

Our Philosophy of Counseling (Draft)
By Bob and Ethel Zook

Having been created in the image of God and placed in the Garden of Eden, humankind was made to live in Paradise, in communion with God. However, ever since Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, the human race has been making choices that have hurt ourselves and those around us. Our sins mar our relationships with God, ourselves, and other people. This world is not the paradise God originally intended it to be. Yet, even before the creation, He had a plan to redeem his broken people living in this broken world.

When Jesus lived on earth, He healed many people physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Before returning to Heaven, He promised His followers that He would send the Comforter, the Counselor, the Holy Spirit. Jesus returned to Heaven where He is seated by Heavenly Father's right hand interceding on our behalf. The work Jesus began on earth continues through the Holy Spirit. Jesus, our Creator and Redeemer, is the One Who can heal our brokenness. Sometimes that healing is experienced through the guidance of a counselor. For us as Christian counselors, the Holy Spirit is the ultimate Counselor. We as human counselors seek direction from Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Life's experiences impact who we are and how we respond to God, ourselves, and others. The impact could be positive, better preparing us for healthy responses in life. The impact could be negative, causing emotional injury that prompts unhealthy responses in life. For many people, life is a mixed bag of positive and negative experiences throughout life. So, in our journey here on earth, we carry with us our past--the positive and negative influences, our own healthy and unhealthy choices.

As counselors, it is crucial that we remain close to God, in tune with the Holy Spirit, constantly aware of our need for and the work of Christ's redemption in our own lives. As we become aware of broken areas in our own lives, it is important that we seek Christ's healing so that our own issues do not hinder God's work through us in ministering to our counselees. We do acknowledge, though, that God is able and sometimes chooses to work through us in spite of us.

People experience healing in their brokenness ultimately through Jesus Christ. Jesus brings healing and restores health in relationship with God, self and others as people welcome and acknowledge Jesus as the healer. As Jesus used a substance of ground and spit to heal the blind man's eyes, Jesus today can use a variety of counseling theories and approaches to bring healing to people's hearts.

Some Scripture Passages

Lk. 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.

Psa 147:3 He (the Lord) heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Heb 4:14-16 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Mt. 11:28-30 (Jesus said) “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.