

IDENTITY FORMATION AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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With two degrees from Harvard University and a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, Dr. Joseph Ozawa is a licensed clinical psychologist in Hawaii and California.

Dr. Ozawa is a Senior Psychologist with Asia Pacific Mission, Ltd. He is the Senior Director of the Family and Juvenile Justice Centre and Director of Psychological Services at the courts of Singapore as well as Head of the Psychological Services Unit at the Ministry of Community Development; in addition, he is a Senior Consultant Psychologist to the Ministry of Education of Singapore. He also hosted a popular Television show, "Face to Face," on ChannelNewsAsia and a popular live call in radio show, "Heart to Heart."

He has consulted as a Psychologist in over 20 nations, including speaking to the primary social psychologists of Japan.

As a minister, he pastored for six years and has ministered in over 30 nations. He has been a consultant to World Vision International for 13 years in over 18 nations. He has been a lecturer at Bible colleges in the USA (including Fuller Theological Seminary), Singapore, and Hong Kong.*

In the 1940's and 1950's, Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, introduced the concept of psychomotor developmental stages. Dr. Piaget was followed by Professor Erik H. Erikson of Harvard University who introduced his timeless analysis of stages of "psychosocial development" and emotional growth (Identity: Youth and Crisis, 1968; Identity and the Life Cycle, 1980). In a brilliant synthesis of psychoanalysis and longitudinal child studies, Professor Erikson described our lives, from conception to death, as a development through inevitable and predictable psychosocial stages.

Of his developmental theory, perhaps the one term which captivated the hearts and minds of students most was the concept of "identity formation," essentially the task of adolescence focused on finding out "who we are" --

linking each person's unique values within the context of a unique history of a unique peoples.

Those who successfully navigate the identity stage result in personalities capable of later maturity and growth (called, "ego synthesis"). Those who cannot form a viable identity have an "identity crisis" or "identity diffusion" which is a shrinking away, a withdrawal from making definitive choices about one's future, careers, values, or relationships. For these people, growth is cut short. They cannot develop careers nor life trajectories. Further, they cannot effectively move on to the next stage of development which is "intimacy" the bonding which leads to adult love and the formation of families. The term, "identity crisis" became a popular term used by generations of psychologists and psychotherapists.

As a clinical psychologist for over 25 years in 3 countries, I have found this issue of identity formation to be instrumental in the emotional well being of people everywhere. Fundamentally, I have found that we must all uncover, even "re-cover" who we are in order to become essentially emotionally healthy and productive.

I believe that this essential search for identity is elemental. It can lead an adoptive child to search for his / her natural parents. This deep drive to capture roots was seen in the popularity of Alex Haley's "roots" (1977), the story of an African-American searching for his ancestral roots in the African continent. As a "*sansei*" (third-generation Japanese-American), I too began a journey of re-discovery which eventually led me to my ancestral homeland at the

base of Mount Fuji in Shizuoka, Japan. I'm reminded of Moses, a Hebrew hidden in the royal Egyptian household, who forfeited his powerful and luxurious life to stop the beating by an Egyptian of "one of his own people" (Exodus 2:11), a Hebrew slave. The deep search for identity by Moses was eventually linked to his epic role as liberator of his people.

In this sense, when external countries "colonize" another nation and impose "foreign-ness" upon another nation, the result is a crisis of identity or identity diffusion (to use Erikson's term). One only need recall Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), the "father of India" who was a lawyer educated in Britain but who eventually lived on a traditional Indian "*ashram*" and became a symbol of India by wearing only a traditional Indian "*dhoti*" loincloth and weaving at a loom, or "*charka*." His entire nation found the validity of its non-colonial identity.

Years ago, I was in a remote Kelabit village in the highlands of Borneo and met a "Christian" villager who was thrilled that I was from America. He sat me down in his "longhouse" and started up his diesel generator and video-television player! He then went into another room and emerged in a white suit with his hair slicked back (he had previously been wearing shorts and had had no shirt on). As the Kelabit tribesman saw my startled look, he put on a VCR and played a video of one of Benny Hinn's crusades. Through a translator, the villager said, "You see I bought this white suit and look at me! I'm going to be a great Christian pastor like the famous Benny Hinn!"

How many millions of people in the world have surrendered their identities in the belief that to have spiritual validity, a person must abandon, even deny his

or her cultural, historical, and traditional ways in favor of foreign cultures and ways? I am reminded of being in Africa where impoverished villagers who wore very little because of the heat, would walk miles barefooted then at the door to their church (which looked like a traditional American New England country church) would put on leather shoes, dresses, and Western suits. Once the service ended, they would undress for their long and dusty trek back to their villages with their Sunday garb neatly folded, bundled, and balanced upon their heads. Similarly, I have seen rural Japanese who normally eat rice, drink rice wine, *sake*, or green tea served in exquisitely crafted ceramics, sit on *tatami* mats without shoes, and wear loosely fitting clothes go to church on Sundays. There they would sit uncomfortably in wooden pews in their shoes, suits, ties, and Western dresses, and sing Western hymns with Western melodies all accompanied by an organ imported from America; this would be followed by taking a communion of bread and red wine served in a silver chalice (imported from Europe).

To some seminary scholars, the process of finding appropriate cultural-historical roots is called, “contextualization.” Don Richardson (Peace Child; Eternity in Their Hearts) used the term, “redemptive analogies” to describe how we can find some practice or understanding embedded in a culture to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ. The 21st chapter of Acts is a provocative narrative of the conflicts Paul (previously known as the Jewish leader, Saul) had in dealing with whether circumcision was essential to a saving faith. Paul questioned the belief that “unless you are circumcised...you cannot

be saved” (Acts 15:1). Paul strongly asserted that salvation is a question of belief, of love, of faith in Jesus and not taking on the core of Jewish identity which was so often seen as verified by the outward evidence of physical circumcision.

In the perspective of developmental psychology, healthy emotional growth and a successful transition through life’s stages of life requires people to incorporate, even embrace, their national, tribal, cultural traditions rather than reject them in favor of a foreign orthodoxy. Thus Paul’s affirmation of the spiritual validity of faith over circumcision, the search of Alex Haley for his African roots, the action of Moses of casting off his Egyptian role of privilege in favor of his Hebrew blood ties or the transformation of Gandhi from a barrister in suit and vest to a half naked Indian in dhoti weaving at a loom, all reflect the core search for psychological wholeness, integrity, and emotional truth.

In a psychological sense, it is the loss of identity, or in Erikson’s term, identity confusion or diffusion, which causes disequilibrium and precipitates an “identity crisis.” This can lead to a psychologically fragmented, dissociated, unintegrated, personality who withdraws from life, is indecisive and confused, and is incapable of moving to the next stage of intimacy.

When Japanese people, for example, can become spiritually mature by embracing rather than denying their cultural and traditional roots, can incorporate such elements as tea ceremony (*chado*), calligraphy (*sho*), flower arranging (*ikebana*), traditional instruments (*koto*, *shamisen*, *shakuhachi*), and wearing of traditional clothing (*kimono*, *yukata*), into their spiritual-religious lives, then they will achieve “ego synthesis” and “emotional integration.”

As a psychologist who is also a minister of Jesus Christ who has counseled non-Western Christians in many nations, it has become evident to me that Christians can fall into a confused, weak, emotionally unhealthy spiritual life when they come to believe that though Jesus died for them spiritually, they must deny their traditional and cultural identities and become “Western” in order to be good Christians. This internal dichotomy leads many to equate Christianity with Western ways. They come to love God but hate their own identities.

Ultimately, however, non-Western Christians must come to know that their emotional resilience and strength of identity comes from a Christ who not only died for them but who accepts them “sono mama” (Japanese for “just as we are”). The power of God’s love is manifest in His acceptance of us in the linking of each person’s unique values within the context of a unique history of a unique peoples. True psychological and emotional viability in stage development, the fulfillment of the fundamental Eriksonian tasks in life of ego synthesis and healthy identity formation can best be achieved by a Kelabit tribesman / tribeswoman becoming more uniquely Kelabit, by an Indian becoming more authentically an Indian, by a Japanese becoming more (rather than less) uniquely Japanese.

***Joseph Paul Naoshi Ozawa, Ph.D.**

Clinical Psychologist

Summary:

Dr. Ozawa has been in private practice for over 20 years dealing with all forms of psychopathology. For over 15 years, Dr. Ozawa specialized in working with the under privileged, the homeless, and victims of the poverty-abuse-addiction cycle and of stress / trauma.

In Singapore, Dr. Ozawa oversaw issues of juvenile crime, incarceration and probation analyses, domestic violence, child abuse, custody disputes and governmental management. Dr. Ozawa also consulted on issues of trauma, crises relief, stress, and healthcare with Tan Tok Seng Hospital, Crisis Relief Society and Healthcare Christian Fellowship of Singapore. From 2003-2005, Dr. Ozawa was posted out-station to Tokyo where he continued to work as a Senior Consultant Psychologist with Asia Pacific Mission, Ltd. of Singapore, dealing with the homeless and with the psychologically disturbed. Dr. Ozawa has also been a consultant to World Vision, International for over 10 years in over 18 nations, especially dealing with counseling, traumas, conflict-resolution, wars and crises.

Dr. Ozawa's focus, at both the macro level (i.e. societal, governmental, educational) and the micro level (i.e. individual case work), is on dealing with "healing," "transformation" and "justice" -- the holistic transformation of individuals, families, organizations, communities and nations.

Education:

Ph.D.	UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA 1980 Educational/Counseling Psychology; outside major: General Psychology.	
M.A.T.	HARVARD UNIVERSITY English & Education. Class Marshall	1972
A.B.	HARVARD UNIVERSITY Government	1967

Publications:

Ozawa, J.P. "Blessed Are the Poor," Healthcare Christian Fellowship, January 2006,
<http://www.hcf.org.sg/>

Ozawa, J.P. "The Family and Juvenile Justice Centre," in R. Magnus, Lim Hui Min, M. Mesenas & V. Thean (eds.), *Rebuilding Lives, Restoring Relationships: Juvenile Justice and the Community*. Eastern University Press: London, 2003.

Ozawa, J.P. "'Transformative Psychological Intervention: The Family Justice Team -- treatment for "anomie" in Singapore and Japan," in *Advances in Psychological Research*, Nova Publishers: Hauppauge, NY, 2003, in final draft form.

Ozawa, J.P. Relational Distress and Self-Destructive Behaviours in Singapore. Plenary paper presented at the Japan Society of Social Psychiatry, 23rd Annual Congress. Morioka, Japan, 4 March 2003. Published in Japanese, Jan 2004.

Ozawa, J.P. Developing Holistic Approaches (to Restorative Justice) in Singapore, *Restorative Justice Online*, International Centre for Justice and Reconciliation, Prison Fellowship International, February 2003.

Ozawa, J.P. Juvenile Delinquency: An Asian Perspective. In Lim K.Tham & Lynette Balotta (Eds.), *Hedges and Edges: A Compendium for Social Workers, Counsellors and Family Therapists*, Care Corner: Singapore, 2002, 17-24.

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Ozawa, J.P. Addressing the Criminogenic Effects of Divorce. *Law Gazette*, Law Society of Singapore, August 2001, 32-34.

Ozawa, J.P. Juvenile Offender Behaviour (JOB) Criteria: Assessing Risk of Recidivism in Juvenile Court. *Law Gazette*, Law Society of Singapore, July 2001, 14-16.

Ozawa, J.P. Twelve Steps and Group Treatment for Addictions. Paper presented at the First National Conference on Addiction Treatment, Institute of Mental Health, Singapore, 21 April 2001.

Ozawa, J.P. The Internet and Juvenile Crime in Singapore. Workshop paper presented at the 8th Congress of the ASEAN Federation for Psychiatry and Mental Health, Singapore, 18 March 2001.

Ozawa, J.P. & Teong, E. A profile study of female juvenile offenders. *Research Bulletin, Subordinate Courts of Singapore*, 26, January 2001.

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Ozawa, J.P. Prayer and deliverance in the healing of chronic disorders. Paper presented at the First International Conference on Christian Counseling, Atlanta, Georgia, November, 1988.

Michael, W.B. & Ozawa, J.P. The concurrent validity of a behavioral rating scale for assessing attention deficit disorder (DSM III), *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 1983, 43, 623-625

Michael, W.B. & Ozawa, J.P. The diagnosis of attention deficit disorder (DSM III). Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association (Clinical Psychology Division), Los Angeles, August, 1981.

Ozawa, J.P. "Academic Freedom and Academic Due Process: A study in theory" (honors thesis, A.B., Harvard College, Harvard University, 1967.

Media:

Radio: Host of "Heart to Heart" live call-in radio show, Tuesday and Thursday nights (10:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.), 93.8 FM, MediaCorps of Singapore. General topic: "Building Relationships." (Oct 02 - Aug 03).

Television: Guest on Canadian television talk shows, "Miracle Channel" near Calgary, broadcast to over 10 million viewers in Canada and the USA.

Television: Author and main guest, “Hippopotamus Postman’s True Stories of Love,” Harvest Time Television, Shizuoka, Japan, (6 shows X 30 minutes) shown in Tokyo and Yokohama. Topic: Love and relationships. (2000 – 2002)

Television: Host of “Face to Face,” (13 shows X 30 minutes), panel discussion show, ChannelNewsAsia of Singapore. General topic: families and youth. (2003)

Miscellaneous: Guest on Bangkok television talk show. Topic: juveniles and family issues. June 2003. Also on “Renew” (San Diego radio, late 1980’s).

Internet References:

Heart to Heart radio programme:

<http://www.gov.sg/judiciary/subct/mediaRelease/HeartToHeart.pdf>

Singapore Kindness Movement speech:

<http://www.singaporekindness.org.sg/drozawa.html>

Today newspaper interview:

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/todaynews/view/785/1/.html>

Straits Times newspaper interview:

http://careers.asia1.com.sg/st_recruit/r20020427.html

Restorative Justice / juvenile delinquency:

<http://www.lawgazette.com.sg/2001-7/July01-focus3.htm>

<http://www.restorativejustice.org/rj3/Feature/2003/feb/singapore.htm>

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Conflict Management:

<http://www.lawgazette.com.sg/2002-5/May02-socevents.htm>

Stockholm Accords on Ethnic Cleansing:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/5357/genocideaccords.html>

Professional qualifications:

Senior Consultant Psychologist (Republic of Singapore government)

Clinical Psychologist (USA: CA #PSY 7783; HI #PSY 909)

Marriage, Family and Child Therapist (USA, CA #ML 8693) inactive

Certified School Psychologist (USA, CA #SC24805) inactive

Board memberships / Advisory:

Board member, Hospitality International Services (Chengdu, China) -- management consultants to hotels and restaurants

Advisory Board member, Bridges of Peace International (Beirut, Lebanon) --

orphanages and centers for abused women

Memberships:

American Psychological Association

Hawaii Psychological Association

California State Psychological Association.

Employment:

Senior Consultant Psychologist, Asia Pacific Mission, Ltd. of Singapore (Jul 1996 – Aug 2005)

- Consultancies: 1996-2005

Senior Consultant Psychologist (2003-2005), Tokyo, Japan.

Dealing with issues of depression, homelessness, trauma, suicide, anxiety disorders, phobias and youth problems.

Senior Director, Family and Juvenile Justice Centre, and Director of Psychological Services, Subordinate Courts, judiciary, government of Singapore (2000 – 2003).

Overseeing the assessment, counseling, profiling and research concerning juvenile offenders, adult recidivist criminals, conflict mediation and resolution, spousal battering cases, child protection, child abuse, beyond-parental-control, and divorce / custody cases for the Subordinate Courts of Singapore. Supervising psychologists, social workers, counselors and mediators. Consulting on issues of trauma counseling, disaster response, stress, and healthcare in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious environment..

Head, Psychological Services Unit, Ministry of Community Development, government of Singapore (1998 – 2000)

Overseeing the assessment and psychotherapy of cases of juvenile probation, juvenile institutionalization, child welfare and abuse cases in a multi-cultural society.

Senior Consultant Psychologist: with Ministry of Education (govt. Singapore), Asia Pacific Mission, voluntary welfare organizations and non-governmental organizations in Singapore (1996 – present)

Special consultant to the Ministry of Education in the development of national curricula on juvenile sexuality education. Also, consultant to schools, hospitals, prisons and relief organizations on stress and trauma.

Private Practice (1977-1996)

Consultant to World Vision, International (1994 – present) -- especially in counseling, reconciliation, post-traumatic stress, prayer initiatives, and peacemaking.

Consultant to homeless / HIV/AIDs / poverty victims (1986 – present) -- Shinjuku Chuo Koen Horizon in Tokyo; Kyurei Kaikan in Nishinari, Osaka; St. Vincent De Paul center for the homeless in San Diego; Helping Hands (to HIV/AIDs patients) in San Diego; Union Station in Pasadena; New Heart Community Church in Golden Hill, San Diego.

Director, Mt. Soledad Presbyterian Church Counseling Center (1986-1988)

Director, Arroyo Counseling Services, Pasadena, California (1982-1986)

Contract Instructor, California School of Professional Psychology, Los Angeles (1981-1984) -- instructor in psychology.

Lecturer, California State University, Northridge (1979-1980) -- lecturer in psychology and research.

Dean and Head Counselor, Harvard School, California (1973-1977) -- teacher of psychology

Teacher, Harvard School, Los Angeles; Brookline High School & New England College Conservatory, Boston, Massachusetts (1971-1977),

Asst. Professor of Naval Science, Prairie View A & M College, Texas (1969-1971)