

Grace: Childhood Abuse Memory – Explanatory Comments (Version 2)

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These notes provide explanatory comments for the DVD of the “Grace: Childhood Abuse Memory” prayer for emotional healing session (version 2). Note: this session demonstrates **mostly basic**, and also **some intermediate** principles, techniques, and process.

Contents of Video Tape	Location on the tape	Length of the segment
Initial discussion	Minute 0	4 minutes
Core of session	Minute 4:12	59 minutes
Debriefing following session	Minute 1:03	7 minutes
One-month follow-up	Minute 1:10	3 minutes
Three-month follow-up	Minute 1:13	31 minutes

Session summary: In this 2003 session, Grace remembers an incident of sexual abuse that she had never before been able to access consciously, and experiences healing as she interacts with Jesus in the context of these memories. At the one-month and three-month follow-up interviews, Grace discusses the new sense of strength and clarity she has felt in facing several crisis situations since the session – situations in which she previously would have felt powerless and confused. Grace also reports that she spontaneously began to have both compassion for and positive memories about the perpetrator, whereas in the past she could only remember the negative events with this person, and had only intensely negative thoughts and emotions. Furthermore, she describes dramatic improvement in long-standing narcolepsy.

Breakthrough session: One of the most interesting aspects of this emotional healing ministry session is that it was a “breakthrough” session. Grace had worked on this same memory in several previous Theophostic[®]-based¹ emotional healing sessions with myself, and also in a number of Theophostic[®]-based sessions with others. In fact, she had been working on this particular traumatic incident for 35 years, with a variety of therapy and ministry approaches.

In all of this previous work, she had experienced a variety of blockages from psychological defenses, internal parts, and demonic spirits. She had never been able to “see” the whole memory, and had not received significant healing in this memory (as far as we could tell). There is no way to know for sure what caused the healing process to move forward in this session, but I think it is especially valuable to ponder carefully sessions in which a previously “stuck” healing process finally moves forward. I offer some of my thoughts regarding what may have contributed to the “breakthrough” in the three-month follow-up interview/discussion (time on tape: 1:37:35-1:44:14).

¹ Theophostic[®] is a trademark of Dr. Ed Smith and Alathia, Inc. of Campbellsville, Kentucky. See explanation of “Theophostic[®]-based” therapy/ministry, and comments about our relationship to Theophostic[®] Prayer Ministries at the bottom of this document.

Also, as discussed below, I think two of the most important contributors to Grace’s “breakthrough” were the attuning presences of both the Lord and myself, both of which helped to augment her previously inadequate capacity.

Emotional healing, Capacity, and Jesus’ Immanuel (“God with us”) presence: Grace’s healing journey, and this particular session, provide an excellent example of some of our most recent teaching material (see especially the “Immanuel, Emotional Healing, & Capacity” presentations from our Immanuel series, and the discussion of capacity and attunement in Part II of the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who is With Us” essays). As just mentioned above, Grace had been trying to remember and resolve this incident of sexual abuse by her father for 35 years. In light of what we are now learning about capacity (described in more detail in our new teaching), I think inadequate capacity contributed to her inability to fully recall or resolve this traumatic event. Her mind/brain system did not have enough capacity to deal with this material, and therefore was unable to retrieve or process this memory.

As also described in more detail in our new teaching, perceiving the Lord’s presence and receiving from Him, *in a specific healing situation where capacity is a problem*, seems to resolve capacity problems in that specific situation and allow the healing process to move forward.

Even though Charlotte and I had not yet learned about capacity, nor discovered/articulated these principles about how the Lord’s Immanuel presence can address capacity problems, the phenomena we describe in our new teaching occurs in this session. Grace spontaneously comments “I want to see Jesus there – there’s a part of me that wants to see Jesus there [see Jesus with her *in the memory*, as she is trying to remember the missing component].” We pray, specifically asking Jesus to reveal His presence to Grace, in the memory, and then after she is able to perceive the Lord’s presence and receive encouragement from Him, she is able to retrieve and process the material that had always previously been missing.

The viewer will notice that even after Grace is able to perceive the Lord’s presence, *with her, in the memory*, it still takes a while for all the details of the memory to return, and for her emotions to fully connect. During this process, I am applying other tools and addressing other issues, and Grace does not mention whether or not she continues to perceive Jesus’ presence throughout this process. When I recently asked her about this, she clarified that she did not continue to have a clear visible image of Jesus, but stated that she could feel His presence, and knew that He was there, *with her in the memory*, through the rest of the session. If I had known then what I know now, I would have encouraged her to focus more intentionally on the Lord’s presence, and the session probably would have moved more easily.

I think other factors also contributed to the breakthrough in this session, as Grace and I discuss in the follow-up interview, but in light of our new understanding, I think that Jesus’ Immanuel presence addressing capacity problems may have been the most important “breakthrough” factor.

Beginning of session (time on tape: 0:00-13:27): Before her session, Grace had commented to me that she felt good, and was not aware of being upset about anything. She was concerned that she would not be able to find anything to work on. At the beginning of the session, I mention briefly the two techniques I usually use in this situation: 1. Do the opening prayer, and then have the person receiving ministry describe whatever is coming forward at the end of the prayer, and 2. Have the person pick an upsetting event from the last couple weeks, and then have him/her talk about it for several minutes, focusing especially on anything that stirs up emotions. Both of

these simple tools worked for Grace (this part of the session is unclear on the tape because comments about specifics needed to be removed). At the end of the opening prayer, she reported that thoughts about her pattern of codependence were spontaneously coming forward, and the most upsetting event in the past couple weeks was a specific example. She connected with intense negative emotions within minutes of starting to talk about this event, and these intense negative emotions then led to the traumatic memory that was the core of the session.

“I’m not getting anything” (time on tape: 6:44-13:27): At 6:44 on the tape, Grace comments “I’m not getting anything,” and provides an excellent example of the common phenomena where the person doesn’t recognize the importance of thoughts, images, emotions, etc. that are coming into her mind. When I coached her to simply report/describe whatever she was experiencing, she responded with: “I’m feeling the pain [about the event just described], and I’m feeling it in my heart.” She obviously had not recognized the emotional and physical pain she was experiencing as clues the Lord was bringing forward. When I helped her recognize her emotional and physical pain as important clues, and encouraged her to focus on them, she quickly moved forward to the next step in the process, and eventually to the traumatic memory that is the core of the session. See the “Describe everything that comes into your awareness” section in “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us: Part V;” “General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids,” pages 21-22; and “Not Reporting Everything – An Especially Sneaky Form of Interference” (all available as free downloads from www.kclehman.com) for additional discussion of the “I’m not getting anything” phenomena.

“Looking away” defenses, including mild-moderate dissociation: This session provides good examples of “looking away” defenses – a combination of denial, avoidance, repression, and dissociation. This is especially apparent between 14:00 and 42:46 minutes on the tape. For example, at 14:07 Grace comments “I can tell you everything in that bedroom but...my father...There is, like a hole – like a ‘nothing’ where he is.” At 15:54, she reports “It’s odd, I sort of, like, see his feet. I’m not seeing the whole him, but I’m just seeing...his feet and a little bit of his legs.” Between 25:00 and 26:08, Grace describes “I get as far as Jesus leaning over and pulling the sheet back, but I don’t see anybody there....It’s like a movie camera where it, like, stops right there [before seeing my Dad].” Between 35:22 and 38:53, Grace reports seeing the traumatic memory events from a perspective outside of her body, observes that she is not feeling any of the painful emotions she would expect to be associated with the traumatic memory she is describing, and even comments spontaneously: “Part of me separated....That’s the sense that I feel is the reason I’m not having any emotion – is because part of me split off.” It is clear that her mind is using some degree of dissociation at this point in the session, even though she does not display any dramatic evidence of dissociation (such as visible “switching,” use of different names, or time loss and disorientation).

All of these “something is missing” phenomena are consistent with choices to “*look away*” and/or *disconnect* from the most painful parts of the memory, as opposed to simply being unable to find certain details because of difficulty with the memory retrieval system.

Working with guardian lies and “whole mind” choices, rather than working explicitly with internal parts (time on tape: 34:45-42:46): Note that in this session we did not work directly with internal parts, even though there was clear indication of dissociation. It was possible to resolve the dissociative disconnection just by working with guardian lies and “whole mind” choices, without having to work directly/explicitly with internal parts. Our experience is that in some situations, this approach is not only simpler and faster, but actually seems to work better

than working explicitly and directly with internal parts. In other situations, it seems to be helpful (even necessary?) to explicitly acknowledge and work directly with internal parts.

Probable² demonic interference (time on tape 18:43-21:03): At 18:43, Grace becomes distressed, and reports “I see something ugly, like an alligator, with his mouth open – like he’s ready to devour something.” I take about thirty seconds to ask the Lord to designate all the parameters (the demonic spirits He wants to reveal information, the information He wants them to reveal, and how He wants them to reveal it), and then simply command the demonic spirits to comply with what He has just designated. After I finish my brief prayer and commands, Grace comments: “It seemed like when you prayed, it left.” In this session I didn’t perceive the demonic to reveal anything in response to my commands, but whether or not they seem to reveal any information, I always take a minute to do a quick “enforcement” prayer/command, and then keep moving forward. Note that the healing process *does* move forward. This brief, low key interaction is a good example of what we now usually experience when encountering demonic phenomena in ministry sessions. See “Dealing with Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session: Prayers and Commands to Neutralize Demonic Interference” (on the Ministry Aids page of www.kclehman.com) for additional discussion.

Where were the lies at the moment of healing?: As is clearly demonstrated in this video, an emotional healing ministry session can include basic Theophostic[®] principles and process, and result in successful healing, even though specific lies are not focused at the moment of healing and even though Jesus does not speak directly, *explicitly* to lies when He comes with healing.

Lie-based thoughts and feelings are clearly present. For example, in the context of talking about the initial trigger, Grace comments “I am confused about me....What should I do, what shouldn’t I do? When am I doing too much, when am I not doing enough?” (4:32), “I’m sad, I feel helpless,...I get mixed up – when do I speak out?” (5:36), and “What am I doing wrong?” (7:50). In the context of the memory of being molested by her father, she comments “I’m feeling helpless....”³ (12:59), and in the three month follow-up interview discussion Grace agrees that the lies that felt true in association with the initial trigger also felt true in the traumatic memory. Finally, all the “looking away” and disconnection phenomena clearly indicate the presence of underlying guardian lies – “fear” lies along the lines of “I can’t face it,” “It will hurt too much if I connect with this memory,” etc.

The “fruit” clearly indicate that the Lord did resolve a number of lies. The fact that Grace can now “see” the whole memory – that she no longer has trouble with denial/avoidance/disconnection regarding this memory – indicates that the fear guardian lies were resolved. At the one month follow-up, Grace says “There was a strength...I know I was different,...there was a freedom in me. I didn’t feel like I had to walk on eggs” (1:11:48). At the three month follow-up, Grace reports dramatic changes in how she has handled crises since the session, and states that “I’m confused,” “I don’t know what to do,” and “I’m powerless” no longer feel true – not even

² The ugly, intimidating “alligator” Grace described could have been an image created by her own mind (in an attempt to avoid going to painful emotions), but my sense is that it was a demonic spirit trying to interfere with the process in some way.

³ In our experience, confusion is usually associated with some kind of lie; “What am I doing wrong?” clearly implies associated lies along the lines of “It’s my fault/I am doing something wrong;” and “*feeling*” helpless is always associated with lies along the lines of “There’s nothing I can do/I am helpless.”

when she thinks about the traumatic memory or when she is in the middle of crisis situations (1:14:10-1:16:32).

However, specific lies were not focused at the moment of healing, and when Jesus comes with healing, Grace reports “I’m seeing, like, a bright light...I just have a sense that Jesus is saying ‘It’s done,’” “I feel like it’s pieces of a puzzle that are all being put together,” and “I’m feeling peace,” but she does not report Jesus speaking directly/explicitly to any lies (46:08-48:35). In this case, the “experiential confession” of the lies – feeling their pain without employing any psychological defenses – was sufficient. Jesus’ healing of those lies was also accomplished without specific articulation. The whole transaction took place in the currency of subjective experience, and the articulated understanding of what happened, (which is helpful, but not essential for healing), did not come until afterwards.

It is important to realize that Jesus does not always work within rigid, “textbook” parameters (specific lies have to be explicitly identified at the moment of healing, and Jesus must address the lies directly and explicitly). If you try to constrain Jesus to this narrow, rigid “box,” you will fail to recognize much real healing, confusing both yourself and the person receiving ministry. But it is also important to realize that the basic Theophostic[®] principles and process are still present, so that we don’t lose track of these important principles and slide back into less effective approaches to emotional healing.

Note: if Grace had connected with the traumatic memory, including the negative emotions, but Jesus had not come with healing, one of the first things I would have done would have been to help her identify and focus more intentionally on specific lies.

Pain processing pathway, processing tasks other than correctly interpreting the meaning of a painful experience (8/2009 addition): At the time of this session and at the time I wrote the first version of the commentary, we had not yet come to understand the pain processing pathway. As discussed in the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us” essays (especially part II), we now understand that interpreting the meaning of a painful experience is *just one* of several important processing tasks, and we now understand that “lies” produced when we fail to successfully complete this level five processing task are *just one* of the toxic components that can be carried in traumatic memories. This was part of what I was struggling with in the three month follow-up interview, and also as I wrote the above section “Where were the lies at the moment of healing?” Lies did contribute to the toxic content carried in Grace’s traumatic memories, the Lord did resolve these lies, some of them were not explicitly apparent at the points where the Lord addressed them, and I still think many of the comments above are valid. However, I now perceive that I was erroneously trying to explain everything in terms of “lies” (failure to successfully complete the level 5 task of interpreting the meaning). Now, looking back at this session, I would like to comment on several other important tasks from the pain processing pathway as they apply to Grace’s session:

*We now understand that an important processing task at level 2 is to *stay connected* through a painful experience – a necessary condition for healthy processing. As discussed above, one of the reasons Grace had never been able to resolve this memory in the past was that she did not have adequate capacity to stay connected – she could not stay emotionally connected, and could not even retain the memory content in her conscious awareness. In this session, Grace’s capacity was augmented by both the Lord’s Immanuel presence and also by my attuning presence (as she describes very clearly in the three month follow-up interview), and I believe

that this is what enabled her to bring the traumatic content into her conscious awareness for the first time.

*We now understand that the most important processing task at level 3 is to maintain access to our relational connection circuits *while feeling the painful emotions*. My perception is that Grace was able to stay connected to the Lord and to myself *even through the pain that came forward in this session*, and that this enabled her to successfully complete this critical level 3 processing task of maintaining access to her relational circuits.

*We now understand that one of the most important processing tasks at level 4 is to find a way to navigate the situation that is satisfying to your true heart – “to know what to do/to know how to handle the situation.” In the session Grace repeatedly described feeling confused, and *not* knowing what to do. At the time of the session and at the time of writing the initial commentary, I kept trying to fit this “I don’t know what to do” unfinished level 4 processing task into the Theophostic “lie” formulation; however, now I can see that the confused, “I don’t know what to do” part of the toxic content in Grace’s traumatic memories was from being unable to successfully complete this level 4 processing task. It isn’t clear to me how the Lord helped Grace resolve this problem during the session, but He certainly did help her to successfully complete this task because in the follow-up interviews she clearly describes that she no longer feels confused when confronted with the family crises that previously had baffled her. In contrast, she describes feeling like she now knows how to navigate these situations. Many of the details had to be deleted to care for the privacy of other family members, but especially in the three month follow-up interview Grace described several situations where she did not become confused, but rather was able to handle crises in a way that felt satisfying to her.

For additional discussion of the pain processing pathway, the processing tasks at each of the five levels of the pathway, how psychological trauma is produced by failure to successfully complete any of the necessary processing tasks, and how we can help people resolve trauma by helping them go back to traumatic memories and succeed in remedial processing, see the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who is With Us” essays at www.kclehman.com.

Opening prayer, closing prayer: As you will notice, I tend to mumble. This is particularly noticeable for the opening prayer at the beginning of the session and the closing prayer at the end of the session. I use my own abbreviated version, but looking at the sample “Opening Prayer and Commands” and “Closing Prayer and Commands” on the Ministry Aids page of our website would probably still be helpful if you want to know what I said.

Spontaneous forgiveness, compassion towards father (time on tape: 1:12:08-1:13:41): At the one month follow-up interview, Grace comments that she is experiencing forgiveness and compassion for her father for the first time in her life. Her experience provides a beautiful example of the way forgiveness and compassion often unfold spontaneously after emotional healing. Grace’s experience also provides a good example of an important point of variation regarding emotional healing: sometimes the person receiving ministry needs to explicitly address bitterness and hatred before they can receive healing, and at other times, bitterness is clearly present, the person receives healing even though they don’t address the bitterness explicitly, and then forgiveness and compassion are discovered after the healing. Our current hypothesis regarding this is that both groups are employing their bitterness and hatred as a defense against the more vulnerable pain in the wound, but that the first group needs the assistance of addressing

bitterness and hatred explicitly in order to *fully implement* their choice to feel the *undefended* pain (a necessary condition for healing). Our thought is that those in the second group also release their bitterness and hatred in order to feel the *undefended* pain, but that these people are able to release their bitterness and hatred spontaneously as they choose healing, without needing to address it explicitly. Note also that forgiveness and compassion are good “fruit” – good indicators that true healing has occurred.

“New” positive memories (time on tape: 1:19:33-1:24:25): As Grace mentions in the three month follow-up interview, she has remembered a positive experience with her father since the ministry session where the memory of abuse by him was resolved. This positive memory was previously unavailable to her conscious mind, and came forward spontaneously and unexpectedly. We are not sure how this works neurologically, but this pattern of positive memories coming forward after negative memories are resolved is an interesting phenomena that many people have reported.

Decreased narcolepsy⁴ (time on tape: 1:24:25-1:34:15): As Grace describes at length in the three month follow-up interview, she experienced sudden and dramatic improvement in long standing narcolepsy immediately following the emotional healing ministry session.

Stopping medication: In the three month follow-up discussion, Grace mentions abruptly stopping medication after a healing prayer service. In her case, this turned out okay, and was an indicator that she truly had been healed, but we do not recommend this as the usual approach. We encourage people to work with their physicians if they want to stop medication. If you have been healed, you share this with your physician, and you are able to come off medication without return of symptoms, this will be a good witness to your physician. If you are mistaken in some way regarding your healing, it will be important for your safety/medical care for your physician to be working with you as you try to go off the medication.

I’m annoying when I’m triggered: During the three month follow-up interview, I felt a triggered urgency, pressure, “I need to get this project done right away.” It is most noticeable during the section where we are talking about “where were the lies at the moment of healing” (time on tape: 1:16:32-1:19:33). When I am triggered in this way, inside I often feel like saying “Let’s go, let’s go, let’s go.” This pressured, intense, “in a hurry” triggering is (unfortunately) very familiar to both Charlotte and I, and we both noticed it at times during the three month follow-up interview. When I am in this triggered place I talk fast, I talk too much, and I feel pushy/in a hurry. I don’t know about the rest of you, but I really annoy *myself* when I am like this. I think it is educational to notice how different it feels to be with me when I am in this triggered place compared to when I am not triggered (I am also apologizing for annoying the audience).

Deleted material: There were several sections of the session that contained information that we felt best to not include on the tape released to the public, and edits deleting this information are indicated by brief “Personal Details Deleted” messages. There are also other very small edits to delete things like coughs and other distractions. No significant content related to working with

⁴ Narcolepsy is a condition where the person experiences episodes of sudden, intense sleepiness, often resulting in abruptly falling asleep in situations where this is inappropriate and/or dangerous.

the childhood sexual abuse memory has been deleted.⁵

Dr. Ed Smith, Theophostic® Prayer Ministry: We strongly recommend that anyone involved in the field of emotional healing study the Theophostic® Prayer Ministry approach as developed by Dr. Ed Smith. We have greatly benefitted, both personally and vocationally, from studying Dr. Smith’s training materials, and from watching Dr. Smith work at his apprenticeship training seminars. For further information on Theophostic® Prayer Ministry, and to buy Theophostic® training materials, go to www.theophostic.com.

Please note that we respect Dr. Smith tremendously, and value our friendship with him, however, neither we nor this tape are in any way officially connected with or endorsed by Dr. Smith or Theophostic® Prayer Ministries.

“Theophostic®-based” therapy/ministry: To describe the healing approach demonstrated in this session with Grace, we have developed the term “Theophostic®-based” therapy/ministry. We use the term “Theophostic®-based” to refer to therapies/ ministries, such as ours at the time of this session, that are built around a core of Theophostic® principles and techniques, but that are not exactly identical to, or limited to, Theophostic® Prayer Ministry as taught by Dr. Ed Smith. For example, a “Theophostic®-based” therapy/ministry might include dealing with curses, spiritual strongholds, generational problems, and suicide-related phenomena, and/or incorporate journaling, spiritual disciplines, community, and medical psychiatry – and these issues and techniques are not a part of what we understand Dr. Smith to define as Theophostic® Prayer Ministry.

More information: For more information from Karl Lehman M.D. and Charlotte Lehman M.Div, including our teaching about the Immanuel approach to emotional healing, our assessment and recommendations about Theophostic® Ministry, our teaching about how Christian emotional healing can fit into professional mental health care, and much more, please help yourself to the free information on our website, www.kclehman.com.

⁵ In case you are wondering why I bother to comment on material that has been deleted: When I view live sessions for education/training purposes (as opposed to viewing sessions for inspiration and encouragement), I want to know whether I am seeing the complete, unedited session, or whether material has been removed. If any material has been removed, I find it valuable to have at least summary information regarding what has been deleted.