



Steve: “Just” Be with Jesus (Immanuel Approach, Basic - Intermediate)

(©Copyright 2011 K.D. Lehman MD, New 6/23/2011, Revised 6/1/2012)

The main purpose of the DVD *Steve: “Just” Be with Jesus (Immanuel Approach, Basic - Intermediate)* is to provide live ministry session examples of the principles, techniques, and process described in our essays and presentations about the Immanuel approach. This DVD will be encouraging and educational for any viewer, but it will be much more valuable if you have first read the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us” essays. If time constraints preclude reading all five Parts, I would encourage you to at least read Part I and Part V. This session demonstrates **Basic and Intermediate** principles, techniques, and process.

Original session, debriefing immediately following the session, and four year follow-up interview: This DVD presents the original session (May 2007), the debriefing discussion immediately following the session, and portions of the follow-up interview that took place four years later.

| Contents of Video Tape | Location on the tape | Length of the segment |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Initial text comments | Minute 0 | 0:29 |
| Opening prayer | Minute 0:29 | 2 minutes |
| Recall positive memory, deliberate appreciation, interactive connection | Minute 2:02 | 5 |
| Core of session | Minute 6:57 | 22 minutes |
| Closing prayer | Minute 29:30 | 2 minutes |
| Debriefing immediately after session | Minute 31:56 | 3 minutes |
| Follow-up (five months later) | Minute 34:37 | 43 minutes |

Chapters:

1. Start/Initial Comments 0:00
2. Opening Prayer 0:29
3. Positive Memory, Appreciation 2:02
4. Begin Core of Session 6:57
5. “This is home” 10:27
6. 20 Minute Mark 20:00
7. Closing Prayer 29:30
8. Debriefing After Session 31:56
9. Four Year Follow-Up 34:37
10. Is It Real? 35:13
11. Better Balance 42:00

12. Details re God Time 48:18
 13. Return to 2007 Image 52:25
 14. More Healing 56:32
 15. Any Remaining Trauma? 1:04:37
 16. Dr. Lehman’s Observations 1:10:36
 17. Final Comments 1:15:30
- End: 1:17:50

Session summary: In this 2007 session, Steve starts with recalling/reentering the memory for a previous Immanuel session in which the Lord healed a childhood near-drowning trauma, and then takes time for deliberate appreciation. As he reconnects with the memory and names specific things he appreciates, Steve moves spontaneously from *remembering* a past connection with the Lord to a new, living, interactive connection with the Lord *in the present*. I coach Steve to focus on Jesus and ask Him for guidance regarding the session, including where to start and what to work on, and the Lord initiates a beautiful interaction where Steve receives restoration as he sits in the Lord’s lap. The remainder of the session consists of my repeatedly asking whether we should shift the focus to working on unresolved trauma, with Jesus responding by repeatedly inviting Steve to “just” sit in His lap and receive restoration. During the four years following the session Steve observes a number of lasting changes, including much better balance in his life, and the ability to receive restoration by regularly spending time with the Lord. Finally, during the follow-up interview, Steve is able to reestablish an interactive connection with the Lord, and Jesus initiates healing for the trauma splinter that I had been trying to get to during the initial session.

Deleted material: Unfortunately, we accidentally failed to record the initial discussion. Other than this, nothing has been deleted from this session.¹

Initial discussion: The initial discussion (accidentally deleted, as just mentioned) was essentially a brief overview of the Immanuel approach,² and then brief discussion of the plan to begin the session with the initial steps of positive memory recall, deliberate appreciation, and refreshed connection with the Lord.

Opening Prayer: Many people have asked about the opening prayer I routinely use at the beginning of our emotional healing sessions. The essay: “Opening Prayers and Commands: Prayer for the Facilitator, Dealing with the Demonic, and General Introductory Prayer”³ provides explanations regarding a number of specific points, and then also provides both a longer and an abbreviated “sample” opening prayer. If you look at the condensed version you will notice that it is very close to the opening prayer I actually use in most of our live ministry sessions.

¹In 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.

²See the bottom of this document for a brief overview of the Immanuel approach and Immanuel interventions.

³Available as free download from our website, www.kclehman.com. Using the “search” box can be helpful if you have difficulty locating this essay amongst the many other articles.

Dr. Lehman forgets explicit Immanuel invitation and request: As some may already have noticed, I forgot to encourage Steve to make the explicit Immanuel invitation, "Lord, I make a heart invitation for You to be with me, here," and I also forgot to coach him to make the explicit request, "Lord, help me to perceive Your presence and establish a living, interactive connection with You in the present." Fortunately, this happened spontaneously. Steve became able to perceive the Lord's presence and re-established a living, interactive connection with Him as Steve focused on the memory imagery from the past Immanuel session and then asked the Lord for guidance.

Sometimes the person does not perceive the Lord's presence and establish an interactive connection until we explicitly ask the Lord to help with this; and at other times, as in this session, the person becomes able to perceive the Lord's presence spontaneously, even without any explicit requests.

"Back and forth" technique:⁴ At 16:23 (and following), as I am discussing options for working on the anxiety splinters remaining in Steve's near drowning memory, I mention what I call the "back and forth" technique. We don't end up using it, and I only describe it very briefly, so I thought some readers might appreciate additional explanation. The very simple summary is that you help the person go back and forth between the place where they feel connected to the Lord and the traumatic memory.

For example, I would start with coaching Steve to return to the positive imagery from the beginning of the session (wrapped in a big towel, sitting in Jesus' lap), with specific instructions to focus on reentering/reconnecting with this positive place until he can again feel appreciation and can again perceive the Lord's living, interactive presence *in the present*.⁵ After making sure that Steve again *feels* appreciation, and that he perceives the Lord's presence as living and interactive in the present, I would then coach him to shift his focus to the splinter of anxiety still carried in the memory of being held under water; and I would coach him to focus on and talk about the near drowning memory and the lingering anxiety until he is emotionally connected to the remaining trauma (*feels* the splinter anxiety as real in the present). Then I would again coach him through the process of returning to the positive connection with Jesus, making sure that he does this until he again feels appreciation, and perceives the Lord as a living, interactive presence in the present.

Our experience is that if a person keeps repeating this cycle, a bridge will eventually form between the two places and he will spontaneously begin to perceive the Lord's presence and connect with Him *inside the traumatic memory*. Once this happens I simply coach the person to focus on Jesus and ask Him for help, and He then leads the process of working through any remaining trauma.⁶ The main disadvantage with this tool is that it can take a lot of time, but a big advantage is that it is conceptually very simple.

⁴I want to thank Dr. E. James Wilder for the conversation that prompted the development of this "back and forth" trouble-shooting tool.

⁵The person will perceive the Lord's presence in the *context* of the positive memory imagery, but also in the present. That is, it will feel true, *in the present*, that the Lord's presence in the positive memory is living and interactive.

⁶I have had sessions where all we did was to go back and forth between the initial positive connection and the traumatic memory.

Note: Sometimes a person who is connected to a traumatic memory will be feeling intense negative emotions, she will be blended with traumatic content that includes negative dynamics towards the people who should have been caring for her,⁷ and her relational circuits will be intensely off. In these situations the person will not initially *feel* like focusing on or reentering/reconnecting with positive memories, so you may need to be very directive and persistent in coaching the person to focus on and reenter/reconnect with the positive memories *even when she doesn't initially feel like it.*⁸ In some situations it may take as long as fifteen to twenty minutes; but our experience is that if a person persists in talking about, focusing on, and trying to reenter/reconnect with memories of positive connections with the Lord, they will eventually calm down, regain access to their relational connection circuits, return to feeling appreciation, and be able to get back to a good place of perceiving the Lord's presence and feeling connected to Him. It may take some practice to learn to be adequately directive and persistent in these situations, but with appropriate coaching most people can learn this fairly quickly.

The Lord's agenda includes more than emotional healing: As Charlotte and I were developing the Immanuel approach, we noticed an interesting phenomena as people began to connect with Jesus and follow His lead *from the very beginning of each session*: The Lord expanded the agenda, and the “Immanuel approach to emotional healing” became just *one part* of the larger “Immanuel Approach to Life.” Resolving trauma removes blockages that hinder connection with the Lord, and the Lord also wants to relieve our suffering, so sometimes Jesus' agenda for the day *is* to resolve trauma. But sometimes Jesus' agenda is to build capacity; sometimes Jesus' agenda is to build maturity skills by teaching, modeling, and helping the person practice; sometimes Jesus' agenda is to address other issues important to optimal living, such as the balance between work and restoration; sometimes Jesus' agenda is to spend time with us, as a friend and companion, just because He likes being in relationship with us; and sometimes His agenda is other stuff that we have never even thought about addressing in an emotional healing session.

This session with Steve provides an excellent example of Jesus expanding the agenda beyond just healing trauma. As described above, I start the session with coaching Steve to try the appreciation exercise that helps prepare our brain and mind to have a positive connection with Jesus. To do this, he thinks about a memory of a powerful emotional healing session in which the Lord healed a traumatic childhood experience of near drowning, and then spends some time talking about the specific things he appreciates regarding how Jesus cared for him in this situation. As Steve talks about his appreciation, the *memory* transitions into a “real time” perception of Jesus' presence, and a living, interactive connection with Him *in the present*. This was all as I expected, and I figured we would move on to working with traumatic memories, now that this initial connection had been established as the ideal foundation for such work. But the

⁷For example, Feeling bitterness or anger towards her caretakers, or perceiving invalidation and/or blame from them.

⁸If you know about attunement and are skilled in providing it, the ideal is to start with offering attunement until the person regains access to her relational connection circuits, and then *after she has regained access to her relational connection circuits* coach her to persist in reentering/reconnecting with the positive memories. For additional discussion of attunement and relational connection circuits, see Part II of the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us” essays (available as free downloads from www.kclehman.com).

Lord had other plans. Each time I directed Steve to ask Jesus for guidance regarding what to do next, he reported something along the lines of "He wants me to just stay right here, sitting in His lap. He says I don't do this enough, and that I need to spend more time like this, letting Him restore me." Throughout the entire session, Jesus persisted in helping Steve improve the work/restoration balance in his life, even though I became anxious that we ought to be doing something "more important," and kept trying to redirect the session to working on traumatic memories.

The fruit remains: As Steve describes at length in the follow-up interview, he has observed positive changes that seem to be results of the Lord's work in this session, and these positive changes have remained. He has maintained much better balance between work and restoration in his life, and he regularly spends time perceiving the Lord's presence and connecting with the Lord.

As also mentioned in the follow-up interview, fruit from the earlier session that addressed his near drowning trauma also clearly remains. He reports that anxiety/terror regarding conflict with authority has continued to be completely resolved during the seven and a half years since the earlier session.

Is there any unresolved trauma in Steve's life?: At one point in the follow-up interview (1:04:21), I mention that the Lord's choice to not work on trauma in the 2007 session might lead someone to conclude that there was no more unresolved trauma in Steve's life. It is interesting that Steve comments, "I might have agreed with them," since he had been doing so well since the 2007 session; however, the Lord initiating more healing work to address a splinter of unresolved trauma in the horse trough memory clearly indicates that all trauma had *not* been resolved. The Lord chose to focus on a different priority in the 2007 session, but this did not mean that all trauma had been resolved, or that the Lord did not want to do any more healing work in Steve's life for some other reason. It just meant that He chose to focus on something other than trauma work in the 2007 session.

Also, just for the record, my belief is that no living person has fully resolved every bit of trauma in his life, and that the Lord wants all of us to embrace emotional healing as an ongoing lifestyle.

Additional healing during the follow-up interview: As just mentioned, Steve received additional healing during the follow-up interview. After re-entering the memory for the part of the 2007 session where he was sitting in the Lord's lap, and then re-establishing an interactive connection as his perception of the Lord's presence and connection with the Lord became living in the present (52:33 and following), Steve asked, "Lord, what do You want to do today?" (time on tape 56:44). After the 2007 session, I was expecting that he would spend some more time just sitting in the Lord's lap, or that the Lord would speak words of encouragement and/or instruction. But the Lord surprised me again. In 2007, when I repeatedly tried to direct the session towards working on the traumatic splinter that I perceived to be lingering in the horse trough memory, the Lord surprised me by very deliberately choosing to *not* do this. And in the follow-up interview, when I had completely let go of trying to find and resolve the splinter, the Lord leads Steve right to it.

In response to Steve's question, Jesus took him back to the horse tank trauma, specifically taking him to the part of the memory where he was in the water (56:58 and following). And even though Steve had never been able to think about being in the horse trough without feeling

tension, anxiety, and fear, when he went there *with Jesus* he felt peaceful and calm (57:09 and following). In fact, Steve reports that he can clearly perceive the Lord's presence, standing right beside him as he is in the horse trough, and that he is actually *enjoying* playing in the water (57:58 and following).

Was there a splinter in the horse trough memory?: At one point in the session (10:32), Steve comments, "As I went back to that place, I was feeling really tense again....I was going back into the water,...and as I went back in there, I could just feel myself getting really, really uptight again...." And as mentioned in the session and in the follow-up interview, this indicates to me that there was a splinter in the horse trough memory. In my assessment, this point would be even clearer if Steve had described (during the healing block of the follow-up interview) first feeling anxiety and tension when he returned to the horse tank, and then described resolution of the anxiety and tension as Jesus worked with him to resolve the splinter of unresolved trauma. That is, the lack of anxiety and tension when Steve returned to the point in the horse tank memory when he was actually in the water makes the point less clear. But my perception is still that there was a piece of unresolved trauma lingering in the horse trough memory. One additional data point that will eventually provide more clarity will be the follow-up regarding Steve's fear of water. If his life-long fear of water resolves after the healing block in the follow-up interview, this would certainly support my hypothesis that there had, indeed, been a splinter of unresolved trauma.

Healing without connecting to negative emotions?: My current understanding is that you need to have a traumatic memory file "open" in order to resolve it. That is, in order to work with the unresolved traumatic content, so that unfinished processing tasks can be completed, you need to have the file open so that you can work "inside" the memory file.⁹ Previous to this follow up session with Steve, I would have said: "One of the best ways you can tell that a traumatic memory file is open and that you are inside the unresolved content is that any distorted interpretations associated with the trauma *feel* true and you *feel* the negative emotions associated with the traumatic memory. Or, to put this another way, I would have said that you can't resolve a traumatic memory without at least briefly connecting with the distorted perceptions and feeling the negative emotions associate with the trauma.

However, as is clear from Steve's comments about the follow-up interview healing, in this healing work Steve did not perceive any point at which he felt the anxiety, fear, and tension that he had always previously experienced when connected to the memory of being in the horse trough. My hypothesis at this time is that the key is the way in which he was able to perceive the Lord's presence, right beside him, even as he went to the memory. That is, going to the memory *with Jesus* (as opposed to "going to the memory, feeling the negative emotions, and then connecting with Jesus"), allowed Jesus to bring shalom into the memory, and replace the previous anxiety and tension with peace, *without first needing to reconnect with the negative emotions*.

The Immanuel approach to emotional healing: One way to define our current version of the Immanuel approach to emotional healing would be to first identify the contributing components:

- Deliberate appreciation, in the context of remembering previous positive experiences with the

⁹For a much more detailed discussion of this point, see the "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who is With Us" essays, especially Part IV.

- Lord, to prepare for an interactive connection with Jesus;
- Refreshed perception of the Lord’s living presence, and establishment of an interactive connection with the Lord, *in the present*, as the starting foundation;
- Once the person has established a living, interactive connection with Jesus in the present, coach her to engage directly with Jesus for guidance and assistance at every point in the session;
- Immanuel Interventions, especially from inside traumatic memories, but also at any point the person loses connection with the Lord;
- Describe whatever comes into your awareness (your brain works better in community)
- Our modified version of Theophostic® theory, tools, and techniques;
- Understanding regarding capacity;
- Understanding regarding attunement and relational connection circuits; and
- Understanding regarding processing tasks at each of the brain levels.

Then, if you take all of these components, organize them around the living presence of Jesus as the central focus, and clearly identify connecting more intimately with Jesus as the primary objective (with resolution of trauma as a secondary objective), you have the Immanuel Approach to emotional healing. This is all described at more length in the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us” essays, but for those of you who have not yet had a chance to review the more detailed discussion, here is a very brief summary of the key process components:

• *Deliberate appreciation, in the context of remembering previous positive experiences with the Lord, to prepare for an interactive connection with Jesus:* Recalling past positive experiences and deliberately appreciating them prepares your brain–mind–spirit system for positive relational connection. At the beginning of each Immanuel approach session, we therefore include positive memory recall and deliberate appreciation, focused on the Lord, to prepare the person’s brain-mind-spirit system for refreshing/re-establishing a living, interactive connection with Him. With people who are new to the Immanuel approach, I very deliberately lead them through this process – we ask the Lord to bring forward a memory of a previous positive experience with Him, I ask the person to describe this experience (in detail), and I coach the person to describe specific things she especially appreciates about the Lord in the memory experience. In contrast, people who are familiar with the process usually go through an abbreviated version (asking the Lord for help, thinking about the positive memories that come forward, and deliberately appreciating the Lord in the context of the positive memories), without the need for coaching from me. In fact, this often happens smoothly and quietly during the opening prayer.

This session with Steve provides a good example of these first steps of recalling a previous experience of positive connection with the Lord and then deliberately appreciating Him in the context of this memory (time on tape 2:02 to 6:57). The follow-up interview provides another example (time on tape 52:33 and following).

• *Refreshed perception of the Lord’s living presence, and establishment of an interactive connection with Him, in the present, as the starting foundation:* After the person has identified one or more memories of past positive connection with the Lord, and *feels* appreciation for His presence and care in these past experiences, I coach the person to spend several minutes

reentering/reconnecting with the memory/memories.¹⁰ As she does this, I ask the Lord to help her perceive His presence and establish an interactive connection,¹¹ so that these are real and living in the present, and then I coach the person to describe whatever comes into her awareness. The person is usually able to transition smoothly and easily from positive memory recall and appreciation to a living, interactive connection with the Lord in the present (and if this doesn't happen, we trouble-shoot regarding what's in the way). Again, with people who are new to the Immanuel approach, I carefully coach them through this process; whereas people who are familiar with the process often recall a positive memory, feel appreciation for the Lord, reenter/reconnect with the memory, and then perceive the Lord's living presence and establish an interactive connection with Him without the need for coaching from me. As with the positive memory and appreciation steps, the whole initial process to the point of establishing an interactive connection often happens smoothly and quietly during the opening prayer.

This session with Steve, and the follow-up interview, include examples of this simple approach for establishing an interactive connection with the Lord (7:18 and following, and 52:33 and following, respectively).

- *Ongoing coaching to engage directly with Jesus:* Once the person has a connection with Jesus in the present, the therapist/ministry facilitator coaches the person to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage with Him directly at every point in the session. The person might engage with Jesus for guidance in choosing an initial target, for help with finding underlying memories, for assistance with resolving unfinished processing tasks, for capacity augmentation when dealing with inadequate capacity, or for help with any other questions, needs, or problems that come up.¹² For example, at points in the session where we're not sure what to do, I coach Steve to focus on Jesus and ask Him for guidance (time on tape 6:57 & following, 11:20 & following, 14:19 & following, 20:06 & following, 24:52 & following, 27:22 & following, 56:32 & following); and at points in the session where something is unclear, I coach Steve to focus on Jesus and ask for clarification (time on tape 12:42 & following, 25:31 & following).

- *Immanuel Interventions, especially from inside traumatic memories, but also at any point the person loses connection with the Lord:* As described at more length in "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us, Part V," Immanuel interventions are *specific, focused, systematic interventions* with the goal of helping the person receiving ministry to perceive the Lord's presence, connect with Him, receive from Him, and be **with**

¹⁰Note that coaching the person to spend several minutes very deliberately reentering/reconnecting with the memory is a new piece as of fall 2010.

¹¹In most cases, the person perceives the Lord's living presence and establishes an interactive connection in the context of the memory imagery. That is, they perceive that the Lord's presence in the memory imagery comes alive, and that (still in the context of the memory imagery), His presence begins to engage with them interactively. However, some people will perceive the Lord's living, interactive presence in the room where they are receiving ministry; some people will perceive the Lord's living, interactive presence in the context of a different memory that comes forward spontaneously; some people will perceive the Lord's living, interactive presence in the context of imagery that does not seem to be coming from any specific memories, and some will experience two or more of these simultaneously.

¹²The therapist/ministry facilitator will also want to coach the person to engage directly with Jesus when good things happen, to thank Him and share her heart with Him.

Him. For those of you who have not yet had a chance to review the more detailed discussion, here is a very brief summary:

Specific, explicit invitation and request: The most basic, simple component is the specific, explicit prayer: "Lord, I make a heart invitation for You to be *with me*, here in this place. I also ask You to help me perceive Your presence, and to help me establish an adequate interactive connection with You." As mentioned above, I forgot to coach Steve to make these explicit requests; but perception of the Lord's presence in the present, and then establishment of a living, interactive connection with Him, unfolded spontaneously even without these explicit requests.

Trouble-shooting: If the person is not able to perceive the Lord's presence and establish an adequate interactive connection, you "trouble-shoot." Start with praying "Lord, what's in the way?" and then follow-up on whatever the Lord brings forward. For example, you may not be able to perceive the Lord's presence because you are afraid that you will feel unbearable shame if you let Him come into the memory you're working with. When you address this blocking fear, and are willing to *let* Him come into the memory, you will then perceive His presence. Or you may not be able to let Him come *close enough* for an adequate connection because you're afraid He might hurt you if He gets too close; and when you address this blocking fear, and are willing to *let* Him come closer, you will then experience an adequate interactive connection.

For those who are able to establish a living, adequate, interactive connection with Jesus at the beginning of the session, an additional resource is available if the person loses connection with Jesus at some later point in the session and is *not* able to receive adequate guidance in response to the direct question: "Lord, what's in the way?" You coach the person to return to the place of living interactive connection from the beginning of the session, and then *in the context of the refreshed connection*, you coach her to ask the Lord about the place where she is *not* able to perceive His presence.

Unfortunately, this session does not provide examples of Immanuel trouble-shooting because Steve is able to perceive the Lord's presence and connect with Him without difficulty.

Adequate interactive connection: This is also a good place for me to explain what I mean by "adequate interactive connection." I am experiencing an *interactive* connection with the Lord when I perceive His presence in some way and it *feels* true that we are having a living, real time, mutual, contingent¹³ *interaction*. When I am experiencing an interactive connection, it feels true that the Lord sees, hears, and understands the emotions and thoughts I am experiencing and communicating, and it also *feels* true that he is offering contingent responses to my emotions and thoughts. And an *adequate* interactive connection is an

¹³*Contingent* interaction means that our responses are directly related to (*contingent* upon) what the other is experiencing and communicating. For example, if I meet my godson in the park and he comes running to me with a big smile, a contingent interaction would be to greet him with "Hey! It's good to see you! It looks like you're having a good day." And if I'm walking through the park and I see him standing by himself and crying, a contingent interaction would be to kneel down beside him and quietly ask, "What's he matter? Tell me what happened." In contrast, if I see him alone and crying, a *non-contingent* interaction would be to ignore his distress and greet him with "Hey! It's good to see you! Isn't this a beautiful day?"

interactive connection that is clear enough, strong enough, and functional enough to enable the person to accomplish the task immediately in front of her. An *ideal* connection is obviously ideal,¹⁴ but an *adequate* connection is an interactive connection in which the person perceives the Lord clearly enough, allows Him come close enough, feels a strong enough emotional connection, achieves enough synchronization, and is able to receive enough *to enable to her to take the next step forward*.

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.

¹⁴For discussion of ideal interactive connections, see the section on Immanuel interventions in Part V of the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who Is with Us” essay series.