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Editor's Corner - Finding and Keeping Your Mental Health

This issue of ADVENTISTS AFFIRM deals with mental health, God's answer to the stress of living. Have we unknowingly absorbed faulty methods in our effort to answer human dilemmas? Guest editor, Kenneth Scribner, has researched widely in the Bible, the writings of Ellen White, and the broad area of the helping professions. You may be surprised by what concerned writers are saying. Please ask God to give you discernment and a willingness to study the articles of this volume and choose to let God's will be done in your life and practice. I commend a thorough study of each article. Mercedes Dyer, Ph.D.

"It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy. His sophistry lessens the obligation of the divine law and gives men license to sin." (Great Controversy, p. 569)

Israels example warns the last-day church that if we do not follow the Lord and His will for us we will be in grave danger. Israel wanted to be like the other nations of her time. Her leaders demanded, "Lord, give us a king!" Samuel was not happy, but God told him to give the leaders what they asked for.

1 Samuel 8:6-9 says: "The thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected me, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. Now therefore hearken unto their voice:...yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."

The warning was given, but the people's request remained the same, "Give us a king to rule over us!" You and I know "the rest of the story."

Today, many of God's people, desiring to be "up with the times," have mistakenly sent forth the cry, "Lord, give us psychologians, i.e., ministers of the gospel of psychology, to guide us in these dysfunctional, abusive, co-dependent times. The church has failed us. It has not met our needs, and pastoral counseling isn't adequate, even if the pastors don't charge us anything. Biblical counseling and prayer are just too simplistic for the complex problems and addictions we face today. We need professional helpers, experts, and 12-step groups that understand our psychological diseases and illnesses. Sin isn't our big issue." So goes the request.

Psychotherapy to enhance "mental health" has become modern man's confessional. Where once church members went to God or to their pastor or even to other trusted fellow church members, for help and guidance with the struggles of life, today they are off to what I choose to call psychologians. Could we hear our Lord speak, He would say, "It is I, the Wonderful Counselor, the Prince of peace, whom you have rejected."

I am not alone in my criticism. Dave Hunt is not an Adventist, but hear what he says: "Christian psychology represents the most dangerous and at the same time the most appealing and popular form of modernism ever to have invaded the church. Many of today's staunchest evangelical and fundamentalist leaders, in order to be relevant and professionally respected,
are preaching a form of Religion Science, apparently without even recognizing it. Psychology, which entered the church as a Trojan horse, now wields such a powerful and all-pervasive influence, that to call Christian psychology into question is taken as an attack upon Christianity itself. This is all the more astonishing when one realizes that, in actual fact, Christian psychology doesn’t even exist.”¹ Gary Almy, another Evangelical, adds that the term, “Christian psychology is an oxymoron. The two religions are inherently contradictory.”²

Paul warned us: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

This prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes. Another well-informed commentator writes, "The church has capitulated and lost its own identity by allowing (and often encouraging) the norms and diagnoses of contemporary psychology to replace the gospel.”³ Thus the desire today is for psychologists, who will speak smooth things, things that won't "rock the boat" as it were. Counselors who do not press the matter of personal responsibility, the deadly nature of sin, or our need of repentance, forgiveness and transformation are not facing the true issues of mankind.

"Every week," says another commentator, "500,000 self-help meetings are held in this country. The fastest growing of these free, confessional meetings is Co-dependents Anonymous. There are over 1800 Co-dependents Anonymous groups in this country."⁴ Self-help groups are fast taking the place of prayer meetings. Who becomes the center of focus in these groups, God or self?

Psychology sees mankind as victims, not as sinners in need of the Savior. Persons do not want to face the reality that they are sinning. The conscience of mankind is vanishing.⁵ Psychologists play the blame game. Guilt, they say, is detrimental to mental health. Thus the psychological world has convinced many that what was once sin is now actually a sickness or disease and not really our fault. Having a disease doesn't seem half as bad as saying, "I have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

Martin L. Gross makes this comment: "Today, the M.D. psychiatrist and his first cousin, the Ph.D. psychologist, have appointed themselves the undisputed Solomons of our era. The new seer delivers his pronouncements with the infallible air of a papal bull, a stance which intimidates even the most confident of laymen."⁶ I have observed that even ministers, lawyers, and judges too often accept without question these "experts." But there are some 500 studies that show that the results of therapy provided by supposed "experts" are hardly any better and are often worse than the results of the advice of lay counselors. Being "my brothers keeper" would reap better results.

The mental health field today is a confused mass of conflicting theories presented by many who have no belief in God, the Bible, prayer, or Christianity. There are some 250 theories by one count and upwards of 500 theories by other counts, all vying for our attention and dollars. These theories are as varied as their founders. The structure is massive, yet its foundation is flimsy. Psychology would love to be promoted as a science, but it fails to match up to any true science. It is actually a false religion, and if a false religion, integrating it into Christianity will only help to destroy the biblical message on mental health. This issue of Adventists Affirm deals with this problem, but only with a "tip of the dangerous psychological iceberg."

The general subject, mental health, is vital to our church today! A warning needs to be given. "Why Christians Can’t Trust Psychology" by the late C. Mervyn Maxwell is an excellent place to begin. Clemency Mitchell shows us how to obtain "positive mental health." Her simple yet profound advice will give us all a NEWSTART. Neal Nedley, a full time practicing physician, deals with one of the most serious issues in mental health today, depression. Vicki Griffin, Health and Temperance Director of the Michigan Adventist Conference office and Paul Musson, a physician in private practice, tell us what happens inside an "Addicted Brain." It is fascinating! Vicki has also contributed an article dealing with her personal struggle with addiction and growth in spiritual and emotional living. Ken Scribner, a pastor on leave, deals
with one of the most devastating episodes in the history of psychotherapy, generally termed "Recovered or Repressed Memory." John Treat, a doctoral student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, has written what some may consider a controversial article on self-esteem. Can self-confidence be over stressed? He draws strong words from Ellen White. Also included in this issue is an article written by Ellen White in 1884 for *The Signs of the Times*. Its message is still relevant today. Judith Vyhmeister, herself a psychiatrist, has contributed a short but powerful article entitled "Deceived." We trust that you will be stimulated by all these significant articles.

We want to AFFIRM what ADVENTISTS have long believed, that Christ's "divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet 1:3, 4).

NOTES


Maxwell - Jesus, the True Psychologist

Enhance your mental health set up an appointment with Jesus.

Prior to his death, Dr. Maxwell gave this sermon at the Fairplain Michigan SDA Church, on May 25, 1996. Much of the flavor of preaching has been deliberately left in.

Without using your Bible, please recite with me Matthew 11:28-30. I'll help you!

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Do any of you know the Greek word underlying the word translated "souls"? Our student pastors probably know. It is psyche. Jesus is saying, "Come unto me, take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and ye shall find rest for your psyches." Psyche is the Greek word from which we get the English word psychology. If Jesus knows how to give rest to our psyches, He is a true psychologist.

Are we playing word games? I don't think so. Let me show you. Without looking it up, can you remember Isaiah 9:6? "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." "Wonderful Counselor."

Yesterday I checked "Counselor" in my Young's Concordance and confirmed that, yes, it does come from an everyday Hebrew word meaning someone who gives good advice. Jesus the Psychologist is a wonderful Counselor. You have talked with people who were visiting a psychologist or psychiatrist. You have asked, "Is he or she any good?" You have heard the reply, "It's too early to tell," or "I think so; I hope so." People who have been clients of Jesus say that He is a wonderful counselor! "Who knows better than God how to comfort the bereaved? Who has a better solution for chronic depression than the Lord, who changes the very heart rather than dulling the pain with drugs?"

Incidentally, in case any of you have forgotten, the difference between a psychiatrist and a psychologist is that a psychiatrist is a psychologist who is also a physician. I suppose we could say that Jesus, the Great Physician who, according to Psalm 103, "heals all our diseases," is a psychiatrist, but remember that psychiatrists are psychologists too.

Now please turn to 2 Peter 1. So far I've asked you to depend on your memory of familiar Bible verses, but most of us will probably need to read our next passage. Begin with verse 2: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." The desire for peace is the reason most people go to a counselor. They hope to find peace through the knowledge and skills of a trained psychologist. Where does this passage say we can find peace? "Through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."
Now verse 3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." How many things that pertain unto life and godliness? "All things." Remember that!

Now 2 Peter 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." What means, according to this verse, has God given us by which we can partake of the divine nature and escape earth's corruption? Yes, that's right, "exceeding great and precious promises."

Jesus is a Wonderful Counselor. How does He go about giving rest to our souls, to our psyches? By having us yoke up with Him and learn from Him. What does He want us to learn? He wants us to increase in our knowledge of God the Father and of Himself, and to take advantage of His exceeding great and precious promises.

Continuing. 2 Peter 1 verse 8: "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Finally verse 9: "He that lacketh these things is blind."

I. WHY CHRISTIANS CANT TRUST PSYCHOLOGY

"He that lacketh these things is blind." Do you know that a great many counselors avoid religion because they think that religion causes anxiety? Do you know that a great many Christian counselors also believe that praying with their clients will increase their anxiety and sense of guilt? Do you know that even in some seminaries—im not saying our seminary—future pastors are instructed not to pray with their counselees? The Bible says that "he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." 2 Peter 1:9

My attention was called some months ago to a book entitled *Why Christians Cant Trust Psychology*. It was written by a minister who earned a Ph.D. in psychology only to discover how barren and harmful ordinary psychology often is and how very helpful Biblical counseling is. The book was called to my attention by a former Seventh-day Adventist minister, now in mid-life. The wife of this former minister, back when he was an active minister, entrusted herself to a Christian counselor who persuaded her that when she was a child she was abused by her father. The Christian counselor persuaded her to believe this foul thing about her own father, even though she couldn't remember a thing about it. (I should add here that many secular psychologists are themselves attacking the idea that children forget such traumatic experiences. And I understand that there have been huge lawsuits lodged against some psychologists who persist in persuading their clients that they have been thus abused.) Anyway, having been persuaded to remember something that never happened, the wife, in typical fashion, decided to have nothing to do with her father and her husband; and it is because his home has thus been broken up, that my former minister friend was dropped from the ministry. He is the one who told me about this book. He shared with me several other books as well. I am not a psychologist and make no pretense to being one. But when our pastor asked me to preach for him today, I thought it would be useful to our congregation to devote a few minutes to what I have learned about the differences between much that is called psychology today and the true psychology offered by Jesus.

One thing I have found significant is the observation that there is by no means unanimity among psychologists as to how they should go about their work. There are many, many conflicting ideas out there as to how best to help people. In fact, two researchers have counted up some 250 different theories or branches of psychology in America alone! You may have heard of some of them. Here's a partial list:

Freud and his Psychoanalysis

Adler and his Individual Psychology
Jung and his Analytic Psychology

Reich and his Vegetotherapy

Rank and his Will Therapy

Horney and his Cultural Therapy

Sullivan and his Interpersonal Relations

Rogers and his Client-Centered Therapy

Lowen and his Bioenergetic Therapy

Janov and his Primal Therapy

Ellis and his Rational-Emotive Therapy

And Existential Analysis, Transactional Analysis, Gestalt Therapy, Family Therapy, Child Therapy, Group Therapy, Encounter Groups, Hypnotherapy, Behavior Modification Therapy, Orthomolecular psychiatry, and, evidently, many, many more.

If any one of them really worked, some sort of consensus might develop. The fact appears to be, however, that psychological counseling usually doesn't work, or not for long. A prominent psychologist is quoted in the book as saying, "Many benefits can come from therapy, in spite of its weaknesses. According to one review of the research, therapy can help people feel better." To which the book replies, "Of course therapy can make people feel better temporarily. But does it truly change them? Does it help them solve their problems? Do they become more like Christ? Are they led into Christian maturity? Are their thought and behavior patterns brought into conformity to God's Word? Those should be the tests of effectiveness for Christian counseling."

Some years ago I was asked to preach morning and afternoon in the Seventh-day Adventist church in Napa, California. After the morning sermon I was invited to the home of some friends; also invited were some mutual friends. One of these mutual friends was a psychologist. Now, I had just read in a news magazine that some study had concluded that 70% or so of people with problems get over their problems on their own, with no professional counseling at all. I asked him about this. His response was cheerful and open. He said that probably everyone would be better off without professional counseling. So I asked him why he offers counseling, and he said, "Because people want someone to talk to."

A little while ago I spoke with someone who is paid by the government to counsel prisoners. Does he think that, without being able to bring Christ into his counseling, he is able to do any good? He didn't think he was doing any good, though he allowed that there might be a very rare prisoner he could help. So why does he stay in the job? "It pays well," he said.

As I look back over my life I think of different people I have known who have visited ordinary, secular psychologists frequently. At the time, I thought they were doing the right thing. But now as I have had time to observe the results, I am certain that the people I am thinking of were badly damaged by the psychologists. Oh, I think that some psychologists are indeed helping people. There are some whom I would be glad to send someone. They are counselors who are experienced at bringing Bible principles and promises to bear directly on people's problems. There is a new life in the Word! Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor. But this, unfortunately, is not true of all counselors.

The book *Why Christians Can't Trust Psychology* closes each chapter with a story or case history that illustrates what the chapter is about. One of the case histories will make the point for us. It was given as a testimony in front of a church congregation. The speaker is Ellen, the wife of Walt. Ellen's Personal Testimony "Most of you know Walt and me. You know that we have had some serious problems in our marriage this last year. I want to tell you why and to warn you to avoid the pit I fell into.
"I was abused by my father when I was a teenager. As a result, I felt dirty and worthless for much of my life. Walt and I were not believers when we got married, and we both drank a lot and got caught up in the drug scene. Then Pastor Cliff introduced us to Jesus, and our lives were changed overnight. Some of you remember the change.

"Then, last year, my sister called me and said she had found the solution to our wounded hearts in a seminar being taught by a psychologist headquartered here in Denver. I remember telling her, I've already found healing for my heart, Carol. I've accepted Jesus as my Savior. He has washed me white as snow.

"Carol's response was, You're repressing your memories, Ellen. Hidden underneath the cheerful veneer is a heartbroken little girl crying for comfort. You owe it to her to go back into the past with a psychologist so you can deal with all the unresolved issues of what Dad did to us.

"I said to her, But, Carol, I've forgiven Dad. He didn't know the Lord. I still love him in spite of what he did to us. I want him to know Jesus, too.

"Carol said, You're just not in touch with your true feelings, Ellen. You've got to learn to hate Dad and make him pay for what he did before you can really forgive him.

"I had never heard Carol sound so bitter. But I promised I would read the book on the wounded heart, so I bought it at the Christian bookstore. As I read it, I began to sense an uneasiness growing in my heart. My old anger and hurts returned, only worse than before. It began to affect my feelings toward Walt, and I withdrew from him. I went out to attend a seminar on sexual abuse with my sister, and came back convinced that only a psychologist could really understand my problems and how to deal with them.

"My anger and bitterness continued to grow until I couldn't separate my anger at my father from my bitterness toward Walt. Soon I forgot all about the person who actually abused me and directed all my venom at my husband.

"I began regular therapy with a psychologist at $90 an hour, and it was causing us deep financial stress. On top of that, I spent hours on the phone with my sister. If Walt dared to complain about the expenses, I just got even more angry. He couldn't win. I was angry if he tried to talk to me about my attitudes, and angry if he kept quiet.

"I began to realize that I wasn't getting better, but now my pride kicked in. I was too embarrassed to admit that therapy was only making matters worse. Walt kept begging me to go to a biblical counselor with him, and I finally agreed....

"I still had enough faith in God to believe that the Scriptures are true, so when the counselor began sharing verses with me, I found that my heart responded. I began to remember what it was like when I first accepted Christ—how free, how clean, I felt. I remembered the joy Walt and I had shared, and I wanted that again.

"The counselor had me read 2 Peter chapter 1 out loud. I understood the deception I had bought into. It was almost like Saul's experience in the Bible. It seemed like scales fell from my spiritual eyes, and I could see the love of God clearly again. Hallelujah!" (very slightly adapted).

II. SELECTED BIBLE PRINCIPLES

Let me reassure you that my purpose is not to knock all counselors. Quite the contrary. I think there are some very effective counselors doing good work. I am just bearing my personal testimony that I believe the success of a counselor is measurable by the degree to which he or she is able to put the client in touch with Jesus, rather than in touch with past hurt feelings. From the testimony I just read to you, I would like to select three items for comparison between ordinary psychology and the Bible 1. Conversion. The first is conversion. Remember what Ellen said about it. While I reread what she said, would you please be turning to 2 Corinthians 5:17. Ellen said: "Then Pastor Cliff introduced us to Jesus, and our lives were
changed overnight. Some of you remember the change. I began to remember what it was like when I first accepted Christ how free, how clean, I felt. I remembered the joy Walt and I had shared, and I wanted that again."

Conversion! As I reflect on the people I have known who have gone to ordinary psychologists, my heart cries out, Oh, if only they had gone to Jesus and given their hearts to Him instead. Their homes, their lives, would have known instant happiness.

Now read 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Folks, how long does it need to take to be converted? Does it take an hour a week for months at $90.00 an hour, or can conversion be free and instantaneous? And what is the new birth? Isn't it the Holy Spirit God, the Holy Spirit coming into you and giving you a whole new outlook, a whole new attitude? All at once you desire to be loving and holy and kind. The way you have been living up to this moment seems all of a sudden dirty and ugly. Say 2 Cor. 5:17 again with me: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Ordinary psychologists know nothing about conversion. True Biblical psychologists do, and so does Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor. He says in Ezekiel 36:27: "I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

The second comparison I'd like to make between ordinary psychology and the Bible is the direction in which they look. 2. Looking backward or looking forward. In typical psychological jargon, Ellen's sister told her: "You're repressing your memories, Ellen. Hidden underneath the cheerful veneer is a heartbroken little girl crying for comfort. You owe it to her to go back into the past with a psychologist so you can deal with all the unresolved issues of what Dad did to us."

What does the Bible say? Hear the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:13 and 14. Paul had been abused far more than most people, beaten by the Jews five times, beaten by the Romans three times, stoned once, and plotted against and lied about many times. Did he dwell on the past? Well, he referred to such matters now and then, but to glorify God, not to blame anybody. Now are you ready for Philippians 3:13 and 14? "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

What did Paul do about the cruelties people had inflicted on him in the past? Far from dwelling on them, he let himself forget them so he could think about the wonderful things Jesus has planned for our future. True Bible counseling stresses conversion rather than endless therapy, looking toward Christ's bright future rather than backward to our bitter past. Dead indeed unto sin but alive unto our Lord Jesus Christ. Forgiving not hating, being kind not angry. Please be turning to Ephesians 4:26 while I pick out another segment of Ellen's testimony: "But, Carol, I've forgiven Dad. He didn't know the Lord. I still love him in spite of what he did to us. I want him to know Jesus, too." To which Carol said, "You're just not in touch with your true feelings, Ellen. You've got to learn to hate Dad and make him pay for what he did before you can really forgive him."

Do you know what I read in one rather learned book? That some psychologists not only encourage their clients to be angry with their husbands or their fathers or whomever, but actually give them soft baseball bats and assign them to pretend that something in the house is the hateful person and beat it unmercifully, all the time shouting out their anger. They assign them to carry on like this day after day and tell them that in this way they are to get in touch with their real feelings. And what does the Bible say? What does the Wonderful Counselor say? Ephesians 4:26: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

I have had people tell me that in this verse the Bible says we are supposed to get angry. Well, but don't forget, First, it is to be an anger that is without sin. Second, the anger is to be completed before night fall. And third, this isn't all the Bible says about anger. Just look down
to verse 31 and read that one with me.

Ephesians 4:31: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Especially notice verse 32: "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven you."

How much anger and bitterness are we to put away from ourselves? All of it. All of it. Please read the verses with me again beginning with 4:31: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven you."

Now heres another one, Matthew 5:44, right out of Christs Sermon on the Mount. As we read it, some of you will notice that part of the verse is missing. Have you got it now?

Matthew 5:44: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Those of you with versions other than the King James may notice that your Bibles dont have the clauses about blessing and doing good, for there is some question whether they are present in the underlying Greek in this verse. (There is no question that they are in Luke 6:27, 28.) Everyone should have the first part of Matthew 5:44, "Love your enemies," and the last part, about praying for those who are mean to you. Love your enemies and pray for them. What a contrast to the psychological theory that says you have to hate your enemies before you can forgive them.

Notice that Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor, doesnt tell us merely not to be angry with our enemies. He counsels us to be proactive, to do something for them. According to the counsel in Ephesians 4, we are to be kind to our enemies and treat them tenderheartedly. According to His counsel here in the Sermon on the Mount, we are to love them and pray for them. This is interactive therapy with participation. Dont just sit there trying to forget someone. Do something for the person.

Now let us look at Matthew 18:32-35: "Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

And consider Pauls advice in Romans 12:18 to 21: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved," Paul continues, "avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore," Paul concludes, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." He sums up his counsel in 12:21: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor, taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Then in Matthew 6:14 and 15 he said, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses"

With such good counsel available to us in the Bible, there is no need for us to spend time and money on ordinary pycologists and psychiatrists!

NOTES


2. Ibid. p. 76, 77.

3. Ibid. p. 71.
4. Ibid. p. 328, 329.
Mitchell - Mind and Body Relationship

What are some simple ways to keep the mind clear and functioning optimally?

"THE RELATION THAT EXISTS between the mind and the body is very intimate," Ellen White wrote in *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 241, summing up the Adventist view that man is a unity, his body and mind are inseparable.

Questions about body, mind and soul have taxed philosophers since time immemorial. The Greeks believed that humans have a dual nature, a body and a soul capable of existing apart from each other. The (immortal) soul, they said, escapes from the prison house of the body at death. This view, downgrading the body, is typical of false religions, and has profoundly influenced Western thought, including Christianity. Although medical science now acknowledges that the mind has an important influence on the body, the body's connection to the mind seems less appreciated, especially by psychiatrists and psychologists. This is not to say that these specialists neglect the physical diseases of their patients, but that many of them pay too little attention to their patients' lifestyles. The same can be said of the plethora of popular self-help books.

The Adventist view means that no therapeutic program is complete without attention to lifestyle, whether the problems to be solved are mental, physical or spiritual. Often lifestyle change is the most important and effective part of the treatment. The extra energy and the clear mind that result from a reformed lifestyle may be all that is needed to help a person solve their problems.

Psychological counseling and therapies are now extremely popular, but unfortunately many mental health practitioners overlook the fact that the lifestyles of their clients may be major factors in their psychological problems. If these clients could adopt truly healthy lifestyles, many might not need their psychotherapists at all. No course of Christian counseling, however biblically based, should be considered complete without attention to lifestyle factors.

As the brain is the organ of the mind, both mental and spiritual health depend on the health of the brain. Ellen White, in *Education*, p. 209, states that the only way by which the Holy Spirit can communicate with us is through the nerves of our brains. These nerves depend on a constant supply of oxygen and glucose and can survive for only minutes without them. This calls for an efficient transport system to deliver these basics and a vast number of other essential materials, as well as to remove waste products and other potentially harmful substances. This means that the condition of the heart and blood vessels is vital, as well as all the other organs in our incredibly complex bodies. In effect, whatever interferes with the proper functioning of any system of our bodies can potentially damage mental health, and whatever improves their functioning can improve mental health. Lifestyle is so important because it is the key to the optimal functioning of all our body systems.

THE EIGHT TRUE REMEDIES

"Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine powerthese are the true remedies," Ellen White wrote in *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 207. They are also the lifestyle factors that keep our minds and bodies healthy. The principle of seeking the causes of illness, and of assisting nature in righting those causes, holds just as
much for mental as for physical illness. The acronym NEWSTART (thanks to Weimar Institute of Northern California) is a useful memory aid and check list and is used in this review of the impact of lifestyle factors on mental and spiritual health.

**NUTRITION**

Well start where Newstart starts, with Nutrition. Practically everyone knows that emotions affect the digestive system. Stressful situations destroy the appetite, stop digestion in the stomach, and speed up the bowels. The opposite fact is just as true though less well recognized: the digestive system affects the mind, including the emotions, judgment and intellect.

**How much?** One of the most important differences between Ellen White and many of our contemporary health gurus is her assertion that "the stomach is closely related to the brain" ([The Ministry of Healing](http://www.adventistsaffirm.org/article/111/previous-issues/volume-17-...), p. 306). In this connection the amount of food is very important: hence Sister Whites emphasis on abstemiousness. To give our minds the best chance, either to recover health or to stay well, the first rule of nutrition is that we need the right amount of food, enough to satisfy our hunger and to maintain our correct weight, no less and no more. Overeating affects the brain directly, making us sluggish and sleepy. Habitual overeating contributes to depression. On the other hand, lethargy is also one of the hallmarks of starvation. Few of us are faced with starvation, but many people dont eat enough, and inadequate food intake can make us irritable and anxious.

**When?** The second rule of nutrition is that we should eat at the right time. Another of Ellen Whites strong points, one in which she differs from many other authorities, is her condemnation of eating between meals and immediately before retiring. In both these cases common sense, common experience, and for those in the healing professions, clinical experience, support Ellen White. Does science? Between-meal snacks have been shown to slow down the stomachs action. The food stays in the stomach longer than it should, giving it the chance to ferment and produce noxious substances. These can irritate the digestive tract. They can also be absorbed into the circulation and cloud the brain.

Food in the stomach at bedtime is digested even more slowly, interfering with sound sleep. Rich suppers are well known for producing colorful and interesting dreams. Who knows? Perhaps Freud and his clients would have had fewer dreams to interpret if they had gone to sleep with healthily empty stomachs!

Although it might be difficult to prove to the satisfaction of the skeptic that eating between meals contributes to mental illness, few can deny the benefits of organizing ones life on a schedule with regular times for eating and sleeping. The self-discipline involved is a useful exercise in developing the will power and self-control necessary for fighting mental problems.

What about the kind of food and its effect on the mind? Food and Mood is a popular subject among natural therapists. Whether used with or instead of drug treatment and counseling therapies, food can be a powerful and effective medicine. Hippocrates is reported to have said, "Let food be your medicine, and let your medicine be your food."

"What kind?" One really cant find a better definition of the ideal diet for both mental and physical health than the one in [The Ministry of Healing](http://www.adventistsaffirm.org/article/111/previous-issues/volume-17-...), p. 296: "Grains, fruits, nuts and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet."

Without these guidelines, choosing what to eat can seem dauntingly complex because individuals differ greatly in their tolerance of different foods. But if the overall lifestyle is healthful, and if the basic diet is good mainly whole, unrefined plant foods, individual intolerances are much less evident and troublesome. (A note of caution: Vitamin B-12 deficiency can cause mental symptoms, and its wise for anyone on, or adopting, a totally plant-food diet to get their blood level checked, and to take a B-12 supplement if it is low.)

**Sugar.** For many people sugar is a major problem. [Potatoes Not Prozac](http://www.adventistsaffirm.org/article/111/previous-issues/volume-17-...) is a good slogan as well as the name of a popular self-help book. Refined sugars are very quickly absorbed into the blood stream, causing a rapid rise in blood sugar, which frequently triggers an equally rapid fall, which, in its turn can cause weakness, trembling, anxiety, irritability, even confusion. High sugar intake produces fluctuations in blood-sugar levels that clearly dont help ones mental state. The unrefined starches in whole-grain products (and potatoes) are slowly broken down and absorbed, keeping the blood-sugar level steady. Cutting out the sugar and increasing the
starch can completely cure the swinging blood sugar problem and its distressing nervous and mental symptoms.

Refined sugar has other problems. It seems to have a special ability to produce cravings in some people; for example, a sugary snack can give an alcoholic an almost irresistible craving for a drink. Another problem is that because it contains no fiber or nutrients, refined sugar does not satisfy but encourages over-consumption. This displaces more-nourishing foods from the diet, resulting in deficiencies of the materials needed for optimum mental and physical health.

**Refined foods.** The same principle applies with all refined foods, including vegetable oils. It's particularly important to know that refining flour removes valuable vitamins of the B complex, which have a special role to play in brain and nervous system function. Mentally ill patients have been found to regress seriously on a diet deficient in the vitamin B complex, which is one reason why unrefined cereal products should be a staple for everyone who wants sound judgment and self-control.

**Fat.** Too much fat is as bad for mental health as too much sugar. A high fat intake, especially if it includes animal fats, whether from meat or dairy produce, makes the blood more viscous and the whole circulation more sluggish. This makes oxygen transport to the brain less efficient and means a duller mind in the short term, and serious trouble long-term. Over the years fatty material is deposited in the arteries including those that supply the brain. Generally diminished mental efficiency is one result, major strokes and progressive dementia from mini strokes are other possible outcomes. High sugar intake compounds the damage.

**Meat.** What about meat? Meat is mainly protein and fat; carbohydrate is the fuel that the brain needs. The digestion of protein calls on heart, liver and kidneys to do extra work. There are a number of substances in meat which act directly on the nervous system to irritate and confuse. An in-depth look at them supports Ellen Whites statements that animal foods arouse "animal passions," those intractable emotions and cravings which wreak havoc on mental and spiritual health. Sir Robert McCarrison, one of the founders of nutritional science, researched the effect of diet on behavior. He had found that the various ethnic groups that he worked with tended to have different temperamental characteristics, some warlike, others passive. In a carefully designed series of experiments, he fed his laboratory animals the distinctive diets of different groups. He found that food had a profound effect on the animals behavior and reflected the temperamental differences he had noticed. Diets composed mainly of plant foods produced peaceful rats, and diets high in meat and refined foods produced aggressive rats. One group of rats had the typical meat, white bread and overcooked-vegetable diet of the British working man of that time. McCarrison, himself British, commented that this group of rats accurately reflected the British workmans tough, assertive but somewhat narrow state of mind typified in the words of the triumphant song Rule Britannia: "Britannia rules the waves! Britons never, never, never shall be slaves!"

**Miraculous changes.** Numerous workers have reported the almost miraculous effects of dietary change on school children, students, workers, and perhaps most notably, delinquent boys. Some twenty years ago, a criminologist, Alexander Schauss, published his findings about the relationship of diet to the behavior of delinquent boys. When the boys sugar-rich refined-food diet was replaced with wholesome, unrefined plant foods, their behavior improved spectacularly. The positive effects of improved diets, or even the simple addition of breakfast, on school childrens grades and behavior have been demonstrated many times. Alcoholics and drug addicts also respond well to nutrition therapy.

**EXERCISE AND WATER**

**Exercise,** the second remedy in the Newstart program, is as important as diet where mental health is concerned. It increases the amount of oxygen in the blood and improves the circulation to every cell in the body. This explains the sense of well being, lifting of the spirits and reduction in anxiety commonly experienced after a good walk or workout. Exercise also stimulates the brain to produce endorphins, the bodys own natural antidepressants and tranquilizers, and explains the frequently noted "runners high."

The National Institute of Mental Health has identified some important benefits from exercise. In addition to a general benefit to mental health and well being, the institute lists short-term reduction in stress, anxiety and tension, long-term reduction in anxiety, long-term reduction in depression in moderately depressed persons, and reduction in muscle tension and
stress hormones. Other research shows improvement in memory and cognitive function in middle-aged and elderly subjects. One study compared the effect of a fifteen-minute brisk walk with a well-known tranquilizer pill. The effect of the walk was better and lasted longer.

If the exercise takes place in fresh air and sunlight (not necessarily sunshine), so much the better. Fresh air, particularly in parks and flower gardens, near lakes and waterfalls, and after rain, contains negatively charged ions, which have an invigorating effect, unlike the positively charged ions of most indoor air. The sunlight itself promotes endorphin production. Recent research has shown that meaningful work, such as gardening, has better long-term mood-enhancing effects than exercise for its own sake. There are important implications here for the care of mental patients, an interesting verification of what common sense and Ellen White tell us.

Water makes a difference to mental health too. At the two extremes of severe dehydration and water intoxication there are profound effects. Mild dehydration increases the viscosity of the blood, which, as already explained, reduces the efficiency of the circulation to the brain. A mild degree of chronic dehydration contributes to a mild and chronic depression of mental function, so keeping up the fluid intake is important. As we are all different shapes and sizes, with different lifestyles and different sizes of drinking glasses, the best rule is simply "drink enough to keep your urine pale and clear."

Water used in hydrotherapy treatments can be very helpful to mental health. One does not have to leave home to experience the calming effect of a neutral (body temperature) bath, or the stimulation of a few seconds of cold water on the skin at the end of a warm bath or shower. Such simple methods were widely used for mental health problems in the past, before the advent of effective medications. The more complex hydrotherapy treatments offered at natural therapy institutions can be very effective too.

**SUNLIGHT AND TEMPERANCE**

**Sunlight.** The list of benefits of sunlight to mind and body is long. One of the more important in this context is the relationship of sunlight and melatonin, a hormone that is produced in the brain in response to light and influences the balance of sleeping and waking. Bright light in the middle of the day ensures the production of melatonin and makes it available for proper sleep during the hours of darkness. This emphasizes the importance of regular hours, and taking advantage of natural light. One of the first signs of mental imbalance can be the "turning of night into day," and the disturbance of the sleep-awake cycle. Restoring that cycle by being up when it is light and sleeping when it is dark is an important step toward recovery even in serious mental illness.

**Temperance.** This includes self-discipline in all areas, and cannot be overemphasized in relation to mental and psychological problems, because self-control is a vital part of the healing process of them all. But the abstemiousness that is a true remedy also includes the avoidance of harmful substances, so let's take a quick look at the poisons that so many people voluntarily consume.

**Alcohol** obviously damages the mind: in excess there is alcoholic psychosis and alcoholic dementia. Modern methods of visualization can now show shrinking of the cerebral cortex, due to destruction of nerve cells, as well as decreased activity in those areas, in heavy drinkers. The general mental and moral decline of the heavy drinker is well known, but what about the more moderate drinker? Even as few as two drinks a week can produce intellectual impairment, still measurable twenty-four or more hours after the last drink.

**Nicotine.** Its addictive nature, once denied, and the tensions produced by its withdrawal are now widely recognized. The symptoms that are relieved by the next cigarette maintain the illusion that tobacco calms the nerves. More-sinister possibilities are now being researched. Is the fact that psychiatric patients smoke so much a matter of cause or of effect? Or do these patients smoke simply because they have nothing better to do? Serious consideration is now being given to the possibility that tobacco is a factor in the causation of mental illness, including schizophrenia. Smoking has been associated with a lower incidence of Alzheimers disease; until recently it was thought to have a specific protective effect, and not simply to be a consequence of the smokers not living long enough to develop it. These ideas are being seriously questioned; some investigators believe that nicotine contributes directly to the development of Alzheimers.

**Caffeine.** Ellen White refers to the intoxicating and depressing nature of caffeine. It is a
mind-altering drug closely related to nicotine and sharing nicotine's addictive nature. Mental patients, on average, drink far more coffee than most coffee drinkers, and the same questions are being asked about caffeine's place in the causation of mental illness that are being asked about nicotine, particularly with regard to depression. Caffeine is also well known for symptoms that mimic the symptoms of anxiety: tremors, rapid heart rate, palpitations, sense of foreboding, insomnia, irritability, etc. In addition, caffeine lowers the pain threshold, promoting headaches and a variety of painful symptoms. No one should be offered sedative medication without their caffeine intake being queried, and the same goes for pain relief. In medical practice, I have seen many people with insomnia and acute anxiety cured simply by cutting out their caffeine. Many headaches, backaches, and other painful conditions are relieved by the same remedy.

The illicit drugs, even the widely used "soft drugs," pose serious dangers to mental health, both in the short and long term. Less well known are psychological effects of many widely used prescription drugs, for such varied conditions as allergies, heart disease, high blood pressure, insomnia, and many others. Side effects listed include lethargy, depression and confusion. Other medications can cause nightmares and hallucinations. Fortunately, dramatic side effects are rare, but consistent use of such medications can contribute to mental and emotional problems, underlining the importance of using lifestyle methods to reverse degenerative problems whenever possible, rather than drugs to control them.

(A note about the drugs used for psychological and psychiatric problems: the effects are not always the ones desired, many have the danger of addiction, and it is in their nature to affect the reason, judgment and will. This is not to say that they should never be used, but to emphasize the principle of doing everything possible in terms of lifestyle and natural therapy first, and using all medications with caution and respect.)

**AIR, REST, AND TRUST IN GOD**

**Air.** Fresh air and sunlight are closely linked with exercise, as already mentioned. Ellen White considered fresh air to be a vital component of healing regimens. Now that so many people live in polluted city environments, it is even more important to make the most of fresh air. This can be done by avoiding the busiest routes and times when walking, choosing environments with trees and plants whenever possible. Minimizing exposure to indoor pollutants is important too. Not only tobacco smoke, but aerosols and synthetic materials also exude fumes that are harmful to the brain.

**Rest.** Insomnia is a well-known factor in depression both as a cause and an effect. Causes of insomnia range from caffeine and other drugs to a full stomach at bedtime, lack of exercise, an irregular program, shift work, etc. Sleep deprivation can induce hallucinations and even psychosis in normally sound minds. Regular hours for rest and sleep are of paramount importance in maintaining mental health. So is the regular weekly rest day. How often we hear stressed, overworked Adventists laughingly saying that it is only the Sabbath that keeps them sane. Many a truth is spoken in jest! Holidays are important for sanity too, and the Old Testament program of annual feasts sets us a healthy example.

**Trust in divine power.** Temperance, rest and trust in divine power are closely linked. Trust in God enables us to be temperate in our work and take the rest that we need to restore our mental and physical health.

Trust in divine power is indispensable for true mental health, but the subject is beyond the scope of this article. Nevertheless, lest anyone think this article overlooks the significance of divine trust, here is an appropriate closing quote: "Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 251).
Both psychologists and psychiatrists claim to help many people solve their problems. And no doubt they do help some. But close observation shows modern psychotherapy to be such a mixture of truth and error that it is dangerous to trust it. Different practitioners propose scores of different theories, all vying for supremacy. The resulting message is garbled. We would be wiser to avoid dabbling in it. The taproot of psychology is not the Bible. The root is at odds with the Bible and its all-wise Author. Let me show you why I am so critical. You will see that others are much more so.

Damaging criticisms. Let's listen to some of psychology's vocal critics, many of whom are not Christians. A significant number of practitioners from the secular area raise some of the strongest objections. Themselves immersed in psychiatry and psychology, they know what they are talking about. Here are a few quotations:

Dr. Szasz, widely read author and psychiatrist, says, "Psychiatry is probably the single most destructive force that has affected the American society within the last 50 years."

Lee Coleman, M.D., another psychiatrist, says, "Psychiatrists have no valid scientific tools or expertise."

Dr. Tana Dineen, a psychologist: "Psychology presents itself as a concerned and caring profession working for the good of its clients, but the effects are damaged people, divided families, distorted justice, destroyed companies, and a weakened nation. Behind the benevolent facade is a self-serving industry that offers facts which are often unfounded, provides therapy which can be damaging, and exerts influence which is having devastating effects on society. What seemed once a responsible profession is now a big business whose success is directly related to how many people become users."

Dr. Martin and Deidra Bobgan: "No greater issue faces the modern, true Church than this Trojan horse of psychology. It has a stranglehold that will not be easily loosened."

Seth Farber, Ph.D., a practicing psychologist for 16 years, explains why he quit: "I did not know when I first became a Christian that the development of my understanding of the meaning and implications of my Christian faith would eventually lead me to a crossroads where I would have to choose between two masters between the mental health professions and Christianity, between the mental (health) religion and Jesus Christ. But this is what has occurred, and I have made my choice."

Other reasons for distrust. Every few years, it seems, a new "all-encompassing" theory or therapy pops up which, we are assured, explains our problems and how to cure them. Sometimes what is proposed is in fact a new theory, at other times it is just a rehash of an old theory that didn't work then, but were told, will now, with a new twist that guarantees success. Proponents of these psychological theories would love to have them promoted as truly scientific, because society tends to trust anything they think is scientific.
SCIENCE?

Seth Farber, the converted psychologist we met a moment ago, wrote in 1999, "Science has become the Gucci label of the Psychology Industry." Pursuing a similar thought Sigmund Koch wrote, "The hope of a psychological science became indistinguishable from the fact of psychological science. The entire subsequent history of psychology can be seen as the ritualistic endeavor to emulate the forms of science in order to sustain the delusion that it already is a science." Psychology is actually junk science says Margaret Hagen, who defines junk science as "the mirror image of real science, with much of the same form but none of the same substance."

OR RELIGION?

"Psychology is (actually) a religion trying to pass itself off as a science." Many believe that if they go to a "Christian" psychologist the danger is not present, but sadly that is not true. A Christian counselor who fails to base his/her counseling on the Scriptures is no better than those who reject the Bible outright. At times they are more dangerous because they believe in a devil and thus are open for the deceptions found in Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA).

People see psychology as an instrument of healing but, as Jay Adams makes plain, "Any system that proposes to solve human problems apart from the Bible and the power of the Holy Spirit (as all of these pagan systems, including the self-worth system, do) is automatically condemned by Scripture itself."

I am not questioning the motives of counselors. I am trying to give a clear warning of the dangers of psychology's message. That danger is real and present. The warning should not be soft-peddled!

While modern psychology and psychiatry were still in baby clothes Ellen White wrote, "This entering in of Satan through the sciences is well devised. Through the channel of phrenology, psychology, and mesmerism, he comes more directly to the people of this generation, and works with that power which is to characterize his efforts near the close of probation. The minds of thousands have thus been poisoned, and led into infidelity. While it is believed that one human mind so wonderfully affects another, Satan, who is ready to press every advantage, insinuates himself, and works on the right hand and on the left. And while those who are devoted to these sciences laud them to the heavens because of the great and good works which they affirm are wrought by them, they little know what a power for evil they are cherishing; but it is a power which will yet work with all signs and lying wonders with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Mark the influence of these sciences, dear reader, for the conflict between Christ and Satan is not yet ended." (Selected Messages, vol. 2, p. 351)

I believe Ellen White was using the term science in a very general manner. Her warning message dealing with psychology is right on target. There was a good reason why she associated it with phrenology and mesmerism.

MODERN-DAY DISASTERS

One of the greatest fiascoes that has ever come out of the psychological world in years is the theory of recovered or repressed memories (RC/RM) False Memory Syndrome (FMS). These are "memories" that have primarily arisen as a result of therapy or the reading of self-help books on sexual abuse. No memories of abuse were there prior. "Throughout the past decade or so, (this) shock wave has been sweeping across North American (Australia, the United Kingdom, etc.) psychotherapy, and in the process causing major repercussions within our families, courts, and hospitals. A single diagnosis for miscellaneous complaints—that of unconsciously repressed sexual abuse in childhood--has grown in this brief span from virtual nonexistence to epidemic frequency."

A good question to ask is Why would anyone believe something so painful as being sexually abused by a parent or trusted friend if it wasn't true? I believe there are several reasons. Here are a few: the feminist movement, people desiring to have an excuse for present behavior, and...
focusing on the past. And another: the chance to benefit from a large legal settlement. See Wassil-Grimm for 16 more reasons.

The nightmare of Laura Pasley. "Laura Pasley 39, a secretary in the Dallas Police Department, sought therapy for her bulimia and was told that all eating disorders spring from repressed memories of child sex abuse. Using hypnosis and dream analysis, her therapist soon persuaded her that she had been abused by her mother, father, grandfather, and a neighbor and that her brother once tried to kill her. When she tried to tell her therapist that certain horrible events had not happened, he shook his head, insisting she was in denial and only trying to protect her family."

Hopefully this FMS epidemic will not arise again to the extreme it did in the 1980s and '90s. Its destructive force left in its wake close to two million broken homes. And this therapy is still being practiced by some therapists. Many of the accused have lost their jobs simply for being accused. The most thoroughly researched book on the FMS issue, Victims of Memory by Mark Pendergast, estimates that "since the hunt for repressed memories came to full flower in 1988, several million have come to believe they are Survivors. Each represents shattered lives and destroyed families. If two and a half million women identify themselves as Survivors, then one out of every 25 families has been affected." How many SDA families have been impacted?

"Therapists use a number of techniques that purportedly assist survivors of childhood sexual abuse to make contact with their lost memories of abuse. These techniques include age regression (a form of hypnosis), body memory interpretation, hypersuggestive questioning, guided visualization, dream interpretation, and sodium amytal." Psychodrama (an acting out exercise) is thought to be helpful, but the benefits are questionable. There are many self-help books which promote this deceptive theory. Marilyn Van Derbur Atler, Miss America 1958, after years of therapy came up with memories of abuse in 1991. But note carefully what she went through to "recover" those memories. "Years of psychotherapy, 100 deep massages, over 100 rolffing sessions (a type of deep massage), 60 acupuncture sessions, acupressure, perhaps 50 sessions of hypnosis, neuro-linguistic programming, dance therapy, bioenergetics, self-defense therapy."

It may be appropriate here to say that sexual abuse does happen and it does take place in Christian homes more often than we like to admit. We are not talking about abuse that has always been remembered. Rather it is the Recovered Memory of sexual abuse that is our concern. This devastating therapy hurts not only the person "repressed" but also those who have been truly abused. Many of the RM stories are so fantastic that they cannot be believed. When this happens the individuals who have been truly abused and have always remembered their abuse are also brought into question. The truly abused are then less likely to say anything for fear of not being believed.

INCEST SURVIVOR'S "BIBLE"

A source to which a person who has been abused could go for help and encouragement would be welcome. In the area of incest there is one book which has gained the title "incest survivors bible." It is The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse, by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis, 1988. The title sounds great. But its message cannot be recommended! It would be better to call it "The Devils Handbook for Breaking-up Families." One of our own publishing companies has promoted it. See the Epilogue Bibliography in Sins of the Father by Marianne Morris. Two other pamphlets entitled "Help for the Person Who Has Been Sexually Abused" and "Ministering to the Sexually Abused" are very questionable reading. They have no place in a Christians library.

Note a few of the positions taken by the two authors Bass and Davis. Note also their very strong support and promotion of lesbianism. Then ask, "Is this a book I would want a therapist to recommend to my daughter or wife?" The quotes are listed by page and paragraph for quick reference.

22.5: "If you think you were abused and your life shows the symptoms, then you were."
22.5: "So far, no one we've talked to thought she might have been abused, and then later discovered that she hadn't been."

46.6: "Survivors have developed psychic abilities from their sensitivity."

73.8: "Another way to regain memory is through regression. Under the guidance of a trustworthy therapist, it is possible to go back to earlier times." (Here the authors speak of a form of hypnotism.)

82, 83: "So I'm going with the circumstantial evidence, and I'm working on healing myself."

122, subhead: "Anger: The Backbone of Healing"

128.3: "You may dream of murder or castration. It can be pleasurable to fantasize such scenes in vivid detail. Let yourself imagine it to your heart's content."

134.0: "You may want to see them suffer. You may want revenge. Be clear that whatever you do, you are doing it for yourself."

143.6: "This woman probably would not have actually killed her father, but it felt good to think about it."

150.1: "Many women try desperately to forgive. As Ellen [Bass] says in her worships, Why should you?"

268.6: "Being a lesbian is a perfectly healthy way to be."

268.6: "If I am a lesbian because I was abused, at least something good came out of it."

346.4: "If you were not sexually abused as a child, explore those experiences in your history that come closest."

I have left some statements out because of their vulgarity. I repeat my earlier question: "Is this material that you want a therapist to give your daughter or your wife to read?"

I believe the danger is clearly evident, and yet this is a book among many that promote the so-called recovered memory theory. The results speak for themselves. The Courage to Heal is not a book for those who need healing from abuse. Its philosophy is completely anti-Christian and deadly to a healthy mentality. It should not be recommended to anyone who is struggling! Is it simplistic to encourage a friend to seek Christ in prayer and pray with them for help? I don't think so.

"SIGNS" OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Sue Blumes Secret Survivors, lists some 250 "signs" of sexual abuse. Other authors extend the list of symptoms close to 900. The lists include low self-esteem, "feeling crazy," inability to take risks, taking risks, eating disorders, wearing baggy clothes, phobias, depression, anger issues, fear of dark, desire to change ones name, admitting that at sometime you were abused, denying that you were ever abused. The list is so generic that every single person could claim abuse and every relative and friend could be accused of abusing them.

Individuals are told not to say, "I wasn't abused," but, "I don't remember being abused," which leaves the door open to possible memories which may arise in therapy. Some of these memories would be laughable if it were not that a life is being destroyed by this deceptive therapy.

WHO ARE THE "ABUSED"?

Using statistics gathered by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries, Paul Simpson reveals some alarming figures:
97% of patients were women.

97% were Caucasian.

87% received their first "memories of abuse" while in therapy.

7 months the average age of the first "recalled" abuse (lowered from 3 years of age in 1988).

100% were still in therapy 3 years after the first "memory." 60% were still in therapy 5 years after the first "memory."

10% prior to recovered memory therapy exhibited suicidal ideas or attempts,

67% after therapy began.

10% had been hospitalized prior to therapy,

37% were hospitalized after therapy began

3% had engaged in self-mutilation before therapy,

27% after therapy began.

83% were employed prior to therapy,

10% were still employed after therapy.

77% were married prior to therapy,

48% were divorced or separated 3 years later.

23% lost custody of their children after therapy.

100% after therapy began were estranged from their extended family.

$2,672 was the average cost to the Crime Victim Compensation Program to pay for treatment of patients that did not involve recovered memories.

$12,296 was the average cost to the Crime Victim Compensation Program to pay for treatment of patients that did involve recovered memories.

28% of therapists believe "hypnosis can be used to recover accurate memories of past lives."24

54% of therapists believe that hypnosis can be used to retrieve memories from birth.25

**WILL YOU BE ACCUSED?**

Many will answer, "Of course not. I have never abused anyone, so how can I be accused?"

Under normal circumstances this would be enough. But when you are dealing with a subject as sensitive as sexual abuse, you might be surprised. In almost all crimes a person is considered innocent until proved guilty, but with sexual abuse, once a person is accused, the verdict is guilty! Even if the accusations are proved to be false, the stigma of the accusation hangs on and on.

Starting about the mid eighties there was a tremendous jump in cases of SA tied to the "recovery movement." Many psychotherapists got onto the bandwagon for various reasons. No doubt some saw the potential for extended income, others may not have done sufficient homework to see whether the philosophy of "recovered or repressed memory" was even logical. As a result, a terrible disaster is taking place.

Those who are particularly vulnerable to being accused are fathers, grandfathers, uncles, teachers, ministers, and anyone else who works with young people. With repressed memory
therapy the accusations do not normally arise until many years later.

**SAD COMMENTARY**

As Adventists we should be the most alert to the devil's deceptions. We have been warned; but sadly some Adventist therapists have supported this type of therapy. We have had numerous individuals within our denomination who have been accused via RM therapy. This type of therapy is a convenient tool in the hands of those who wish to remove a person from employment. Scientific evidence has been lacking, but there is plenty of anecdotal evidence that the accusation alone can get a person fired/released from denominational employment. This is sad! As Christians we of all people need to make sure that what a person is accused of is factual before any action is taken. Never should we label a person a sexual abuser if the evidence is lacking. And if true, we need not air dirty laundry in public. Except for the grace of God, everyone's laundry could be written in the sky for all to read. Those who have had to pay the price of these false accusations need to be exonerated. If they have been dishonored publicly, is it too much to ask the church to use the same medium to clear their name? We promote fairness, forgiveness, and love. Let's exemplify it! Remember you could be next.

**CONCLUSION**

I have touched only the tip of this iceberg. Much more could be brought out such as Satanic ritual abuse (SRA), which incidentally is not a result of secular counselors who do not believe in a devil. Another area is Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD) now known as Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). People are being encouraged to cater to their "inner child" as it "needs" healing. "Learn to love yourself so you can love others." Past-life regression therapy is also taking place to find out what is bothering a person today.

"As a society we seem hooked on periodic witch-hunting, where common sense gets ditched, the truth recklessly improvised and hysteria takes root." 26 "Militant feminism stands prominentalbeit not alonein this sad drama. Its fixed romance of victimhood, anti-male mythologies and the general din of unchallenged misandry have both fed, and fed upon this awful virus."

We are living in the last days and in the presence of a roaring and deceptive lion! A clear warning sign needs to be placed wherever the psychological world is working. It should read: "Buyer Beware: The value of materials or services you are about to purchase are far over-stated and over-priced, and they have been found to be tainted with a deadly virus. Individuals and their extended families are being torn apart for this world and the next."

This is the message of Paul in Colossians 2:8-10: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."

**NOTES**


5. Dineen, p. 137.

6. Seth Farber, *Unholy Madness: The Church's Surrender to Psychiatry* (Downers Grove, Ill.:
InterVarsity Press, 1999), p. 11.


10. Ibid., p. 126.


24. Ibid., p. 8.


27. Ibid.