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Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy

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The field of spiritual care and psychotherapy has changed significantly in the last 20 years. Both of us were educated at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary (WLS) in the late 1980's in the Masters program of pastoral care and counselling, with the academic program at the Seminary and the clinical education and training at Interfaith Pastoral Counselling Centre in Kitchener. Interfaith no longer exists, and the pastoral care and counselling program at WLS was changed to spiritual care and psychotherapy. There are many reasons for these changes in the field, including the expanding diversification of faith groups in Canadian society, and the recent development of the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario.

This edition of *Consensus* focuses on spiritual care and psychotherapy. Thomas St. James O'Connor traces the history of the program at WLS. Pastoral care and counselling was initiated by Dr. Delton Glebe, at the time the principal-dean of WLS. In 1977 the Seminary Board and WLU Senate approved an MTS and MTh in pastoral care and counselling, later transforming to the spiritual care and psychotherapy program with an MA and DMin. Donna Mann, a WLS graduate who works as community chaplain in the area of palliative care, summarizes a literature review on spiritual care for family care givers of a family member who is in palliative care. Many terminally ill patients today prefer to die at home, and often the family caregivers experience tremendous stress in providing care. Mann uses this literature to understand and explain a case study outlining interventions from the research to help ease this stress. Nancy Calvert-Koyzis focuses on the care of the soul for a person with a borderline personality disorder. After summarizing the literature and indicating which interventions are helpful, Calvert-Koyzis provides clinical examples to explain the research. In the article by WLS students Derek McLeod, Agus Sadewa, Ruth Ann Arthur, Tracey Hand-Breckenridge, Kelly Collins, Yvonne Rumstedler and Kellie Van Hooren, the authors begin with a case study describing how a pastor or spiritual care psychotherapist might use Contextual Family Therapy developed by Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy to deal with a conflicted teen and his family. Finally we end with an article describing the Diamond Approach in spiritual direction which was developed by A.H. Almaas. Gordon Alton, a congregational pastor, uses the Diamond Approach understanding of spiritual direction in his ministry.

There are a number of common themes in these articles. First and foremost is context. Context is extremely important in spiritual care and psychotherapy. which is influenced by a client's age, gender and economic well-being, as well as the client's presenting issue, the place and environment where therapy is offered, the client's family, and the religious, cultural and social beliefs of the client. The context presented in each of these articles is different and thus the approaches change accordingly. Second, there is variety in the practices of spiritual care and psychotherapy with no one way to do this work. Different spiritualities and different therapeutic modalities create varieties. The authors work with differing client populations, within a variety of settings using multiple

tools. Third, the theory and practice of spiritual care and psychotherapy is rooted in practical theology and spirituality which evolved from ancient traditions within various faith groups. Case studies are important in this field, and each of the articles has at least one case study. Specificity in practice is a requirement with the understanding that practice can inform theory as theory can inform practice.

Psychotherapy can be translated from the Greek as “cure of the soul”. Socrates first used the term to describe the goal of philosophy, which was through an understanding of truth to cure the soul of confusion and untruth. Some practitioners today prefer *care* of the soul rather than *cure* of the soul. Each of these writers in this issue is concerned about both the care and cure of the souls of people whom they serve, i.e., psychotherapy. And finally, each of the writers goes outside of the discipline of practical theology and spirituality to include insights influenced by their previous educational experiences, and interpretations from the social sciences.

It is our hope that the articles in this issue of Consensus will help spiritual care givers, chaplains, pastoral counsellors, spiritually integrated psychotherapists, pastors and faith group leaders in their work of curing and caring for souls.