

The Immanuel Approach (to Emotional Healing and to Life)

Chapter 19: Tom, Mom, and Immanuel

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DRAFT

Charlotte and I have close friends, Tom and Adey Wassink, who are husband and wife co-pastors of a church in Iowa City. Tom is also a psychiatrist and a professor at the University of Iowa, so I particularly appreciate hearing about his experiences with the Immanuel approach. (I don't have very many psychiatrist colleagues who are both facilitating Immanuel approach sessions for others and also receiving their own Immanuel approach healing.) Charlotte and I were blessed to enjoy several short fellowship and prayer getaways with Tom and Adey during the summer and fall of 2013, and during one of these get-togethers Tom told us about the experience described below, from an Immanuel session he had in May of 2013. He has also graciously given me permission to share this Immanuel story with the rest of you.

I was eight years old and in the backyard with my Mother and six year old brother. My mother was upset and crying and my brother and I were miserably looking down at the ground. "Why can't the two of you get along! Honestly, I just don't know what to do. I'm at my wits' end!" I had horrible sibling rivalry with Mark. I was mean to him, kept him out of neighborhood friendships, and cheated to win at games. I still don't know why—insecurity? jealousy? and I certainly had no idea back then.

My family is Dutch, so Mom crying was a big deal. We never showed emotion except for joy when Michigan beat Ohio State, but my mother crying now had nothing to do with football. She didn't know what to do with our rivalry either -- how to help us talk about it, how to help us explore why it was there, or how to help get us through, and it felt to me that in that moment she was putting her frustration onto us, two clueless young brothers who already felt confused, angry, and guilty.

I had started the Immanuel prayer time with a positive memory of sailing with friends off the coast of Maine on a sunny afternoon, and I connected with Jesus when I invited him into the experience and then immediately saw him sitting right beside me on the bow, his feet dragging in the chill water just like mine. I also asked Jesus to help me be aware of his presence in the room where we were praying, and then I sensed him sitting in a chair, leaning forward and looking at me intently. I asked, "What do you want to show me Jesus?" and a few moments later I was in the memory of being in the backyard with my mother and brother.

In my remembering, I entered the shame of that moment. I could see the three of us sitting in the grass, our wooden deck off to the side. I felt angry. This isn't fair! She was the Mother, the one in charge, who was supposed to know how to deal with these things. And her helplessness, sadness, and frustration were supposed to be hers—but now, not only was I beyond hope regarding my brother, but I also was the cause of my mother's tears! I already felt bad about how I was treating Mark, and now I felt guilty for making Mom cry too.

"Where's Jesus?" the person praying with me asked.

"Jesus?" I thought, "Who cares! What can he do? This thing can't be undone. I have lived distant from my brother (and guilty towards my mother) for 40+ years. I don't want Jesus to somehow make me feel all happy about it."

But then I saw him. He was sitting on the deck, sort of behind me, facing sideways. He obviously was there for me, but I think he knew I wouldn't talk to him yet. In my mental imagery, my child self in the memory stood up and moved a foot or two towards him, but I was still facing my mom and brother. They had stopped moving, like in the movie scenes where all action freezes except for the main character.

And then the weirdest thing happened. I (adult Tom) was still feeling very angry at Jesus. So I watched in shock (and amazement) as eight-year old Tom from inside the memory sighed, shrugged his shoulders, walked up onto the deck and plopped down next to Jesus. I had been watching the whole scene from an outside observer perspective (from above, and a little to the left), but I also at this point sort of went inside my little self. And I said—and these were the only words I spoke in the whole process of going through the memory—“This really sucks.” And Big Jesus sitting beside me said, “Yeah, this really sucks.”

Well, that was enough for little Tommy. He/I took a deep breath, got up, and began to walk back to Mark and Mom. I remember my adult self thinking, “Wait—that was too fast! You can't just fix a life time of sibling rivalry and bad parenting with ‘That sucks!’ Go back—sit down!” But try as I might, I could not deter little Tommy. He all of a sudden felt good! He trooped on down to Mom and Mark and just wanted to play. All of a sudden, this whole intense sibling rivalry meltdown, with all its pain and shame and heaviness, felt like a silly distraction getting in the way of having fun on a sunny afternoon.

I remember trying to probe the child me that was still inside the memory. I was looking for some kind of sign that I was making the whole thing up because it just seemed too easy. But I was not in denial—I knew what had happened—I knew it was real—and I was now serene. I was as connected as I'd ever been with that experience--with that whole thread from my childhood memories. Jesus was *present, with me*, and that was enough.

Follow-up: The healing benefits of this interaction with the living presence of Jesus appear to be long-lasting. It's now May of 2014, a year after the Immanuel prayer time just described, and in these past twelve months Tom has noticed things shifting in a good way with respect to his mother. For example, he visited his parents recently and felt himself to be “more free and open in conversation with her, less secretive.” He also “felt the possibility of engaging more deeply with her about real topics of conversation—religion, church, and growing up in a socially rigid environment.” Furthermore, whenever he goes back to the memory of being in the back yard with his mother and brother, he continues to perceive Jesus' presence with him in the memory and that this once painful experience has been permanently resolved. Instead of feeling the shame, despair, and anger that this memory used to carry, now when he visits it he feels only the freedom he was experiencing as he came out of the prayer time.

The Immanuel Approach (to Emotional Healing and to Life)

Chapter 20: Facilitator Establish Interactive Connection,

Constantly Ask God for Guidance

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Advanced topics warning: If you are going through the book for the first time, trying to get the overview big picture, just skim over this material for now and come back for a more thorough review when you are ready to actually begin practicing with the Immanuel approach. And when you are ready to begin practicing, if you are a lay person and/or beginner doing basic Immanuel approach work, just focus on the simplest, most basic connection and benefits. If you perceive God's presence, maintain an interactive connection, and just receive encouragement, reassurance, strengthened relational circuits, increased joy, and increased capacity from sensing that God is glad to be with you, that's great, and that's all you need for basic Immanuel approach work. You can study the material about receiving and transmitting more complicated guidance and help if you decide to do intermediate and/or advanced work at some point.

In the full, ideal version of the Immanuel approach, both we and the recipient establish and maintain interactive connections with God. We should be focusing one half of our attention on the recipient and focusing the other half of our attention on Jesus – constantly watching for any guidance, encouragement, or other help that He might be providing throughout the session. I know that this is not an absolute requirement, since I have facilitated successful Immanuel approach sessions while being subtly triggered, quietly non-relational, and without any awareness of Jesus' presence or an interactive connection with Him, but it is certainly the ideal. And the more we deal with intermediate and advanced issues and blockages, the more valuable it will be for us to have our own connection with Jesus as we lead sessions. Similarly, in group exercises the ideal is for *every* person in each small group – the recipient, the lead facilitator, and all of the observers/intercessors – to establish and maintain interactive connections. With individual sessions, with group exercises, and with every other situation we might possibly end up in, more interactive connection with Jesus is always better.

Getting into relational mode and staying there: Since we have to have our relational circuits online to be able to establish any kind of relational connection, to the extent that we are able to establish and maintain a relational connection with Jesus we will get into relational mode and stay there. And being in relational mode is a good thing with respect to many aspects of facilitating Immanuel sessions. For example, even without a connection to God, just being in relational mode increases our capacity, our emotional presence, and our discernment. Being in relational mode will also increase the ease and effectiveness with which we are able carry out many of the practical facilitator tasks, such as helping the recipient to get words for what's in her heart, helping her to describe whatever is coming into her awareness, coaching her to engage directly with Jesus regarding everything that comes forward, and offering attunement.¹

¹ If you observe yourself carefully, you will notice that when you are in relational mode these facilitator tasks flow easily, require minimal effort, and feel natural, real, and "right." In contrast, when you are subtly triggered and in non-relational mode you can still carry out some of these facilitator tasks, but they do not flow smoothly, they require much more effort, and they usually feel a bit awkward, stiff, clumsy, and artificial. Furthermore, since your relational circuits are the part of your brain that does attunement, you can only offer true attunement when you are in relational mode. (You can try to offer

Protection with respect to triggering and non-relational mode: As just mentioned, establishing and maintaining a relational connection with Jesus helps get us into relational mode and helps keep us there, and this is a good thing with respect to many aspects of facilitating Immanuel sessions. In addition to these benefits, getting in the habit of establishing and maintaining relational connection with Jesus also provides a valuable warning system with respect to triggering and non-relational mode. If we usually establish and maintain a relational connection with Jesus, any time we notice that we are having difficulty with this connection it should be a warning signal to check whether we may be subtly triggered and/or have slipped into non-relational mode. Being triggered and/or in non-relational mode will dramatically impair our ability to facilitate effectively, so if it turns out that we are triggered and/or in non-relational mode, we should take appropriate measures to get back into relational mode immediately.² At the very least, we should keep working on our own issues as part of our ongoing spiritual growth so that we will be less likely to get triggered and fall into non-relational mode in future sessions.³

How to best transmit guidance and help from God through the facilitator to the recipient: As already mentioned at several points, and as will be discussed in much greater detail in chapter (**Fill in**), the primary focus with the Immanuel approach should always be the connection between Jesus and the recipient. The primary source of guidance and help is *not* the well trained, skilled, experienced, gifted, and wise facilitator providing advice, assistance, teaching, insight, and prophetic truth, but rather the recipient engaging directly with God. However, with the facilitator also having an interactive connection with God, the Lord sometimes provides guidance and help to the facilitator that the facilitator should pass on to the recipient. So an important question is, “How can the facilitator pass on the guidance and help from God without disrupting one of the most important pieces of the Immanuel approach – the priority of the connection between the recipient and God?”

Guidance and help that quietly pass to the recipient without the need for explanation: Some pieces are easy, in that some of the guidance and help that the facilitator receives through an interactive connection with Jesus quietly pass to the recipient without the need for explanation or any other explicit communication. For example, often when I am facilitating an Immanuel approach session I will sense Jesus standing beside me, I will have a subtle mental image of his smiling face, it will feel true that he is glad to be with me, and I will have the sense that he approves of what we are doing. These interactions with Jesus encourage me, reassure me, increase my faith, increase my capacity, increase my joy, and increase the intensity of my relational circuit activity. Or I will be puzzled by some aspect of the session, I will focus on Jesus and ask for guidance, I will then notice an important but subtle clue that I had previously missed, and I have the sense that I was able to spot the clue because Jesus just gave me a gentle nudge in the right direction. Or the recipient will be having difficulty connecting with Jesus and

attunement when your relational circuits are offline, but the resulting *pseudo*-attunement just doesn't feel the same.) For additional discussion of the importance of your relational circuits and the connection between relational circuits and attunement, see chapters 12 and 15 through 18 in Karl D. Lehman, *Outsmarting Yourself* (Libertyville, IL: This Joy! Books, 2011).

² For careful discussion of how to tell when you are triggered and/or in non-relational mode, and also discussion of how to get your relational circuits back online, see chapters 12 and 15 through 22 in Karl D. Lehman, *Outsmarting Yourself* (Libertyville, IL: This Joy! Books, 2011).

³ The importance of getting your own healing is discussed at length in chapter (**fill in when complete**).

the first round of simple troubleshooting has not been effective, I will focus on Jesus and ask for guidance, a thought comes to me regarding a new/different/creative question to ask as part of the troubleshooting process (and it works), and I have the sense that the new, helpful thought was from the Lord.

All of these benefits will bless my effectiveness as the facilitator in any session, they will be especially appreciated in long, difficult, complicated advanced sessions, and they will all be released into the session without my having to offer any explanation to the recipient. Again, these are the easy ones, that don't pose any difficulty with respect to interfering or competing with the priority of the connection between the recipient and God.

Guidance/help that requires explanation: However, in some situations the guidance and/or help from God can only be applied by explicitly presenting it to the recipient. For example, the recipient is having difficulty establishing a connection with God in spite of our best efforts at Immanuel intervention troubleshooting, I focus on Jesus and ask for guidance, and the thought comes to me that the recipient has a dissociated child part⁴ carrying guardian lie fears⁵ about allowing Jesus to be tangibly present. Or the recipient and I are working with a guardian lie fear that appears to be blocking her from establishing an interactive connection, the guardian lie fear does not seem to be resolving, I focus on Jesus and ask for guidance, and the thought comes to me that the guardian lie fear is anchored in a painful memory from first grade reading class. Or the recipient is working with Jesus to address a hurtful, sinful pattern in her life, she is making brave choices to keep looking at the truth and humbly receive correction, I sense from Jesus that he is intensely pleased with her life-giving choices, and I sense that he wants me to share this with her as part of encouraging her to continue. In these situations I can't apply the guidance and help I am getting from Jesus without some kind of explanation to the recipient.

I occasionally see this even when the recipient has a good interactive connection of her own,⁶ but my perception is that this is much more common when the recipient is having difficulty with receiving guidance and help directly from God. This makes sense, since the facilitator obviously needs to provide more direction and assistance in these situations, and my perception is that God seems to know this and correspondingly offers much more guidance and help through the facilitator in these situations. Receiving guidance and help from God through the facilitator especially becomes necessary when people doing intermediate and advanced Immanuel approach work encounter longer blocks of time during which they have difficulty establishing good connections with the Lord themselves. This is an obvious important reason for intermediate and advanced facilitators to get in the habit of establishing and maintaining the best possible connection with God, since the facilitator's connection may be the only channel still working in the most difficult sessions (when guidance and help are needed the most).

⁴ **Possible footnote re dissociated child parts?**

⁵ Guardian lies are distorted beliefs (lies) that "guard," or block the way forward in emotional healing work. For example, if I believe that I will go crazy if I feel the emotional pain associated with certain memories then I will not cooperate with attempts to work with these memories. Or if I believe that I am bad and dirty, and that Jesus will yell at me and shame me if he shows up, then I will not allow myself to be aware of his tangible presence.

⁶ In these situations it seems like Jesus just enjoys including me more actively in whatever he is doing.

Be humble and tentative: Which brings us back to, “How can the facilitator pass on the guidance and help from God without disrupting one of the most important pieces of the Immanuel approach – the priority of the connection between the recipient and God?”

I think the key is for us to be humble and tentative as we offer the guidance and help. For example, with the first two scenarios just presented above I might start with something along the lines of, “I have a thought about something that might be helpful. I think it may be from Jesus, but it may just be from my own mind. If you would like to hear it, let me know when you come to a good place to pause and I would be happy to share it with you.” And then (if and when the recipient asks for my input), I offer it gently, as a suggestion that she is free to accept or reject. With the first scenario, possibly something like,

“I was asking Jesus for guidance, and then the thought came to me that maybe your ability to perceive Jesus is being blocked by a part that is afraid to let Jesus be more tangibly present. It’s totally okay if I’m wrong, but that’s the thought that came to me. If you think I may be right and you’re willing to try it, I’d like to try the direct eye contact thing⁷ and check to see if there is a part inside that’s afraid to let Jesus be present.”

With the second scenario, maybe something along the lines of,

“I was asking Jesus for guidance, and then the thought came to me that maybe your guardian lie fear isn’t moving because it’s anchored in a memory. And the thought also came that it might be a memory from first grade reading class. This may just be from my own mind – I’ll be fine if I turn out to be wrong – but those are the thoughts that came to me. If you think I may be right and you’re willing to try it, I’d like to see what happens if you specifically ask Jesus for help with this possibility and then report whatever comes into your awareness.”

And with the third scenario, I might start with, “I think I may be sensing some encouragement for you from Jesus – they may just be my own thoughts, but I think they might be from Jesus. If you would like to hear it, let me know when you come to a good place to pause and I would be happy to share it with you.” And then (if and when the recipient asked for my input), I would follow up with something like,

“All along as we’ve been working I’ve had a subtle image of Jesus’ face with a quiet smile, and I’ve had the sense that he’s glad to be with us. Just now, as you’ve been embracing his correction with such a humble and teachable spirit, he gave a little nod, he got this big grin on his face, I got the sense that he’s intensely pleased with your life-giving choices, and I got the sense that he wanted me to share this with you to encourage you to continue. Again, these might just be my own thoughts, but I wanted to offer them to you and let you discern whether or not they are from the Lord.”

The recipient always makes the final call: When the facilitator offers something as possibly from God, the recipient always makes the final call regarding whether or not to accept the guidance and/or help as from the Lord.

⁷ See “Direct Eye Contact (Technique for Making Contact with Internal Parts),” available as a free download from www.kclehman.com, for discussion of this simple but powerful tool for working with internal child parts.

The Immanuel Approach (to Emotional Healing and to Life)
**Chapter 21: Faith (In God's presence, In God's Goodness,
In God's Guidance, and In the Effectiveness of the Immanuel Approach¹)**

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DRAFT

My perception is that faith helps. Although the Lord is amazingly gracious, and often works even in the face of minimal faith, it seems that faith does contribute to the efficacy of our prayers in releasing the Lord's will for healing in any given situation. In ways I don't fully understand, faith cooperates with the Lord's intentions and makes it possible for Him to work more powerfully.

I. Biblical teaching: I'm not a theologian, and have not done a careful theological study regarding the role and importance of faith in emotional healing, but I think we can all agree that passages such as the following indicate that faith is important:

Matt 9:20-22, especially verse 22: "...Jesus turned around and said to her, 'Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well.' ..."²

Matt 9:27-31, especially verse 29: "...Then He touched their eyes and said, 'Because of your faith, it will happen....'"

Mark 6: 1-5, especially verse 5: "...And because of their unbelief, he couldn't do any mighty miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them."

Luke 7:37-50, especially verse 50: "...And Jesus said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'"

Luke 17:11-19, especially verse 19: "...And Jesus said to the man, 'Stand up and go. Your faith has made you well.'"

II. Our experience and observations: Both Charlotte and I have noticed that it is easier to work with people who have strong faith. When a person comes in expecting to connect with the Lord and to get healing, the session goes more smoothly and the positive results are more dramatic.

Both Charlotte and I have also noticed greater efficacy when *our* faith is strong. We observed this most clearly the first several times we returned to Evanston after attending Theophostic training events where Dr. Smith had provided a series of live demonstration sessions. Most days would include some lectures, but occasionally the entire day was invested in demonstration sessions. On one of these days, the morning would start with Dr. Smith picking a volunteer from the audience – maybe a person who reports that she has panic attacks whenever she thinks about a certain subject. Dr. Smith would lead her through the Theophostic process, and in anywhere

¹ Note that the comments here with respect to the Immanuel approach also apply to Theophostic and any other Christ-centered emotional healing ministries.

² Scripture quotations marked *New Living Translation* are taken from *The Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1996). Used by permission.

from 20 to 90 minutes she would find the underlying traumatic memories, focus the distorted interpretations, and identify and resolve blockages. Jesus would then bring truth to replace the distorted interpretations, and she would report that she could now think about the triggering subject without the least twinge of anxiety, let alone panic. There would be 20 to 30 minutes for questions and discussion regarding the session, and then we would take a break for cookies and hot chocolate.

After the break, Dr. Smith would choose another volunteer – maybe a middle-aged man who describes a problematic compulsive behavior. Dr. Smith would lead him through the Theophostic process, and in anywhere from 20 to 90 minutes he would find the underlying traumatic memories, focus the distorted interpretations, and identify and resolve blockages. Jesus would then bring truth to replace the distorted interpretations, and he would report that he could now think about the most intensely triggering situations without the slightest impulse towards his previous compulsive behavioral response. There would be 20 to 30 minutes for questions and discussion regarding the session, and then we would take a break for lunch.

We would come back from lunch, and Dr. Smith would pick another volunteer – maybe an older woman who asks for help with persistent feelings of self-hatred. Dr. Smith would lead her through the Theophostic process, and in anywhere from 20 to 90 minutes she would find the underlying traumatic memories, focus the distorted interpretations, and identify and resolve blockages. Jesus would then bring truth to replace the distorted interpretations, and she would be able to talk about events that had always especially stirred up self-hatred, but now without feeling the slightest self-condemnation. There would be 20 to 30 minutes for questions and discussion regarding the session, and then we would take a break for crackers, cheese, and soda.

After the break, Dr. Smith would choose another volunteer – maybe a 35 year old man who experienced persistent guilt about getting his high-school girlfriend pregnant and then pushing her to get an abortion, even though he had confessed this sin and asked the Lord's forgiveness on hundreds of occasions. Dr. Smith would lead him through the Theophostic process, and in anywhere from 20 to 90 minutes he would go through the memories for these events (and also any related unresolved traumatic memories), focus the distorted interpretations, and identify and resolve blockages. Jesus would then bring truth to replace the distorted interpretations, and the volunteer would report that he still knows his choices were wrong, but that now he finally feels forgiven. There would be 20 to 30 minutes for questions and discussion regarding the session, and then we would take a break for supper. Occasionally, Dr. Smith would facilitate one last session in the evening.

By the end of one of these seminars we had usually seen at least 10 - 15 sessions in which the person appeared to receive permanent healing for significant traumatic memories. Both Charlotte and I could sense that watching session after session after session of effective healing was tremendously faith-building, we could both sense a dramatic increase in the positive results in our work when we returned home, and we both perceived that at least part of this dramatic increase resulted from our increased faith.

III. Psychological factors that contribute: In addition to the somewhat mysterious ways in which faith releases *spiritual* authority and power for healing, there are also fairly straightforward psychological factors that contribute to the beneficial effects of faith. For example, faith in God's presence, goodness, and ability – the cognitive and experiential conviction that God is *always* present, that God loves the recipient more than you do and *always* wants to heal her, and that God is *always* able to provide the guidance and help needed to resolve the problem – will

predictably encourage persistence in troubleshooting. Faith in the effectiveness of the Immanuel approach and Immanuel interventions – the cognitive and experiential conviction that they should *always* work, and if it temporarily appears that they are not working then there is *always* a reason that can be identified and resolved – will predictably encourage persistence in troubleshooting.³

My experience with facilitating emotional healing over the past twenty five years provides a good example. When I first started facilitating emotional healing sessions, both my faith and my persistence in troubleshooting were pretty minimal. I would say that my cognitive faith was moderate at best. I knew some of the verses promising God's Immanuel presence, I knew the Bible stories about miraculous healing, I had read a number of books about God coming with powerful emotional healing in modern times, and I had even heard a few stories from people I knew personally, so I was cognitively convinced that miraculous faith-based emotional healing could happen and did happen. But I had not yet carefully studied the extensive Biblical support for Immanuel approach emotional healing, I had not yet studied the neurological and psychological research that support the Immanuel approach, and I had not yet come to understand the reasons for why my attempts to facilitate emotional healing usually did *not* work.⁴ And my experiential faith was pretty minimal – I had not yet had any experience of God's tangible presence in my own life, I had not yet had any experience of God's healing work in my own life, and as mentioned in chapter three, I was initially seeing dramatic resolution of traumatic memories in maybe one out of twenty patients. At a gut level, my experiential faith could have been summed up with, "It's worth trying, but it usually doesn't work." Furthermore, I had many trauma-associated negative beliefs that would undermine my faith even further.

Not surprisingly, my persistence in troubleshooting matched my faith (or lack thereof). I would pray with the recipient to invite God to come into her traumatic memories with guidance and healing, but if we didn't perceive immediate results and 20 to 30 minutes of troubleshooting didn't identify and resolve the blockages, I would become increasingly discouraged. Furthermore, In addition to my weak baseline that was vulnerable to faith fatigue from the get go, I also had many trauma-associated negative beliefs that made the situation even worse. If the session seemed stuck, and I asked God for help but didn't perceive the Lord's tangible presence or assistance, a variety of traumatic memories would get activated. Triggered negative beliefs, such as "God's not really with us, he doesn't really care, and he's not going to help us" would quietly start sliding forward into the present. I realized that these triggered negative beliefs were totally contrary to scripture, so I would fight them cognitively and push them to the extreme periphery of my internal awareness, but they would still linger in the background, quietly feeling true and further undermining my faith. Eventually I would tell myself things like, "I guess God doesn't want to heal this memory today," and, "I guess this technique just won't work for this particular situation," and then abandon the attempt for true healing in favor of medications and psychotherapy techniques for managing symptoms.

Fortunately, over the past twenty-five years my faith has steadily increased, and my persistence in troubleshooting has increased along with it. Cognitively, I have discovered that the Biblical

³ This is not a big issue for basic Immanuel approach sessions (in which troubleshooting is quick and easy), but persistence in troubleshooting becomes increasingly important as one begins to work with increasingly advanced/complicated blockages.

⁴ Observing that something usually fails, but not having any understanding with respect to why, is a huge faith buster.

support for Immanuel approach emotional healing is EXTENSIVE, I have discovered and carefully studied psychological and neurological research supporting the Immanuel approach, and I feel like I understand why my earlier efforts were so ineffective. Experientially, I have enjoyed thousands of connections with Jesus' living presence, I have had hundreds of sessions in which I have received healing, I have facilitated thousands of sessions in which I have seen others experience God's presence and receive healing, and I receive a constant stream of faith-building stories from family, friends, and colleagues who are using the Immanuel approach.

I have also been relentless in my work with the Lord to find and resolve trauma-associated negative beliefs.

So I now have strong faith regarding God's presence, regarding his character and heart, regarding his ability, regarding the effectiveness of the Immanuel approach, and regarding the effectiveness of Immanuel interventions. Both cognitively and experientially, I am deeply, profoundly, totally convinced that God is always with us, that he loves us even more than we love ourselves, that he always wants us to be able to perceive his presence, that he always wants us to have a living, interactive connection with him, that he always wants to heal our emotional trauma, that he is always able to bring this healing, and that the Immanuel approach and Immanuel interventions can always work.⁵ Furthermore, the fruit of God's healing work in my life is that triggered negative beliefs seldom undermine my faith. And the result of all this is that now I NEVER stop troubleshooting. With some patients I have needed to troubleshoot for many sessions,⁶ gently, carefully, and persistently identifying and removing blockage after blockage after blockage, before they were finally able to establish an interactive connection with Jesus. And the reason I have been able to persist with this prolonged troubleshooting is that the strength of my faith prevents me from getting discouraged and quitting.

My experience with advanced physics problems in college provides a helpful analogy with respect to faith and persistence in troubleshooting. In the advanced level physics classes, a single homework assignment problem might take five to six hours of work and ten to twelve pages of calculations to solve. However, my classmates and I would be incredibly persistent when working on these problems *because we knew there was an answer – we knew the textbook would not give us problems that could not be solved*. As we were working on these problems, we *knew* that there was some way to make it work, and we would persist in trouble shooting until we found the solution. Similarly, when I am facilitating Immanuel approach sessions I am utterly convinced that there is always some way to make it work, and I therefore persist in troubleshooting until we find and resolve the blockages.

One final point: Some readers may understandably think, "Maybe Dr. Lehman's increased efficacy is just from his increased knowledge and skill." My knowledge and skill with respect to troubleshooting have indeed grown steadily over the past twenty five years, and this has certainly contributed to my current effectiveness with troubleshooting, but it is very clear to me that many

⁵ As mentioned earlier (****refer to location? Chapter three?***), the Immanuel approach and Immanuel interventions *always* have the potential to work, but this can be blocked if the recipient chooses to turn away from healing by choosing to indulge in bitterness, self-pity, or rebellion. And even in these cases, we can often (eventually) help the recipient to repent of these choices and turn back to healing (and then the Immanuel approach and Immanuel interventions work).

⁶ I'm talking about troubleshooting for the entire session, every session, every week for many months.

of my current successes also depend on much greater persistence. Even with my current level of knowledge and skill, if I consistently quit after 20 to 30 minutes my success rate would go way down. To put this another way, I have a very high success rate, even when working with people who have complicated blockages, but breakthrough often comes at the end of a long troubleshooting session, or at the end of a number of troubleshooting sessions. Even with my current level of knowledge and skill, these people would not get to the breakthrough of experiencing God's tangible presence and receiving healing if we quit after 20 to 30 minutes.

Parallel material in essays about TP somewhere? (Allusion to this in prior notes, but as of 11/13 I'm not sure what I was referring to).

IV. Practical considerations with respect to increasing faith: Fortunately, there are specific, concrete, accessible things we can do to increase our faith.

A. Resolve traumatic distorted interpretations (lies) that undermine faith: As described above, traumatic memories can contain distorted interpretations that become *anti-faith* beliefs when they come forward as implicit memory and are transferred onto the Lord. Distorted interpretations (lies) from my early separation trauma provide a painfully good example. As described in chapter 17, when I was two years old my mother got mononucleosis during her pregnancy with my younger sister. Between the pregnancy and the mono, she got to the point where she couldn't even get out of bed – Dad had to carry her across the hall to the bathroom. She was certainly too ill to care for my four-year-old brother and myself, so we were sent to stay with friends in another city for three weeks while she was recovering. At two years old, three weeks was much, much, much longer than I could handle being separated from my parents, and the whole experience was intensely overwhelming and painful for me. Furthermore, part of being two was that I perceived Mom and Dad to be omnipotent – I believed that they knew everything and that they could do anything they wanted to. I was too young to understand any of the explanations regarding why they wouldn't come when I called, and so when I asked for them all day every day for three weeks I believed that they could hear me, and that they were *choosing* to stay away.

An important part of trauma is that we come up with distorted interpretations regarding the meaning of the experience, and by the end of these three weeks of separation I had come up with many distorted interpretations, such as, "I've been abandoned and I'm on my own," "It's hopeless and I'm powerless—they aren't coming, and nothing I can do will make them come," "I can't trust their hearts toward me because there's no possible justification for allowing this to happen," and "They won't help me when I'm overwhelmed and need their help." These distorted interpretations were then carried in the memories for these traumatic events, and any time these memories would get triggered these false negative beliefs would come forward and feel true in the present.

This was all sad and bad with respect to my relationship with my parents, but these distorted interpretations would become *anti-faith* beliefs whenever they would get activated and transferred onto the Lord. Any time I would become stuck in a situation that felt overwhelming, and call out to the Lord for help, but then not be able to perceive his presence or assistance, my interactions with the Lord in the present would match my interactions with my parents in the two-year-old trauma closely enough to activate the toxic content carried in these memories. The distorted beliefs from the two-year-old separation trauma would then come forward as implicit memory and get transferred onto the Lord – it would feel intensely true that I couldn't trust

God's heart toward me because he chooses to allow things for which there is no possible justification; it would feel intensely true that he's not with me now, and won't come even though I call and call for him; and it would feel intensely true that he won't do anything when I'm overwhelmed and need his help. And since all of this would come forward as "invisible" implicit memory, I would have no awareness or insight regarding "Oh, these thoughts and emotions are really coming from traumatic childhood experiences." Instead, I would perceive that the thoughts and emotions were *about the Lord*, and that they were true, valid, and reasonable *in the present*.⁷

As I'm sure the reader can see, these anti-faith beliefs are *diametrically opposed* to faith and *inherently incompatible* with faith because you cannot simultaneously believe "He won't come when I need Him" and "He is always with me," you cannot simultaneously believe "I can't trust the Lord's heart towards me" and "The Lord loves me, and I can trust Him to care for me." At any given moment, to the extent that the anti-faith lies are triggered forward and feel true, the opposing truth about the Lord will *not* feel true. This phenomena is very common and important, and, again, we usually do not perceive the true source of the thoughts and feelings regarding the Lord due to the triggered content coming forward as "invisible" implicit memory.

The good news is that we can resolve these anti-faith beliefs! We can find and resolve the traumatic memory files that contain the anti-faith beliefs, and when we resolve the underlying traumatic memories, the anti-faith distorted interpretations will be permanently resolved along with them. Each time we resolve a traumatic memory that contains anti-faith distorted interpretations, the truth about the Lord's heart and character will *feel* more true, and it will be easier to hold onto this truth. (We will notice especially dramatic beneficial change with respect to situations that had previously triggered the specific trauma-associated anti-faith beliefs that have just been resolved.)

And I *know* this is true because it has happened repeatedly in my own life. My two-year-old experience of being separated from my parents once again provides a good example. As just described above, after this traumatic separation, any time I would become stuck in a situation that felt overwhelming and call out to the Lord for help, but then *not* be able to perceive His presence or help, these interactions with the Lord would activate the distorted interpretations from the 2 year old memories and these anti-faith beliefs would come forward into the present and get transferred onto the Lord. However, *these long-standing and very costly anti-faith beliefs have been steadily losing power as different pieces of the 2 year old separation trauma have been getting healed*. There are still splinters that can get triggered when I'm dealing with especially intense and prolonged frustration and disappointment, but now I often encounter difficult, frustrating, disappointing situations *without* getting triggered, *even when I ask the Lord for help and do not perceive any tangible response*. Instead of feeling triggered, hopeless, overwhelmed, abandoned by the Lord, alienated from the Lord, and bitter, now what usually feels true is: "I don't understand why You're allowing this mess, and it's really hard; but I know that You're with me, and because of who You are, that's enough."

And this is only one of many examples from my personal experience. For a number of additional examples of how traumatic experiences can include distorted interpretations that

⁷ If you are not familiar with how "invisible" implicit memory, the verbal logical explainer, confabulated explanations, and central nervous system extrapolation can hide the true source of trauma-anchored lies, please read chapters 2 through 5 in Karl D. Lehman, *Outsmarting Yourself: Catching Your Past Invading the Present and What to Do about It* (Libertyville, IL: This Joy! Books, 2011).

function as anti-faith beliefs, and of how resolving these trauma-associated anti-faith beliefs can strengthen our usable faith in the present, see: “Dad/God isn’t all-knowing or all-powerful: A case study and discussion,”⁸ “Case study: ‘God the psychotic cult leader,’”⁹ and “Unresolved issues in the facilitator: One of the most important hindrances to emotional healing ministry.”¹⁰

The *Rocky: Father-Son Wounds* DVD provides another good example of trauma-based anti-faith beliefs, and how emotional healing can resolve these trauma anchored lies that directly oppose faith. At the beginning of the session Rocky felt alone, and his perception was that God was “out golfing somewhere” instead of being with Rocky and caring for him. Referring to his family, friends, colleagues, *and also referring to God*, he states: “It’s like somehow Rocky ends up being alone. No matter what he does, no matter how hard he tries, even if he’s doing right, he has to do it by himself – he ends up being alone.” However, as the session progressed it became clear that these thoughts and feelings were actually coming from memories – memories in which painful experiences with his father exactly matched the thoughts and emotions he was perceiving to be true with respect to God – memories in which it *was true* that *his father* was not with him or caring for him. This unresolved content was coming forward as “invisible” implicit memory that *felt true in the present*, and the verbal logical explainer on the left side of Rocky’s brain had convinced him that these thoughts and feelings were *really about God*.

Fortunately, Rocky was eventually able to experience Jesus’ living presence in the painful memories, and his distorted perceptions regarding God no longer felt true once he had worked with Jesus to resolve the trauma with his father. At the follow-up interview 16 months later, he reports:

“[In the past], when things would go wrong in my life, my first, knee-jerk, heart response was: ‘Why are You allowing this? Why aren’t You helping me? Lord, where are You – are You out golfing?’ And now when things go wrong, my initial response is: ‘This really stinks – I really don’t like this, *but I know that You’re with me.*’”¹¹

The *Maggie #3: Labor & Delivery Trauma* DVD provides yet another example of trauma-based anti-faith lies, and how emotional healing can resolve them. At the beginning of the session Maggie felt that the difficulty of working with a certain client was more than she could handle,¹² it felt true that God should have been doing more to give her relief and ease her burden, and she perceived God to be “hard” and “mean” because he was present but chose not to

⁸ Karl D. Lehman, “Dad/God isn’t all-knowing or all-powerful: A case study and discussion.” Available as a free download from www.kclehman.com.

⁹ Karl D. Lehman, “Case study: ‘God the psychotic cult leader.’” Available as a free download from www.kclehman.com.

¹⁰ Karl D. Lehman, “Unresolved issues in the facilitator: One of the most important hindrances to emotional healing ministry,” see especially pages 15 - 17. Available as a free download from www.kclehman.com ****Unresolved issues in the facilitator possibly changing to chapter in book?***

¹¹ A very condensed version of *Rocky: Father-Son Wounds* (9 minutes), especially highlighting this content with respect to emotional healing and trauma-based anti-faith lies, is available as a free download from www.outsmartingyourself.com. (It is also included on the *Outsmarting Yourself* companion DVD.)

¹² Without being traumatized.

provide more help. Referring to the Lord, she comments, "...you know, *he could be making this a lot easier!*" However, as the session progressed it became clear that these thoughts and feelings were actually coming from memories – memories in which traumatic aspects of her first delivery exactly matched the thoughts and emotions she was perceiving to be true with respect to God – memories in which the overall experience *was* more than she could handle, and in which the uncaring physician *should* have provided understanding, encouragement, sensitivity, and other resources that would have given her relief and eased her burden – memories in which it *was true* that *her doctor* was hard and mean. This unresolved content was coming forward as "invisible" implicit memory that *felt true in the present*, and the verbal logical explainer on the left side of Maggie's brain had convinced her that these thoughts and feelings were *really about God*.

Fortunately, Maggie was eventually able to experience Jesus' living presence in the painful memories, and her distorted perceptions regarding God no longer felt true once she had worked with Jesus to resolve her mean doctor delivery trauma. During the debriefing discussion after the session, when I was deliberately trying to stir up any negative thoughts or emotions with respect to the Lord allowing her situation with her client to be so difficult, she responded with, "It feels like he's sovereign....It feels like he's sovereign, and he's much smarter than I am, and he knows – he has a purpose for what he's doing,...." And at the follow-up interview 6 months later, Maggie reports that "God is good and trustworthy" has continued to feel true in place of "God is mean and hard."¹³

My perception is that finding and resolving traumatic memories that contain anti-faith beliefs is one of the most powerful things we can do to increase our usable faith, and I think this is one of the most exciting benefits of Immanuel approach emotional healing.

2. Truth in non-traumatic memory files (for both client and facilitator): One of the simplest and most straight-forward things we can do is to load truth about the Lord's character and heart, truth about Immanuel interventions, and truth about the Immanuel approach into non-traumatic memory files. As discussed in "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who Is with Us, Part III," loading truth into non-traumatic memory files, *by itself*, will not resolve trauma-associated distorted interpretations that undermine faith; however, truth in non-traumatic memory files is still an important and valuable component that contributes to building faith.¹⁴

When we're thinking about how to build faith, research regarding effective teaching strategies provides helpful guidance. In a fascinating series of studies, Daniel Schwartz and John Bransford compared three groups of students. The first group received *cognitive explanation*, the second group received "hands on" lab *experience*, and the third group received a synchronized, coherent combination of the lecture explanation and lab experience. When the students were tested for usable understanding of the concepts being taught, the combined

¹³ A very condensed version of *Maggie #3: Labor & Delivery Trauma* (9 minutes), especially highlighting this content with respect to emotional healing and trauma-based anti-faith lies, is available as a free download from www.outsmartingyourself.com. (It is also included on the *Outsmarting Yourself* companion DVD.)

¹⁴ For additional discussion regarding the role and value of truth in non-trauma memory files, Karl D. Lehman, "Immanuel, an especially pernicious blockage, and the normal belief memory system," pages 13-21. Available as a free download from www.kclehman.com.

presentation was found to be *as much as three times (yes, that's 300%) more effective than either component alone.*¹⁵

This research, in combination with my own observations and experience, has convinced me that the most powerful, stable, *usable* faith¹⁶ is built by starting with *both* right-hemisphere experiential, intuitive “knowing” and left-hemisphere cognitive logical understanding, and then combining them in a synchronized, coherent final product. Therefore, when it comes to participating in Immanuel interventions and the Immanuel approach, it is helpful for our *left hemisphere* to have a *cognitive, logical understanding* of the underlying theory, so that the plan “makes sense” and is convincing with respect to probable efficacy; and it is also helpful for our *right hemisphere* to have an *intuitive, experiential “knowing”* that the Lord’s heart is good, that His character is trustworthy, that He is always present, that people can perceive His presence when blockages are removed, and that the Immanuel approach is consistently effective.

3. Teaching regarding scriptural foundation: To the extent that a reader perceives the Bible to be an authoritative source of truth, it is helpful to have teaching regarding the scriptural support for Immanuel interventions and the Immanuel approach to emotional healing. Charlotte’s teaching, *Immanuel: God With Us*, is designed to provide this scriptural foundation.¹⁷ Material prepared by pastor Patti Velotta also presents extensive Biblical support for the Immanuel approach.¹⁸ This material presented by Charlotte and Pastor Patti is primarily left-hemisphere cognitive information and understanding, but the personal stories also provide a component of right-hemisphere experiential knowing.

4. Teaching regarding observable data and logical analysis: To the extent that we experience systematic observation and logical analysis to be helpful, it is valuable to have teaching regarding the case study observations, scientific studies, and logical considerations that support Immanuel interventions and the Immanuel approach to emotional healing. The material presented in this book, and also the “Brain Science, Emotional Healing, and the God Who is With Us” essay series are designed to provide this observational, scientific, and logical foundation. This material is primarily left-hemisphere cognitive information and understanding, but the true stories again also provide a component of right-hemisphere experiential knowing.

5. Personal stories and other case studies/testimonies: If we have had powerful positive

¹⁵ Daniel L.Schwartz and John D. Bransford, “A Time for Telling,” *Cognition and Instruction*, vol. 16, no. 4, (1998): pages 475 - 572.

¹⁶ Schwartz and Bransford were studying the learning and application of new concepts, as opposed to the building and application of faith, but I think the principle with respect to the special power of *combining* right hemisphere *experiential knowing* with left hemisphere *cognitive understanding* is transferrable.

¹⁷ See the “Store” page of www.immanuelapproach.com for additional information regarding the *Immanuel, God With Us* teaching DVD.

¹⁸ For extensive additional discussion of the Biblical support for Immanuel approach, see appendices three through ten of Patti A. Velotta, *Immanuel: A Practicum* (Libertyville, IL: This Joy! Books, 2011), pages 71 – 197, and also the many Bible studies available on the *Immanuel: A Practicum* website (www.immanuelpracticum.com).

experiences with the Lord, with Immanuel interventions, and with the Immanuel approach, we can share our stories with others. If we know people who have had powerful positive experiences with the Lord, with Immanuel interventions, and with the Immanuel approach, we can ask them to share their stories with us. Although not as powerful, “second hand” stories in the form of written case studies/testimonies can also contribute good raw material for building faith. Just as including vegetables as a regular part of our physical diets will help to build and maintain strong bodies, I think including stories of the Lord’s presence, goodness, and faithfulness as a regular part of our spiritual diets will help to build and maintain strong faith. Personal stories, case studies, and testimonies can be an excellent source for both left hemisphere cognitive information and right hemisphere experiential knowing. (This is one of the reasons why I have included so many stories in this book.)

6. Observe actual sessions: Even more powerful than hearing stories is observing actual sessions. It is an amazingly powerful and faith-building experience to watch the Lord heal someone, right in front of you. For those of us who are privileged to be in various situations where we can regularly observe live sessions, let us remember to appreciate this gift. For those who are not able to observe live sessions, video recordings of actual sessions can be almost as powerful with respect to encouraging faith. (Even though I have watched them many, many times during the editing process, I still feel tangible faith encouragement each time I view one of our ministry session DVDs). Observing actual sessions will especially contribute right-hemisphere experiential knowing. This is one of the reasons we have spent many, many, many hours preparing the live session DVDs.¹⁹

7. First hand experience: There’s nothing like building our own, *first hand*, personal positive experiences, both receiving Immanuel approach sessions for ourselves and also facilitating for others. A growing pile of our own, first hand positive experiences, where the person receiving ministry is able to perceive the Lord’s presence and the Immanuel approach is effective in resolving traumatic memories, will obviously be uniquely effective for building our faith in the goodness and trustworthiness of the Lord’s character and heart, our faith in the efficacy of Immanuel interventions, and our faith in the efficacy of the Immanuel approach to emotional healing. First hand experience, either receiving or facilitating, is obviously a uniquely powerful source of right hemisphere experiential knowing.

¹⁹ For more information regarding our live session DVDs, see the “Store” page of www.immanuelapproach.com.

The Immanuel Approach (to Emotional Healing and to Life)

Chapter 22: All Valid Emotional Healing Principles and Effective Emotional Healing Tools

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DRAFT

The last component of the Immanuel approach is for facilitators to bring in any other valid emotional healing principles they are aware of and any other effective emotional healing techniques they are comfortable with.

When a person is not able to perceive God’s tangible presence and establish an interactive connection at the beginning of a session, or when a person loses her interactive connection in the middle of a session, we of course start with the basic Immanuel intervention troubleshooting tools described in chapter 13, and then sometimes move to intermediate and advanced Immanuel intervention troubleshooting as necessary and appropriate.¹ These troubleshooting tools and interventions are built out of foundational Immanuel approach principles and tools, and are obviously an inherent part of Immanuel approach work. However, as described in chapter four, some people have survived severe trauma and/or have experienced Christianity/church related trauma, and have built very complex defenses, often including defenses specifically targeted towards a God whom they perceive to be unsafe. Even with careful coaching and persistent Immanuel intervention troubleshooting, these people regularly experience portions of sessions, entire sessions, or even multiple sessions in a row in which they have very weak connections with God, or in which they are not able to establish any interactive connection with God at all. Therefore, the facilitator cannot simply depend on Jesus to provide help and guidance at every point in the session. At the points where the person has no connection or only a weak connection, the facilitator needs to be the primary source of therapeutic interventions, supplementary emotional resources, and general leadership for the session.

Basically, the facilitator coaching advanced Immanuel approach work needs to provide competent, adequate psychotherapy/ministry during the sometimes prolonged gaps during which the recipient is not able to connect with God. For example, the facilitator might use mindfulness interventions to help a person with dismissive attachment become more self aware and emotionally connected, and she might use other specialized attachment interventions for other specific attachment disorders. She might use EMDR and/or Theophostic to find and resolve traumatic memories that contribute to Immanuel blockages. She should watch for limited capacity as an issue that can undermine many emotional healing interventions. The facilitator might use deliberate attunement to help a recipient get his relational circuits back on line, and to augment his capacity and maturity skills as he works through traumatic memories. She might use THRIVE materials as an additional resource to help him build capacity and maturity skills. And the facilitator will hopefully apply the principles and tools regarding the pain processing pathway and traumatic memories described in parts II, III, and IV of the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who Is with Us” essay series.²

¹ See chapter twenty-six for an introduction to intermediate and advanced Immanuel intervention troubleshooting, and then essays on www.immanuelapproach.com and www.kclehman.com for additional resources.

² For people moving into advanced Immanuel approach work I want to especially emphasize Theophostic, and also understanding and interventions regarding capacity, relational circuits, attunement,

As I will discuss at great length in chapter twenty-five, when recipients *are* able to establish and maintain an interactive connection, I implore facilitators to just provide the Immanuel approach structure and then to let Jesus drive. However, when recipients are persistently *not* able to establish and maintain a connection with the Lord, I bless facilitators to bring in other resources. When recipients are persistently *not* able establish and maintain an interactive connection, so that they are *not* able to use the usual Immanuel approach process and tools, then I explicitly encourage facilitators to apply any other valid emotional healing principles they are aware of and to employ any other effective emotional healing techniques they are comfortable with.

And remember, even as the facilitator is applying these other principles and employing these other tools, every aspect of her work should still be informed by and permeated with the Immanuel approach. For example, even as the facilitator is bringing in principles and tools that are not directly a part of the Immanuel approach, in the back of her mind she should constantly be aware of Immanuel approach values, such as the ultimate goal and priority of helping the recipient have a better relationship with God. The facilitator should constantly be watching for traumatic memories that are anchors for the blockages that prevent the person from being aware of Jesus' presence and establishing an interactive connection with Him, the facilitator should constantly be watching for implicit memory getting transferred onto the Lord, and she should constantly be watching for any other issues that might hinder the recipient's ability to connect with God. With each of the people she works with, the facilitator should constantly be trying to help them move towards including the Immanuel approach in every aspect of their work, she should constantly be trying to help them move towards having an interactive connection with God as their usual baseline, and she should constantly be trying to help them experience *stronger* interactive connections with the Lord. In this context, all valid emotional healing principles and all effective emotional healing techniques are part of the larger Immanuel intervention troubleshooting toolbox.

It is also good to remember the encouragement from the end of chapter four. Over time, these people who initially require advanced Immanuel approach troubleshooting with a very large toolbox become more able to connect with God and more able to let God provide guidance and resources during the sessions. And as this happens, there will be less and less need for advanced, large toolbox Immanuel intervention troubleshooting. As I mentioned in chapter four, several of my most complicated clients, who initially required advanced troubleshooting that applied every advanced principle in my knowledge base and employed every tool in my toolbox, now require mostly basic Immanuel intervention troubleshooting that applies mostly basic Immanuel approach principles and employs mostly basic Immanuel approach tools.

and specific processing tasks at each of the brain levels. I perceive each of these to be especially valuable, and some of these principles and tools are also fairly new, so that many therapists and emotional healing ministers have not yet incorporated them into their work. Also, see the footnotes from chapter four for references to additional resources regarding these principles and interventions that can augment advanced Immanuel approach work.

The Immanuel Approach (to Emotional Healing and to Life)

Chapter 23: Ian, Insecurity, and Immanuel

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DRAFT

From his earliest experiences of elementary school, Ian had trouble with academic endeavors. He was competent and confident athletically, and he was comfortable socially, but he had trouble with anything that had to do with academics. He now understands that he had a pretty significant learning disability that especially affected reading and spelling, but when he was in elementary school he just knew that there was something wrong with him – that he wasn't able to learn or perform academically like the other kids. He reports, "When I was ten years old I still couldn't read, at all – I couldn't read anything." And he still remembers one particular spelling test from this same year, on which he missed every single word, including "it." (He came up with "itt" as an interesting variation.) Not surprisingly, Ian had many painful experiences related to these learning difficulties, and by the time he finished elementary school he had accumulated a painful package of negative thoughts and emotions that would get stirred up by reading assignments, writing projects, tests, school-related presentations, or any other endeavors that felt like they were intellectual or academic.

With his underlying intelligence, help from his teachers, and lots of hard work Ian eventually overcame his learning disability. He did well in highschool, he did well in university, and in graduate school his GPA was 4.2. (His program awarded 4.0 for an A and 4.5 for an A+, so his grade point *average* was half way between an A and an A+.) Ian finished his doctorate, he passed his comprehensive exams, he maintains a thriving private practice as a psychologist, his colleagues tell me that he is competent and respected, and I experience him to be an intelligent, articulate mental health professional. However, in spite of all of this he continued to struggle with episodes of feeling inadequate and insecure whenever the old pain from his elementary school memories would get stirred up.

For example, whenever Ian would study new material as part of his ongoing professional education, he would have thoughts like, "I can't handle this – this is too much," and "I won't be able to learn this – I won't be able to understand and master this well enough to be able to use it." Whenever he would work with difficult clients, he would have thoughts like, "I'm not smart enough," "I don't measure up," and "I'm lacking in some way." When he used the Immanuel approach with his clients, he had thoughts like, "I won't be able to do this – I'm not smart enough, I haven't read enough, I can't remember enough – somehow I just don't have what it takes to be able to do this." And when he was preparing presentations for a seminar about the Immanuel approach, he had thoughts like, "I'm not smart enough," "I'll make a mistake," "I'm not gonna do it right," "I'll screw it up," and "I'm gonna let it turn out badly."

Especially with respect to any part of his career (or life) that felt like an intellectual or academic challenge, he would have the same negative thoughts and the same associated feelings of inadequacy and insecurity that he had struggled with in elementary school.

Fortunately, God was willing and able to resolve this longstanding burden. I was presenting several workshops at the March 2012 Biennial Deeper Walk convention, and for one of these workshops I had planned to provide a live demonstration of the Immanuel approach. I needed a recipient to be a part of the demonstration, Ian volunteered, and God provided generous blessings in response to Ian's courage and vulnerability. As a blessing to myself and the audience, the

session also turned out to be a very nice teaching demonstration.

Ian quickly and easily went to a memory of connecting with Jesus in the context of enjoying a worship service with his two youngest daughters, intense appreciation came forward spontaneously and easily as he thought about and talked about this positive memory, and Ian then moved smoothly and easily from just *remembering* this past experience to perceiving the Lord's living presence and feeling a living, interactive connection with Jesus in the present.¹ Once this interactive connection was in place I coached Ian to ask Jesus for guidance regarding where to go with the session, and the Lord lead him to this longstanding issue of feeling inadequate and the associated family of "I'm not smart enough," "I won't do it right," "I just don't have what it takes" type of negative thoughts.

The next step was to find the memory roots, but this was also easy since Ian still had a clear, strong interactive connection with Jesus. I just coached him to keep focusing on Jesus and ask for more guidance, and within moments of this request a memory from his early childhood began to come forward. In this memory Ian was maybe five or six years old, he was sitting at a table with sheets of paper and crayons in front of him, and his father was crouching over him, watching him intently. Apparently Ian had been coloring outside of the lines at school, and when his teachers shared this with his parents his father had become concerned. His father was consequently requiring Ian to do some coloring in his presence, so that he could be sure that Ian was able to color within the lines, and Ian became increasingly uncomfortable as he was aware of his father's intimidating, hovering presence and as he noticed the stern, critical expression on his father's face. Ian felt small and inadequate as he remembered this experience, and then he also noticed familiar negative thoughts along the lines of "I'm not smart enough," "I won't be able to do this," "I'll mess it up," and "I just don't have what it takes."

At this point I helped Ian get past an initial difficulty and then establish a connection with Jesus (from the perspective of being *inside* the memory). Initially Ian was so focused on his father that he wasn't able to be aware of anything else in the memory, even after we made an explicit invitation and asked the Lord to help Ian establish a connection. However, when we asked, "Lord, what's in the way of Ian being able to connect with you?" Ian was able to move his focus away from his father, and as soon as he did this he realized that Jesus was sitting right beside him. And he also realized that Jesus had been there through the whole experience – Jesus had been sitting right beside him the whole time, but he had been so focused on his father that he simply hadn't been aware of Jesus' presence.

The rest of the session was just plain fun. I coached Ian to keep engaging directly with Jesus, and I periodically asked Jesus for more healing and blessings, but mostly I just sat back and enjoyed the ride as Ian described beautiful, poignant healing. Ian reported that Jesus put his arm around the little boy in the memory, and as he described this he realized that he could actually feel the physical weight of Jesus' arm across his shoulders, *in the present, in the prayer session*. As Ian felt Jesus' arm across his shoulders he also felt lighter, and he felt the hovering, intimidating presence of his dad lift away. "He's still there, but he doesn't feel like he's in that hovering, criticizing place anymore."

¹ As described in chapter eight, Ian was still in the context of the images from the memory but the Lord's presence in the memory imagery *came to life*, and Ian experienced an interactive connection with Jesus that was *real and living in the present*.

After a brief prayer asking for more healing and blessing, Ian started describing more beautiful interactions with Jesus. “Just as you were praying there, I was looking down at my page – at my coloring – and of course I was trying so hard to color within the lines.” And then as Ian was focusing so intently and working so earnestly to color within the lines, Jesus smiled, put his big hand over Ian’s little hand, and started moving the crayon all over the page. Ian began laughing as Jesus did this, and then eventually reported that somehow he could sense that Jesus understood the ways in which he had misinterpreted the meaning of the whole experience. Jesus knew how he had concluded that coloring outside the lines meant that he was bad and inadequate, and with this fun little interaction Jesus was speaking new truth into his heart: “Nope! That’s not it. That’s not true. Coloring outside the lines does *not* mean that you’re bad or inadequate or defective. It’s okay to color outside the lines – it doesn’t *mean* anything.”

After another brief prayer asking for more healing and blessing, Jesus took Ian to a second memory from this same time in his life. In the second memory Ian felt a painful sense of distance and rejection from his father, and he also felt that the rejection was connected to his being inadequate and not doing well in school. Ian was immediately able to perceive Jesus with him in this new memory, and after spending some time just sensing the Lord’s presence with him in the negative emotions, he smiled and started laughing. “It’s like the Lord kind of grabbed me, lifted me up and held me in front of himself for a moment, and then flung me onto his shoulders” (with gestures to demonstrate). I don’t fully understand how riding on Jesus’ shoulders fit into the therapeutic process, but Ian said that it felt really good, and after a couple of minutes he commented spontaneously, “I’m getting the sense that the Lord is proud of me.” After a couple more minutes on Jesus’ shoulders Ian reported, “So the Lord just gently moved me off of His shoulders. He set me down on the floor, and now he’s kneeling down right in front of me. He’s just face to face with me, and I hear inside, ‘You are enough.’”

After the closing prayer Ian finished with, “I still have this clear image of the Lord kneeling right in front of me, and I’m just feeling a sense of being complete. Not lacking anything.” And then, with a big grin, “Which is awesome!”

I’m sure no one will be surprised to hear that these beautiful, poignant interactions with Jesus produced dramatic healing benefits. For example, at the end of the session when I coached Ian to focus again on the two memories with his father and to deliberately look for any lingering pain, he discovered that the initial negative thoughts and emotions had been fully resolved. “I’m not smart enough,” “I don’t have what it takes,” “I’m not gonna do it right,” and “I’m bad and inadequate because I colored outside the lines” no longer felt true. These negative thoughts had been replaced with “I’m not lacking anything” and “The Lord has given me all that I need.” And feeling small, insecure, inadequate, and rejected had been replaced with feeling adequate, connected, affirmed, enjoyed, and joyful. (Jesus is glad to be with me!)

However, Ian didn’t settle for just the healing work in the demonstration session. Before the demonstration session, Ian had already been experimenting with using the Immanuel approach in his psychotherapy practice and he had occasionally received Immanuel approach healing for himself. But after this session he was much more deliberate about pressing into the Immanuel approach as a *lifestyle*. In a follow up interview four months later and in another follow up interview two years later, Ian explained how his interactions with the Lord during the session had revealed something that he continued to apply, even after the session.

As he thought about the session afterwards, Ian realized that it had been the living presence of Jesus that had made all of the difference. It had been Ian’s perception of Jesus, and Ian’s

connection with Jesus' living, loving, encouraging, reassuring presence, that had caused the negative thoughts to lose their power and that had caused the negative emotions to be replaced with encouragement, security, confidence, and joy. Ian also realized that he could be much more deliberate about inviting and connecting with Jesus in the situations that stirred up the negative thoughts and emotions from his elementary school pain, and that this should provide the same benefits as he had experienced in the demonstration session.

The really cool part is that this plan has been working. For example, Ian deliberately established a connection with Jesus before giving his presentations about the Immanuel approach – the “I’m not smart enough,” “I’ll mess it up” negative thoughts didn’t bother him, he didn’t feel anxious or inadequate, “and I attribute this, of course, to having my connection with the Lord present and vivid through out the experience.” As another example, Ian has been deliberately connecting with Jesus when he needs to study difficult material for ongoing professional training – the “I’m not smart enough,” “I can’t handle this” negative thoughts, the insecurity, and the feelings of being overwhelmed have not been bothering him, “and without that mental interference, I’m learning more material, more quickly, and more easily.”

Furthermore, Ian has been establishing and maintaining a connection with Jesus as he uses the Immanuel approach with his clients, *including his difficult clients*. He reports that he no longer struggles with feeling insecure or inadequate. He reports that “I’m not smart enough,” “I don’t have what it takes,” “I won’t do it right” type negative thoughts seldom come into his mind. And he reports that when negative thoughts do come into his mind, he just focuses on Jesus and they lose their power:

“The thoughts will sometimes intrude into my mind, but they have nowhere near the same power as they did before. They feel unimportant – they seem like empty words. As I draw close to the Lord and acknowledge His presence, the negative thoughts just seems to drift away, and not affect me.”

Regarding Immanuel approach sessions with his clients, Ian summarized:

“I’m connecting with Jesus, and *staying* connected throughout each of those sessions. I’m really trusting Him to do the work that He’s going to do, and resting in that place....The issue isn’t whether I’m going to mess it up or not – the issue is his presence with me, and how I can trust his presence working through me in facilitating the Immanuel approach with others.”

Finally, Ian reports that he has noticed more compassion towards his father. He noticed that after the demonstration session he just seemed to be more aware of the things in his father’s upbringing, of the things in his father’s background that got in the way of his father wanting to know Ian and wanting to be with him in the ways that he needed. And Ian noticed that this new understanding seemed to be spontaneously, naturally compassionate. “I feel more compassion for him, in that way, and it has even come into our present relationship. . . . I feel more connected to him – It’s kind of cool.”

Note: The March 2012 demonstration session and the four month follow-up interview described here were recorded, and are available as the Live Ministry Session DVD, *Ian: “I’m not*

Enough.”² The account presented in this chapter also incorporates information from a second follow up interview, January 2014, twenty-two months after the initial session.³ Used with permission.

Advanced topics addendum: Some readers might ask, “So, where do the two memories from the demonstration session fit in?” or “Why do any negative thoughts come, after the traumatic memories were resolved in the demonstration session?” My thoughts are that with a very significant learning disability over the course of his entire elementary school career, Ian probably has hundreds of painful memories related to intellectual/academic endeavors. The specific two memories addressed in the session were beautifully and dramatically resolved, and possibly a number of very similar memories for which they were prototype representatives were also resolved, but my guess is that there are also many other painful memories that have not yet been resolved. That is, one Immanuel approach session addressing two specific memories probably did not resolve the whole pile.

My thoughts are that some of his observed improvement is due to having less underlying traumatic memories to get triggered, and that some of his observed improvement is due to experiencing Jesus’ living, loving, encouraging presence with him in the situations that used to trigger him. To some extent, experiencing Jesus’ presence simply prevents the unresolved trauma from getting triggered. And when some of the remaining unresolved pain does get triggered, such as when he occasionally notices a negative thought coming forward, experiencing the Lord’s living, loving, encouraging presence removes it’s power. (Again, “As I draw close to the Lord and acknowledge His presence, the negative thoughts just seems to drift away, and not affect me.”)

It would be ideal for Ian to work away at the remaining painful memories, as he is able, and in the mean time it’s wonderful that Ian’s Immanuel lifestyle minimizes the negative effects of the trauma that has not yet been resolved. Furthermore, his growing perception of Jesus and connection with Jesus’ living, loving presence provides tremendous blessings in many other ways as well.

² Karl D. Lehman, *Ian: “I’m not enough,”* Live Ministry Series #24 (Evanston, IL: Karl and Charlotte Lehman, 2012), DVD. This live session DVD can be obtained from the “Store” page of www.immanuelapproach.com.

³ ****footnote for personal communication****