



GOOD TO BE GOOD: Rx: Spirituality & Helping Others

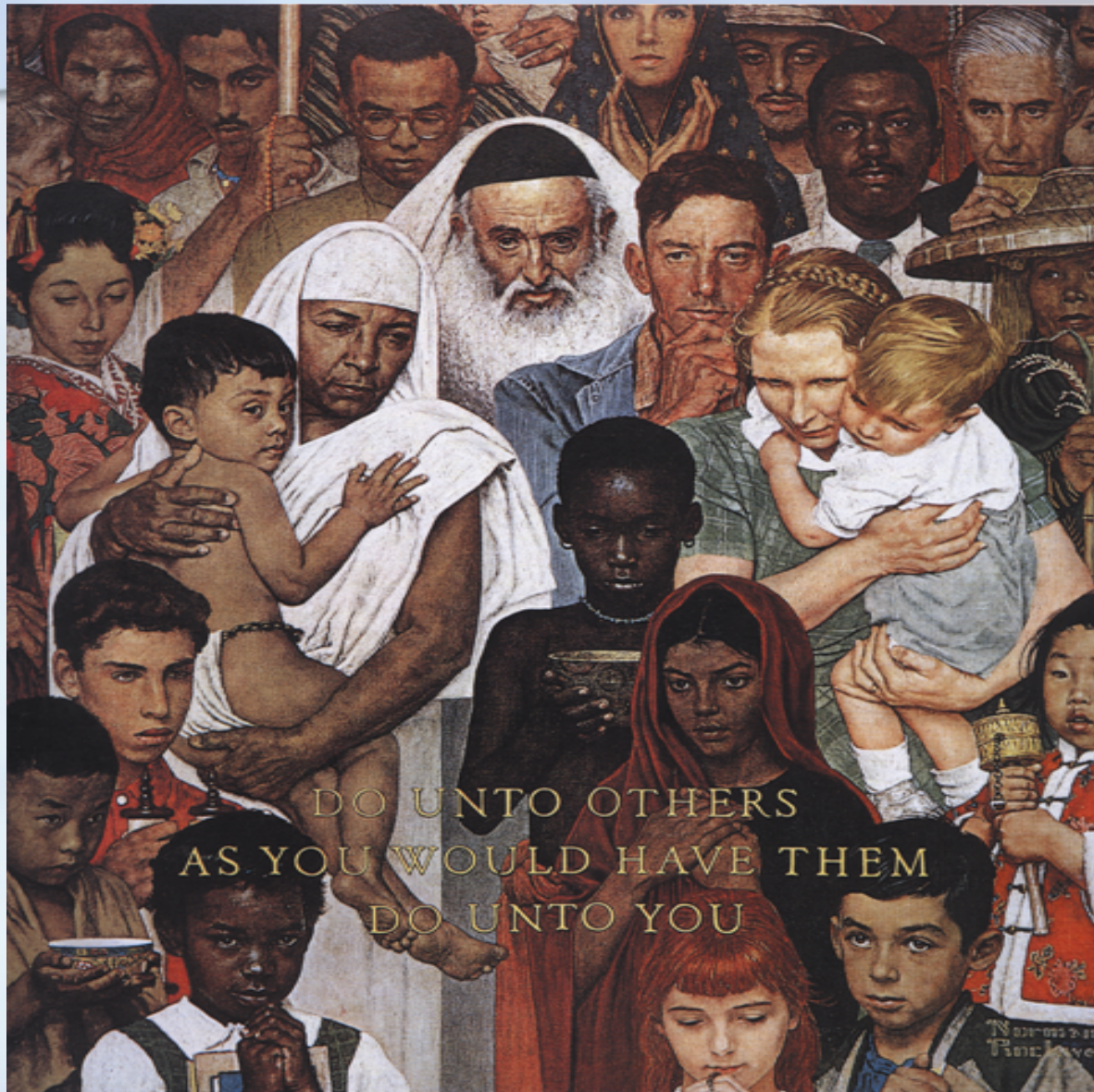
www.stephengpost.com

"Those Who Refresh Others Will
Themselves Be Refreshed" (*Ps. 11:25*)





Rockwell's *The Golden Rule*





2010 Volunteers in the US (2009)

- 41% volunteered
- 89% of volunteers agreed that “volunteering has improved my sense of **well-being**”
- 73% “lowered my **stress levels**” (serenity)
- 92% “enriched sense of **purpose** in life”
- 68% “made me **physically healthier**”
- 96% “makes people **happier**”
- 77% “improves **emotional health**”
- 78% “helps **recovery from loss and disappointment**”
- less trouble **sleeping**, reduced **anxiety** and **helplessness**, better **friendships** and **control over chronic conditions**
- **25% volunteer through their workplace**, and 76% of them feel better about employer as a result
- www.volunteermatch.org & United Healthcare



Rx: Happiness is a Meaningful Donation

- Brain scans show that planning a donation activates the mesolimbic pathway, associated with feelings of happiness and with increased levels of dopamine (Moll, et al., *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2006; also JK Rilling, et al., A Neural Basis for Social Cooperation, *Neuron*, 35, 2002: 395-405)



Sir John Templeton (1912-2008)

- “Who are the happiest people you have ever met? Let us write down the names of ten persons who continually bubble over with happiness, and we will probably find that most are men and women who radiate love for everyone.” (*The Humble Approach*, pp. 98 – 99)





- Transformations are as important as transactions, so nurture them

A Happy Fax!



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UNLIMITED LOVE

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Rx: Serenity (and Oxytocin)







Rx: Regulating Negative Emotions

- Redford B. Williams, MD, Duke
 - 27 Questions From the MMPI, 1950, age 25; 20% of high hostility quartile dead by age 50 (cardio-vascular disease); 2% low quartile
 - “You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Leviticus 19:18)
 - When we help others we cannot maintain a vengeful attitude (Michael McCullough, *Beyond Revenge* 2008)



Rx: A Health Halo for Life

300 pre-teens in the Bay Area followed every ten years since the 1920s. The one third who identified contributing to humanity as important were healthier and happier 50 years later, protected from depression & some physical illnesses.

(P. Wink & M. Dillon, *In the Course of a Lifetime*, 2007)





Vancouver High

- Grade 10 students: subjects volunteered regularly for ten weeks; controls were on a waiting list
- One hour/wk helping school kids in after school programs (homework, cooking, cards, science club, and sports programs)
- Reduced inflammation and cholesterol, lower body mass index, especially in those with greatest increases in empathy and well-being
- These biomarkers, when elevated, are the first signs of cardiovascular disease, which is spreading in adolescents and limits life expectancy. (M.C. Schreier et al., “Effect of Volunteering on Risk Factors for Cardiovascular Disease in Adolescents: A Randomized Controlled Trial,” *JAMA Pediatrics*, 167(4), 2013: 327-332)



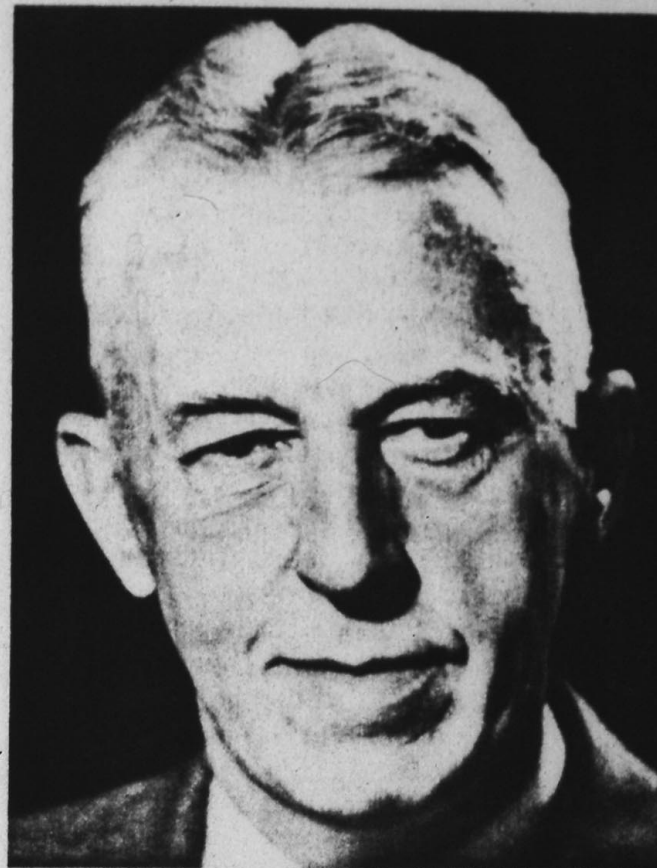
Rx: Overcoming Addictions

- “Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help their needs.” (*AA: The Big Book*, p. 20)
- Process addictions too?

The 12th Step



"Bob S." Co-founder of AA.



Bill W. Co-founder of AA.



Photo Used By Permission: Michael E.



- 40% of high helpers were sober one year out, but only 22% of lower helpers
- helpers had decreased depression levels (Pagano, et al., *J of Studies on Alcohol*, 2004)



Rx: Aging Well

- National study of older adults by Stanford University researchers: “....more frequent volunteering is associated with delayed mortality even when the effects of socio-demographics, medical and disability characteristics, self-ratings of physical activity and social integration and support are controlled.” (Harris & Thoreson, *J of Health Psychology*, 2005)



“I Can Never Retire” (Oct. 1999)

www.altrusiticlove.org

Dr. Cicely Saunders (1918-2005)





Reduced Hypertension

- 1100 older adults ages 51 to 91 were both interviewed about their volunteering and had their blood pressure checked in 2006, with a follow-up interview four years later in 2010.
- Those subjects who were volunteering at least 200 hours (est. four hours per week) in the past year at the time of their first interview were 40% less likely to have developed hypertension four years later than nonvolunteers.
- The researchers suggested that this impact was due to the stress-reducing effects of being both active and altruistic (Sneed, et al., “A Prospective Study of Volunteers and Hypertension Risk in Older Adults,” *Psychology & Aging* 28, 2013: 578-586)



Rx: Depression

- Changing Lives of Older Couples data showed that helping behaviors predicted “accelerated recovery from depressive symptoms among those with a heightened stress response” (Stephanie Brown, et. al., “Coping With Spousal Loss: Potential Buffering Effects of Self-Reported Helping Behavior,” *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 2008)
- “I don’ t do nutin’ for nutin’ ”



Happier Communities

- Oct. 22, 2008 release of *Mental Capital and Wellbeing Report*, compiled by 400 British scientists in the UK government's prestigious think tank, the *Foresight Project*
- Five items contributing most to lower depression rates and well-being include “giving to neighbors and communities”

ULMLE Step One! Our Stony Brook Med Lymph Notes





Rx: Mended Hearts

- CVD (n = 4,491) longitudinal national survey compared those who provided non-paid assistance to family and friends outside of their households with those who did not
- After adjusting for baseline characteristics, spending up to 200 h over the prior 12 months helping others was associated with lower odds of a new CVD event & depression
- “Health care providers could play an important role exploring ways that patients with CVD can provide beneficial levels of assistance to others in their own social networks or communities, thereby possibly improving their own health.”
- Michele Haislet, et al., “Adults with Cardiovascular Disease who Help Others: A Prospective Study of Health Outcomes. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 36(2), 2013:199-211.



Rx: Schizophrenia

www.hopewell.cc



HOPEWELL

A therapeutic farm community for adults with mental illness.

RESULTS/RESEARCH EXAMPLE





Healing Values

- Acceptance
- Home
- Community
- Nature
- Spirit
- Daily routine of benevolent work
- Healthy diet

Rx: Carers of the Cognitively Imperiled - Jean Vanier of L'Arche





“We do not believe in ourselves until someone reveals that something deep inside us is valuable, worth listening to, worthy of our trust, sacred to our touch.”

e.e. cummings

WWW.MUSICANDMEMORY.ORG



Rx: Provider Wellness





Professionalism

- Provision 1. The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with **compassion** and **respect** for the inherent dignity, worth, and uniqueness of every individual. (2001)
- II. A pharmacist promotes the good of every patient in a caring, **compassionate**, and confidential manner. (1994)
- I. A physician shall be dedicated to providing competent medical care, with **compassion** and **respect** for human dignity and rights. (2001)



Benefits

- Clinicians attribute their decline in enthusiasm for medicine (58% of 2,608 surveyed) to systemic inhibition of empathic care (87%). (Zuger A, "Dissatisfaction with Medical Practice," *NEJM*, 350, 2004:69-75)
- Clinician satisfaction with patient relationships protects against professional stress & burnout. (Shanafelt TD, "Enhancing the Meaning of Work: A Prescription for Preventing Physician Burnout and Promoting Patient-Centered Care," *JAMA*, 302,2009:1338-1340)



Take Time to Refocus on Meaning

- “Mindful communication” programs (8 weeks, 2.5 hours/week, University of Rochester) involving meditation, self-awareness exercises, appreciative interviews, readings, and discussions enhanced empathy and caring attitudes -lowered burnout. (Michael S. Krasner et al., “Association of an Educational Program in Mindful Communication with Burnout, Empathy, and Attitudes Among Primary Care Physicians,” *JAMA*, 302 (no. 12), 2009: 1284-1293)



Jodi Halpern - Beyond “Detached Concern”

- Routine care, cognitive empathy, affective empathy, compassionate care
- Osler’ s *equanimitas*, but affective presence is important
- Patients who are really ill will remember tone of voice, facial expression, and feeling states

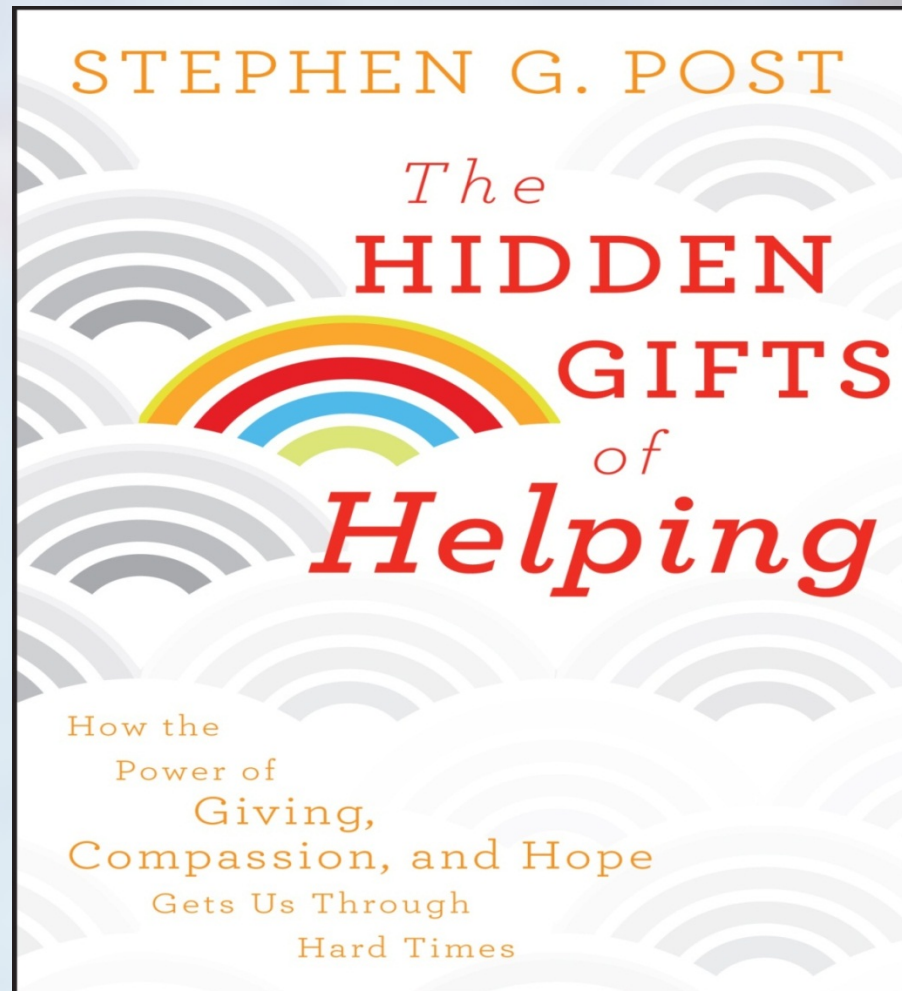


Balance to Avoid Burnout

- *Medicine*
- *Meditation*
- Define it for yourself and insist on it
- Reflection rounds (GWISH)
- Schwartz rounds (Boston)
- Develop in students “circles of trust” early on in clinical training



Rx: Coping With Hard Times –Jim on the LIRR



EXIT 218



WEST

Cleveland



WEST

Akron - Canton



EXIT 1/2 MILE

18

Wabash Ave
RAMP RIGHT



Posttraumatic Growth & Vets

- Web-based survey of 1,838 vets who reported traumatic events. Half of vets reported at least moderate PTG 2 years later, maintenance predicted by purpose in life, altruism, gratitude, religiosity, & active reading (Jack Tsai et al. “Longitudinal Course of Posttraumatic Growth Among U.S. Military Veterans: Results From the National Health and Resilience Veterans Study,” *Depression and Anxiety* 2014)



Lincoln's Melancholy

- “When I do good I feel good: When I do bad I feel bad.”



Rx: Workplace Volunteerism

- Positive relationships
- Employees think more highly of employers
- Greater job satisfaction
- Strengthen work teams
- Greater competency/fewer errors
- Attract new employees: 62% of 18- to 26-year olds prefer to work for companies that help non-profit organizations
- Employee retention
- Retirement is easier esp. for males

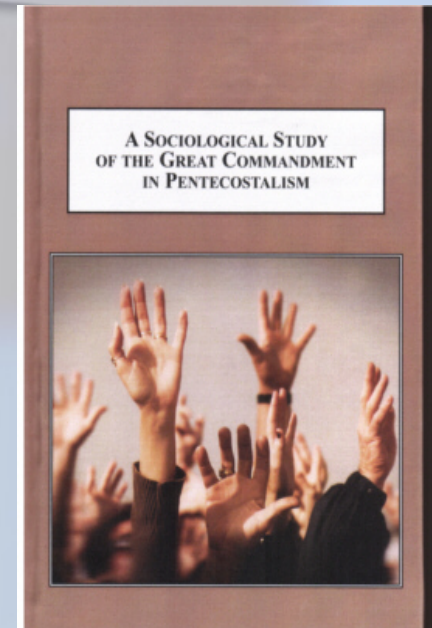
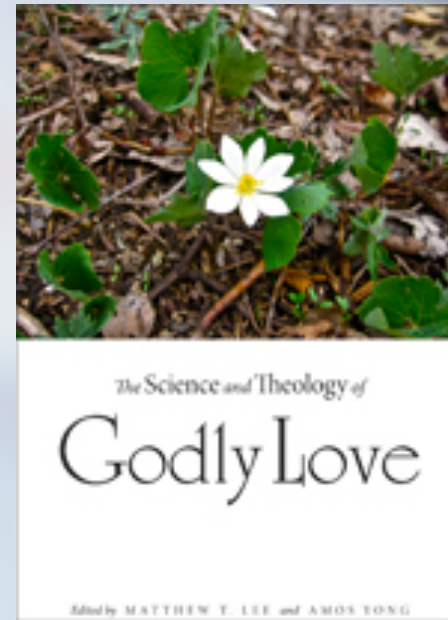
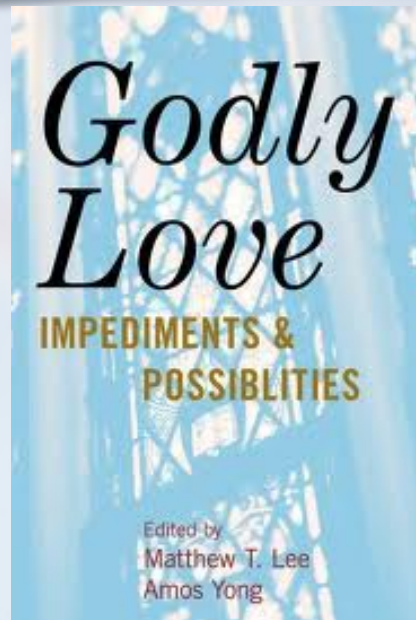
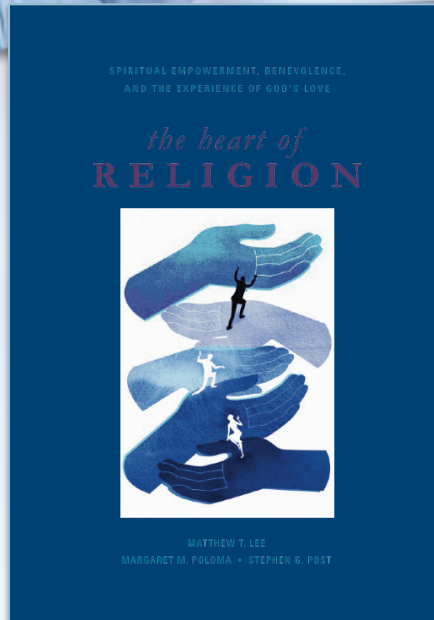


Big Questions 1: Sources

- Alignment with a Higher Power (William James, AA, Grace)
- Moral principle (“a common humanity,” Kant)
- Habituated virtue, community & good modeling (Dr. Edmund D. Pellegrino, MD)
- Love/Empathy/Compassion (Dalai Lama, Hume, Smith)
- Meditation (deflects attention from self)



Findings from the Flame of Love Project



1. Eight out of ten Americans experience God's love increasing their compassion for others.
2. The experience of God's love was the only variable that significantly predicted all six of our outcome variables for benevolence.



W.H. Auden

“One fine night in June 1933 I was sitting on a lawn after dinner with three colleagues, two women and one man. We liked each other well enough but were certainly not intimate friends, nor had anyone of us a sexual interest in another. Incidentally, we had not drunk any alcohol. We were talking casually about everyday matters when, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, something happened. I felt myself invaded by a power which, though I consented to it, was irresistible and certainly not mine. For the first time in my life I knew exactly – because, thanks to the power, I was doing it – what it means to love one’s neighbor as oneself. I was also certain, though the conversation continued to be perfectly ordinary, that my three colleagues were having the same experience. (In the case of one of them, I was able later to confirm this.) My personal feelings towards them were unchanged – they were still colleagues, not intimate friends – but I felt their existence as themselves to be of infinite value and rejoiced in it.”



BQ 2: Do We Need a “Higher Psychology”?

- Transpersonal Psychology
- Positive Psychology
- Higher Psychology



BQ 3: Motivations & Habituation

- There is some expected evidence that motivation matters with respect to benefits
- Individuals who are “other-regarding” seem to be the ones who benefit; “self-regarding” are stressed (S. Konrath et al., “Motives of Volunteering Are Associated with Mortality Rates in Older Adults,” *Health Psychology*, Vol. 31 (1), pp. 87-96).
- But there are those who become other-oriented (James Youniss, ed. *Engaging Young People in Civic Life*, 2009)
- “Eustress” (Selye) - shift from “self-oriented” to “other-oriented” with good role modeling and community acculturation (Aristotle, Hauerwas)



BQ 5: How Too Avoid Attrition

- Elective Affinity
- Use Strengths
- Concrete Goals
- Peer Feedback



BG 6: Crosses Still Find You

