA writing, while psychoanalytically-oriented, he openly hypothesises the existence of psychic organs, possibly locatable in the brain. He observed people behaving in three distinct patterns, and recognised these ways of organisation of thinking, feeling, and behaviour as coming from that area of Freudian psychic apparatus designated ego. He labelled these three behavioural phenomena ego states. He conjectures that when the ego is organised to function in one of these three states it is operating by means of psychobiological processes originating in three separate areas of the brain. On the basis of this conjecture he defines ego states as being structural rather than simply functional phenomena. As a result, he categorically declares ego states are not roles. His definition of roles is unclear and seems most connected with his understanding of role-playing where a role is behaviour assumed and put on by persons but is not part of their authentic reality. This is not the basic definition of role proposed by J. L. Moreno in psychodrama.

In his later TA period, Eric Berne is careful not to connect the observable phenomena of ego states functioning in human behaviour with psychic organs located in the brain. However, he insists on a structural basis to ego states leaving the whole matter unclear and confused. Later authorities in TA recognise the confusion and difficulty generated by Berne and many have taken a stand in the direction he was moving at his death to define ego states only behaviourally, as functions of the personality.

This is the position I now take. Having explored Berne’s thought about ego states I concluded his insistence on a structural base is the result of his own

conjecture. It is speculative deduction from empirical observations and no evidence has since given it any substance. (Indeed modern models of brain function based on the holographic paradigm put structural notions further afield.) Freed from Berne's insistence that ego states are not roles leaves me able to make a unifying understanding of TA and psychodrama. I do accept Berne's statement that ego states are not synonymous with roles. Ego states for me are now convenient labels for role clusters of constellations of roles. Moreno maintains that the sense of self, the "ego", is secondary, not an ontological structure, and emerges out of developed clusters or constellations of roles in a person's life (Moreno, 1977). Over time, humans develop a cluster of roles associated with parents and parenting and parent figures. When people operate out of this set of roles their awareness of their "self" is that of being parental, or their ego state is that of Parent. So Berne's "cowpoke lawyer" experienced his self as a little boy when operating out of his cluster of child roles, his Child ego state, even though biologically he was a grown up.

Interestingly, Eric Berne observed the role cluster effect in human behaviour and addressed it under the notion of repertoire (in *Games People Play*). Although lacking in precision it seems as though by use of the plural, ego states, Berne notes there is more than one "set of coherent behaviour patterns" in the repertoire: "Each individual seems to have available a limited repertoire of such ego states ... This repertoire can be sorted into the following categories: (1) ego states (emphasis mine) which resemble those of parental figures", etc. (Berne, 1964, p. 23)

So for Berne, what were colloquially called Parent, Adult, and Child were really categories of repertoires of ego states. More correctly, when diagrammed, according to this thinking of Berne's the labels should read Parent Ego states (plural), etc., and not the Parent ego state (singular). Why they are not so labelled is because of the confusion discussed before where Berne thinks these ego states emerge from one single structure in each case. To this extent, Berne's thinking supports my contention that ego states can usefully be thought of as categories of role clusters: a Parental, Adult, and Child role cluster or, synonymously, ego states.

When we break from Eric Berne and define ego states only in functional (behavioural) terms, we are coming on to the same ground as Moreno and his notion of role. While acknowledging the use of the word role is often

wide, unspecified, and applied to a variety of different situations (including how Berne sees it), Moreno makes his own definition precise: “Role is the functioning form the individual assumes in the specific moment he reacts to a specific situation in which other persons or objects are involved” (Moreno, 1977, p. iv). The operative words are “functioning form”. This gives us an immediate connection with the ego states defined functionally. It means humans are always in some ego state just as they are always in some role, In this sense a role is not assumed, put on, or a pretence. When people are putting on a role, pretending to be something other than what they are, their functioning form is that of a pretender, they are in the role of pretender. What they are trying to pretend or portray is not the role. To illustrate from Berne’s previously quoted illustration of the accountant who puts on a show of being an accountant at the Rotary Club dinner and really being an accountant in his office facing columns of figures; the man, an accountant in both situations, displays two different functioning forms (two different ego states). At the Rotary Club his functioning form, role, is that of a seeker-to-conform-to-social-expectations. In this role he acts as he thinks his audience expect him to act as an accountant. What he portrays might not be up to the social expectations of the Rotarians, but at that specific moment in relation to the specific situation and the other people in it he is true to his role: the seeker-to-conform-to-social-expectations. Back in his office with his column of figures his functioning is that of a human-computer-calculator.

In both situations the man in Berne’s example is an accountant, assuming he is entitled to that qualification. Moreno distinguishes three types of functioning form as roles: psychosomatic, psychodramatic, and social. Being an accountant is a social role having a large public component defined by social use. People take on social roles accepting the functioning which goes with them, but retain to greater or lesser degree some of their private individuality to give a unique quality to how they live the role. The same person may have several social roles: accountant, Rotarian, husband, father, citizen, etc. In delivering his speech to the Rotary Club our accountant may be inspired or motivated from his own private psychodramatic world. This inner world is populated by many psychodramatic roles incorporated from real-life or imaginary persons or figures. In delivering his speech the accountant may attempt to emulate the style of one of his heroes and functions influenced by his psychodramatic

roles. Or, he may recall his mother's advice, "Behave yourself," and respond to this psychodramatic type of internal role. TA therapists also recognise these influences. Moreno's understanding greatly enriches Berne's TA here. The psychosomatic types of roles sustain our basic biological functioning. If our accountant moves into the role of anxious-speaker as he begins his speech he may need to attend to his psychosomatic role of breather to control his fear and manage his delivery of words.

## **PSYCHODRAMA AND ROLES**

One last comment to connect ego states and roles is to note that psychodramatists recognise three components to a role: its cognitive construct, its affect, and its behaviour. A fully developed role has all three components congruently formed. The social role, accountant, requires a cognitive awareness of what accountancy is and what accountants are called to do by society, an affect appropriate to performing the activities and a competence in behaving as an accountant. Roles involve thinking, feeling, and behaving. By functional definition, ego states too, are said to be distinct, consistent patterns of thinking/feeling/behaving. The same phenomena of human behaviour are referred to in both notions. The important factor here is that of there being units of consistent patterns of thinking/feeling/behaving. For me each of these units is an ego state or role. In life such a unit may be helpful or unhelpful to productive living. Whichever way, the unit is remarkably persistent and consistent. Also the units constellate in clusters which are more or less effective, these larger units are categorised helpfully to me, in traditional TA ego states of Parent, Adult, and Child. Moreno suggests that in the development of roles people will find which work for them and these roles and role clusters become conserved, fixed. Conserved roles may or may not continue to serve a useful function in the person's life. If life's circumstances change the conserved roles may be quite harmful, but they are resistant to change and considerable spontaneity and creativity is required to produce a role shift to something more adequate. TA practitioners may recognise this and many already acknowledge that psychodramatic action methods are wonderful tools to effect change and so currently use them, straight or modified, in their practice.

This paper intends to provide a base on which to find freedom from Eric Berne's restriction on seeing ego states and roles as having much in common. Indeed, there is so much in common at these fundamental points in both systems that further integration of both is now possible and would lead to a most productive union between TA and psychodrama.

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## A Transactional Analysis of God (2005)<sup>5</sup>

[5. Ed. — A presentation first made in 2005, at a Transactional Analysis Residential Training event. As Evan noted, it was stimulated by Lloyd Geering's book *Christianity without God* (Bridget Williams Books, 2002).]

## PRESENTATION NOTES

Question 1: “What is the chief end of man?”

Answer: “Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever.”

(*Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession of Faith*, 1648)

Theism, from the Greek Θεός (theós), is the technical theological term for the way most people in our Western society understand God. As with all “-isms”, such as racism, or sexism, we develop these unconsciously, absorbing them from the culture we live in, and act on them in our lives; and, as with all “isms”, there is a difference in social power involved.

## **Some Technical Theological Terms**

*Deism* A creator God with no involvement in the creation

*Theism* A creator God with involvement in the creation

*Monotheism* One God

*Polytheism* Many Gods

*Pantheism* All is God

*Panentheism* God is in all and is more

## **Theology and geology**

*-ology* (δολοζία) = the scientific study of

*theo* (Θεος) = God

*geo* (Γεο) = Earth

The difference is that you can get your hands on earth!

Scientific study presumes that you can get some hold on what you are studying; that you can view it from different angles, that you can objectify what you study. You cannot do this without God — according to theists.

The scientific study of humans:

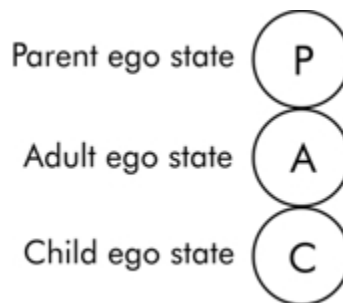
- Anthropology — (from the Greek anthropos, human being) is the study of the origins, social and cultural development and behaviour of humankind.
- Psychology — (from the Greek, psyche, or soul) is the study of the mind and emotions, mental processes and behaviour.
- Transactional analysis — a theory developed by the founder, Eric Berne, a psychiatrist, originally to help him cure patients more effectively, based on studying and observing humans carefully: “is a theory of personality and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change.”

## Transactional Analysis

TA is all this and more. It began with Eric Berne observing what went on between people. He saw them trading — transacting — for quality responses from each other. People need to relate and interact. He made an analysis of transactions. What did Berne see? That humans live life in three broad patterns — consistent to each person — which he identified as ego states. One ego state pattern he called Parent, where the life style is taking care of others in the way they were. Another ego state he called Adult, where the life style is thoughtfully attending to the here-and-now. The third pattern he called Child, where the person's life style is repeating how they lived when they were a child.

### *Human personality*

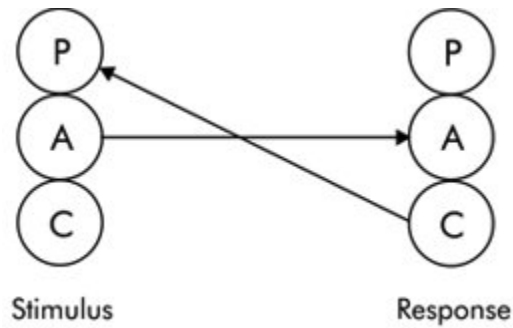
According to Berne, human personality is structured around these three ego states, in the patterns unique to each person, so he diagrammed the human being as a stack of three circles, one for each ego state (Figure 10.1).



*Figure 10.1 The human personality<sup>6</sup>  
[6. Ed. — In TA, this is referred to as structural analysis  
(as distinct from functional analysis), and is the first order  
or level of analysis. Second-order analysis is represented  
in Figure 10.6.]*

### *Human transactions*

Based on this structure of human personality, Berne systematically analysed how people interacted, using diagrams (Figure 10.2).

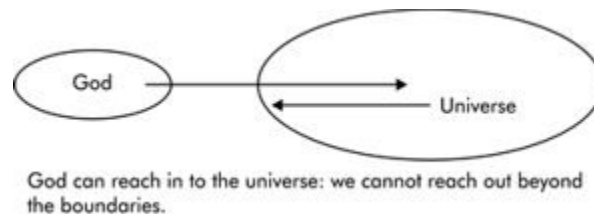


*Figure 10.2 A crossed transaction*

## THEOLOGY

— the impossible study. The theistic God is unavailable for objective study. (Theists think it blasphemy to consider studying God). At its best, theology is the study of how humans have conceived of God and how they have talked about their experiences of God over time. God is not available for a TA structural transactional analysis.

Theos is the unknowable God. A theistic God is completely other and separate from the universe we are part of (Figure 10.3).



*Figure 10.3 The theist concept of the relationship between God and the universe*

## Revelation

Can we know God at all? Deists (deism, from the Latin, deus, God) propose that God is like a creative clockmaker who made the world (universe) a perfect machine, set it going, and left it to its own devices. We know God by making deductions from the evidence of the created product left behind. Theists propose we only know God at all because God has revealed



God-self to us. (Note the semantic difficulty of gender specific personal pronouns: him and her.)

### *Prophets*

Over the course of time, selected men (prophets), mainly in the Middle East, about 1,400 to 3,000 years ago, experienced happenings which they interpreted as God being revealed to them. They passed on their understanding of the God revealed to them to their followers, if not directly, eventually in written form. These written records were given sacred status by the faith communities which have accepted them as definitive of God

In these faith communities, patriarchal, and hierarchically-organised, trained and specially recognised men have particular social power as the authorised custodian of the Holy records of the revealed God.

Theism, our usual understanding of God, generally holds that:

- God is some sort of being is outside our universe
- God created the universe we are contained in
- God is completely different from the created universe
- God is concerned about the created universe
- God intervenes in the universe
- God is personal, masculine, and transcendent
- God is always and only subject
- God, as an entity, is inaccessible to objective study.

To communicate their experience of the revelation of God, the Prophets had to use the language and thought forms of the culture and communities of their day. In order to be understandable the Prophets spoke of God in anthropomorphic terms and images; human activity, attributes and qualities were projected on to God.

### *TA and God*

While it doesn't make sense to do a (structural) transactional analysis of God, it is possible to do a structural analysis of the projections onto God. Most of these are transactions aimed at a superior Parent figure.

Transactions may originate from Parent, Adult or Child ego states. As

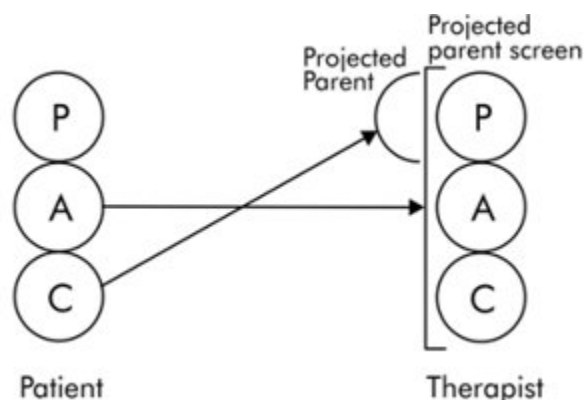
theism encourages the infantilisation of humans — and Christianity in particular, addresses God as Father — most such transactions are from Child to a projected Parent ego state.

### *TA and projection*

TA has various ways to diagram projection(s).<sup>7</sup>

[7. Here, Evan drew on the ideas of an Italian transactional analyst, Carlo Moiso.]

The client engages with the therapist. There is ostensible Adult to Adult transaction from the client. However, from the client's Child ego state, the therapist is seen as a Parent figure. The therapist's Parent ego state is not experienced by the client; rather, the client projects his or her image/memory of his or her actual or experienced parent onto the therapist. It's as if there is a screen onto which the image is projected, and which hides the reality of the therapist.

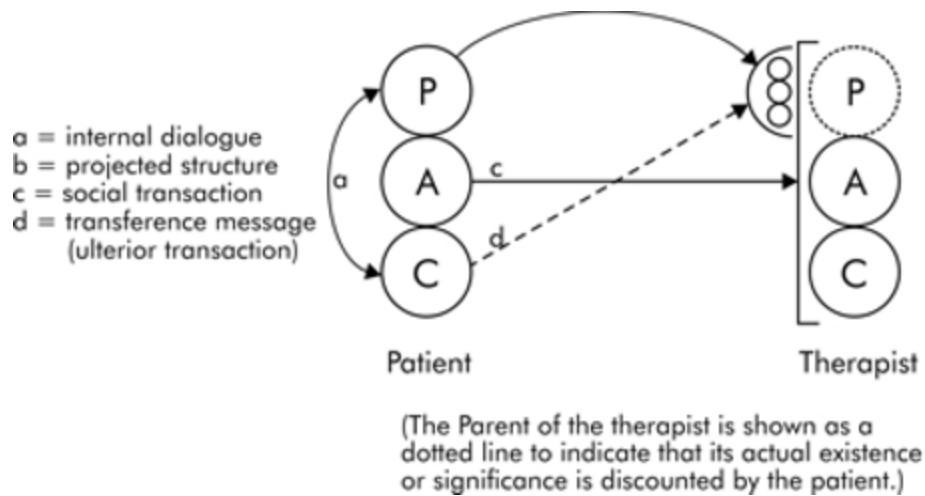


*Figure 10.4 The transference projection/relationship (Moiso, 1985)*

This diagram equally describes our projection onto God. Any substance/reality of the theistic God is inaccessible to humans. In the absence of God humans set up a screen to cover the gap and onto which they project their anthropomorphic images of powerful authority figures, some beneficent, some tyrannical. This is God transference. As the French philosopher, Voltaire observed, “If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him.”<sup>8</sup>

[8. Ed. — Voltaire wrote this in 1770, in response to an 11th century anonymous treatise *The Treatise of the Three Imposters*, about Christianity, Judaism, and Islam were and Jesus, Moses, and Muhammad.]

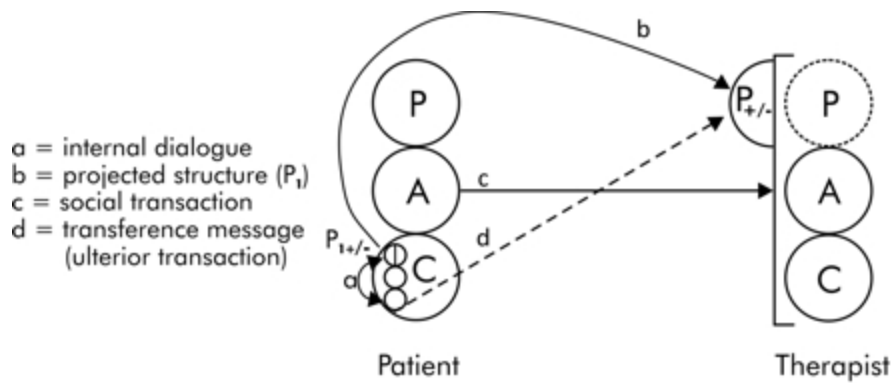
[In his article Moiso identifies two other types of transference that are helpful in understanding the more detailed dynamics of people's relationship with God (Figure 10.5).]



*Figure 10.5 Parental Transference I: Projection of the Parent ego state (Moiso, 1985)*

[As Moiso put it: “In this type of transference the patient projects the ego states of the real parents onto a screen in front of the therapist” (p. 197) — or, in this case, God. This expresses the client's internal dialogue, between Parent and Child ego states (“a” in the diagram), as a result of which the client “feels and acts out toward [God] those feelings, manifests those needs and puts into action those kinds of rackets and games which are an example of his original relationship with the parental figures.” (p. 197)

In the second type of Parental transference (Figure 10.6), the client projects the image of the Parent that derives from their own Child ego state. Such an image could be one of an ideal omnipotent Parent (represented by the P1+ in Figure 10.6) or the negative polarity of this.]



(The Parent of the therapist is shown as a dotted line to indicate that its actual existence or significance is discounted by the patient.)

*Figure 10.6 Parental transference II: Projection of the Parent in the Child ego state (based on Moiso, 1985)*

These structures hold a variety of experiences which provide an enormous range for projection. People have projected onto God the whole range of human qualities: loving and hateful; forgiving and vengeful; refined and brutal [P1+ and P1-, respectively].

In TA P2 is viewed as originating from later sociocultural sources, more easily available to review and modification, and more rational, and P1 as originating from primitive family of origin sources, less easily available to review and modification, and more magical.

[This analysis of projections describes the transactional process as well as the origins of the dynamics in terms of the ego state structure of personality. The next section describes the origins of these dynamics with reference to the transactional analysis concept of symbiosis.]<sup>9</sup>

[9. Ed. — Regarding which Evan drew on the work of Jacqui Schiff and her colleagues — see Chapter 9.]

### *TA and symbiosis*

In TA, symbiosis is an unhealthy process: two people get together, one gives up using their Child ego state, the other gives up using their Parent and Adult ego state. The result is that, together, they have one full set of ego states, and thus need each other in order to live a full life — but co-dependent on each other (Figure 10.7).

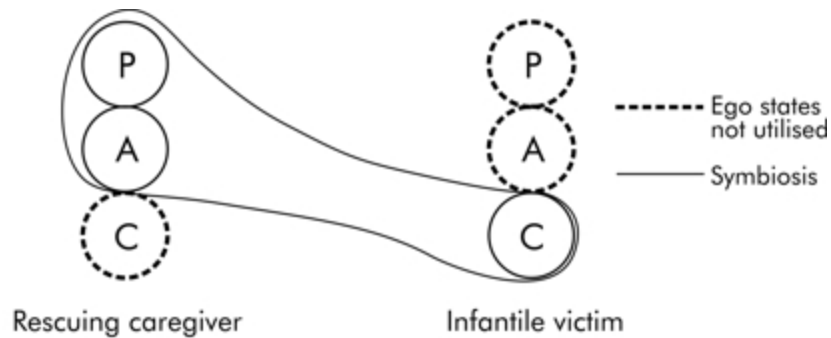


Figure 10.7 Symbiosis (a TA view)

The theistic tradition encourages humans:

- To exclude their own Parent and Adult functions
- To project these onto God (the Rescuer) and to make Him the all-knowing Father
- To relate to God from a constant Child, as portrayed in the symbiosis diagram.

Putting these two pieces of theory together, we can visualise the symbiosis with and onto a God projection.

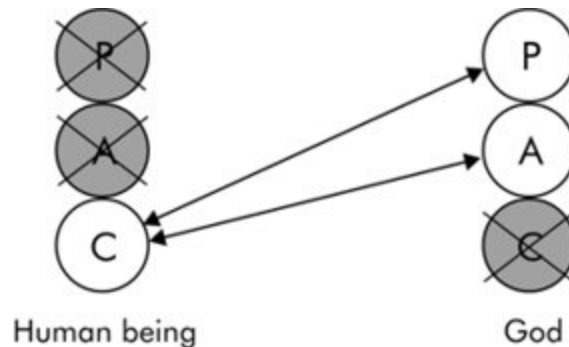


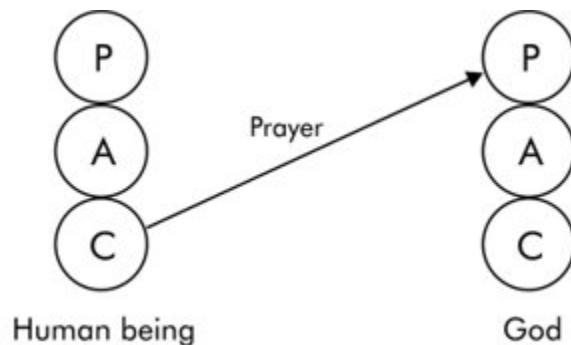
Figure 10.8 A God projection (in symbiotic terms)

In the theistic tradition, the symbiosis with God:

- Infantilises human beings
- Encourages conformity and dependency

- Discourages or disallows free-thinking
- Discourages humans “acting like God”
- Encourages submissiveness (e.g., “it’s God’s will”)
- Minimises human responsibility
- Encourages racket “happy” feelings>
- Encourages a symbiotic relationship with God’s “agents”, i.e., prophets and priests
- Encourages human beings to engage with God in ritual and prayer.

[On this last point, in this tradition prayer appears to be unilateral, whereas, in transactional analysis, transactions (and contracts) are viewed as bilateral. In other words] Transactions are two-way; to be considered for analysis there has to be a response to the initiative [or stimulus] of the first party (Figure 10.9).



*Figure 10.9 Prayer — A transactional view*

*Question:* Does God respond?

### *TA and OKness*

Finally, transactional analysis proposes certain basic existential life positions, which it refers to, colloquially, as “OKness” (Figure 10.10)

I'm not OK – You're OK	I'm OK – You're OK
I'm not OK – You're not OK	I'm OK – You're not OK

*Figure 10.10 The OK corral (Ernst, 1971)*

The traditional position with the theistic God is expressed as “I (God) am OK — You (humans) are not OK.” God is always OK. From this perspective, humans were created OK but classic stories tell how the first man was tempted to do wrong by the first woman with the result that all their human descendants are “not OK”. Thus, in the theistic tradition, humans are, from the earliest days, flawed — in all ways: morally, socially, politically, and bodily. This tradition encourages humans to turn to God to make good on the deficits and flaws. God will make good.

With regard to interhuman relationships, the theistic tradition has, intentionally or unintentionally, encouraged a position of: “I’m OK — You’re OK (if you are one of us)”, and “I’m OK — You’re not OK (if you are not one of us)”; and, in relation to the rest of the created universe, animate or inanimate:

“We (humans) are OK, you (others are less and ours to dominate and exploit, because God says so) are not OK”.

### *Summary*

1. The theistic construct of God is based on anthropomorphic projections.
2. These projections have been culturally interpreted and mediated (mostly) by men with special status.
3. These projections provide a very unhealthy model for human existence and relationships in the universe.

### *Conclusion*

1. An atheistic position is healthier.

2. New constructs for understanding God are urgently required.

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Part V

**PSYCHODRAMA**

# Introduction

PHILIP CARTER

---

*1977* Evan begins training as a psychodramatist with Dr G Max Clayton

*1984* He is certified as a Psychodrama Director with the Psychodrama Institute of Western Australia

*1985* He becomes a certified psychodramatist (a psychodrama director) with the Australia New Zealand Psychodrama Association (ANZPA)  
He begins training as a Trainer Educator Practitioner of Psychodrama with Max Clayton

*1996* He becomes a Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and Practitioner with the ANZPA



*Certificate. Psychodrama Director from Psychodrama Institute of Western Australia, 1984*

Evan Sherrard was a highly respected and loved elder in the Australian and New Zealand psychodrama communities. He was involved in the establishment of psychodrama in New Zealand, as an innovator, practitioner and trainer. His willingness and commitment to getting alongside another person has been valued and lauded, as too, the consistency of friendliness which infused his being and professional practice. He was a close friend, colleague and collaborator with many of the innovators and champions of psychodrama in New Zealand.

One can experience the quality and spirit of his contributions in a conversation between Isabelle Sherrard, Dale Herron and myself in Chapter 10. In Chapter 11, Evan's psychodrama thesis offers an entrance into how effective practice was worked from central premises; and two papers outline the principles that guided Evan's supervision and training.



**Australian and New Zealand  
Association of  
Psychodramatists, Sociodramatists,  
Sociometrists and Role Trainers**

This is to certify that

Evan Sherrard

has satisfied the requirements  
of the Board of Examiners  
and has achieved the level of

Psychodrama Director

Jeano Lee-Hucker  
President

B. D. King  
For the Board of  
Examiners

25th January 1985  
Date

*Certificate. Psychodrama Director from Australia and  
New Zealand Association of Psychodramatists,  
Sociodramatists, Sociometrists and Role Trainers, 1985*



AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND PSYCHODRAMA  
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

This is to certify that

**Evan Sherrard**

has satisfied the requirements  
of the Board of Examiners  
and has achieved the level of

**Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and Practitioner.**

  
President

  
For the Board of Examiners

**18<sup>th</sup> August 1996**  
Date

*Certificate. Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and  
Practitioner from Australia and New Zealand  
Psychodrama Association, 1996*

## *Chapter 11*

### Reflections on Evan and psychodrama

DALE HERRON AND ISABELLE SHERRARD WITH PHILIP  
CARTER

---



*Evan and others being spontaneous at a psychodrama workshop, c. 1990*

*Isabelle:* Evan was really committed to psychodrama and psychodrama training.

*Dale:* Absolutely.

*Isabelle:* It started with Rex and Valerie [Hunton] and Wayne [Scott] and Evan in a little hall at the back of St Luke's Church. Now I don't know

what year that was but it would've been the late '70s.

*Dale:* It was when we were working at Presbyterian Support. When I say "we", I mean Evan and myself. It was an extension of our day work.

*Isabelle:* It used to be Wednesday from about 4 until 7.00pm.

*Dale:* Sometimes there were sessions on weekends too because I came and did a few.

*Isabelle:* I think some of the people who came; I was going to say trainees but they might've been clients from Rex's medical school clinic I seem to remember.

*Dale:* All sorts came.

*Isabelle:* It was a great day for Evan when he met Max [Clayton]. Now that would be roughly the same time. Evan went to a workshop run by Max up in Orewa I believe.

*Dale:* Yep. I organised that.

*Isabelle:* You organised that?

*Dale:* I did because I'd already done some work with Max and I was determined that we'd get more. I did the cooking.

*Isabelle:* Well Evan latched onto Max. They had quite a lot of shared history. Max stayed in our home several times when he came to Auckland from Perth. Evan thought Max was a magic therapist and a great man really. He started to talk a bit like Max from time to time. Like until he died he was still talking about pre-sentation, which was a Max-ism!

*Dale:* It sure was. That's very sweet.

*Philip:* I'd imagine that he would be a peer from Max's point of view.

*Isabelle:* Evan always treated Max as the senior. I think in psychodrama that was appropriate. But they were peers in lots of ways because of their theological training and their interest in people. Max didn't come out of agriculture the way Evan did but they did have a lot in common.



And I think Max did regard Evan as a peer but not the other way round, not until Evan was qualified.

*Dale:* When was that do you know? I looked around in my brain last night and couldn't find it.

*Philip:* From recollection his psychodrama thesis was 1983. His supervision and training papers for TEP [Trainer Educator Practitioner] I think were '95 and '96.<sup>1</sup>

[1. Ed. — See Chapter 12.]

*Dale:* Evan and Don and myself worked together for a whole year to get that done, meeting once a month. We really flogged it. We had hot baths as well, but we were determined to have it done in a year after the other papers, feeling like they had taken forever. We weren't going to go through that again.

*Philip:* The last time I chatted with Evan, he was remembering a challenge that he gave Max, I think over quite a period of time, around a way that Max was working that Evan saw as intuitive, and Max rejected that. I'm imagining that Max didn't want there to be any connotation of magic, rather that he was very systematic. Evan impressed upon me that he kept presenting evidence to Max about his intuition and eventually Max agreed.

*Isabelle:* It's more than I know!

*Dale:* Me too. I've never heard that bit before. That's delightful. I could see it happening though. I could just imagine it. So you're right, there's a sense of kinship rather than someone being the person carrying the lamp and someone else trotting on after. It's not like that.

*Isabelle:* No it wasn't like that.

*Philip:* I imagine Evan taking initiative to create learning centres and various things Max would think as peer.

*Isabelle:* Evan was an educator, in more ways than one. Psychodrama was one aspect of his adult education. He did academic study in the adult education in Michigan. His Master's was in education from the University of Michigan. Psychodrama training was a perfect discovery for Evan from working with adults. It added a dimension for Evan that

I don't think that TA [transactional analysis] provided. Evan appreciated the wholeness of psychodrama over TA although he did remain committed to TA of course. But he was, I think, in his bones a person of education.

*Dale:* What do you mean by "a person of education"? I know what I picture but I don't exactly know what you took from it.

*Isabelle:* I think educating adults was pretty easy for Evan.

*Dale:* Yes it was.

*Isabelle:* I don't think he had to have a lesson plan or anything like that. He also had the ability to make good connections with people in a group and individually. He was a very good listener and very gifted at being with.

*Dale:* He could work respectfully with people no matter how regressed they were. That's what I noticed working alongside him for years and years. He didn't have to fall into that regression. He didn't have to push the person anywhere. He could work alongside adults who were regressing. That was very common when we were working in psychodrama. He always took that over. I had a sense of him being very involved when that was happening. More so than other times when he was more watchful and interested but not involved as much. Wednesday nights for example, he had a way of being there without fully being there and something would happen. Often times I did the work to warm-up the group to get things going but when something like that happened then he was alive and I would sit back and learn from what he was doing which was great for me. And it was great for the trainees to be met because they could regress safely on a Wednesday night for three hours. And they felt safe with him. It's more than safe; I think that they felt attended to. So I think that is unique in this psychodrama training, at least in New Zealand, I don't know much about Australia.

*Philip:* In his psychodrama thesis, he's got four or five areas that he covers and the first one is the ideal parent role. He says as soon as possible he seeks to nurture the ideal parent role functioning in a client.

*Dale:* That's when he was in role reversal a lot so there could be modeling and mirroring. He felt very free when he was doing that. That was like a spark of life for him.

*Philip:* Would that come from his experience in TA? TA would inform him quite a bit about that wouldn't it — the Parent, Adult, Child?

*Dale:* Psychodrama invited him to engage it and that's when he really started to shine. He loved doing it.

*Isabelle:* He did have a healthy regard for the Parent and the protagonist. I don't know whether that came from TA but, from what I understand Evan was doing, he believed that change worked better if it came from within the individual.

*Dale:* Absolutely that's true.

*Philip:* And that would fit with his description of the I-God. In his thesis, he says in the psychodramatic world, embodiment is central, axiomatic and universal. Everyone can portray their version of God through their own actions and so communicate their own version to others.

*Isabelle:* Well I couldn't possibly respond to that [laughing]. It's more than I can get.

*Dale:* I get it in the sense that I could see him and the work he was doing and it makes sense. But I couldn't teach or coordinate it in my own work.

*Isabelle:* That was pretty learned stuff he wrote.

*Philip:* [Reading from Evan's psychodrama thesis] "Leaders, prophets and therapists of all times have always tried to play God and have attempted to impose upon the poor people, the little man, their magnificent power and superiority. In the psychodramatic world, the tables have been turned. It is no longer the master, the great priest or the great therapist who embodies God. The image of God can take form and embodiment through every man — the epileptic, the schizophrenic, the prostitute, the poor and rejected."<sup>2</sup>

[2. Ed. — See Chapter 12.]

*Dale:* I think that encapsulates a lot of what we were saying that he carried as a basic premise.

*Philip:* “The cosmic function of the psychodramatic world is particularly impressive to me. Moreno elaborates the psychodramatic world in terms of the four functions: time, space, reality and cosmos.”<sup>3</sup> That complete thing really attracted Evan.

[3. Ed. — Ibid.]

*Dale:* It also explains to me why when we were working in different ways he used to get sleepy and not be that interested. In other words, warm-up was his nap time!

*Philip:* He might’ve been listening strongly with his eyes closed.

*Dale:* No, because he was deaf [laughing].

*Philip:* It also indicates that he didn’t need to control everything.

*Dale:* Absolutely not!

*Isabelle:* I don’t think he had a need to control in this at all.

*Philip:* This relates to another area in his thesis where he discusses the power differential. Psychodrama work with the original social and cultural atom<sup>4</sup> is creating the conditions in which people can stand up and not be dependent on external authority. Evan emphasizes that to affect social and organisational change, there’s work to be done with the individual’s original social family atom.

[4. Phil — The social atom can be considered the significant people in the social field of a person in a particular period of time, and that this “field” is internalised into a social self map, schema or “atom”. The cultural atom is the “roles” which coagulate into a kind of template of social understanding and functioning.]

*Dale:* Absolutely. Which is a long and winding road!

*Isabelle:* It sure is for most of us!

*Dale:* I wouldn’t say I’ve met anyone for whom it isn’t a long and windy road. I’ve met people who wouldn’t think that way but I mean it was long and windy for them too and it also explains why he used to fall asleep. I don’t think he was bored but I do think at the times we were doing other things that didn’t either seem to him to be pertinent, or he didn’t care about them at that moment. And he was quite relaxed. I never felt, no one ever felt, judged. It wasn’t a negative thing at all.

*Isabelle:* It’s pretty good really.

*Philip:* We could relate it to his idea of role which is that it is an interpersonal experience. The role occurs in relationships so for every role there's a counter role. If there's a teacher, then there must be a pupil. If he's the sleeper ...

*Isabelle:* ... someone else is awake.

*Dale:* Probably doing something they shouldn't be doing, and he wasn't going to do anything about it, which I think is very wise.

*Isabelle:* Certainly not going to be over-responsible about discipline.

*Dale:* No, not when working with people, especially when we were at Presbyterian Support and the people that came into those groups were highly trained many of them, thinking of themselves as very sophisticated. People were needing to come to ground, and he was very good with that. We didn't try to teach the curriculum all the time. We didn't try and impose the training on them all the time and he didn't try and impose on himself to stay awake all the time. It was a whole year's course. It was very intensive. We met for at least a half a day sometimes a whole day with the same group for a whole year and we did it several times and there were people who'd done other trainings and I think this is what we were attempting to get across to them. Just what we're on about now. We didn't use psychodrama as much as we used the group. They did stay alert. When they'd got over being frightened and self-conscious and all those things. There were times we ran it when I thought it was stunning. I have never experienced anything like that in my life.

*Isabelle:* A friend of mine made a very interesting comment about Evan and she's done some psychodrama. She thinks Evan's skill was helping people to come forward and lower their anxiety because he was kind caring and used an appropriate use of humour. That is quite a capability if it's true.

*Dale:* Oh it is true — but he didn't do it with everybody. I will say that he did it more with people who he thought could receive it and the others would observe it and warm-up to that. I don't think he attempted to reach people who were still on another pattern. Very confronting to some of them.

*Philip:* What would be confronting?

*Dale:* The fact that he would meet with people that way and this was in a teaching arrangement so it wasn't like he was meeting them socially and there wasn't any pressure on: we didn't do exams, we didn't do assessments, and we didn't actually probe into their social atom very much so they didn't have a lot of pressure on them and that produced a particular involvement and he would in his way, and me my way, we would meet with them. I mean I always felt different because we met people differently and I think that was probably alright. It went on all year. I was very new. And I enjoyed it. It was a living commitment. He didn't fall asleep in that group.

*Isabelle:* Ha ha! Good. Good.

*Dale:* No he didn't because he was busy and we were all involved.

*Isabelle:* He would've begged for more sleep in the last year.

*Dale:* Shame you can't bottle it and send it on.

*Isabelle:* That's right.

*Dale:* I think those particular groups that we ran at Presbyterian Support were unique in my experience. They were very different to what we did in psychodrama training and very different to anything I had experienced and I think that was because he set the tone to do it, maybe from what he learned to do in the United States, I don't know, but we all learned a lot. In psychodrama training, we started out with beginners, not working with people with any sophistication. And their ability to bring their life's story present built up over time but there was a lot of play stuff that went on with people and they wouldn't be real. And I don't think he forced them to be real but he also didn't interact with them when they were being like that. So I think he was bored. I think he was tired because it was at night. He and Don and I used to meet for an hour beforehand and we'd meet after and plan what we were going to do next session and of course all three of us were working differently. That is very tricky I think. I think if Evan had run it on his own, it would've been very different. I know it was different when I ran it on my own. I didn't like that. I preferred us together. I don't know what Don would say. I don't think Evan was

dissatisfied but I think he was limited by the format and by what we were teaching. I don't know that he was set up in himself to teach psychodrama. Teaching the psychodrama "now you do this and now you do that", I don't think he was warmed up to do that. I don't know if it ever suited his way of wanting to be with people. He was kind and cooperative but I don't think that his heart was in psychodrama training a lot of the time.

*Isabelle:* One of Evan's strengths was using psychodrama in his work. Psychodrama gave him a very good tool to understand the world, people, dynamics. He thought in terms of role because of his psychodrama learning. It was "training" he wasn't so good at. I think of "psychodrama of life". With training, you've got to learn this and then that, and then that.

*Philip:* In his TEP paper [a paper he wrote for his endorsement as a Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and Practitioner], he says he used to think training was for animals and education was for people.<sup>5</sup>

[5. See Chapter 12.]

*Isabelle:* He would still think that.

*Dale:* Wow that's a very powerful statement! Woof woof!

*Isabelle:* Make monkeys jump through hoops. That's training. He didn't like the word training.

*Philip:* Seems he was very alert to power. He didn't want power over in any form.

*Isabelle:* Yeah. That's true.

*Dale:* And being a psychodrama director does sometimes involve the use of power. We give direction, we say "go and do this".

*Isabelle:* He would downplay the power.

*Dale:* Maybe that's what allowed him to fit so well into AUT [Auckland University of Technology]. The type of training they do there is very different.

*Isabelle:* He struggled with aspects of AUT. Oh God when he applied for Head of Department, I was nearly a nervous wreck

*Dale:* Did he apply to be Head of Department?

*Isabelle:* He did and then he withdrew once there was a decent applicant. Lots of aspects of being Head of Department would've been really difficult for Evan I can assure you.

*Dale:* He'd have needed to pass the paperwork on, the bits he didn't want to do. That's the only way he could be Director of Training of ATCP [Auckland Training Centre of Psychodrama]. He would give me the bits or if he didn't give me the bits, he just didn't do them, and he knew that I would do them, not a problem.

*Isabelle:* Evan was very respectful of the philosophy of psychodrama and the completeness and the depth of the psychodrama method. I mean with Evan it was a huge discovery. The best thing since sliced bread really in his life. He went to every workshop for years.

*Dale:* He went to Perth for a long time.

*Isabelle:* Yes, he and I went to Perth when I got technical refresher leave. We studied with Tom Wilson.

*Dale:* You were there for some months.

*Isabel:* Three months.

*Dale:* There was immersion in trying something out and finding out what actually happens. It wasn't like learning something from a book.

*Isabel:* And there was a fun element that I think really appealed to Evan.

*Philip:* I connected very strongly with the playfulness. He and I played. We didn't have a lot of contact but it was very playful. I felt very relaxed and I think he did. Maybe I would call it mischievousness.

*Isabelle:* Well I would you know. I've had a stack of cards like that and I was looking at one last night that described him as fun loving with a streak of mischief. It's an interesting word.

*Dale:* Did that come out one to one with you because I didn't spot it in training groups?

*Isabelle:* Dale, it might be a man to man thing.

*Dale:* Oh that's an idea.



*Isabelle:* Although Valerie I think would say ...

*Dale:* Oh, she'd bring it out of him.

*Isabelle:* Valerie and Evan had a great connection in lots of different ways. Valerie was a great mate of Evan's in a deep sense. It didn't include me. They had deep connections in three or four different ways, and fun was one of them.

*Philip:* Valerie describes him as her personal theologian.

*Isabelle:* Valerie would say, "Well, I don't have any direct connection with God so Evan's the best I've got!"

*Dale:* I can just hear it echoing! That makes perfect sense.

*Isabelle:* Yes.

*Dale:* That quality in Evan didn't often show up during psychodrama training when I was there.

*Isabelle:* I think you're quite right; anything to do with training is not to do with human beings. It's for animals. He could never help the grandkids with anything boring like learning tables or spelling. He's not good at stuff that's got a sort of tedious component to it.

*Dale:* I didn't know that. I knew that he'd hand me the paperwork and being me I'd just sort of do it but I didn't know why! I just took it and did it.

*Isabelle:* I said at his funeral he was a man of clutter, and man have I been tidying it up! He never threw anything out, never put stuff away.

*Dale:* He's lucky to have had us in his life.

*Philip:* I'm going to write him down as a team player.

*Dale:* Team player? He would choose his part of the play is what he would do. [laughing]

*Isabelle:* A selective team player.

*Dale:* Yes that's right: auxiliary functioning.<sup>6</sup>

[6. An auxiliary is a companion or assistant in some joint endeavour. In psychodramatic enactment, the group members are auxiliaries for the protagonist and director, on hand to be used to enact the roles of the protagonist, to be mirrors and doubles.]

*Isabelle:* It's all compatible to me.

*Dale:* Whatever's happening, it seems enough. He was lucky to have people like us in his life who picked up the pieces.

*Isabelle:* Of course he was. Like with gardening; he'd do the planting and I'd do the weeding.

*Dale:* Well, that might be enough for now.

*Isabelle:* I reckon it'd be worth you having a phone call with Don Reekie.

*Dale:* What it is that you would like him to add?

*Isabelle:* Oh, I just think Don had a long history with Evan, and they are different.

*Dale:* I can't imagine two more different people having a long history together.

*Philip:* Don says that Evan was his best friend.

*Isabelle:* There are quite a lot of guys who would say, "Evan was my best friend". I wonder who Evan's best friend was?

*Dale:* I don't know that he had one because I don't know the people he knew well but occasionally he used to talk to me about people from his past with a sense of that.

*Isabelle:* Do you remember who he mentioned?

*Dale:* The only one I can remember is the chap — we had a meeting before he and his wife went back to America. I met them together when I first met Don. The Browns, yeah. I thought that maybe he ...

*Isabelle:* See, Noel Brown would say Evan was my best friend. Evan had quite a lot of "my best friend" sort of stuff, really. It would depend on what he was doing. In psychodrama, Evan would say, "Max was my best friend".<sup>7</sup>

[7. Ed. — For more on friendship, see Part VIII.]

*Dale:* What are you thinking?

*Philip:* I'm recalling a dream he had; where he's on a hill and there's the cross and I'm just trying to recall what it was. I know the spirit of it.

The spirit of it is that he's there and incredibly alive, and inspired. And it's him on the cross or it's him knowing what that means and that it inspired him and was his core motivation for the work.

*Isabelle:* Yep, that makes sense to me. He was a deeply theological man. So that would be absolutely in keeping.



*Don Reekie, Valerie Hunton, and Dale Herron, 1988*

## *Chapter 12*

### **Papers on psychodrama**

EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **The use of the psychodramatic role of the ideal parent in therapy (1983)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — This chapter is an abridged version of the thesis Evan presented in support of his membership application to the Australia, New Zealand Association of Psychodramatists, Sociodramatists, Sociometrists and Role Trainers. The thesis was completed in partial fulfilment of the requirements toward certification as a practitioner by the Board of Examiners of the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association, Incorporated. As noted on the title page of the original thesis "It represents a considerable body of work undertaken with extensive supervision. This knowledge and insight has been gained through hundreds of hours of experience, study and reflection." The copyright is held jointly by the author and the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association Incorporated which has kindly given permission to publish it, on the basis that Evan's family has also given permission to publish — which it has. In editing this version for publication, and in consultation with ANZPA, Isabelle Sherrard, and members of my own University's Ethics Committee, I have deleted identifying case study material from the original thesis, whilst retaining some illustrative client material.]

#### **INTRODUCTION AND THESIS**

The thesis or proposition I wish to put forward to those familiar with the theories and action-methods pioneered by Dr J. L. Moreno is a simple one: in order to carry out effective social atom repair work (or therapy) using therapeutic psychodrama (or other forms of psychotherapy), a protagonist (or client) must develop an effective psychodramatic role of self-caring

“parent” in order to support or nurture the internal “child” roles which are inadequate to contemporary situation but which are over-developed and over-used to the person’s detriment. The psychodramatist or social atom repair person is advised to assist the protagonist to develop or reinforce this psycho-dramatic role as early as possible in the therapeutic process. With an effective internal role for self-parenting, the protagonist is able to go back, face and work through those early scenes in his/her primary social atom in which inadequate or missing roles developed and which require an adequate resolution.

I have developed this thesis from my observations of psychodrama directed by others and my own clinical practice. In this paper, I propose to elaborate and support my thesis, discuss the development of roles reviewing ways a psychodramatist might develop a psycho-dramatic self-caring parent role.

### **POWER DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN ROLES AND REGRESSION**

The clients discussed [in the original submission] are typical of those people who were brought up by their parents to be forever honouring, respectful, obedient and subservient to their mothers and fathers. They were intentionally brought up to be passive, compliant, adaptive and never to be assertive, self-determining or demanding with their parents. For these people there is a lack in the role interaction they had in childhood with their parents. Repair of this lack is not just to enable them to have adequate relations with their mothers or fathers in their adult lives. The parent-child relationship is one of a differential in power. Parents exercise power over their children. Some do this healthily and openly, others unhealthily and deviously. In many social systems like medicine, marriage, employment, education, there are power differentials in the relationships. Doctors exercise power over patients, husbands over wives, bosses over workers, teachers over students. Some do it healthily, others destructively. It is my observation that when people find themselves in relations of power differential which parallels those of their original parent-child relationship they regress to the infantile roles they used in their childhood social atom.

When [clients] in their adult worlds meet up with people who exercise power over them in ways parallel to their mothers or fathers, they have difficulty. G [a male client] had difficulty with male authority figures who controlled and evaluated his work; B [a female client] with her demanding

inconsiderate husband; L [another female client] with doctors and social workers assisting her youngest child. All three regressed to passive compliant infantile roles. The repair work then is not only to improve the relations with their mothers and fathers in their childhood social atoms but to expand the way they were brought up as children. As children they need to be brought up to have assertive, self-determining roles. In so far as their original parents did not bring them up this way, they require an ideal-parent to enter their childhood and do it for them.

Psychodrama, the treatment method developed by Dr J. L. Moreno is a vehicle for doing this. When these and other clients return in psychodrama to their childhood situations, enter their original social atoms (family of origin) and are “brought up” to have a full range of effective roles as children, they will then have the role repertoire they need to draw on in their adult worlds at those times of relating to others in a power differential. As grown-ups when G meets authorities, B relates to her husband, and L engages with a doctor and they “regress” to their childhood range of roles, they will find some new effective ones there to draw upon. In their regression, they will no longer be limited to passive, helpless-child roles, there will be a powerful, assertive-child cluster of roles for them to act out of.

Moreno describes the regressive situation when B and L act like helpless little girls and G acts like a passive little boy as role pathology. He writes: “[r]egressive behavior is not a true psychological regression but a form of unconscious rôle playing, a ‘psycho-dramatic’ regression.”<sup>2</sup> In using the term psychodramatic here, Moreno is referring to more than behaviour which happens in a psychodrama.

## **THE PSYCHODRAMATIC COSMOS**

Psychodramatic is an adjective describing what pertains to psychodrama, a particular process of activity with a well-defined operation and setting, but Moreno uses the term for a wider sphere of human nature than a psychodrama event. Often, to those unfamiliar with Moreno’s ideas the notion of the psychodramatic has to do, mistakenly, with play acting. In this way they see it as seemingly trivial, an unreal carry-on of make-believe with no connection to the substance of real daily living. Such thinking is mistaken, if understandable because the medium for exposing and exploring

the psychodramatic dimension of human existence is the psychodrama stage and its action methods. These are dramatic activities having the appearance of theatre. Also, historically in the development of his ideas and methods of psychodrama Moreno had a direct connection with acting and the stage in both Vienna and the USA in the 1920s and after.

Psychodrama enables us to bring to light the secret, hidden intangible world of everyone's psyche, that inner world which shapes our human existence, the psychodramatic world. It is the world that is inhabited by creatures of our memories and imaginings. In it we may "hear" the voices of our parents, brothers, sisters, "see" their forms, and "feel" their touch and presence. There we may re-experience the encouragement of a kindly loving grandparents, or endure the ongoing harsh criticism of a complaining school teacher figure never satisfied with our efforts. In this word a mother may "talk" to and keep in touch with her child although she gave the baby up for adoption. A husband may "hold a conversation" with his wife each evening at bed-time, although she died a decade previous. We may imbue our heart with independence and speak to it, or find we have lost it, or that it is broken. We may personify death and argue with it. Someone's psychodramatic world may be filled with demonic spirits eager for control, while another's is graced by angelic forces. Others may retreat to their inner world to consult their heroes, spiritual guides or God for inspiration, direction and courage.

In order to deal with this "level of structuring which represents the intangible, invisible dimensions of intra-and extra-psyche life", Moreno coined a term "surplus reality".<sup>3</sup>

[3. Moreno, J. L. (1975). *Psychodrama. Vol III*. New York, NY: Beacon House Inc., (Original work published 1969) p. 15.]

Moreno devised the action methods of psychodrama to bring out this dimension. Psycho-drama is all surplus reality. It is the "surplus" reality of the psychodramatic world which transcends the temporal-spatial limits of our bounded physical universe and where experience is over and beyond the normal possibilities of our bodily functions. Time is telescoped, the past and future become present. Space is collapsed, distance compressed to the immediate here. Using techniques such as role reversal, a person can imaginatively enter the thinking, feeling and behaviour patterns of the other and reciprocally learning what each other's world is like. We do not do this

in life itself, but in psychodrama, we can go beyond our normal boundaries, and discover the world of the other. With the technique of the auxiliary ego, we can represent the absentees, individuals, delusions, hallucinations, symbols, ideals, animals and objects of a person's psychodramatic world. In psychodrama these auxiliaries make the person's psychodramatic world real, concrete and tangible, exposed to sight, touch and sound. The otherwise inner, private world can then be appraised and if necessary treated.

In his first chapter of his work on *Psychodrama (Volume III)*, entitled "Universalialia", Moreno elaborates the psychodramatic world in terms of four functions: time, space, reality and the cosmos. The cosmic function of the psychodramatic world is particularly impressive to me.

Man is a "cosmic man", not only a social man or an individual man....

Since time immemorial, man has tried to understand his position in the universe at large, and, if possible, to control the phenomena that determine this position—evolution, birth, death, sex, and the function of the Creator of the world, himself.... Within the framework of psychodrama, by means of its numerous methods, cosmic phenomena can be integrated into the therapeutic process. A therapeutic method which does not concern itself with these enormous cosmic implications, with man's very destiny, is incomplete and inadequate.... It is at this point that surplus reality techniques in cosmodynamics come to the fore. In the psychodramatic world the differentiation between the sexes is overlooked and surpassed. There is no sex in psychodrama.... The factualities of birth and death are overlooked. There is no death in psychodrama. The unborn and the dead are brought to life or live again on the psychodrama stage....

These externalizations are, however, closely related to the subjectivity and imaginings of the protagonist.... An old man may play a child and so correct the loss of childhood or experience the childhood which he feels he has never had. Anatomies and physiologies and biologies do not matter. What matters is the expansion of man in relation to the needs and



fantasies he has about himself. He becomes the master of anatomy and physiology instead of the servant. A man can, in the psychodramatic cosmos, also embody animals — dogs, tigers, bears, fish, birds, insects, any form of actual or imaginary beings, not as a form of regression, but as creative involvement. He is free from the fetters of facts and actualities, although not without the highest respect from them.... This is not a plea for “illusionism” or an escape from reality, but, just the opposite, a plea for the creativity of man and the creativity of the universe. It is, therefore, through man’s faith in the infinite creativity of the cosmos, that what he embodies in a psychodramatic world may one day actually become true....

**One of the greatest dilemmas of man in our time is that he has lost faith in a supreme being, and often in any superior value system as a guide for conduct....**

The outstanding event in modern religion was the replacement, if not abandonment, of the cosmic, elusive, Super-God, by a simple man who called himself the Son of God — Jesus Christ. The outstanding thing about him was ... the fact of embodiment.

In the psychodramatic world the fact of embodiment is central, axiomatic, and universal. Everyone can portray his version of God through his own actions and so communicate his own version to others. That is the simple meaning of my first book, in which I proclaimed the “I-God”.... when the I-God is universalized. ... the whole God concept becomes one of humbleness, weakness, and inferiority, ... the I-God ... puts all responsibility upon me and us, the I and the group.... it is not the I of a lonely, singular person, but the I of everyone....

Leaders, prophets and therapists of all times have always tried to play God and have attempted to impose upon the poor people, the little man, their magnificent power and superiority. In the psychodramatic world, the tables have been turned. It is no longer the master, the great priest or the great therapist who embodies God. The image of God can take form and embodiment through every man — the epileptic, the schizophrenic, the prostitute, the

poor and rejected... God is always within and among us, as he is for children.<sup>4</sup>

[4. Ibid., pp. 19-22.]

### **THE PSYCHODRAMATIC IDEAL PARENT**

The psychodramatic role of self-caring, ideal parent I propose in my thesis fits into this notion of the cosmic function of the psychodramatic world. With a few protagonists I have invited them to embody their version of God as a supportive role. Mostly the suggestion seems to disturb and break the warm-up of the process. The ideal-parent incorporates many of the God functions the protagonist requires and thus has cosmic dimensions. For example, the function of having faith in the infinite creativity of the cosmos and ideal parent has faith in his/her own child, believing in their creative genius. So within their own psychodramatic world a protagonist's ideal-parent incorporates a believer in him/herself in the sub-set of roles assumed under that title. Many people do not believe in themselves. They do not trust that deep within is a creativity — a function of creator-God lying asleep. While my immediate purpose in producing this ideal-parent role is to further the process of therapy in a psychodrama event, I want to introduce the role into the protagonist's psychodramatic world as a role permanently there to provide self-caring and self-support. It is a role everyone needs, I propose, in their psychodramatic world. Just as the I-God notion of Moreno's turns the tables of power in the psychodramatic world, so the ideal parent enables a person to recapture their sense of power in the social world where there is a differential in relationships. The ideal parent enables the protagonist to embody power, for an ideal parent knows how to protect and assist their defenseless, vulnerable children. Sustained by this powerful protector in their psychodramatic world if and when a protagonist does "regress" they do not feel helpless nor bereft of assistance in the presence of a powerful social other.

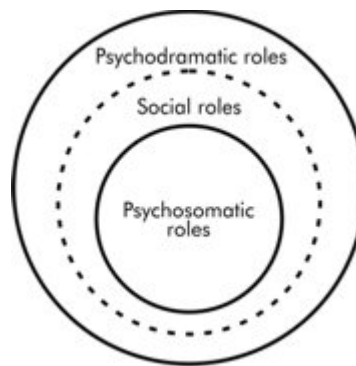
The ideal parent is the psychodramatic role which enables "the expansion of (a) man in relation to the needs and fantasies he has about himself."<sup>5</sup> G, B, and L's role clusters were too small in their childhood. It resulted in later psychodramatic regression to helpless little boy/girl — a role pathology. They needed an expansion in their image or fantasy they held about themselves. They only imagined or fantasied themselves as powerless

children. So, when they unconsciously regressed all they knew to do was to act our helpless boy/girl roles. The role pathology in their psychodramatic world is repaired by a psychodramatic device of surplus reality, the embodiment in psychodrama of a psychodramatic ideal-parent.

[5. Moreno (1969/1975) op. cit., p. 20.]

### *Role types*

Moreno identified three types of role: psychosomatic, social and psychodramatic. He diagnosed them thus (Figure 12.1).



*Figure 12.1 Three types of role (Moreno, 1977)<sup>6</sup>*

[6. Moreno (1946/1977) op. cit., p. 77.]

Psychosomatic roles are at the centre of each person. These roles are primary as the substrate or foundation on which all else is built and as the first to emerge in the life of a human. A psychosomatic role is one such as sleeper, eater, eliminator. I add to these examples from Moreno the one of the reflective safety-seeker driven by adrenaline as in G's case. The psychodramatic and social roles emerge slowly and the dotted line indicates the threshold between them is thin and definition on from the other sometimes difficult. As the psychosomatic roles express the physiological dimension of the self, the social roles express the social dimension and psychodramatic roles express the psychological dimension.

With psychosomatic roles a person takes their own role.<sup>7</sup> Their body is theirs. How they live in it and use it is distinctively their own style. These taken roles grow and develop from birth, with operational links developing between roles such as breather, walker, eater so that a unity of function is formed from the role cluster, and the food-seeking infant emerges as a sort

of physiological self. These roles are the embryos, forerunners of the self. Along with the developing psychodramatic and social roles which also strive toward clustering and unification, these roles are only “part” selves; “the really integrated, entire self, of later years is still far from being born.”<sup>8</sup>

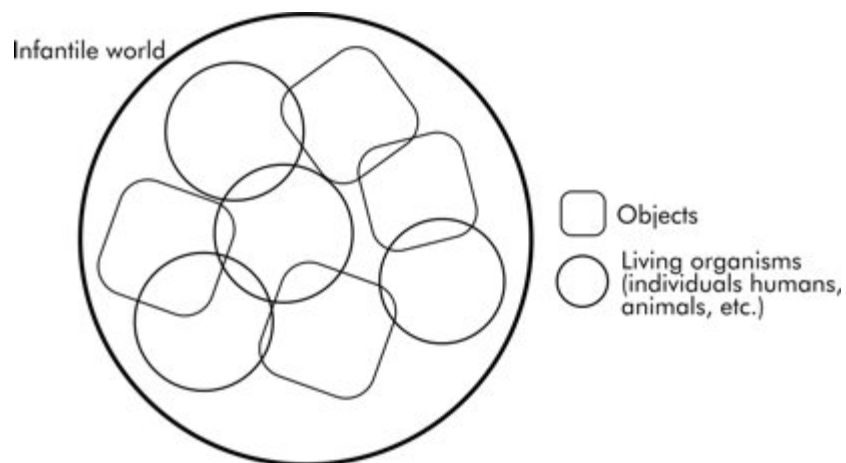
[7. Moreno, J. L. (1978). *Who shall survive* (3rd Ed.). New York, NY: Beacon House Inc. (Original work published 1953).]

[8. Moreno (1946/1977), op. cit., p. iii.]

Psychodramatic roles are formed, as a person places the idea of a role in the other, in another self, God, angel, ghost, etc.<sup>9</sup>

[9. Moreno (1953/1978), op. cit.]

The domain of the psychodramatic roles is far more extensive and dominating than either social or psychosomatic roles. At birth, Moreno postulates, an infant lives in a world which is a matrix of all-identity. The individuals or objects of the infant’s world overlap and are not experienced yet as separate unity. They are fused in various configurations as they enter the action-range of the infant. “the bottle belongs to the hand which holds it, and both belong to the lips in the act of sucking.” (see Figure 12.2)



*Figure 12.2 A matrix of (undifferentiated) all-identity  
(Moreno, 1977)<sup>10</sup>*

[10. Moreno (1946/1977), op. cit., p. 74.]

As the infant grows he/she is increasingly able to differentiate objects and individuals as separately functioning units, but all have the same degree of reality. The young child cannot distinguish real from imagined. The child places an idea of role on real objects and real living organisms, individuals

and animals, and on imaginary objects and individuals. Dolls and pets in the child’s life are given friendly or unkind roles by the imaginative child. Moreno represented this by another diagram (Figure 12.3).

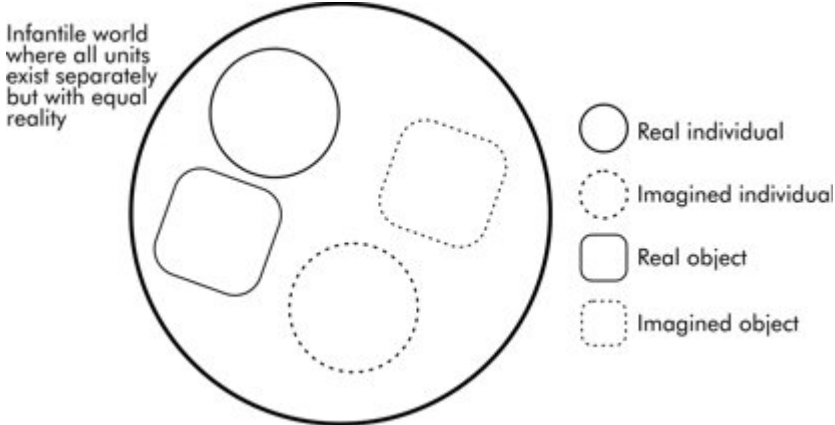


Figure 12.3 Matrix of differentiated all-identity (Moreno, 1946/1977)<sup>11</sup>

[11. Ibid., p. 75.]

Next in development the child is able to make a breach between the world of fantasy and the world of reality. The one matrix of differentiated all-identity splits and can be represented by two figures — one for the world of fantasy and one for the world of reality (Figure 12.4).

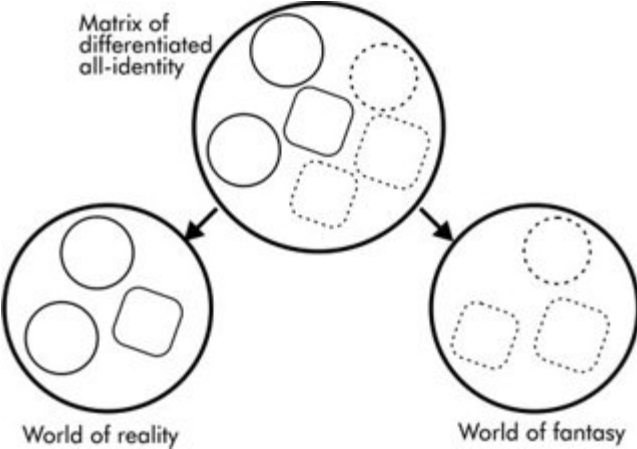


Figure 12.4. Matrix of the breach between fantasy and reality (Moreno, 1946/1977)<sup>12</sup>

[12. Ibid, p. 76]

Moreno explains:

After the breach between fantasy and reality is established, the division between psychodramatic and social rôles, which have been up to that point merged, begins gradually to become differentiated. The rôles of the mother, son, daughter, teacher, etc. are called social rôles and are set aside from the personification of imagined things both real and unreal. The latter are called psychodramatic rôles.<sup>13</sup>

[13. Ibid., p. 77.]

A were-wolf is the personification of an imagined unreal thing, as is a fairy God-mother. An ideal-parent, mother or father, is an imagined real thing. The roles placed on these personifications are psychodramatic roles having to do with the psychodramatic world already described.

Social roles are ones which a person gradually takes on from others. They are roles which have a common, collective quality defined by social use. Society in general has an idea of how a policeman, nurse, wife, father etc. should be. There are models of these social roles, or more appropriately, social role clusters. A nurse has a unified cluster of roles brought together in an identifiable configuration which allows for distinction from other social role clusters like hairdresser. In the development of his/her social roles a person takes on these roles of the other.<sup>14</sup> Each role is a fusion of private and collective elements. While every individual lives in a world which seems private and personal to his in fact the millions of private worlds overlap in large portions and form truly collective elements. Only minor portions are private and personal.

[14. Moreno (1953/1978), op. cit.]

Every rôle has two sides, a private and a collective side.... the private rôles appear like a veneer which gives the collective rôles individual coloring.... It is *the* father, *the* mother, *the* lover, *the* gentleman, *the* soldier, versus *a* father, *a* mother, *a* lover, *a* gentleman, *a* soldier.<sup>15</sup>

[15. Moreno (1946/1977), op. cit., pp. 351-352.]

Many social roles are proscribed by custom and form, such as the role of policeman. These social roles are not as limited as the roles taken by and actor who plays a character created by an author. When the actor plays the part of Hamlet he has to suppress and reduce his own private elements. The

role of Hamlet is conserved by a written script which defines the actor's words and actions. No Shakespeare has written the policeman's lines and actions in advance:

A varying degree of spontaneity is permitted, indeed, is expected from them. A policeman, for instance, may be required to represent the authority of the law in every situation into which he enters, but he may be required to act differently in varying situations. In fact, without some degree of spontaneity his words and actions may have fatal consequences for him and his fellow citizens.<sup>16</sup>

[16. Ibid., p.158.]

This spontaneity contributes the private side of the social role, giving it its quality. As in the case with the actor playing Hamlet, the private dimension or the spontaneity factor gives the particular quality to the production.

The collective element allows psychodrama to take place. If roles were entirely private it would be extremely difficult for auxiliaries to play the roles they are given by the protagonist or director. When G set out to re-enact a scene which took place between him and his father it was a father-son involvement which the group members could understand and in some cases identify with. For G, his private knowledge gave him a dimension making the interaction particular. It was an engagement between his father and himself as son.

Further, this feature of the collective element in the role make it possible for the creation of the ideal parent role. There is sufficient overlap of life experience for individuals to take elements from the common reservoir of the collectively held notions of what an ideal parent is to create a fantasy image of one for themselves. This image is privately particular to each person even though that individual did not have the good fortune to personally enjoy an ideal parent in their own child world of external reality. G did not have the quality of relationship with his father in their social roles of his childhood which he was later able to create in the fantasy of his ideal parent in the surplus reality of psychodrama. Not having the experience in the real life of his original social atom did not prevent him creating the psychodramatic experience.

## ROLE THEORY

The concept of role is fundamental to Moreno's work and his heritage of action methods. Moreno's definition is that "Rôle is the functioning form the individual assumes in the specific moment he reacts to a specific situation in which other persons or objects are involved."<sup>17</sup> A living human being is always in some role state. Even at that moment of lying asleep in bed that person's functioning form is in the psychosomatic role of sleeper. There is no advantage to name each role in a person's moment to moment living reactions to the different situations they experience. For Moreno "there is no need for an ultimate definition of rôles ... they are created before our eyes .... they define themselves as they emerge from status nascendi to full mature shape."<sup>18</sup> Only when studying roles might it be useful to give them labels, or assign them to one of the three categories already discussed.

[17. Ibid., p. iv]

[18. Ibid., p. 340.]

"Rôle can be defined as the actual and tangible forms which the self takes. ... Rôle is a final crystallization of all the situations in a special area of operations through which the individual has passed".<sup>19</sup> For example the psychosomatic role of the talker. The ability to talk is the end product of a sequence of developed neuromuscular skills. An infant has to suck adequately, then to chew effectively with a capacity to extinguish the primitive bite reflex, then to gurgle freely as muscular steps in the chain leading to speech. The talker then is the final crystallization of all the situations in the special area of oral muscle operations through which the infant passes: sucker, feeder, chewer, gurgler to talker.

[19. Ibid., p.153.]

These are the operational links which strive toward clustering and unification. The same process is true for a psychodramatic role such as ideal-parent.

The ideal parent role is the final crystallization of all the situations in the self-caring, self-nurturing, self-protecting, self-directing, self-believing, self-sustaining areas of operation through which an individual has passed. It seems to me that G had passed through most of these operations and it only took one final event to crystallize this cluster into a unified whole. His ideal



parent role emerged quickly in the warmed up spontaneity state he was in. B has not passed through many of those areas of operation needed as the building blocks for this role. There are serious gaps in her cluster so there are not enough to crystallize into the unity we seek. L had fewer deficiencies in the areas of self-care operations and worked at role training in and out of my office so that she could move toward the goal of crystallizing and ideal parent as quickly as possible. (This suggests a research project: the identification of the roles in the ideal parent cluster and way of scoring their presence and adequacy as a diagnostic tool and method of planning remedial treatment.)

Both G and L had a clear “role perception” of the ideal parent. They could both clearly imagine what elements of thinking, feeling and behaving would constitute the role and clearly perceived the value and necessity such a role could have for them in the immediate therapy and permanently in their psychodramatic world. B could not grasp even the abstract concept of being a self-caring person. The cognitive constructs of her cultural atom did not allow her to think of “looking after herself” in this or anyway.

Consequently, in the slow therapy of B little by little we have had to win cognitive shifts, small changes in belief systems, re-decisions about values, seeking for her to give herself permission to change her perspective of the moral cosmos so she could allow herself, without the terror of hell, to think differently. She is beginning to have a perception of the ideal self-caring parent role.

G not only had a clear role perception but he could “role-enact” straight off. L had the role perception but not the ability to enact ideal parent. Moreno’s definitions here are clear:

Role perception is cognitive and anticipates forthcoming responses. Role enactment is a skill of performance. A high degree of rôle perception can be accompanied by a low skill for role enactment and vice versa. Role playing is a function of both role perception and role enactment. Role training in contrast to role playing is an effort through the rehearsal of rôles, to perform adequately in future situations.<sup>20</sup>

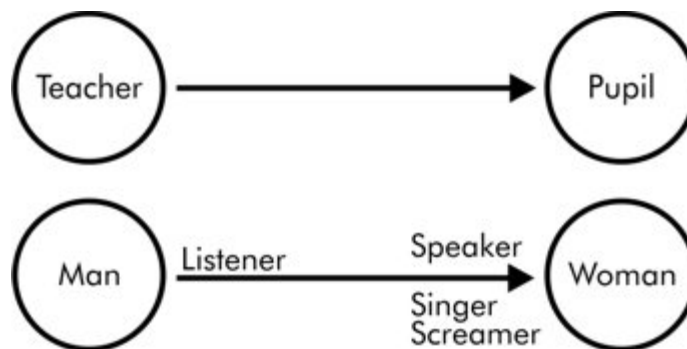
[20. Ibid., p. vi.]

Consequently, G could play the role of ideal parent with minimal effort, L required role training in her therapy to develop the skills enactment necessary for her to play the role, and B was quite deficient in role playing and required the development of role perception and role enactment. “Rôle training in contrast to rôle playing is an effort through the rehearsal of rôles, to perform adequately in future situations.”<sup>21</sup> Consequently, G could play the role of ideal parent with minimal effort, L required role training in her therapy to develop the skills of enactment necessary for her to play the role, and B was quite deficient in role playing and required the development of role perception in therapy as a precursor. B has the skills to enact the social role of parent toward her own children but not to enact the psychodramatic role of self-caring parent to her own psychodramatic child cluster of roles. With a shift in role perception my hunch is that with some role training to practice role enactment skills as applied to herself B will quickly be able to role play the psychodramatic ideal parent. Her therapy continues.

[21. Ibid.]

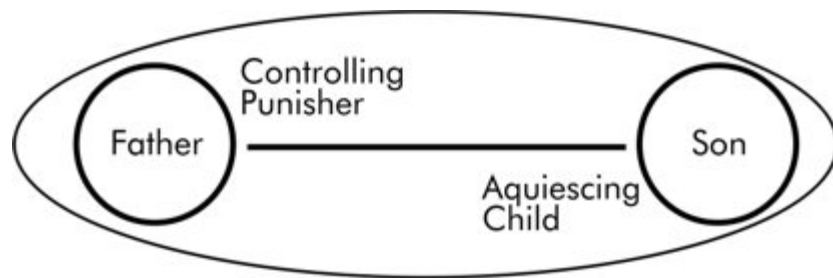
“A rôle is an inter-personal experience”.<sup>22</sup> Roles occur in relationship involving the individual and other persons or objects. Roles do not occur in isolation. To enact the psychosomatic role of eater involves food. To enact the social role of chef involves food and eaters. To enact the psychodramatic role of chef in a daydream involves imagining food and imagining eaters. In relation to other person every role has a counter-role: if a teacher is to act as a teacher a pupil must be involved. If a person is to be a listener then someone else must be a speaker, or singer, or some noise maker (Figure 12.5).

[22. Moreno (1946/1977), op. cit., p. 184.]



*Figure 12.5. Example of role relationships.*

In the individual's inner psychodramatic world roles also exist in relationship to mental objects/things or imagined persons who have counter-roles. (Figure 12.6)



*Figure 12.6. G's internal psychodramatic role.*

Roles go through various stages of development. When fully developed there is congruence between the three components of a role: its cognitive construct; its affect, and its behaviour. G's father in his role of controlling punisher has the cognitive construct: spare the rod and spoil the child — children must be brought up by controlling their behaviour with punishment for wrong doing. The associated affect is outrage at a child's wrong doing and grim satisfaction with punishment handed out. The associated action or behaviour consistent with this thinking and feeling is to monitor children's behaviour, being on the alert for wrong doing, and administering corporal punishment whenever it appears regardless of the children's efforts to escape it. The fully developed counter-role of acquiescing-child will have its corresponding construct, affect and action.

In time every individual settles down to a fairly consistent range of roles he or she gets into in the face of a fairly consistent range of counter-roles he/she sees opposite him/herself. In G's psychodramatic range of role — counter-role sets he was consistently internally in controlling-punishing parent to passive-acquiescing son. With the introduction of a new role to his psychodramatic world a new counter-role is evoked. G's ideal-parent comes in to expand his range of roles by the emergence of the assertive-child counter-roles. The ideal parent encourages the development of autonomous

behaviour in the child. These emerging embryonic roles need their full development of an appropriate construct, affect and behaviour. The ideal parent helps the psychodramatic child develop an adequate cognitive construct, such as, "I am a child of God deserving just treatment, it is quite okay for me to speak out and claim attention", along with an appropriate affect. Fear would be an incongruous feeling to go with such a construct. The ideal-parent may need to work to correct the emotional state of the psychodramatic child. G was terror-stricken and could not be assertive with that affect. The ideal-parent had to attend to the psychosomatic role level to change the affect to one congruent with assertiveness. Lastly, effective action needs to be developed so that there is the skill for the enactment of the assertive roles. This may call for the ideal-parent to coach the child, or mirror optional behaviours as a model for the child, in a role training modality.

### *The psychodramatic ideal parent does the work of therapy*

It is my proposition that expanding the protagonist's range of child roles by the development of new adequate roles must be done by the protagonist him or herself. There is a great temptation for therapists to do the coaching and modelling themselves, to repair inappropriate affect from their own attentions, and to give a new construct to the protagonist from their own wisdom. I believe protagonists must do this work for themselves. The only way to deal with their own inadequate psychodramatic child roles is to be their own ideal-parent to themselves. As a therapist I will help them develop their ideal parent role, but from that role they must attend to their own psychodramatic child state. Otherwise the protagonist develops a dependency on me, the therapist, and a symbiosis occurs with me in the social role of substitute parent.

It is of little importance what label is given to this ideal-parent role. The term ideal-parent is open enough to allow protagonists to fill it with their particular content to it is uniquely meaningful to them. It is even open for them to select the gender of the parent. According to their unconscious need they will embody the role as a mother parent or father parent. Only the protagonist knows whether the ideal psychodramatic parent needs a masculine or feminine component. In time a person may develop both ideal mother and ideal father to populate their psychodramatic world so as to

make good their deficiencies and live more effectively. “The function of the role is to enter the unconscious from the social world and bring snaps and order into it,” according to Moreno.<sup>23</sup> So long as an individual has the necessary effective roles at their disposal to function effectively in life it does not matter how they are constellated or what name is given to the unified cluster.

[23. Ibid., p. v.]

For example, everyone needs a role of believer in one’s own creative genius. Without this function being serviced within a person they are not going to be able to live fully and will have a limited, restricted existence. If the person does have such a believer well developed and functioning adequately within their range of role-counter-role sets then it does not matter if that believer role forms part of the cluster, unified under the title “ideal parent”, or “God”, or “grandmother”, or whatever. Of course there are operational links and roles reinforce each other to maximize effectiveness. Roles need to cluster in effective constellations. In isolation the believer role would be ineffective and nullified. The believer needs the support of a wise person role to function by making judgements about a particular situation and by a knower role who functions to bring or obtain information and data about the situation.

It is not necessary for every protagonist to develop a role constellation we might call the ideal parent. Using psychodrama we can explore the role range and their functional links or clustering. It might only be necessary to strengthen or develop fully already existing patterns so that the same purpose for the existence of the ideal-parent role is achieved, namely that the inadequate child role clusters are expanded healthily or the psychodramatic child is properly brought up. I prefer to begin my therapeutic work in this direction by exploring the protagonist’s original social atom to discover if there exists in that configuration of original social role, no incorporated into the protagonist’s psychodramatic world, a person with effective enough parenting skills to do the task.

In my practice I have found it economical of time and effort to suggest the creation of an ideal parent as soon as it becomes apparent that these functions are not being served nor are likely to be served easily from existing role constellation in a protagonist’s range of roles. The suggested role seems, mostly, readily perceived. It forms a focal point around which a

new cluster of many already existing skills or role enactment or roles themselves may crystallize. As Moreno says:

the individual craves to embody far more rôles than those he is allowed to act out in life, and even within the same rôle one or more varieties of it. Every individual is filled with different rôles in which he wants to become active and that are present in him in different stages of development.<sup>24</sup>

[24. Ibid., p. v.]

I think this craving is especially strong when functions necessary for full living are missing. People seem quickly ready to develop the role which gives them the function of looking after their own inner psychodramatic child. It is though they are craving to embody the parent they wished for and never had. While this seems a general finding in my practice I have not discovered any one particular technique to use in general to help develop this role. All the techniques of psychodrama action methods are called for: it is what Dr Moreno developed them for.

In a sense developing and using the psychodramatic role of the ideal-parent in action therapy is a technique in itself. It is the use of a particular piece of surplus reality within the psychodramatic process. In describing psychodrama as a method of treatment in the psychopathology of interpersonal relations Moreno says:

We realized that he [the patient] must have charged and tainted all persons and objects of his immediate environment with some aspect of himself, and that this must be traceable in the performance of his bodily and mental functions, in his inner tensions preliminary to these performances, in his gestures and expressions, in the words associated, and in the feelings and movements towards the persons and things with which he lived. ... The solution [to a formidably complex pattern for treatment] was then the resurrection of the whole psychological drama, or at least of the crucial scenes of this drama, re-enacted by the same persons in the same situations in which their association had begun.<sup>25</sup>

[25. Ibid., p.181]

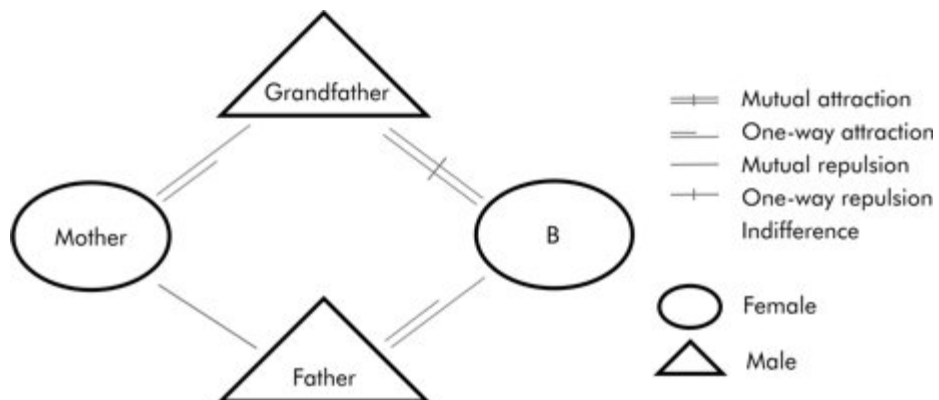
This reliving, often in a magnified, dramatic way, of situations evaded and feared and which needed to be faced squarely and adequately is the object of psychodrama. It is the process of repairing the damages occurring particularly in our formative, primary social atoms. This is where those “taints” come from which spoil present living.

*The social and cultural atoms*

The social atom is a person’s range of tele relations. Tele relations are those psychological relations which involve forces of attraction or repulsion between people. Each person has a particular patter of these attractions, repulsions and indifferences:

This pattern is called the “social-atom”. It is the smallest functional unit within the social group.... It is this total configuration which comprises the social atom. An individual has from birth a structure of relationships around him, other, father, grandmother and other members of his early environment. The volume (range) of the social atom is in continuous expansion as we grow up; it is within it that we live most concretely.<sup>26</sup> (See Figure 12.7)

[26. Moreno (1953/1978), op. cit., p. 69.]



*Figure 12.7. B's primary social atom*

[Moreno continues:]

every individual, just as he is the focus of numerous attractions and repulsions, also appears as the focus of numerous role which

are related to the roles of other individuals... he also had a range of rôles and a range of counter-rôles. They are in various stages of development.... The focal pattern of role-relations around an individual is called his "cultural atom".<sup>27</sup>

[27. Moreno (1953/1978), op. cit., p.70.]

The social and cultural atoms are manifestations of the same social reality. The same range of people made up B's primary social group or family. The social and cultural atoms are two ways of describing how this same group related to B.

Psychodrama reveals the patters of these two atoms, the social and cultural. Particularly it shows up the psychopathology of the interpersonal relations which existed. We see B, from the above brief diagrams, to have lived in a small atom of predominately repulsive tele. Her world was one where people did not have much attraction for each other. The only truly positive relation was with her grandfather. Otherwise B did not feel she had a place or belonged anywhere. The role range, though not fully depicted in the diagram was also very narrow. (B's difficulty to enact has limited the diagnostic analysis of her social/cultural atom system.) The major role set which B recalls was at bed times. Mother had her turn at saying goodnight. It was a time of moral admonition from a fundamentalist religious sect background. Being naughty meant going to hell to burn forever. In an object lesson, mother once held B's hands in the fire to experience the pain of burning. Special attention was given to the non-specified instruction of being a good girl. Mother would also "teach" her lessons with violent beatings to her naked body during which B would lose consciousness and awake later in bed.

After mother's turn at bed time she would leave and father would come to B's bed side, where after a few moments of general conversation would come a regular admonition to secrecy and sexual abuse would follow with B often losing consciousness in the pain of the violent rough mishandlings of her body. This was thoroughly confusing to the child B. Her tele relationship at these times with father was repulsion, which at the other time turned to attraction because he did provide playful fun, cuddling and loving statements. He seemed two dissimilar people to B. To resurrect psychodramatically the whole of this drama, or crucial scenes of it, re-enacting it with the same people in the same original situations is as yet in



the therapeutic process with B too much for her to move into. When simply verbally describing these scenes to me she blacks out in a self-protective, self-induced hypnotic trance. She is unable yet to relive these evaded and feared situations which need to be faced squarely and adequately for a resolution of her current psychopathology of interpersonal relations.

### *Role assessment and treatment*

A role assessment of her cultural atom can be made on the basis of Moreno's measurement of roles [which]

are normally developed and used, i.e. adequate; or, 2 are missing, having never been developed, or if they were developed are no longer used, i.e., absent; or 3 are over-developed or over used inappropriately in situations best served by a different rôle; or 4 are under-developed not used as extensive as they might be or remaining not fully formed in all the components; or 5 conflicted internally with one rôle opposing the enactment of another.<sup>28</sup>

[28. Moreno (1969/1978), op. cit., p. 70.]

As a child B had a role conflict about her father. She loved him and played with him and was attracted to him. When she wanted to enact the playful child role with him the fear aroused in her sexual victim role conflicted with her desire and she was immobilized with him unable to enact any role. Again, as discussed with G, assertive, self-protective, insistent self-claiming roles were missing. Her self-protective black-out role was well developed and adequate to the violence she suffered. Her fanciful day dreamer was over-developed and over-used as one of the only outlets she had in the stimulus poverty of her social world.

This assessment gives some direction to the therapeutic process. Missing roles need development. Over-developed and over-used roles need extinguishing or diminishing — especially the blacking out role which completely precludes B facing these abusive situations squarely and adequately. Once this protective role was useful in the original social/cultural atom, but it has become unhelpfully conserved. It is useful here to distinguish role taking, role playing and role creating, as described by Moreno.<sup>29</sup> At some point in time, when B was being physically abused by either father or mother, spontaneity and creativity combined and she

developed, created a new role, the black-outer. Role-playing this new form of behaviour “permits some degree of freedom” ... as it allows an individual to experiment and “learn to perform rôles more adequately.”<sup>30</sup> So, over time, B learned by playing the black-outer role to become highly effective at this form of self-protection in the face of the regular abuse she endured as a child. Role taking does not permit any variation, and degree of freedom or spontaneity because the person takes the role in its finished, fully established form. “Role taking is an attitude already frozen in the behavior of the person... [it is] a role conserve.”<sup>31</sup> Eventually mother and father stopped physically abusing B and her life situation changed. However, she continued role taking the black-outer. She no longer needed to protect herself from violence of the sort she experienced as a child. Yet she continues to black-out. This role is conserved, fixed, frozen in her behaviour. She blacks out in bed along at night, on public transport, or panics at the onset of these episodes, even if the role does not fully develop at each occasion.

[29. Ibid., pp. 75-76.]

[30. Moreno (1953/1978), op. cit., p. 75]

[31. Ibid., p. 76.]

In my office in the course of therapy I can predict the warm-up of B taking the black-out role, and disrupt the process. It is a distressing and socially awkward role to continue to take. I cannot, nor can anyone else be with B all the time to inhibit this role. My notion is that a constant, internal ideal parent could be developed to conflict and overpower the black-outer. This psychodramatic internal parent could then help B face those original violent dramas she evades and role create new assertive child roles in her original social/cultural atom, (at it was for G [a male client]). She needs to address and re-dress the role-counter role set she played with mother and father. Maybe the route to the ideal-parent is through extending the psychodramatic role range of her grandfather the only person with whom she had a positive tele, and an adequate role set. (She has a positive transference with me based on my likeness to her grandfather.) However, any attempts meet warm-up difficulties.

### **WARM-UP AND SPONTANEITY**

“The warming up process manifests itself in every expression of the living organism as it strives towards an act. It has a somatic expression, a

psychological expression, and a social expression.”<sup>32</sup>

[32. Moreno (1946/1977) op. cit., p. 56.]

The varieties of its expression depend on the organism and its environment:

The warming up process is the operational expression of spontaneity. Spontaneity and warming up process operate on all levels of human relations, eating, walking, sleeping, sexual intercourse, social communication, creativity, in religious self-realization and asceticism.... [and] If there is no sign of warm-up we can conclude an absence or loss of spontaneity.<sup>33</sup>

[33. Moreno (1959/1978) op. cit., p. 42.]

B’s cultural atom and cultural network was strongly conserved and spontaneity was not valued and little evident. Again, the presence of an ideal parent role or not valued and little evident. Again, the presence of an ideal parent role or the functions of an ideal parent in effective role constellations would value and enhance spontaneity consciously and deliberately for B: “The first basic manifestation of spontaneity is the warming up of the infant to the new setting.”<sup>34</sup>

[34. Moreno (1946/1977) op. cit., p. 52.]

The infant is moving, at birth, into a totally strange set of relationships. He has no model after which he can shape his acts. He is facing, more than at any other time during his subsequent life, a novel situation. We have called this response of an individual to a new situation — and the new response to an old situation — spontaneity.<sup>35</sup>

[35. Ibid., p. 50.]

As on the first day of her life, now B needs spontaneity. She needs new responses to old situations. As on the first day of her life B needed the mental starter of the auxiliary ego of her grandmother to come to her rescue because the difficulty and delay of delivery exhausted her ability at self-starting the somatic warm-up to breathing, so she needs a continuing mental started to spontaneity. A therapist cannot do this for her. She needs a built-in “auxiliary”; my notion is the psychodramatic ideal-parent.

## **THE TWO UNIVERSES: REALITY AND FANTASY**

Finally, B's warm-up difficulties with spontaneity, role creating and enactment illustrate something far deeper. It is the point as which "the human personality, even in its most integrated examples, has a tragic touch of relative imperfection."<sup>36</sup>

[36. Ibid., p. 72]

It concerns the breach between fantasy and reality experience previously mentioned in the development of social and psychodramatic roles:

With the breach personality becomes normally divided. Two sets of warming up process form — the one toward reality acts and the other toward fantasy acts ... The more deeply engraved these tracks are, the harder it becomes to shift from one to the other on the spur of the moment. The problem is not that of abandoning the fantasy world in favour of the reality world, or vice versa, which is practically impossible, but rather to establish means by which the individual can gain full mastery over the situation, living in both tracks, but being able to shift from one to the other. The factor which can secure this mastery for rapid shifting is spontaneity ... as a conscious and constructive principle. ... Without the function of spontaneity to facilitate the shift, the warming up process can produce a mental set in one track to the degree that it hampers or harms the relationship of the individual to real situations and real objects, or to imagined situations and imagined objects.<sup>37</sup>

[37. Ibid., p. 72.]

B has no mastery in this area. As a child she developed a rich fantasy world all of which was wrong according to her mother. She formed two deep and dissimilar tracks. Her reality world warm-up discounts and negates her fantasy world and her fantasy warm-up puts her out of touch with reality. She is a very divided person, and is aware of, confused by and disturbed with the breach within herself.

Moreno continues:

The infant begins to develop two emotional tracks in his universe. They may run independently, never to meet again. The infant would live them in, two dimensions at the same time, ... or it may

be that the two tracks ... from time to time strive towards a reunion, a re-establishment of the original status. These strivings may bring about collisions between the two tracks, produce blocking and bring the flow of spontaneity to inertia. It is the latter which actually happens to human personality.<sup>38</sup>

[38. Ibid, p. 72.]

The spontaneity in B's two tracks, which I think is quite high when it is consciously channeled effectively, runs into each other and cancels each other out. Hence B's low spontaneity state and warm-up difficulty. The fantasy and reality worlds conflict within her and immobilize spontaneity warm-up in either track.

There is this continuous struggle within the individual trying to maintain a balance between these two different routes into which his spontaneity attempts to flow.... The deeper significance of this struggle comes from the inability of the infant to continue the uniformity of his first universe where all the warming-up processes in the rôle taking were centralized and uniform.... he was, at least, united in living in one world and not in two ... As long as this breach did not exist, all real and fantasy components were merged into one set of rôles, psychosomatic rôles. ... But from the division of the universe into real and fictitious ... forms of rôle playing are now emerging which correlate the infant to persons, things and goals in an actual setting outside of himself [social roles], and to persons, objects and goals which he imagines are outside of him [psychodramatic roles].<sup>39</sup>

[39. Moreno (1946/1977) op. cit, pp. 72-73.]

B unconsciously imagines violent physical abuse is going to occur outside of herself and warms up to take the role of black-outer as protection. This abuse is not going to happen in her present real world. But the black-outer role effects her behaviour in the real world. Her psychodramatic world of imaginings has the past real abuse continuously present in its timeless dimension. So she fears abuse just around the corner in many unrealistic situations. The dualism of the two worlds causes her serious problems. In her case the warm-up track to the imagined world is powerfully triggered to the harm of her functioning in the real world. It is a psychodramatic

problem calling for a psychodramatic solution. “It can be said that psychodrama is the attempt to breach the dualism between fantasy and reality and to restore the original unity.”<sup>40</sup> Originally, as an infant B created the role of black-outer so as to act self-protectively in the physical powerlessness to prevent overwhelming emotional trauma. It was a psychosomatic role played in a unity of action to protect herself by unconsciousness from absorbing the full horror of her real world. Now the unity is divided by the two warm-up tracks and restoration is required. To face the horror of the original situations I suggest a psychodramatic ideal parent as an ally in the psychodrama of therapy.

[40. Ibid., p. 351.]

It is this dualism which accounts for the not real by “psychodramatic regression” described as role pathology in the cases of G, L and B. Within themselves and within the actual settings of their real world they are adults. Yet they unconsciously role play as if they are still helpless children. They imagine the world outside them is grown up and they are little. Their warm-up process tracks them into their fantasy, psychodramatic world of their timeless, ever present original social atom and they role play from the role-counter role sets they had available to them then as children. If the problem is a psychodramatic one it can be resolved by a psychodramatic solution — the psychodrama in which they relive that original situation and change it to more adequate solutions for living, both in their psychodramatic world of the timeless present and in the contemporary world of the now. Between the two worlds of social reality and psychodramatic fantasy there can be a unity. The psychodramatic ideal parent can assist them go back and relive more effectively their formative situations and contribute to restoring unity in therapy. It can remain with them as a continuing source of wisdom and caring and loving and believing in them which, in the fantasy person they construct, they can imagine to be outside themselves — but which in reality is their own work of parenting themselves.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this paper I have drawn on the fundamental ideas of Dr J. L. Moreno to present my thesis or notion that helping protagonists to develop a psychodramatic role of ideal parent is a surplus reality device of therapeutic psychodrama having cosmic dimension which effectively enables them to

crystallize those areas of operation concerned with self-directed care, protection, determination and the like functions of good parenting, into a role constellation for active use in the immediate therapeutic process and future use when evaded and feared situations in their primary social atoms require being faced with the spontaneous creation of roles to adequately deal with those situations which untreated continue to taint and disturb their present living through the breach between their worlds of social reality and psychodramatic fantasy.

## **Guiding principles of supervision (1995)<sup>41</sup>**

[41. Ed. — This paper was presented in February 1995 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the qualification of Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and Practitioner of the Board of Examiners of the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association Inc., and, again, is published with its permission.]

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since 1964 when I first began my training as a supervisor in the Clinical Pastoral Education movement at the Institute of Religion in the Texas Medical Center, Houston, my guiding principles have remained much the same. In those days the only available authoritative work on supervision was what has become a classic Ekstein and Wallerstein's (1959) *Teaching and Learning of Psychotherapy*. Their notion of the clinical rhombus and parallel process to describe the multifaceted dimensions of supervision has become a norm of thinking for me. In the years that have followed opportunities for training in and the literature on supervision has expanded enormously but apart from refinement and reformulation my original basic guidelines have lasted. I got an excellent foundation.

It has been a useful task rewriting these principles. Over time they have become such a given in my work that I have not reviewed them with any frequency. They have become so much taken for granted that I might have been growing careless and negligent of self-reflective critique. Having to dust them off and expose them to light and scrutiny is valuable. It is also grandiose and dangerous to assume there is nothing left to learn. So, it has become a welcomed exercise to give fresh attention to such an important topic.

## **SUPERVISION**

Supervision is a mutually-established, contracted relationship in which one person, the supervisor, provides over-sight of the other persons functioning in order to assist that person's growth and development in the work they are doing and to enhance and maintain excellence of practice and satisfaction in performance. Understood in this way supervision is both a major training activity, and an ongoing procedure for those who have attained qualification are in practice.

The root meaning of the Latin words which make up supervision — *super*, over, and *videre*, to see — suggest the basic action inherent in the process. It is a task of looking over the work of others. All too commonly the supervisory task of looking over work is experienced by workers as a process of inspection, control and direction by another, higher up the hierarchy of authority. In some contexts and some disciplines this is how supervision is defined. With connotations of control and direction, supervision is often unwelcomed and unhelpful. Because of these negative connotations a synonym for supervision has been sought by many, without success.

Increasingly, in the field of people-helping professions, effective supervision which assists and supports the development of competence and job satisfaction is being experienced as beneficial and is becoming appreciated. After several years of lead-in, in 1994, the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) introduced, without quibble, regular ongoing supervision for all levels of members, not just trainee applicants, as a pre-condition for annual renewal of membership.

I believe effective supervision is based on the following principles.

*Principle 1: Supervision must be based on a well-established relationship of trust.*

It follows that, if supervision proceeds by the supervisor looking over the work being done, the supervisee must trust both the person and process if s/he is going to be willing to expose to view their own inner private workings which are a vital part of their functioning.



Although, in some supervisory arrangements, the supervisor can directly observe the supervisee at work and make careful deductions about his/her inner processes much important material remains hidden from view and must be willingly disclosed. More often, the supervisory arrangement is such that supervisees bring reports of their work to supervision and direct observation, even with video or audio tape recordings, is not possible. In this situation the supervisee always deliberately or unconsciously selects what to show and tell the supervisor. Trust is essential to get to those areas of functioning which the supervisee is afraid or ashamed to have looked over.

A good warm-up to the supervisory relationship and to each supervisory session is essential if supervision is to be successful. Trust develops over time. By following good warm-up practices the supervisor can progressively reduce fear. The experience of adequate support and unconditional positive regard from the supervisor may progressively reduce a sense of shame in the supervisee.

Warm-up is such a central part of psychodrama operations that it can be taken for granted and overlooked. This fluid state of readiness for action is discussed by J. L. Moreno extensively throughout his writing, especially in *Psychodrama Volume 1* (Moreno, 1946).

In my supervisory practice I spend time ensuring adequate personal connection before commencing a contracted relationship or each session. I use the first two or so sessions for getting some personal history and current life situation, and with the naïve enquirer role begin to get a sense of the supervisee's social and cultural atom. I often ask for a short written biography as a means of introduction.

*Principle 2: Supervision proceeds purposefully, based on mutually-contracted goals and methods*

While this ultimate purpose of supervision is to enhance functioning, this goal needs to be filled out with specifics appropriate to each individual. Negotiation of the contract is an important part of building the supervisory relationship. The contract is respectful of the supervisee and is based on a mutuality of equal existential value with the attitudes of "I'm okay, You're okay" on the part of both partners.

In Transactional Analysis (TA), much is made of the contract. (In the constitution of the International Transactional Analysis Association (ITAA), TA is defined as a psychological and social theory with mutual contracting for growth and change.) Contracting was considered a fundamental feature of working with clients by Eric Berne. Bob Goulding, another pioneer of TA theory and practice, in playing with words during his instructions in training sessions, suggested the therapist without a contract with the client was at risk of becoming the rapist (Goulding & Goulding, 1978). In other words, the contract protects against boundary violations and the invasion of personal space without consent. Without a contract the supervisor is at risk of becoming a despot.

Part of the contract is the business arrangement. This includes such items as the fee for, frequency and length of sessions, the consequences of a failure to show up, and the resolution of conflict. Following the ITAA's requirements and those of the NZAP, I write out the contract. On the basis of the example of Dr Robert Crawford, a Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and Practitioner in Christchurch, I now include a disclaimer in the contract, in anticipation of the application of new legislation in New Zealand, i.e., the Health and Disabilities Commissioners' Act 1994, which is likely to include provision which could hold supervisors responsible for the outcome of trainees' work, which may give rise to any complaint.

The contract also contains specific goals and intentions, and the means by which it is planned to achieve them. Sloppy use of language by some TA practitioner equates the goals with the contract. My contract is to write a paper on the principles of supervision. Such a statement is not a contract but a goal. Clear, attainable goals contribute to an effective warm-up for supervisee and supervisor, and contribute to the whole process being purposeful.

*Principle 3: Supervision models the method and attitudes of the theory and practice being taught or used*

Supervision of psychodrama practitioners or trainees must be consistent with the action methods developed by Moreno, who understood human beings to be primarily actors in the world. When making a self-presentation of their functioning for review in supervision a psychodrama supervisee

needs to include more action than talking to be consistent to the philosophy and practice of Moreno.

In order to make a full assessment of the roles involved in the supervisee's function, the presentation made to the supervisor needs to be as fully active as possible. A full re-enactment is best. The non-verbal components of the roles can then be taken into account. Use of other production techniques (soliloquy, asides, maximisation, concretisation), can then be the reality of the supervisee's inner unspoken world, especially their psychodramatic roles, onto the stage or action space for supervisory review.

I use these psychodramatic methods to a greater or lesser extent with all my supervisees, including trainee/students of talk therapy at the Auckland Institute of Technology, and all find it very useful as a means of presenting their functioning and practicing alternatives. In this way I bring role training into my supervision.

*Principle 4: Supervision is based on a careful assessment and evaluation of clearly identifiable data in the supervisees functioning*

The activities of supervision are data-based. There must always be hard evidence for whatever is the focus of supervisory attention. This data should be mirrored in action or reflected by active listening to the supervisee so that s/he can also see or hear what it is that the supervisor is referring to when making comment on or suggesting the need for changes to their functioning.

This is the counter-part for the supervisor of the principle that the supervisee must have a clinical focus in reporting their work. The supervisor must also be specific and attend to the particular. Speculation and supposition are unhelpful. Only by identifying what the supervisee actually does and identifying the consequences of that behaviour for both the supervisee and her/his client is the supervisor in a position to suggest what might assist the supervisee grow and change toward improved development of function.

To do this the supervisor needs to have some vision of effective practice against which to evaluate what the supervisee actually is doing. To develop this internal norm or standard of practice means the supervisor needs to be experienced in the field both in the sense of personal competence seasoned

over time, and from mature reflection of the exposure to the work of others either written or directly observed.

I find that it helps me to have some sort of checklist against which to note the various areas requiring over-sight. If I work from my own internalised list a variety of subjective factors can bias or overweight the focus of my interest at the time and consequently some areas needing attention can be over-looked or neglected. The Board of Examiners of the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association (ANZPA) has produced an invaluable guide in its *Training and Standards Manual* (ANZPA, 1993) which can be used as such a list (in the chapter on “Content, Ability, and Professional Identity Requirements Applicable to all Trainees”.

In giving data-based feedback and any associated evaluation of it for the supervisee’s consideration the supervisor is performing one of the classic expected tasks of supervision, quality control. However, by doing this within the context of the normal practice of supervision quality control is not something in isolation or singled out as a special activity. Nor does it call for the supervisor to act in any sort of officious manner. Quality control for the benefit of clients and any employer is part and parcel of the supervisory process.

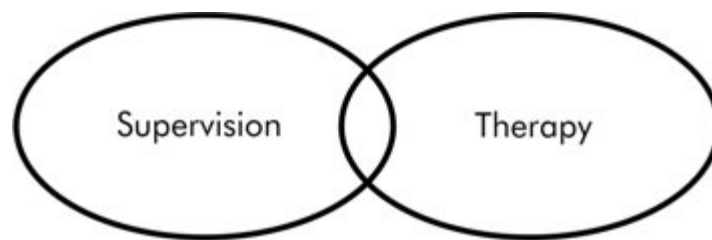
*Principle 6: Supervision facilitates an integration of the triad of skills, personal abilities, and knowledge of the supervisee*

This activity assists the development of congruence in the supervisee. For example, a supervisee may hold the value that esteems his/her clients to be of equal worth to him/herself, and to treat them with the respect and dignity to which he or she would wish to be treated. This supervisee might also know that it is part of their code of ethics to hold clients in this respect, and that by doing so the working relationship is enhanced and strengthened. However, the supervisee may not have the skill to relate to many of their clients with the desired outcome of having them experience a sense of equal worth.

The development of effective functioning depends on all three areas, skill knowledge and personal qualities, being given attention in the supervisor process. In the above example the supervisee may be ignorant of mannerisms and styles which communicate an impression of superiority

self-importance. It is likely, following the dictum of parallel process, that the supervisee will relate to the supervisor with some of the mannerisms and styles and allow access to the skill deficit for the supervisory intervention on the basis of direct experience in the supervisor-supervisee field. Attention to the skill deficit will assist the effective functioning of the supervisee.

There is debate over the extent to which personal qualities should be given attention in supervision, and where the boundary between therapy and supervision exists (Figure 12.8).



*Figure 12.8. The relationship between supervision and training*

Some seek to make a very clear demarcation between these two considering it unethical to overlap the two (Hewson, 1992). Personally, in my experience and practice, I find there is considerable overlap. It is artificial to designate a clear, either/or boundary. In any case, the overlap of skill, knowledge and personal factors is considerable. A systemic view would hold them in a balanced equilibrium without attempting to define clear edges between these sets of influences. It is a matter of theoretical mapping to describe the territory which, as a whole, is only by convention divided into different descriptions (Figure 12.9).



Figure 12.9. The supervisory territory

In supervision, when it becomes clear that the supervisee's functioning is limited by a personal factor the decision must be made, "is this something which can be dealt with in supervision, or should the supervisee be referred for therapy?" In psychodrama training it has been considered allowable for a supervisor to refer a trainee with personal difficulties to a psychodrama treatment group which s/he runs and to have the trainee be a protagonist in a drama aimed at correcting the difficulty or doing some social atom repair work. In some other approaches to therapy, this dual relationship is considered inappropriate — the supervisor should never be therapist.

I find it has been possible to provide, short, focal therapy within the supervisory relationship and within a supervision session. The working limits for me is the maintenance of the focus of energy on supervision. Therapy is proportionately short and limited and should never over-balance the supervision. *The British Association of Counsellors' Code of Ethics and Practice for the Supervision of Counsellors*, Section B.2.4 supports my position (Dryden & Thorne, 1991).

*Principle 7: Supervision facilitates and encourages personal development and "professional" identity in the supervisee*

Supervision is best understood as a longitudinal process. While "spot" supervision is useful, that is over-sight and attention to one moment or

occasion of functioning, (which, in some disciplines, might be called consultation rather than supervision), supervision is more effective if undertaken over time. This allows for the developmental nature of the supervisee's growing widespread agreement that supervision itself follows a developmental sequence of its own in parallel to the supervisee's development (Erskine, 1982; Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Fay 1993).

Part of personal development is the formation or maintenance of a professional identity in the supervisee. Supervision assists the trainee or practitioner to hold to a professional identity. That is a clear sense that s/he is engaging in a practice which calls for all the marks of a professional.

The marks of a professional include:

- That they are trained and knowledgeable.
- That they are credentialed or becoming so.
- That they are skilfully effective in doing their work and producing the desired outcomes.
- That they are able to give a rationale for their activities; that they are accountable to some responsible body.
- That they follow a code of ethics and are open to review and discipline.
- That they practice safely.
- That they are sensitive to cultural matters.
- That they are appropriate in affect and demeanour.
- That they communicate effectively.
- That they maintain records and good management practices.
- That they maintain confidentiality of privileged information.
- That they are economical and efficient in the use of time and resources.

Supervision attends to the development of all these marks of being a professional in a supervisee. All these areas are grist for the supervisory process. Petrüska Clarkson (1992), in her short but excellent section on supervision, acknowledges that: "Supervision is a vast, complex and ever growing field of investigation, practice and discovery. The heart of the supervisory partnership is probably the longitudinal unfolding of a

developmental process facilitated by the relationship with a colleague.” (p. 273)

She suggests a supervisory tool — a checklist — for pinpointing bands of key issues of a supervisory session so that this vast complex, unfolding, developmental process can be kept up with. I find this a useful practice in coping with the wide range of grist for the mill of supervision. Some time ago I made my own checklist, which I keep revising, in order to help myself keep a balance in my supervisory over-sight, so that there is no corner unattended over time.

*Principle 8: Supervision attends to the holistic nature of the supervisee, taking into account all dimensions of his/her life*

Following the metaphor of grist for the mill, there is nothing which lies outside the purview of supervision. Some supervisees want to compartmentalise their lives and resist bringing important, usually private and personal dimensions, to supervision on the grounds that it is none of the supervisor’s business, and that they are only required to account for their professional functioning. This attitude reflects a mistaken idea of supervision, and often previous unhappy experience in training supervision of the past.

In my experience this kind of resistance has most often come from social workers (usually very sensitive to client rights) and academically-trained practitioners (people with degree qualifications in counselling sensitive to theoretical and philosophical rightness). Indeed, at one stage in the 1960s in New Zealand, the NZ Social Workers’ Association had secured the right to be free from accounting for their private and personal lives in their supervision.

From a systemic point of view what happens in a remote corner of a person’s life has effect throughout the whole of that person’s life and work. Unfinished business, addictive tendencies, relationship difficulties which seem outside a person’s professional functioning do have their effects and influences. If a marriage guidance counsellor is having marital difficulties, this information must be brought to supervision. Conversely, as supervision aids the development of the person’s professional life and functioning so there are follow on advantages in his or her non-professional areas.



*Principle 9: Supervision educates the supervisee providing information, guidance, direction, coaching, and modelling*

From my definition of supervision this educative dimension is very important. It is not education or training which follows a set curriculum and provides a formal set of input. It is a form of experiential education in which the curriculum is set by the clinical experiences the supervisee is having in their professional functioning. The learning/teaching moment is not constructed or devised as a deliberate intervention by the supervisor but by the clients whom the supervisee is serving. At the most the supervisor may direct the supervisee to the context in which clients will be engaged. The educative moment comes serendipitously, by good fortune. It is the supervisor's task to assist the supervisee learn from that moment of chance. The main way of doing this is by guiding the supervisee's reflection on the clinical incident.

This guidance may include reference to reading resources, the provision of information from the supervisors own experience and wisdom, suggestions to attend certain courses, consult particular people, advice to seek therapy, amongst other activities. I include role playing and role training with skills coaching as the supervisee undertakes the exercises.

An educative intervention not often recognised as such is the modelling the supervisor provides within the supervisory relationship of the counselling/psychodrama method. The supervisee often absorbs the style, atmosphere, and verbal manner of the supervisor without being aware of it. Personally, in this last area of supervisory operations, I have had difficulty accepting the idealising transference which goes with the modelling process. My countertransference has been to resist or push away moments of idealisation in my supervisees. For this I have needed supervision and therapy myself. I believe supervisors need supervision of their supervisory activities.

*Principle 10: Supervision requires the exercise of authority by the supervisor to set boundaries, to demand and challenge, and to assess and evaluate the supervisee*

Effective supervision requires the supervisor to act with authority. Professional boundaries and limits, to demand and challenge their clients so

these functions are often not difficult for the supervisor who has been a counsellor. The counsellor acts with authority to do this.

Properly handled and well warmed-up the client will respond acceptingly to the counsellor's authority roles with productive counter-roles. The counsellor authority comes from the qualities Rogers noted and which have been recognised widely: congruence, unconditional positive regard, warm acceptance, empathy and immediacy. This authority is earned by disciplined work at developing and maintaining these qualities, and is conferred by the client recognising and responding to them. It is not the authority of status, qualifications nor delegated responsibility from some higher social power.

However, acting as an assessor and evaluator are often new roles for a counsellor-become-supervisor. It is my observation and personal experience that acting in these roles is very difficult for those in the helping professions whose normal task is supporting, accepting, encouraging, nurturing, being non-judgemental and mutually valuing of the others existential worth. The stronger the professional's identity is to that of being a healer whose main function is to restore wounds it seems the more difficulty these people have in being an assessor, or evaluator. There is a strong reluctance to cause more narcissistic wounding by failing a person, or giving them feedback which is contrary to their self-perception.

Nonetheless, the task of supervision will call for assessment and evaluation at times. The supervisor must learn to undertake these hard-nosed functions. The authority comes from seniority, more experience in the profession, disciplined preparation of knowledge and skill, and the attainment of credentials which the supervisee recognises as the endorsement of others of the supervisor's ability. Often there is a delegated authority in which the supervisor acts. This can be on behalf of an employer, or professional body or credentialing organisation. It takes careful warm-up, if not some focused role training, for many supervisors to act with authority.

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## **Guiding principles of training (1996)<sup>42</sup>**

[42. Ed. — This paper was presented in August 1996 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the qualification of Psychodramatist Trainer, Educator and Practitioner of the Board of Examiners of the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association Inc, and, again, is published with its permission.]

I propose to describe my history of training. My principles emerge from that history, so that in telling my story the origins of these principles can be seen in context. Then I will identify each principle and describe how I apply it today, 1996, in my training activities of the Auckland Training Centre for Psychodrama.

My training as a trainer began in 1964. I was at the Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas and training to become a Clinical Theological Education supervisor. In those days there was no uniform system and what was to become the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) movement had not yet evolved.<sup>43</sup> There were a variety of programs in the USA. I was in a local Texas scheme. There was some debate in those days about whether to call the process education or training. The Institute of Religion called it education — training was what you did to animals; education was for humans. Other programs, one in a next door hospital in Houston run under the auspices of the nationwide Council for Clinical Training, were quite comfortable calling it training.

*Principle 1: Training is a sub-set of the wider educational enterprise, which involves equipping people with the resources of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and values to do particular tasks*

Application — In psychodrama training my task is to equip people to use psychodramatic thinking and methods effectively; at first, in their own lives and progressively in the service of others. Thus it involves teaching people the language and thought forms of psychodrama, as pioneered by Dr J. L. Moreno so that they can think psychodramatically. I do this informally in training sessions by using the language, and explaining it as I go, enlivening it with a history or story of Moreno or other leader in the field. It involves skills development, in practice sessions, beginning with small segments of skills and progressively building on the acquisition of increasingly complex orders of mind, movement and eye and ear co-ordination. It also involves attending to the attitudes and values of the trainee helping them to fit the values and attitudes found desirable by the collective training wisdom of the psychodrama movement. I do this by designing the trainees' skills practice sessions to focus on their internal role states which constitute the foundation of their attitudes. There is a little bit of subtle social atom repair work inserted here so the process is an interwoven whole and not bits and pieces.

The CPE movement was counter-cultural. It began as a counter to exclusively seminary based, academic education of ordained ministers of religion. Anton Boison, the acknowledged pioneer of the CPE method, considered that the academic education of the seminary did a great job of enabling the prospective minister/priest/pastor to read and understand the extant documents on which theology was based, but was totally inadequate to prepare men (in those days) to understand the theology of living documents — people. CPE was a life-saving experience for me. It made theology come alive and ministry meaningful for me. I wanted to be able to educate/train others using the method. I too, had found the academic education of the seminary totally inadequate to prepare me to work with people. I wanted to counter that effect in others.

Part of being counter cultural, that is, using a method of educating people for ministry in contrast or opposition to the prevailing mainstream culture of seminary education, was to be anti-academic. Intellectual pursuits such as developing theories and sharing ideas in a wide community of specialist learning through writing and articles and conference papers found little

favour and was given minimal support. CPE developed an oral tradition and an apprentice-type method of handing on knowledge and information. While it was harshly self-critical and robustly self-reflective it did not build a readily accessible written body of knowledge. Within this evolving CPE movement the Institute of Religion was exceptional. It valued some academic discipline in our training and part of the requirements to complete the programme was the attainment of a master's degree. I gained an STM [Master's degree in Sacred Theology] from the Perkins School of Theology at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas, in Pastoral Care with a thesis topic, A Concept of Theological Education Based on the Methods of Clinical Pastoral Education.

*Principle 2: Training is more comprehensive than a book learning process, which involves more than intellectual development by including hands-on activities with people*

Application — In psychodrama training more time is spent by trainees up in the action space engaging with each other, than sitting listening to me, the Trainer, talking to them. Book and literature resources are valuable. The Training Centre is committed to building a good library of available material. The Australasian psychodrama movement also began with some anti-academic dimensions. It now clearly values writing and the accumulation of wisdom and experience in written form as a major vehicle for sharing and spreading information. I seek to encourage trainees to read and enjoy the library resources and to write with pleasure in recording their ideas and experience from early in their training.

Learning to become a CPE supervisor was a process of experiential education conducted in lively forum of discussion and debate with peers and senior staff supervisors. It was hands-on learning. It involved supervision of my supervision, in an intensely focused and demanding relationship. I had to arrange and manage three month long programmes for small groups of up to six seminarians, who I selected for my programme from those enrolling at the Institute of Religion for CPE quarters. These arrangements ranged from getting students parking spaces, chest X-rays to be inducted as honorary hospital staff, a course of lectures from senior hospital staff, to organizing my own curriculum of input information. We

wrote endless verbatims of supervisor encounters, thoroughly analysing the educational, psychological, social and theological dimensions of those relationships with our students. For my final assessment I did have to write a statement of my personal understanding of the methodology of CPE education. Sadly, it is long gone for I would like to compare my ideas of those days with now, for in one form or another, to a greater or lesser degree, I have been an educator/trainer ever since then.

There was not much to draw on from literary sources in those days. I was significantly influenced by the work of Martin Buber, especially his ideas on the educational relationship. There was the work of Miller on new ideas for medical education which I found useful. And there was the Ekstein and Wallerstein (1959) book on supervision. It was an exciting time developing the CPE method. Often we felt like we were making it up as we went along, there was no one else out there who seemed any more knowledgeable. There was always that guiding feature, — it was counter to academic — sit-and-take-notes-at-lectures and read-books-and-write-essays — education. It was an active method of having students engage with people; learning pastoral care by doing pastoral care. Doing, in itself is no assurance of learning. The learning came from reflection on and evaluation of the doing. Both the doing and reflection were assisted and guided by the supervisor. This is a form of experiential education and has been at the heart of my practice ever since.

*Principle 3: Training is experiential education, which involves assisting the trainee to learn by doing: this assistance comes in the form of carefully, intentionally planned experiences for the trainees to do followed by guided reflection and supervision*

Application — In psychodrama training it is my responsibility to plan activities for my trainees to engage in. The stage, or action space in a natural arena for experiential education, on which the trainees act out simple life scenes or situation which I have intentionally selected as experiences to enact. From these enactments I hope they will learn something about psychodrama as a result of the reflection I get them to engage in on what they have just participated in or observed. I cannot control what they may learn. Sometimes trainees will gain an insight or develop a skill which was not in my planning. There is a fortuitous or

serendipitous quality to experiential learning. It is a process in dynamic flow. I have learned to trust the process. From every experience the trainee has, useful learning is potential. It is my task to assist that learning to occur. It is based on an I-Thou quality. The trainee, as Thou, is subject in her/his own right and cannot be manipulated for educational purposes as if they were an object in an I-It relationship. Each trainee is going to bring a unique dimension to the experience I plan for them, and, as in a psychodrama, I must follow their warm-up.

There was something experimental about CPE in those days. Later, after the various programmes around the USA came together under the ACPE, the Association for CPE, it seemed to settle down, standards were drawn up and a commonality of methodology seemed to emerge, while still allowing for idiosyncratic variation. The experimental style was familiar to me from my Agricultural Science days, my first career studies. It was life doing lab work for soil science, the experiments did not always work out as they should in the manual. It did not matter. A great deal could be learned from the failure. It was all part of skills development, getting proficient with the equipment, becoming accomplished with the technology. If the results were a complete disaster the experiment could be repeated. That kind of lab learning was close to CPE. Except, with human subjects — in our situation, hospital patients, there had to be care with how students experimented in doing their pastoral care. Again the presence of supervision was critical to the process. Providing a safe place to experiment, a situation in which failure can be used creatively for learning continues to be part of my educational approach.

*Principle 4: Training is laboratory learning, which involves having a safe place in which to experiment and be repetitious; experimental means outcomes are not predetermined; failures occur and are not unwelcomed; skills and techniques can be perfected before being used on vulnerable subjects*

Application — In psychodrama training I purposefully develop a culture in which there is no shame to making mistakes and not getting it right. This takes some doing in so far as most trainees come to psychodrama training with past experiences of being in educational settings in which they were humiliated for getting things wrong. I encourage the value of “giving it a

go”. Within the first session I have every trainee in the group up in the action space being a protagonist, director and auxiliary, though I do not use those words yet. Trainee’s efforts are rewarded no matter how bumbling. I seek to turn the worst mistakes into a learning opportunity. Even in late stage training when there is a relapse, skills deficiency, or lack of psychodramatic thinking I find it more effective to encourage learning than to criticise in a way which could shame. Shame, with anxiety, is the enemy of spontaneity and creativity, and antithetical to learning. At the same time a mistake, or experimental failure cannot be ignored or denied. I avoid dealing with it sentimentally. The artistry which constantly challenges me is being matter-of-fact without shaming, or provoking anxiety which will reduce the trainee’s readiness to give it a go on the stage.

My next major learning as an educationalist/trainer came through out the early 1970s. I joined the Michigan Episcopal Training Network (METN), and worked my way through the ranks of learning to become of their Trainers of Trainers and explored some of the newly identified methods of Organisational Development with them as an adjunct to some of the course work I was doing at the University of Michigan at the time. METN had refined experiential education, or learning by reflection on doing to a simple code term, EIAG, which stood for the steps in the learning process. This was the learner’s side of the educational relationship: E stood for the experience which the learner was having; I for the process of carefully identifying what had taken place; A was for the process of analyzing what had been identified; and G was the last step of generalizing the learning gained from the experience to other similar situations in the future. This formula gave more focus to the reflective process I was using in CPE.

*Principle 5: Training requires a model of learning which involves some theory or awareness of the process by which people learn on which to base the practice of training*

Application — In psychodrama training I use my awareness of several factors which I believe contribute to effective learning in people. One of these is that learning is more effective when pleasure is involved in the process. These processes are physiological there have to do with brain chemistry and the limbic system. I seek to make my training session enjoyable for the participants. A measure of this is the amount of laughter



and fun which occurs. Another measure is attendance and drop-out rates. I am pleased with this record. Another awareness is different trainees have different learning styles. Each of these differences needs to be noted and allowed for. I use a variety of styles of teaching/training input and behaviour and exercises, talking, demonstrating, whiteboard presentations etc., to cover these different styles. This includes seeking a different relationship style with different trainees, with some more reserved and professional, with some more friendly and intimate. I still use the EIAG model as a basic stepwise procedure when conducting an experiential learning event. It is more incorporated into me now and flows without a mechanical slavishness to the model.

In the Michigan Training Network, on the trainer's side of the learning relationship the formula was DPPE. This was a guiding set of steps in the process of providing an experiential education event, in which:

- *D stood for data.* The procedure began with collecting data about the context and background history; the business contract, budget, resources and site; the organizational authority structure and accountability; the participants their skills base and expectations; and the desired outcome for the whole enterprise.
- *P stood for purpose.* On the basis of the data collected a purpose statement was next prepared declaring what learning achievement the participants, and their sponsors could expect as the outcome of the whole enterprise.
- *The second P stood for Plan.* Within the METN no planning was undertaken until the purpose statement had been finalized. The plan was the total set of activities required to achieve the purpose. Thus the plan could include the advertising and registration program, transport arrangement, accommodations and meals, as well as each teaching input or practice sessions, the deployment of trainers, allocation of room space, the design and preparation of feedback instruments on which to base an evaluation of the whole affair. Each of the experiences the trainee might go through in participating in the event, from travelling in buses, eating meals together, engaging in exercises, was potential grist for the reflective process of EIAG which the trainers facilitated. So each experience was subject to careful planning with the intention of contributing to the overall purpose.

- *The final E of the model stood for evaluation.* No segment of the sequential activities of the total event, nor the total event itself was complete unless the plan included a way of evaluating progress and outcome. Evaluation in this sense meant a continual monitoring of progress toward the achievement of the overall purpose and a readiness to alter the plans to meet the changing circumstances. The findings became new data and the whole DPPE process was recycled as a result, and any appropriate changes made.

This made for an organic flow to an overall event with changes coming in where necessary. In this sense it was an emergent design. The original design grew and changed as the learnings and experiences of the trainees produced more data to influence the design process. This made it client/trainee centred, the opposite of a rigid predetermined timetable of educational activities. I still teach, even within my current emergent design way, following the growth and developmental of the students.

*Principle 6: Training requires a model of planning, which involves the whole process of curriculum development; in this sense a curriculum covers all the dimensions which go into the organization and conducting of a training event*

Application — In psychodrama training at the Auckland Centre for Psychodrama I keep the DPPE model in the back of my head as a guide to my activities, whether as the Acting Director of Training for the whole Centre or as the trainer responsible for one of the two core curriculum groups of 1996. The model is now a guide and not a rigid prescription of my activity. I take some short cuts. When working for METN I was rigorous in collecting data on which to base an evaluation of the progress of events. Now I collect it in informal and subliminal ways. As mentioned I keep some sort of track of the amount of laughter and fun in my training groups, and I watch attendance patterns by marking a roll, and I carry mental notes of the activities of each trainee and I could speak to the person and progress of each, but I do not write formal notes. However, I have an ingrained principle behind my activities.

*Principle 7: Training requires a carefully defined end point which is the beginning point of planning, which involves a clear statement of the outcome of all the training activities, and the planning process is one which suggests the most efficient way, given the available resources, to achieve that goal*

Application — In psychodrama training the end point of the training process has been defined by ANZPA and set out in the Training and Standards Manual (ANZPA, 1993) The basic end point is one of: Role Trainer, Sociometrist, Sociodrama Director, or Psychodrama Director. The personal capabilities, the skills abilities, the professional identity and the knowledge base of each of these attested and certified positions of status have been thoroughly defined or described. I know what I am training people to become. I comfortably subscribe to these end points. As a member of ANZPA I know I am in a democratic position, with other members, to have these definitions changed if I consider it important enough to put the necessary energy into changing them. My training activities are not carried out in a vacuum. There is a context of accountability and collective wisdom in which I practice.

It is on the basis of this end point that I plan how I am going to get my trainees to this goal. I am directly responsible for my immediate 15 trainees for the first year of their journey towards the goal. I also have over-sight of the way in which there are plans, carried out by other trainers in the Training Centre, to assist trainees continue their journey towards the end point. The overall training plan to reach the end point is a minimum of three years spent in training groups up of people who have attained a reasonably comparable level of competence; the core curriculum group, the intermediate group and the advanced group. Each of these three groups covers about the same range of material, at increasing depth or intensity. The core curriculum is in the end point attainments. I have a list of theoretical constructs, and methods which I aim to cover within the year. The actual sequence of the material depends on the nature of the group's life.

*Principle 8: Training proceeds on a trainee-centred basis of emergent design, which involves pacing the trainees' capacity to learn and their warm-up to subject matter*

Application — In psychodrama training, while I have a list of material to be covered within the year (30, three hour sessions), I take the nature of the trainee group into account as a select the next topic for attention. Year by year the composition of these core curriculum groups change. We have no formal selection for admission to them other than “first come first served” up to the numerical limit of the group, i.e., of 16 people. The motivation and purpose for training varies greatly. Sometimes very few begin with any intention to go on to the formal end point of training, certified membership in ANZPA as a director. Many want to use psychodrama to improve their own lives, to contribute to the health of their families and have no intention of using the method in their place of employment. I think this is a fine use of training and give as much attention to these trainees as those who plan to use psychodrama at work. There is a self-selection process which carries seriously intending trainees through to advanced training and eventual assessment. So these factors come together when considering the central groups concern; the group’s history, the trainees’ warm-ups and their purposes for training. This helps me decide the topic, the slant or emphasis I give it, the exercise/experience subjects.

After leaving the USA, in 1975, with an MA in Educational Psychology from the University of Michigan, and Clinical Membership in the International Transactional Analysis Association and as a Trainer of Trainers in the METN, I returned to New Zealand and set up an Educational wing in the Presbyterian Social Services Association, Auckland. In 1977 I began my psychodrama draining. In this training, as well as learning the psychodramatic theories and methods of Dr Moreno, I learned great refinements in my awareness of group theory and process. This new knowledge greatly enhanced my abilities in group leadership, assisted by the supervision and training from my primary trainer, Dr G Max Clayton. Particularly helpful have been the models of Focal Conflict, and Central Concern, as applied to group life.

*Principle 9: Training requires knowledge and skills in group process and leadership<sup>44</sup>*

[44. Unfortunately, this is where the document ends.]

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Part VI

THE  
PSYCHOTHERAPY  
COMMUNITY

# Introduction

## KEITH TUDOR

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- 1971* Evan is elected as a Member of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors
- 1976* He is accepted as a Member of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP)
- 1977* He is elected to the Council of the NZAP and continues to be re-elected to several appointments on the Council until he resigns in 1992 due to ill health
- 1981* He becomes a member of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists & Counsellors
- 1983* He becomes a registered psychologist
- 1985* He spends a year in a work group developing a proposal to establish a psychotherapy training programme at the then Auckland Technology Institute (ATI) (from 1989, the Auckland Institute of Technology)
- 1987* ... a proposal which is endorsed by the chair of the Academic Board of Studies at ATI, and by Dr Basil James, then Director of Mental Health [at the Department of Health], and it is decided to establish a programme of psychotherapy training within the Faculty of Health Studies



1988 He is invited to take up a part time subcontract for his personal services from the Presbyterian Social Services by Yvonne Shadbolt, the Dean of the Faculty of Health Studies, to undertake the necessary preparation in order to begin the program in 1989

He resigns from Presbyterian Support Services

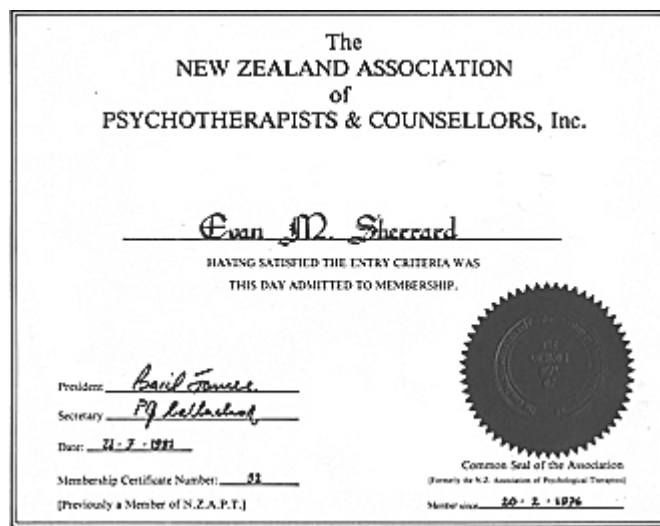
1989-2002 The psychotherapy programme at Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT) is established; in 2000 AIT becomes Auckland University of Technology (AUT); Evan is contracted (on a part-time basis) to be the course Co-ordinator and one of the foundational teachers, a position he holds until 2002

1991 He is awarded honorary life membership of the NZAP

2009 He becomes a registered psychotherapist with the Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (PBANZ)

2010 He resigns as a registered psychotherapist

2011 He publishes a chapter arguing against the state regulation of psychotherapy.



*Certificate. Membership of The New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists and Counsellors, 1981 (Member since 1976)*

The first chapter in this Part comprises two papers Evan wrote, the first a relatively early (and unpublished) paper on the nature of authority in counselling, and the second, a chapter on the registration of psychotherapists and, more broadly, the regulation of psychotherapy (Chapter 13). This is followed by a chapter in which, following Evan's citation for Honorary Life Membership of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, a number of colleagues in the field, profession, and discipline of psychotherapy provide their memories of and reflections on Evan and his contribution to psychotherapy in New Zealand; and concludes with the eulogy Jonathan Fay gave at Evan's funeral (Chapter 14).

## *Chapter 13*

### Two papers on counselling and psychotherapy

EVAN M. SHERRARD

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#### **The nature of authority in counselling (1966)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — Talk given March/April 1966 to the Otago Divisional Branch of the New Zealand Association of Social Workers.]

I have chosen this topic, which at first might seem quite academic and abstract, to share with you my own philosophy underlying my counselling procedures and to tell you what we are planning to do at First Church [Dunedin].

The concept of authority is a most difficult concept to define. You are probably asking yourselves, “By what authority does he stand there speaking on this subject at all?” Well, first I only stand here because I’ve been invited to. I have the right to stand and speak only because you have given it to me. So this is one of the elements in authority: that a person is entitled to certain rights and privileges because they have been conferred on them. Thus I am privileged to speak to you tonight because I am entitled to by right of your invitation.

While you have every confidence in those of your own number who select and invite your speakers this doesn’t mean that you are thereby obliged to

be impressed by what the speaker says. So that we come to a second element in authority: “Why?” you could and should ask yourselves, “Why should we take any notice of what he says about this subject of counselling? What competency has he got to speak on it? Has he been invited because he knows all about counselling?” Heaven forbid.

No, all I can claim in answer to the unspoken questions you should be asking me is that I have spent two years in advanced study overseas in the field of pastoral care which included a considerable emphasis on counselling. This study was not designed to give all the answers, instead we were introduced to a broad range of counselling philosophies and methods, to different schools of psychology, psychiatry, and sociology. We were taught to be critical and to evaluate, and we were given supervised practice. To recognise my study, the Institute of Religion, in the Texas Medical Centre at Houston awarded me a certificate of proficiency and I earned a Master’s degree at the Southern Methodist University. This is the second element in authority; recognition of various levels of the attainment of proficiency by some reputable institution.

“But,” you might say — with a proper degree of caution — “so what! Degrees and certificates from Texas, what do they amount to?” We come to a third element in authority: a very subjective element for it depends on how you regard and how you value these external symbols of value — and the institutions which give them. Some might feel that Texas is a place of such brash boastfulness that its value as a place of learning or its reliability as a source of recognition does not amount to much. Some might feel that only British training is valid. Some might feel that only those with a Freudian outlook are to be trusted. Our own feelings greatly influence the extent of authority we accord to anyone. This, the Indian, who returned to his homeland, well knew. For his fellow countrymen his experiences at an English university held such prestigious value that he was sufficiently rewarded when he signed his name with the following letters: “B.A.(Oxon) failed”!

One more element influencing authority can be illustrated thus: let us suppose that you are satisfied by the validity and worthwhileness of the recognition given to my study in Texas, as I hope you are. You should still ask the questions, “Yes, but what experience has he had? How capable is he of carrying out the qualifications which he has on paper? Has he also been

schooled in the university of hard knocks and learned something from his tuition or is his only book learning and theory?” To these questions I can only say that I have not had much opportunity to earn long service badges.

This element in authority is really the quality of consistency. It revolves around the simple test — is he all that he claims? Is there a consistency between the recognition and the position conferred upon him by his place of learning and the place he has been invited and entitled to fill and what he is, in fact, able to do? Does he measure up? On the other hand, there are people who are very capable and competent who have no formal learning, who never qualified for any degrees or certificates, and who, to those what they have done and can do, are listened to with great respect because they carry the authority of competency.

I hope you have not been offended by the personal references in my attempt to define authority — this most difficult word, because it seemed an opportunity to serve two purposes: to illustrate the meaning of “authority” and to introduce myself, at least a little. It is not always wise to attempt two things at the same time so let me sum up what I mean by authority. True authority has these four elements about it:

1. Certain rights and privileges are conferred upon a person placed in a position of authority by a wider group or an individual who is empowered to entitle this to happen.
2. This authority is dependent on certain recognised levels of proficiency being attained, whether of academic standards or of length and experience of service.
3. This authority conferred and recognised must be held in esteem in the feelings of people.
4. True authority is finally judged by the consistency demonstrated between the authority vested in a person and recognised in qualifications and that person’s ability to actually carry out what he is authorised to do.

## **Once was a psychotherapist (2011)<sup>2</sup>**

[2. Ed. — Originally published as a chapter in Tudor, K. (Ed.). (2011). *The turning tide: Pluralism and partnership in psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 119-125). Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand: LC Publications.]

I confess I have done a “uie”. In some circles doing a “uie” or a “u-turn” on a stand one has taken is considered a sign of unreliability, of inconsistency, of fickleness, and is used against one. So, for me to admit to having done a uie may be unwise. Given my strong support for statutory registration of psychotherapists since the late 1970s, it may appear somewhat ironic to have been invited to write this contribution. However, now that registration is here, I have turned full (or half) circle, and have huge concerns about State control of my life-long profession. Let me explain my early support and my present alarm which has led to my u-turn.

## **BAD PRACTICE**

### *The Psychotherapy and Hypnotherapy Institute of New Zealand, Inc*

Back in the late 1970s in Auckland we had people setting up psychotherapy practices of doubtful quality. One such was the Psychotherapy and Hypnotherapy Institute of New Zealand, Inc. (PHINZ) which, while successfully offering “stop smoking” treatments, also sponsored a theory that, in private, all women push their new born children’s heads and faces against their perineum or vulva and all fathers make penile oral penetration of their newborn. Such behaviour is obviously repellent and socially taboo. The theory suggested that, in order to manage the conflict (between this theoretical perspective and the social taboo), all women and men consign any memory of their totally unacceptable actions to their deepest unconscious. This memory denial and suppression was claimed to be recoverable by hypnotherapy, and the social-emotional conflict resolvable by psychotherapy. Understandably, as this teaching in the PHINZ curriculum became known in increasingly wider circles beyond the Institute, it was viewed with repugnance. Some of those who found it difficult to dismiss it as nonsense became seriously disturbed and the media of the day began to report incidents of very distressed women. As a result, both hypnotherapy and psychotherapy got a bad press. In those days in New Zealand both counselling and psychotherapy were little understood or appreciated and were regarded as on the professional fringe. As members of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists and Counsellors, as it was then called, prior to it returning to the more exclusive New Zealand

Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) in 1987 (see Dillon, 2011), we were struggling to gain respect, credibility and public acceptance. PHINZ did not help us.

### *Centrepoint*

What is perhaps better generally remembered or known is Bert Potter's claim to be a psychotherapist. He claimed his whole Centrepoint enterprise was basically a residential psychotherapeutic community. To begin with, Potter's stated vision for the Shoreline Human Awareness Trust, the precursor to Centrepoint, won favourable response in many quarters, Dr Bill McLeod, Professor of Psychiatry at Auckland Medical School, being one. The supportive, accepting nature of the community and some of Potter's interventions produced beneficial outcomes for a number of individuals, and the vision seemed to be working.

However, it was not long after the Centrepoint community was established on site in Albany in 1977 before reports came in which disturbed some members of the (then) New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, Counsellors and Behaviour Therapists. The ethic of confidentiality meant the concern was only shared in the most general of terms between those few who were privileged to learn at first hand about some of the abusive activities. A full picture was not available. The victims were urged to make formal complaint but, in general, and for various reasons, they refused. To whom could these adults complain? Potter refused to make himself accountable to anyone as he pursued his narcissistic course toward God-like status, and the engagement of adults in his treatment prescriptions was between consenting parties. It was only much later that the abuse of children emerged, which gave the police the right to take action.

One incident I recall was reported in the media at the time. It was the suicide of a young woman who was living in the community. From memory she left a note expressing her dismay and discouragement. At the time my interpretation, based on what I was hearing, was that Bert Potter had not chosen to favour her with his most potent therapeutic intervention to overcome her psychological barrier to full living (i.e. her sexual inhibitions) by taking her to bed. This interpretation was confirmed for me when Potter made his infamous response at a morning session at an annual NZAP

conference held in Auckland, in the early/mid 1980s. Anxious to gain the support of the Southern members of the Association for urgent action on registration of the title “psychotherapist”, we held a morning session for the membership which comprised a variety of people in Auckland calling themselves psychotherapists who were invited to explain their theory and practice.

In those days anybody could hang out a shingle claiming to be a psychotherapist and many in Auckland were doing so. We wanted our Southern associates to appreciate what we were up against in Auckland and recognise the damage to our profession by people such as Bert Potter, who was one invited to speak. He showed his true colours and, with complete disregard for the impact he was having on conference members, explained his psychotherapeutic belief and practice of the benefits of sexual intercourse with clients. He was asked if this meant he had sexual activity with all women members of Centrepoin. A silence followed, during which he was goaded by one questioner about his silence, to which he replied that he was thinking if he could remember any with whom he had not had sex. Uproar followed in the lecture theatre and later. Powerless to do anything about Potter’s offensive grandiosity, some Association members displaced their anger onto the conference arrangements committee. Our scheme backfired and we were roundly condemned for giving the likes of Potter a platform because, it was thought, the invitation implied that the Association was giving them endorsement. Already, in 1983, it had been resolved that: “The Association affirms that sexual intercourse between counsellor/therapist and their clients/patients is incompatible with the clinical aims of this organisation” (see Manchester & Manchester, 1996, p. 77). It was considered that we had no need to hear from Bert Potter in order to condemn his practice. However, the point we were seeking to make, that psychotherapy was gaining a bad name in Auckland and people were being damaged by its so-called practice, was side-tracked.

### *NZAP, regulation and registration*

It was against this background that the need for registration of psychotherapists was a focus of attention within the NZAP for several years in the early 1980s. Some of the details can be followed in the Manchesters’ (1996) book about the *NZAP: Notes Towards a History: A Chronology of*



*the First Fifty Years 1947-1997*. I cannot recall any major opposition to the perceived need for registration as protection for the public from highly suspect practice from self-claimed practitioners and professionals. Looking back, in those days, we presumed that registration would give a protection to the title “psychotherapist” and that only those registered would be able to use it. There would be protection from misrepresentation, just as doctors and nurses were protected from any unauthorised person using those titles. Registration would stop just anyone from hanging up their shingle. With registration would go a process of careful selection of those who could be registered; ongoing supervision as a means of ensuring accountability; a requirement for continuing professional development; and a mechanism for resolving complaints. It seemed a taken-for-granted assumption that registration was desirable and, at successive annual general meetings of the NZAP, progress towards this end was reported, and those working to implement it were supported and encouraged. We looked to the progress of the registration of psychologists for models of how to go about getting the appropriate legislation. We also considered that publishing a list of our membership could assist the public. One of our past Presidents, Dr Basil James, was made the Director of Mental Health, and was in a good position to assist and advise on the process. It was in this context that psychiatrist, Dr Robyn Hewland, President of the NZAP in 1986, through her networking and political skills, hoped she had the numbers in the House of Representatives to introduce the necessary Bill for the registration of psychotherapists. However, a radical change in the political climate in favour of the notion of the free market and the disestablishment of regulatory controls in general dashed those hopes. I remember the suggestion that dentistry would be deregulated, allowing the free market forces to determine the best dentists, and that consumers would avoid the worst as open competition revealed them. Although public outcry at this particular suggestion dissuaded politicians from such radical experimentation, the climate was against the introduction of any more controls. It was to be years before the introduction of the *Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003* (“the *HPCCA*” or “the *Act*”) opened the door to fresh moves by the NZAP for registration. This Act “provides a framework for the regulation of health practitioners in order to protect the public where there is a risk of harm from the practice of the profession.” (Ministry of Health [MoH], 2010) It was an Act which seemed

to meet our concerns to protect the public from the risk of harm, but I did not see the fish hooks in this specific piece of legislation.

## **PROBLEMS WITH REGISTRATION**

### *Notions of protection*

So it was that the NZAP worked toward the establishment of registration for psychotherapists under the *HPCAA* and eventually this was achieved. However, I have been deeply dismayed and disappointed by what has eventuated. With the perspicacity of hindsight the situation is accurately described in the operative words in the above quotation: the Act provides a framework for the regulation of [psychotherapist] practitioners, a point which the MoH (2010) acknowledges (see Tudor, 2011b). What a framework it is turning out to be: cast-iron, inflexible, and totally regulatory of practitioner psychotherapists, based on patterns of regulations taken from sources quite outside our profession. It is a framework made by and for bureaucrats. It is based on the notion of protecting the public by regulating the practice of registered practitioners by bureaucratic administrators. Back in the 1980s, within the Association, I believe that our notion of protecting the public was to use registration as a way of excluding unqualified practitioners damaging people. No doubt Potter would have kept up his enterprise to feed his narcissism but he would have had to limit his hat to that of a spiritual leader as he damaged people. I think there is a very important distinction in these two notions of protecting the public. The NZAP's concept of protecting the public was and, I think, still is based on trusting the professional (while accepting that a few are unreliable). The state's notion of protecting the public, as enshrined in the Act is based on not trusting the professional. My first main intimation of this distrust was in the correspondence with the Registrar of the Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand ("the Board") in the process of obtaining registration. Towards the end of each message there was a warning that if I was to do any of the activities defined in the scope of practice of psychotherapy without being registered or having an Annual Practising Certificate (APC) I would be practicing outside the law. Having a big stick waved at me was outside the ethos and culture of the psychotherapy I had ever experienced. A new spirit was abroad.

## *Bureaucracy*

The new spirit is the bureaucratisation of the administration of registration. It seems to me that a motivating drive with bureaucrats is the need to cover themselves from criticism. They are liable to the wrath of their political masters and to rage and condemnation from a dissatisfied public. One way to avoid potential punishment is to do everything according to the rules and regulations. As I write this a perfect example presents itself, as reported by Rudman (2010). In 2007 the Charities Commission was set up with “the main purpose of improving the transparency and accountability of the charitable sector by registering and monitoring charitable organisations” (p. A11). I suppose this was to protect the public-tax payers from dubious charities seeking donations and a tax exempt status. What are the rules and definitions determining what constitute a charitable organisation entitling it to be registered? It turns out that in New Zealand this is governed by a British law enacted in 1601 known as the Statute of Elizabeth. This 400 year old law is used by the Charities Commission to judge what organisations in New Zealand in the 21st century are truly charitable and can be registered, and it seems the National Council of Women is ruled out because its purposes are “not sufficiently close to the spirit and intent of those purposes listed in the preamble to the Statute of Elizabeth”. Interestingly, in the UK the list of purposes in that preamble has been brought up-to-date, and the National Council of Women would be a charity in that country, while here in New Zealand rules based on 400 year old definitions from another country are used to rule against along and well-established organisation. Can the Charities Commission be faulted? No. Are they to be admired? Yes. They are simply being bureaucrats.

My concern about the state having any sort of control over the practice of psychotherapy comes from my observation that state involvement means bureaucratisation. The whole system is set up by a bureaucracy: the MoH; and the registration Board has been established through the Act (Section 115) — by the MoH. This Board controls the practice of registered psychotherapy by administering the rules and regulations laid down under the Act. The Board comprises professional psychotherapists and lay members representing the public and are accountable to the Minister of Health. I know several of the professional members of the Board. I acted as a referee to one and supported others in their selection for membership and

have talked intimately with them. They are wise, intelligent and experienced people, but they have become bureaucratized. The system does this to them.

My experience of becoming registered as a psychologist through a grandparenting process on the basis of my MA from the University of Michigan as an educational psychologist was very different. Then the Psychologists' Board was relaxed and slow moving in getting the process up and running. They recognised they were introducing a new process and took it slowly to bring people on board, only gradually bringing in stricter requirements and regulations. I expected there would be this sort of gentle introduction to the transition of registering psychotherapists, with some degree of flexibility and allowance for special circumstances until such time as more uniformity was developed across the profession, with senior practitioners moving on, and younger ones coming in meeting all the newly introduced requirements. Times are different now, post *HPCAA*, with all the rules and regulations and definitions of scope of practice firmly in place from the outset, no transition needed or growing into what it means to be registered, mechanistic not relational. I understand the Board has been and is instructed on what it can and cannot do, and what it must do in its functioning. There has been no growing into its role like the original Psychologists' Board, learning from experience what was needed to guide the practice of the profession. The Psychotherapists' Board, as the other "responsible authorities" established under the Act, must follow the directives of the Ministry. I assumed the members of the Board had been selected for their wisdom and competence to make decisions on the basis of case by case situations. An additional problem is the presence of career "lay" Board members (see Tudor, 2011a). But, no, I have learned that this function would create precedents and precedents must not be set because they can cause difficulty in the future. The Board appears to have no or little power of discretion, or the will to exercise what powers they do have and of being able to make allowances due to changing circumstances (see Chapter 2 and Bibliography). One size made in the Act has to fit all. The Board has been made aware that its members exist at the pleasure of the Minister. The Minister may at any time for any reason replace a Board member. Board members without any security of tenure are disempowered from acting autonomously and end up functioning bureaucratically.

Members of the Board serve at the Minister's pleasure and, it seems that they are overly concerned about incurring the Minister's displeasure.

### *Culture clash*

State power of control of this sort is inconsistent with the emancipatory purposes of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy aims to free people from the bondage of pathological psychodynamics and help them find autonomy and act with full awareness of their inner and outer world in healthy, socially appropriate, creative spontaneity in each circumstance. The system set up under the *HPCAA* for control of the practice of psychotherapy operates on bureaucratic values in a culture which seriously clash with the values and culture of the profession. The rigid ethos and culture of bureaucracy is antithetical to the living practice of therapy in which the therapist risks journeying on an unknown path to health with the client. The Ministry was founded on the medical model. In this approach, once a diagnosis of the bodily condition is established, and the normative treatment of choice is applied, any exception to this route must be carefully defended. This model is not applicable to psychotherapy. Even if a definitive diagnosis can be made of a person's psycho-social condition, treatment outcome research indicates that it depends on the very idiosyncratic human quality of the interpersonal relationship established between therapist and client, and not on a normative set of treatment procedures. Psychotherapists must feel free to go on the journey to health along a path which suits them and their patient best, and not a route prescribed by an official authority — or "responsible authority". This clash of fundamental world views alarms me. It is no assurance that the politicians who pass Acts such as *HPCAA* tell us to have no fear because Ministry officials know the intent of the Act and, as public servants, they will administer it carefully. Such assurance was given by Prime Minister, Helen Clark at the time the Charities Commission was being set up, when alarm was sounded by the National Council of Women, that if they voiced opposition to Government policies and action it could mean the cutting of tax-free charity status. The assurance of politicians has been no safeguard for them. Here is a scenario. Is it possible that Ministry officials decide, as they have done in the UK, that cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is the preferred modality of treatment and must be included in all psychotherapists' repertoire of skills in order to be registered? In a

recent conversation a senior, experienced practitioner was telling me of a referral he received from a GP in order to provide his patient with CBT. “You can do CBT?” he was asked. He gave an affirmative reply but suggested that, once having met the patient, his assessment might mean CBT was not the modality of choice, whereupon the GP declared that he was sending his patient for CBT or nothing. No doubt CBT is effective for many patients, but it is not a universal panacea. What if the Ministry gets to think like that GP over some particular approach to treatment, and requires it to become the norm? Is it too alarmist to fear the bureaucrats responsible for the practice of psychotherapy could ever get to act like those bureaucrats in the ACC over claims for assistance in cases of sexual abuse? Having seen the straws in the wind I do not think it is too alarmist, rather not alarmist enough.

## **ENDING**

Thus I have made a complete u-turn over the statutory control of psychotherapy. I have registered as a psychotherapist with the PBANZ, but I am no longer paying my APC fee. This means I am prohibited by law from indicating in any way that I am a psychotherapist. I am making the prohibition very clear, everywhere, today, by saying I am not a psychotherapist and I “once was a psychotherapist”. Thus, I have made a u-turn, changing from advocating statutory registration to being opposed to it. I still strongly believe in the need for psychotherapists to be registered, that is, for them to have their names accepted for inclusion on a register of approved names which is available to the public. This register would be recognised by the state by some statutory or legislative means but not regulated by a statutory body like the MoH and its PBANZ. I think all psychotherapists should make themselves accountable for their professional practice, undertake regular supervision, and ongoing continuing education in their field. Such a process of registration requires management and this must not be done by a statutory agency for the reasons offered above.

## **PUBLIC STATUTE**

Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003

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*Chapter 14*

Reflections on Evan  
and his contribution to the  
psychotherapy community in New Zealand  
A. ROY BOWDEN, JONATHAN FAY, ROBYN HEWLAND,  
PETER HUBBARD, SHEILA LARSEN, SEÁN MANNING,  
THE NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF  
PSYCHOTHERAPISTS, AND HELEN PALMER

---

**Citation for the Award of Life Membership (1991)**

*From New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists*

THE NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

*Te Roopuu Whakaora Hinengaro*



*HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD*



Evan Sherrard was awarded Life Membership of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists in 1992 for outstanding services to psychotherapy. His influence is evident in the Association, his contribution to training in a range of settings, the practice of his trainees and supervisees and the lives of people who have benefited from his skill and compassion.

Evan trained primarily in Client Centered Rogerian Pastoral Counselling in Houston, Texas during the 1960s. In the 1970s he qualified in Transactional Analysis and in the 1980s in Psychodrama. He has been a member NZAP since February 1976; and from 1977 as the first Northern Regional Convenor was active in maintaining the branch at a time when ethical concerns and conflicts had left many with low energy for NZAP. Evan served on the NZAP Council during the 1980s; was Chair of Admissions in the early 1980s; and with Peter McGeorge, Joan Chappel, Bruce Hucker and others, was involved in writing the first NZAP Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Procedure. In 1986 while Evan was Chair of Admissions the Association made a significant change to the Admissions procedure. Evan used the International Transactional Analysis assessment procedure as a starting point for designing a New Zealand model for the assessment of interpersonal psychotherapeutic competency; and the current assessment processes are a refinement of those established by Evan and his Committee.

During his time on Council the Association experienced major challenges from people purporting to practise psychotherapy, whose practice and ethics were a cause of much concern to senior NZAP members. Evan spearheaded a strong ethical stance by the Association involving among other things responding to a complaint against the Association to the Human Rights Commission. This process was costly to him in time and energy. It led to increased clarity within the Association about professional standards and the ongoing monitoring these, as well as constitutional changes to reduce the financial vulnerability of the Association and its members to such charges.

Training of psychotherapists has been a major focus for Evan. In collaboration with Joan Dallaway he developed the experientially based training model of Clinical Pastoral Education for use at Presbyterian Support (Northern) Human Development Team. when in 1986 he wrote and developed the first Tertiary Psychotherapy training course at Auckland Technical Institute (now Auckland University of Technology), with Joan Dallaway, Peter McGeorge and John Harre.

This course was approved by Basil James, Director of Mental Health, on behalf of the Ministry. This was ground breaking in New Zealand and has become the basis of training in other Tertiary educational centres in New Zealand.

A value held strongly by Evan has been to see work to be done and do it, keeping himself in the background, with no interest in any personal kudos. Yet for many it is the man rather than the deeds that is foreground. In his life time of work for humankind, as pastoral counsellor, chaplain, minister of the Presbyterian Church, educator, and psychotherapist, perhaps Evan's greatest gift is his person, warmth and integrity, humility, passion, humour and love.

President: *R C Broadmore* Date: 2/3/07

***A. Roy Bowden writes***

The New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists has an international reputation for building a membership which includes therapists from a variety of professions. Evan Sherrard joined the Association after first training as a Presbyterian church minister. He could have separated his career as a clergyman from his role as a therapist but his strong commitment to that which is unknown as well as that which is known was a unique gift to clients, colleagues, and both professions.

When I first met Evan we had heard each other's names mentioned by colleagues who were both counsellors and clergy. I was aware of Evan as a leader in the newly emerging counselling profession. He first approached me during a break in proceedings at the national conference of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists. We were soon talking about the pastoral theologian Revd Dr David Williams who introduced "client-centred therapy" to New Zealand. In theological college David taught me how to match a revised theology with therapeutic skills I have retained as fundamental and Evan knew Dave Williams well. After discussion with Evan that day I recognised he touched my spiritual self without wanting me to prove my ideas or my competence. His demeanour was one of affirmation, curiosity, and total acceptance. When he challenged my ideas I was left feeling suitably disturbed and loved. Prior to becoming a psychotherapist I had resigned from the Methodist ministry. Whenever I met Evan I was affected by the way he remained within the Presbyterian ministry yet stood alongside those of us who had relinquished our role as "pastors".

The term "pastoral counselling" described innovative attempts by Christian churches to meet the psychological needs of parishioners. Prior to the advent of counselling methods clergy relied almost entirely on prayer, preaching, and the words of scripture to "heal the soul". Evan was a pioneer in the pastoral counselling movement in New Zealand and younger counsellors like myself had followed his creative initiatives from a distance. We needed mentors like Evan who would "keep on keeping on" when theological imperatives were being challenged by psychological insights. Clergy were accepted into the new counselling profession often without question because they were viewed as practitioners who cared. Evan and I had conversations about that over the years that followed. The complexities inherent in combining what was known as a "calling from God to reach out

to people” with the rigour required to become a competent therapist needed to be mapped with perception. In this regard I found Evan to be a colleague who could stand firm and not bow to compromise. He became one of the few clergy-therapist colleagues with the ability to weave strong principles into the midst of two caring professions.

When Evan described his thoughts during and after his theological training I wished I had known him in those days. Very early in his career he was invested in a training which included psychotherapeutic theory from pioneers such as Freud, Jung, Skinner and Adler.

At the Bayliss School of Medicine (a School Associated with the Institute of Religion in Texas), he appreciated lectures on human pathology and physiology. Those lectures overlapped with psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine. He could have chosen to restrict his knowledge to the breadth and depth of theological insights but he perceived the whole person could only be served if his vision was expansive. I have since become more certain that clergy and therapists are most effective when challenging paradigms are not dismissed but accepted as food for the soul.

Evan and I often connected at conferences sharing the impact of movements which dominated psychotherapy and theology at different stages. It seemed we both had inclinations to investigate the way therapeutic approaches complemented or rejected the world of the unknown. Aspects of life and death which had never been explained had a strong influence on our professional and personal relationships.

I recall speaking with Evan after he led NZAP members through a particularly harrowing conference. He gathered us in a large group and chartered a loving way forward. He sought me out and wondered whether a sense of the divine, a sense of the unknown, might have been more efficacious than his focus on strong emotions within the large group. I suggested he had carried that spiritual sense into the situation just by being himself. He was not so sure, preferring to give way to profound humility.

The movement known as “Encounter” once shook the very heart of the Association. It was an era when almost every rule for human behaviour and human relationships was being dismantled, questioned and subject to radical change. Evan was a leader within the Association and central to processes that kept the membership safe from serious challenges. As I

watched from the side lines I was aware that human understanding and a strong spiritual sense were both crucial in this time of turmoil. Evan held those two elements together with a quiet insistence.

When Evan agreed to a conversation with me for a book about the journeys of NZAP members he recalled his training at the Institute of Religion in Texas. He said, “The course blew me away and was a huge cultural shock but I was very impressed with the tutors and the learning.” He was engaged to attend to patients in a hospital setting and quoted his tutors who said, “Here is your corner of the hospital, go and provide pastoral care.” He was then required to write verbatim accounts of conversations with patients. Each verbatim was subject to review with questions from tutors such as, “Why did you say that? What did you hear the patient saying to you? What were you both feeling? How does the conversation relate to your theology?” Evan said, “This is what I need, this is gold”, and he wrote back to the New Zealand church saying he would stay for the time it would take to absorb the new knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

The account is an early indication he was yearning to match his beliefs with intensely personal and effective ways to assist people. He knew that psychological struggles were mixed with the desire to understand life and death by connecting with that which is called spiritual. Evan said:

“I have kept pace with the psychosomatic spiritual dimension of healing. I get in touch with infinity rather than stay with a finite view of who we are. I have a view of humanity that is more expansive than just a body-mind view. There is more to us than that and it is the piece that allows a bit of mystery.”

The enlightening words Evan used on many occasions within the life of the NZAP are remembered because they were offered by a man with great presence. Every now and then I have met theologians and therapists who capture my attention because their words match that which is held securely in their mind and heart. I was drawn to Evan because of his integrity in that regard.

The way therapists are present with people is not often discussed, but is, in the end, the element that makes the most difference. If that human presence is combined with a constant awareness of the unknown, people are held within a spiritual environment that is life changing. I recognised that

combination in Evan. Words were often not necessary; he spoke to many, even when he was not speaking.

It was no surprise to learn that throughout his career Evan was engaged in endeavours which were multi-faceted. He was a transactional analysis practitioner and a practitioner-teacher with perceptive insights into other approaches to therapy. He managed agencies within the structured environment of the Presbyterian Church treading carefully when “sacred met secular” and authoritarian measures ignored desires for freedom.

He stood within an academic world impacted by accountability measures making sure students would be nourished as well as informed. I recall being involved in a spontaneous early conversation with Evan and Lewis Lowery (a former president of NZAP). We were sharing ideas regarding the proposal to establish psychotherapy training at the Auckland Institute of Technology (now Auckland University of Technology). At first it seemed strange that three theologically trained practitioners would be discussing a diploma programme to train psychotherapists, but there was an important thread winding its way through our contributions leading us to contemplate more than psychological theory and therapeutic skills. It had to do with selecting and encouraging students who could reach beyond certainty and frameworks into more philosophical arenas which might be called spiritual. I have sometimes reflected on that meeting as the course in Auckland moved through changes which were dependent on the ethos of each stage in its development. Evan was an advocate for something more expansive in education. He wanted learning to be visionary because of his awareness that visions were integral to human endeavour.

Evan was also a force in the establishment of a *Code of Ethics* for the NZAP and when he spoke with me he remembered insisting the Code should draw attention to competence whilst being monitored with compassion. Evan would advocate for competent and compassionate psychotherapy practice at every conference he attended. He was a spiritual leader within conference settings calling attention to the dawning of a new day and providing quiet contemplation when our minds needed rest.

During my presidency of NZAP (1998-2000), wise members offered me helpful advice. Evan’s words to me stayed with me on occasions when conflict or confusion dominated meetings. He said, “Remember what it was

like when you had a congregation Roy. Every member needs pastoral care even when they are making life difficult for you and those around them.” That advice, offered with a smile, eased my anxiety on many occasions.

I have known clergy and therapists who have been supervised by Evan. They have appreciated his ability to add dimensions which challenged their psychological and spiritual understandings. It seemed he was never a clergyperson and then a therapist; both arenas were combined in his practice and in his way of being. When I asked Evan how he could enter complex psychoanalytic or psychodynamic discussions without being captured by a secular ethos he reminded me the ability to demythologise or reinterpret language was a crucial skill. He also drew my attention to the importance of developing a belief system capable of encompassing different world views.

The NZAP has recently been contemplating the place of “elders” within the life of the Association. Evan’s stature was acknowledged in his Life Membership Award and it is important to note his contribution represented an expansive view of what it means to be a psychotherapist. Perhaps his contemplation of all that affects the human condition and all that reaches beyond what is known will be remembered as a guide for the future.

Evan’s words are both comforting and challenging for us all:

“There are mysterious things we cannot account for. I can’t account for some of the transpersonal experiences I have but I trust in my own unconscious wisdom and let it emerge from me. There is a mystery here. I don’t know what lies beyond and it does not bother me if there is nothing or if there is something.”

### ***Helen Palmer and Peter Hubbard write***

We met Evan when we joined the NZAP Supervisors group in 1991. We began an enjoyable collegial relationship with Evan, that had many permutations over the years. He was Helen’s supervisor in the early 1990s, and she feels fortunate to have experienced his knowledge not only as a clinician, but also as a trainer and educator. Our teaching methodology at the Institute of Psychosynthesis NZ is grounded in experiential learning, and Evan (along with Joan Dallaway) was ensuring that the psychotherapy

programme at AIT (now AUT) had as much an experiential component as they could manage to have within the academic setting. He understood the necessity of developing a whole-body psyche understanding, as well as acknowledging existential and spiritual concerns and experience.

In 1995, Evan wrote a letter to the psychotherapy community of New Zealand, articulating his concerns that there was a privileging of what was being called psychodynamic psychotherapy that was not inclusive of approaches such as psychosynthesis. He pointed out that psychodynamic was not a word that could be claimed exclusively by a psychoanalytic approach, and that we needed to stay true to the founding intention of NZAP. We do have core competencies that we agree on, and Evan's experience and contribution to articulating what these are was significant. He had a breadth of theoretical knowledge of different modalities and a depth of human understanding, underpinned by his generous heart and passion for psychotherapy, from which we have all benefitted.

Helen remembers the first time she chaired an NZAP assessment panel. Evan was one of the panellists, and she assumed that he would chair the interview. He had great delight in encouraging her to step up, reassuring her that if she lost her way he would be able to get the process back on track. This was a typical Evan strategy, facilitating people to become more of who they could be.

With pleasure, we invited Evan to become the External Moderator for the Institute in 2008. The skill set we need for this position is complex. The person needs to be an experienced clinician, respectful of psychosynthesis as a psychospiritual psychology; have educational understanding; knowledge of training process and protocols; administrative awareness; and strategic political nous. He more than fulfilled the brief, and was a highly valued member of our quality assurance team for four years.

In 2012, we witnessed the egregious treatment of Evan by the Psychotherapists' Board.<sup>2</sup> We were appalled that our treasured and respected elder, who had so whole-heartedly served the development of the profession and practice of psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand, was treated with such punitive disrespect. We were faced with the challenging situation of discussing with Evan the pragmatic difficulties it posed for us if he were to continue as the Institute's Moderator. With his unfailing grace,

he reassured us that he well understood our dilemma, thanked us for the honour of being involved with the Institute in the role, and resigned.

[2. Ed. — See Tudor, K. (2012). Ebb and flow: One year on from The turning tide: Pluralism and partnership in psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, 10(2), 170-177]

We are so grateful that we continued to connect with Evan from time to time — even as he dealt with his health issues with dignity and courage, he had a twinkle in his eyes and a zest for life. We mourn his passing and miss him still.

### ***Seán Manning writes***

#### **THE MAN WHO BROUGHT AN ATHEIST CLOSE TO GOD: A SHORT TRIBUTE TO EVAN SHERRARD**

Of all the workshops, all the lectures, training events, training groups, personal development exercises, consultations and such over the almost 30 years I have studied and practiced psychotherapy, among the many gems, the epiphanies and hurdles overcome, there are some that, even in that elevated company of brilliant teachers, stand out clear as the morning sun in my memory. Evan Sherrard's diagram of God<sup>3</sup> is one of those.

[3. Ed. — See third paper in Chapter 10.]

He was the only one who, in attempting to train me, was inclusive and expansive to enough to attempt a psychotherapy analysis of the divine. I have a photo somewhere of a workshop Evan ran at a transactional analysis residential training event somewhere, diagramming God with circles and arrows. I wish I could find it, so I could reproduce his whiteboard drawing, but the details are gone. Perhaps it is better this way, so that what remains is more the man than the theory.

Of course he was a minister of religion as well as a psychotherapist. Whether he believed in a sentient spirit in charge of the universe I could never quite make out — he was, I believe, deliberately vague on the subject — but he certainly made the idea interesting. He would have talked about idealised parental projections, the sort of thing TA trainers are fond of, a way to share an optimistic approach to life with a lot of people, a way to



providing an arsenal of useful concepts with which to defend ourselves against the unfairness and battery of everyday, and not-so-everyday, life.

Evan was a man to be close to in troubled times. He was a person who had that quality that just being in the same room could be calming. Of course he would say that one creates this oneself, using whoever is around, and in this way he could be elusive, making it difficult to identify the quality he brought to us. There is a perspective, I believe, among Calvinists, that God created people for aesthetic reasons, that God enjoys people. If that were the case (borrowing here from novelist Marilynne Robinson<sup>4</sup>), Evan would be a man whom God would enjoy. Evan's take on his own TA analysis of God was that however accurate he was, God probably would not mind. What a dear man.

[4. From an interview with Kim Hill, 30th August, 2009, NZ Radio *Saturday Morning*.]

### ***Robyn Hewland writes***

Evan was one of those people with whom I felt that the world is a better place with him there, and I wanted to be alongside to listen and to “catch” some of that to share. He was a witness to the therapist's essential qualities of being genuine, with non-judgemental warmth, hope, caring, competence, communication and help and befriending that I could trust. I remember at a Dunedin NZAP conference when he was courageous, as, despite resistance, he supported Constance Corey to present her “new” body therapy approach and breathing. He was also courageous under stress after his daughter, Susan, was disabled and as the family battled with unhelpful systems such as the Accident Compensation Corporation. In Christchurch, far from Auckland, I knew Evan only when we were both at NZAP conferences and at Council meetings in 1970-1980s. His contributions were always valuable, and have been missed since.

### ***Sheila Larsen writes***

I first met Evan when I became a member of NZAP in the early '70s. He was practising in Auckland and was also coming to Christchurch on a fairly regular basis, running TA workshops and training TA practitioners. This

exemplified the early NZAP members who were both practitioners and trainers. There were few if any training institutions at that time, so they were the ones setting standards of practice and passing on their knowledge and experience so generously. Evan was deeply committed to NZAP, and highly respected, holding senior positions over many years. Evan did not believe that the registration of psychotherapy practitioners was necessarily a good thing and refused to register. This had repercussions for him in that he was then deemed by the registration Board to be an unsuitable person to supervise registered psychotherapists. This was deeply distressing for him as he had been supervising these people for many years and he was committed to improving the state of mental health within NZ. Evan was greatly loved by many people, both within NZAP and the wider community.

### *Jonathan Fay writes*

#### **EULOGY FOR EVAN<sup>5</sup>**

[5. Ed. — Delivered 24th October, 2015, at Evan’s funeral service, held at St. Luke’s Church, Remuera, Auckland]

Kia ora friends.

Like many others who are gathered here today, Evan was my colleague, my comrade and my friend. I was privileged to meet regularly with him for 24 years and to work alongside him throughout the 1990s in the psychotherapy training programme that he helped to found. As ATI became AIT and then AUT, the psychotherapy programme continued to grow and became the Department of Psychotherapy & Counselling. That our Department/Discipline and our training programme are still flourishing and expanding today is a testament to Evan’s founding vision and his unique ability to nourish and develop the capacities of the people around him. I count myself very lucky that I was able to experience “at close range” Evan’s character and style, his attitudes and values, and his understated but very powerful and very effective way of going about the business of helping people of many different walks of life to discover themselves and fulfil their potential, as a teacher, a supervisor, a therapist, and an explorer in our field.

Evan was a man for all seasons. He was a consummate practitioner of humanism and humanistic values. He believed that love and wisdom are essential attributes of the human heart and that, given sufficiently favourable conditions, that these long to grow inside us and make their presence felt. Accordingly, Evan was always fully client-centred and student-centred. He worked to facilitate creative and supportive environments where students could not only learn how to give skilful service but, in the process, discover their own authenticity as human beings. His faith was the result of personal experience. Evan recently told me the story of how, in the midst of his graduate training in pastoral counselling in the great state of Texas, he came to discover that he had feelings; indeed, that he was full of hitherto unrecognised feelings. This was his own personal discovery of the unconscious. Following this revelation, Evan returned with new energy and enthusiasm to Dunedin, where in addition to his duties as Presbyterian minister, he founded the Cameron Centre, developed its programmes, trained its staff, conducted its group work and equipped himself to work at progressively greater depth with more and more challenging clients. From there, Evan went on to play a key role in a wide variety of training programmes: Presbyterian Support Services in Auckland; the Human Development & Training Institute, the transactional analysis community, psychodrama, the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP), and Auckland University of Technology. In each of these settings, Evan was unfailingly kind and courteous, wise and generous, and above all generative. Care is love with effect, and the effect of Evan's love and care is plain for all to see. He was made a life member of NZAP in the early 1990s, and in 2007 at the NZAP Conference in Napier, we again honoured Evan for his many and varied contributions to psychotherapy. We thought it timely to buy him a T-shirt that proclaimed: "I'm retired. Do it yourself." Evan wore this shirt with pride for many years afterward, but of course, he never fully retired, continuing to serve as one of our most beloved elder statesmen, an active and influential presence in our community.

Evan, time and eternity are now one and the same for you; the river of your life has run its course and emptied into an ocean whose breadth and depth we cannot fathom. So we must mourn our loss, and count you as a guardian angel and tutelary spirit in our lives. You have been a pou, a pillar of our

community, a pillar of strength for your family and your friends. Your life has enriched us all. We love you and we salute you.

Ka moeteatea tonu te ngakau ki a ratou ma kua whiti atu ki te poa, moe mai, moe mai, a moe mai ra. Our hearts lament for those bright shining lights who have gone into the night. May they find rest and their hearts be at ease.

Be at peace dear friend.



Part VII

HEALTH  
AND  
ILLNESS

# Introduction

## ISABELLE SHERRARD

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- 1964* Evan's first major health crisis is corrected by avant-garde surgery using 4.5mm stainless steel wire to connect his right ear drum to the inner ear to restore hearing lost by a cholesteatoma, a growth, which had destroyed his hearing bones which normally make that connection, and had eroded the protective bone covering of his facial nerve and was about to sever that and go on to do even more lethal damage.
- 1980* Evan's body rejects the stainless steel wire in his ear, requiring a series of surgeries to repair and overcome the damage and loss of connection from ear drum to inner ear; skilled surgical refashioned replacement of bone from bone bank; eventually, in 1985, his other ear suffered from cholesteatoma and untreated would have had lethal consequences so another set of surgical repair; now he needs to use hearing aids to overcome hearing deficiency.
- 1991* Evan's second major health crisis; he is diagnosed with prostate cancer. He has a course of radiation treatment which is very interruptive of normal life; he finds the treatment very exhausting and has unpredictable moments of needing to lie down; he has to change his life-style extensively; he gives up all but his regular teaching and client commitments, and takes on no evening commitments or night driving.

*1996* A new tumour is discovered in his prostate; the radiation treatment has been unsuccessful. He begins intermittent hormone treatment which, to date, has slowed the cancer growth but not removed it.

*2004* In semi-retirement Evan and Isabelle enjoy travelling; while on a family cruise-tour of Alaska he suffers an episode of severe weakness and breathlessness; after several check-ups, a further one exposes serious coronary artery disease which requires immediate surgery in which Evan is given five by-pass grafts to repair his heart. Apparently the episodes were silent heart attacks and he is lucky to have survived.

*2013* Evan notes that he is still enjoying “semi-semi-retirement”, i.e., with some clients, some teaching, some Church commitments, some gardening, some travelling, and some reading and writing of theological thinking; and not enjoying some continued health problems: atrial flutter, and poor blood circulation with lack of energy and sluggish thinking. He writes:

“I am fortunate to be remarkably responsive to the treatment and my oncologist informs me that I am his longest surviving prostate cancer patient (coming up to 22 years). I think it has something to do with my changed life style.”

Later, he comments: “some warfarin anticoagulant treatment then cardioversion — a zap — and my heart is now going well. Another health episode is behind us”.

*2014 Jan* Bladder cancer confirmed.

*2015 May* Radiation damage diagnosed, followed by constant neurological complications.

*Oct 8th* Undergoes major surgery at Auckland City Hospital.

*Oct 21st* Dies.

The chapters in this Part comprise Evan’s own writing about his health and illness(es) (Chapter 15); one by our daughter, Susan (Chapter 16); and a short one by me, reflecting on Evan’s health and illness (Chapter 17).



## *Chapter 15*

### Evan on health and illness: Two letters

EVAN M SHERRARD

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#### **Letter to Lloyd Geering (2009)**

Dear Lloyd

It was lovely to have the brief connection with you a couple of Sunday nights ago at the Ephesus meeting. Even better because we had heard you were not going to be present because of your recent heart attack. Although you were still in the recovery phase, you were looking well and chipper. It was so good to see.

Robin Lane had told me of your heart attack when we went down to visit and stay with them. Ken Irwin added to that, telling us of your distress at learning of your heart's damage — being told by your physician in a blunt and insensitive way — and that it was difficult for you to accept. Then you told Robin and me about your unpleasant experience of feeling your body strange and unfamiliar in the throes of the attack and its aftermath.

I am most appreciative of your observation. It has been difficult for me to come to terms with a damaged body. I resisted the idea of my heart being damaged, but had to face it when my heart surgeon told me I had suffered

heart attacks (plural). When I challenged him, he told me simply and directly he had seen the evidence in my heart muscle when he did surgery, putting in five grafts by-passing the blockages in my heart arteries. I could not argue with that kind of proof from that kind of authority. Until then I did not recognise I had had heart attacks, because I didn't think I'd experienced them. I had experienced episodes of extreme physical distress but not know them to be heart attacks. I had a preconceived idea that a heart attack was associated with considerable, usually excruciating pain, which I never had.

The surprising thing to me was the degree to which I did not want to own having heart damage. Perhaps there is some shame I did not do better self-care and get more attention for myself. Perhaps, because our hearts are so central to being alive, I did not want to face the evidence of mortality, and the corruptibility of the flesh. How much more vulnerable I have become with a damaged heart, and how much more the inevitability of death is. Now, nearly five years from that time I am fit and healthy. My heart works just fine and the whole thing really has been just an episode of my past. I am aware of the risks to my wellbeing and I do take good preventative care of myself. I thought I had faced my finitude because my prostate cancer, still active, and 18 years old. It is far from being an episode. It is continually with me. My damaged heart carries a different quality of life and death with it. You can see I am grappling with articulating it. Our recent meeting is given impetus to continuing my reflection, which I find very valuable. Thank you.

If, in reflecting on your experience, you come up with ways of expressing what went on for you, putting it into words to share with others, I would be most favoured to learn from you how you make sense of it.

Go well, Lloyd, with continued good health,

*Evan Sherrard*

## **Buns and gravy: Living with prostate cancer (2012)<sup>1</sup>**

[1. Ed. — This is based on an original “letter”, circulated by Evan in March 2004 (and subsequently). As it primarily dealt with living with prostate cancer, he addressed and sent it initially and primarily to his men friends. As his health became more compromised and complex he added a sequel which he circulated in 2014 to a wider circle of friends, men and women.]

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is now January 2012 and I am still living with Prostate Cancer. My dance continues with the “buns and gravy” I described in my letter of 2004. Strange, none of that has changed in the years since. Life with Prostate Cancer goes on. So that letter still stands. I can bring you up to date quickly. My oncologist, John Matthews and I have an agreed scheme to “watch and wait”. We wait until my PSA [Prostate Specific Antigen] reading reaches 5.0 then I have a course of hormone treatment (now using Zoladex, a slow release pellet implanted under my skin to completely suppress the production of testosterone, some call it chemical castration). We have been waiting now for over three years for the level to reach 5.0. Three years without any treatment. It is inexplicable, but bloody good. Treatment-free life is best. Testosterone gives me energy and libido. Not that the PSA readings are not showing cancer activity, just they are growing extraordinarily slowly. My next readings and visit with John will be in a couple of weeks and it is a sweepstake, will I be over or under 5.0?

Tony [Robinson] has said he would like to see a copy of my 2004 letter. Although it still stands there has been a dramatic sequel to it. I had a different major health crisis at the end of 2004. I survived major heart attacks with urgent bypass graft surgery on my heart. This has given me an added perspective which I need to add to my story. I have faced the slow bodily deterioration of death by cancer and the drop dead in an instant death of heart attack. Neither would be my choice. But, it is clear I will not be given a choice. Death will happen as it will happen. My friendly oncologist made the observation, when I visited him after my heart surgery recovery, “well, now you face competing morbidity!” to which I replied, “you mean you can no longer tell me what is going to take me out”.

## **Buns and gravy: My original letter (2004)**

Evan M Sherrard  
1/41 Bolton Street  
Blockhouse Bay, Auckland 0600

*29 March 2004*

## An Open Letter to Men Friends

### *The invitation*

I have written this letter with my men friends in mind, sort of man to man, but, I know my story will interest some women friends so this invitation is to both. A long while back a friend at Massey University challenged me. He said I'd been good at sharing my bad news of having cancer, but I wasn't so quick at sharing my good news. This is to share the good news about having cancer. Possibly the time it has taken me to write this (off and on over nearly two years) indicates that deep down maybe I don't think there really is good news about living with cancer, or, it indicates this is very hard to write about. Nevertheless, so far, life with cancer has been especially good for me. I intended this to be a couple of short pages to tell how good things are and have been for me, but, as I got into my story the telling expanded. I'm writing for myself, to organise my thinking and to trace my journey, where I've been and how I've got to here. My story may be interesting to others. You, my dear reader, have a choice: to read on or not. If you do read, I suggest a quiet time with a glass of good wine to celebrate along with me.

### *An introduction*

About two years ago (2002), chronological timing and exact details don't really matter in my story now, I went to visit with my oncologist, and I was doing very well. He initiated, perhaps defensively, pre-emptively, "don't ask me to explain what's going on!" Then after a short discussion he asked, "What are you doing?" Those of you who know me will appreciate that what appear flip answers are a code for a lot deeper stuff. My reply was, "nothing special, maybe praying". Part of the motive of writing this is to answer his question more adequately and it is taking me a while to do it, because I have been doing something, and doing nothing. I think the answer is in the story.

I thought of how to head this up. "I'm married to a Cancer" occurred to me. I am. Isabelle is a Cancer in the star signs, and I am a Scorpio. Two water signs — and we get on well, if that's not too wet. And, in some ways it seems like a marriage to this prostate cancer. A strange union: arranged by

my parents before I was born when they gave me the mix of genes that determines the basic building blocks of me with a built-in predisposition to cancer — it's all through the family. This cancer is a constant companion and joins with me in all I do. It is something of a “soul-mate”, “till death do us part”, or so it seems because it doesn't seem to be willing to leave me and it refuses to divorce me. Therefore, it is with me: of me, but not me. I know it to be alien, a cancer: a cluster of disorderly cells which grew from me. It is an “it” with which in a strange way I have an “I-Thou” relationship. I have never personalised it and given it a name, even when I address it. Essentially it is inhuman: Gollum-like. There, I've done it — given it a name, but I won't use it. This is my attempt to explain what this internal relationship is like to me.

### *I meet my cancer*

We've been living together (since 1991) for very close on thirteen years now (and, without knowing probably longer). We have settled into one of those comfortable, ho-hum relationships which still have enough ups and downs to spice up life. It was not always that way. I'm grateful to May Votar, my medical advisor in Ann Arbor, Michigan, who, as I was leaving to return to New Zealand in 1975, offered me as a gift the advice to get a rectal prostate examination annually. (I pass on this advice with enthusiasm.) I more or less did follow it. Some of my NZ doctors didn't like doing this as frequently. However, I held out. It was early in 1991 when my GP of those days did one of these examinations he said he thought my prostate was a bit uneven and he'd like a blood test sensitive to cancer: PSA. The results came back within normal parameters. “All clear”, I heard him say as he told me over the phone. No cancer: a result which I reassured took to heart. Nevertheless, he wanted to see me in six months. Again, on examination my prostate didn't feel right to him so he wanted a specialist check out. The urologist in turn wanted a sonar scan. We were very busy at the time. It was end of the year teaching and marking time, I had a week long Transactional Analysis workshop in Sumner to participate in. It was busy fitting everything in yet we did.

As soon as I was home I went for the scan. There it is — the kindly doctor said to me, after explaining I hadn't properly emptied my bladder as I had been supposed to before the procedure, because he could still see urine in it

— that white spot. It seemed to glow neon-like out of all the black and greys on the TV monitor he shared with me. That has been my only real meeting with my cancer — ever. I can't feel it. It has never announced itself to me in any way. I wouldn't know it was there if all these other people didn't tell me; and I believe them.

Then I went in for a biopsy. While going through the informed consent process the radiologist told me he would be taking samples from the lump in my prostate. I, innocently reassured it was not cancer, and thinking lumps in the breast range from fluid filled cysts to malignant growths, asked him what the range could be, from what to what? I still remember his startled look; from cancer to cancer to cancer, was his reply. This way of introduction to my new life companion shocked me. I didn't want to know. (The bliss of my denial was whipped away. Isabelle reckoned the possibility of cancer had stared me in the face from the time of the GP's first announcement, but that I wouldn't talk about it. I thought didn't need to, for the blood test had said, no abnormality. A confirmation used to serve denial. Here's a bit of a theme in the story — what I do with what I am told and what I hear.)

It was hard to take in what the radiologist was saying. They wanted to be able to name and grade my mutant cells. That called for shooting a fine hollow needle into the glowing spot showing in the ultrasound scan. I can now better empathize with women who undergo similar procedures: the indignity, and vulnerability of lying on your back, legs held up in stirrups, backside exposed, orifice spread open to the needle gun. It was all quite painless with a local anaesthetic — which doesn't take away the anxiety; what will they find?

Once upon a time, I knew all the technical medical details of the results and the consequent treatments. Today those facts are not so important. That information belongs to the past. In writing this I've had to go back and ask what the diagnosis was: a well differentiated adeno-carcinoma. (Probably now rated at a Gleason [?] 6 or less, but they did not have that scale then.) It wasn't especially bad, and it wasn't especially good. I was under age: younger than 60 and that was not so good. So, it was cancer (bugger!) and I needed treatment. With a heavy heart, apprehensive, but with a show of kiwi bravery I moved on, within days, to the next specialist: the oncologist.

### *In specialist care*

Now this man, a lovely guy John Matthews, has been a sort of marriage counsellor. At first he did not want me to have anything to do with my partner-to-be from a genetically arranged marriage, and I was very happy to go along with him. He just didn't like the look of this new creature in my life and did not approve of me taking up with it. He took all the time I needed and is a great listener and answered all my difficult questions about why I shouldn't get engaged and warned me of the possible consequences of any future marriage arranged by my genes: he painted most unsavoury prospects of such a union. Moreover, in spite of his gentle kindness he made it very clear he is a ruthless operator. We're going to set out to kill this interloper, was his clear message; if you are willing we are going to bomb it with lethal radiation. It was all a bit breath-taking and over-whelming. "Go for it", I heard myself saying, supported by Isabelle. She comes to all such meetings with me. A second pair of ears is very useful at such a time, and she will think of and ask questions I do not know to ask. We are a good team.

However, it wasn't quite so fast getting into radiation treatment. First we had to check the cancer was contained in the prostate. Had it got out yet? This cancer, if it escapes from the primary site where it starts, is likely to go for the near-by bones to take up uninvited lodging. A bone scan and a CAT [computed tomography] scan were ordered to see if it had spread already. Even these tests are not definitive. Only one cancerous cell needs to break away from the original cluster; to float off in any of my body juices; to slip by the guard posts of my defence system; to avoid the seek-and-destroy sentinels roaming around looking for any "not-really-me" cells loose in or invading me; to find a cosy resting place; to settle and to start multiplying into a secondary lump. This new lump could be so microscopic at its beginning not to show up in current medical tests. Anyway, good news, which, seems to have lasted; the test results at the time showed that the cancer was contained. However, I'm mindful that cancer cells are really-me cells out of control and so can dodge my immunity and self-regulating and self-reparative mechanisms slipping past detection because they are so much a look-alike part of me.

### *Radiation*

On to the next stage: radiation treatment, one journey with one new adventure after another. Radiation is a story in itself. Perhaps I'll give details another time. It's surreal. I lay there on my back under this high tech, humming-whining-to-screaming machine, and felt nothing and saw nothing while I was bombed. I knew I was in a highly dangerous area: huge thick walls with enormous doors that clanged shut leaving me all alone, after hooters went off and red lights flashed and everyone not lying down, immobile, rushes out of the room. All dignity was lost as I wore a short open-down-the-back hospital gown, revealing enough in itself, but then all was revealed as the gown is peeled back so they could push me around to line my body up within a one or two millimetres of tolerance along the red laser guidelines bisecting the dimly lit space with the aiming tattoos marked in my body forever. Yes, I am now tattooed, but not where the public will ever see, and only pinpoints. It is high precision work, carried out by wonderfully caring and sensitive people.

I made inquiries of the Cancer Society. They do offer many services, and I recommend them, particularly to anyone having to follow my footsteps. They sent me good information through the mail, and over the phone advised that the journey through radiation was exhausting; my body would be vigorously engaged in coping with all the effects of heavy duty bombardment, so to plan accordingly. In addition to the traditional medical approach I was following I included some carefully selected complementary approaches. For example, I had three or four sessions of Reiki treatment (a "hands on but no contact" balancing of energy fields in the body) which I found deeply relaxing and calming. A naturopath friend admitted her profession did not have a good record of treating cancer and advised me to stay with establishment medicine, but she offered to assist me to stay as healthy as possible throughout the assault of radiation. She gave me dietary advice, regular soothing massage, and homeopathic supplements. Along with a schedule of rest, work, exercise, and sleep the regime of radiation treatment went well. (I have moved on to osteopathic body interventions which I find beneficial and have continued with at a maintenance level of about four sessions a year.)

After several weeks the effects of radiation bombardment begin to show. Otherwise, again, I wouldn't have known anything was happening, but bloody discomfort from bowel and bladder kicked in, and tiredness. Oh,



such a deep and heavy tiredness, thankfully manageable. Just before it was all over I had a clear sense that we had the cancer beat; I was going to be okay. So far that premonition is true, except I took it that we would knock out the cancer. The initial results seemed to confirm that. We'd gotten rid of the unwanted partner-to-be. All through the treatment phase I was wonderfully supported by Isabelle and the family doing many little extra things to make me comfortable. One thing was to spend some time after dinner in the evening sitting in a sitz bath soothing my nether regions reading a Lonely Planet guide book on Turkey where we were planning a visit to sail in the Med with friends. I now know this loving support from intimate friends and caregivers is a major factor in my recovery and continuing well being. This awareness has grown on me, consolidating over time, and not at first being fully recognised and appreciated.

True to the Cancer Society warning when radiation finished, my spirits lifted, my body recovered and energy returned at the same rate as it had been sapped over the weeks of treatment. So, we slowly but surely got up to speed again and got on with life and did our overseas travelling. I had regular follow-ups, each six months I saw either the urologist or the oncologist, so it was annual visits to each, and all was well. I was back to normal, not giving anything like cancer a thought.

*“Many happy returns”*

It was a major blow when, at the five year survival mark, which I was supremely confident of making, the urologist threw a fit when his finger found a lump in what was left of my prostate, now pretty shrunken from the radiation. A new lump, or the first one returned, who knows? Did it matter? The certainty was I had prostate cancer — again. Now, I had been warned not to get excited by the prospect of the often talked about “five year survival” mark. The oncologist said five years’ survival did not mean a cure, but even knowing that, in the end I’ve heard what I wanted to hear, and what I haven’t wanted to hear I haven’t taken in, although I heard it — if you know what I mean. What a strange organ the (h)ear is.

So there it was, cancer, in my face again. That fact took the blue out of the sky. I must admit it is a bit anxiety making going to get your regular blood checks and physical exams even if you pretend to others and yourself you are being cool about it. What are the results going to be? But that day, on

the eve of making five years I was pretty cocky. The urologist said, in effect, (what did I hear? and what did he actually say?) “My God, it’s back! You need to get to John Matthews and be planning your next stage of treatment, like yesterday. And, if he recommends getting rid of your testicles I’ll be glad to do it for you!” The lights went down on a horror movie.

I was five years out from the radiation treatment supremely confident the cancer was gone. I had been denying there was no certainty it had gone. I had been getting on with life and we were on the eve of an overseas trip. Should we go or stay and go straight into the next treatment? Whatever the urologist said his alarm was contagious and I was very rattled. John was as solid as a rock and calmly soothing. No rush he said over the phone, we have options, we can take a bit of time planning and he made a time to see me before we left. What a heavy duty visit/consultation it was. Yes, my PSA was up and he too could feel the lump in my prostate. Again he was the superb listener/counsellor. I could identify with him; a fellow professional: not only in the marrying field but also in the theological realm.

### *Marriage and eschatology*

Now we had no choice. The arranged marriage was on. Our attempts to wriggle out of it by killing off the partner-to-be had not worked. John had to sombrelly celebrate our union, and declare us “man and cancer”. We were stuck with each other. How would we live together? And here I found John was also versed in eschatology (the theological study of end times), because, I wanted to know what my end would be and he engaged with me in a discussion of the topic. I wanted it for real, no gloss, and he gave it to me, answering the leading of my questions. All this was hugely difficult for Isabelle, being with me listening in. She had been a nurse-manager of a urological unit at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor, and knew first hand what I could be in for and kindly didn’t add to what John was telling. She recognised what was enough for me.

I knew John couldn’t answer this one, but I had to ask it. How long did I have? He was truthful; he didn’t know and could not even guess. I made it easier. Would I make 80? (The longest lived male grandparent I knew made 80, and I would love to equal it.) No, he said categorically, you won’t make 80. Will I see the millennium? Yes, you’ll see the millennium fit and well.

(He's right so far.) So I accepted somewhere between the years 2000 and eighty years old (2014). I continued asking, "if this cancer is going to kill me, rather than me being run over by a bus, how will it do it?" Now that's not a pretty answer and I won't put you off by telling you, but I did hear him and I can repeat what I think I heard. (I suspect Isabelle suspects I have minimised it. Sometimes my hearing is not all that good.) Anyway, it depends on where the cancer cells spread to, as to how it takes you out. Main thing is I'll get good warning — about a year, when and if it begins to actively move against me and symptoms show — and then there is much they can do to give me a quality of life and reduced pain at the end. At the end of the visit we decided on a course of hormone treatment to begin on our return from holiday. (Now, that year's lead-in time is something I have heard, so each morning I wake up symptomless I know I've got another whole year ahead of me.)

### *Discovering gravy*

In February 1997, we went on our planned holiday and visited our good friends, Robin and Pam [Plummer], who were living and working in Vanuatu. We had a great time with them in their comfortable apartment up on the hill looking back over Port Vila. How important it is to have good friends at a time like this. They looked after us, showed us around, and gave us unhurried space to deal with what was on our minds. I read an excellent book, Jonathan [Fay], another helpful friend put me on to — Arthur Frank's *At the Will of the Body*.<sup>2</sup> Arthur suggests that our body has its own mindfulness and wilfulness which we are at the mercy of, and with which we must come to terms. We can only go through an illness, not around it. And, as we do so we need "care" givers more than "treatment" givers confirming how important Isabelle is in my journey. Illness in the body allows us to see the end and consider how we will live to that end. He suggests some very helpful ways to approach it.

[2. Ed. — Houghton Mifflin, 2002.]

It was a helpful time and space to reflect on what was happening. Out of it I decided later in 1997 to send out that first bad news letter, some of you got. It was a way of facing into it rather than going around it. Arthur also talked about gravy. Gravy is finding the extra life has given us above and beyond the basics we have had dished out to us. That's when I remembered my

ears. My ear illnesses have been life threatening. I've had corrective surgery so long ago and recovered so successfully that I tend to forget it. The threat fades. I should remember each morning as I put my hearing aids in, without which life would be so much more difficult. Sometimes those aids hurt, a kick in the pants to remember gravy with appreciation. I visit my ear specialist every three months to have my ears cleaned. It hurts something awful but I cheerfully face it to have gravy. To remind myself I asked Ron [Goodey], my ear doctor recently, where would I be now if he hadn't got the skill, knowledge and microscopic technology to have done surgery on my ears? He looked startled, stepped back, "why dead", he said, "dead from meningitis". I have already had a long time on gravy, far longer than this extra ration of time because my prostate cancer is behaving quietly.

### *Losing cockiness*

To my embarrassment, I have to admit that too often I took the gravy for granted. I forgot it was gravy — extra, undeserved, and took it as how life should be for me: like I'm entitled to it. It was getting that way at that five year survival mark. I was just too cocky: on the one hand over-confident that life would go on for me forever as a feast of delights that was mine by rights to enjoy. On the other hand, that was facade, I was anything but cocky, but I wasn't admitting it. One thing influencing the original decision to treat the cancer with radiation was that at that time radiation was less likely to produce the undesirable side-effects of incontinence and impotence than surgery. While I have never had trouble holding my water I was growing less and less cocky.

On one visit to Rex and Valerie [Hunton], friends in Fiji, I had admitted in a conversation around the breakfast table that I wasn't as potent as I used to be and I was missing my old sexual get up and go, but not my desire. It is tough having the desire but not being able to get into action in the way I once could. I was faced with having to do what I had had to witness daughter Susan do: say out loud "Goodbye" to body function no longer working, and not likely to ever work properly, naturally again. My case was so much less than what Susan had to say goodbye to. It is a necessary and hard process of facing a new reality. I recommend it, even though it comes with tears; it is all part of grief work. Ironic, how "grief work", something

of a specialty in my professional life was something I now had to apply to myself as the one going through the loss.

The discovery of the reoccurring cancer took away all my cockiness. Without being aware of the subtle shift I was beginning to focus on what I didn't have, and what length of life I didn't have ahead of me. I was losing the unconscious confidence I used to have of an interminable future. I began to see the glass half empty and lowering further. Enjoying gravy was becoming an intellectual exercise, a mind game. I talked the talk but was not walking the walk. About this time we went to the movie *Dead Man Walking*, the story of a nun who befriended a death-row convict in Texas and accompanies him to his execution. As he walks to the execution chamber his fellow death-row companions salute him with the call, "dead man walking", giving title to this very fine movie. Privately I began to sense myself a dead man walking. I felt as though I had been given a death sentence and was waiting out my time on death row for an indeterminate execution.

In our eschatological discussion John had not pronounced a death sentence. He was positive and hopeful. What interests me, now, is how I took what he said; and he only spoke in response to my lead, — in good counselling fashion. I am intrigued with the power I have given "the doctor". I know better, and I often act in opposition to authority especially when I feel disempowered. John did not disempower me. He gave me information in order to empower me to plan and face what was ahead. I gave it the twist. It was my interpretation of the information. Basically the information was that with my type of cancer it can be held at bay with hormone treatment but not cured. The hormone treatment quietens it down, but eventually in its own time which medical science cannot yet predict, it will turn virulent and mutate out of control, run riot in my body invade and crush some vital organ and kill me. Just, "when", that is the wild card. (With this length of time behind me I can now see I've been dealt a good hand.) Away back then, I can see on reflection, I took that information as a virtual death sentence.

### *Medical options*

I started hormone treatment when we returned from Vanuatu and it had a dramatic effect. While monitoring my response to the treatment at a very

early stage, we stopped it. John had come up with an alternative to explore: salvage surgery. In medical reports he had been noting this technique was being tried in some places for cases such as mine: failed radiation. Did the radiation fail? There was a new tumour in my prostate, was this the same one rekindled or a brand new one? There was no way to tell. At the time of choosing radiation I knew the choice was either/or, since surgery could not follow radiation. Now surgery was being done, elsewhere, and John was suggesting I investigate this possibility. I must admit to secretly feeling I had made a bad choice originally going for the radiation. If I had elected surgery then I might have had impotence as a side-effect, and I was having that anyway (I overlooked the side-effect possibility of incontinence), but the prostate would have been gone, cut out of me, and no more prostate tissue to be a seedbed for any more tumour growth. After radiation I still had a prostate of sorts. Although a prostate well-cooked by a sort of microwave it was still capable of spawning cancer. Bugger! More reason to think of what I was missing and of that emptying half glass. More slide towards gloom and doom.

I was referred to another, new-to-me good urological surgeon with a long and successful experience. With him I investigated salvage surgery. My request to consider this surprised him. I was driven to get rid of my prostate. One of my first tongue-in-check questions was, “are you still paying off a big mortgage?” Meaning, was he driven by money hunger? While taken back he got on to me quickly — we liked each other. What was more important; we could be blunt with each other. He wanted a complete update on my physical condition, and he wanted time to make his inquiries into doing this sort of surgery. More scans were ordered and again I came up clean. There were still no signs of any spread. The cancer was contained in the prostate. As a result of even the very short hormone treatment he could not feel a lump; good news for hormone treatment, it worked well. He went off to an international medical conference promising to check out salvage surgery.

On his return I saw him. He was most reluctant to do any surgery. His reason was that because the radiation would have cooked me down there all the different tissues would have melted and fused together. He would not have a nice sharp difference with clean edges between the different parts of my anatomy. He would have to grab tweezers-full of prostate and chop it

out. And, what was worse, he would not be able to assure me he had got it all out. Any microscopic piece of prostate left behind was just as much a risk as leaving the lot. As bad as that was, in addition, no matter how careful he was about what he was grabbing as he grabbed tweezers-full of mixed up tissue, he might grab a bit of bowel or bladder and chop that out too. The result of his consultation was that the promised return of positive results from salvage surgery was very low and the chances of unwanted reduced quality of life through disaster to bowel or bladder were huge. The choice was between quality and quantity of life. On the spot I went for quality and said no to surgery: to Isabelle's great relief, and his. In parting he told me that at the time of my choice of radiation the state of the art for prostate-removal surgery was in its infancy in Auckland. In those days for example, he was nowhere near as experienced as he had become. If it was any consolation he thought I had made a good choice at that time. I don't think anyone put him up to saying that, but it helped me. His last word to me on leaving was that there were surgeons down the road he knew who would do it for money. I didn't ask for names.

(That was 1997. When I met him again in late 2003, for another, unrelated, urological consultation he looked at his notes, "I see I saw you in 1997, what was that for? Oh, yes, I see for "that" surgery. I hear it talked about at conferences at times but it is not done much." Looking at me, he continued, "And how are you? You look very well. It is so good to see you still, er, um ... ah...". I filled in, "in the land of the living?" "Yes, yes, it is so good to see you looking so well." His brief awkwardness and genuine surprise to see me at all was a rather nice affirmation. I like him.)

### *Hormone treatment*

Since the end of radiation in April 1992 the only medical input I've been getting for my cancer is hormone treatment. That began in 1997. I take pills which have the effect of blocking the testosterone I naturally produce from going to work in my body. The type of medicine I've been taking doesn't stop the production of male hormone like some pills do. While there is a continuing input of testosterone floating around in my blood the medicine acts as interference to its uptake by any of my cells including my cancer cells. The medicine blocks the receptor sites for the male hormone on any cell. Prostate cancer seems to thrive in the presence of male hormone. Cut

off from a supply of testosterone the cancer slows down, loses energy and many cancer cells die. I've have been taking this medicine in a regime called pulsing, or, intermittent androgen suppression. This means bursts of taking the pills, then coming off them so that I am not going entirely without testosterone. The effect is that the tumour disappears — it can't be felt by those searching for it — and my blood PSA level drops, but not to zero, indicating not all the cells die. At the end of 2003 I finished the longest pulse on suppression medication, nine months, and we hoped for a long period before cancer cells grew back to the size of a lump that could be felt and the PSA level rose indicating the need for another burst of treatment. (As I finish writing this I have just been back for a regular check up, Feb 2004. The gain in time we had hoped for has not occurred. The PSA has jumped a few points, but there is no physical sign of a lump in my prostate. We think this means that the treatment dose was possibly too dilute as a result of a management decision taken in an attempt to reduce unpleasant side-effects, and not that the cancer has become more active. So I went back on hormone treatment with a new androgen suppression medication having the same purpose as the last one, but with different chemical mechanics in the hope the old unpleasant side-effects are not repeated.)

Meantime, while on hormone treatment the cancer cells were not the only ones denied testosterone. My masculine body hair cells missed out. The coarse hair fell out leaving me with the softer hair and smoother skin of a boy. But, that was the only benefit. Unfortunately, I have not recovered the slim shape I once had. In joking with me my GP wondered that if I should be reversing backwards through time I needed to be ready to face the pimple stage again: not a funny prospect even though we laughed at the impossible image. I still have my beard, although it does not grow so fast. I suppose the male/female hormone balance is disturbed when I am on androgen suppression medication and my own estrogens dominate within me. The result is my breasts bud up, grow and become very tender to the touch and quite painful. We were hoping my new medication will avoid this unpleasant outcome. The other difficult side-effect of that first medication was sheer exhaustion. Each evening I might or might not, maybe earlier or later, "hit the wall" and suddenly feel exhausted and totally lack energy. This effect was completely unpredictable, and I never discovered any warning signs. When exhaustion hit even the flight of stairs leading up to



bed took on the appearance of a mountain side which I had to drag myself up. If exhaustion happens when I am out at nights I get quite alarmed, so I take care about evening outings.

I am finding it very interesting observing these changes in my body. Standing at a distance watching myself like a spectator is a strange experience. Of course my organic potency has completely gone since the radiation slowly damaged those cells responsible for working the hydraulics, and especially since they are cut off from testosterone. But, my brain cells have been less affected. Maybe, without the male hormone flooding around there has some reduction in my libido, whatever that is and however it is measured. Not only because of ageing, this brain drain has taken away from me the bodily makings of a man. However, my mind is still functioning fully. The electrical circuitry is quite independent of hormonal chemistry. After all, sex maybe more in the mind, than we admit. While I cannot rise to the occasion, I still have the occasion(s) which I wish I could meet in full. In the summer of 03 an old colleague now returned to live in South Australia, a medico working in the area of sexual functioning gave me a surprise visit. Over our early morning cup of coffee we both lamented our loss of potency. He declared gratitude for Viagra; I conceded it did not work well for me. He suggested the possibility of using injections, which he was recommending to appropriate patients. While a most off-putting thought, “a prick in the dick to raise it”, a great longing drove me to find out more. Now, an injection in the right time and place is proving pleasurable: even more gravy.

*(2012 edition. A little note here: After my heart surgery I stopped this practice after some warning of incompatibility with the new medications I was on to meet the needs of my heart. We live with erectile dysfunction. “We” because it has consequences for Isabelle as well as me. Thankfully we have found creative ways to find physical pleasure without erections.)*

### *Dead man walking*

I am getting away ahead of myself — jumping right up to the present (2004). I need to go back to the time when I was a “dead man walking”. “Dead” is the word. Only by looking back can I see what was going on. I

was more depressed than I realised at the time. Not depressed in the clinical sense with disturbance of eating or sleeping and with morbid and negative thoughts about myself, and major loss of vitality. The depression was at a deep or core level: an existential or spiritual disturbance. I suppose what was happening would be called, by some, my coming to terms with my mortality. What an awfully thin figure of speech that is. On the surface I was keeping going with my full, normal life of the times; going to the gym, socializing, teaching, supervising; attending my private practice clients; fulfilling my commitments at the Psychotherapy Department at the Auckland Institute of Technology. Yes, on the surface I was energetic, productive, contributive, fully occupied and cheerful. One thing I was very deliberate about, I would not undertake any form of commitment taking any thing more than about nine months. I was alive, but, super-conscious of death. Those archetypal images of death as predatory — as some sort of black monster, a cloaked skeleton, a fanged carnivore — took on personal meaning for me. Death was lurking, just out there, round the next corner, waiting to get me. I was building that mental construction, quite unintentionally. I was laying the foundations on what I was hearing my doctors say at such times as they warned me that they had been unable to cure my cancer and to be aware that rogue cells lived in my body waiting to emerge like Dracula aroused from the tomb. Accepting this inevitability of my end turned me into a dead man walking. While I determined to be fully alive as I walked — death had already taken over and my aliveness was about to be snuffed out.

### *Peter's death*

Out there in my environment things were happening to reinforce my inner focus on death and dying. There was the death of Peter Reid, a great friend, a wise and competent professional colleague with whom I had enjoyed many adventures and mutual support. We loved and respected each other. Over time we shared much, including how cancer was invading both of our lives. (He had a different sort from mine.) I understood we had an agreement to support each other on whatever journey lay ahead for either of us. Peter was coming to an end of the treatments his doctors could offer him, apart from palliative care to relieve his physical distress. A relative in Australia told him of an experimental treatment centre over there and Peter,

determined for life, explored it and decided to go. He sent me all their literature encouraging me to consider it. Their claims were modest and acknowledged as experimental. I showed them to oncologist John. He had heard of the methods they were using, heating the body, and explained how limited he considered the benefits. I really did not give it a second thought. Peter did tell me later he thought the money he spent would have been better used painting his house. The trip to Australia was to be his last push for a cure and he continued to live fully as though nothing was wrong except for taking time out to attend to each health crisis he met. His choice was to live and to ignore that he was dying from his disease. There was something admirable about his positiveness yet his death left me hugely distressed. My disturbance was more than the grief of losing such a good friend.

One troubling thing for me, Peter came to the end of his life without ever allowing anyone I know of to make any closure with him. By closure I mean completing a relationship by acknowledging that it is ending, by expressing gratitude and regrets for what we have enjoyed or missed and gained or lost in our time together and by affirming what it is we have got from being together that we will take with us into our different futures. Closure is making an opportunity to express what either one of us has not yet said to the other, and yet wants to say; to complete unfinished business, if there is anything outstanding. Closure is a purposeful act of saying “goodbye” in plain words, with no fudging or euphemisms. Peter and I communicated by email, and I sent him one a few days before his death declaring that I was continuing to walk with him in spirit accompanying him on this last section of his journey in all the wonders and new things that these steps might contain for him. He sent a grateful reply to that email but no reply to my message. We did not say goodbye to each other. I do not think anyone did. Personally I do not want to part company in that way. I do not want to be critical of Peter. I respect his choice, he had integrity. His way has provided me a point of reference for my choice of living my own dying when that time comes.

### *My Dad's death*

This pulled me back to the way my Dad died in the mid-1950s. We did not say goodbye to each other then, for different reasons. There was no ignoring

his dying from cancer. On the advice of the experienced doctors and nurses of the time we, the immediate family, entered a conspiracy of silence with Dad. The wisdom of the day said that you must do nothing to take away a person's hope. Those "wise ones" held that to face people with the truth of their condition would mean they would "turn their face to the wall". This saying meant they would give up and give in to the disease, sulk, and hasten the end. Ye gods! What an insult to my father's integrity and strength of character, now that I think about it. He had faced down death at places like the Somme and Passchendale in the trench warfare of World War I. He was robbed of living a more heroic dying and we of living it with him by the conspiracy not to talk about it with one another. He, too, attempted to keep our hopes up. One of the last things he talked of before becoming comatose was looking forward to the new diet he was going on for building weight, when the weekend was over. What an utter farce! His body had so deteriorated that he could barely sip water. At the same time he was keeping our hopes up he was openly saying goodbye to his intimate friends and cousins behind our backs. We missed out the gutsy, tearful but satisfying completion of saying goodbye. I don't want that at my end. (Not surprisingly with that history, I, as a hospital chaplain made a feature of working with the dying and the newly bereaved.)

### *How to live dying*

One of the advantages of having cancer is that I have been given time to think of my dying and how I want it to be. Otherwise, when would I have done this? Death from collision with a bus or from heart attack — any sudden, unexpected cause — would not allow me to plan an intentional life style for my dying: instead of dying I would be killed. As a "dead man walking" I was giving a lot of attention to how I wanted to live my dying. I hoped that like Peter I could live positively, with full involvement in life making appropriate commitments and full contributions. I hope that I will recognise clearly when my body has declined to that point where I am in the dying process and that I will recognise that shift, and that I will face into death with my usual positiveness and energetic commitment to what is ahead. I want to be able to accept that shift as another adventure with new experiences to savour. Some experiences in life may be enjoyed once only, like losing virginity. I can never repeat that. As that event was a bit of a

fizzer for me I want my dying to be a more significant. There may be no choice for me when the time comes whether to go out with a bang or a whimper, but which ever I hope it will be satisfying and significant. I know some people have come close to dying on several occasions, but by definition, dying happens when death follows; it is a once-only occasion. Those returning from near death experiences report them as good journeys so I want to make the most of it: but not yet — not for a long time. Sorry, I will not be able to report on the experience to you.

### *A useful workshop*

While I was a “dead man walking” I was helped greatly in a workshop in Christchurch I attended led by Richard Erskine, an integrative psychotherapist with a great reputation in the Transactional Analysis tradition, one of my professional disciplines. To demonstrate his process, and as a basis for discussing his theoretical approach Richard undertook a brief therapeutic intervention with every one of the 25 or so people on the five day workshop. In my turn I raised the difficulty of facing my own dying and he gently led me in a conversation about how I wanted this to be, if and when it should happen. Given that I could not know that far in advance what body system might be involved in any future spread of my tumour and what shape I might be in, I could only guess at my last days. I would want to be conscious, with any pain under control and with company, preferably physically held close in calm, secure comfort. Richard suggested that I take this desire home and tell my family. With this preparation it was easier to come home and talk about it with Isabelle. She assures me she understands my desire and is able to go along with my hopes. I think I have grasped the nettle of my own goodbye well.

So I was a “dead man walking” a tight rope maintaining my balance and keeping going. I settled into new routines. My way of work changed. I am less pushy and more supportive. I am less incisive and abrasive and more gentle and soothing. I am less speedy, taking it more slowly. I am less impatient with vulnerability, more encouraging and affirming. I am less with-holding and distant, and more sharing of my life experience especially my difficulties and weakness. I am better at being with people in their deepest troubles, and in being silent. I have greater love and respect in my heart for my colleagues, clients and students and delight and appreciation of

their growth and development. One discomfort: I was once or twice asked to talk with men facing the decision, radiation or surgery for prostate cancer treatment; not to advise them but to describe my experience of radiation. I was honest and told my story. I felt envious when one, in particular, choose surgery and got rid of all prostate tissue. Good choice, I thought privately, I wish I had. He has since died, and I live on, a wee bit guilty about surviving and about my private internal reaction of envy and self-doubt about my choice. It has not been so bad not having surgery, and, I am not dying.

### *A religious experience*

Then I stopped being a “dead man walking”. Now comes a more difficult part to explain, or tell. It is a bit embarrassing. What will you think of me? Did I go soft and religious? I went to a Jesus Seminar in Auckland. I was blown away. I was so excited. Without being aware of it my depression faded away. I felt lively and enlivened. Let me quickly explain the Jesus Seminar.<sup>3</sup> Robert Funk, Lloyd Geering and Jim Veitch led it. If you are in the theological “know” those names will tell you something. I have not gone soft. Lloyd and Jim are Kiwis, outspoken, hard headed clear thinking theologians who as disciplined scholars speak as they see it and not seeking solace in conformity to traditional church thinking attached to the Middle Ages. Lloyd was one of my first teachers in theology and is still a hero of mine. Charged with heresy by the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand in the late '60s, I was one of the several hundred or so to judge him and along with the majority found him not guilty, but he was too hot for our conservative church to hold and was forced out anyway. Lloyd and Jim are New Zealand members of the Jesus Seminar, founded by Robert Funk an independent American theologian. A long time ago now he invited a number of leading scholars in a variety of disciplines in or out of the Church, Christian, Jewish, whatever so long as they were experts in a field contributing to the enterprise to join in a seminar intended to determine the historical accuracy of the Bible accounts of Jesus.

3. Ed. — See also Chapter 4.

Over many years, as a result of scientific investigation and scholarly debate the Jesus Seminar has come up with what it has confidence to publish as authentic sayings and actions of the man Jesus. There are not many. Most of the stories of what Jesus said and did in the Christian New Testament are

the inventions of men writing in the styles of two thousand years ago as a means of communicating those experiences from which their faith originated. The stories are word pictures, extended metaphors of faith not statements of reality to be taken literally. At the Jesus Seminar I attended in Auckland I was to learn first hand how the Seminar worked and what it concluded. I was excited and energized by what I learned. To some of you reading this, the Jesus Seminar is old hat and their findings not so new. For me, it must have been the timing: right time and right place. It pulled a lot of things together for me, as well as providing me with some new information. On reflection I think it was a religious/spiritual experience confirming my identity.

No surprise in this admission — I have had a struggle with being a Christian Minister of Religion. I have had no doubt that is what I was meant to be. In my early twenties, while I was sowing sacks in a barn during a southerly storm as an government rural field cadet heading for an agricultural science qualification, I had — words fail me — a brief but well defined “mystical” experience: a vision, a sense that my path or destiny was to be “a minister”. Though not a traditional kind of minister and I would be married and have children. After completing my Bachelor of Agricultural Science I changed tracks and began studying for the Presbyterian ministry without any idea of what ministry was or is, and what I was getting into. Three years later, when I completed my theological training I was none the wiser. Later, after more study in Texas, I came up with a way of understanding what it meant to be a minister — but it has been quite unconventional.

The expectation was clear in my tradition; a minister was a Minister of The Word and Sacrament. In this tradition, the predominant thing for a minister to do is preach. I was to preach about stories in the Bible, helping to make sense of them and make them relevant for people today. Trouble was lots of people did not want the new, the unending and difficult struggle with modern scholarship. They want a repetition of the old fairy stories, to be tucked up in a comfortable little compartment separate from the world of harsh reality. There were even places in the church where, to get the tick of approval, I would have had to give assent to the preposterous biological impossibility of the virgin birth.

From the background of my scientific training in animal breeding I knew parthenogenesis could not pass on the Y chromosome so the offspring of any virginal birth would be XX: namely, female. I was told the Creator God can do anything, and Mary producing a son was easily within the range of possibility. Yet it was uncomfortable for me thinking of Jesus as a biological freak of nature, a one-off. “But”, the Bible-believer told me, “that is exactly it, he is a one-off, and he is the son of God as a result of the Holy Spirit getting together with Mary to conceive a son”. Ouch! This thinking is getting a bit close to those ancient ideas which held that the supreme Greek god could do anything he wanted in the range of possibility, turn himself into a swan or bullock, to impregnate beautiful earthly virgins. The Jesus Seminar proposes there is no struggle here. The virgin birth story of Jesus, found in the Bible is not a record of an historical event, and when originally written would not have been taken by readers as history. The story is a literary device, a metaphor, a myth to illustrate the place of the divine and the human within the universe. The Seminar provided me with substantial scholarly evidence for believing what I have always held but had difficulty putting into words.

The Seminar concludes that Jesus was an ordinary human being, a man of his times, who taught with extraordinary wisdom, went around with extraordinary ways of communicating what it means to be human and to live communally in this world, and who provided relief for many social and physical ills people suffered. The ways he suggested we might live in relation to each other were and are contrary to the usual lifestyles of the general population. His ways involve loving, forgiving consideration of others who are no less valuable and important, vulnerable and weak as we are ourselves. He suggested the inestimable value of human beings and suggested a lifestyle of mutually cooperative interaction between members of a community seeking to support and benefit each other to no one else's cost, in terms of pragmatic reality — food, shelter and justice. To live this way is to honour the divine in the universe. To make this vision for a community happen we have to get out there and work at it. This “kingdom” will not fall from the sky, the relief of suffering humanity is in our hands. It has been part of my life's work to act, to be a minister, to make this “kingdom” come. The Jesus Seminar gave me an endorsement for my understanding and my endeavours. It lifted me from my depression and gave me a huge boost. My endeavours have been worthwhile, they have



been in keeping with my basic life philosophy and there is more I can do. (And it has taken me ages to be able to put this into any kind of words.)

### *A year of discipline*

Now I am getting closer to accounting for that opening piece about praying, as something I was doing to help myself live well with cancer. “Chester” (not his real name) was one of my first students when I was beginning to supervise in Clinical Pastoral Education in 1965 in Texas. He was unattractive to me, I confess. I didn’t like his looks, or his personality. He had an ugly dent type scar on the top of his forehead where his hairline receded. It was the operation scar from a few years earlier when they had tried unsuccessfully to remove a large, lethal, and inoperable — it turned out — cancerous brain tumour. Now, he was completely cancer free. It had gone. By every then known test or medical examination he was cured. A miracle was claimed: a cure quite unaccounted for by medicine. Chester said it happened when he turned to Jesus one night at a crusade, when he repented and was baptised. He said he wanted to learn pastoral skills so he could go round the cancer wards of hospitals converting sinners and healing their tumours as his had been. I thought he was an arrogant and bombastic so-and-so, and hard to teach. But, I had to admit he seemed cancer free, alive and well, and putting on ugly pounds daily in front of my eyes, blimping-out and straining his suit seams. (Sometimes I am just not very nice, nor non-judgemental.)

Chester was not the first, but he was one of my earliest, very much in-your-face examples of medical miracle, or faith healing whatever you call it. It is technically called spontaneous remission of cancer. It happens, but not all that often. For a long time I have been interested in this naturally occurring phenomenon. To me it means the body has amazing recuperative powers, plasticity and enormous potential. It means that at some point the cancer cells stop their dominating totalitarian function; tumours shrink, and the body’s defence and reparative mechanisms take over. The malignant cells are arrested and absorbed, and healthy replacement tissue installed, — all quite quickly. To me this all means a natural process involving normal physiology; there is nothing supernatural or miraculous about the process. The question is more, why does this process kick in? Remission is unusual, — especially if medical interventions have been unsuccessful, — so why

does the normal deadly dominant process of malignancy turn around at some point. That “some point” often seems in many cases to be a moment associated with some mental activity; like Chester’s repentance and turning to Jesus, or other altered states of consciousness: trance, meditation, visualisation and imagery.

What is this moment of mental activity? It has fascinated me, but defied my ability to come to grips with. I have used meditation and visualisation in my journey. I used a lot while having my radiation treatment. I sought to protect my healthy cells from radiation damage, while increasing the power of the machine to bombard and destroy my weakened cancer cells. Did my mental activity help? I think so. How would I know? Outcome research without some matched-control in an idiosyncratic situation is impossible. My cancer is still contained and I am alive and well. I think this result is a consequence of multifactorial input. I have taken up every avenue which appeals to my good sense, including mental activity. Synchronous with the shift from depression was my renewed connection with a colleague from way back: Bev Silvester-Clark. Bev had joined our Human Development Team in the old Presbyterian Social Services Association. She came to set up a holistic health programme. She and I once gave a joint conference paper on the vision and parameters of such a programme. We recognised mental activities as playing a large part in a holistic approach for developing health in ailing people. In the team we worked together in this mutually-evolving project for several years. Then Bev left to follow her vision in a different way. We parted company and I left the team shortly after following my own imperatives. From a distance we kept up with each other’s progress.

Then, at the end of the Millennium, 1999, I heard that Bev had discovered an approach to Body-Mind-Spirit healing which accounted for those moments of mental activity. I learned she had invested hugely to go to the USA to follow this up and that she had returned stimulated and motivated to bring the method to New Zealand. Isabelle and I enrolled in a programme Bev was going to run in partnership with an American who would be able to attest that her NZ programme properly represented the US method. The programme was a variant of educo-therapy, with formal sit-behind-a-desk listening to teaching input, followed by homework exercises with set reading and research. The approach was disciplined, substantially based and carefully monitored. We were both very impressed. The neurological

foundations of the programme were established on the recent discoveries of brain function — the last frontier of human anatomy and physiology, enabled by the recent technology for exploring the brain as it works. We now know that the brain is not a static organ with permanently set neural circuitry. The brain is highly plastic, capable of making new nerve ending connections throughout much of its structure along with accompanying changes in the dynamics of neurotransmission hormones. The claim of the programme is that by working daily and with intentionally small change increments that can be measured in an outcome review the next day, the brain can create new linkages and drop old ones, to influence body states positively. The effectiveness of the programme was dependent on me committing myself to daily, pencil-and-paper homework, — setting intentional goals and reviewing progress. Such simplistic statements do disservice to the programme, which Bev continues to refine. Of course there are body conditions which are irreversible. Amputated limbs do not grow again. The mechanical damage in my ears can not be undone. Susan's damaged spinal cord cannot repair itself. Susan has learned mental activities which enable her to live well with the results of her injury. I have developed mental activities, requiring ongoing attention, that enable me to live with and manage my deafness and hearing aids, and my other physical conditions including my prostate cancer. Through all of 1999 and well into 2000 I kept up my daily discipline of homework. That whole year of mental activity I have thought of as prayer. It has helped. I recommend Bev's programme: *Creative Healing — A MindBodySpirit Approach to Illness, Injury and Stress*.<sup>4</sup>

[4. Ed. — See <http://mywisebody.com/my-wise-body-interviews-bev-silvester-clark>]

I have found it difficult to do justice to describing Bev's programme. One of my friends who made helpful and welcome editorial comment on the draft of this letter — thank you, Allan (Davidson) — observed this section to be a bit “new age-ist”. Perhaps a little more expansion is deserved. New-age is an appropriate description in the sense that Bev, I and others seek to live in a time of a new world view, a paradigm shift from the old familiar Cartesian split that mind and body are two distinctively different things. Cartesian dualism is still the norm for thinking in our Western world and difficult to break out of. That we can treat the world with detached objectivity assuming no subjective interactivity with those “its” out there we can manipulate as we like has lead to technological advances unbelievable to

my father's generation; men on the moon, proof of water on Mars, heart transplants, ear microsurgery and other beneficial and life enhancing advantages, and nuclear bombs. That same technology is now indicating that purely physical/chemical activity of the brain is what a thought is. The mystery/miracle is that I experience this purely bio-electro-chemical functioning as the mental activity of thinking. How the tangible, hard measurable goes on in my neurons translates to the intangible, ephemeral experience of thinking is a long way from being understood, but we can say a thought has a physical basis, and no physical basis no thought. The mind and body are inextricably linked. There is no separation. We have to find a new paradigm to illustrate this new appreciation of this age.

Descartes made his so-called "turf deal" with the Pope's representatives in the 17th century whereby the Church released bodies over to scientific investigation on the understanding that the Church maintained authority over the mind and soul. This event clinched Descartes philosophy where although he saw some union between body, mind and soul he was moving towards the dualism I have described. The sad outcome of the Cartesian dichotomy is that we in the West are badly out of touch with our bodies, the mind and spirit are so much more important and such different things. Being dissociated and detached from our bodies and devaluing them as we do; is there any wonder that we suffer from illness and dis-ease? We do not know our bodies and tend to treat them as we do our motor cars. When they go wrong we run them into the garage for the mechanic to fix them, replace a part, tune them or adjust the fuel and lubricants. Bev and her two partners' creative healing programme is designed to assist people reconnect healthily with their bodies. A lot of the focused daily work attends to this. The vision they hold for their programme is "to partner in the creation of the individual and cultural paradigm shifts that reframe injury, illness and dis-ease as states from which to escape into opportunities for healing, growth, and transformation." Bev says in the process of their programme "The whole relationship with illness begins to move from a fight for life into a discovery of life." That discovered life, no matter how long or short is of great worth and beauty.

One area of mental activity, in my daily discipline, I needed to work on was how I accepted doctors' opinions as definitive of my situation. This acceptance creates a neural circuitry which is circular and limiting. If I take,

as the descriptive reality of my situation, opinions such as — “You have a cancer which we cannot cure.” “It will lie dormant until it breaks out into virulent malignancy” — then I hold to expectations which have a dead end, literally. My brain can do nothing more with the circuit embedding this idea. I need to be respectful and mindful of the medical information given to me, and, engage in mental activity open to the possibility that my body can do a Chester. This mental activity has to do with shifting deep basic life expectations, expanding them to embrace wider options. Here is an image: the circle breaks into a helix, going round and round and on and on. The mental activity is quite subtle and it is more than wishful thinking. One more recent test of building optimistic expectations was when I asked John Matthews how I was doing, in terms of the average. He said I was much, much better than average. My heart sank and fear rose. I took it that getting too far out from the average put me closer to the end. Within a few hours I was on to how I distorted John’s response, and I told myself that by doing so well I would pull the average up.

### *The current status*

As of this date I am living well with prostate cancer. I am on active hormone therapy, 2 pills a day of androgen suppression medicine (Flutamin). My PSA level has dropped dramatically without unpleasantness. I tried a different medication (Cyproterone) to see if it would work better but, it was too toxic. I got severe shortness of breath with any exertion. I stopped it. Now I am not doing anything special, no diet, just healthy sensible living.

### *Conclusion*

Truth is that I would prefer to have no cancer in my body. So far it persists. One mental activity I engaged in was to regard my prostate cancer’s presence as a positive opportunity rather than to treat the cancer itself as an enemy. I have learned a lot because of it and have made significant changes in order to live more fully and more enjoyably in the here and now. I am grateful to “my good little cancer”, and so far it has not harmed me. In visualising and talking to my tumour I have made it clear long life is in both our best interests. If I can not get rid of my cancer and it is not going to leave me, then my hope is to live on friendly terms with it and die with it,

not from it. Ours may turn out to be a marriage, “until death do us part”. I totally reject the old matrimonial formula, “whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder”. I am open to separation, annulment, divorce and no fault dissolution of marriage; particularly my marriage to cancer.

David [Clark], my pastor, asked me some time ago, when I told him I was no longer a dead man walking, “what image do you have for yourself now?” That’s been hard to answer. As a very little boy I remember puzzling over what my blind Irish grandfather said when he pronounced a blessing and gave thanks before meals. (This tendency to hear what I want to hear, or, to be more generous, to hear what I am able to hear, began early.) I was sure he was talking about buns we were going to have. I loved buns — but there were never any on the table, and they never came. Years later I heard another person from Ireland give thanks before food, he thanked the Almighty for the abundance of good things showered upon us. It was my grandfather’s blessing, and at last the buns made sense. Today I am a man at a feast of buns and gravy. Or, as a friend has observed since getting this, because of granddad’s grace I’ve joined in a bun dance.

*With best wishes,*

*Evan*

## **Buns and gravy: The sequel (2014)**

If you go back a page to the section, “The current status”, written in March 2004, just before I sent the letter out, this sequel to my story begins there. From then on the year got worse. In the words of Her Majesty, my Queen, 2004 turned into an “annus horribilis”. John Matthews and I decided to stick out a full year on hormone treatment. Off the stuff giving me too many nasty side effects and back onto Flutamin, my first medication which originally worked so well. But my levels of stamina and energy were declining and I was getting breathless. At their invitation we joined Susan and Pete on a cruise to Alaska and a rail tour of Denali National Park to Fairbanks. It was all great and at the National Park, in the prolonged twilight of early spring Isabelle and I took off on a nature trail, noting that the bears at this time were hungry after their hibernation and could be very

dangerous but would avoid us if we gave them warning of our presence by talking loudly or singing. However, I nearly didn't make it back to the hotel. The ups and downs of the trail and the singing were more than enough for me. Slowly, by dark we got back to warmth and shelter and we didn't see sight or sound of bears.

### *Heart attack or hormone treatment?*

In hindsight I might have been having a heart attack. But, there was no chest pain, just shortness of breath and exhaustion. After my heart surgery in December my surgeon told me I had had several heart attacks and I protested, "I've never had a heart attack!" "Oh yes you have, I've seen the scar tissue in your heart muscle!" What better proof? I was dumbfounded. Just like my cancer, I have never directly met my disease. Doctors have pointed it out, otherwise I would not know. My major illnesses are silent (except for my ears which do give me plenty of notice). Being silent allows for denial and other distortions of what I make out of what I hear doctors tell me. Twenty years ago I heard the doctor tell me my PSA was in normal limits which I took to mean no cancer. In 2004 I was hearing my breathlessness and exhaustion were side effects of hormone treatment, not heart disease.

To be fair, doctors were pointing to heart disease. When we got home from our Alaskan trip I went to see John Matthews. He acknowledged the severity of the side effects and suggested that if there were no improvements after reducing the dose I was taking I should see a cardiologist, because, what I was experiencing could be hiding heart disease. My GP did not want to wait and immediately made an appointment with the first available specialist. About mid-year I had a stress cardiogram, wired up to monitors and working out on a treadmill thing with the cardiologist watching. I managed and completed — with effort. Mid-way through the appointment the specialist rushed off in response to alarm-bells and returned later apologising for having to assist in an emergency, then brusquely asked if I had ever had angina. I have never experienced chest pain radiating down my left arm and side which was my idea of angina. (My old mate, Robin, described his angina and heart attack as being kicked in the side by a horse and being left breathless and paralysed with pain, and dropping to the floor trying to get a breath. I've had nothing near that, old

chum.) So my answer was “no” and it was not denial. But it turned out to be a wrong answer, eventually, nevertheless. My memory of the climax of the cardiologist’s written report was, “I find no evidence of coronary artery disease”. That was good enough for me, I (and Isabelle) had heard enough, my symptoms were the consequence of my hormone treatment. The end of the year, the twelve months of being on treatment could not come soon enough. On the basis of that written report Isabelle joined me in my conclusion about the devastating effects of hormone treatment. In retrospect we feel quite misled and angered by that cardiac examination and report.

### *Heart attacks*

Over the next few months I had several moments when any sudden exertion would leave me faint, breathless and needing to sit down and rest. Like the time when three of us were rushing to carry a mattress between our houses (40 metres) to beat the oncoming rain and I just had to let it go and collapse onto the nearest chair to catch my breath. Obviously, now, another silent heart attack, but put down to hormone treatment. At that time Isabelle said to me in encouraging tones “you’ll be much better next year after your treatment is finished”. It was getting too much for me. In November I pushed myself when walking along a footpath behind three dawdling women blocking me and others from moving on, by stepping out onto the road and overtaking them. And then, I nearly collapsed to the kerb, but managed to get to the seat at the nearby bus stop, and took ages to recover with my head down. I rang my GP he made an immediate appointment for an angiogram (x-ray examination of my heart at work) and mid-December was the earliest available. Meanwhile my old friend and colleague Rex [Hunton] (who taught GPs) visited and heard of my intending angiogram. He took an unobtrusive gentle history as to why I was going to have this test. In the course of his inquiry he asked if I noticed any unusual things going on in me at the time of such collapses. Yes, I replied, I have my old allergy symptoms and wondered if it was something I had been eating. What are those symptoms he asked? It is a strange unpleasant sensation in my sinuses below my eyes spreading round to the top of my jaw on each side. Oh, says Rex, just make sure you tell the specialist that when you see him. It is a well known but rare symptom of angina. I was having angina but it was completely unrecognised by me. After Rex left, Isabelle went to her



text-books and there was a diagram portraying all the different sites of angina symptoms in the human body, including mine! We feel very let down and angry with my first cardiologist who did not assist me to understand what angina could mean when asking the question. Good on Rex, he is a wonderful care-taker, and demonstrated consummate skill in history taking. We got nowhere when attempting to explain to that cardiologist how we felt inadequately attended to. Formal complaint would have been pointless.

### *The angiogram*

I checked with this interventionist cardiologist that he could put a stent in while he was observing my heart in action so I would not need to go back for a second go if they found something needing fixing. I was assured it could all be done at once. It is a procedure to x-ray your heart and see that your heart muscles are getting the blood supply they need and it is all working properly. So on the 16th December I went off for the angiogram, first having a light lunch with Michael and barely able to walk up the hill to the café. There is very little discomfort and I was invited to watch the TV screen showing the x-ray results as it happened but the view was too difficult. So I watched his face as he worked making his various adjustments to the dye he was putting in to make the x-rays show. I couldn't see much of his face, he was wearing a mask and cap and all I could see were his eyes behind his glasses lit up by the TV screen he was watching. And I could see that he didn't like what he was seeing. Then he was finished and quickly off to get Isabelle and give us the results. I was left lying waiting. He came back with Isabelle, swings his TV screen around so we can both see it and begins a replay. He points and says, "see this artery to your heart it is 100% blocked here, see this second artery to your heart on the other side, it is 100% blocked, and see the third, middle and last artery it is 60% blocked here. It is not good news. It cannot be fixed with stents. You need bypass graft surgery. I checked while I was away getting Isabelle and there is one place for surgery left at the end of tomorrow which is our last day of surgery for the year. No more surgery until the middle of January. Do you want to take it?" Yes, we both said at once. Then he muttered an aside to Isabelle, which I was able to hear, "wise choice — waiting would be very risky!" He went on to say he knew we had no insurance and it would cost

around \$30,000, could we manage that? We said yes, again with one voice. So surgery was arranged for the next day.

### *Bypass graft surgery*

This heart surgery is to graft fresh clear blood vessels onto the arteries in the heart to bypass the points where they are blocked. It requires a great deal of preparation and it was all on for me. I walked the 100 metres or so from the angiogram suite over to the Mercy Hospital and was admitted for the surgery on a warm, beautiful sunny afternoon in a room with a million dollar view and preparations began. I had no time to think about what was going to happen, no time to get anxious. It all seemed an easy routine I was following directed by caring, sensitive staff who knew what they were doing. Early evening Isabelle left and I went with the flow of preparation, at a slow and steady pace. Then out of the blue a nurse bustled in to ask if I minded shifting to being the first surgery of the next day, it would give them more time to get the bloods right for the original, first patient due for surgery. I agreed and after a quick phone call to tell Isabelle of the change. Now I was caught in a whirl of activity with no time to think, compose myself or get fearful. Technicians were called in, x-rays taken, blood samples, body shaved, sterilizing shower, operating room clothing, after midnight exhausted and with a sleeping pill I fell instantly asleep. In the morning I was awoken and almost straight away wheeled off to the operating room with Isabelle at my side, and my pastor, David, meeting me in the corridor on the way with prayerful good wishes and God's blessing on all involved. It was all peaceful, calm and without discomfort and I was soon anaesthetised and in the hands of the surgical team.

### *Mental preparation for the surgery*

As I write this I realise that I had been preparing my state of mind over recent years, as described in my letter. So I could be calm, accepting, and confident of all that was going on. Also I had long ago overcome my hospital phobia. Ironic: I was a hospital chaplain for so many years, maybe an unconscious way of forcing a resolution of the phobia. I had put a lot of unsuccessful effort with several different therapists into resolving it. And, one time when I was in the middle of doing a Transactional Analysis training weekend in Christchurch and giving examples from my own life of

Child ego state dynamics (ways of life-style in our childhood which haven't grown up to maturity and remain within our mental make-up as our child ways of dealing with contemporary life issues) it was like I was hit in the head. I choked on what I was saying and very nearly burst into tears. I suddenly knew the origins of my phobia. As a five year old I had been abandoned in hospital to have my tonsils removed.

It was a custom in that day and age, the wisdom of medicos, that while a nurse distracted the child the mother slipped away to return two days later to collect them after the procedure was well over. I remember it being a horrible event in a totally child unfriendly environment. It was as primitive as that wisdom of medicos not to talk with the dying about what was most directly happening to them. How wise of a child to fear such an environment and avoid going there as much as possible, even to resist going. I had a job to do to convince that residual five-year old, ungrown-up, immature personality still living deep within me that never again would he be abandoned into the hands of medicos. I talked to him and he answered me, voicing his doubts at my attempts to reassure him of my ability to stay with him and support him in the face of medical procedures. It was back and forth internal dialogue and took time. One device I (the grown-up) used to calm the little-boy within was to stroke and sooth the back of my right hand with the thumb of my left hand as I clasped hands sitting in a waiting room before some procedure, assuring him that I was with him. And those efforts at resolution have worked. That arrested area of development in my personality has grown up. I have no hospital phobia. Thank goodness that work was all done before I had to deal with my prostate cancer and I could go into all that treatment stuff, especially injections, needles, infusions, tubes and stuff calmly. I know any tension, any tightening of muscles, any resistance, any anxiety, increases my pain and adds to any difficulty of treatment.

So I have learned to blob-out, to hand myself over, to relax into the hands of the medical team. This, as I have learned has its dangers. I can put my need for grown-up decision-making into suspension, in my blobbed-out state and be taken over by medicos when I am in very vulnerable positions. Like during an endoscopy exam and they advised me to have my haemorrhoids tied off while they were there and it was just before Christmas. What a joyful merry Christmas I had sitting on holly. And, of course, Isabelle was

not with me during that exam. I need her with me. On my own at a time like that I can be done for. What did you do that for? Isabelle asked me. You've been living with those haemorrhoids; you had no need to get that treatment at this time. She was annoyed. It did not relieve my discomfort. It is back to another point in my letter: the need for care-giving rather than treatment-giving and to make sure you have care-givers in the team. I need Isabelle as a team member. With her alongside I can be placid.

### *Post surgery*

To bypass the blocked coronary arteries I had been given five grafts using pieces of the vein taken from my leg, from groin to mid-calf. And it was still not enough, so more blood vessel was harvested from inside my chest. In post surgery recovery I had most discomfort from my leg scar and it was the slowest to heal. From my past experience with surgery (ears) I give over 24 hours to being out of it, totally in the hands of the medical/nursing team and leave it to the natural recuperative powers of my body to deal with the assault and invasion it has had. What more invasion or bodily assault could you have: chest opened, heart handled, stopped, patches sewn on, restarted? I do not need to be conscious for that time. I allow myself to drift away and come to alertness only as it is called for. And, this time it was called for. Throughout my recovery I was constantly called to attention and activity. It is no rest and recuperation process. As soon as possible they had me up and walking with lots of support. The first time was quite daunting. I sat on the edge of the bed and it seemed an awful long way down to the floor, would I be able to get down there? With a strong person on each side I was assisted down and to walk to the door and back. It was hard work and very tiring but my body felt so good for having done the movement and exercise. And so it was each time I got up and walked. While I needed to be in bed it was good to get out of it and walk. "Walk and talk," I was told. "Push it to walk and if you can talk you are not overdoing it." Along the corridor walls different distances were marked off in metres. It meant you could go just that much further each time I was up. Then, progress — I could go to the shower and toilet.

### *Primitive fear*

As a one-time hospital chaplain and with Isabelle a one-time cardio-surgical nurse specialist I was aware that there can be psychological disturbance after heart surgery so I was on the alert for night-mare type dreams or day dreams. At a deep, unconscious level, way down in the wiring laid down in the time of our cave-man ancestry fear of predatory attack and bodily assault such as by a tiger tearing into you is the stuff of night-mares. I did have some low level disturbing times particularly while anaesthetic medicine was still in my system. So I talked to myself: that internal dialogue process stuff. I sympathised with my primitive fearful being, my vulnerable self, explaining what had been going on and how it was all under control and I was in no danger. Facing into it seemed all I needed to do and I was untroubled by any fear.

### *The support of prayer*

I am well aware this bit can be explained as self-hypnosis: I want to experience what I tell myself I am going to experience so I do have the experience. I had a sense of being upheld by prayer: the focused energy of compassionate people concerned for my wellbeing and good outcomes for me. I do not believe in a divine agent — God — who attends to the interceding requests of faithful people requesting beneficial interventions on behalf of needy persons. I do not believe in an interventionist God who for “his” mysterious reasons seems inconsistent about on whom “he” bestows “his” benefits and from whom “he” withholds benefits. Nevertheless I did have this experience of being “supported” throughout the time of surgery and post surgical recovery. How do I find words to describe this existential sensation? It can only be through the use of metaphor, “figures of speech”. As the process philosophers put it, first is the immediate sensory experience of a life event, then follows the struggle to put it into words which can never adequately convey the experience being one step removed or second-hand from the original, immediate first-hand moment. So I experienced this sense of floating, on a secure air mattress, or on a warm water-bed of loving goodwill. I lost that sensation when I got home. I think the focused unspoken concern many people had for me created an energy field on which I floated. I think of this as similar to a gravitational field which I feel holding me on the surface of planet earth, I understand the neurological sensory mechanism which enables me to know whether I am sitting,

standing, lying down, standing on my head. I don't understand what sensory mechanism produced the feeling of being supported on a secure base. I am aware of being able to sense emotional atmosphere, places that are warm and happy and other places that are cold and prickly. Simply put: the good vibes from many people held me up and gave me peace and confidence and on this foundation I could put my faith and trust whole-heartedly in the medical team. There is my metaphor.

### *Pain relief*

Another pleasant surprise for me was how pain control was managed. Very early after my return to my room with a view, after leaving the intensive care unit, a nurse specialist, recently arrived from the UK, came to attend to my pain. Given my chest had been opened and stretched to get access to my heart; then closed up with special wire to hold it securely (it will not set off the airport alarms, I was assured) I felt surprisingly comfortable. I thought the pain was quite low, my leg hurt more, as I said. So this nurse asked me to rate my pain on a scale of 1 to 10, (with 10 being excruciatingly unbearable and 1 being totally pain-free and even feeling great) so they could gauge the level of pain relief medication to give me. But, before I answered he told me he needed to explain what was meant by pain: a completely different approach than the question, "have you had angina?" By pain he wanted me to include: whether I felt more warm than usual; was I sweating; were the palms of my hands damp; was it difficult to find a comfortable position in bed; was I restless and could not settle? Now, taking these into account what was my score? I had first thought of 6 but with new criteria to consider I changed that to 8. "Pain is more than just hurting! And your body takes longer to heal when it has to deal with pain. So no pain heroics here, it holds up your recovery!" That was such new thinking for me — a good Kiwi uncomplaining, grin-and-bear-it, big-boys-don't-cry, man. I took it seriously and between us I was pain free with the medication I was given and I don't think I was a wimp.

### *Setback fixed with a zap*

I had all these cardiograph terminals taped to my body wired into a wireless connection to a heart monitor away in the nurses' station and it showed my heart had not yet returned to a normal rhythm since the surgery. That was

bothering the medical team. By a week out my heart should be beating normally. Everything else was healing nicely. My heart surgeon, David Haydock, with excellent skills and human compassion, explained that it was usual for some glitch to occur in the recovery journey for every patient and mine was happening early. He was reassuring cool and calm about the arrhythmia. But after several more days, concern was growing and I was not enjoying the sensation. What Mr Haydock said they were trying to do was to find out if there was a drug or combination of drugs which would bring my heart back to normal. He was in consultation with a medical colleague of his, a cardiologist expert in arrhythmia, over what drugs to use. I asked about giving me a zap. That was a last resort possibility for them, if drugs did not work. They saw drugs as a more natural way to go. A zap might last only a few minutes before a heart went back to arrhythmia. Daily changes to drugs brought no change to rhythm and time was starting to run out. Already I was one of the last patients left. The hospital was closing down, not just for Christmas but for a total refurbishment. Beds had been moved out and building materials brought in. Cupboards emptied and packed up, and my room with a view was being demolished in the far corner. On the morning of Christmas eve I was just settling down to my “bacon and egg” breakfast and a message from Mr Haydock declared I was for a zap, asap. My breakfast tray was whipped away as I was about to take my first mouthful. Fortunately! Any food and we would have had a long wait. I rang Isabelle who came in while I was being prepared. The procedure of cardioversion, (a zap like you see on TV) is done under anaesthetic. Fascinating, Isabelle just automatically stepped in to assist the anaesthesiologist anticipating what he needed. Then the zap specialist came in and has been my cardiologist since. His skill is to watch the arrhythmic heart beating and timing the zap for the right moment to produce the inversion back to normal. I was put to sleep and very soon the zap was done, my heart went into normal sinus rhythm and has been that way ever since. What a relief! I hated the way my whole body shook and jolted with the uneven beat. How strong the heart is: it can literally shake your whole body so you can't lie still.

*AF and Warfarin*

My arrhythmia was AF — atrial fibrillation — and one of the nasty possible consequences when that going on is that a blood clot can develop in the heart and get pumped up to the brain and cause a stroke with fatal results. As prevention I was put on Warfarin, a blood thinner, and, as my new cardiologist announced I would be on it for life: a precaution against my next time of having AF. (Note again: a doctor's pronouncement — “your next time of having AF”. I am now on my guard against such a post-hypnotic suggestion and its potential for self-fulfilling prophecy. We can give doctors a lot of power and their authoritative statements can be most entrancing. I reframe such a statement — if and when I have another episode of AF there is the possibility of a clot which is not a certainty and need not be damaging.) Nevertheless, I went along with the Warfarin, — it makes good sense. However, it takes a lot of monitoring to maintain the correct levels. (Warfarin is used as a rat poison: because it is painless, it is mixed with enticing food, unnoticed and over-eaten by the rats who have their blood thinned to fatal levels.) So, it is crucial to have the right levels of INR (a blood clotting measure) in your blood by having constant blood tests. Needles — more needles! The test results need review by a doctor who then authorises adjustment on the daily dose of Warfarin. Generously, Mr Haydock did this monitoring for me when I was discharged at a holiday time, but Isabelle had to drive me across town for the lab test blood sample to be taken and analysed. I was not allowed to drive for 4 weeks after discharge, until I had a doctor's OK certificate.

### *A postscript on Warfarin*

Twelve months ago, January 2011, just after returning from a holiday on Great Barrier Island — I hate to think if it had happened there — I had a bleed from the backside that took me into the emergency room for urgent treatment to reverse the Warfarin effect and enable my blood to naturally clot and stop the bleeding. Then it was a week in hospital while they explored where and what caused the bleed and how to cauterise the site with a laser to prevent bleeding, but they came to no clear conclusion; but, that is another story. The final outcome is a medical decision, initiated by me, that the precautionary value of taking the blood thinner, Warfarin, in case I have AF again with the chance of a clot is far outweighed by the risk of a major bleed again because I am taking it. I have been off Warfarin for a year and



the freedom is great and I will take the chance of AF, a clot, and stroke because none of that is inevitable and I will not think in that closed circuit way.

### *Discharge from heart surgery and the Christmas gift*

Once I had slept off the zap and was back to a lovely normal rhythm, I had the lunch they had saved for me, then, alongside beds and supplies moving out, I was shipped off by ambulance to the Ascot Hospital. They wanted me in hospital under observation over-night following the zap. There I was in a new place, a new bed, and new staff to get used to, and they gave me wine with dinner. It was Christmas Eve and the mood was merry. I was delighted I had been given my Christmas gift — a repaired heart beating in normal healthy sinus rhythm. Christmas was bringing me new life, new birth, and peace (shalom — wholeness) on earth. I was so unbelievably fortunate. I was so excited sleep avoided me and I lay awake, my window drapes drawn back so I could watch out for Santa and his reindeer. I never saw him. I saw only two people at different times walking along Greenlane that night, one was a woman wearing a red Christmas cap. I considered that she could serve as Mary Christmas, Santa's substitute; however, my gift had already been delivered. Next morning, Mr Haydock made an early morning round and discharged me. Isabelle came to collect me but there was a long wait while all the paper work was done and prescriptions filled. Just as we were about to go down to the car with a load of stuff to take home pastor, David, turned up carried stuff and escorted me and Isabelle back into the everyday world. Then off to Michael and Cate's home to celebrate Oscar's first Christmas, a special time with our first grandchild, Susan and Pete's son. His arrival, two month's earlier, at which I had been present, was the most heart-warming event in 2004, my year of heart attacks. Now the two of us, new lives, were celebrating a new Christmas.

### *Conclusion*

This tale is told. There is little to add to this sequel, to 'Living with Prostate Cancer'. My treatment for heart disease has been an episode in my health history. I was again reminded of Arthur Frank's book, *At the Will of the Body*,<sup>5</sup> which alerted me to gravy. Arthur's personal story included a major heart attack and testicular cancer. He distinguished the one as a critical

episode which once past fades into history but cancer invades our landscape and alters our world view. My cancer is ongoing and that gives it a different quality. What happened to my heart has had little, if any effect on my cancer. It has not changed its nature within my body, and the conclusion in my 2004 letter needs no change. I can report my physical health is better than ever, or at least for a very long time. Once I had made full recovery from my heart surgery, after following a program of exercise walking, and some minor diet and life style changes I felt the full benefit of an effective heart and good circulation. I felt brighter all over, more lively and clear thinking. Even that has increased particularly with this long period free from hormone treatment. I have lived a life-time with cancer now, — if life-times are measured in the old sort of generation period of 21 years. At the time I was diagnosed, Micah, our grandson's half brother was born. He is 21 this year, and I keep time against him. I never thought it might be this long. Maybe I will make 80. I have told the story of John Matthews saying definitively, "no you won't make 80." I have already invited him to my 80ieth birthday party, and he had said he will be there. And, I told the story that I selected 80 as being the age of the oldest male relative I could think of in our family, he was Sam Sherrard, my blind Irish grandfather, who taught me about buns. I have since learned I made a mistake, he was 86 when he died. So I have had to make an adjustment, 86 is now the new upper figure I suggest for an age range.

[5. Ed. — Mariner Books, 2002. (Original work published 1991)]

Now, what about some of those other areas of interest in my letter describing living with cancer?

### *Creating new thinking circuits*

The discipline I learned from Bev I still find useful but I have made my own modifications to it and practise it mentally without pencil and paper as I did at first. Bev ran into copyright difficulties with the original scheme she was using, so she and her other colleagues have been developing their own commercial programs for coping with cancer or preparing for surgery. Use her name, Bev Sylvester-Clark, to find their website on the internet, if you want to follow that up.

### *Mind-body healing*

I have been following up the challenge of Chester and the whole area of mind-body healing (today, this area is now a university level discipline at AUT in the Psychotherapy Department I helped to found back in 1989). This led me to write some papers on healing for the faith community I am a member of, The Community of St Luke, in Remuera, Auckland. It is essential when discussing this topic to distinguish between healing and cure. I am a well healed man living with cancer which has not been cured. To be well healed means I have none of the psycho-social distress which goes with the disease of cancer. I think my world view is healthy. My heart has not been cured. There are heart attack scars in my heart muscle and the blockages in my coronary arteries are still there but they have bypassed with clever little grafts made from veins. I have been treated and healed not cured. Healed in that the consequences of the coronary disease have been removed and I live well with my repaired heart. Within a community such as St Luke there is much can be done to promote healing. We are not in the business of curing, we leave that to doctors. I have become involved in our healing enterprise which does not include the “faith healing” practices of some primitive Christian groups nor does our thinking of prayer involve an interventionist God.

### *New biological thinking*

To appreciate the dynamics of mind-body healing I have needed to up-date my knowledge of cell biology. This has been most enjoyable and rewarding. It took me back to my first love and academic discipline — biology. I had not moved on this for fifty years. Bev put me in touch with Bruce Lipton through video-tapes of his lectures, his book *The Biology of Belief*, and his presentations in person in New Zealand. He is a micro-biologist, specialising in cell functioning: a vibrant and energetic lecturer who rushes me off my feet with his enthusiasm to explain how the energies of our mental states influence the functions of the basic build blocks of life — cells, and contribute to healthy or unhealthy outcomes. I was very out of date on the latest science of the structure of cell boundaries, protein molecules, genes and epigenetics.

### *New theological thinking*

I continue to follow up the theological leads begun for me in the Jesus Seminar. I am left flabbergasted by the archaic, illogical, stupid beliefs and understandings otherwise intelligent and well-educated people hold about Christian matters. These are what I consider primitive notions: the Bible is God's words in print, literally true and accurate; the earth was created by God from nothing in a short space of time and did not evolve; Jesus was conceived, gestated and born by a woman who was a virgin, who had had no sexual contact with any man at any time; Jesus' dead corpse was resuscitated and he was resurrected bodily but not with our sort of body because he could walk through walls; God is going to organise and orchestrate the most bloody violent human battle ever known to end history. What a primitive, barbaric view of God! Come on! Grow up! The faith community I am a member of considers itself a "progressive Christian" community, that is we want to upgrade our understanding to be consistent with 21st century thinking and world views. Doing this takes hard critical thinking and making some major paradigm shifts. I enjoy it.

### *New perspectives on life and death*

In my introduction to this document I say this experience of heart surgery has given me an added perspective to life and death. I think facing into the possible outcome of death from cancer had prepared me for the fatal possibilities of death from my heart condition, so it is difficult to speak of new perspectives.

Do I have a preference for slowly dying of cancer or a sudden swift death from heart attack? It is a theoretical question because I know I will not be given a choice. If I was given one what would I prefer? My answer: a slow lead in and then a quick end. I want that time to finish business, say goodbyes, complete projects, put things in order, and bring closure to significant relationships. Then I do not want to linger. Recently, my friend, Bruce, dying from melanoma told me he was ready to die and everything was completed, so he asked, "why am I lingering?" He said it was torture to himself and especially his immediate family caring for him but that his body was holding on. My only answer at the time, "you must have genes for robust bodily survival". I wonder, are there ways to pull the plug? Some people seem to be able to do it and end when they want to. But, no one in my family has been able to, even my mother though, she, particularly,

wanted to go well before she did, when dying from cancer. I'd like to find an answer to how to time my own ending without actively suiciding. I know suicide is an option, but one which I do not really entertain as of now. I will keep that option open. One of my significant teachers, Bob Goulding, closed that option for himself, and talked about it. He died quite stressfully, slowly from emphysema. He thought there was something humanly noble about facing the challenge of however death came, dealing creatively with it and involving the human companionship of near and dear others for support in the process. I do not really know how he would have answered Bruce.

### *Zorba the Greek*

Many years ago I was struck by a passage in the story of Zorba the Greek. It goes that Zorba is journeying from one village to another having to cross a mountain pass. High in the mountains he comes across an old peasant farmer planting olive trees. "Excuse me, Father," says Zorba, "will you not be long dead before those trees come into harvest?" "Son", replies the old man, "I live each day as though I was never going to die!" "Oh, Father," says Zorba, "I live each day as though it was my last!" I am still torn between these two approaches. In some ways I have the approach of the old man, I live as though life stretches out endlessly before me. I am very well aware of my mortality, yet I deny the coming end by putting off preparations I should be making like cleaning out accumulated clutter of books and papers and stuff in the garage. And, I see the good example of friends who warned of their likely demise had completed everything down to the last detail, like disposing of stamp collections, finishing family trees and histories, and prepared their funeral. But, if today is my last day, is that what I want to spend my last hours doing, cleaning up my left-overs? Consideration for others, says I should clean up behind me. It is a real conflict. It is unlikely today is my last, and Zorba often did seem irresponsible, and in that way I am a bit like him with that approach. Here is where I draw on what I want to hear from doctors, I take refuge in what John Matthews says each morning: I wake symptom-free I will have a year to live. Life stretches out before me; each new day means another year ahead of me. But, John has said, you are faced with competing morbidity. There can be a car accident. Yuk! I love living!

### *A man dancing life*

David, my pastor, asked some eight years ago, “if you no longer see yourself as a dead man walking, how do you see yourself?” I have come to my answer, I am a man dancing a bun dance of life. The dance of life has a huge range of tempos and moods. Sometimes the rhythm and meter is slow and serious, sometime fast and even frenetic. Zorba the Greek demonstrates a dance I like, linking arms with others and stepping out in measured passionate movement. I like to think I have learned through my experiences to pick up on the tune life is playing at the moment, and dance to it. My tune is folk music called “a bun dance”, or, abundance, for short, and involves buns and gravy in large measure.

### *My dancing grandfather*

The last word goes again to Grandfather, Sam. Would you believe I am here because of dancing? Here is the story: In his farmhouse called Bruslee, in County Antrim, Ireland, one night Great Grandfather, Charles, heard a noise and went to investigate. It was youngest son, Sam, climbing in the kitchen window. “What are you doing, son?” asked Charles. “Coming home, father,” Sam replied. “Where have you been, son?” “At the village dance, father,” was the answer. “Son, you know in this family we do not go to the village dances. Now, you must choose, stay and be a member of this family, or, leave and go to dances.” “Father, I choose to go dancing!” Next day, Sam left home, went and lived and worked with his oldest brother until he saved enough to sail to New Zealand in 1873. If you go to Dunsandel on the main south road 40km from Christchurch, that is the village Sam settled in and became a store-keeper, married the blacksmith’s daughter and had my dad, and if you poke around the village hall you can find the foundation stone. You will see it was laid by Samuel Sherrard Esq. and built as a place where village dances could be held.

*Go well my friends,  
Evan*

## *Chapter 16*

### **My Dad was hit by a bus**

SUSAN SHERRARD

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Dad and I had a conversation a couple of days before his surgery to remove his bladder. He told me he was thinking he would go ahead with the surgery, but was a bit scared. I agreed I was too but that his quality of life was pretty poor and that this surgery provided a chance for a better quality of life, and after all, I said, he might be hit by a bus. His reply was that he didn't want to be hit by a bus, to which of course I agreed. But on the 21st October 2015, Dad was hit by a bus.

Clearly Dad didn't want to die. He wanted to improve his quality of life. He wanted to get a good night's sleep, be able to focus during the day, and have his time and space back. He was optimistic that this major surgery would give him something back that he had lost. He went into it hopeful and positive. He came out of the surgery tired and still determined. A complication of the surgery, probably related to his body finding it just too much to overcome, was the bus that killed him.

There were no magical lights or music when he died. It might ease our sadness to think it was his time, or he was ready or he had been called to heaven. This was not his belief — he believed our bodies are vulnerable and can't survive forever. His body simply could not recover from the second serious complication he experienced, his organs stopped working and he died. He was surrounded by the love of his family. We, the hospital

and he did all we could to keep him alive and with us. But it was not to be and we grieve deeply for his death.

Dad knew about grief. He was a grief specialist — not that that was a term he would use or be comfortable with. He was a humble man. He followed and taught Granger Westberg's grief theory, with a focus on living with the loss.<sup>1</sup> This was part of his pastoral care and fits well with Transactional Analysis. He was always fascinated by theories and knowledge. He was always interested in understanding more — especially about people. But not only about people, he was interested in everything.

[1. Ed. — Westberg, G. (1960). *Good grief*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.]

Growing up, both Mum and Dad went off to something called “workshops”. It took a long time for me to figure out they weren't going to a mechanic. They seemed to do strange things and none of my school friends' parents went to “workshops”. Mum and Dad also had strange friends — I remember one lunch where Max Clayton decided I needed to learn to make a fist and be able to throw a punch, without breaking my thumb.

Growing up, Mum and Dad were often busy with their work. Both worked full time and Michael and I looked after ourselves after school. One of the ways they managed the household was through sharing out chores at our “family meetings”. They probably picked up this idea at one of their workshops. Chores were weighted for difficulty, each of us had to take turns to pick a chore and ensure the weighting was spread across us all. One of Dad's chores was the laundry. We all had to cook one evening meal a week and we got used to our weekly tuna casserole.

While we might not have spent a lot of time together, especially when we were teenagers and developing our own interests, there were always significant conversations to be had, mainly by Dad to us — we might have referred to these as his sermons or preaching. One of his topics was “graciousness” in response to something one and or other of us had done. Goodness knows what looking back, but he certainly was able to tell us all about the need to be gracious.

Talking things through was his thing. Mum was much more straightforward — rewards and punishments came through her. For Dad it was a discussion, important that we understood the different points of view. Weighing up options before decisions were made. Emotions released — all good



therapeutic stuff — practised in the family. Funnily enough, this is not always an approach appreciated by the children and partners of psychotherapists.

Dad was an introvert — he needed time alone and quiet to recharge his batteries. His garden and pot plants played a role in his wellbeing. Watering was a ritual for him. He had different sizes of watering cans for different jobs. He also read books — a wide range from serious “learning” books to fantasy science fiction to comics like Footrot Flats by Murray Ball. He and Oscar, his grandson, would discuss and swap books when they found one they thought the other would like.

Dad also watched television and enjoyed movies. Another ritual was the wine and cheese before the 6 o’clock news. It was common knowledge in our house when we were growing up that Mum and Dad would sit down together and discuss their days, over originally sherry, then red wine and some cheese with crackers. This was their special time and, when Michael and I were teenagers, interruptions were not welcome. It was also expected that we would be quiet during the news. In his later years, we were welcome to join the wine and cheese ritual, but the volume of the television became something to contend with, and he never quite mastered the mute button with the ads.

When we moved to Auckland from the States, we got a dog, this was hugely exciting for us. We had to have a family discussion to name our little black cocker spaniel. When we were in the United States, Dad used to tell us stories of a man named Wiremu and his dog, Kuri. These were adventure stories, based in a foreign land called New Zealand. Anyway, we named our dog Kuri, after much discussion. Kuri brought joy to us all for 17 years. When his pelvis was broken in a car incident (a long story), Dad used to get up at night and carry Kuri out to the grass, holding him under his chest and letting him sniff around to find the right place to do his business.

When I was in my final year at school I remember a significant conversation between me, Mum and Dad. I was stressed and didn’t know what I wanted to do when school finished. I knew two things: ultimately I wanted to work with people and I didn’t want to move out of home (playing hockey for the local club was my priority). The three of us talked through options and I decided I would go nursing as a way of moving into working

with people. I was accepted into Auckland Technical Institute (now Auckland University of Technology [AUT]) and completed my nursing in three years — loving almost every minute of it.

I had my accident when I was 21 years old and survived a spinal cord injury. Mum and Dad in their own ways became my major supports in the early days. Mum in practical, sometimes ferocious hands-on support. Dad was my emotional rock — he held the hope for me until I could hold it for myself. He was the one who knew I could still work with people.

At Dad's funeral I shared the story of the funeral for my hands. It was about ten days after my accident. I was still in head tongs to treat the broken vertebrae, when I raised my fear of my hands becoming claws. Dad suggested we hold a funeral for my "old" hands so that I could welcome my "new" ones. Together we talked about all the things I had loved to do with my hands — and we cried. I was then able to welcome or accept my new hands. Dad facilitated a lot of funerals.

With Dad's support I joined Lifeline as a telephone counsellor, did counselling courses and two psychology papers before being accepted into the first year of the newly developed Diploma in Psychotherapy at AUT. We were a small group and acknowledged as the pioneers of the programme. My father one of the main tutors, his style of teaching was through stories and examples. Rarely did he lecture from notes. His presence and being was his demonstration of the art of psychotherapy and his knowledge and skill the science. Dad had a great capacity to see the best in people and he held them with love and respect while they worked to find their own goodness.

Dad was a founding member of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) and eventually made a Life Member, for which he felt honoured. His relationship with NZAP wasn't always easy — in early days he and the Association were challenged by the actions of a member, Bert Potter and Dad helped to develop complaint processes based on ethical standards of practise.<sup>2</sup> Principles of natural justice and fair processes were important to him. The importance of the NZAP honouring tangata whenua was another discussion and movement to which he contributed.

[2. Ed. — See Chapter 14.]

Many people idealised Dad, which was at times almost amusing for those of us who knew him. He did have such an ability to listen to others, empathise and understand, that many people thought he was perfect. He could be in a large group and still focus on an individual that they felt heard and valued by him. And that was real. He truly valued people and was safe to be with and share with. At times we teased him about his inability to gossip!

But this didn't make him perfect. He was a man who liked to be "looked after" and in his later years rarely contributed to household chores, meal making, or clean up. Mum supported him and he enjoyed part of that. As he became more unwell he struggled with his physical impairments and often seemed to feel occupied and exhausted by them. At times we felt he had withdrawn to some extent and become more accustomed to receiving rather than contributing in the ways we were used to. This reluctance to engage was out of character for him and challenging for us because we wanted more from him.

We had many special occasions together as a family and we had many rituals. We were good at celebrating and took care to acknowledge achievements both small and large. As a family we celebrated Dad's 80th birthday in Rarotonga, a very significant place for us. Dad facilitated a naming and haircutting ceremony for Oscar when he was four. Pete and I were married by Evan in a fabulous three day celebration on Waiheke Island, and every year we acknowledged the sacredness of life with our "Being Here" ritual.

Celebrating Mum and Dad's 50th wedding anniversary was another huge milestone. Their relationship was rare not only in its length but in the quality of their connection. They had fun together, be it playing cards or travelling the world. They argued and disagreed with each other, and would then find a way to compromise or live with the difference. They had such different personalities yet their core values of respect, care and love were the foundation of an amazing marriage. As much as Dad teased Mum, he adored her.

I feel incredibly privileged to have had 50 years with my Dad. In all those years I either lived with him or next door to him. It was a rare day that I didn't see him. We drank wine together, ate meals, watched television, travelled and worked together, and enjoyed our family. Watching Evan as a

grandfather was one of my greatest joys. Over the years Dad and I laughed and cried together, shared stories, learnt from each other, challenged each other, and sometimes got grumpy with each other. But mostly we were just with each other and all that meant to us.



*Isabelle, Michael, Susan, and Evan, 1989*

## *Chapter 17*

### Reflections on Evan's health and illness

ISABELLE SHERRARD

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*Golden Wedding, 2009*

### **Evan's health**

Ever since I have known Evan, ear troubles have been part of his life. The first time I fully understood the severity of his ear problems was in Houston, Texas, in the early 1960s. Evan noticed a small amount of discharge on his pillowcase and decided to consult an ear doctor. The

specialist looked into Evan's left ear and with his strong Texan accent said "My, this is a baaad ear". Evan didn't think it was bad but agreed to surgery for the benign tumour known as a cholesteatoma. The surgery lasted six hours. Four millimetres of stainless steel wire was used to replace the tiny bones in his middle ear. This tiny piece of wire enabled Evan to hear and served him well for over 20 years. Evan's view was that he was in the right place at the right time.

A similar problem occurred in Evan's right ear about 1980. Another surgery was required. As time went on, repeated surgeries were needed, along with frequent and regular cleaning and suctioning to both ears. This was always difficult and painful for Evan. Usually I would go with him and hold his hand. Sometimes he worried about the twisting and pressure he was putting on my hand. I found it hard to watch him in such agony.

His journey with Prostate Cancer began in 1991. He wrote about this to his friends in "Buns and Gravy" (Chapter 15). Regular monitoring and a variety of treatment continued until 2015.

Also in the 1990s he had both cataracts removed on separate occasions. He said after the first removal and replacement of the lens that it was "easier than the dentist."

In 2004, while we on holiday in Alsaka, Evan became noticeably short of breath. We thought this could have been a medication side-effect from the prostate cancer hormonal treatment, but wondered if something else was happening to his body? Once home, another round of medical investigations began. In December that year an angiogram showed serious Coronary Artery Disease and bypass surgery was recommended. Luckily there was one space for surgery the following day and Evan accepted it. Five coronary grafts were required to restore the circulation to his heart muscle. Following heart surgery, most people are left with small ongoing trouble. Evan's ongoing problem was atrial flutter, which is an irregular heartbeat. This became obvious during the first week after surgery and was very troubling to Evan. Several treatments were necessary to get his heart beating properly, but the atrial flutter was stubborn and further cardio-versions and ablation were needed over the following years.

Evan's bladder cancer was diagnosed in December 2013. Soon after this his bladder became "over-active" and could not be settled with several trials of

medication. By May 2014 he was a miserable man with confirmation of radiation damage to his urology system.

The last two years of his life were very difficult, both for him and for me. His multiple medical diagnoses all required attention and treatment and one physical problem seemed to trigger another. It was challenging to sort out what to do for the best. Eventually his quality of life and life-long optimism seemed to be leaving him. Then we found a urologist who offered to remove his bladder. Evan was very pleased and hopeful of a new lease of life. He took the risk bravely and had this major operation on 8th October 2015. For the first few days he seemed to do well. I was less than certain he was doing well but could not define the reason. Sadly, he died — 13 days after surgery.

He was delighted to have made his 80th birthday in October 2014. I think his body had served him well but it simply could not deal with this final recovery.

Evan's medical history was complex and challenging yet he hardly ever complained to me. He did not talk about his health challenges. He would say that he had good health and the presence of illness was just part of his life. He spoke with appreciation of his several medical specialists and of his General Practitioner for keeping him alive.

## **Reflection**

On reflection of Evan's work and health I think there are some important points to be made.

Evan lived his life well in spite of his medical situation. He lived every day to the full and he always maintained his positive philosophy. In fact, I think his life experience increased his understanding of the human condition. He did not talk much to me about what he was living with, so I was puzzled at times about whether he fully knew about his illnesses. He used to say repeatedly "It's just the way it is." I believe he integrated his physical life into his outlook on life. Friends would not know what he was dealing with because he did not tell them. I do not know whether this is a good thing or not. He did not tell me very much either. One example was when he had a biopsy to determine his prostate cancer. Evan did not expect he had cancer.

He casually asked the specialist doing the procedure what it could be. The doctor said “Cancer, cancer, or Cancer”. This is what I expected from what I knew as a nurse, but Evan was shocked! This had not entered his thinking at that time. I still do not know whether this was denial or his overly optimistic outlook.

Writing about her supervisory relationship with Evan, Margaret Bowater speculates about the impact of Evan’s health on his work:

I have also valued the times when I was able to bring religious and moral issues to explore with him, when my Christian faith was shaken by clients — especially clergy — and by my own experience of deep personal loss. He had been through so much pain, anger, grief, betrayal and disillusion himself that he was able to provide steady holding for many of us in our times of distress. I wonder how much it cost him, though, in his personal health. He was a walking miracle of living against the odds from about 1990 on, when he first had treatment for cancer. Yet he didn’t lose hope, or his rather cheeky sense of humour, or his subversive enjoyment of pricking pompous dogmatists, quite a few of which he upset along the way!

After his heart surgery in 2004 Evan told his heart surgeon that “I have never had a heart attack”. The surgeon replied “Oh yes you have — I saw the scarring on your heart during the surgery”. Again Evan was surprised and shocked. Evan spoke to me in only a small way about when this could have happened. It is fair to say that his coronary artery disease was difficult to diagnose initially because of medication side effects for his prostate cancer — but Evan was adamant that he had not had a heart attack!

Following the five bypass grafts to Evan’s coronary arteries, he experienced the complication of atrial flutter. This was challenging to control and, on Christmas Eve 2004, he had cardio-version under a general anaesthetic. Later on the same day he was moved from the Mercy Hospital by ambulance to Ascot Hospital for 24 hours of observation. He told me on Christmas morning that he spent the previous evening looking out the window to spot Santa doing his rounds! Who else but Evan would think of that!



Evan and I had three weeks in Victoria, Australia in April 2014. His latest physical problem was his constant need to be near a toilet. I had gained excellent knowledge of the location of men's toilets wherever we were in Auckland! In Australia we had no such local knowledge. These three weeks were dominated by "Where's the next loo?" This was extremely difficult for Evan and almost as difficult for me! One cold evening we searched the internet for reasons of his dysfunctional urological system. We googled all his symptoms and eventually found a case study. I remembered Evan saying — "There's at least one other guy in the world who has the same troubles as I do — poor bastard!" He never told me until then that he thought he was alone with his troubles. Our academic discovery that evening was "late effect radiation damage" to his whole urology system. Generally speaking, I believe that "knowing is preferable to not knowing", but, at this time, for both of us, this was a challenging discovery. I needed to talk about it and Evan initially went silent. This tended to be our pattern.

We continued our holiday and our looking for toilets. He needed two hospital visits during this time. He was very pleased to be told that there was no charge for treatment because he was a New Zealander. During these three weeks I made the private decision to remain supportive to Evan. I thought to myself, "This is his body, his life and his decision-making." I was certain he had no real need to go to the hospital in Mildura, but he was determined and fearful of infection and so we spent half a morning waiting there — for nothing! I felt some temptation to say "I told you so" but bit my tongue instead. Sometimes I found it conflicting being an experienced nurse (with urology experience) and being Evan's supportive wife.

Once home in Auckland radiation damage was medically diagnosed and Evan had to come to terms with his awful situation. His toilet needs continued day and night. He was never fully asleep or fully awake. A variety of medical treatments were tried but nothing made much difference. It was hard going for us both. Did we talk about it together — not very much. I do remember saying on one occasion to Evan "Over my dead body will anyone remove your bladder."

Then we found a urologist who offered to do just that. Evan sat up and put his hand up before the doctor had finished his sentence about this major surgery. Then Evan put his hand on my thigh and said to me "How is that for you?" I simply said "I will manage", and I am proud to say I have. For

the next month or so Evan spoke with optimism to me about “My new lease of life”.

It is true to say that Evan’s surgery was successful, but he died. He died because of a complication following surgery. For years some doctors had described him “as being between a rock and a hard place”. This was true more than once. Again he did not talk to me about this. Sometimes I think he thought he would live forever.

In my wonderings I do have some unanswered questions about Evan’s life and death.

From his agricultural beginnings he understood the cycle of life and death. As a minister he knew about death and dying being a part of life. In working with Dr Elizabeth Kubler-Ross during our Michigan days when he worked as a hospital chaplain, he fully accepted her line “Death will happen to thee and to thee, but not to me.” This of course is the self-protective mechanism known as denial. Did he deny his own dying? He certainly never completed his funeral plan for himself. It is hard for me to believe that he died in his own psychological state of denial. Yet there is I think, certainly an element of this.

One of my wonderings concerns his work in psychotherapy. I remember being absolutely astounded at a transactional analysis conference in California some years ago. I attended a group on chronic illness and a psychotherapist asked the question: “Should I talk to my client about her chronic illness?” I nearly fell off my chair! Why would you not? This added to my concern that psychotherapy may not include the physical and the medical aspects of living. I think living with any chronic illness or disability can be greatly assisted by psychotherapy as a holistic discipline. A person is a whole being, and most of us need help to live well at some time or another.

Since he died more than one of Evan’s friends have said to me “I wish I had talked with him about his decision to have surgery”, or “I wanted to say goodbye to Evan more personally that last time I saw him.” Evan was open to talking with friends about many things, yet, for some unknown reason, these good friends did not speak to him about what mattered to them. This seems to me to have been a missed opportunity, both for his friends and for Evan himself.

The last thing Evan said to me was this: “The doc is offering me a tube to help my breathing and I have accepted”. This was in Critical Care at Auckland Hospital. I knew what this meant but I don’t know if Evan fully understood. I remained supportive to him because there was no other option.



*Evan and Isabelle, Melbourne, 2015*



Part VIII

**F R I E N D S H I P**

# Introduction

## ISABELLE SHERRARD

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Evan and I always had good friends around us. We enjoyed doing things with other people. As with many couples, I tended to be the social organiser rather than Evan. Whilst he was the follower rather than the leader he always appreciated and enjoyed what I organised. However, when out for a walk with others he would lag behind, reading notices or getting sidetracked by taking a detour to follow something of interest or to take a photograph. I also think he enjoyed his own company privately during our walks with friends. Because he wandered off he frequently became separated and always insisted that he was never lost. This was never my opinion!

Evan greatly enjoyed the company of his men friends. He hardly ever shared these conversations with me. These friendships often grew from work-related activities. He would usually make arrangements a month or so ahead of time and I think almost took off where the previous conversation had finished. Evan was a loyal and trusted friend to a special group of people.

I think he could have had a wider circle of friends. He did not meet men in a bar or through any sports. He watched the All Blacks only because I did. He did not join any club, even to listen to music, but I think he had the friends he needed and enjoyed every occasion with them.

Some of Evan’s friends have written memories or stories of their friendship with him (Chapter 18).



*The Sherrards and the Cheslers, when visiting Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1985*



*Wedding of Sarah (Isabelle’s niece) and Eric, Waiheke Island, 2009*

## *Chapter 18*

### **Evan Sherrard — Testaments of friendships**

MARGARET BOWATER, ALLAN DAVIDSON, HANS  
EVERTS, PRISCILLA EVERTS, REX HUNTON, VALERIE  
HUNTON, LESLEY KING, ROBIN LANE, DOROTHY  
McCARRISON, MARGARET MERTON, DON REEKIE,  
SUSAN SHAW, BEV SILVESTER-CLARK, AND SHIRLEY  
WEBBER

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### **Swimming with dolphins**

*Margaret Bowater*

There were many fun times too, of course, at barbecues and celebrations and workshops and side-events at conferences. One that stands out for me was when Evan was one of a group of us who tried swimming with dolphins in the choppy waters of Akaroa Harbour (in the Banks Peninsula, Canterbury), looking like Martians in our yellow wetsuits and snorkels. The sleek little dolphins zipped happily around us clumsy humans!

Along with all the rest of us, I will miss his warm-hearted presence, and his fund of stories, and his comprehensive view of human wellbeing. I imagine



him now, saying “Hello” to old friends in another dimension of reality, before embarking on the next stage of his soul’s journey.

## **Being there — The quality of friendship**

*Allan Davidson*

Friendship grows out of sharing. Over many years Evan and I met once a month for lunch. Evan the psychotherapist, minister, man of many parts; myself an historian, academic, author and also a minister. We have our shared worlds: — family, grandchildren, the Community of St Luke, theology, academic institutions, retirement and health. Our academic areas reflected very different worlds. But in friendship these worlds overlapped and became entangled as we shared concerns about faith and family, reflected on life in society, and talked about our conflicted relationship with the church. Deep sharing involves openness and a willingness to expose oneself. But friendship is also based on trust and a quality of listening and speaking in which the other is valued and respected.

These lunch dates were not psychotherapeutic sessions or history lessons; they were times of sharing, and through that sharing came growth, healing, learning and much more. They were based on a level of empathy and a deep concern for each other. We were enriched by entering each other’s worlds. The extension of friendship over time has meant that the young seedling planted when we first met, developed deep roots, a strong trunk and many branches.

At one stage I thought of looking to Evan for supervision, but he wisely counselled against this. Our friendship would have been changed into something very different, a professional arrangement which would have become skewed by the needs of one and the role of the other. That’s not to say there hasn’t been much talk about our work and some of the things troubling us. These times together have been a space when we were able to bring to the table whatever was on our mind and just share from our heart and without any constraints and know that at the end of our being together we had been listened to and affirmed and what was said remained with each other.

Our friendship grew and matured over the years. The food was somewhat incidental, although good coffee helped lubricate good conversation. Friendship promotes trust, and trust builds a relationship and produces affirmation.

This gift of friendship can't be taken for granted. Like all relationships it required nurturing. When I allowed my diary to become overcrowded and found times for meeting difficult I've had to make sure that the opportunity to meet took priority. On several occasions appointments were missed due to my failure to check my diary and I was the poorer for that. The preciousness of time spent being in each other's company, talking, sharing, correcting our worlds resulted in us leaving each other with a sense of realities faced. The way ahead seemed easier than it was an hour or more before.

There is an element of journey and pilgrimage with a longstanding friendship, sharing the highs and lows of our lives. Reflections on overseas travel and the journeys we've taken to strange places were among the highs. The sharing of the realities about our bodily weaknesses, and health issues have been part of our journey. Walking with Evan one day to our cars after lunch I was very aware of how breathless he was and how slow he was walking. Within a short time I was visiting him in hospital where heart surgery gave him a new lease of life. We've shared each other's medical vulnerabilities, man-to-man conversations, friend-to-friend. The illness and death of special friends reminded us of all those things for which we give thanks in the midst of sadness and loss.

Our friendship spilled over into our shared meals with our wives, Isabelle and Margaret, and the common entanglements and enrichment as together we've shared our concerns about family and friends and enjoyed great food and good wine. 'Being there as friends, has taken on a special character through understanding, empathy and support through crises which others could not really appreciate or enter into.

Evan, I have been honoured to be able to call you my friend, and together with Isabelle, your care and compassion have been valued beyond words. Your death Evan brings home to me what I knew, but have now experienced, that love and friendship enriches our lives beyond measure. This makes the final farewell always harder, but also reinforces that being

enriched by friendship is infinitely better than living without it. Thank you my very special friend!

## **Evan**

### *Priscilla and Hans Everts*

We have had a friendship with Evan and his family that goes back many years, based on personal connection (Priscilla and Isabelle both attended Christchurch Girls' High School), children of comparable ages, and multiple work relationships. Over the years we celebrated many family events, honoured shared cultural traditions like the Passover, and even had a camping vacation in Whitianga. Evan married our son Anton with Lori on our bush property in Puhoi, in the shade of a gazebo on our hilltop building site, and in the presence of some dozen family and friends. As ever, Evan accommodated our beliefs and wishes, and the girls wore gumboots for the photographs. We also belonged with Evan and Isabelle to an informal small group of couples, mostly clergy, who shared common spiritual beliefs, and who celebrated special occasions and meals at each other's homes. In all, our personal relationship with Evan and his family constitutes one of the most meaningful and rewarding ones in our lives — the memory of which remains with us vividly.

## **Car trips**

### *Rex Hunton*

Our car trips together to Middlemore hospital where I was a Consultant Physician and Evan a Hospital Chaplain come to mind now. These trips gave us the opportunity to discuss many personal and often controversial issues. This would include work situations including clients we would both see. I loved the way Evan would ponder over something I had said before he would reply. He did not blurt things out but seemed to think things through before coming back, often quite a bit later with a suggestion, or an indication of whether he thought I was on the right track or not.

## **Personal theologian**

*Valerie Hunton*

In 1991 I developed a serious cancer and Evan became my “Instant Theologian”. From then on our relationship developed and expanded allowing him to appreciate my art in a unique way. He remained my “Personal Theologian” and trusted friend on our journey through life.

## **Life in all its fullness**

*Lesley King*

Evan and I first met in 1987. I was commencing a year as psychotherapy intern with Presbyterian Support Services, Evan was a senior staff member and was to be one of my mentors. It was just weeks after the accident which left his daughter Susan paralysed. My first memory of him was his shakiness and vulnerability as he spoke of it to our group. In awe of him as I was (his reputation as a challenging teacher scared me) I met a man courageously present to his shock and grief, respectful of us, very real.

It was a powerful introduction to him and to the profession I was looking to join. Since then our relationship has moved through many incarnations.

I completed the year, along the way finding he was the challenging teacher I had been told of. My respect for his skill got me through the tough parts and in the process I discovered his underlying loving kindness towards people and his tenacity in the service of his profession.

This tenacity showed itself when the counselling and psychotherapy section of Presbyterian Support was discontinued. Out of its ashes Evan, in collaboration with John Harré from Auckland Technical Institute (now Auckland University of Technology [AUT]), developed a Diploma in Psychotherapy programme. Psychotherapy training in a Technical Institute? Strange bedfellows many said and they were right but Evan knew from his years of working in pastoral care that NZ had need for more widely accessible psychotherapy and he saw this as a way forward. Some 25 years later it has continued to evolve into a professionally respected course with many graduates contributing to the wellbeing of the community.

For eight years I was on the staff of the psychotherapy department and over that time moved from being Evan's student to being his supervisee, his colleague, then after our retirements his friend. This transition is said by some to be unwise, impossible, given the initial power imbalance between trainer and student. I have much respect for his authenticity and respectfulness that has allowed our friendship and our spouses' friendships to develop naturally.

One incident from our shared working life stands out. It occurred at an NZAP conference at a time of tension within the Association. The entertainer at the social evening badly misjudged his audience, with offensive "comedy" content. A group of members from outside Auckland interrupted and asked him to leave, which he did, mid set. This lit the fuse on the tension within the Association, in particular fear and rage at what some saw as dangerous Auckland directions. During the melee of personal and professional outrage next morning Evan stood up, acknowledged the feelings present, then said "and now I am going to visit [the entertainer]. He, too, will be devastated by last night." He left. Courage, loving kindness, willingness to go against the tide for the wellbeing of others were all there in that moment.

During the 25+ years I knew him Evan's health has been an ongoing challenge for him. He has long had a major hearing loss and a chronic painful ear infection. While at AUT he developed prostate cancer. In line with his values of honesty and authenticity he included staff and students in his experience of treatment. Rather than rest at home he chose to continue his teaching roles. His mana in the department was such that students and staff alike accepted occasional lapses into sleep during group sessions and we all celebrated when his treatment was over and his energy returned. Unfortunately, the treatment left him with ancillary tissue damage which has shown itself more recently and bedevilled more recent treatments.

The Evan I met latterly was in his ninth decade. He is as authentically vulnerable, cognitively astute, loving and tenacious as ever. Sometimes he is very tired. He has physical health issues which would stop many. Not Evan. He and Isabelle enjoy and support friends and family, travel both in and out of NZ, live life fully between medical appointments scheduled and otherwise. Quiet courage, tenacity, belief in the value of life, being present to what life brings, these to me are some of the essence of Evan.

## **My friend Evan**

*Robin Lane*

I first met Evan as an 8 or 9 year-old at Sumner School. For one year we were in the same class. I was aware of him as having leadership abilities and an easy way of getting along with people. I saw these as he moved through Cubs and into Scouts. We parted at the end of that year when I failed Standard 2 and had to repeat it.

My family left Sumner some time in 1950. Evan went to Christchurch Boys' High School and I to St Andrew's College.

In 1960 Mary and I moved into 8 Pitt Street, Dunedin. There a fresh friendship developed with Evan and Isabelle. We had the upstairs flat. They had a downstairs flat. Jim and Anne Wilson were another couple there; we were all the same year in the Theological Hall.

Quite often the three of us would walk together to Knox College to morning classes. Usually there were discussions about theological topics we were learning in the Hall. These discussions expanded when we set up a Theological Conversation Society at 8 Pitt Street and invited anyone to come along. It was there I met Jeanette Brunton who came to one of these discussions. Thirty-six years later Jeanette was to become my wife, some years after Mary and I had parted.

Of the "Three Musketeers" (Evan, Jim [Wilson] and myself), Evan brought a rich leavening of worldly experience from his time as an agricultural cadet. He had worked on a variety of farms throughout the country as part of his qualification as an agricultural science adviser. Jim and I had of course simply had university holiday experiences of the working world.

Pitt Street life was not all earnest. Evan and Jim were keen debaters and along with another student, Graeme Fergusson, entered a debating competition at Otago University. To the surprise of some sniffy university students, the theologians cleaned up the whole competition. We ordered a subscription of Donald Duck comics which arrived at 8 Pitt Street addressed to Evan Lane Wilson!

The three of us set up a revision group where we came together regularly and tested each other on questions set in previous exams. The value of this

was clear when the three of us continued to score the same marks within a variation of one percent. Later in life, Lloyd Geering told me the staff were surprised at the similarity of answers that we gave.

To relieve the tedium of exam preparation, we created a mock drama, “Gunfight at the OK Corral”. I had several cap guns. We strapped these on, adopt the appropriate slit-eyed look, and stalked each other at either end of the long hallway. “We are not amused” best describes the looks we received from our wives, who had been out working to support us in the manner we desired to become accustomed.

These bonds of friendship stretched over the ocean when Mary and I visited Evan and Isabelle in Houston after our time in Chicago. I don’t think we slept for the 24 hours after our arrival. Later, when Mary was diagnosed with cancer, Evan and Isabelle came from Auckland to be with us in Hamilton as we digested the news. Evan and Isabelle remained good, wise, firm friends to me and mine ever since.

## **“Why not?”**

*Margaret Merton*

I remember Evan with great love, and many thanks.

I met him first when I trained to be a therapeutic counsellor. In his time with me, I remember his patient, endless two chair work: facing into constraints, conflicts, contradictions. With his firm and gentle encouragement, imagination and creativity, I came away with bigger visions and a fuller, stronger self. He invited the understanding of opposites, and the absorbing of challenges. He taught me to befriend threats. He relished layered realities and complex thinking. He invited those who were willing into infinite worlds of possibilities through psychodrama. He practiced what he preached to the best of his ability. He embodied integrity. Nothing was impossible, and yet he also accepted what is.

He was a master at enabling people to explore themselves and their interactions with others. I met him first at a trainers’ consultation for the Inter-Church Leadership Committee in the ’70s. Through his leadership of the Group Life Laboratories, he made a rich contribution to the life of the

churches in NZ. I was blown away with his extraordinary skill at asking a simple question which then took the group an enthralling day to answer. I resolved then to learn from him and so asked if he would be willing to teach me counselling and therapy skills. He was an enquirer, an inveterate explorer, and he helped me to trust the explorer in myself.

Then somehow we became friends: Isabelle, Evan, John, and me. These are just some of the things I remember, in these rich years of our friendship: innumerable games of raucous 500; shared meals, memorable holidays, always with a generous spice of good fun; his enigmatic silent smile (what was he thinking?). His still waters ran very deep — almost out of sight. He was intensely private, with a depth of personal feeling that he seldom expressed. If you raised something with him, he would always discuss it, but he rarely initiated discussion about himself.

I remember his grin, his hug and kiss on arrival, his kindness. His mischievous and provoking “Why not?” challenges, as when he suggested I might request more than one dessert while on a Mediterranean cruise; his own love of desserts and cream — not whipped, of course!

He was insatiably curious and well-informed about a huge number of things. Often on a day’s trip he would get left behind, absorbed in taking yet another photo of something that caught his interest. Like godwits, for example.

He was a courageous outlier in so many ways, never average nor a statistic.

Isabelle has been his true love and companion for almost all of his life, since their teenage years. His love for his two children was enduring, his delight in his grandchildren, Oscar and Molly, infectious. It warms my heart to be around their family. I count it a great privilege to have been amongst those who have shared a little of their love for each other.

You have been a very significant and well-loved witness to my life, Evan, and I miss you greatly.

**Evan**

*Don Reekie*



Evan Sherrard was my best male friend these last thirty years. This is an unreciprocated experience. We have had mutuality in respect, love, aligned values, common belief systems and visions of and for human kind. It is unreciprocated because Evan had at least a hundred friendships with similar depth and interactive sincerity.

My view of Evan is that he was defined by his consistency in being friend. It was what gave his relating vitality and strength. It was his considerable gift to his friendships, his collegiality, his consultation, collaborations, therapeutic relationships, his teaching, his supervising, and in all of his engagements and encounters. Saying encounters may seem strange or a step too far. I do not withdraw my assertions. I have contested alongside Evan and have at times contested with him. He has always been open to hear and work to appreciate and genuinely meet the other whether they are critical of, against or receiving and joining with him. His stance is to be alongside, to promote an equal balance and to sit with in casual and astute alertness to the prime and undercurrent realities of the other.

My opening assertion has been that being “friend” gave Evan the capacity to be with and encourage others. Many have taken up courage through Evan’s being a friend.

## **Sage**

*Beverley Silvester-Clark*

In recent weeks, each morning, Tony (my husband) and I have been reading a short portion from the Tao Te Ching, and each morning I read descriptions of Evan and the way he was. Here is one example.

### *The Sage*

Always saves men (and women) from their mistakes in a goodly fashion,  
And thus no one is thrown overboard;  
Always saves things from their flaws in a skilful way,  
And thus none are thrown away.

Brings things to life and nurtures them,  
But has no thought of possession.  
Acts without relying on anything;  
Brings things along, but does not take charge.

For me, Evan was a Sage: a very human Sage.

We first met in 1976. I was a young charge nurse of a busy surgical ward at Middlemore Hospital in South Auckland. I was called, one day, to one of the medical wards and introduced to Evan Sherrard, a locum chaplain recently returned from USA. Evan had been sitting with a young student nurse, admitted during the night having attempted suicide. She had asked to see me. Evan and I sat with her, and heard her despair.

The highlight of my working day then became visits from Evan to my ward. Until then I had no concept of pastoral care for staff. Chaplains were there for the patients. He was the first person to understand my vision of patient-centred care in a fiercely task-oriented system.

Those two snap shots would be a summary of my experience of Evan over the following nearly 40 years.

Over these many years Evan was my teacher, mentor, confidant, therapist, employer, supervisor, and priest: all in the fullest sense of the word; and always, with his remarkable ability to understand and validate what was emerging intuitively in me. Like the day, in 1980, I knew I had to walk away from my then role as charge nurse of the oncology ward at Auckland Hospital. My absolute knowing that organic illness must be engaged with holistically left me with no choice. I had to find a way to do that. I staggered into Evan's office at the then PSSA (Presbyterian Social Services Association), overwhelmed, lost and frightened and he heard, and again, understood. Then he offered me a pathway forward to realise what I was stumbling to articulate!

Evan was also a man of deep humility, so much so, that, in later years, we role changed once again and he also became my student.

Such a privilege to have known and been known by this gentle wise Sage.

## **A wether for meat**

*Shirley Webber*

I first met Evan soon after he arrived in New Zealand after their time in America. It was at a Lifeline Plenary session and Evan came over to me and asked, as I was on a farm, if he could buy a wether from us for meat. An unusual request from a townie I thought, but told him that would be no problem. That was a start of a lifelong friendship with Evan and his family, and what a friendship it has been! So many wonderful memories.

When we had a holiday from the farm, Evan and the family came and looked after the stock, moving them from one paddock to new grass, etc. Fortunately for us, he seemed to like that sort of stuff. When we had the orchard in Puhoi, the Sherrards were an enormous help. Evan liked to do pruning and picking; he wasn't interested in the selling side of things. He liked being on the land. How grateful we were for their help.

Travelling overseas with Evan was an experience. The phrase often bandied about was "Where is Evan?" He was always off somewhere, studying intently something that had caught his eye. Everything was interesting to Evan. He saw things we didn't see.



*Shirley Webber and Evan*

In our first trip to the Islands, Evan brought along, in an overly large suitcase we thought, a pair of strange shoes for walking on the coral reefs, he said. We gave him a lot of stick for those shoes until we actually came to the coral. Then it was “Hey, Evan, can I borrow your shoes?”!

We have had so many wonderful trips over the years and I feel so lucky to have been part of that fun and seeing things through Evan’s eyes. Very importantly for our family, when we needed a guiding friend, Evan was there. How fortunate we are to have Evan and his calm skills to help us. I miss him very much, but so many times now in my life, I remember something he has said that helps me. “Evanisms”, too, pop into my mind and make me smile.

I am glad that he wanted fresh meat from the farm so long ago. From that we had a lifelong solid friendship: I will always feel so lucky to have had that.

## **Being a thread**

*Susan Shaw*

Evan was Susan’s dad. Susan is one of my dearest friends and one of the things we have in common is our close bonds with our dads. Keith and I talked about a book such as this for a long time — I used to think of it as “downloading Evan”. I felt really frustrated that it wasn’t much further along before he died, but I agree with Keith (see Introduction) that it has become a different project and arguably a more valuable one as it evolved while he was alive and has come to fruition after his death. A long time ago I wondered about writing a contribution but my sense was that the focus would be on his career and I had little to do with that. Mostly I met with Evan on a very personal level and so the book didn’t seem to need any input from me. Over the last year I have really missed Evan and, as I have spent time reading the almost-complete manuscript and reflecting on the many connections we had, others have emerged, making me want to contribute.

The Sherrards were famous — I knew of them long before I met any of them. Isabelle had an impressive career in nursing leadership and was head of nursing at Unitec by the time I applied to become a nursing student. I

applied to three nursing schools and had to choose which place to take. I settled on the hospital-based training programme at Greenlane, mainly because I had already spent three years at teacher's college and was not entitled to another three years of fully funded education, making the salary that went with the apprenticeship model fairly attractive. As the first year of study began (1987), the nursing world was buzzing with the news of Susan's accident — nursing lecturers were talking about the family and, as they told us details of such a personal story, I felt protective of these people I didn't even know.

In 1992 I arrived at Auckland University of Technology to work in what was known as the Community and Health Services Unit to teach a programme for the long-term unemployed. Our offices were in the enduringly makeshift prefabricated classrooms of "E Block" and we shared a reception with the psychotherapy team. During that year, Wendy Horne decided that we would run a new programme in supporting people with disabilities, that I would be the programme leader, and she would ask Evan to see if Susan wanted to be involved.

I remember Evan bringing in a hand-written letter from Susan; she quickly became a colleague and then a close friend. Initially it was a bit surreal because here was this woman I had heard so much about, that so many people on the campus knew and revered, and clearly she was the expert on disability. I remember saying early on how scary it felt; she responded very generously that we all brought ourselves to this work and that we would learn, support one another and grow as we did — I came to recognise the inheritance of this response.

Evan was around but the psychotherapy programme grew into a department and moved to another building which led to a weird situation in which Susan and I shared what had been his office. I remember many profound conversations with him over those years. He would materialise in my office and we would have deep, meaningful and timely chats. One in particular was about human bodies and how none of us know what our flesh is getting up to, which results in a sense of betrayal when diagnoses arrive in our lives. He talked about his own journey and how he really felt for women who suddenly found they had a breast lump. I talked with Susan about this and her response was that she was pleased he was sharing what was going on for him with someone!

I have felt very privileged to be included in family celebrations, travels, rituals and life events. I have developed a deep appreciation of the value in acknowledging success and challenges and how much warmth and support can emerge over a glass of wine, a platter of cheese and crackers and conversation. It was not until I read Susan's contribution to this book (Chapter 16), which made me laugh and cry, that I realised the history of the wine and cheese ritual — which endures.

Of the international travels I have embarked on with Susan, Pete and Oscar, two also included Evan and Isabelle. The first was a visit to Thailand in 2005 to celebrate Susan's 40th birthday. Evan and I shared a slow trip up the side of a mountain on the back of an elderly elephant. There were two distinct parts to the journey. Initially we analysed our surroundings and identified a moral dilemma. The trainer was managing the elephant with a sharp hook on the end of a long stick which was clearly responsible for the extensive scarring on the elephant's neck. In addition to this we were unimpressed with the manner and tone in which the trainer spoke and we talked about how we were creating this experience for the animal and maybe we should pay to stop the trip (as Pete sped past us on what immediately became known as "the turbo elephant"). However, as we reached the ridge we came to realise that the elephant had it sorted — it was largely immune to the sharp hook at the end of the stick, tuned out the commands and chose when and how to respond; the agitation was with the trainer, not the elephant. As we sat and marvelled at the view we felt a sense of triumph that the elephant was the boss and on the way back down silently cheered as it quietly called the shots.

While in Thailand Pete and I talked about what we could do to celebrate our 40th birthdays (on exactly the same day). A cruise was decided upon and my only wish was that it involve the Adriatic. So, in 2007 a group of us (nine in total including Margaret and John Merton and Isabelle's sister Jane), embarked upon the christening voyage of the Emerald Princess. Evan was a constant source of unassuming commentary around the Greek Islands and I remember him getting "lost" as Isabelle says. He quietly took in his surroundings and was happily distracted into alleyways and conversations, relatively oblivious to the searing heat and the need the rest of us had to track down the next cold drink and to be reassured he was OK. We both noticed religious symbolism and were attracted to tiny chapels, needing to

visit and then discuss the human and theological context of them. On one of our last mornings as we ate breakfast in a courtyard in Venice Evan and I had an intense conversation about cognitive behavioural therapy and our shared views about it in relation to chronicity. As we reflected on the trip I said that the initial idea was for Susan, Pete and I to go on holiday but that the three of us had not really spent any time on our own. By mid-morning team Evan and Isabelle had worked their magic and we were informed of the arrangements in place for the three of us to have dinner together that night.

Evan and I talked a lot, often about political and social issues and increasingly about his health. These became very frank and detailed conversations as he became more unwell. Since his death and especially after reading the contributions by others I have realised that I missed many opportunities to discuss theology with him. However, we did discover places in which our paths had crossed to some degree. I grew up on the North Shore of Auckland, not far from the Centrepont community.<sup>1</sup> My dad was the local electrician and I clearly remember his concern for his staff following an encounter with naked women one day when they were working there. I went to school with kids from Centrepont, Bert Potter's son was in my class and his wife was one of our teachers. The school community embodied many values, views and experiences of those who lived there. In recent years I have read some of the published stories of people from my generation about their lives at Centrepont which confirmed what I wondered about and feared at the time. I feel challenged about not having realised or done enough. I was shocked to realise the connections the leaders had to psychotherapy and needed to discuss that with Evan. He shared my anxiety and while obviously we had been involved in very different ways and at very different points in our lives I trusted he had taken as much care as he could and shared some of the enduring concerns that I do.

[1. Ed. — See Chapter 13.]

I finished my schooling in the Bay of Islands. We lived in Te Ti Bay (Waitangi) with views across the Bay and to Russell. Reading Haare Williams' contribution (Poroporoaki) had me back there in a heartbeat. The long bus trip to and from school involved diverting to Opuia to collect one of the teachers and his family. They were also Sherrards — Malcolm,

Evan's brother, was a teacher (and occasional bus driver) and his daughter was in my sister's class. It was several years before we figured out this connection but once realised it made perfect sense — they look very similar and share that wise, unassuming personality.

Susan, Pete, Oscar and I were overseas when Evan was particularly unwell. We met up in London and spent a few days together and I remember how important the Skype connections to Evan and Isabelle were. He had told Susan he was looking forward to the photos of the trip. When I arrived back Keith told me Evan was about to have surgery. I thought it all sounded way too radical and assured Keith that he had misunderstood but soon found out I was wrong. I had bought Evan a beautiful glass paper weight in Venice and I felt the need to give it to him before he went into hospital. It was good to see him and I felt relieved we were all home. I saw Evan very unwell a few times — in hospital at Christmas after his cardiac bypass and cardioversion, once when we were in Italy and briefly in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Auckland Hospital. When I met Isabelle at the door of the ICU that night she said I should feel honoured to be there and that was exactly how I felt. I thought Evan looked better than he had done for a while; I felt that he had dodged a thousand bullets, that it was amazing he had survived and that he would be OK. Again I was wrong.

I have been privileged to have had Evan in my life. He taught me much and while I am only now realising opportunities that I missed to know and appreciate him more I will always treasure what we shared. Within the pages of this book are many threads and cross one another. That is the complexity and the tapestry of life and Evan is one of the souls that has made mine much richer.

## **Evan — The man with the cap**

*Dorothy McCarrison*





I saw the funeral notice  
Evan the good man how true  
Evan the ever thoughtful  
Evan who could reverse roles  
Evan who made interventions  
That helped communities and individuals change  
Evan the reader and thinker of new ideas.  
Evan who challenged and encouraged us to think  
Evan who had a sense of presence and you knew  
That his soul had been to the depths and risen to unknown heights  
Evan, the man with the cap who has left us  
With thoughts, wisdom and spirit to use as we will.

## Family photos

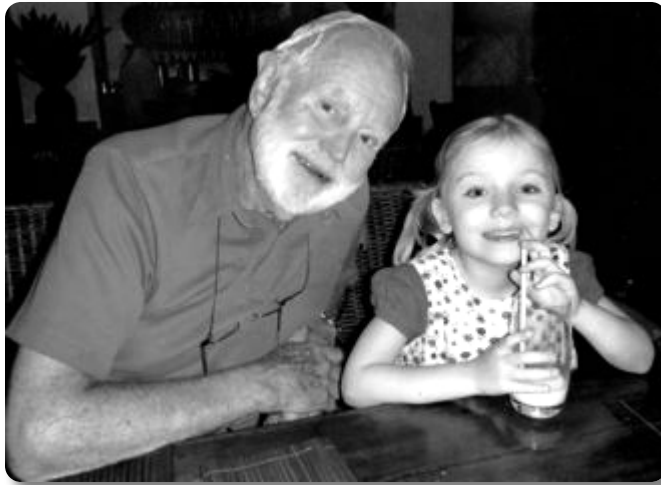
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*Cate, Michael, Molly, Evan, Susan, Pete, Oscar and Isabelle, at Evan and Isabelle's Golden Wedding celebration, 2009*



*Evan with Oscar, 2004*



*Evan with Molly, 2011*

C R E D O

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I B E L I E V E

Credo — I believe (2015)  
EVAN M. SHERRARD

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This work is my story. I have written it that way. It is a story about what I think and why I got to think the way I do. I claim to be a Christian. I am involved in some activities of the Community of St Luke (a good sort of Presbyterian Church in Remuera, Auckland). I have the role of being one of the Associate Ministers there. Because of that I have been challenged. “What do you believe? All we hear from you, and others like you, is what you do not believe.” I find that fairly damning and deserved. This is my attempt to say something positive by sharing my story.

I recall that when studying at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas (in 1964 for my STM degree) it was a requirement for students studying there, who were candidates for ordination as ministers in the Episcopal Methodist Church of the USA, to produce a one page statement summarising their beliefs under the heading Credo, (Latin for “I believe”). It was to be a positive statement for their final examination for readiness for ordination. I am going to follow this exercise and I will take a bit more space.

Credo is a very individual, personal statement. It is not a creedal statement for a community of faith to use, such as the Apostles’ Creed. I understand such creedal statements, recited by a community, emerged from the oaths of allegiance soldiers made to their commanding officers and higher authorities in Roman times. I am not writing down beliefs for others to follow, or persuade them to join me. There I go, saying what I am not doing. I am writing down what I believe and sharing it for what it is worth to you. Hopefully, it may interest you. And, here is another thing I am seeking to do. Once when preparing to sit examinations on a subject we were warned to be ready to answer any question in words a six year old would understand. I am aiming to make this Credo something 10 year olds might be able to grasp.

What does it mean, to believe? There are a variety of subtly different meanings. I believe this chair I am sitting in to write this will hold me up safely. With experience over time this chair has proved reliable and trustworthy. My appraisal of this chair’s construction and the material it is made from leads me to believe it is sufficiently robust to carry my weight safely, and it has. In this case of my chair, my saying I believe I will be safe in it, is the same as saying I have faith in my chair. Except, for it to be faith

there needs to be some element of doubt. If I have absolute certainty my chair is safe, then the appropriate word to use is know. I know my chair is safe. I think the Latin word here would be scio, I know and not credo, I believe. In this Credo, I will distinguish between something I know and something I believe.

When I say “I believe” it means that I am of the opinion that what I am talking about is true and factually accurate and that I live my life committed to that truth which I hope is trustworthy

## **Credo**

- I believe this universe we live in began in the one and only event of the “Big Bang” which brought into being the basic patterns and dynamics of energy which have evolved over eons into the time, space and material forms of life and non-life we are familiar with. Consequently this universe of today I live in includes tangible and intangible realities of psycho-social space and now the virtual realities of electronic communication space.
- I believe our universe came into existence from nothing without any creative agency or at the direction of any higher intelligence. No divine entity or god was involved. I believe the word god has no reference to any entity or divine being but has usefulness in a poetic or metaphoric sense in reference to the awesome mysteries which lie at the heart of our universe and are associated with intangible human realities such as love, compassion, generosity and graciousness, courage and kindness. It has usefulness when words are unable to describe our experiences of profound and passionate and deeply meaningful moments.
- I believe the dimensions and functions of our universe at the astronomic, quantum atomic and biological scales are so extreme and complex as to be beyond human capacity for full comprehension consequently we are left with mystery and unknown. I am left amazed, awe-filled and appreciative the more I learn about the complex interlocking connection of all parts of this ginormous universe I

inhabit. This psychological condition I find myself in after contemplating being a living part of this whole system I believe is the equivalent of religious reverence for a deity.

- I believe that the combination of the evolution of human speech and the cultural evolution with movement from the stage of hunter-gatherer to settled agriculture caused humans to develop the construct of gods or divine entities to account for the mysteries of the natural phenomena they encountered in the world they lived in. The notion of “god” evolved with increasing sophistication.
- I believe the various forms and functioning of the deities constructed by human communities were significantly contributive to the development of the different forms of society seen around the globe. Some of these constructed divine entities resulted in beneficial outcomes for some members of that social group and less for others. The claimed existence of their chosen deity justified many harsh and cruel practices in different societies explained as necessary to appease their god’s demands. I believe this is a universal human tendency and no less so in the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- I am dependent on the work of others to tell me about this world I live in and how it got to be the way it is.





# Bibliography: Evan Sherrard

## COMPILED BY KEITH TUDOR

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This does not include the numerous talks and presentations Evan gave to local and national groups, especially in the field of psychotherapy (generic, psychodrama, and transactional analysis) or at the occasional international conference; nor does it include his extensive correspondence.

The bold entries marked with an asterisk indicate those writings included in the present volume.

While every effort has been made to make this as complete as possible, if anyone has copies of or references to any more of Evan's work, please contact me at [keith.tudor@aut.ac.nz](mailto:keith.tudor@aut.ac.nz).

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Sherrard, E. M. (1962, September 19th). *The trial of Jesus* [Presbytery Exit Exercise in New Testament Theology]. Knox College, Dunedin, New Zealand.

### **1963**

Sherrard, E. M. (1963). *Biographical summary*. Unpublished manuscript.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1963, March 17th). *St. Patrick's day* [Sermon]. First preached at Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne, Northern Ireland.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (1963, April 12th). [Sermon]. First preached on Good Friday at Ballyclove, Northern Ireland.

Sherrard, E. M. (1963, April 14th). *Jesus stand among us* [Sermon]. First preached at Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne, Northern Ireland.

Sherrard, E. M. (1963, November 3rd). *Where are you?* [Sermon]. First preached at First Congregational, Houston, Texas, USA.

### **1964**

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, January 12th). *A Christian doctrine of reconciliation which incorporates a dialogical concept of education* [Essay]. Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, March 22nd). Your King has come. [Sermon]. Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, July 19th). While we were still powerless. [Essay]. Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, August 16th). A matter of choice. [Sermon]. Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, September, 9th). The great denial. [Sermon]. Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, September). *A methodology of clinical theological education*. Paper presented to The Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, October 1st). *Anxiety* [Exam Question 2]. Final Exam, Knox College, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, October 1st). *Image of the minister* [Exam Question 1]. Final Exam, Knox College, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, October 21st). *My doctrine of reconciliation* [First Position Paper]. Course III—152, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, November 4th). *Anselm's dealing with the problem of human guilt* [Seminar Paper]. Course III—152, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, November 11th). *My doctrine of reconciliation in relation to Anselm* [Second Position Paper]. Course III—152, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, December 2nd). *My doctrine of reconciliation in relation to Schleiermacher* [Third Position Paper]. Course III—152, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1964, December 16th). *My doctrine of reconciliation in relation to Paul* [Fourth Position Paper]. Course III—152, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1964, December). *Anselm and human guilt*. *The Log*, 14(3), 17-24.\***

### **1965**

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *A statement of my present position arising out of my previous paper on a philosophy and methodology of clinical theological education*. Paper presented to a meeting of the COSTS Committee, Institute of Religion, Houston, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, July 10th). *A concept of theological education which employs methods derived from clinical pastoral education*. A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Sacred Theology, to the Faculty of the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, September 12th). *Sickness and healing in the Church*. [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, October 10th). *Christ's representatives* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.<sup>2</sup>

[2. Ed. — This and the following 101 entries are taken from a meticulous record that Evan kept of sermons and addresses he gave from October 1965 to May 1967.]

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, October 17th). *Justification by faith* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, October 24th). “*Where are you?*” (*Identity and defences*) [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, October 24th). *The law of love* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1965, October 31st). *Sickness unto death* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, November 14th). *Prayer — Spiritual energy* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, November 21st). *Be prepared* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, November 28th). *Born King of the Jews* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, December 4th). *Preparatory service (Jesus and the Passover)* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, December 12th). *Born with a herald* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, December 19th). *Jesus — Born of a virgin* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965, December 25th). *Christmas is children's day* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1965). *The original vision: The Cameron Centre dream*. Unpublished manuscript.

## 1966

- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 9th). *Jesus — Son of God* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 9th). *Epiphany — The story of the dates of Christmas and epiphany* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 9th). *Men with tails* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 16th). *The great denial* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 16th). *Houston children ...* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 16th). *Related to God* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 23rd). *Let us build a city and a tower* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 23rd). *Romulus and Remus* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 23rd). *Cities of Cain* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 30th). *A matter of choice* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 30th). *Total immersion* (in Baptism) [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 30th). *Creation's caretakers* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, February 13th). *The crossing of the Red Sea* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, February 20th). *The word of God* [Sermon]. First preached in Pleasant Valley, Geraldine, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, February 27th). *The sentence of death* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, February 27th). *Godparents* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, March 6th). *The bread of life* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, March 20th). *"Barn" Churches of Northern Ireland* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 3rd). *Riding on an ass* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 3rd). *Lids on fonts* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 6th). *Autumn afternoon* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 10th). *The resurrection body* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 10th). *Easter eggs* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 17th). *New birth into a living hope* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 17th). *Time* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 24th). *The act of commitment* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, April 24th). *Legend of Kerry and Aldyth* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1966, March/April). *The nature of authority in counselling*. Talk given to the Otago Divisional Branch of the New Zealand Association of Social Workers.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, May 1st). *The movement of city life* (Harvest-industrial thanksgiving) [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, May 1st). *Jethro Tull* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, May 8th). *Unwashed hands* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, May 22nd). *In the face of great odds* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, May 29th). *The fellowship of the Holy Spirit* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, June 5th). *The Pill — Yes or no?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, June 5th). *Legion of frontiersmen* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, June 12th). *The Christian value of sex and personality* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, June 19th). *Who is in charge in the Church* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, June 26th). *Why premarital chastity?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, July 10th). *Those who served* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, July 10th). *People who served* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1966, July 17th). *Good grief* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.\***

- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, July 24th). *He is a jealous God* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, July 24th). *The lecturn* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, July 31st). *No call to the righteous* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, August 7th). *What if a man should return from the dead?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, August 14th). *And he went out and hanged himself (The problem of suicide)* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 4th). *Fathers' day* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 11th). *The lay renaissance* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 18th). *The frontiers of faith* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 18th). *Good and bad escape* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 25th). *Why give flowers?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 18th). *Say it with flowers* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, September 25th). *The Bible — An open or closed book?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 2nd). *A new word from the old book* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 6th). *What is the vehicle for the gospel?* [Sermon] First preached at Mornington Presbyterian Church, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 16th). *The supernatural God* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 16th). *What should we teach our children?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 23rd). *Duo (Jesus met the woman at the well)* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 23rd). *Free gift of water* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, October 30th). *The household of God* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 6th). *What about Hell?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 6th). *Winnie-the-Pooh (Stuck in a tight place)* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 6th). *When things get out of hand* [Broadcast]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 20th). *Thou art my beloved son* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 20th). *Baptism* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 27th). *Behold the new has come* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, November 27th). *Flags* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, December 3rd). *Love's risk* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, December 11th). *Christmas wrappings* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, December 25th). *No Santa Claus God* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, month). *A philosophy behind a church social work agency*. Unpublished manuscript.

**1967**

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, January 8th). *The worship of wise men* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 8th). *The wise men — how many?* [Children's address] The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, January 8th). *What do we expect?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, January 22nd). *Let us know praise famous men* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 22nd). *The naming of Christopher* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, January 29th). *They said he was out of his mind* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, January 29th). *Security (Linus' blanket)* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, February 12th). *Religious display* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, February 19th). *The cost of building* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1967, February 26th). *Why call Good Friday good?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1966, February 26th). *Simon Magnus the magician* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

- Sherrard, E. M. (1967, March 4th). *What conditions for membership in God's community?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1966, March 19th). *Palm Sunday* [Children's address]. The First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1967, March 26th). *Our resurrection faith* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Also televised on National Television.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1967, April 9th). *Out of chaos* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1967, April 23rd). *What's in a name?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1969, May 7th). *Fruit of the loom* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1969, May 14th). *Frontiers* [Sermon]. First preached at St Paul's, Oamaru, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1967, May 21st). *Listening to the Holy Spirit* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1967, October 15th). *A question of identity* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

### **1968**

- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, January 21st). *Consistent persistence* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, January 28th). *The final standard* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, March 10th). *Surrendered people* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, March 24th). *A tale of two cities* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, April 14th). *Easter — Apparent nonsense* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, April 28th). *Of shoes and ships and sealing wax, of cabbages and kings* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1969, May 5th). *Faith for men with braces and a belt* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1969, May 12th). *One? two? or three?* [Sermon] First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1969, June 16th). *Rains or refugees?* [Sermon] First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.\***
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, August, 25th). *The old, old message* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sherrard, E. M. (1968, September, 8th). *Christian table fellowship* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.



Sherrard, E. M. (1968, October, 13th). *Of human life* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1968, December 15th). *Eating our Christmas pie* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

### **1969**

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, January, 5th). *A parable for the New Year* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, January 26th). *Let us build a city* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969). A philosophy behind a church social work agency. *New Zealand Social Worker*, 5(1), 35, 37, 39.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, March 2nd). *The joy of communion* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, March 30th). *A donkey's colt* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, April 6th). *Christ appeared also to me* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, May 18th). *The healing of anger* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1969, December 7th). *Loveliness or ugliness* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

### **1970**

Sherrard, E. M. (1970, March 22nd). *Towards Good Friday* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1970, April 5th). *Belief without sight* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1970, April 19th). *Back of the loaf* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1970, April 26th). *Tit for tat* [Sermon]. First preached at First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sherrard, E. M. (1970). *The pastoral care of grief* [Course notes]. The Cameron Centre, Dunedin, New Zealand.

### **1971**

Sherrard, E. M. (1971, Summer). *Basic CPE* [Clinical Pastoral Education] program. Unpublished paper, University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Sherrard, E. M. (1971, December 1st). *A planned change project* [Final paper]. Social-Psychology 685, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

### **1972**

Sherrard, E. M. (1972, January). *Key issues in CPE* [Clinical Pastoral Education]. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (1972). *Theological education in a hospital*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (1972). *The University Hospital CPE Training Center*. Unpublished manuscript.

### **1973**

Sherrard, E. M. (1973, December). *Observation of human behaviour in an out-patient clinic waiting-room* [Observation Project]. Course Psychology 793, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Michigan.

### **1974**

Sherrard, E. M. (1974). *Pastoral training*. Paper presented to the Theological Education Committee, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand

Sherrard, E. M. (1974, July 28th). *Where are you?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Sherrard, E. M. (1974). *A matter of choice* [Sermon]. First preached at the First Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

### **1975**

Sherrard, E. M. (1975). *Clinical membership written exam*. International Transactional Analysis Association, San Francisco, California, USA.

### **1976**

Sherrard, E. M. (1976, February). *A [personal] position paper*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (1976). *Passivity and discounting from a transactional analysis point of view*. Unpublished manuscript.

### **1977**

Sherrard, E. M. (1977). *Charging fees-for-service in a church agency* [A position paper]. Unpublished manuscript.

### **1978**

Sherrard, E. M. (1978). *Notes on the biological, psychological and social aspects of homosexuality*. Unpublished notes.

Sherrard, E. M. (1978, July 28th). *Where are you?* [Sermon] First preached at the First Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

### **1982**

Sherrard, E. M. (1982, April 15th). *A report to the Auckland Presbytery Quinquennial Visitation Committee on my ministry*. Unpublished report.

### **1983**

Sherrard, E. M. (1983). *Some thoughts about how a group of people ticks*. Unpublished manuscript.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1983). *The use of the psychodramatic role of the ideal parent in therapy*. Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements towards certification with the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association.\***

**1985**

Silvester, B. R., & Sherrard, E. M. (1985, January). *Holistic health counselling: Basic working principles, illustrated by case material*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists and Counsellors, Auckland, New Zealand.

**Sherrard, E. M. (1985). *TA and psychodrama: An exploration of the concept of ego states and role*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

**1986**

Sherrard, E. M. (1986). *Children's grief*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (1986). *Consensus decision-making*. Unpublished manuscript.

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**1987**

Sherrard, E. M. (1987). *The original vision: The Cameron Centre dream*. Unpublished paper.

Sherrard, E. M., & Brown, W. N. (1987). *Group process and decision-making*. Paper presented to the Presbyteries Conference, Auckland.

**1988**

Sherrard, E. M. (1988). *Conceptual tools from transactional analysis for working with suicidal people*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (1988, June 19th). *An experiment in ministry: A retrospective study of the theological dimensions of the Human Development Team of Presbyterian Support services (Northern) June 1976 — June 1988*. An unpublished study leave report.

**1989**

Sherrard, E. M. (1989, March 25th). *Easter* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland.

Sherrard, E. M. (1989, August 6th-9th). *Training proposal outline*. Paper presented to the Training Endorsement Workshop.

**1991**

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**Sherrard, E. M. (1997). *The Cameron Centre*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

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**Sherrard, E. M. (1998, July 5th). *Faithful winners* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

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**2000**

Sherrard, E. M. (2000). *The spiritual roots of TA*. Unpublished presentation.

**2004**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2004, March). *Buns and gravy: Living with prostate cancer*. Privately circulated manuscript.\***

**2005**

**Sherrard, E. (2005). *A TA analysis of God*. Unpublished notes.\***

**2006**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2006, January, 29th). *Epiphany* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

**Sherrard, E. M. (2006). *Clinical pastoral education*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

**2008**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2008, June 29th). *Colonialism* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

**Sherrard, E. M. (2008, July 6th). *Biology* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

#### **2009**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2009, January 25th). *Jesus and Paul — The consummate political activists* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (2009, February 14th). *St. Valentine's Day* [Talk]. St. Helier's, Auckland, New Zealand.

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**Sherrard, E. M. (2009). *Healing in the church: A position paper*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

#### **2010**

Sherrard, E. M. (2010). *The community of St. Luke's ministry of healing*. Unpublished manuscript.

**Sherrard, E. M. (2010, May 23rd). *A modern man faces Pentecost* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

#### **2011**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2011, March 9th). *Ash Wednesday* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

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#### **2012**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2012, January). *Buns and gravy: Living with prostate cancer — Update*. Privately circulated manuscript.\***

**Sherrard, E. M. (2012, July 15th). *Killed by a dancing girl* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

**Sherrard, E. M. (2012, August 8th). *The essence of Christianity*. A presentation given to the College and School Chaplains' Conference, St. Cuthbert's, Epsom, Auckland.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (2013, September, 30th). *Mentoring* [Discussion paper]. Unpublished manuscript.

**Sherrard, E. M. (2012, November 4th). *Self-love* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

#### **2014**

Sherrard, E. M. (2014). [Endorsement of the book *Co-creative transactional analysis: Papers, dialogues, responses, and developments*, by K. Tudor & G. Summers.] London, UK: Karnac.

**Sherrard, E. M. (2014, June 3rd). *Geering and Feuerbach* [Sermon]. First preached at St Luke's, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand.\***

**Sherrard, E. M. (2014). *Buns and gravy: The sequel*. Privately circulated manuscript.\***

### **2015**

**Sherrard, E. M. (2015). *A song about Mary*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

**Sherrard, E. M. (2015). *Credo — I believe*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

**Sherrard, E. M., & Sherrard, I. (2015). [Review of the film *The ground we won*, directed by Christopher Pryor]. *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*, 19(1), 87-89.\***

Sherrard, E. M. (2015). *Career time line*. Unpublished manuscript.

### **2017**

Sherrard, E. M. (2017). *The book of Evan: The work and life of Evan McAra Sherrard* (K. Tudor, Ed.). Auckland, New Zealand. Resource Books.

### **2020**

Tudor, K. & Sherrard, E. (2020). *Transactional analysis: Genericism and speciality*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

## **Undated sermons**

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *The Book of Jonah*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *Building in troubled times*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *Do not be afraid ... [Matthew 10:28]*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) [*Finding the Bible aggravating*].

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *The immortality of man*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *Jesus the awakener — Men the sleeper*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *O come all ye faithful*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *The pain of unsatisfied desire*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *Preparing the way for God*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *The story of John Mark*.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) [*There are many things about Christianity ...*].

**Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.) *Unconscious influence*.\***

## **Undated papers**

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *Clinical pastoral education — Notes*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *Conflict in the Church*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *Feedback in a learning community*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *The great Easter show*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *Holy war*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *Key issues in C.P.E.* [clinical pastoral education]. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *A pastoral theology of death, grief, and suffering*. Unpublished manuscript.

Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *Pilgrim bashing*. Unpublished manuscript.

**Sherrard, E. M. (n.d.). *A new dimension for TA: Spiritual development*. Unpublished manuscript.\***

## Editor and contributors

*Note: As at the publication date of the printed edition (2017)*

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**KEITH TUDOR (Editor)** is Professor of Psychotherapy and Head of the School of Public Health & Psychosocial Studies at Auckland University of Technology where, from 2009-2013, he was Programme Leader of the psychotherapy programme that Evan instigated.

**MARGARET BOWATER** is a senior counselling trainer and transactional analyst with 30 years' experience in leading hundreds of dream workshops, and was Evan's long-time colleague.

**A. ROY BOWDEN** is a former president of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists. Beginning as a Methodist minister, he worked in Life Line, the Methodist Family Counselling Centre (Palmerston North), as a Lecturer in Psychology and Sociology at Massey University, and was the Head of Health Sciences at the Wellington Institute of Technology. Since 1998 Roy has been the New Zealand Representative on the Board of the World Council for Psychotherapy and currently practices in Plimmerton as a supervisor and couples' counsellor.



**REVEREND GLYNN CARDY** became Minister of St Luke's, Remuera in 2013, when Evan preached at his induction service. Evan was an Associate Minister at St Luke's for many years and led a Communion group each Wednesday, which, from 2013-2015 Glynn co-led with him.

**DR PHILIP CARTER** is a psychodramatist with two decades' experience using the psychodramatic method. He has used this method in research, teaching, computer usability, social inquiry, organisations, leadership training, individual and couples work, men's groups, domestic violence and sexual offending.

**JOAN DALLAWAY** met Evan when he presented to Lifeline, and became "a colleague, friend and confidant", Evan's words to her on her 50th birthday. She joined the Human Development Team of the Presbyterian Social Services Auckland as an Education Officer where she and Evan worked together for over 12 years, following which they established the Certificate in Psychotherapy and Counselling at Auckland Institute of Technology. Ten years later she left for private practice, using much of what she had learned from Evan, "his spirit is forever behind me".

**ALLAN DAVIDSON** is an Emeritus Presbyterian minister, who taught church history for many years at St John's College and at the University of Auckland. He met Evan and Isabelle when he was studying at the University of Chicago in 1970-1971. He has published extensively on religious history in New Zealand and the Pacific, and in 2010 he was appointed an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to history.

**GRANT DILLON** practices psychotherapy and supervision in Auckland, and is former President of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (2013-2015).

**HANS EVERTS** is a retired counselling psychologist, and former co-ordinator of Counsellor Education at the University of Auckland, and long-time colleague and friend of Evan and the family.

**PRISCILLA EVERTS** is a retired counsellor, psychotherapist and former tutor at the University of Auckland, and long-time colleague and friend of Evan and the family.

**DR JONATHAN FAY** trained as a clinical psychologist, then practised psychotherapy for nearly 40 years where he taught and supervised some 200 psychotherapists. He was a member of the psychotherapy training core staff group at Auckland Institute of Technology and Auckland University of Technology (AUT) (1991-2002), to which he returned in 2014. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in psychotherapy and Head of Clinical Services in AUT's School of Public Health & Psychosocial Studies. Evan was one of Jonathan's closest colleagues for 24 years and a beloved supervisor and mentor.

**PROFESSOR LLOYD GEERING** was ordained as a Presbyterian minister, then served in Kurow (near Oamaru), Dunedin, and Wellington. He held Chairs of Old Testament Studies at theological colleges in Brisbane and Dunedin then became the foundation Professor of Religious Studies at Victoria University, retiring in 1984. He was awarded an Honorary DD (University of Otago, 1976), a CBE (1987), a PCNZM (2001), and ONZ (2007).

**DALE HERRON**, an experienced psychodramatist, worked with Evan and others to develop the programme in psychotherapy at Auckland Institute of Technology.

**DR ROBYN HEWLAND**, QSM, is a Life Member of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) (from 1995), was NZAP President (1985-1987), and a Member of NZAP Council (1977-1988).

**ROGER HEY** trained as a Minister of the Methodist Church, and served as a Hospital Chaplain in Carrington and Oakley Psychiatric Hospitals (1978-1990). He was then appointed to Presbyterian Support (Northern) in Auckland and later served in Aged Care Chaplaincy within the Methodist Church in Auckland.

**PETER HUBBARD**, along with Helen Palmer, co-founded the Institute of Psychosynthesis NZ in 1986. He has degrees in English, Law, and Psychosynthesis Psychology, along with a background in education, psychosynthesis training and practice in UK and Ireland. On joining the counselling and psychotherapy community in Auckland, Evan was his supervisor, where he was “warm and welcoming”.

**REX HUNTON** is a retired physician, and psychodrama director with involvement in many community health issues. He lives in Kerikeri with his wife Valerie, and is currently active in the End of Life Choice debate.

**VALERIE HUNTON** is an artist and psychodrama director. She lives in Kerikeri with husband Rex, and is involved in community issues through her art and the End of Life Choice debate.

**LESLEY KING** is a retired psychotherapist, a past president of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, and, taught on the psychotherapy programme at Auckland University of Technology from its inception. Evan was at different times her trainer, therapist, supervisor, colleague and, ultimately, a family friend.

**ROBIN LANE**, born 22nd September 1935 in Timaru, met Evan at Sumner Primary School, then again when they trained together for the Presbyterian ministry at Knox College, Dunedin. They became

lifetime friends. He is now retired and living with my second wife Jeanette Brunton in Woburn, Lower Hutt.

**SHEILA LARSEN** is the current President of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists.

**SEÁN MANNING** is a psychotherapist attached to a therapeutic community in Dunedin treating male offenders, and with a small private practice. Trained in Belfast, he has lived in New Zealand since 1975 where he has held a number of offices in professional associations, including President of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists. Now retired, he is still passionate about psychotherapy and is intensely interested in how it works and what happens in the human brain as a result. He was the author of a report summarising the effectiveness of psychotherapy and has written a number of papers on antisocial behaviour, the unconscious, and the essentially secular nature of psychotherapy.

**JOHN MCALPINE** is a priest, counsellor, and educator. Evan was his first supervisor (in clinical pastoral education) and, in the ensuing years, was variously his tutor, supervisor, work colleague (in the Human Development Team) and mentor, but “above all, my dear friend”.

**DOROTHY MCCARRISON** first heard of Evan and his work when he was in Otago. As a guidance counsellor in Auckland in 1979, Evan became one of her supervisors about which she says: “I learnt so much from Evan which has so enhanced how I live my life today as he gently assisted us in our own growth.” Since then she has been very active in psychodrama, sociodrama and transactional analysis, while serving in the Department of Education as a Secondary Inspector, then as an Education Officer in the Education Review Office. She attended St Luke’s Presbyterian Church where she enjoyed intimate spiritual discussions with Evan. Now retired, she works in domestic violence

through Restorative Justice while still supervising: “Evan always encouraged me to take risks and stay true to myself.”

**MARGARET MERTON** is an experienced counsellor and trainer, who has worked with professionals for over 25 years in career development and life planning, communication, counselling, and team building. Evan both trained and supervised her for many years. Over the last decade she and her husband John had become close friends with Evan and Isabelle.

**MARGARET POUTU MORICE**, MHS (Psychotherapy, 1st Class Hons), MNZAC, MNZAP is of Te Hapu o Tuwhakairiora and Te Iwi o Ngati Porou.

She is a Founding Member of Waka Oranga, the national organisation of Māori psychotherapy practitioners and she currently works as a Clinical Educator within the Psychotherapy Discipline in the School of Public Health & Psychosocial Studies at Auckland University of Technology where she manages the Adult Psychotherapy Clinic and supervises students’ clinical work.

**ALAN NORDMEYER** was a student at Lincoln College with Evan, becoming the best man at his wedding. He worked overseas and in New Zealand as a Forest Scientist.

**JOHN O’CONNOR** worked as a psychotherapist with Auckland District Health Board Mental Health Services and is now a Lecturer and the Programme Leader of the Master of Psychotherapy at AUT. In private practice he specialises in working with clients who have experienced early childhood trauma or are exploring their bicultural and cross-cultural experiences. He is also a former Director of Youthline Counselling Services (Auckland), and of the Human Development and Training Institute of New Zealand.

**HELEN PALMER**, along with Peter Hubbard, founded the Institute of Psychosynthesis NZ after training in London. She says: “Evan was one of the first psychotherapists we met on returning, and was warmly and encouragingly collegial from the outset as an elder of the profession and as a collegial friend.”

**ROBIN PLUMMER** was at Lincoln College with Evan and was a groomsman at his wedding. He then became an agriculture consultant, working in the Solomon Islands and elsewhere. Returning to New Zealand he worked for IHC and Victim Support where Evan gave him a lot of support. He has worked for VSA in Thailand for two years.

**BRIGITTE PULS** arrived in New Zealand from Germany in 1987 as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist specialising in Integrative Gestalt Therapy, Clinical Movement Dance Psychotherapy and what is now called Embodied-Relational Psychotherapy. In 1991 she began teaching in the new psychotherapy programme at AUT where Evan became her colleague and “esteemed mentor”.

**DON REEKIE** is from London, is a Psychodramatist and Psychodrama Trainer, retired Registered Psychologist, and a Presbyterian Minister Emeritus. His background is in community development in Pacific Islands, Liberal Studies teaching, counselling and group work training, organisational relationship development and other work and interests.

**SUSAN SHAW** knew Evan as a friend and colleague where, as an Associate Dean in the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences at Auckland University of Technology, she worked with Evan and the wider psychotherapy team over many years. She is also a close friend of Susan Sherrard, Evan’s daughter, and as a result spent much personal time with Evan including travels and family events.

**ISABELLE SHERRARD**, MPhil (Massey), QSO, JP, RGON, best friend and wife of Evan for 60 years.

**SUSAN SHERRARD**, the daughter of Evan and Isabelle Sherrard, studied nursing at AIT. In 1987 an accident left her with a spinal cord injury and she eventually joined Lifeline as a telephone counsellor. She trained and qualified as a psychotherapist, and, along with her father, started Sherrards Consultancy, offering psychotherapy, supervision, and teaching. In the early 1990s, with her partner Pete, she travelled to the USA where she discovered the disability rights movement. It became her passion to work to improve the lives of disabled people and this is the sector in which she has worked for the past 25 years. During that time she has married Pete and had one child, Oscar, Evan and Isabelle's first grandchild. For just over 50 years she lived either with or next door to Evan, with whom, as she puts it, she: "shared a depth of understanding of each other that still makes me smile and brings tears to my eyes".

**BEV SILVESTER-CLARK** worked as the charge nurse of a general surgical ward at Middlemore Hospital and the Oncology Department at Auckland Hospital. Here she recognised that the mind, emotions and spirit were involved in the causes of ill-health and the healing process. In 1980 Evan offered her a job at the Human Development Team (HDT) at Presbyterian Support where she developed holistic counselling principles, contributed to the HDT counselling training programme and support for holistic practice for nurses and health professionals. In 1986 she moved into private counselling and in 1998 she developed a series of programmes to mobilise the healing power of the mind, and co-authored *Having Surgery? Prepare Well to Recover Well Using the Power of Your Mind*. Although she retired in 2015, she still has a Skype-based practice in spiritual mentoring and in leading retreats.

**SHIRLEY WEBBER** trained as a school Dental Nurse, married a farmer, then joined LifeLine which was where she met Evan. Then came 40 years of overseas travel and sailing and working on farm and orchard with Evan and Isabelle. She says: “Our family will never forget those years.”

**ROGER WIIG** is a retired Presbyterian minister who served the church in Aotearoa, Australia and the UK as educator, editor and parish minister.

**HAARE WILLIAMS** combines art, poetry and music in his work. As he puts it: “I write, paint and sing the living spirit of the spoken word.” In this he explores the stories of the life of Te Kooti (c.1832-1893) and his church, Ringatu. Guided by Te Kooti’s influence, Haare says: “my work and commentary on our society are drawn from spiritual beliefs and personal experiences.”

**ONDRA WILLIAMS** is a retired psychotherapist who was supervised by Evan for many years. She worked as a colleague in the Psychotherapy Department of Auckland Institute of Technology, later Auckland University of Technology.

**COLIN WRENNALL** gained a Diploma in Agriculture, eventually purchasing his first farm in Waipu Northland. After many years came a marriage breakup and the sale of the family farm. Colin moved to Auckland where he entered the world of therapy, eventually training in counselling and psychodrama on the psychotherapy programme at Auckland University of Technology. He was involved in establishment of three therapeutic agencies that thrive today. In 2003 he purchased a farm in Paparua, Northland, turning it into a success, but today still has a psychotherapy practice and does organisational work in the rural community.



