

# Connection Newsletter

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## *Upcoming Events:*

- ◆ May 31 Professional Identity & Business of Counseling workshop
- ◆ June 28 CPCE Exam in Campus Library
- ◆ Aug. 9 Semester ends
- ◆ Aug. 31 Fall semester begins



## ***25 Years of the Counseling Program From Kay C. Bruce, PsyD***

Our current MA Counseling program in Portland is celebrating 25 years of preparing students to offer hope and healing to people throughout the world. Based upon an earlier program developed by Norm Thiesen, Ph.D., Sandy Wilson, D.Min. and Dave Wenzel, Ph.D., initiated a professional counseling program and obtained approval from the Oregon Licensing Board in 1994. Dave directed the program for 16 years before handing off the baton in 2010. In January 2015, we achieved CACREP accreditation as a major milestone.

Despite living in a constantly changing environment, the Western MAC has maintained incredible continuity and stability. We remain committed to faith in the Lord as an integral part of our work. We highly value relationships between faculty and students, forming long-term connections. The fact

that alumni choose to work at Western is evidence. All counselors at our counseling center including the Director Debbie Woo, MA, are current students, faculty, or alumni. Our counseling Administrative Assistant Sandy Phillips completed the MAC in 2007 in the same graduating class with faculty member Bryan Warren. Laurie Bloomquist, Ph.D., who oversees the Child and Youth Track in the MAC, was a 2009 graduate. Mary Aguilera, Ph.D. who will be our newest faculty member this coming year, graduated from the MAC in 2004. Most of these folks have gone on to do training in other schools and locations, but have come back to work at Western. Linda Hill, MA upon visiting commented, "It's like coming home, to come to Western."

Ken Logan, Psy.D. blessed us with his knowledge of the brain and even more importantly his passion for integration of faith and practice. He is now moving to a psychology faculty position where he can add significant influence to the body of research and discussion around integration in Christian training programs. We will benefit from his ongoing work.

Continued from page 1 by Dr. Kay Bruce

We are glad he has offered to be a continuing resource to our community as he takes on this new responsibility. Thank you, Ken!

Even before Ken's new position, Mary contacted us about joining our faculty. God faithfully continues to coordinate an excellent teaching team at Western. Mary brings a wealth of knowledge, wisdom, and experience—we are overjoyed that she is joining us. In this coming year, Laurie will step into an even greater role of leadership over the Child and Youth Track. Hannah will return to care for family in Ghana but we hope to remain solidly connected via the internet. Hannah is a treasure to our program, adding not only her passion for professionalism and research, but also expanding our understanding of culture and interpersonal relationships. She may continue to have influence as one of your online professors next year.

Perhaps unknown to most, this spring CACREP affirmed our mid-cycle report stating: "based on the information provided, there were no concerns identified and the Board accepted the report." This was a significant stamp of approval for us to move forward in upgrading our curriculum to 2016 standards. You have already seen the new fall curriculum and you know who will be teaching. 2 Timothy 2:13 tells us that even when we are faithless, "He remains faithful." We have experienced 25 years of His faithfulness in our growth and transformation and we anticipate an even stronger program as we move forward into the future.



### *New Addition—Mary Aguilera , Ph.D.*

I graduated from Western in 2004 and little did I know then that someday I would return to teach in the counseling program. I am very excited to be joining the counseling faculty. Since graduating, I worked in a clinic and in private practice. I have worked with children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families. My practice included working with depression, anxiety, PTSD, eating disorders, bipolar, adjustment disorder, and trauma. Some areas of specialty are play therapy, animal assisted therapy, and sand tray therapy. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the state of Oregon.

I completed my Ph.D. in Counseling with a specialization in counselor education in 2009 at Oregon State University. My qualitative dissertation, *An Exploratory Study of Novice Play Therapists*, explored the developmental process of becoming a counselor and play therapist. During my doctoral program, my internship focused on supervision of master's level students. I supervised both clinical mental health counselors and school counselors. As a doctoral intern, I oversaw "The Corvallis Project." The project was a joint venture between the Corvallis School District and OSU where master's school counseling students provided counseling for students in the schools with doctoral students providing the supervision. This was a great opportunity that served the local community and provided great training for school counselors. The experience also led me to complete the courses to become a school counselor.

Continued from page 2 Mary Aguilera

I have been teaching for the last twelve years and I have a passion for training counselors and being part of their professional development process. I've taught a wide variety of clinical mental health and school counseling courses. In addition to teaching master's students, I also teach doctoral practicum and internship courses. Helping a student learn through teaching classes and seeing a student's clinical growth through supervision is both rewarding and a great privilege.

In addition to teaching, I enjoy the detail work of assessment and accreditation. I think it is because the accreditation works brings me back to my accounting roots which is the work I did prior to becoming a counselor. I developed the assessment plan and wrote the self-study that led to my previous university getting CACREP accreditation. I also work at OSU coordinating their assessment data for CACREP. I have learned a lot through the process of accreditation and I want to be able to help others with the process. As a result, I have had the opportunity to present on the topic of assessment at the Western Association of Counselor Educators (WACES) conference.

When I am not teaching and working on accreditation, you can find me at the Oregon Coast whale watching and enjoying the beauty of the crashing waves. I enjoy traveling and spending time with family and friends.

I am looking forward to getting to know counseling students at Western, and to becoming a more active part of the Western community. Mary

## **Congratulations Dr. Bloomquist!**

Our very own Dr. Laurie Bloomquist was the recipient of the "Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling's 2019 Clinical Mental Health Counselor Advocate Award. The committee was thoroughly impressed with both the advocacy and the service she provide to her students, the counseling profession, and the children and adolescents she interacts with. "

All the best, -- Sarah Zalewski, MS, NCC, ACS, LPC

Chair, ACAC Awards Committee

### **\*\*Criteria for nomination of the 2019 Clinical Mental Health Counselor Advocate Award**

This clinical mental health professional is a tireless advocate for child and adolescent mental health who stays current on research, participates in mentoring and has developed collaborative relationships with their local mental health community.

- ◆ Describe how this clinical mental health professional advocates for child and adolescent mental health, especially in the areas of prevention and interventions.
- ◆ Describe how this individual demonstrates that they have remained current on matters pertaining to child and adolescent mental health.
- ◆ Describe this nominee's mentoring style, including any professional development offerings.
- ◆ Describe how this nominee demonstrated collaborative relationships with the local mental health community.

## WITH SADNESS WE SAY GOODBYE TO Dr. Ken Logan

Dear Students  
Monday, May 20, 2019



This is a difficult note for me to write to all of you. I have been offered an incredible opportunity to teach neuropsychology, psychological assessment, and conduct research in the integration of faith and clinical practice in George Fox's doctoral degree program. If you know my clinical focus and specialization you know how well these areas fit my interests and calling. While my family and I are excited about the opportunity, we are also grieved to have to say goodbye to you guys and Western Seminary. I am going to miss working with each of you and taking part in what God is doing in your professional development and personal transformation. If any of you have any questions about this transition, I am open to talking with you about it in more detail. Feel free to interact with me in class or come by my office and we can chat.

Please plan on keeping in touch with me as we transition. I want to hear about where you guys go, what you end up doing with your ministry and work, how many kiddos you end up having (some of you, anyway), and how you are doing personally and professionally. To facilitate connection, feel free to friend request me on LinkedIn, FaceBook, or you can email me anytime at [kenloganpsyd@gmail.com](mailto:kenloganpsyd@gmail.com) or even connect with me at my website [www.drkenlogan.com](http://www.drkenlogan.com).

I look forward to hearing about the many great things God is going to do through you in His kingdom work. I will miss Western Seminary and all of you greatly. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your lives.

Sincerely, Ken

*Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.  
2 Corinthians 13:11*

### Alumni News

Following is an upcoming release by an Alumna...Connie Baker.. "to all those who have been tracking with me in my journey writing this book, THANK YOU!! I feel your support and am so deeply grateful for your encouragement! As you have probably heard, the book, **Traumatized by Religious Abuse: Courage, Hope and Freedom for Survivors** is almost here!! Looks like it will be released at the end of May or beginning of June! "

If you would like to get an early look at the book, you may receive a copy of the manuscript if you are willing to provide an Amazon review. For more details please respond to [customerservice@connieabaker.com](mailto:customerservice@connieabaker.com). If you qualify, I will send you an electronic copy of the manuscript.

Thank you SO much, my friends! I'm looking forward to great things as this book launches!

Love to each of you!!  
Connie Baker, MA, LPC



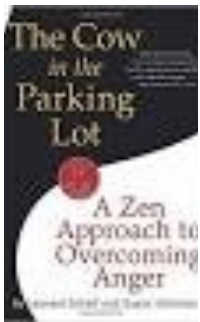
## **Good Reads by Dr. Norman Thiesen**

### **Summertime readings—find a good hammock in a shady spot and enjoy yourself!**

If you'd like a lot of good information on the Solution Focused Approach you might want to check out Elliott Connie at [elliottconnie.com](http://elliottconnie.com). He has a lot of free videos and trainings.

Mark Manson is also an interesting blogger. If you can get past his vulgar style he has some very good reflections.

James Clear is one of my favorite bloggers. He usually has some really Interesting ideas and resources. His material is well researched and practical in its helpfulness.



### **The Cow in the Parking Lot: A Zen Approach to Overcoming Anger**

by Leonard Scheff, Susan Edmiston

A surprisingly (to me) good book on anger management. If you are looking for something readable, clear, practical and in line with the research on the subject I'd highly suggest this one. The Buddhist aspects are not overdone and can be viewed as common grace principles. I think a very good book for clients (once you explain the Zen thing).



### **The Discriminating Therapist: Asking "How" Questions, Making Distinction, and Finding Direction in Therapy**

by Michael Yapko

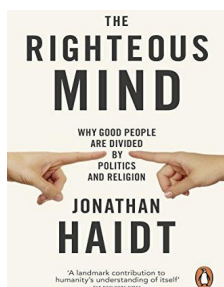
A very different perspective on doing therapy from a brief perspective. Problems are a result of global thinking and the inability to make appropriate discriminations between what is a helpful or non-helpful response. Very thought provoking observations and conceptualizations. He provides practical advice of how to implement concepts with your clients. A very good read.



### **Love Kindness: Discover the Power of a Forgotten Christian Virtue**

by Barry Corey

Barry is the president of BIOLA University and writes a part biographical/personal and conceptual book on the power of kindness. I found it an absolutely stimulating and convicting read (irrespective of being a BIOLA alumni). I highly recommend it and can't imagine you not personally benefiting from reading it!



### **The Righteous Mind** by Jonathan Haidt

Interesting read on how people make moral choices. He contrasts a liberal to a conservative mindset and shows how and why they come to different conclusions in their political, moral and life choices. This will help you understand some of the "culture war" debates that we are having today. Not a light read.

# Trauma and Christian Identity

by Dr. Kenneth Logan

We typically explore the concept of Christian identity through a direct study of scripture. This strategy provides an explicit and declarative biblical definition of our identity as followers of Jesus Christ. For example, one may study specific scriptural passages, such as John 1:12, Ephesians 1:5, 1 Corinthians 6:17, Romans 6:6, 1 Peter 2:9, Galatians 3:27-28, Colossians 3:1-3, 1 John 3:1 to discover biblically defined declarations about who we are from God's point of view. From an applied and pragmatic clinical perspective, we might also consider studying Christian identity through an applied psychological approach by directly exploring the "self-identity" of a believer in Jesus Christ. Self-identity in this perspective would be the person's generalized understanding of who they are. This comes from within the person, through cognitive knowledge and/or a felt acknowledgement of their identity. This article focuses on how trauma can influence a person's sense of self-identity causing a non-conscious subsequent impact on faith aspects of self-identity.

Lenore, a Christian counselor in private practice, was seeing me in therapy struggling with feelings of disillusionment, burnout, and depression that she experienced after completing treatment with a highly traumatized client in her practice. About four weeks into our treatment she was processing painful feelings of disillusionment when she shared, "I didn't feel this way when I first started counseling. It's not just about this recent case. I think caring for people in pain over time has been changing me and it is affecting how I view myself and the world. It is even changing my view of God. I don't know how, but I find myself questioning things that I believe and it makes me wonder if I even have a faith anymore. I know I am a Christian, but I don't feel like one. I can't get over the magnitude and amount of suffering I see in the people I am working with. It feels hopeless. I think I am just... angry. I really don't feel confident anymore in my ability to help people. I mean, what's the point."

Lenore was depressed and burned out, but she was also struggling existentially. The more we processed her experience the clearer it became that her experience of vicarious traumatization was manifesting as faith disillusionment. She was not seeing her faith crisis as an aspect of the trauma she was experiencing. She saw it as her reality, a true state of unbelief. Unable to see this reality coherently, she personalized her loss of faith as personal weakness, failure, and a real state of being. While Lenore's experience is more debilitating than average, it is easy for care providers to relate to her feelings and situation. The experience is not all that uncommon to people who do soul care work. Treating human suffering has a trauma impact on us, and it impacts our sense of personal and spiritual wellbeing and identity as well.

If you have worked with trauma long enough, I am sure you have seen how it manifests into anxiety symptoms (e.g. PTSD or acute stress responses). Likewise, trauma can affect our inner sense of self as well. Vicarious traumatization, as experienced by care providers, impacts in similar ways. This leads to similar symptoms, like those directly traumatized, which can include the loss of a care-provider's sense of identity. Our body, thinking, emotional functioning, and spiritual self can be altered in response to our empathizing with our client's traumatic experiences. We put ourselves in the shoes of the traumatized person and feel what they felt. Erikson (1968) states that identity creates an internal model for how to do life and plan for the future. This "model" is used to help us make decisions, deal with stressful situations, and create a sense of relative safety for ourselves and others. When we perceive a person, situation, or experience to be safe only then to find it to be a source of trauma, we begin to question our perception of

## Continued from page 6 by Dr. Kenneth Logan

reality and lose confidence in our ability to read reality. This is what compromises a sense of self or identity. In the experience of questioning everything, we then lose a sense of safety, we feel more vulnerable, and we lose our confidence.

Likewise, in our identity as a Christian, we have a model of who God is, how He acts, and how life is supposed to go with his involvement. Trauma can impact this confident identity of who He is and put us into a theological or existential tailspin. I have heard many believing clients say, “this is not how it was supposed to turn out.” It’s almost as if we are surprised by the experience of the event(s) that are causing our suffering.

In light of what I mentioned above, we could say that our Christian identity is impacted whenever our self-identity is impacted. In Lenore’s case, the cumulative experience of vicarious traumatization eventually led to her struggle with disillusionment. She began questioning if God was even real and, if He was, why was He allowing so much suffering. These were concepts that she had explicitly worked through theologically many years ago, yet they were becoming unresolved as she implicitly experienced her client’s suffering. As she thought through the more implicit and unconscious notions of her struggle, she was surprised as she became aware of several internal expectations she had about how God was supposed to show up in life. She shared that she was surprised by the reality of how much suffering was in the world. She shared, “The experience of my client’s suffering was far greater than I had intellectually understood or expected. I was prepared, or at least I thought I was. The reality of it surprised me.” This led her to believe that was happening because she was in over her head and was becoming ineffectual with her clients. She stated that she had been able to reality test these fears before, but she felt overwhelmed by them now. This is a common symptom of identity loss in trauma experiences. Lenore was struggling with the ability to engage in what is called self-reflection. She wasn’t able to fully believe and objectively see how her client’s stories were legitimately affecting her, nor could she see the positive impact of her clinical skills on her client’s wellbeing any longer. The inability to self-reflect, or mentalize, is a common symptom in trauma survivors. She also felt like a bad person for having to seek out help and that she was a bad person for not being able to get over it. She lacked objectivity in what was happening to her, the legitimacy of her symptoms, and optimism about working through her struggle. Her ultimate relief came when she began to believe that all the symptoms she was experiencing was an aspect of trauma and not some new reality that she had been blind to before. Trauma and identity work in therapy benefit greatly from studied clinical strategies. These can include increasing safety, decreasing feelings of vulnerability by validating experience, instilling a sense of control and empowerment, decreasing self-harshness and self-hatred responses, and helping people challenge beliefs that they are unable to deal with things effectively. Clients also benefit from working on isolation tendencies, relearning to trust themselves and safe others, rediscovering a sense of meaning in life, and normalizing the time necessary to grieve and heal. The same is true for care providers suffering vicariously from other people’s trauma.

Because we are dealing with trauma effects on Christian identity, some of the interventions I have found to be helpful with Christians struggling with identity loss include some more spiritually nuanced interventions. These are not at all exhaustive. While we must be careful with these interventions and how and when to apply them, I have found them to be helpful at appropriate stages of healing. The goal is to promote the experience of spiritual support not create a performance hoop for clients to jump through. Ultimately, the purpose is to help Christians bring God into the healing process.

1. Conceptualize the grief response as a dark night of the soul and to see this experience as a developmental phase which many times can lead to a deeper more intimate walk with God. The purpose of this is to normalize suffering and portray a sense of meaning to the experience. The helpful part of this



strategy is that clients are leaving behind a more simplistic and formulaic faith and moving toward one that can hold the reality that includes God being present in pain and suffering. God is not seen as a fixer but instead walks with them through the pain serving to increase a sense of Christian identity.

2. Conducting a scriptural study on God's character can be helpful. I usually emphasize the attributes of God's love and goodness. Clients many times end up re-engaging in a new way as they hang on to His character in the face of the pain they are confronting. Clients who do this often report an increased sense that God is walking with them through the process, increasing a sense of Christian identity.

3. The scriptural and theological study of Christian identity from a scriptural standpoint (John 1:12, Ephesians 1:5, 1 Corinthians 6:17, Romans 6:6, 1 Peter 2:9, Galatians 3:27-28, Colossians 3:1-3, and 1 John 3:1). This study addresses the issue of who we are in Christ while we experience suffering. Implicit beliefs that come to the surface in suffering can reveal the idea that God is with us when we are happy or content and that He is not with us when we are suffering. This task can help correct the issue that God is with us in our suffering, thereby potentially increasing a sense of Christian identity.

I would propose that spiritual development is a critical and important part of helping Christians who are suffering from the effects of trauma. I have seen some people who end up recovering from trauma, yet their faith gets left behind in order to allow them to do the deeper work of trauma recovery. Perhaps addressing the repair of Christian identity might be a way to avoid this.

## References

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Kenneth A. Logan, PsyD Professor of Counseling, Western Seminary, Portland OR. Dr. Logan is a licensed psychologist in California and Oregon. Academically, he specializes in neuropsychology, integration of psychology and theology, and clinical supervision. Clinically, he specializes in stress and trauma work with first responders, military, and families in ministry.







### **Western Placement Service for Counseling Students and Alumni:**

Over the last few months we have been refreshing and updating our placement services and website to be more interactive and to have resources that will help with job searching, both for those looking for a position and for those looking to fill one. We want to create a better bridge between the two. As alumni, you might occasionally be in either circumstance. I have often heard employers say, "I want to fill this position with a Western-trained person," and with our renewed focus on placement we have a better chance of making this happening.

With that said, the Counseling section of Western's Placement services needs work and I need your help. Counseling has a number of unique challenges when it comes to employment. With the degree and credentialing requirements, connecting qualified candidates to perspective employment is a delicate dance. Western is known for our exceptional training in all disciplines however, over the years, we have not done an adequate job of building bridges between counseling students/alumni and counseling employment. If you have ever been on our Placement site, there is very little that would cause you to return after you first visit. This needs to change. The current website needs more depth in this area and you can help by using it as a place to list or look for job opportunities.

Presently it is a very active site for church and para-church organizations because they see the value and volume of positions listed. Counseling, I believe, can have this same impact if more folks see us as a resource for finding qualified counselors. It is user friendly, and designed in a way that whatever the particular requirements for any given position, can be easily described to a potential candidate. To insure these employment opportunities are exclusively for Western Seminary counseling students and alumni, access will be granted by your S.I.S. number.

We have future plans for an individual portfolio/data base with resources like: Electronic resume' and Professional Disclosure Statement links; papers written on a particular subject; describing your counseling specialties; the ability to link to sites that have particular information on students/alumni work and accomplishments; professional interests and whatever we can add that we believe is helpful in applying for employment. These future plans will come online as our IT department has time to implement. So, stay tuned, lots of exciting upgrades to come.

If you have any questions or just want to visit regarding your particular needs, please contact me at [gmoon@westernseminary.edu](mailto:gmoon@westernseminary.edu) or at 503-517-1880. Here is a link to the landing page. <https://www.westernseminary.edu/alumni/placement>

I am here to help. Greg Moon, Director of Placement at Western Seminary