

COVENANT

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MAY
11
2017

Annual Benefit Dinner

Columbus Event Centre
(Sala Caboto Ballroom)
40 Playfair Avenue
Toronto, ON M6B 2P9

SPEAKER:

Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB
CEO, Salt and Light TV

REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION:

T: 905 727 4214 ext. 104

EMAIL:

events@southdown.on.ca

ON-LINE REGISTRATION:

www.southdown.on.ca

Career Opportunity!

We are currently looking for a psychologist to join our team.

For full details

please visit our website:

[www.southdown.on.ca/
about-us/job-opportunities](http://www.southdown.on.ca/about-us/job-opportunities)

or email:

cdodgson@southdown.on.ca

or call:

905 727 4214 ext. 106

Transformation in Psychotherapy

By Eran Talitman PhD



Over the past 18 years that I have been at Southdown, I have witnessed the inner transformation that takes place within residents that receive treatment. I would like to share with you the transition process that I hope takes place between the time individuals enter treatment and the time that they depart.

Residents begin treatment with a narrow, rigid, and distorted sense of self, maladaptive coping strategies, and a strong sense of how they must behave in order to succeed or be accepted. As treatment unfolds, the manner in which they view themselves, others, and the world is increasingly challenged. As a result, individuals experience confusion and anxiety because their self-concept as well as their secure and stable maladaptive coping strategies are being dismantled. Gradually, as treatment unfolds, residents are encouraged to take risks and to enter into unfamiliar territory in order to develop healthier coping strategies and a balanced self-perspective.

Some religious and clergy who enter treatment do not think that they need help. They externalise blame onto others and are very reluctant to acknowledge any personal issues/struggles. It is important to recognise that these individuals are attempting to avoid the emotional pain of shame, guilt, embarrassment, and even humiliation. They are also desperately attempting to maintain an unrealistic and idealistic self-image. Their fear is that, if they acknowledge any weaknesses, then they would be inferior to others or empty and worthless with no redeeming qualities. Through the process of psychotherapy, these individuals are encouraged to embrace a balanced self-perspective that integrates their humanity. Acknowledging and taking responsibility for mistakes and/or the fact that we have hurt others is a step in our acceptance of our humanity- that we can hurt others.

Some residents enter treatment with a very narrow, distorted sense of self. They see themselves as failures, not good enough, unlovable, and unworthy. They focus on their limitations, struggles, problems, and seem to ignore or dismiss their qualities and gifts as individuals. Through psychotherapy, residents are encouraged to move towards a fuller, more complex, multi-layered, and balanced self-perspective that integrates their gifts, qualities, and struggles.

Many people view emotions as a form of weakness, or as a sign of immaturity, childishness, or neediness. Moreover, individuals are fearful that experiencing emotions means that they are "out of control." Consequently, they display a long-standing pattern of using strategies to distract, avoid, and/or escape from their emotions. Mindless television watching, workaholism, surfing the internet, alcohol, sex, and food are all used by individuals as an attempt to deal with unwanted emotions. In psychotherapy, residents are encouraged to move towards "attending and befriending" their emotional

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Our History

1964

Canadian Bishops endorsed concept of treatment facility

1965

Letters Patent granted for non-profit corporation, Emmanuel Convalescent Foundation

1966

Residential facility known as Southdown opened on December 15

1976

Lakewood residence for women religious opened

1977

East wing office space constructed

Website news!

We are pleased to offer a new online Resource Centre available on Southdown website: www.southdown.on.ca. It can be opened from the top menu and it provides an easy access to:

- Covenant newsletter archives (searchable by keyword or category)
- Videos produced by our staff
- External resources (web links, books and articles recommended by our staff)
- Q&A Forum (a place to post a question and get an answer from our staff)

The Resource Centre is in its' initial stage and our goal is to grow the content based on your inquiries. We will post answers to questions from our readers and website visitors through the Q&A Forum either in a written or video format. Whether you have a general question about mental health or are seeking information on a specific problem within your community or diocese, we hope to be able to answer. All inquiries are moderated and anonymous.

What we often encounter in our practice is that people are not sure what to do when they are presented with a problem and what are the next steps. They may notice a problem but are hesitant to address it due to fear of being judged or simply due to lack of direction. We have over 50 years of experience in addressing questions and concerns around mental health needs and addictions, and we would like to share this knowledge with you. Please do not hesitate to use this Resource Centre and ask your questions! Feel free to email advancement@southdown.on.ca or call Katherine Rogalska, Communications Manager at **905 727 4214 ext. 104** if you have any questions on how to use the Q&A Forum or would like to take a tour.

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experiences. In this way, they come to recognise that sadness, loss, grief, anger, and anxiety are natural and normal aspects of life. Paying attention to our emotions allows us to more fully understand our experience as well as our needs.

Some religious and clergy enter treatment with a longstanding cycle of shame, guilt, self-judgment, secrecy, and isolation. Most often, shame is related to an aspect of their sexuality such as past experiences, sexual abuse, sexual orientation, or breaking of their vows of celibacy. Shame refers to the sense of being a bad or sinful person and/or the sense that there is something wrong with them. Moreover, when people experience shame, they engage in secrecy and isolation in order to avoid rejection and abandonment from others. By sharing and exploring personal stories with others in both individual and group psychotherapy, residents begin to break this destructive cycle of shame. In sharing their personal stories, individuals experience acceptance, understanding and empathy from others rather than harsh judgment or rejection, which reduces the sense of shame. As a result, an inner transition takes place from shame and self-judgment to acceptance and understanding of their issues. Residents who struggle with shame do come to recognise the importance of interpersonal engagement, social support, self-compassion, and self-forgiveness.

Many people seek to master complete control over their emotions, behaviours, and other people. Trying to control all aspects of life is an attempt to reduce

personal insecurities and anxieties. However, in psychotherapy, residents are challenged to accept and tolerate that they cannot have complete control over their lives. Individuals are encouraged to embrace the notion that experiencing insecurity and anxiety is part of being human and part of navigating an unpredictable future. Consequently, individuals are invited to learn to tolerate uncertainty and to develop skills to manage their emotions.

Many religious and clergy enter treatment possessing a harsh, impatient, and judgmental inner critic. This inner critic constantly points out to them what they did wrong and what they need to do to improve. Individuals with such an inner critic typically exhibit perfectionism and/or workaholicism. Underlying this striving for perfection and excessive work is the sense that they are not good enough. As a result, such individuals work harder and harder in an effort to raise their self-esteem. Unfortunately, this approach typically leads to burnout and depression. Through their involvement in psychotherapy, the residents are encouraged and challenged to become gentler, more compassionate, and more understanding towards themselves. They are also challenged to recognise their gifts, achievements and successes. They may be invited to recognise the many ways in which they have positively impacted the lives of others through their ministry. In this regard, they are called to become a very good friend towards themselves—one who is supporting and encouraging rather than constantly criticising. ■

Residents who struggle with shame do come to recognize the importance of interpersonal engagement, social support, self-compassion, and self-forgiveness.

1982

Expansion of facilities including pool was completed

1984

West wing residence opened to accommodate women on-site

1985

Publication of Covenant newsletter initiated

1991

Educational conferences for leadership initiated

1996

First Critical Personnel Issues Conference

The Spiritual Journey of Transitioning

By Barry Lynch, CFC



"May God give you the power through his Spirit for your hidden self to grow stronger." (Eph. 3:16)

As one matures in spiritual life, one becomes more comfortable with endings and with beginnings, with change and sometimes with disorientation. The purpose of transition time for residents is to support the ongoing process of renewal. We are told that any transition journey in life has three basic phases: (1) an ending, (2) a period of adjustment and confusion, (3) a new beginning. In transitioning, residents encounter an ending of their time at Southdown and a new beginning with a period of "liminal space" or adjustment in between. These three phases shape the transition periods in all our lives and Southdown residents are made aware of this journey which is one of maturing, while trusting in the mystery of God's Spirit with a grateful heart.

Transitioning in life calls all of us to journey forth with hope. When individuals set out from Southdown to live their life anew, they experience emotional and spiritual dynamics that support them and also challenge them. Transitioning is certainly not just a "head-journey"—it is an emotional and spiritual journey. In this journey residents are invited to venture forth trusting in the living presence of our compassionate God.

The dynamics of life transitioning that residents have experienced and shared with one another during Connections' workshops include the challenge of integrating their psychological, emotional and spiritual growth in their new life of community and mission. Transitioning calls on individuals to consolidate their learning in healthy and integrating ways. It challenges

them to journey with the ongoing realities of confusion, uncertainty, anxiety and fear.

While in residential treatment at Southdown, priests and religious women and men often embrace a renewal in their spiritual awareness and personal prayer life. Their spiritual journey is often found to be a second conversion, an affective conversion, and a true change of heart. Residents find that this conversion of heart makes possible a real transformation of their true self. As they re-engage with people in their ministry and with members of their religious community, individuals express renewed hope and faith in their call to live in more integrated and healthy ways.

"To live with the Spirit of God is to be a listener. It is to keep the vigil of mystery, earthless and still."
(Jessica Powers)

Transitioning involves a vigil of mystery. Men and women must take time for listening to their newfound true self, and time to explore the meaning and implications of that which calls them to grow into a fuller life. This affective and spiritual self-knowledge is never learned alone. The experience of the Southdown program has confirmed this for residents. Our spiritual growth is learned in our relationships, in our experience of life lived with family, with community and with people in ministry. Our desire to mature commits us to resource ourselves with ongoing counselling and with spiritual direction. Residents set goals for their transition, which help open them to the ongoing spiritual journey of conversion of mind and heart. As St. Paul says in Philippians 1:9, "My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best." ■

JULY
24-28
2017

Listening to the Teacher Within Retreat Conference for Women Religious in Leadership

St. John's Convent
and Guest House

233 Cummer Avenue

Toronto, ON M2M 2E8

REGISTRATION AND
INFORMATION:
T: 905 727 4214 ext. 107

EMAIL:
dheiderscheit@southdown.on.ca

BROCHURE AND
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www.southdown.on.ca

Watch our new video
on our website
www.southdown.on.ca or
The Southdown Institute
YouTube Channel.

2001

First Accreditation granted by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation
Carter Centre opened

2011

14-week residential program established

2013

Accreditation with Exemplary Standing granted by Accreditation Canada
Moved to new facility in Holland Landing

2015

Inaugural Benefit Dinner

2016

50th Anniversary:
**Gratitude,
Compassion and Care**

50 YEARS

APRIL
1-3
2017

Critical Personnel Conference

Asia: Today's Challenges
and Perspectives

Saint Pedro Poveda College

P. Poveda Street
Ortigas Center
Quezon City, Metro Manila
Philippines

REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION:

T: 632 631 8757 ext. 257

EMAIL:

teresian10.2011@gmail.com

ON-LINE REGISTRATION:

www.southdown.on.ca

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We are grateful for your continuous help with keeping our mailing list current. Any new information can be emailed to administration@southdown.on.ca or call 905 727 4214.

FROM MY DESK TO YOURS:



In Mark 3:9, Jesus tells his disciples to secure a fishing boat ready for him so he could avoid the press of the crowd against him. As I meditated on that phrase, I wondered what makes it so difficult or challenging for Religious and Clergy to move away from the pressing crowd for the express purpose of renewal and refreshment. How many times have you felt selfish or unworthy of a holiday or vacation? When you have not been feeling physically well or needed to see a professional, did you experience guilt, frustration, embarrassment or disgust? Mark reminds us that part of Jesus' routine was good self-care, taking time for renewal and rejuvenation, so that he could wholeheartedly fulfill his ministry. Strong supportive words for us to remember as we go about our daily mission.

I recently came across an article listing eight practices that will provide better balance in daily life. These are great items to remember when you are in a transition phase in your life. Practising mindfulness, looking for the silver lining in a situation, employing positive emotions, seeking support from others, seeking out a good supervisor, getting moving—do regular exercise, smelling the roses—enjoy nature, and having meaning in your life are the words of wisdom for today. We know a well-balanced ministerial life includes time alone and time with friends. These eight tips include both qualities. In addition, time alone may be personal prayer time, retreat time, achieving an appropriate amount of sleep, and taking vacations/holidays that refresh the spirit. Many years ago a colleague of mine called this "regression in service of the ego." It renews our energy, replenishes our capacity for empathy and compassion, and can create mental space to spark new ideas for conversations. Our souls need the fuel of beauty and rest just as our bodies need food. May you find time to step aside—secure a boat—and refresh your spirit in service of those who appreciate and look forward to your ministry. And remember, Jesus modelled for us how to look after our needs so that we can continue to minister effectively.

On another note, this has been an active winter for the Southdown staff. We look forward to seeing you when we are at conferences or presenting seminars around the world. On May 11th we will host our Annual Benefit Dinner at the Columbus Event Centre in Toronto. Come and enjoy a delightful evening out with friends. Funds that are raised through this event are used to assist those who are not able to afford the full cost of residential treatment. Those we have been able to assist have expressed their gratitude for making it possible to do their deep inner work. We hold all in prayer who assist us in our mission.

Wishing you a blessed Lent.

Dorothy Heiderscheid, OSF, MSW, ACSW, RSW
CEO, Southdown

Covenant is produced and published by The Southdown Institute. Its purpose is to inform and educate the readership about clinical issues that surface in our work and to invite integration of the emotional and spiritual aspects of our lives.



18798 Old Yonge Street
Holland Landing, ON L9N 0L1 Canada

Tel: 905 727 4214
Fax: 905 895 6296
Email: administration@southdown.on.ca

www.southdown.on.ca



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