1

The Cross-Cultural Counselor

A Theology of Presence

"Hitherto most people have accepted their cultures as fate, like climate or vernacular; but our empathic awareness of the exact modes of many cultures is itself a liberation from them as prisons. We can now live, not just amphibiously, in divided and distinguished worlds, but in many worlds and cultures simultaneously. We are no more committed to one culture—to a single ratio among the human senses—any more than to one book or language or technology. Compartmentalizing of human potential by single cultures will soon be as absurd as specialism in subject or discipline has become."

—Marshall McLuhan, 1962

EMPATHY–INTERPATHY
Two Classic Chinese Stories

Once upon a time, I, Chuang-tzu, dreamed I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man.

Suddenly, I awoke, and there I lay, myself again.

Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.

Chuang-tzu the philosopher and Hui-tzu the logician were strolling one day on the bridge over the river Hao.

Chuang-tzu said, "Look how the minnows dart hither and thither where they will. Such is the pleasure that fish enjoy."

Hui-tzu said, "You are not a fish. How do you know what gives pleasure to fish?"

Chuang-tzu said, "You are not I. How do you know that I do not know what gives pleasure to fish?"

Hui-tzu said, "If because I am not you, I cannot know whether

you know, then equally because you are not a fish, you cannot know what gives pleasure to fish. My argument still holds."

Chuang-tzu said, "Let us go back to where we started. You asked me how I knew what gives pleasure to fish. But you already knew how I knew it when you asked me. You knew that I knew it by standing here on the bridge at Hao."

Chuang-tzu said, in gathering all wisdom into unity, "Heaven and earth live with me; the ten thousand things and I are one." We do not watch the Way, we participate in it. We do not observe nature and life, we enter it empathically so that subject and object are one.

enviable

"One who knows but one culture knows no culture." We are born into culture as we are born to the atmosphere of planet Earth. The biosphere welcomes us, surrounds us, sustains us. It makes life possible, even as it nourished and supported those who gave us birth. Yet just as our life-giving atmosphere is invisible to us until we meet another one (a smoke-filled room perhaps, a smog-clouded city, or a temple filled with incense), so culture becomes visible on the boundary, in comparison, in contrast.

Anyone who knows only one culture knows no culture. In coming to know a second or a third culture, one discovers how much that was taken to be reality is actually an interpretation of realities that are seen in part and known in part; one begins to understand that many things assumed to be universal are local, thought to be absolute are relative, seen as simple are complex; one finds that culture shapes what we perceive, how we perceive it, and which perceptions will be retained and utilized; one realizes that culture defines both what is valued and which values will be central and which less influential.

startling but true!

Knowing another culture may free one from or freeze one to the culture of origin. When the knowledge of contrasting perspectives shatters illusions and perforates old boundaries, the collision of cultures may forge new central commitments that weld old assumptions into new patterns. But the encounter with another culture can result in freezing old boundaries, in confirming biases, in asserting the superiority of one's own assumptions, and thus in reinforcing the cultural encapsulation of an unexamined worldview. Cultural values held as central commitments can free us and provide a flexible resilience. Cultural views maintained as external boundaries isolate and encapsulate us.

Culture is a given to the human person. It simply is in our origins. To become culturally effective is a gift, a gift received through learning from other cultures, through being teachable in encounters with those who differ, and through coming to esteem other worldviews equally with one's own.

If we are to continue life on this planet, we cannot exist within isolated cultural, national, or racial boundaries. Industrialization, the communications revolution, the exploding population, and the resultant economic interdependency of all nations have brought us to the point where we are

indispensable to one another across all boundaries. This awareness is dawning on us slowly and has not yet permeated education, psychology, or (obviously) political science, although it is already self-evident in the world of economics. The old nationalism, we are coming to recognize, is an obsolete residue of nineteenth-century romanticism that is of no help in the emerging interdependent world. A new nationalism is evolving that expresses a people's longing to live self-directed political lives in concert with other nations, to direct their economic and social improvement in cooperation with other nations, to protect their interests against imperialism from other nations. Ethnic, cultural, religious, and racial backgrounds can become heritages to be prized, protected, nourished, and cherished, as guides for life-style, but not as boundaries, barriers, or blocks to communication and cooperation between peoples.

Every discipline must contribute to this movement from a mutually exclusive world of competing nations to an inclusive world of collaborating peoples. The snail's pace of ideological change, compared to rapid shifts in technological and economic realms, must incite us to revolutionary thinking and excite radical caring about the future of humankind. Psychological anthropology has laid the groundwork for an interface of the studies of personal, interpersonal, cultural, and intercultural dynamics. Pastoral counseling has barely begun to think about the contribution it can offer from its standpoint at the conjunction of psychology, psychotherapy, theology, philosophy, ethics, missiology, sociology, and anthropology. No other field stands at the conjoint boundaries of eight great disciplines. Pastoral counseling's opportunity and responsibility at the end of the twentieth century are great if it is to contribute not to the end of this millennium but to the beginning of the next.

Other fields are recognizing the absolute necessity of such creative work on the boundaries of our discipline. Harry Triandis, a cross-cultural psychologist, writes (1979:392):

> If humankind survives, cross-cultural psychology will become a central activity for all psychology. Psychological theories will have to use universally valid propositions. However, such theories may well include parameters that reflect the major ecological, economic, and sociocultural variations.

This is a time for pastoral theologians to claim the unique vantage point offered by their integrative stance and multidisciplinary training and vision. It is a crucial position for contributing to the central agenda of our age. And it must begin with a shift in the way we define the essential nature of pastoral counseling and a broadened model of the pastoral counselor as a person, as a professional, and as a culturally capable therapist.

The Culturally Capable Counselor

The ability to join another in his or her culture while fully owning one's own requires a broadened vision of the task of facilitating human

growth and healing. Clinical skills within a culture are not sufficient. Cultural skills that transcend and thus can participate in transforming culture are equally crucial.

Culturally capable counselors are distinguished by five measurable and teachable characteristics that protect them, the counselee, and the counseling process from being culturally oppressive.

(1) *Culturally aware counselors have a clear understanding of their own values and basic assumptions.* They recognize which human behaviors they view as appropriate or inappropriate, desirable or undesirable, life-enhancing or destructive. They are fully aware that others may hold different values and assumptions, which are legitimate even when they are directly opposite to their own. This understanding has been internalized as both insight (cognitive) and awareness (affective) so that the counselor will not unwittingly impose values or unconsciously influence others into accepting directions alien to their own community.

For example: Inducing guilt in a counselee is seen as undesirable in Western counseling ("You should feel guilty about refusing to obey your mother"). And suppressing a counselee's communications is seen as nontherapeutic ("You should not talk about this"). But in Japan, guilt induction and suppression of communication are central to the two most effective and widely recognized counseling theories.

(2) *Culturally aware counselors have a capacity for welcoming, entering into, and prizing other worldviews without negating their legitimacy.* They can go beyond empathy, which assumes a common cultural base, and feel at home on the boundary between worldviews. They can enter into another's world, savor its distinctness, and prize its differentness while holding clearly to the uniqueness of their own.

For example: A counselor who assumes that persons ought to become autonomous individuals as they mature toward adulthood may suspend, or "bracket," these values while listening to a member of a culture in which family solidarity and a collective sense of personhood leads to a mature dependency within the family unit. Seeking to inculcate Western individualism as a means of increasing autonomy violates the integrity of the person and his or her system. Integrity—the integrating core of the person—is what makes autonomy a desirable characteristic to begin with.

3. *Culturally aware counselors seek sources of influence in both the person and the context, both the individual instance and the environment.* Having come to appreciate the impact of the historical, social, religious, political, and economic forces that have shaped the identity and values of all human beings, they are sensitive to the effects of racism, economic exploitation, political oppression, historic tragedy, religious prejudice, or the absence of these on the person's personality or interpersonal adjustment. The action *and* the actors, the behavior *and* the context, the particular counseling interaction *and* the cultural environment must be seen, understood, and respected.

For example: To a counselor from another context, the first interview with a male Palestinian Arab might suggest strong paranoid formation, decided anti-Semitism, and radical loss of control of self and personal environment. Further empathy might reveal that the persecutory ideas are related to the recent confiscation of his home by Israeli settlers and to the imprisonment of his son for accepting a scholarship to study law in Jordan; his "anti-Semitism" is not generalized and racial but based on specific complaints against certain persons, offices, and acts of discriminatory practice; the loss of control is found to be actual and the sense of impotence a correct appraisal because he has no recourse for any of these perceived injustices.

4. *Culturally aware counselors are able to move beyond counseling theory, orientation, or technique and be effective humans.* They are truly eclectic in their counseling, not in a random selection of techniques that work but in a disciplined flexibility that allows them to select a particular set of counseling skills as a considered decision about its appropriateness to the life experience of the particular counselee. They can be critical of each methodology, theory, and orientation, recognizing that "no theory of counseling is politically or morally neutral" (Sue 1978:451).

For example: A counselor who sees an American couple may choose to be noninterpretive and offer primarily experiences and exercises for their mutual discovery of self and other. When asked for evaluation, the counselor may return the question and elicit their awareness of what has occurred and ask for their insight into its meaning. In the next hour, the same counselor may see an Oriental couple and choose to be interpretive, directive, and behaviorally focused. To the Oriental couple, the exercises, experiences, and refusal to interpret would be seen as disinterest, as being cold and aloof.

5. *Culturally aware counselors see themselves as universal citizens, related to all humans as well as distinct from all of them.* They live in the world, not just in their own community or country. Aware as they are of what is culture-bound and class-bound, they refuse to allow what is local to be valued as universal, or to trivialize what is universal by identifying it with any local application. The world is their home, humankind have become their kind. Thus they prize differences as well as similarities, uniqueness as well as commonality. Recognizing that enemy love is the central pastoral task of this century, they hold cultures in respect that are antithetical to their own at points of high value; they extend understanding to nations whose actions are hostile to their own native country.

For examples we may look to black pastoral counselors in Zimbabwe who offered care to revolutionary and loyalist alike, while holding their own convictions about justice, or to pastoral counselors in South Africa who live on the boundary, recognizing that maintaining trust with either one or both sides is a fragile process possible only for a time, yet offering care to people regardless of race or their oppressed place in society. They are not alone. In Latin America, South America, India, Southeast Asia, the Muslim states, Russia, and countries new and old, pastoral care

crosses over boundaries and brings people to oneness within and with each other.

The Culturally Encapsulated Counselor

"Among the 500 or so classical Malay proverbs I had to memorize as a child," writes theologian Marianne Katoppo, "one of my favorites was this: *Seperti katak di bawah tempurung*—'Like the frog under the coconut shell.' The image was clear: the frog, never having escaped the boundaries of the coconut shell, could not but conceive of the world as dark, silent, limited" (Katoppo 1981:v).

Perhaps there is no clearer metaphor for the culturally encapsulated counselor. It is the natural tendency among humans to see the world as stretching only from horizon to horizon or to feel at one only with those between familiar boundaries. When such boundaries become—consciously or unconsciously—taken for granted and seen as givens, they function as if absolutized.

Encapsulation then, becomes a useful word for human sin. As Katoppo writes (1981:6), "Sin, all sin, is by nature an all-encompassing absolute. When we sin we think we are all that there is and are therefore divine. We deny the Other and believe that our own totalized order is the kingdom of heaven. Or, as the Malays put it, we are like the frog under the coconut shell."

Counselors are especially susceptible to cultural encapsulation. Their intense specialization in learning the nonverbal language of their counselees—the gestures, facial signals, voice tones, silences, eye movements —and their skill in intuiting expectations, multilevel communications, and denied or concealed emotions may lead them to trust their culturally bound interpretations of these expressions even when they are aware that the same signal may mean the reverse in another culture. However, these same skills of observation and interpretation can help them break out of encapsulation once it is recognized and confronted.

Cultural encapsulation, as described so well by Wren (1962:444–449), results from three unconscious choices, motivated by the desire to reduce the complexity of the world and simplify its confusing and contradictory variety. (1) The culturally encapsulated counselor is one who has substituted symbiotic model stereotypes for the real world. The need to create reliable cognitive maps of the world has been carried to the point where the person prefers the map to the territory, the menu to the meal, the model to the reality. (2) The encapsulated counselor has disregarded cultural variations among clients. A counseling focus on the individual, a preference for examining internal dynamics, and the dismissal of social, environmental, and situational forces as equally significant all contribute to seeing persons as having little significant variation. (3) The culturally encapsulated counselor has dogmatized technique-oriented definitions of counseling and therapy. This trust in technique leads to a self-reinforcing process of moving from symptom to intervention without first examining

the symptom for its unique meaning for this person in this specific cultural situation.

Encapsulation functions for the counselor in a way similar to the addictive process. One can become "addicted" to one system of cultural values, resulting in the same disorientation and dependency as for any other addiction. Automatic reliance on a network of meanings subscribed to by the parent culture reduces the capacity for independent thought and case-by-case creativity. This loss of sensitivity is the natural result of addictive attachment in the counselor's worldview—or lack of worldview and resulting satisfaction with a local view (Morrow 1972: 30-32).

In systems language, the culturally encapsulated counselor is fused to the culture of origin, with no distinct boundary between self and society. The necessary differentiation process that makes reflection, awareness, insight, and understanding possible has not yet begun. Thus the counselor's worldview is unconsciously coterminous and continuous with the cultural context. Cultural values and perspectives are mixed with the counselor's view of human nature and understandings of personality dynamics, with no practiced ability for separating fact from fiction or for differentiating feelings about how the human person functions from observations tested cross-culturally. As in a fused family, the culturally encapsulated counselor is surrounded by a rubber wall of boundary assumptions from which new ideas effectively rebound. The person with few independent reflective ideas may function effectively and empathically with others who share the identical cultural perspectives and so facilitate appropriate adjustment within that culture, but such a counselor will be culturally oppressive to persons from another world of experience.

The culturally effective counselor has differentiated a self from the culture of origin with sufficient perceiving, thinking, feeling, and reflecting freedom to recognize when values, views, assumptions, and preferences rise from an alternate life experience. Such a counselor feels a measure of inner freedom to float these differences to the surface and discuss them with more objectivity than the immediate subjective feelings of evaluation, prejudice, threat, or defensiveness.

It is often assumed that training programs will facilitate this differentiation of the person and his or her unexamined context with its many maps of reality, pictures of other cultures, patterns of thinking about other life-styles, feelings attached to other ethnic groups, and clichés and stereotypes about racial, social, religious, or political groupings, but it is too rarely so. The process of encapsulation is frequently built into the very training programs that should be culturally integrative. In becoming a pastoral counselor, one seeks to achieve an understanding of personality theory, therapeutic theory, and theological values and insights and to consolidate these into a centered identity and a core definition of reality. Through one's own personal therapy and growth, this is internalized into a clear set of central convictions. These basic assumptions, well

tested in a monocultural setting, become the measure of reality that anchors the person when walking with others along the narrow boundaries between illusion and reality. Such assumptions contain, of necessity, many stereotypes that condense reality into perceivable units, and because of early developmental learnings and unconscious rooting, the stereotype is more readily trusted than new conflicting data from the real world. Thus it is inevitable that all humans have a natural insensitivity to cultural variations and contrasts and will prefer views tested and trusted in the past. Even after years of work across cultures, the most skilled person will still be threatened by interaction with unexpected cultural values, political views, or religious perspectives and react with defensiveness or dogmatism.

Although we may move free from much cultural encapsulation, we cannot fully escape the limitations of our past experiences, or our anxiety before the unknown and unpredictable, or radically alter our present capacities to tolerate ambiguity and contradiction.

> In working with persons from different ethnic, cultural, or sexual backgrounds, it is essential to be aware of the universal tendency to feel, on some level, that one's own experiences and culture are the norm for all human beings. Each of us judges cultural differences as inferior, according to the degree this tendency operates in us. It may blind us to subtle but significant differences in the ways counselees from other backgrounds perceive, conceptualize, feel, solve problems, and create their world-view. (Clinebell 1984:101)

It is a demanding task to transcend the values, biases, and convictions that form our cultural contexts; it is far more difficult to recognize, own, and modify the cultural roots, depths, and patterns that shape our unconscious and automatic behavior. We are limited, finite beings, and the limitations that protect our sanity also inhibit our capacity to perceive an alternate world. As Clinebell concludes after several decades of consulting cross-culturally (1984:101):

> When counseling with a person from a different gender or cultural background, it is helpful to say: "I realize that, much as I would like to understand what you are saying, I won't understand at times because of the differences in our backgrounds. Our work together will be more helpful if you will tell me when you sense I'm not really understanding what you are saying."

In spite of our persistent struggles with cultural, racial, sexual, and religious prejudices, the most we can achieve is a deepened awareness of our ethnocentrism and some appreciable degree of liberation from our unconscious and conscious programming toward cultural superiority. (See Boundary Checklist, p. 39.)

Toward Cultural Awareness

Movement from unawareness to awareness is facilitated best by encounter with more than just information about another culture. Nothing

dissolves old assumptions like salt water, particularly crossing a large amount of it and finding oneself in a totally unfamiliar situation. Accelerated learning and unlearning occur as one discovers the immediate need to discard old givens and assimilate new options.

Traditional peoples in tribal or local settings had little or no need to develop an awareness of more than superficial differences. The primary values, common denominators of the group or culture, bound members together with profound and basic similarities. Secondary values create the individual differences that distinguish members from each other to balance and complete the variety of humankind.

Modern peoples in the expanded context of a varied and heterogeneous society were forced to develop capacities for awareness that appreciated more significant differences in secondary values and occasionally penetrated to primary levels. This requires an expanded psychological flexibility for the learning of new roles and the acceptance of contrasting others (Hanvey 1979:55).

As accelerated change in communications systems, increased interaction through travel and migrations, growing interdependency in economic development, and proliferating interchange in multinational corporations all join to demand a new level of awareness, we must be capable of visualizing and understanding the roles, rules, and life routines of persons in other cultures sharing fewer common basic assumptions. This change comes from encounter, contact, and interaction, not from programmic education or social engineering. It occurs on the boundary, not in the cultural enclave.

Cross-cultural awareness comes gradually to persons who remain in monocultural communities. But with repeated encounters, the strange *Process* becomes familiar, the exotic becomes accepted, the unbelievable becomes believable, and then the second culture becomes a second home.

Paul Hanvey suggests we can discriminate between four levels of cross-cultural awareness, as seen in Table 1-1. *p. 26*

At level 1, tourists may note the "exaggerated" politeness and gestures of deference practiced in the Japanese culture. At level 2 they become frustrated at the hesitance of a Japanese friend to disagree or correct them when they have reached a false conclusion. At level 3 they may come to understand that the really distinctive aspect of the Japanese culture has little to do with the many levels of politeness and their linguistic and behavioral forms and much to do with the intense sense of mutual obligation between superior and inferior. At level 4, intellectual insight and emotional understanding of this cultural trait become assimilated and appreciated.

Cultural immersion does not guarantee achievement of both cognitive and affective understanding and awareness. Many expatriates, living within a host culture but not coming to value and respect it, may over time slip back to level 2. The crucial factors are the capacity to experience empathy for the differentness and the willingness to value others' perspectives alongside one's own.

According to this model, the person comes to "believe" the other

culture and its forms only at levels 3 and 4. Without "believability," persons do not accept other groups as fully equal members of humanity. Affectively, those in levels 1 and 2 rarely feel that exotic others share the same biological species as truly human others. Thus level 3 is a worthy goal for all persons in the context of our present world community. The tendency to deny the full humanness of the enemy in times of war is painfully familiar; the less obvious ways of relegating others to "primitive," "aborigine," "savage," "uncivilized," or "nonmoral" categories facilitate the objectification of persons who are not seen as equal subjects. The subtle forms of such valuations emerge in numerous psychological theories that place childhood and cultural development schema in parallel lines, with childlike and primitive equated on the low end and adulthood and Western thought forms at the top. The epigenetic (child-to-adult cycle) is seen as parallel to the phylogenetic (history of human species development) and to the ethnogenetic (cultural development from primitive peoples to technological society). The implicit hierarchies within these structures, all indebted to the system of eighteenth-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant, invite conscious relegation of the "less developed nations" to the lower end of the developmental charts and unconscious reduction of their value.

The capacity not only to "believe" the second culture but to come to understand it both cognitively ("thinking with") and affectively ("feeling with") is necessary before one enters cross-cultural counseling.

Table 1-1. Four Levels of Cross-Cultural Awareness

Level	Information	Mode	Interpretation
1	Awareness of superficial or very visible cultural traits: stereotypes	Tourism, textbooks, *National Geographic*	Unbelievable, i.e., exotic, bizarre
2	Awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own	Culture-conflict situations	Unbelievable, i.e., frustrating, irrational
3	Awareness of the meanings of the cultural traits that contrast sharply with one's own	Intellectual analysis	Believable cognitively
4	Awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider	Cultural immersion: living the culture	Believable because of subjective familiarity

(Hanvey 1979:53)

superb definitions! (handwritten annotation)

The Empathic–Interpathic Counselor

All understanding begins in a movement from within oneself to enter the world of another; being understood is opening and enlarging one's experience to make room for another. Such movements toward another, in both insight and feeling, may be automatic and unconscious, as in sympathy; or they may be intentional and active, as in empathy; or they may require the envisioning of another's thoughts and feelings from within a different culture, worldview, and epistemology. We are only beginning to conceptualize this third level of identification with differing others, and we lack words to name it from our past vocabularies. Since it is a pathos, or "feeling-level way of knowing," as well as insight into a radically different perspective, we shall call it "interpathy,"* as compared to sympathy and empathy.

Sympathy is the spontaneous response to another's emotional experience, which wells up as the other's pain evokes memories of similar hurts in the past. It is a co-suffering; one sufferer knows just how the other feels by connecting parallel injuries through projective identification. Sympathy is a kind of projection of one's own inner feelings upon another, for in judging that your suffering is understandable because I have suffered in similar fashion, my emotion is felt to be one with yours. When the other person's tragedy evokes feelings connected to my own tragic past, or another's loss triggers feelings once attached to losses in my life, then my own feelings function as a barometer to measure and reflect the pressure of emotion within the other. As the Chinese proverb expresses it, "When your own tooth hurts you can understand how another's toothache feels."

In the shock of deep losses, persons often reach out for those who have suffered in similar ways. The first phase of grief work is to come to terms with the numbness and allow the realization "This has actually happened to me" to slowly take shape. Sympathy assists as one finds co-travelers who are co-sufferers. This emotive state is one of union, with little or no differentiation for healing to progress. One needs more than sympathetic union; there must be genuine contact with persons who exercise the next level of "feeling with" we call empathy, in which both union and separation, connectedness and respect for the other's uniqueness, are offered in authentic encounter.

Empathy is sharing another's feelings, not through projection but through compassionate active imagination. Empathy is an intentional affective response rather than the spontaneous automatic reaction of sympathy; it is the choice to transpose oneself into another's experience in self-conscious awareness of the other's consciousness. Thus it is enriched by similarities between the observer and the observed, but it is based on differences. Empathy respects the distinctness of self and other and seeks to enhance rather than diminish these boundaries. In empathic caring, I enter your feeling and thinking world in an effort to understand

---

*I am indebted for the suggestion of this word to Willi Toisuta, Rector of Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia.

your perceptions, thoughts, feelings, muscular tensions—even the temporary states that come and go as you speak. I seek to share your joy or pain while recognizing that it is uniquely yours, and in seeking to share it with you I do not lay claim to it as my own. I share it as I am present with you, but I recognize that it is your feeling.

Empathy, as the perception of the cognitive and affective world of a separate other, is based upon common linguistic and cultural assumptions. It is grounded in the joint worldview and the shared patterns of thinking that provide a base for the encoding and decoding of percepts. Thus a balance of union and separation, of caring closeness and clarifying distance, is maintained. Empathy is the capacity to imagine oneself into another person or role within the context of one's own culture. In a mobile community, with the rich variety of persons met and known briefly or intimately in modern society, empathy has become a necessary ability for all effective human relations. Daniel Lerner writes in *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958:50–51):

> Empathy . . . is the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation. This is an indispensable skill for people moving out of traditional settings. Ability to empathize may make all the difference, for example, when the newly mobile persons are villagers who grew up knowing all the extant individuals, roles, and relationships in their environment. Outside his village or tribe, each must meet new individuals, recognize new roles, and learn new relationships involving himself. . . .
>
> High empathic capacity is the predominant personal style only in modern society, which is distinctively industrial, urban, literate, and participant. Traditional society is nonparticipant—it deploys people by kinship into communities isolated from each other and from a center. . . .
>
> Whereas the isolated communities of traditional society functioned well on the basis of a highly constrictive personality, the interdependent sectors of modern society require widespread participation. This in turn requires an expansive and adaptive self-system, ready to incorporate new roles and to identify personal values with public issues. This is why modernization of any society has involved the great characterological transformation we call psychic mobility. . . . In modern society *more* individuals exhibit *higher* empathic capacity than in any previous society.

Some psychologists have attempted to construct continua of empathy from unconscious reflections of posture and gesture to the complete mystical union of the one with the All and of all with the One. Gordon Allport's eight levels (1954:13) are the classic definition of a scale of empathic feeling from the subliminal to the sublime.

1. Motor mimicry, as in an aesthetic response to a work of art. The lowest level of empathy, it is shown by tilting the head to match the portrait or taking the posture of the statue, in an unconscious effort toward understanding. The similarity is in the act, not the feeling.

2. Simultaneous feelings occurring in two persons in response to each other or to a situation or event. This is a spontaneous sympathy, triggered by the depth or intensity or beauty of a shared experience.

3. Emotional contagion sweeping from person to person in a crowd.

It is the emotion that brings the people together, not the commitment of the persons themselves (as in level 6).

4. Identification between persons. The similarities between persons are noted, and a feeling of common identity is shared, but not a joint identity of the two feeling boundaries dissolving into oneness.

5. Persons who know how others feel, but the understanding of the other is conscious and detached, distinguishing the self from others. The self understands how others feel but does not necessarily endorse their actions.

6. Affiliative fellow feelings. Though the feelings themselves are separated, the persons are connected in a common emotional bond.

7. Sensing the state of mind of the other by the self, which prizes and respects it fully as one's own. Boundaries are disappearing and a profound sense of oneness, of joint personhood, is felt, but it is an intentional choice of prizing the separate other.

8. The mystical union of all with the One. The empathic sense of joint experiencing of spiritual oneness connects both to each other and to the Transcendent and the universal.

A review of these eight levels reveals a rhythm between difference and similarity. The even-numbered levels suggest states of similarity, summarized as simultaneous feelings, identification between persons, affiliative fellow feelings, and the unity of all in the One. These contrast with the odd numbers, which refer to differences and to the lack of the common bond of the even levels. Thus the even numbers show movement from simple attraction, to temporary fusion of self with others, to a complete mystical union. The odd numbers indicate the need for detachment, separation of self and other, in transcendence or differentiation. Thus empathy has complex roots in both unity and uniqueness, in similarity and difference, in union and separation.

Within this scale, Allport has included sympathy as the first three levels, empathy as it is used in both social and clinical definitions in levels 4 through 6, and intimacy, unity, and shared mysticism in levels 7 and 8. All this presupposes a common base of experience that can be mutually shared and celebrated, a cultural platform for encounter and interaction. But the needed direction for stages 7 and 8 is in moving beyond empathy to an interpathic caring that can value and view the world through the experience of one who is distinctly, culturally, and epistemologically other.

Interpathy is an intentional cognitive envisioning and affective experiencing of another's thoughts and feelings, even though the thoughts rise from another process of knowing, the values grow from another frame of moral reasoning, and the feelings spring from another basis of assumptions.

In interpathic caring, the process of "feeling with" and "thinking with" another requires that one enter the other's world of assumptions, beliefs, and values and temporarily take them as one's own. Bracketing my own beliefs, I believe what the other believes, see as the other sees,

value what the other values, and feel the consequent feelings as the other feels them.

Viewing an other from within, empathically, is not a skill unique to counselors and therapists. As Thomas Oden has pointed out (Oden and others 1974:40–43), such decentering of the self and entering of another frame of reference is necessary for the artist, archaeologist, anthropologist, historian, sociologist, author, actor, translator, political scientist, even geologist. However, the degree to which this moves from analytic entertaining of the other to empathic experiencing of the other varies widely from person to person as well as situation to situation.

In interpathic caring, I, the culturally different, seek to learn and fully entertain within my consciousness a foreign belief. I take a foreign perspective, base my thought on a foreign assumption, and allow myself to feel the resultant feelings and their cognitive and emotive consequences in my personality as I inhabit, insofar as I am capable of inhabiting, a foreign context. Interpathy is the voluntary experiencing of a separate other without the reassuring epistemological floor of common cultural assumptions; it is the intellectual invasion and the emotional embracing of what is truly other.

Anthropologist and philosopher Magoroh Maruyama names this process "transspection," as a step beyond analytic inspection of another culture.

> Transspection is an effort to put oneself into the head (not shoes) of another person. One tries to believe what the other person believes and assume what the other person assumes. For example, if someone claims that he sees a ghost and is scared, you try to visualize his ghost and see how scared you become. If you have questions about his ghost, you ask these questions not as an interviewer but as someone who visualizes the same ghost. Transspection differs from analytical "understanding." Transspection differs also from "empathy." Empathy is a projection of feelings between two persons with one epistemology. Transspection is a trans-epistemological process which tries to *experience* a foreign belief, a foreign assumption, a foreign perspective, feelings in a foreign context, and consequences of feelings in a foreign context, as if these have become one's own. It is an understanding by practice. (Maruyama and others 1978:55)

This capacity to join others in their world offers a bidirectional strength: one, the ability to see as others—who are truly other—see; and, two, the ability to see ourselves as others—who are fully other—see us.

Looking at ourselves from outside our own culture is a possibility for those who learn to look through the eyes of the outgroup. As Paul Hanvey comments, "Native social analysts can probe the deep layers of their own culture, but the outside eye has a special sharpness: if the native for even a moment can achieve the vision of the foreigner, he/she will be rewarded with a degree of self-knowledge not otherwise obtainable" (Hanvey 1979:55).

Western culture, with individualism assumed as a given, prizes similarities as the point of meeting, the basis of understanding, the evidence of co-feeling. Eastern cultures, with traditional cultural mores

guaranteeing similarities, find differences in the new element to be discovered and the source of excitement to bring people into conversation. So sympathy is the more natural Western response, empathy more automatic in the East, and interpathy a new step to be learned by both as we build bridges between us. (See Table 1-2.)

In interpathic "feeling with," empathy is extended beyond known borders to offer a grace that draws no lines, refuses limits, claims universal humanness as sufficient foundation for joining another in a unique world of experience. Interpathic listening strives for co-perception in recognition that the perceiver and the percepts are a radically ("from the roots") foreign viewer and vision. Interpathic caring awaits the discovery of how caring is given and received within that culture before initiating

Table 1-2. The Boundaries Between Sympathy, Empathy, and Interpathy

Sympathy	*Empathy*	*Interpathy*
Sympathy is a spontaneous affective reaction to another's feelings experienced on the basis of perceived similarity between observer and observed.	Empathy is an intentional affective response to another's feelings experienced on the basis of perceived differences between the observer and the observed.	Interpathy is an intentional cognitive and affective envisioning of another's thoughts and feelings from another culture, worldview, epistemology.
In sympathy, the process of "feeling with" the other is focused on one's own self-conscious awareness of having experienced a similar event.	In empathy, the process of "feeling with" the other is focused on the imagination, by which one is transposed into another, in self-conscious awareness of another's consciousness.	In interpathy, the process of knowing and "feeling with" requires that one temporarily believe what the other believes, see as the other sees, value what the other values.
In sympathy, I know you are in pain and I sympathize with you. I use my own feelings as the barometer; hence I feel my sympathy and my pain, not yours. You are judged by my perception of my own feelings. You are understood by extension of my self-understanding. My experience is both frame and picture.	In empathy, I empathically make an effort to understand your perceptions, thoughts, feelings, muscular tensions, even temporary states. In choosing to feel your pain with you, I do not own it; I share it. My experience is the frame, your pain the picture.	In interpathy, I seek to learn a foreign belief, take a foreign perspective, base my thought on a foreign assumption, and feel the resultant feelings and their consequences in a foreign context. Your experience becomes both frame and picture.
Sympathy is a kind of projection of one's own inner feelings upon another as inner feelings are judged to be similar to experiences in the other.	Empathy is the perception of a separate other based on common cultural assumptions, values, and patterns of thinking that provide a base for encoding and decoding percepts.	Interpathy is the experience of a separate other without common cultural assumptions, values, and views. It is the embracing of what is truly other.

care-giving on patterns from one's own tradition. Interpathic identification prizes the meeting of humanness in which universals of life experience coincide, but without assuming that the interpretation or the emotional savoring of these universals will overlap or necessarily even touch. Interpathic presence enters another world of human energies and risks, making the self available to entertain what was formerly alien, to be hospitable to what is utterly new.

Interpathic Understanding

Interpathic "thinking and feeling with" another across cultural boundaries requires a willingness to bracket one's own way of knowing —one's epistemology—and enter another. This may require exploring notions completely foreign to one's assumed or preferred rational process, which must be suspended in the effort to undergo the change necessary to stand with and understand a citizen of another worldview. Most counseling training is grounded in empiricism or phenomenology. Either approach focuses on observable phenomena that are replicable, measurable, and definable by either naturalistic observation or objective self-description. Neither approach offers a useful perspective on mystic, cultic, folk religious, and commonly believed perspectives that shape many cultures.

CASE STUDY: The Gold Talisman (Indonesia)

A counselee, recently converted from Islam to Christianity, is troubled by the magical talisman that has given him power, success, and prosperity in the past. It is a gold coin, visible beneath the skin on the underside of the forearm. There is no scar, no sign of an incision. He reports that it was placed there by a Muslim priest who laid the coin on the arm, covered it with his hand, chanted the incantation, and when he took away his hand the coin was beneath the skin. The young man, having now rejected such magic, wishes to have the coin and its powers removed. He leaves the counseling interview, having decided to request prayer in the public worship service. The next Sunday he goes forward asking that this symbol and its powers be removed. The pastor shows the arm and visible coin to the congregation, then lays hands on the talisman while all pray. At the end of the prayer, the coin is in the hand of the pastor; the arm is clear, scarless, and with no sign of the previous implantation.

In other cases, the pastoral counselor reports, prayer removes the special powers experienced by the person with the embedded coin, then a surgeon at the Christian hospital removes the coin but stitches mark the operation scar.

Such actual material phenomena are outside the categories of hypnotic, hysteric, or psychosomatic description which we use to label symptoms from psychologically induced blindness to psy-

chosocial death. But the insertion of coins in the arm, or diamonds in the temples, or the ability to walk barefoot over live coals, or pouring boiling oil over oneself from head to foot in temple ceremonies with no visible burn damage, these have been empirically verified by witnesses from within and without the culture. Such persons must be counseled from within the reality of their experience, though one possesses no scientific explanation for the phenomena observed.

(Krisetya 1984)

The case study of the Gold Talisman presents a public event that is beyond any explanations of a common scientific worldview. Gold coins do not pass through skin without rupturing tissue, sleight-of-hand does not explain what is beyond reach. The intercultural counselor, working in a culture that accepts a rich variety of experiences from the mesocosmos, must be capable of interpathic entertainment of new possibilities and their emotional consequences.

The discussion of this case focuses on the contrasting epistemologies and the capacity to transcend such boundaries interpathically in the counseling relationship. Chapter 9 will explore the relationships of magic, of shamanism, of healing in folk religions, and of witchcraft and the demonic to cross-cultural pastoral counseling.
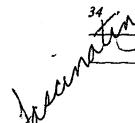
Western scientific thought since the eighteenth century has increasingly accepted a Platonic dualism that has resulted in a two-tier world, as psychological anthropologist Paul Hiebert has described the secularization of science and the mystification of religion. These two levels exclude the traditional middle zone that is central in the epistemological model for the majority of the earth's peoples on the popular or folk level of observation.

The two-tiered view of reality offers only two levels, the religious level, based on faith, manifest in miracles, and concerned with otherworldly problems; and the scientific level, based on experience and manifest in the natural order dealing with the problems of this world (Hiebert 1982: 90; see Table 1-3).

The excluded middle leaves a vacant area in the epistemology, which causes dismay when one encounters unexplainable phenomena in another culture that violate the natural laws of the scientific realm.

In many traditional societies a three-tiered view of reality provides explanation for many of life's puzzling dilemmas. This zone of "low religion" offers answers to why the unpredictable patterns of nature—storms, lightning, rains, floods—strike one person or group and not another, why prosperity and good fortune fall on one family and misfortune and calamity on another, why a child dies or a pregnancy miscarries. It offers ways to prevent accidents, to ensure success, to guarantee the happiness of a marriage, to safeguard the health of one's children. In Western culture these things are dismissed as luck, accidents, unforeseeable events, or tragedies that fall by the law of averages with no

Table 1-3. Two Views of Reality

The Western Two-tiered View	The Historic and Multicultural Three-tiered View
Religion	*High Religion*
Faith in God The spiritual dimension The Sacred Miracles and exceptions to the natural order	Cosmic beings: God, gods, angels, demons, of a world separate from this one Cosmic forces: kismet, fate, karma, or impersonal cosmic forces
	Low Religion, Magic, Mana
(Excluded Middle)	Folk religion: local gods and goddesses, ancestors, spirits, demons, ghosts Psychic phemomena: curses, blessings, special powers, astrological forces, evil eye Physical phenomena: magical rites, charms, amulets, firewalking, embedded charms, psychic surgery
Science	*Natural and Social Science*
Sight and experience The natural order Secular definition Empirical methodology Mechanical analogies Sense experience Experimentation and proof	Directly observable sensory phenomena, knowledge based on experimentation and replication. Interaction of human beings or interaction of natural objects based on natural forces

(Adapted from Hiebert 1982)

respect for persons. "But many people are not content to leave so important a set of questions unanswered, and the answers they give are often in terms of ancestors, demons, witches, and local gods, or in terms of magic and astrology" (Hiebert 1982:92).

When Raymond Firth was doing fieldwork in Tikopia, one of the Santa Cruz Islands in the Pacific Ocean, a house collapsed, causing the death of a man. Immediately the villagers set about discovering the shaman who caused it, threatening to kill the witch or sorcerer. The anthropologist gathered the people and showed them the rotten and termite-eaten poles, which everyone recognized had collapsed in the accident. They admitted the poles should have been replaced as they regularly were when poles rotted. But they saw no logic in Firth's argument of natural causation. For them the question was not "Why did the poles collapse?" as it was for Firth. They asked, "Why was this particular man sitting under this particular house at this particular time when the poles gave way?" The Western answer that these factors

are simply a matter of chance or accident is neither more nor less satisfactory than the Tikopian understanding that a shaman was responsible (Firth 1957:244). We may accept the laws of statistical averages, but this evades the questions of the middle zone: "Why? To what end? For what purpose? By what power?" These are the questions that trouble the soul "when tragedy strikes," as we say—expressing the same process of reasoning rather than concluding that a random event of calamity has occurred.

The puzzling phenomena of fire walking, bathing in hot oil, extraordinary physical powers, embedded talismans, psychic surgery, healing of visible physical symptoms, invoking illness, tragedy, or death through curses, incantations, spells, dark magic—all these belong to the middle zone. In Western cultures such things are considered empty rituals or sleight of hand, effective largely by the power of suggestion or by deceit. In other cultures, these practices figure prominently in the emotional lives of a high percentage of its people. In Jakarta, Indonesia, a pastoral counselor reports that an early diagnostic question of most Christian pastoral counselors at the outset of personal, marital, or family counseling is, "Do you have any charms or amulets in your home?" In an outer-directed culture with a rich middle zone, counseling that deals only with inner-directed or interpersonal issues may be avoiding a crucial part of the counselee's reality. Holistic treatment takes the social, spiritual, and cultural forces as seriously as the developmental, emotional, familial, or marital factors. When the reported phenomena contradict the rational explanations taken as givens within the counselor's culture, the ability to suspend judgments and evaluations and interpathically enter an alternate way of knowing is necessary if there is to be communication on the primary anxieties of the counselee.

Interpathic caring enters a foreign epistemology to evaluate it not by extracultural values but rather by its own internal consistency and by its contextual congruency. When the belief system of the counselee possesses an integrity within and a congruence with the cultural field, it can have integrative power for that person, and healing and growth will emerge from using that system, not from contradicting it.

At the same time, *the counselor is not value-free; no theory of therapy is no effective therapist will be, no human being of integrity can be.* Values are central to all truly human existence; values are essential to all healing and maturing in the therapeutic process.

The interpathic process involves an assumption of the other person's values, an experiencing of their emotional impact when fully entertained within the self, and an envisioning of their consequences within the self and between self and other. Simultaneously one's own values, although suspended for the moment, are within awareness but bracketed, to allow full hospitality to the other stance. Equal concern for the values of both self and other thus rises from the ethical commitment to prize the other's values equally with one's own, but all the while maintaining one's own value center.

Crossing Over

A theology that functions on the boundary requires a commitment to presence, to dialogue, to crossing over and coming back between worlds.

Pastoral counseling across cultures is rooted in an incarnational theology that is truly present to others and a dialogical theology that is open to others in agape.

Presence embodies grace. Dialogue actualizes mutuality and humility. Pastoral theology unites both presence and dialogue in fleshing out grace through authentic encounter that invites growth, healing, and liberation.

John Dunne has given a clear description of this dimension in the encounter of persons, cultures, and faiths. In *The Way of All the Earth* he has described the journey of "passing over" and "coming back" as the most important religious fact of our times. He writes:

> What seems to be occurring is a phenomenon we might call "passing over," passing over from one culture to another, from one way of life to another, from one religion to another. Passing over is a shifting of standpoint, a going over to the standpoint of another culture, another way of life, another religion. It is followed by an equal and opposite process we might call "coming back," coming back with new insight to one's own culture, one's own way of life, one's own religion. The holy man of our time, it seems, is not a figure like Gautama or Jesus or Mohammed, a man who could found a world religion, but a figure like Gandhi, a man who passes over by sympathetic understanding from his own religion to other religions and comes back again with new insight to his own. Passing over and coming back, it seems, is the spiritual adventure of our time. . . . The course such an adventure follows is that of an odyssey. It starts from the homeland of [one's] own religion, goes through the wonderland of other religions, and ends in the homeland. . . . One has to pass over, to shift standpoints, in order to enter into the life of Jesus, even if one is a Christian, and then one has to come back, to shift standpoints again, to return to one's own life. (Dunne 1972:ix–x)

Passing over, into an "other world," is possible for us because we share the common experience of being human. Nothing human is alien. Each of us holds within the self, potentially, a part of any other person. We share the richness and the poverty, the vastness and the finitude of being human. However, these potentials may be possessed in fragmentary or rudimentary form. All true relational growth rises from our experience of seeing through another's eyes, entertaining another's thoughts, and interpathically sensing another's feelings. It is, Dunne argues (1972:180), the means of our becoming completed as persons.

> Passing over, therefore, entering sympathetically into other lives and times, if we are on the right track, is the way to completeness. This is not an unlikely hypothesis. For whenever [one] passes over to other lives or other times, [one] finds on coming back some aspect of her or his own life or times which corresponds to what was seen in others. Passing over has the effect of activating these otherwise dormant aspects of oneself.

The benefits of this two-way pilgrimage across boundaries are described by Clasper as a personal transformation that occurs as persons move in the free air of new worlds and then return with a second wind.

> To "pass over" is to enter a new world; to "come back" is to return a different person. One is bound to look at one's own world with fresh eyes and with fresh questions once the journey of friendship has been taken. It is easy to see why a narrow, fearful sect-mentality always urges a careful restriction of personal contacts. One can be "contaminated" by alien perspectives! Friendships are risky and threatening adventures. They can draw us out of our isolation and our restricted worlds. They force new concerns, new questions, and new priorities upon us. If we want to "remain the same" it is best not to venture out in significant friendships. (Clasper 1982: 126–127)

Presence

Presence is a primary word for pastoral care and for pastoral psychotherapy. A counselor is pastoral when she or he is truly there for others, is fully present to others, and recognizes that this presence is in the name of God, who has called the counselor to be available at a depth beyond normal association. The pastoral therapist is one who has answered the call to be present with all of the self that can be owned by that person —the conscious experiences of being and the unconscious experiences as they rise to awareness. When one is truly there for another, a depth of communication occurs that is beyond words or style, or technique, or theory, or theology. It is presence gifted by Presence.

In cross-cultural pastoral counseling, the greatest gift the counselor may have to offer is the opening of the self to receive another in authentic presence. John V. Taylor, in his reflection on Christian presence amid African religion, writes, "The Christian, whoever he (she) may be, who stands in the world in the name of Christ, has nothing to offer unless he (she) offers to be present, really and totally present, really and totally in the present" (Taylor 1963:107).

Presence requires an integration of self-awareness with an awareness of the other. The consciousness of being "with" another is not a superficial association but an openness from the center of one's existence. As one is transparent to his or her own experience, the feelings, intuitions, thoughts, desires, resistances, anxieties, impulses, fantasies, and images that rise from the unconscious depths can be admitted into conscious awareness. Such self-awareness permits more complete attending to others and a willingness to perceive as much of the other's experience as he or she is free to reveal. Thus one can talk of being only partially present or of being authentically present to the depths of one's lived experience. Out of suffering, depression, and despair can come a knowledge of the dark side of experience, which, when claimed with healing acceptance, can open levels of communication and communion with fellow sufferers that is presence from the core of existence.

Presence and dialogue must not be undertaken as a means or methodology for reaching an ulterior end; each is a good in itself, like work for charity, for social justice, and for healing of alienation. The pastoral counselor is called to embody grace, to incarnate agape, to flesh out the steadfast love of God.

Incarnation and embodiment are the inevitable direction of the love of God. The solidarity of God with humanity is a central motif of the biblical history of God's relation to creatures and creation—from the accounts of creation, the pursuit of humans throughout history, the event of incarnation, to the ongoing presence of God within the believing community and the world.

God is justified by this presence, solidarity, and incarnation. In this radical solidarity with us, God accepts fully the responsibility for creating finite beings who are vulnerable to evil and remains in loving relationship with us. The abandonment we fear is ungrounded. The solidarity and community we need are the basic guarantee of grace. We are secured by the very nature of the God who created us.

God is present for us in those persons and that community which embody grace and enflesh unconditional love. The power of the pastoral is grounded in this experiencing and expression of the presence of God in human relationship.

Presence is central to all forms of ministry. Being and doing are inseparable. It is being which authenticates doing, doing which demonstrates authentic being. A theology of presence, writes Calvin Shenk, is central to any truly biblical theology.

> If we presume to approach [incarnation and presence] biblically, we are not free to choose or reject a theology of presence. Presence as incarnation is fundamental to all witness. All ministries of the church are rooted in "being present." . . . It is not enough to suggest that Christian presence is a kind of pre-evangelism but that it is not evangelism. It is not enough to see presence only as a first step in identification. Presence has an intrinsic value in itself. (Shenk 1983:32–33)

Dialogue

"Dialogue is an encounter between people, mediated by the world in order to name the world," Paulo Freire has written. An encounter between persons who name and own a private world and seek to impose it upon others is inimical to dialogue. "Mediation by the world" accepts the reality of the world as third party to the conversation, as the reality that transcends, critiques, corrects both our subworlds.

Such genuine encounter is difficult when there is a power differential between the persons or parties. When all power and authority flows one way, it is impossible (Freire 1970b:76).

Can a white "think black"? Can a Christian "think Buddhist"? Can the rich "think poor"? Can a man "think woman"? Lawrence Howard, an Afro-American writer, has suggested this important impossibility:

BOUNDARY CHECKLIST

Living on the boundary demands a repentant attitude toward one's automatic preferences for or instinctive loyalty to one's own culture, religion, or community.

Check those automatic instinctive responses which you have experienced.

Yes No

_____ _____ 1. I find I sometimes compare the worst of the other culture/religion with the best examples of my own.

_____ _____ 2. I see the abuses of the other group and instinctively contrast it with my group's graces. (I avoid contrasting our abuses with their graces.)

_____ _____ 3. I often note the lack of social concern by others at the point where my own group is most concerned. (I do not immediately see where they show concern that is missing among us.)

_____ _____ 4. I see the lack of compassion for the poor among other religious leaders and compare it with such Christians as Mother Teresa, but I do not contrast their noblest examples with our apathetic majority.

_____ _____ 5. I frequently contrast the ideal Christianity with the real Islam, Buddhism, or Hinduism, but I overlook the real contradictions in my own community.

_____ _____ 6. I sometimes pit the internal consistency of Christian theology at its best against the visible contradictions of the popular or folk practices of the other faith.

_____ _____ 7. I remember the other faith's tragedies of history while recalling only the wisdom, art, and beauty of my own tradition.

From safe inside one's own territory, such comparisons may go unnoticed, but on the boundary they become transparent.

Black consciousness is open to anyone who . . . will operate in black categories. . . . Blacks, in the deepest sense, are people of any color who are dedicated to emancipation, national interdependence, freedom from fear and human fulfillment—whose priority is always people over property or machines. Blacks are all those who affirm the species in its deepest psychic dimensions. (Quoted in L. Russell 1974:165)

The choice to think black or Buddhist or poor or woman requires one to move from identity to mutuality. Mutuality means entering another's worldview, sharing that consciousness, exploring its interior, looking out at the wider world through its windows while retaining one's own worldview. One does not become identical with the other, but mutual. Identity has been joined with another's identity in reciprocal interchange and transformation.

Dialogue and hierarchy are contradictory. When one person insists on defining or describing reality in exclusive terms and possesses the power

to impose the definition and description on the other, a vertical violence dehumanizes both. For the oppressor to learn the ways of dialogue, especially in communication with the oppressed, requires a series of changes. (1) Members of oppressing groups can trust the oppressed to work for liberation and to decide when they have been empowered. (2) People of the oppressor group can learn to play a support role to those working to liberate themselves and wait for the oppressed to take the lead. (3) Oppressors can become advocates, helping to break the barriers in the society. (4) Persons of oppressed groups and of oppressing groups can learn to understand the things that oppress their own lives and begin their own process of conscientization in coming to understand their own history, identity, and dignity (Russell 1974:69–70).

Dialogue is a conversation on a common subject between two or more persons who hold differing views. The goal is for both sides to learn from the other, to enter into the other's perspective and seek to understand the opposing position from within. It is as deeply committed to strengthening the other's position by contributing to any discovered point of weakness as it is to clarifying and improving one's own stance. Dialogue can begin only when there is an openness to being fully confronted and perhaps persuaded by the other view. Thus it carries the risk of change.

Two contrasting movements take place in dialogue between Eastern and Western persons. The individualist Westerner must leave the self center and go out to meet the other. The Eastern person, already at the boundary in joint identity, must withdraw into the self in order to listen.

To hear another, the individualist must open the self to admit another's consciousness, perspectives, and vision of reality with its otherness. The movement is outward; it is encountering; it is the meeting of two separate individuals.

. To hear another, the corporate personality must return to the self to experience the self as perceiver, listener, separate agent.

In Japanese, the word *ningen* as "person" is compounded from *nin* ("man") and *gen* ("the space between"), which emphasizes the space between persons as central to an encounter. The two previously joined in social solidarity must withdraw into the selves in order to encounter the other as Other.

In the West, encounter means to step out of one's own self in order to meet the other person, who is doing the same. In Japan, the person is already in "the space between." In order to meet the other person, one must first come back to self, while the other person is doing the same (Kimura 1927:107).

We are concerned here with a specialized kind of dialogue, that which gradually emerges in the counseling encounter, as the initial power differential is equalized and the counselee claims his or her full privilege and responsibility in the pastoral conversations. As the pastoral therapist and the counselee grow toward more accurate perception and more complete understanding of each other, the transference and countertransference exchange decreases. As the authentic encounter of two persons apprehending and comprehending each other's self presentations grows

toward full mutuality, dialogue becomes the sign of emerging maturity and health in the relationship. In cross-cultural exchange, the need for each party to own her or his worldview and to affirm solidarity with it is central to the task of inviting healing. Since the unconscious processes speak in the language, metaphor, and myth of one's people and place of birth, growth proceeds as one can freely reconnect with, reclaim, and reconcile the present with the depths of the past.

> If one is to truly hear what the other person has to say in its own integrity, there must be a breaking through of the barrier that stands between the language world of the hearer and that of the speaker. Stated more funda-mentally, to "know" another means to enter that person's world in such a way that a merging of experienced reality can take place. The ancient Old Testament image that associates knowing with intercourse between the sexes expresses the truth that an intimate merger or interpretation must take place if one is to truly know another. Theologically speaking, we encounter here the primordial sense of incarnation. To know another in the incarnational sense is to enter that other's world and to have the other enter our world. Hermeneutically speaking, this is possible only because of and to the extent that we are able to enter the other's language world, the world of the other's meanings. In the same way, if we are to be known by the other person, the other must in some degree enter our world, the language of meaning we bring to the encounter. (Gerkin 1984:43)

There is a special relationship between the observed and the observer, like that between the reader and the text read. The interpretive process is reciprocal; the text interprets the reader as well as the reader the text. Just as a person reading a biblical text may discover the text is searching and disclosing new insights about the self, so every encounter with a significant document "discloses a world" that the reader appropriates. The world disclosure power of a text calls the reader to reorient the self. In understanding a text, one's own world lights up, and the situation, experienced in a new light, enlarges into a world. A broader world is opened up for us (Ricoeur 1971:536).

In cross-cultural encounter and interpretation, each person brings a "horizon of understanding" into the new situation. Within the limits of that horizon we can experience empathy; as we encounter the horizon we must reach out with interpathic openness.

> Care involves the opening of the horizon of our understanding to admit the intrusion of the world of the other in the hope and expectation that some-thing truly new may be shared in the encounter—a "fusion of horizons" in which the other is permitted to speak, to question our understanding and vice versa. (Gerkin 1984:45)

This reciprocal process of interpreting and being interpreted, reading and being read, creates an intersubjective process of joint hermeneutics. Each is seeking to know and be known by the other. In knowing the other, one comes to know the self more deeply; in knowing oneself, one is opened to perceive and receive the other more fully.

Five basic ground rules of intercultural or interreligious dialogue must

be observed if dialogue is actually to take place. First, each participant
must come to the dialogue with complete sincerity and honesty. No
deception, evasion, or presentation of false fronts have any place in
dialogue. Second, each participant must assume a similar complete sin-
cerity and honesty in the other partner. Either pretension of sincerity or
suspicion of insincerity in the other will make dialogue impossible. No
trust, no dialogue. Third, each participant must define himself or herself.
Only the Buddhist can define from within what it means to be a Bud-
dhist; another can only observe. This definition will continually deepen,
expand, and modify as the dialogue progresses. Fourth, each participant
must approach the dialogue without hard-and-fast assumptions as to
where points of disagreement are. Each listens openly and sympatheti-
cally, agreeing as far as is possible without violating the integrity of her
or his own tradition. This can proceed until an absolute impasse is
reached. This, the real point of disagreement, is rarely the same as those
assumed in advance. Fifth, dialogue is grounded in trust, so it is advisable
to begin with those issues that are most universal and consolidate com-
mon ground to establish trust. Then dialogue can move to more thorny
issues of disagreement.

  Dialogue usually proceeds through three states. The first is a discovery
and dispelling of misinformation and faulty assumptions as we come to
know each other as we are. The second is seeing values in the other's
tradition and wishing to appropriate them for our own. Third comes the
discovery of new areas of reality and meaning we were not aware of
before (Swidler 1981:10–12).

  Dialogue is urgent and essential to repudiate the arrogance, aggres-
sion, and negativism of those evangelistic crusades that obscured the
gospel and caricatured Christianity as an aggressive and militant reli-
gion. Above all, dialogue is essential for us to discover the Asian, Afri-
can, or Aborigine face of Jesus Christ as the Suffering Servant, so that
the church itself may be set free from self-interest and play the role of
a servant in building community (de Silva 1981b:50).

Interfaith Dialogue

  Japanese theologian Kosuke Koyama stresses the need for a dialogue
that lays aside pretensions to superiority and practices the crucified mind
of its Leader.

> If the Christian message is formulated into a chauvinistic Christianity, that
> is, a "superiority Christianity," "the-best-religion Christianity," and "final-
> ity Christianity," then [those of other religions] at once detect arrogance,
> superficiality, and unreligiousness in *our* understanding of Christianity.
> (Koyama 1977:88)

  Koyama argues that (1) religions are not objectively comparable, since
such comparison would require vast knowledge and profound religious
experience of each. (2) Religious commitments belong to the world of
I-Thou relationships. An "I" can be treated comparatively, a "Thou"

One true? religion

can be compared subjectively but not objectively. (3) To judge all other religions as inferior faiths is arrogance, not an observation made by "a crucified mind." (4) Theological perception is primarily grace-grasped instead of data-grasped; it is symbolical, sacramental, and revelatory instead of being comprehensive and comparative. It is story-oriented rather than rationally and sequentially argued.

> The Christian faith would lose nothing if Christians stopped calling their faith the superior or the best religion. . . . Up to now the discussion of the finality of Christ has been predominantly formulated within the framework of Joseph's sweet dream of my-sheaf-stood-up theology. All other religions are supposed to bow down to the upright sheaf of Christianity. (Koyama 1977:88–92)

The dialogue between faiths is of particular concern to the pastoral counselor, because faith issues, faith values, and the practice of faith are the central issues in healing and wholeness. Everyone enters dialogue, particularly interreligious dialogue, with presuppositions, and it is necessary to recognize these from the outset.

Lesslie Newbigin, Bishop of the Church of South India (1947–1975), has noted four streams of assumptions:

1. All religions must make good their claims at the bar of reason. This post-Enlightenment school of comparative religion evaluates religious experience by criteria from other fields and sees it as a functional illusion. There are theories of a Hegelian type that see religion as a primitive anthropomorphic science, theories of a Schleiermacher type that see religion as a product of human psychology, and theories of a Kantian type that see religion as the result of the moral pressure of the community on the individual.

2. All religions rise from a common core of reality: from the ancient voice of the Rig Veda, "the real is one, though sages name it variously," to the Thomist "All truth is God's truth," to W. Cantwell Smith, who suggests we cease talking of different religions and speak of human religiousness (Smith 1962:48).

3. All religions can provide a practical and necessary social and political unity. As old as ancient Egypt or China, this view subordinates religious truth to other values.

4. All religions must embrace their own values, both those that are inclusive and those that are exclusive. The integrity of dialogue depends, first of all, on the extent to which participants take seriously the full reality of their own faiths as the ground of their total life experience. It is this fourth position that Newbigin recommends (Newbigin 1981:13, 15–16).

The understanding of one faith by another varies widely from group to group, but several dominant patterns do appear. I shall discuss and illustrate these from the perspective of the Christian, although the converse perceptions are appropriately held by persons in the other world religions.

Exclusivism: Other religions and ideologies are wholly false and have nothing to offer. (This refuses to see that every faith can be my teacher in its unique view of truth. Every translation of the Bible uses the traditional word for god from that culture's heritage.)

Demonic: Other religions are evil, the work of the demonic, and only distort or cleverly mimic the Truth. (This either-or thinking extends the paranoid dualism of concrete thought to cosmic extent.)

Preparatory: Other religions serve as preparations for our faith, which fulfills them. (In reality, the different religions turn on different axes. The questions Hinduism asks and answers are not the primary concerns of Christianity.)

Value balance: All religions possess many values, but only in Christ are all values found in proper relationship, balance, and unity.

Concentric: All world religions are concentric circles with the Roman Catholic Church at the center and other Christians, Jews, Muslims, other theists, other religionists, and atheists at progressively greater distances. (*Ecclesiam Suam* 1964—This fails to understand religions from within, or the paradoxical fact that those closest to the Truth may be the bitterest opponents of the gospel.)

Anonymous Christians: All believers of all faiths are anonymous Christians, since all religions are the means through which God's saving will reaches those who have not been touched by Christ (Rahner 1978:115). An expert Christian has a much greater chance of salvation than an anonymous one. (Other religionists insist this does not take them seriously; it assumes salvation is in religion and not, for example, in lived faith.)

Witness to Christ: All religions bear witness to a unique vision of the truth, and the Christian is one who has been laid hold upon by Jesus Christ to be his witness, a witness to the uniqueness of Jesus, the kindness and justice of God revealed through him, his central place in history, his position as Lord of the Church and of all humanity (Newbigin 1981: 21–24).

Models of Dialogue

There are multiple models for encounter between the Christian way and the Asian paths to spirituality—Theravada Buddhism, Hinduism, Zen. Paul Clasper depicts these as the metaphors of the dungeon, the round table, the graduation, the higher synthesis, and the crown.

The dungeon model, one of the oldest and most persistent, views all other religions as imprisoned in darkness, in a dungeon of slavery. The dungeon may be decorated, furnished, even made quite livable, but it is still inferior, inadequate, and condemned to a tragic end.

The round table model, at the opposite extreme, sees all as equal, as a genial, open "parliament of religions." The conviction is that no one has all the truth, that each is completed by all others, since all are variations on a single theme.

The graduation model, equidistant from both preceding, suggests that all religions are traditional heritages which are now fulfilled, surpassed by scientific ideology. Communism as an applied scientific sociology, secularism as a life perspective, and psychology and psychiatry when practiced as a religious worldview all offer themselves as a new vision beyond religion.

The higher synthesis, an inclusive merging of all faiths, hails the coming of a new world faith as a basis for a coming world civilization. The hope of reconceiving the Judaic and Buddhaic traditions into a common path of Being and Blessedness is largely the dream of intellectuals who hope to create a harmonizing force for world unity.

The crown of all faiths, a midpoint between the exclusive view of the dungeon and the inclusive view of the round table, notes both the similarity and the uniqueness of Christ (not Christianity) to all other faiths and sees Jesus the Christ as the completion, the crown of other paths. This perspective, from Indian writer J. N. Farquhar in *The Crown of Hinduism* (1913), sees Jesus the Christ as the summation and crystalization of the richest tendencies and highest insights of Hinduism. Christ came to fulfill, not to destroy the best of Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other faiths; he is not the enemy of other worldviews but one who challenges, clarifies, completes, and consummates the healing, liberation, and transformation (Clasper 1982:101–110).

The most useful metaphor for visualizing interfaith dialogue is that of *multiple staircases,* all of which rise from a common landing on which stands a cross. The staircases represent the many ways by which humans learn to rise toward the fulfillment of God's purpose—all the ethical, aesthetic, and religious achievements of each culture. But at the common foot stands the symbol of a historical deed of God. In total vulnerability, God exposed God self to human purposes. The cross revealed that, at the religious highest and lowest, humanity is still the enemy of God. God comes to meet us not at the top of our stairways but at the bottom. Our ascent, real and genuine as it is in search of God's purposes, takes us farther from the real point of meeting. We meet with other religions not at the peak of our insights and achievements but at the bottom of the stair in self-emptying, not in the security of systematized truth and ritualized holiness but on the common landing of human suffering, where God suffers among us, with us, in us (Freytag 1958:21).

> The Christian attitude is not ultimately one of bringing Christ *in,* but of bringing him *forth,* of discovering Christ; not one of command but of service. . . . The Christian instinctively falls in love with the positive aspects of other religions . . . because he believes that he discovers there the footprints of God's redemption, and some veiled sometimes disfigured grace which he believes he must unveil and reformulate, out of love for the neighbor and a sense of responsibility for the faith God has given him. (Panikkar 1964:45)

This openness to the presence of God in all creation, cultures, and creatures sends the Christian theologian searching for the spore of the

Spirit. There are signs of the Presence in the myths and stories of every people, so the universal mythical heritage is to be appreciated, not denigrated. The writings of C. S. Lewis offer a case study in sensing the presence of God in all human cultures. He wrote:

> God sent the human race what I call good dreams; I mean those queer stories scattered all through the heathen religions about a god who dies and comes to life again and, by his death, has somehow given new life to men. (Lewis 1952:39)

Elsewhere he notes:

> We must not be nervous about "parallels" and "pagan Christs"; they ought to be there—it would be a stumbling block if they weren't. (Lewis 1952:67)

And again:

> If my religion is erroneous then occurrences of similar motifs in pagan stories are, of course, instances of the same or similar error. But if my religion is true, then these stories may be a *preparatio evangelica*, a divine hinting in poetic and ritual form at the same central truth which was later focused and (so to speak) historicized in the Incarnation. (Lewis 1970:132)

The uniqueness of Christianity is that in the gospel "myth" has become "fact."

> By becoming fact it does not cease to be myth: that is the miracle. . . . To be truly Christian we must both assent to the historical fact and also receive the myth, fact though it has become, with the same imaginative embrace which we accord to all myths. The one is hardly more necessary than the other. (Lewis 1970:66–67)

But the real meeting point is in spirit, not doctrine, Lewis suggests.

> It is at her center, where her truest children dwell, that each communion is really closest to every other in spirit, if not in doctrine. And this suggests that at the center of each there is a something, or a Someone, who against all divergencies of belief, all differences of temperament, all memories of mutual persecution, speaks with the same voice. (Lewis 1952:9)

There is a place of crossing over, even in our most valued and sacred regions of faith. One can cross over in openness and reverence and return more rich, more humble, more alive, and more deeply centered in one's own faith in the God who is present in our midst.

Summary

Cultural awareness is a necessity in this age of global interchange, interaction, and interdependency. The survival of humankind depends on our developing increasing capacities to understand and appreciate other cultural values and views.

The intercultural pastoral counselor has definable skills that can be taught and learned. Cultural encapsulation can be transcended as one differentiates an intercultural self, develops an enriched cognitive aware-

ness of other's experience, and exercises interpathic insight and aware-ness.

The intercultural pastoral counselor who is at home on the boundary crosses over and returns with effectiveness, freed by theological ground-edness to function as a mediating and reconciling person. Theology on the boundary is committed to authentic presence and genuine dialogue between cultures, faiths, and values.