



Jim: Grieving Dad's Death
(The Immanuel Approach to Emotional Healing)
Explanatory comments, condensed version

(©Copyright 2008 K.D. Lehman MD, New 3/14/2008, Revised 6/27/2011)

The main purpose of the DVD “Jim: Grieving Dad’s Death” (the Immanuel approach to emotional healing)” is to provide live ministry session examples of the principles, techniques, and process described in our essays and presentations about the Immanuel approach to emotional healing. This DVD will be encouraging and educational for any viewer, but it will be much more valuable if you have first read the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, & The God Who is With Us” essays. If time constraints preclude reading all five Parts, I would encourage you to at least read Part I and Part V. This session demonstrates **Basic and Intermediate** principles, techniques, and process.

Session summary: In this ministry session Jim works on childhood pain from his relationship with his Dad, and also on unfinished grieving over his Dad’s death. Jim begins the ministry time by focusing on a memory of a past positive experience with Jesus. In the context of this positive memory Jim refreshes his connection with Jesus, and then engages directly with Jesus regarding his Dad. Jesus does a beautiful job of helping Jim work through his childhood pain, appreciate his Dad, and then grieve his Dad’s death. At the six-month follow-up interview, Jim reports a number of indicators of lasting fruit, including decreased anxiety (in general), feeling “more settled” regarding his father, and increased times of intimate connection with the Lord during his personal devotional times.

Deleted material: To put the “Condensed Version” in perspective: In order to make the 14 minute condensed version, 70 minutes of material have been deleted from the 84 minute complete version. The condensed version is valuable for providing an *overview* of what an Immanuel approach session looks like, and it’s great for inspiration and faith building; but if you are actually trying to learn how to facilitate Immanuel approach sessions, you will definitely want to view the complete version.

The Immanuel approach to emotional healing: One way to define our current version of the Immanuel approach to emotional healing would be to first identify the contributing components:

- Recall of previous positive connections with the Lord, in combination with deliberate appreciation, to prepare for connecting with Jesus;
- Refreshed perception of the Lord’s presence, and establishment of a living, interactive connection with the Lord *in the present* as the starting foundation;
- Once the person has established a living, interactive connection with Jesus in the present, coach her to engage directly with Jesus for guidance and assistance at every point in the session;
- Immanuel Interventions, especially from inside traumatic memories, but also at any point the person loses connection with the Lord;
- Describe whatever comes into your awareness (your brain works better in community)

- Our modified version of Theophostic® theory, tools, and techniques;
- Understanding regarding capacity;
- Understanding regarding attunement and relational connection circuits; and
- Understanding regarding processing tasks at each of the brain levels.

Then, if you take all of these components, organize them around the living presence of Jesus as the central focus, and clearly identify connecting more intimately with Jesus as the primary objective (with resolution of trauma as a secondary objective), you have the Immanuel Approach to emotional healing. This is all described at more length in the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us” essays, but for those of you who have not yet had a chance to review the more detailed discussion, here is a very brief summary of the key process components:

•*Recall of previous positive connections and deliberate appreciation to prepare for connecting with Jesus:* Recalling past positive experiences and deliberately appreciating them prepares your brain–mind–spirit system for positive relational connection. At the beginning of each Immanuel approach session, we therefore include positive memory recall and deliberate appreciation *focused on the Lord* to prepare the person’s brain-mind-spirit system for refreshing/re-establishing a positive relational connection with Him. With people who are new to the Immanuel approach, I very deliberately lead them through this process – we ask the Lord to bring forward a memory of a previous positive experience with Him, I ask the person to describe this experience (in detail), and I coach the person to describe specific things she especially appreciates about the Lord in the memory experience. In contrast, people who are familiar with the process usually go through an abbreviated version (asking the Lord for help, thinking about the positive memories that come forward, and deliberately appreciating the Lord in the context of the positive memories), without the need for coaching from me. In fact, this often happens smoothly and quietly during the opening prayer.

In this session with Jim, the initial discussion/comments at the beginning of the session flow spontaneously into a description of a past positive connection with Jesus, and then also appreciation for Jesus in the context of this past experience. (Time on tape: 4:02 - 8:38).

•*Refreshed perception of the Lord’s presence and connection with Him in the present as the starting foundation:* After the person has identified one or more memories of past positive connection with the Lord, and *feels* appreciation for His presence and care in these past experiences, I coach the person to spend several minutes reentering/reconnecting with the memory/memories.¹ As she does this, I ask the Lord to help her perceive His presence and establish an interactive connection,² so that these are real and living in the present, and then I

¹ Note that coaching the person to spend several minutes very deliberately reentering/reconnecting with the memory is a new piece as of fall 2010.

² In most cases, the person perceives the Lord’s living presence and establishes an interactive connection in the context of the memory imagery. That is, they perceive that the Lord’s presence in the memory imagery comes alive, and that (still in the context of the memory imagery), His presence begins to engage with them interactively. However, some people will perceive the Lord’s living, interactive presence in the room where they are receiving ministry; some people will perceive the Lord’s living, interactive presence in the context of a different memory that comes forward spontaneously; some people will perceive the Lord’s living, interactive presence in the context of imagery that does not seem to be coming from any specific memories, and some will experience two or more of these simultaneously.

coach the person to describe whatever comes into her awareness. The person is usually able to transition smoothly and easily from positive memory recall and appreciation to a living, interactive connection with the Lord in the present (and if this doesn't happen, we trouble-shoot regarding what's in the way). Again, with people who are new to the Immanuel approach, I carefully coach them through this process; whereas people who are familiar with the process often recall a positive memory, feel appreciation for the Lord, reenter/reconnect with the memory, and then perceive the Lord's living presence and establish an interactive connection with Him without the need for coaching from me. As with the positive memory and appreciation steps, the whole initial process to the point of establishing an interactive connection often happens smoothly and quietly during the opening prayer.

Jim's session provides a good example of this simple approach for establishing a living, interactive connection with the Lord. After Jim described his memory of previous positive connection with the Lord, and he was obviously *feeling* appreciation for Jesus' presence in this memory experience, I coached him to reenter/reconnect with the memory, and in the context of the positive memory, ask: "Lord, help me to perceive Your presence here." (Time on tape: 8:38 - 9:47).

Note that after offering this prayer (as part of the opening prayer), we did not take time for Jim to describe his experience of the Lord's living, interactive presence; but rather Jim just moved smoothly into engaging directly with Jesus regarding his father's death. I observed that the session seemed to be moving forward in a good way, and therefore did not interrupt the flow in order to ask Jim to describe details with respect to perceiving and connecting with Jesus.³ However, if I had been coaching people working in a group exercise situation or a session with beginners, I would have encouraged them to pause at this point for Jim to describe his experience. The key point is to make sure that the interactive connection is in place as both a resource and "safety net."⁴ If an interactive connection *is* present, then describing this experience out loud will increase its clarity and emotional power;⁵ and if the person is *not* perceiving the Lord's living presence and experiencing an interactive connection, we take time to trouble-shoot regarding what's in the way.

When both the facilitator and the person receiving ministry are very familiar with the Immanuel process, and the facilitator is a skillful and experienced trouble-shooter, so that there is confidence regarding the ability to handle any difficulties that might arise later in the session, I wouldn't stop to clarify this point if the session is flowing forward, smoothly and spontaneously, and the person appears to be engaging directly with Jesus' interactive presence regarding whatever is on the table (as in this session). However, for group exercise situations and for people who are just learning the Immanuel approach, where it is important to have all

³ Note that Jim's comments during the debriefing time and in the follow-up interview make it clear that he *was* experiencing an interactive connection with the Lord's living presence, in the present, at this point in the session.

⁴ For discussion of how establishing an interactive connection at the beginning of a session serves both as a resource and safety net, see the section on group exercises in "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, & The God Who is With Us, Part V: The Immanuel Approach Revisited."

⁵ For a fascinating, thorough discussion of this point, see the "Describe everything that comes into your awareness (your brain works better in community)" section of "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, & The God Who is With Us, Part V: The Immanuel Approach Revisited."

the safety nets and potential resources in place, it is important to make sure that the person has established a living, interactive connection, in the present, before moving forward.

- *Ongoing coaching to engage directly with Jesus*: Once the person has a connection with Jesus in the present, the therapist/ministry facilitator coaches the person to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage with Him directly at every point in the session. The person might engage with Jesus for guidance in choosing an initial target, for help with finding underlying memories, for assistance with resolving unfinished processing tasks, for capacity augmentation when dealing with inadequate capacity, or for help with any other questions, needs, or problems that come up.⁶

- *Immanuel Interventions, especially from inside traumatic memories, but also at any point the person loses connection with the Lord*: As described at more length in “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us, Part V,” Immanuel interventions are *specific, focused, systematic interventions* with the goal of helping the person receiving ministry to perceive the Lord’s presence, connect with Him, receive from Him, and be **with** Him. For those of you who have not yet had a chance to review the more detailed discussion, here is a very brief summary:

Specific, explicit invitation and request: The most basic, simple component is the specific, explicit prayer: “Lord, I make a heart invitation for You to be *with me*, here in this place. I also ask You to help me perceive Your presence, to help me connect with You, to help me receive from You, and to help me be *with You*.”

Trouble-shooting: If the person is *not* able to perceive the Lord’s presence (or connect with the Lord, receive from the Lord, or be with the Lord), you “trouble-shoot.” Start with praying “Lord, what’s in the way of my being able to perceive Your presence? (or connect with You/ receive from You/ be with You)” and then follow-up on whatever the Lord brings forward. For those who are able to establish a refreshed connection with Jesus, *in the present*, at the beginning of the session, an additional resource is available if the person loses connection with Jesus at some later point in the session and is *not* able to receive adequate guidance in response to the direct question: “Lord, what’s in the way of my being able to perceive Your presence (or connect with You/ receive from You/ be with You)?” You coach the person to return to the place of refreshed positive connection from the beginning of the session, and then *in the context of the refreshed connection*, you coach her to ask the Lord about the place where she is *not* able to perceive His presence.

More information: For more information from Karl Lehman M.D. and Charlotte Lehman M.Div, including our teaching about the Immanuel approach to emotional healing, our assessment and recommendations about Theophostic[®] Ministry, our teaching about how Christian emotional healing can fit into professional mental health care, and much more, please help yourself to the free information on our website, www.kclehman.com.

⁶ The therapist/ministry facilitator will also want to coach the person to engage directly with Jesus when good things happen, to thank Him and share her heart with Him.