

CHAPTER 1
What Is Soul Care?
(David G. Benner)

Soul care can be defined as the support and restoration of the depth and totality of the well-being of person.

Most civilizations, for example the Greek and early Roman, in history have made soul care a religious specialization until the present. The care of soul has understood slightly different ways from each culture and each religion. In each case that involved can be described as "the sustaining and curative treatment of persons that beyond the requirement in the life of animal."

The Old Testament image of the shepherd is the one of the most powerful biblical images for one who cares for the souls of others. For example, the prophet Ezekiel presents the soul shepherd as one who leads and guides the sheep. The prophet arranges their food, ensures their safety, heals the sick, and finds the lost (Ezek. 34:2-16).

In the history of soul care, Jesus is the model soul shepherd. He is understood to be a moral teacher, and in the tradition of the priests, scribes, prophets, and wise men of Judaism. Jesus' approach to soul care was based upon His conviction of the immense worth of persons. The importance of soul care is emphasized in Jesus' teaching regarding the offense against the soul of a new convert. Jesus once said that it is better to be weighted with a millstone and dropped into the sea than to cause a young convert to sin (Mar. 9:42)

Soul care in Christianity, two components have always been central: the response to the need of a remedy for sin and assistance in spiritual growth. In each of the major Christian

traditions, although sin has been understood in different ways. The other element of Christian soul care has been to help the individual's spiritual development. Since the time of Christ, the Christian church made the care of souls one of its primary function.

There may be a way of understanding the master goal of Christian soul care, if we understand the concept of discipline broadly enough. Discipline designed to help directed toward deeply implanting within the character of a people the basic patterns, and sensibilities that govern the culture of the group. Discipline can be thought of as individual and corporate experiences designed to help Christians develop the character of Christ.

Christian soul care can be drawn as follows; First, Christian soul care is not something to do for ourselves, but to do for each other. Second, Christian soul care operates within a moral situation. Third, Christian soul care is concerned not just about individuals, but community. Fourth, Christian soul care provided through the dialogue within the context of a relationship. Fifth, Christian soul care focuses on the whole person, not just on some narrow spiritual aspect of personality. Finally, Christian soul care is to be restricted to the clergy or any other group of people.

CHAPTER 2
The Rise of Therapeutic Soul Care
(David G. Benner)

The shift from the care of souls to the cure of mind is principally associated with rise of modern psychology in the early twentieth century. Both Catholic and Protestant soul care served to pave the way for this development. The Catholic practice of soul care experienced a severe narrowing of focus, becoming concern with decisions about religious vocation. The Protestant, on the other hand, was primarily associated with their emphasis on the priesthood of all believer and the central place of the Bible in personal salvation and spiritual growth.

The most significant force in the movement of soul care from religion to psychology was the seventeenth and eighteen century.

During seventeen and eighteen century, the movement of soul care from religion to psychology was developed significantly, the growth of science and decline of religion were followed in nineteenth century. The great hope of science was that it would provide new solutions to old problems without the trappings of religion. Remove from its foundering basis in religion, the care of souls now rested securely in the hands of modern science.

The pastoral counseling was profoundly influenced by the emerging ascendancy of therapeutic culture. The new psychological sciences offered powerful techniques, while the authority of pastoral counseling was grounded in the office.

It is not the great hope of the church, nor is its basic message the same as the gospel, while therapeutic psychology has much to offer Christian soul care. The church has lost its

reason for existence, if the message and methods of the church are essentially psychological. The church must be careful not to trade its soul for a mess of psychological pottage. While Christian soul care was being influenced by its new rival, the latter was being discovered to be more religious than scientific. Psychology may have indeed become the science without a soul, but therapeutic psychology was much less successful than the religion, its academic counterpart.

Psychotherapy and religion stand in close relationship to each other as the two major sources of modern individual identity formation. Several additional similarities between psychotherapy and religion serve to make psychotherapy fundamentally religious. Therefore, both provide concepts and technologies for the ordering of the interior life and can be thought of as strategies of personal salvation.

The culture of individualism which associated with therapeutic soul care had greater impact. Under the influence of the therapeutic culture, dialogue was transformed into the technical skills of listening and talking. Pastoral counselors and other religious soul curates seem to find new vital ways of offering their care. Therapeutic soul curates may have an advanced level of skill in such things as attending, reflection of feeling, and identification of discrepancies in communication.

Within therapeutic culture, those who guide others in the matters of the soul are those with advance education, specialized technical training, and suitable professional credentialing. Those who are able to draw on the resources of therapeutic psychology will be greatly aided in their work.

CHAPTER 3
The Boundaries of the Soul
(David G. Benner)

Understanding of the nature of persons that best fits the theology, psychological, and medical data is that the care of soul is the care and nurture of the well-being of whole person.

The biblical anthropology discussion usually have taken the form of arguments over the number of basic parts of person. The dichotomists arguing for two-body and soul and the trichotomists arguing for three-body, soul, and spirit. If we confine ourselves to Pauline psychology, we are forced to consider parts of persons with more than two or three. To view , however, these terms as describing several parts of persons is to misunderstand biblical psychology. Body, soul, and spirit are not independent faculties of persons but different ways of seeing and describing the whole person.

Humans are embodied spirits, not a composite of a number of parts. So, there can be no easy division of a person into spiritual and psychological any more than we can divine him into body and soul. Ultimately, humans are only understandable in the light of this primary wholeness.

Therefore, it makes no sense to break persons apart in order to attempt to understand them.

When examined with out materialistic biases, the inner life of persons is clearly seen to reflect the deep intertwining of psychological and spiritual needs and processes. Human personality is of a single, seamless fabric, and personhood is unified in a deep and basic way.

Only by accepting this basic underlying unity is it possible to move toward greater degree of integration of the disparate aspects of personhood.

Treatment is seriously hampered by accepting the veracity of the patient's experience of being a multiplicity of persons inhabiting a single body. Only by helping the patient understand and experience the deeper unity of personality that exists can significant progress toward integration of personality be made.

Recent research in the field of psychoneuroimmunology (the study of the effects of stress on the functioning of the immune system) has made clear in regarding to the relationship between two basic body systems, the central nervous system and the immune system. Both are a complex and communicative network of components that interact among themselves and with external environment.

Other research has pointed to the health that producing effects of living in loving relationship, of positive religious experiences-sense of forgiveness, worship, and a feeling that something ties all of us together and that the parts of one's life are connected.

It is clear that psychological variable can change brain chemistry and subsequently produce body changes. Conversely, the process can also work the opposite way, physiological changes in the body can also change brain chemistry and subsequently modify emotion, thinking, and other psychological variables. These new understandings of health and illness give an obvious evidence of the close interaction of mind and body.

We discover that the soul encompasses all of our personhood, when we examine the boundaries of the soul. Our spirituality emerges out of our minds and bodies and has no independent existence apart from them. Therefore, our relationship with God is mediated by the same psychological processes and mechanisms as those involved in relationships with other people.

Psychological and health and pathology must be understood as involving both spiritual and physical components, and a disembodied psyche is as dangerous as a disembodied spirituality.

The care of persons who are inextricably somatopsychospiritual wholes requires that we view and relate to them as such. Soul care that is worthy of its name should always nurture and care for person's inner psychospiritual life and its environment that influenced by physical and external realities.

CHAPTER 4
Psychology and Spirituality
(David G. Benner)

It is very important for anyone who desires to provide soul care to understand the relationship between spiritual and psychological aspects of persons.

It might be profitable to reflect briefly on the mutual suspicion, misunderstanding, and animosity that has viewed the relationship between psychology and religion over the past century.

Instead of viewing the simplest or most basic explanation of any phenomenon higher levels of analysis and their respective explanations, the various levels of explanation should be viewed as complementary to each other.

Properly understood psychology and religion are recognized to stand in close relation to each other because of their share interest in solution the human predicament. Psychology and religion do not deal with different kinds of reality or even with totally different domains of human experience.

We need a view of spirituality that situates such experience within the overall framework of psychospiritual functions and processes of personality. To gain an understanding, we should briefly view the contributions of theorists working within four system of psychology that have been sympathetic to human spirituality: analytical psychology, we-psychology, existential psychology, and contemplative psychology.

In analytical psychology, Jung taught that spiritual and psychological health both depend on an open relationship between conscious and unconscious forces in personality is also a major contribution to spirituality. Therefore, psychology appears to make significant contributions to an understanding of spirituality in general.

We-Psychology; Kunkel suggests that this is the meaning of Christ's paradoxical teaching that he who would save his life must lose it. He suggests that the way we do this always involves finding one's place within the service of the we; that is through commitment to and engagement with others. Spiritual is here understood as self-transcendence and self-surrender, concepts much more central to Christian spirituality than self-fulfillment or individuation.

Existential psychology is not so much a specific set of theories as it is a general approach to psychology. As a group, Danish theologian and philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, the essential approaches stand in opposition to those systems of psychology. Ignoring human essence, the abstraction of certain schools of philosophy and psychology. Existential psychologists focus on human existence and issues such as the establishment of meaning and purpose for life. These and related issues move existential psychologists into the very heart of spirituality.

Kierkegaard viewed person as spirit, the absolute of all that person can be. He asserted that self must be grounded in some thing outside itself and that true selfhood is only possible by being grounded in God.

Finch suggests that the human quality observed by these theorists is the *imago dei*, that is, our imaging of God. He offers the term spirit as the most suitable one to describe this aspect of persons. Finch defines spirit as "that quality which characterized man as self-transcendent, free, and responsible, and which is unique to man." Christian existential psychotherapy is to encourage persons seeking help to find and develop their true self, this being their spirit.

According to Van Kaam, true spirituality exclude mere imitation or conformity. Christianity has often missed this central truth, assuming that as we become like Christ we become more similar to each other. He asserts that this is fundamental error; the more we grow in Christ, the more we should find and express the uniqueness of Christ in us.

According to May, the keystone of contemplative spirituality is what he calls the "unitive experience." It is a momentary loss of self-definition accompanied by some degree of self-transcendence.

May suggests the spiritual quest to be a search for our toots. Human spiritual longing is realizing that we have forgotten who we are and searching for our place. He points out that psychology cannot address this quest, only religion can help us understand such spiritual questing.

Humans in and of themselves appear to incomplete. Our deepest yearning appear to drive us beyond ourselves for their fulfillment. These yearnings are usually called spiritual yearnings because their satisfaction requires that we transcend the ordinary modes of life.

All the theorists seem to agree that spirituality is associated with an integration of interior life and external behavior. All also agree that this includes moving beyond the false selves that we create and then confuse with our true life. The spiritual quest is thus understood as the quest for our place and for our identity.

CHAPTER 5
Christian Spirituality
(David G. Benner)

It might be helpful to be clear on what is meant by spirituality, before developing a Christian perspective on this matter.

Spirituality can be defined as the human quest for and experience of meaning, God, and the other. Spirituality is an expression of a yearning for connections that we unconsciously recognize will clarify the meaning of our existence and secure our identity and its fulfillment.

Religious spirituality involves a relationship with the power or being who serves as the focus of self-transcendence and meaning for life. The essence of Christian spirituality is the deep relationship with God that occurs when the human spirit is grounded in the Holy Spirit.

The variety of ways in which Christians have learned to experience God can be profitably viewed in relationship to two bipolar scales: a kataphatic/apophatic scale and a speculative/affective scale. The first two dimensions explain techniques of spiritual growth while the last two describe the primary focus of these techniques.

Kataphatic and apophatic refer to the two classic approaches to meditation. Kataphatic spirituality is based on the active use of the imagination. Christian identifies positive image of God and uses these images as a tool for meditation. Apophatic spirituality, on the other hand, is based on an emptying technique of meditation. Rather than focusing on images that symbolize some aspect of God, it emphasizes on what God is not. God is not merely a heavenly father, He is much more than this.

The speculative/affective scale is the second dimension to understand the variety of ways in which Christians approach God and expect to meet Him in their lives. Speculative spirituality emphasized encountering God with the mind usually associated with a rational and propositional theology. Unlike speculative spirituality, affective spirituality emphasizes a direct encounter with God in experience. God is met in the heart rather than in the head.

There are numerous distinctive characteristics in Christian spirituality. As we attempt to better understand the spiritual context within which Christian soul care is offered, the following characteristics should be considered: 1) Christian spirituality begins with a response to the call of Spirit to spirit. 2) Christian spirituality is rooted in a commitment to Jesus and a transformational approach to life. 3) Christian spirituality is nurtured by the means of grace. 4) Christian spirituality involves a deep knowing of Jesus and, through him, the Father and the Spirit.

5) Christian spirituality requires a deep knowing of oneself. 6) Christian spirituality leads to the realization of the unique self whom God ordained we should be. 7) Christian spirituality is uniquely developed within the context of suffering. 8) Christian spirituality is manifest by a sharing of the goodness of God's love with others and in care for his creation. 9) Christian spirituality expresses that goodness in celebration in Christian community.

Christian spirituality should apparently relate to all of life and affect all of life. Our spirituality infuses and permeates all aspects of our being, it cannot be divorced from any aspect of life. Our spirituality is the relationship of our total selves to God. Being in relationship with God

allows us to find our true identity, our meaning, and our life.

CHAPTER 6
The Psychospiritual Focus of Soul Care
(David G. Benner)

In their inner persons, humans are psychospiritual being. The term psychospiritual refers to the fact that the inner world has not separate spiritual and psychological compartment. Those who seek to care for others in their depths and totality must understand between psychological and spiritual aspects of person. They must learn to recognize psychospiritual dynamics as they involve with both health and pathology. Most importantly, they must learn to discern the spiritual face, and the psychological face of those that appear to be simply a spiritual one.

Understanding of spirituality development suggests that everyone experience spiritual longings in one form or another. We often discern a spiritual quest at their core, if we examine these needs carefully. Understanding and recognizing this spiritual core allows us to nourish a response to the needs that is spiritual, not just psychological.

The quest for identity is also a manifestation of the quest for place. If we look at the pattern of our lives, it is often possible to discern and search for our place as basic and fundamental topic. We have forgotten who we are and where we belong. We all searching for home, and this searching a very central part of our spiritual questing.

We all yearn for deep and meaningful connection with others, although some people seem to function without intimacy or personal relationships. Technology offers the possibility of not just connections things to things but also people to people. It does offer another means of

establishing interpersonal relatedness. Connectedness is basic to spirituality. We need to be connected to other people and to the world around us.

To search for happiness is something with which most people can easily identify. We will recognize happiness when we find it to be our undeniable right. To pursue happiness as a primary goal appears to be a self-defeating venture. The search for happiness is a spiritual search. It is a longing for all there is to life, for fullness of life, and fullness of personhood. Happiness is a call to the deep joy in life that is found when one discovers one's place, purpose, and identity in relationship with God.

There are many different ways to define success. The most common way is to equate it with financial, social, power, or occupational status. Like happiness, success is an illusory goal when defined in terms of accomplishments or possessions.

The quest for success is not a bad quest, it is merely misdirected. The quest for success, like all human strivings and longings, is reflective of a basic desire that is good but has become distorted. When this longing is directed toward accomplishments rather than a quality of life, it is a false spiritual direction that ultimately proves unsatisfying.

Perfectionism is not usually seen as a virtue by psychologists. As we see in professional people, perfectionists are usually tight, rigid characters in whom the perfectionistic longings serve to strangle creativity and energy. Perfectionists are persons with admirably high standard of excellence, who are not easily contented with halfhearted effort.

The desire to be perfect is a good and basic aspect of our humanity. The road to perfection, however, is fraught with frustration unless we operate within a framework of grace. Apart from grace, our ideals are so hopelessly beyond our ability to perform that we will forever caught in frustration and a sense of failure. The quest for perfection is a spiritual quest and a

quest for wholeness. Perfectionistic longings continuously remind us of our failings and limitations. Without these reminds, we would easily forget the place for which we long.

The quest for truth and justice is very real to a large number of people who have not yet yielded to this message of relativism and despair. Many who still search for truth and justice are young people who have not yet lost their idealism.

Sometimes we find ourselves avoiding from justice, fearing that we may not receive the fairness under a truly just administration. The oppressed millions of the world today crying out for justice, seeing their only hope to depend on a fair judge who will recognize the unfairness of the present situation and bring justice. The quest for justice is the quest for the kingdom of God, a kingdom where justice will be the result of the just reign of God.

We appreciate God in Creation. God created from nothing, we take what He made and creativity refashion it in order to make and enjoy beauty. The quest for beauty is a need of human, to fail to experience the appreciation of beauty is to be less than fully human.

Stimulation is the most readily available diversion from restlessness. Through stimulation we are able to relax and let go the pressures of our busy day. The escape is not simply from our pressures but from our inner selves. In order to hear the quiet voice of our inner self, we must turn down the noise level of the external sources of noise in our life.

Our quest for stimulation is not so much the direct experience of our spirituality as it is the experience of our attempts to run from our spirituality. The pursuit of stimulation is the way in which we drown out the quiet inner voice that speaks. Unless we listen to rather than run from this restlessness, we never will understand its meaning of spiritual growth. To grow spiritually we must be able to be still.

We live in an age that attempts to eliminate mystery. Unexplained today event assumed to be new discovery of tomorrow. Spiritual and mystery are closely related. Mystery may not

always be spiritual, but a spirituality that does not have space for mystery is shallow and impoverished. Mystery surrounds us, we can ignore it, get angry at it, or learn to love it and allow it to lead us into a deep experience of life.

It is important to learn to discern the spiritual significance of matter that appear to be simply psychological, and also the psychological dimension of matters that appear to be simply spiritual. Because the spiritual is always embedded in the psychological.

Trust in God is a Psychospiritual commitment, made possible by the development of the capacity for trust and facilitated by the gift of faith. The gift of faith will need to be accompanied by the experience of Psychospiritual healing. Bringing a Psychospiritual focus to our soul care dialogue means learning to discern the psychological face of spiritual discourse and gently helping the person explore this face. Those who care for souls must be continuously active in grounding spiritual in embodied personhood.

Psychospiritual health is see in very aspect of a person's life. Increasing psychospiritual health involves becoming more fully alive and living life. Psychospiritual health reflected in movement from willfulness to willingness, from a life of control to one of surrender to the will of God. Psychological and spiritual growth are inextricably intertwined. It genuinely helps our psychological growth and has the potential to be equally good for us spiritually. Similarly, true spiritual growth should be good for us psychologically.

CHAPTER 7
Dialogue in Soul Care
(David G. Benner)

At least at some basic level, most people capable of carrying on a conversation, and even more are capable of verbal communication. Dialogue is exploration and discovery through conversational engagement, it is share inquiry that is designed to increase awareness, understating, and insight.

On a number of dimensions, dialogue and debate hold apposite ends of a scale on which discussion and conversation hold more intermediate positions. Discussion being closer to debate and conversation being closer to dialogue.

Debates are about formally agreed upon topics, they are the most structured and combative form of verbal interaction.

Discussion can be described as seeking convergence, even though in reality they often produce divergence.

Conversation can be pictured as two people chatting about what ever comes into their mind. They may speak of feelings, thoughts, the weather, upcoming plans, their relationship, politics, mutual acquaintances, books read, or movies seen.

Dialogue strives for the engagement of two or more persons in way that honors both their separateness and their connectedness. It is supports the development of each participant's ever deepening understandings of self, others, and the issues being explored.

Therapeutic soul care has come too far in its understanding of the importance of listening to tolerate simple interrogation. Good therapeutic listening begins with serious attention to the actual words spoken by the other.

Listening requires active engagement and some inner, silent processing of what is being heard. While listening at the first level of the manifest content, the therapist must ask of all statement.

To listen at the second level, the level of the other's phenomenological experience, is to listen empathically in the manner. It designed to allow one to understand the internal frame of reference and experience of the other.

The listening to one's own phenomenological experience is the final level of psychotherapeutic listening.

The clinical nature of therapeutic soul care threatens genuine dialogue by predisposing those who offer such care to focus on problems and their solution. Problem improvement is much too narrow an end for dialogue that is directed toward the care and nurture of persons in their psychospiritual core. A narrow focus on difficulties always compromises the richness of such dialogue.

Describing the difficulty of achieving genuine dialogue within therapeutic conversation, psychotherapists often give others technical aid without entering into relationship with them. We can perceive the other person as whole and unique only through the attitude of a partner and not through that reductive, analytical and derivative look that prevails today.

The challenge of pastoral conversation is to find a path between listening to the other and speaking for God that does not confuse dialogue, if the challenge of therapeutic conversation is not to allow reductionistic analysis and deep encounter of two people. The pastor's call to proclaim God's Word is associated with what is probably the greatest contribution. The pastoral

conversation can make non-pastoral soul care as the reminder of the importance of moral inquiry in soul care dialogue.

Dialogue is a direct engagement with person, it is not an encounter with information about another person. It takes courage to respond to the invitation to share oneself with another person. Genuine dialogue is an intimate encounter, it is not for those who lack the courage to honestly engage with another. Often, dialogue is impaired by a need for control. One can control interviews and conversations, but must surrender by a need for control. We create opportunities for dialogue and participate in it, we do not create dialogue or control it.

Approaching a relationship of soul care with the understanding that the essence of what is involves in dialogue may be both liberating and terrifying. Several practical suggestions for providing soul care facilitate the possibility of dialogue and how the conversation should be directed are as follows: 1. Dialogue is facilitate by personal preparation. 2. The focus of soul care dialogue should be the inner experience of the one receiving care. 3. Listen for the imbedded spiritual significance of whatever is being discussed. 4. Listen with respect. 5. Attend to your own experience in the dialogue. 6. Invite moral reflection on the matters under discussion. 7. Don't be afraid of judicious advice, suggestions, or offerings of direction.

CHAPTER 8
Dreams, the Unconscious, and the Language of the Soul
(David G. Benner)

Dreams are not only way of knowing our innermost thoughts and feelings. Dreams are unique in the direct access they give to this world and for this reason are often a very appropriate and helpful part of soul care dialogue.

Christians sometimes relate to the unconscious with a good deal of suspicion. Viewing it as the dark and sinful aspect of self, they equate the unconscious with our fallen nature-sin. Biblical reference to the deceitfulness of the heart are taken as support for such a view. It is quite problematic to equate the unconscious with sin. Both conscious and unconscious are wonderful gift, they are every bit a part of God's good creation.

Properly understood, the unconscious can be seen to be the source of spiritual experience: of vision, of prophecies, of the still small voice, and of the sense of the God's presence. The unconscious is the place wherein we have our primary meeting with God. We may think conscious thoughts and confess consciously held beliefs about God, but our actual experience of Him is primarily unconscious. The unconscious should not be seen as a closed system driven by previous experience, but rather as an open system that is uniquely receptive to and expressive of creative, non-rational, and spiritual matters.

The unconscious has a crucial role to play in our health and wholeness, not only has an important role to play in facilitating our experience in responding to God. One of the most important things we have learned from depth psychology is that there can be no wholeness apart

from the redemption of the unconscious. Listening to our dreams, or any messages of our unconscious mind, will unavoidable confront us with things that will be unpleasant. This is the reason why openness to the contents of our unconscious requires courage.

Dreams are the means with which we have the most regular contact, they are not only way in which we can listen to our unconscious messages.

Dream are usually first discussed in soul care as part of the encouragement of regular journal writing. To keep a journal is one of the easiest way to begin to attend to the messages of the soul. To be useful for psychospiritual growth, journal writing needs to focus on inner life; feelings, fantasies, reactions, intuitions, vagrant thoughts, troubling attitudes, and puzzling experiences.

Journal writing may be impossible to do daily, while such a highly disciplined approach works well for some people. The challenge is to establish a habit of reflection and writing that fits with rhythms and demands of one's life. Some people include Bible study insight, while the others include their written prayer.

There is a general agreement on the basic principle and techniques of dream work, while there is no comprehensive theory of dreams. The following are eight basic principles for the use of dreams in Christian soul care dialogue that can be identified. 1) Welcome dreams as a gift from God. 2) Recognize that some dreams are more profitable for dream work than others. 3) Recognize that, with the help of God, the dreamer is the one best able to discern the significance of the dream. 4) View the dream as offering questions rather than answers, advice, or prophetic revelations. 5) View dreams as parables. 6) Pay particular attention to repetitions. 7) Recognize that people and objects in dreams usually are best understood as representing parts of self. 8) Undertake dream work within a context of the Christian disciplines and community.

Having a journal and pen readily available to receive dreams as an evidence of communications from God. Just before falling asleep, be prepared for work with dreams by inviting God to speak whatever way He chooses. Upon awakening, it is necessary to record the dreams as soon as possible before they fade away.

Basic techniques how to prepare for dream work can be described as follows; 1) Immediately upon awakening after significant dream, write a dream report. 2) At the earliest possible good time for reflection, give the dream a title and identify its theme, dominant affects, and the major questions that it raises. 3) Make opportunities for prayer, Scripture study, and reflection on questions suggested by the dream.

In addition to the basic techniques, the advance techniques of preparation for dream work are as follows; 4) Pay careful attention to the details of the dream and write down your associations to each major symbol. 5) Identify and pay particular attention to your dream ego. 6) Conduct an imaginary conversation with the dream ego.

There are many other dream work techniques, but these six should provide enough for all of those who are highly experienced in dream work. The great danger of techniques is that they can depersonalize and mechanize dream work. At their best, they are ways of structuring an encounter with one's deepest self guided by the Spirit of God. This is the wonderful and rich role of dream work in Christian soul care.

CHAPTER 9
Forms of Christian Soul Care
(David G. Benner)

A large range of people are involved in the Christian care of souls. For example, parents, friends, teachers, clergy, lay counselors, authors, psychotherapists, health care professionals, chaplains, laity providing pastoral care, and spiritual directors. Christian soul care is very important to be left to any one group of people.

The most basic form of Christian soul care is that provided by family and friends. Usually, people do not think of themselves as providing soul care, when they care for each other within these intimate personal relationships.

Regardless of what steps need to be take, most families can readily identify things they need to do move toward making the family a network of deep soul friendships. If Christian soul care is to start at home, there is a great need for people to learn the art of dialogue. It starts with developing the skills of deep empathic listening.

Mutual soul care is people caring for others in their lives and helping them care more adequately for themselves. Mutual soul care involves balanced and alternating giving and receiving. It is also involves reciprocal intimacy and vulnerability.

The relationship in mutual soul care can involve as few as two people but can also occur within small groups as well. Those who are able to care for the souls of others are those who know their own inner worlds and maturity to reach out to others with love. This is the exciting potential of relationships of mutual soul care.

The pastoral care is the first of the more formal expressions of Christian soul care. Pastoral care is a ministry of compassion, its source and motivation being the love of God. Pastoral care includes things such as visiting the sick, attending to the dying, comforting the bereaved, supporting the struggling, assisting those who are facing difficulties of any kind, preaching, administering the sacraments.

Pastoral care includes much broader than pastoral counseling. Pastoral care offers the gift of Christian love and nurture from one who attempts to mediate the gracious presence of God to another who is in need. Pastoral care has more potential for soul care than cure.

A lay counseling is a developed professional counseling that has in some sectors of the church. Lay counselors are usually people who are neither clergy nor professional counselors. Lay counselors are not really well qualified for the vital work of soul care because they have limited training in therapeutic methods. In general, lay counselors play a very significant role in a soul care that is primarily directed toward spiritual growth, since they are sincere Christians, caring and sensitive individuals.

In the past five decades, Christian counseling has been a major growth industry. Christian counseling has quickly made its mark on churches around the world. Christian counselors offer their soul care on a variety of basic and within a range of contexts.

Christian counseling has great potential as a component in the spectrum of Christian soul care options. Its practitioners have more understanding of psychological dynamics and better training in therapeutic dialogue than lay counselors and those offering pastoral care. Christian counselors could offer care that would be more intensive than that typically associated with lay counselors and other providers of pastoral care.

Pastoral counseling is provided by someone who is or was a pastor. In general, pastoral counseling may be distinguished from more general Christian counseling. Pastoral counselors

have their training not just broad theological preparation but also often includes supervised clinical pastoral education. Therefore, pastoral counselors have a number of advantages over other counselors.

Spiritual direction seeks to help individuals find their ground in God and to live their lives out of that ground. The focus of spiritual direction is experience not the ideas, which means that the experience of God is the goal, not developing certain understandings of the experience. It seeks to foster a personal knowing of and response of God.

Unlike pastoral counseling, the focus of spiritual direction is not problem but growth. Spiritual direction holds a unique place in the spectrum of Christian soul care activities. Spiritual direction is very helpful for people receiving counseling that does not openly explore the spiritual implications of such work from a Christian perspective. Spiritual direction is also helpful for those who seek to provide the other forms of Christian soul care.

Christian psychotherapy has great potential as soul care and cure. Christian psychotherapists work from a dualistic view of the world and of the nature of the inner life of person. Too often, this potential is once gain not always realized.

Psychotherapy focuses on matter of the inner life form a psychological perspective. Psychotherapy may lead persons into a place of readiness for spiritual growth and may even help them take important steps toward God. Christian psychotherapy combines the spiritual resources of the Christian life with the psychological resources of depth psychology to effect radical and deep repair of psychospiritually damaged soul.

Intensive soul care assumes that the separation of the tasks of care and cure of souls is both arbitrary and unnecessary if sufficient time, intensity, and intentional ability can be brought to the effort. There is no need to choose between the psychological focus of Christian psychotherapy and the spiritual focus of spiritual direction. The components of intensive soul

care that receive the most intense work are: 1) The deep knowing of Jesus and, through him, the Father and Holy Spirit. 2) The deep knowing of self, including the identification of false selves that interfere with our response to God and maintain our egocentricity. 3) The discovery and actualization of one's true self in Christ.

In either case, intensive soul care retreats are conducted on an individualized basis, although group retreats can often accomplish many of the same goals. The retreats can be for as a short time as a weekend or as long as three weeks. The retreats do offer the possibility of integrated soul work that gives equal attention to the spiritual and psychological aspects of functioning.

Each of the expressions of Christian soul care has distinctives, advantages, and limitations.

While some relationships are primarily oriented toward the cure of damaged souls, others are oriented toward the care and nurture of anyone who seeks spiritual growth. None of Christian soul care can do the whole job, and none is superior to another, they complement each other. Each should be embraced and redeemed as the church seeks to restore soul care to a place of centrality in its life and mission-cooperation should replace competition.

CHAPTER 10
Challenges of Christian Soul Care
(David G. Benner)

In God's kingdom, there can be no higher calling than that of the care and nurture of people whose worth is forever secure by having been created in His image and redeemed by the death of His only Son. In the New Testament, Jesus once said, "What is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mat. 16:26). There is no higher calling than that associated with the care of souls.

In reality, nothing qualifies anyone to receive God's call except the fact of that call. God looks on the heart, not external, therefore, his call will often be surprising. God calls whom He chooses and equips those whom He calls. The following seven characteristics are ideals for those who seek to serve God through the care of souls. 1) Those who care for souls should possess a deep and genuine love for people. 2) Those who care for souls should be people who are trustworthy and who are capable of trusting others. 3) Those who care for souls should be spiritually and psychologically mature. 4) Those who care for souls should be characterized by genuineness, honesty, interpersonal accessibility, internal congruence, and candor. 5) Those who care for souls should have a deep experiential knowing of God's grace. 6) Those who care for souls should be characterized by deep faith that light will overcome darkness. 7) Those who care for souls should be characterized by wisdom and humility.

Few vocations are as demanding as the care of souls. In actuality, the demands of soul care extended well beyond having much more to do with being than doing. The demands of

Christian soul care can be described as follows: 1) Soul care demands truthfulness. Superficially understood, this appears to be a simple requirement to not tell lies. 2) Soul guides must continue to grow. Commitment to living the truth is a commitment to growth and development. 3) Soul care also demands that its practitioners not seek gratification of their personal needs within soul care relationships.

Christian soul guides follow their Lord down a path of self-sacrifice that will inevitably be personally costly. Christian soul guides take Christ as their example and approach the care of the souls of others prepared or such care to be often personally costly for them.

The challenge of Christian soul care that offering distinctively to those who have retained an identification with the church is great. There is, for all of these challenges, both a hunger and great need for soul care that is offered in an authentically Christian manner. These seven challenges must be confronted by Christians who seek to care of the souls of others in such a manner. They must: 1) guard against the erosion of the personal in such care 2) develop an integrated inner core 3) continuously renew their own inner psychospiritual resources 4) not allow professionalism to dilute a sense of Christian vocation 5) rediscover the formative and transforming power of story 6) recover the uniquely Christian resources of soul care 7) avoid sacrificing *being* on the altar of *doing*.

This is the reason that *being* is more important than *doing* in the life of those who seek to offer Christian soul care. More importantly, soul guides must learn to embrace solitude and must develop a solitude of the heart.

CHAPTER 11
Receiving Soul Care
(David G. Benner)

Everyone needs soul care, in answering to the question "Who needs soul care?" We, humans, are social creatures, we need each others in order to live our lives. More importantly, we need others if we are to live our lives out of our depths.

At some point in their lives, most people need one of the more specialized forms of soul care, all people need relationships of mutual care. Four groups of people in particular should recognize their need for such care: 1) those who seek to provide soul care themselves 2) those who seek freedom from inner bondage 3) those who seek greater depths of psychospiritual maturity and vitality 4) those who seek assistance in developing a moral perspective on their lives.

Mutual soul care forms the sustaining base of our psychospiritual growth and this must be supplemented by more intensive forms of care.

Some general principles, the best form of care can provide a framework that may help in making the choice, it is obviously determined by the needs and circumstances of the one seeking care. In choosing the best form of soul care, the following characteristics of care should be taken into consideration: 1) Those who provide soul care should themselves have an experience of receiving the form of care they provide. 2) Those who provide soul care themselves should also experience a form of care that complements the primary focus of that which they provide.

3) The greater the sphere of one's influence over others, the greater the need for a form and intensity of soul care that ensures deep and genuine knowing of both self and God. 4) The presence of significant distress indicates a need to select a form of soul care with a therapeutic focus. 5) A desire for spiritual growth suggests that one consider a relationship of spiritual direction. 6) Prior experiences with one form of soul care should suggest consideration of another form when the need next arises. 7) As a general rule, one should not simultaneously engage in multiple therapeutic soul care relationships.

Choosing the right soul guide is often quite challenging. To search for a soul guide often begins with a recommendation of friend who names someone he or she has found helpful. Sometimes the choices are limited, maybe to one's pastor and a Christian counselor in one's church or community.

Regardless of whom we select, view the decision to undertake such work as open to ongoing review. It means that if we are not getting the help we desire, we should clearly communicate this fact to the person with whom we are working. We should not terminate the relationship the moment we are unhappy with something about the soul guide or the process. But if we continue to feel we are not getting the help we need and desire, don't be afraid to discontinue the relationship and seek help from someone else.

Christian soul care involves a deep engagement with oneself, with God, and another person. Preparation for soul care should also involve reflection on one's spiritual life. One should take care to balance a focus on self with a focus on God before and during the receipt of care. Preparation for soul care should also include reflection on one's relationships.

Searching the right person to provide soul care and preparing for the receipt of that care are only the beginning of the process. In order to make the dialogue rewarding and the

experience successful, the challenge of maintaining the honesty, courage, vulnerabilities, and commitment to truth and growth are necessary.

The experience of receiving soul care should make us more capable of caring for both our own souls as well as the souls of others. The interaction between the giving and receiving of care to self and others is rich and multidirectional. In caring for our own souls, we are better able to care for those of others, and caring for others. By giving and receiving it, we become more whole and are blessed by being able to participate in the growth of others.
