

Maggie #2: “If I leave, she could die”

(The Immanuel Approach to Emotional Healing)

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The main purpose of the DVD “Maggie #2: ‘If I leave, she might die” (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.

Original session, debriefing, and five month follow-up interview: This DVD presents the original session (April 2007), portions of the debriefing/discussion immediately following the session, and the follow up interview that took place five months later.

Contents of Video Tape	Location on the tape	Length of the segment
Initial discussion and opening prayer	Minute 0	1:30 minutes
Core of session	Minute 1:36	36 minutes
Closing prayer	Minute 37:57	2 minutes
Debriefing/discussion immediately following session	Minute 40:14	11 minutes
Five-month follow-up	Minute 51:19	7 minutes

Chapters:

- 1: Start
- 2: Opening prayer 1:12
Core of session 1:36
- 3: Intentionally focusing on memory of positive connection with Jesus 3:07
4. Appreciation exercise 5:25
5. Engaging directly with Jesus regarding the recent triggering event 9:19
6. Engaging directly with Jesus regarding earlier memory that might be getting triggered 14:00
7. Return to initial triggering situation 32:51
8. Closing prayer 37:57
9. Debriefing/discussion immediately after session 40:14
10. Follow-up interview (5 months after session) 51:19

Session summary: In this ministry session Maggie works on fear, uncertainty, and confusion about a very tough judgment call she was forced to make regarding ministry with one of her friends. After identifying the target, I coach Maggie to focus on a memory of a past positive experience with Jesus, and in the context of this positive memory I help her to refresh her

perception of His presence and to establish a living, interactive connection with Him *in the present*. She then engages directly with Jesus regarding the recent difficult clinical situation and her corresponding fear, uncertainty, and confusion. Jesus does a beautiful job of mentoring her with respect to the recent situation with her friend, and then also brings forward a matching traumatic childhood memory that needs to be resolved. Finally, Maggie’s report at the five month follow-up interview indicates lasting fruit regarding the issues addressed in the session.

Initial discussion and deleted material: The triggering situation that Maggie chose to work on in this session involved prayer ministry with a friend,¹ and therefore much of the initial discussion regarding this triggering situation needed to be deleted to care for confidentiality. Part of the opening prayer and several other segments also needed to be deleted for this same reason. Fortunately, we were able to do this without deleting anything important with respect to the actual Immanuel approach process. However, even with these deletions, the session will still make sense if you focus on Maggie’s negative thoughts and emotions as the most important aspect of the initial trigger.²

Brief summary of the Immanuel approach to emotional healing: With people like Maggie, who have had previous positive experiences of perceiving the Lord’s presence and connecting with Him, I start the Immanuel approach by helping the person to establish a living, interactive connection with the Lord *in the present*.³ 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), I coach the person to describe specific things she especially appreciates about the Lord in the memory experience, and then I coach the person to spend several minutes reentering/reconnecting with the memory.⁴ As she does this, I ask the Lord to help her perceive His living presence, and to establish an interactive connection.⁵ This usually happens smoothly and easily (and if it doesn’t, we trouble-shoot regarding what’s in the way).

¹ The very short summary: Maggie’s friend is working to resolve very complex trauma, and she had not come to a place of good resolution by the end of the time available for the ministry session. Maggie felt the Lord leading her to move on to important family concerns that needed to be attended to, but she was fearful that her friend might commit suicide if she left.

² In case you are wondering why I bother to comment on material that has been deleted: When I view live sessions for education/training purposes (as opposed to viewing sessions for inspiration and encouragement), I want to know whether I am seeing the complete, unedited session, or whether material has been removed. If any material has been removed, I find it valuable to have at least summary information regarding what has been deleted.

³ For discussion of the different ways in which one can begin an Immanuel approach session, see “Brain Science, Emotional Trauma, & The God Who is With Us, Part V: The Immanuel Approach Revisited.”

⁴ Coaching the person to spend several minutes very deliberately reentering/reconnecting with the memory is a new piece as of fall 2010.

⁵ 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; 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.

Once the person is able to perceive the Lord’s presence and has refreshed her connection with Him, I coach her to engage with Him directly regarding the initial target, any underlying traumatic memories, any unfinished processing tasks, and any difficulties that we encounter.

For a much more detailed discussion of the Immanuel approach to emotional healing, see the “Brain Science, Emotional Trauma, & The God Who is With Us” documents (especially Parts I and V).

“Keep focusing on Jesus” approach for accessing underlying traumatic memories: At 14:24 in the recorded session, I suggest that Maggie ask Jesus if there are any underlying traumatic memories contributing to her troubled thoughts and emotions. She initially tries the technique that is taught as part of Theophostic, EMDR, and many other ministries and therapies: she focuses on the trigger, stirs up the negative thoughts and emotions associated with the trigger, and then waits for stimulation of the neurological association networks to access the underlying memories. This is an excellent technique, and it is consistently effective in enabling people to connect with unresolved content from traumatic memories; but it sometimes requires a significant amount of time and skill in order to find the best initial triggers, stir up adequate emotional intensity, navigate blockages, follow a trail of associations that can sometimes be complex, and then recognize the material that comes forward.⁶

With people who have an especially clear perception of the Lord’s presence and an especially strong connection with Him, an alternative technique can be more effective. Instead of using the “traditional” technique just described, the person asks the Lord to lead her to any underlying memories *and then continues to focus on Him as she waits for memories to come forward*. This session happens to provide a particularly nice opportunity to observe the two approaches side by side: after an initial attempt with the traditional technique proves unsuccessful, Maggie tries the “keep focusing on Jesus” approach and is then able to access an important underlying traumatic memory.⁷ I think the “traditional” technique would have eventually been effective if we would have persisted with it, but it is striking that the “keep focusing on Jesus” approach did not require any additional trouble-shooting.

“How do I handle a situation like this?” (Level 4 processing task): As discussed at length in the debriefing immediately following the session, the most important healing work in this session was the Lord helping Maggie with her uncertainty regarding “How do I handle a situation like this?” In both the underlying traumatic memory and in the recent triggering situation, most of Maggie’s distress had to do with feeling inadequate and not knowing what to do; and in both of these situations the Lord addressed this level 4 processing task by reassuring her that she had made good choices, and by showing her that she had actually been following His guidance as she discerned how to navigate the recent difficult scenario.

⁶ This technique for accessing unresolved content from traumatic memories can be especially difficult for early, intense traumatic experiences where the hippocampus was significantly impaired (or even entirely “off line”). In these situations, the components of the memory are not organized into a coherent autobiographical package, and are therefore both more difficult to activate and more difficult to recognize once they do come forward. For additional discussion of the storage and retrieval of traumatic memories, see “Brain Science, Emotional Trauma, & The God Who is With Us,” Parts III & IV, in the “Immanuel Series” section of www.kclehman.com.

⁷ Time on tape: 14:24 to 19:36.

These interactions between Jesus and Maggie regarding “How do I handle a situation like this?” also provide an example of the Lord taking leadership with respect to identifying and resolving unfinished processing tasks. If you watch carefully, you will notice that Jesus initiates all of the work with respect to these level 4 tasks. I come to understand and appreciate what He has done by the time we get to the debriefing, but I certainly was not leading the process.⁸

Correcting erroneous/distorted interpretations (Level 5 processing task): Although resolving unfinished level 4 processing tasks was the most important healing work in this session, the Lord also helps Maggie with the level 5 processing task of correcting an erroneous/distorted interpretation regarding the recent triggering situation. At 33:53, Maggie comments: “He’s already told me that it’s not my fault if she kills herself;” and even though the earlier mistaken belief had never been explicitly identified, this comment from the Lord would appear to be replacing an erroneous/distorted interpretation (lie) along the lines of: “It will be *my* fault if she kills herself (it’s my responsibility to keep her from committing suicide).”

Low emotional intensity: Many emotional healing sessions, such as the “Rocky: Father-Son Wounds,” “Lisa: Childhood Surgery, Panic Attacks, and Abreaction,” and “Patricia: First Session with Internal Parts” sessions, include intense emotional reactions during the healing process. This is common enough that some have come to believe this is always the case, and that no real healing can occur unless the person displays intense emotions. However, as is clear from this healing work with Maggie, it is possible to experience important healing in a session where emotional intensity remains subdued. We have now seen many sessions where emotional intensity never gets above two or three (on a scale of one to ten), but careful follow-up reveals lasting fruit from important healing.

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.

⁸ To clarify: I *was* leading the process with respect to helping Maggie connect with Jesus and then coaching her to keep engaging directly with Him, but I was *not* leading with respect to identifying and resolving unfinished level 4 processing tasks.