

The Christian Fellowship of Healing (Scotland) worked from the early 1950's to support and spread the healing ministry within churches and to encourage engagement with the medical profession. To further these aims a centre was run in Edinburgh where people could come for prayer, listening and healing. A loving and supportive prayer community formed, which came to an end in 2011. This document is part of a legacy of resources which we hope will support others in their engagement with the healing ministry. More archived material is available to the public at the National Library of Scotland.

Inner healing

By Ian Cowie (Chaplain 1976-88)

"John" came to us for healing of his bad back. In our morning prayers we read Psalm 139, and afterwards it was clear that something was happening. "John" was re-living being rejected by his mother and could see that this lay behind all that had happened to him. As we helped him to see the scene, it transpired that his mother was about 50 at the time ... , with a three-year-old child. He was about that age himself now, so understanding dawned on him: "Oh Mum, I'd never seen you like that before", he cried. A deep healing process started which affected his relationships with his wife and with people at work. His back began to improve, too.

This is an example of the "healing of memories" or "inner healing" as others call it. There are many excellent books ([1](#)) about it, so only a brief introduction is given here.

Two Sides of the Same Coin

We have hurt people. We have been hurt by people. In confession, we come to terms with the wrong and the hurt we have caused and received. Both confession and inner healing centre on the fact that all human sin and wrong are focused upon the Cross, where God in Christ takes upon Himself all the sin and hurt of humanity. Every hurt given by one human being to another becomes His hurt, and because He loves both the sinner and the "sinned against", each sin wounds Him doubly.

Therefore I can bring to the foot of the Cross all the hurt and wrong I have received, which perhaps has been festering in my memory for years. I can see that painful memory in the light of the Cross instead of seeing it, for instance, through the eyes of the frightened child that I was. I can see my fellow-sinner who hurt me in a new light, knowing that Christ was there sharing the pain and the shame, and so allow His healing to flow into the whole situation. I can pray for the one who hurt me, and the poison of bitterness and fear within can be released. (See our leaflet "[Forgiveness](#)".)

Former CFH Resources can be found at:

www.st-cuthberts.net | www.mindandsoul.info
www.emmaushouse-edinburgh.co.uk

Do it Yourself

There are some hurts which I can deal with myself, just as there are some sins for which I can find pardon just by confessing them in private. But there are some which have made such a deep impression that I need to share the load with somebody who has Christ's authority to deal with them.

Begin by "laying your life before the Lord" ... sometimes it helps actually to stretch yourself on a bed or even before the Communion Table in your church. Ask that the Holy Spirit may go back through the years and deal with anything which needs healing. Open your store of memories to Him and invite Him to walk back through that store to cleanse it, right back to your conception. You may, or may not, have an immediate reaction. In some cases it is in the following weeks that incidents are brought to the surface. It is a process which might go on for months in deeply hurt people. As a memory begins to surface, share it with the Lord. He was there with you at the time. It happened to Him, too, for He said: "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do to me". The people who hurt you were also His beloved children, and you share His sorrow that they could have behaved like that.

It is no part of the Christian life to avoid calling a spade a spade. If it was a wicked thing to do (e.g., if you were interfered with as a child), then it was wicked. Evil is evil --- don't try to whitewash it. Yet, with Christ on the Cross, one can come round to pray for the sinner ... the mother who wounded her child emotionally, the man who violated the child, the husband who was unfaithful ... In the weeks as this process is going on, you must be seeking to deepen your understanding of the Gospel. Clarify your picture of Jesus by reading a book that will help you come to grips with the meaning behind the familiar stories. Seek out worship, conferences, etc which will deepen your commitment and understanding as a Christian. The Holy Spirit will not bring to the surface anything which you are not strong enough spiritually to cope with, but if there are really serious hurts deep down you should seek out somebody experienced in these things, so that your experience may be shared under wise guidance. (For a specimen prayer, see our leaflet "[Three prayers](#)".)

Inner Healing for Somebody Else

We may undertake Inner Healing in the course of normal pastoral work or as part of the normal prayer for one another in a Christian Fellowship. This will probably be because normal "treatment" at the medical and spiritual levels does not seem to be progressing. One might say, "I wonder if there is anything deeper behind this. Let us ask the Lord if there are any old wounds or wrong relationships which need to be healed". Then look prayerfully together at a story about Jesus until His Presence becomes real, perhaps read some verses from Psalm 139, and see what happens. We are listening attentively at this point and leading into prayer. There must be no probing, only an openness to the Holy Spirit.

DO NOT TRY THIS WITH MENTALLY ILL OR DEEPLY DISTURBED PEOPLE.

It is usual for us to pray in pairs, a man and a woman, both because the Lord sent His disciples out in pairs and because it shields us against too deep an emotional involvement. It is 'two together in His Name' which is the source of spiritual power. We must also allow for the fact that a number of sessions may be needed, especially if the sufferer has very little faith to begin with. It may be necessary to build up a more mature faith first.

In some cases a Bible verse pops into your mind, or perhaps a picture. In one case we were waiting silently and one member got the picture of a bath, which opened up a bad memory for the client. If something like that comes into your mind share it tentatively, so that the person can reject it if it does not make sense or, as in some cases, having rejected it find that it does link up after all.

If tears or anger flow, then let them come unafraid. Enter into this with them and find the way to link it up with the Lord. If you do this too glibly before the real feeling is out then something will be left behind.

End by committing the incident into God's hands and give the person the blessing.

This healing can take place quite naturally without any "label". Here is an example shared with us by one of our members:

The telephone rang in my London flat. It was my sister, 400 miles away.

"I think you'd better come north" - she sounded quietly desperate -
"Mother and I are no longer on speaking terms".

Mother was 93 years of age, fit and well, dominating the family unto the third generation and still resentful towards her father, who had been an evangelist and, she considered, too strict with his children. Rather than live with us she had chosen to go into an old people's home, but had become so disruptive there that she had been asked to leave. This was upsetting my sister, who was almost suicidal with depression. Nevertheless it was she who gave mother a home when the authorities expelled her.

Once under the same roof, however, things went from bad to worse. "If only mother would let God run her life", I thought, but her attitude had always been: "If you had my experience of life you wouldn't believe in God either".

A few days later I travelled north to be with them. I knew that only the Almighty could deal with the situation, and that no matter what happened I must listen to God's voice telling me what to do. But I laughed when the thought came: "Start to make a family tree". Mother has an excellent memory and there would be no lack of information, but I was unprepared for her reaction.

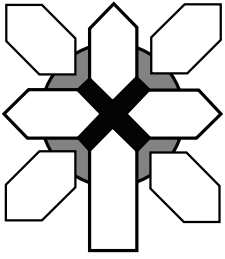
“Well”, she said, “if you’re going to start that, there’s something I must tell you”. And out of the cupboard came the first skeleton. With the sharing of this life-long secret she found release and her journey to freedom had begun. For us it meant an understanding of her situation.

My innocent questions like “Where is Uncle James buried? I can find no trace of him” brought forth unbelievable stories and memories so painful that she had sleepless nights for a week, but in the end a milestone was reached on the road to freedom.

Then one day the miracle happened. She said she would like to pray; she hadn’t prayed aloud since her father led family worship many years before, but her voice was strong and clear as she said, “Please, Father, forgive me for being such a poor mother”. The family tree is far from complete but my sister looks radiant these days.

Footnotes

(1) *The Prayer that Heals*, Francis MacNutt; *Healing of Memories*, David A Seamands; *Emotionally Free*, Rita Bennett



Credo

used by the

Christian Fellowship of Healing (Scotland)

The Christian Fellowship of Healing:

is united in its commitment to the practice of prayer as the foundation of all our ministry.

Prayer is the means through which we believe the Holy Spirit can use us, here and now, to continue the practice of healing incarnated by Jesus.

is an ecumenical group of Christians who openly embraces a range of theological understanding and language to describe 'how' God heals.

We accept that health and healing can and does come through medicine, counselling, complementary therapies and other means. This does not negate the real contribution of prayer, rather it upholds the role of prayer to support individuals to listen to the Holy Spirit within them, guiding them, facilitating health and healing.

is committed to being alongside people who are suffering and experiencing pain, struggle and distress whatever their background.

We acknowledge that suffering faces us all and challenges our understanding and belief. Yet we can, with integrity, offer reassurance of God's loving presence accompanying every human being as seen in Christ who has shown us the capacity of God to be vulnerable even to the point of death. Living in and from this truth of the ever present loving God we respond as authentically as possible from our hearts, and we can offer an understanding of the range of meaning of healing which includes miracles.

is convinced of the importance of the varied aspects of healing displayed by Jesus in the miracle stories.

This includes an intense personal encounter with Jesus; affirmation of the individual as a person of value, physical healing, restoration of meaning and purpose, social inclusion; as well as challenge to those in power; confronting rigid thinking and lack of compassion. We believe all these components are aspects of the transforming love of God and reflect the wholeness Jesus calls us into. We see healing as deeply linked with the Christian tradition of vocation through which the living God calls each of us to discover and fulfil our potential.

is united in our understanding that healing in the New Testament includes wholeness.

This links the transforming love that effects miracles with the transforming love that brings the disciples through their fear and resistances into their ministry of apostleship. Our experience is that the practice of prayer in small groups, with a commitment to sharing and listening, enables those of us offering healing prayer to grow in ourselves and in our capacity to experience and share God's love. This includes the reality that some people have a gift of healing and a greater capacity than average to bring about healing.
