



Session 9: Healing Wounds

Part 7: Helping Skills

According to Brad Long and Cindy Strickler¹ (2001), people who work in the arena of inner healing need to know something about a) the hidden depths of the human heart; b) the nature of the human psyche; c) the anatomy of inner hurts that are hidden in the unconscious; d) the complication of evil spirits that will actively hinder the healing process; and e) the process of our cooperating with the Holy Spirit to bring Jesus' healing into the hidden recesses of the human heart" (p. 91).

People working in inner healing ministries must be taught how to listen to the Spirit's guidance, how to flow with the Spirit, and how to use their spiritual senses. They must not lean to their own understanding—their own reasoning and intellect, but put their faith in the power of God to guide them. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can help them discern properly.

God uses people as His instruments in healing because:

- We are the body of Christ – we are His arms, legs, mouth, skin, smile, ears, and eyes here on earth.
- He has given to His body, the church, the ministry of reconciliation – not only to God, but also to ourselves and to others.
- He gave His power and authority not only to Jesus, the twelve disciples, and the seventy, but also to us (His body) who believe.
- He has given us the responsibility and power to heal the sick, set people free, loose chains, work miracles, deliver the oppressed, and care for the soul in His Name. (See Mark 16:17,18)
- He has given His body the gifts of the Spirit, the word of knowledge, etc....

When someone comes to us for help, our goal is to get the person to meet with Jesus. There is hope in that meeting.

¹ Brad Long & Cindy Strickler are co-authors of *Let Jesus Heal Your Hidden Wounds* (2001). Their book speaks to the individual who wants to be or already is involved in healing ministry. This is not another technique for doing healing, but a description of how the prayer minister cooperates with the Holy Spirit to bring healing and deliverance to people with hidden wounds. Those called to healing ministries will be taken to a new level of understanding and greater effectiveness from reading and studying this book. And those with hidden wounds will find new hope for restoration and freedom.



Listening Skills

When ministering inner healing, we need to really listen in order to identify core issues, lies, the root of their problem, and the key emotions.

Listening involves more than a passive reception of messages. Listening is an active process that communicates a sense of caring and interest in the client. It is both healing and consoling.

Counselee needs to really express their hurts, clarify a problem by talking, share all details of an issue or experience, and experience the relief that comes with catharsis.

It helps to try to hear what the person is not saying, what they perhaps will never be able to say, but are feeling and need to express. How beautiful, how grand and liberating this experience is, when people learn to help each other. It is impossible to overemphasize the immense need humans have to be really listened to, to be taken seriously, to be understood.

How does accurate listening help?

1. It helps people free themselves of troublesome feelings by expressing them openly.
2. It helps people become less afraid of negative feelings.
3. It helps promote a feeling of understanding between and among people.
4. It helps to facilitate problem solving.
5. It helps to keep the ownership of the problem with the person involved in the problem.
6. The knowledge that one is being truly listened to is frequently in and of itself remarkably therapeutic.

We listen in order to mediate Christ's love to the person is of utmost importance. The feeling of being heard and listened to is a healing and affirming experience.

"No one can develop freely in this world and find a full life without feeling understood by at least one person. He who would see himself clearly must open up to a confident freely chooses and worthy of such trust."²

Attending – giving undivided attention

Act of attending requires we make effort to set aside existing preoccupation's and actively shift our consciousness. Attention is an act of will, of work against the inertia of our own minds – the strain of keeping the consciousness clear, the attention focused on what the counselee is saying.

To learn more about how to listen to others, read "The Work of Attention", pgs. 120-131 in *The Road Less Travelled* by M. Scott Peck.

² Paul Tournier, M.D.



Making eye contact

When you are listening to someone tell their story, it is helpful that you make eye contact with them. This gives them the feeling that they are being heard and thus valued.

When you focus your attention on someone, making eye contact with them, something special happens with eye contact. Looking without staring is a way to convey concern and understanding.

Avoid looking away from the person as she or he is speaking: sit still, wait patiently through periods of silence or tears. Avoid reacting in a way that interferes with their free expression of thoughts and feelings. One problem I often see is that if someone starts crying we start trying to comfort them by gently patting them on their back or by trying to put our arm around them. In my experience, our trying to comfort them, actually distracts them from releasing their pain. Sometime, I might whisper in their ear, just cry it out to Jesus.

It is often said, "The eye is the window to the soul." To look into another's soul, penetrating the façade most people put on, only a person with a degree of awareness and compassion is able to recognize what they are doing.

- The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear (healthy) your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness, how great is the darkness (Matthew 6:22-23)

William Shakespeare once said, "The eyes are the window to your soul." Those eyes that let you watch your kids play ball, see the Eiffel Tower, read the beautiful words of a novel, or to see the precise detail in building clocks.

Responding

How do we respond to the client? We can respond in a variety of ways.

Leading - a skill by which the counselor redirects the conversation:

"Can you elaborate on..?" "What happened then?" "What did you mean by.....?"

That is an interesting feeling, how come, when, what helped you before?

Reflection

Reflect back what was said in such a way that the person knows he or she was heard and understood.

Questioning

Brings about a great deal of useful information. The best questions are those which require at least a sentence or two to answer.

Avoid questions beginning with why, they sound judgmental.

Extensive questioning stifles communication.

When something happens, you might want to ask "how come that happened? What have you learned from it? What do you want out of it?"



Techniques for communication

1. Rephrase: I hear you saying that you felt . . .
2. Clarify: I am not hearing exactly what you meant when you said . . .
3. Extend: Give us an example . . .
4. Ask for input: Does anyone else have any insight on this?

Spiritual direction

In giving spiritual direction, we focus in on the person's personal relationship with the Lord, especially as it relates to his or her present life circumstances. Explore the direction in which the Lord seems to be leading the person. We also explore distortions and misconceptions about the nature of God, Scripture, and church doctrine. This may become catalysts for deeper exploration and development of client's spiritual life. May also direct client to specific meditation, affirmations, or Scripture study.

Issues to explore

- Making choices: choose life; accepting life
- Letting go.
- Accepting parents, themselves, partner

Small Group Dynamics

1. Sense of community, belonging, not isolation.

Most people cannot develop as isolated individuals. Dr. Bruce Morgan says that "in order to grow, our walls must come down and demarcation lines disappear; therefore, collectivity, not individual isolationism, is at the heart of the small group process. Credentials do not mean anything, only honest self-expression."

Morgan notes that the early apostolic groups met "daily" and in every house – there they found togetherness and the support necessary for their own spiritual development.

Redemptive and restorative power comes from the feeling of being cared and supported by others. There is power that comes from a caring and supportive community. Small group process offers a family-like context – supplying various roles that are found in the family; i.e., mother, father, daughter, son, sister, brother, etc.

2. Mutual support

Encouragement, compassion, and comfort. Being present to one another; actively listening. Sharing one another's burdens.

Open atmosphere – open, honest sharing.

3. Voice of personal experience:

There is one voice that modern man still listens to, that is the "voice" of vital personal experience. This voice carries great authority and power. "If something is real to you", Morgan says, "it will carry across in reality."



Dr. Rudolph Mraz of Hochgrat Klinik in Germany finds that the act of confessing to one's condition and witnessing with one's own mouth creates a powerful life-changing energy. He notes that the early apostolic groups claimed vital personal experience.

4. Enthusiasm

According to Morgan, "The voice of vital personal experience produces enthusiasm." This word connotes, "God in you", thus introducing the possibility of a spiritual component. Enthusiasm is contagious – it has life, it spreads and creates hope. When released in a therapeutic community, the person begins to believe that change is possible, hope and faith are restored.

5. Spontaneity

Enthusiasm and desire lead to spontaneity. People simply can't get enough of each other – they spontaneously come together for fellowship. Morgan notes that there is great strength to be found in spontaneity.

Apostolic Christianity started out as a small group movement. Members met together daily in each other's homes and practiced a high degree of personal self-disclosure (*exomologesis* – the telling of absolute truth about oneself), mutual concern (*Koinonea*) and restitution.