


 ReligiousFormation CONFERENCE


**Religious Formation Conference
and
Conference of Major Superiors of Men**




**Webinar Series
Getting the Most out of a Psychological Assessment**

 ReligiousFormation CONFERENCE

- for more than **60 years fostering and serving initial and lifelong formation** for members of religious congregations of women and men.
www.relforcon.org

 The Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) supports and offers resources for U.S. leaders of Roman Catholic men's religious institutes, monastic communities, and societies of apostolic life, addressing their life and concerns and evangelizing their missions in the context of church and culture in this country. As the common voice for the leaders of these organizations, CMSM promotes dialogue and collaboration in service to over 16,000 religious priests and brothers in the United States.
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Opening Prayer

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May today there be peace within!
May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.
May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.
May you be content knowing you are a child of God.
Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.
It is there for each and every one of us.

St Theresa of Avila

May 2018



“The Webinar Series”

Part One was on – *May 2nd* - “*Understanding the Basics*”
 This podcast recording is at: www.rfc.org

Today May 16th

Two: “Dealing with Difficult Findings and Difficult Realities”

Stay Tuned!

Wednesday May 30th

Part Three: “*Developing and Managing Inter-Cultural Competencies within formation*”






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OBJECTIVES

1. Re- Examining/Envisioning a new model- a brief review - this looks at the new way we can use typical psychological assessments within the formation process and “team.”
2. What are the “red flags” in a report?
 - ❖ any report might have red flags- which are fine for admission, which ones can cause greater concern, and which ones tell us enough is enough?
3. How do use therapy well and when is it being mis-used in formation?
 - ❖ We will attempt to “draw a line or two in the sand...” about the use of therapists- using the right types of therapists and the right types of therapy.
 - ❖ We will also attempt to draw the line as to when an issue or problem becomes an interference or hindrance in the formation process.








Brief Review of the Basics

The “new” context with “difficult” findings and realities:

- ❖ The “team” is now more inclusive and more concerned with two questions-not one!
- ❖ It is preventive by design - surprises might now be more rare (they will still happen but,...). Screening AND assessing “suitability of fit are essential.” “Snapshot in time.”
- ❖ Each assessment has certain basic elements in them (brief review); then, each person’s unique and mysterious history and current reality changes her/his assessment.
- ❖ Specificity of **your** question(s) to the assessing psychologist is key!
- ❖ General questions get general information! Big net image- you may pick up lots of junk...
- ❖ Accompaniment is key before, during and after... assessor **can’t be treatment provider**, by the way. Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is best form of short-term treatment, when necessary.
- ❖ Is formation a therapeutic setting or is it not? Formation is formation.
- ❖ “Serious” treatment needs to take place before formation.



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Basics of Mental Health


1. Mental health is multi-faceted.
2. Look at full complexity of many issues singularly and together.
3. These are dimensions of "health" or well-being.
4. A varying level of functioning in each.
5. On many different dimensions– as we discussed.
6. These change over time – we develop.
7. The role of stress, loss, change must be assessed and known.
8. The capacity to survive ->especially, trauma - shows resilience -> capacity to be happy->thriving.



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Difficult Findings


BIG Red Flags versus **small** ones:


1. Personality disorder(s) -- Different for women and men
2. Instability in one or both of the **"two pillars:"** love and work- here is the "tipping point" from big to small... addictions assessment is key - driving and credit history!
 - a). work, school
 - b). Interpersonal/relational/love history
3. History of poor impulse control combined (DUI's) with history of procrastination. (Key to assess and know Emotional IQ – this must and hopefully will develop - exclusion criteria is "alexithymia")
4. Undifferentiated sexual orientation/identity issues and sexual acting out (desires or experiences of abusing children is an exclusion criteria – must be asked and assessed every time!).
5. Unintegrated experience(s) or history of severe trauma or abuse. Watch this one!
6. Very high IQ with little or no ability to be empathic-no friendships (exclusion criteria –autistic spectrum d/o).
7. Past academic performance → predicts future academic performance.
8. "Very" unstable versus "dysfunctional" family of origin issues.

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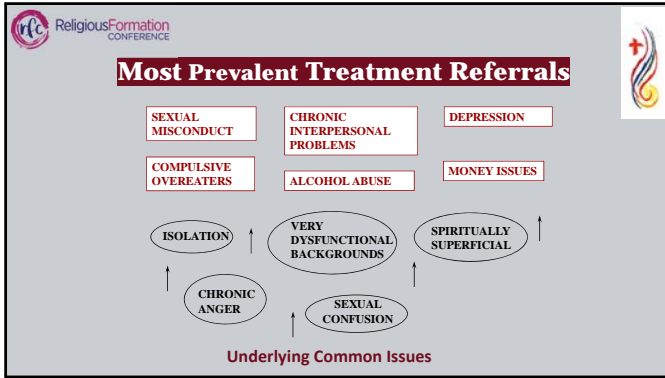





tend to act out...



tend to act in...



SEXUALITY - I

Assessing AND integrating Sexual Histories

1. **Very difficult** to get reliable information about sexuality- let's explore why this might be (research is very clear on this issue)... "can't change something unless you know what is there."

- ❖ "Sex talk" is always difficult; getting reliable information is also very challenging, watch judgments about what may seem like "lying" – social desirability – "presenting in an overly positive light" is good in public figures! But,..
- ❖ "More" will **always** be revealed in the accompaniment that begins in vocational discernment and continues in formation. It is a relationship! Be gentle...

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SEXUALITY - II

Assessing AND integrating Sexual Histories

2. **Very difficult** to get reliable information- let's explore why this might be (research is very clear on this issue)... "can't change something unless you know what is there."

- ❖ But - be wise, discerning and trust your "gut" ... it is a both/and- it is a science – "best practices" – and an art.
- ❖ **Collateral data, various opinions, and perspectives** are key in any assessment and in this regard. **PLEASE** ---Structure this into assessment and formational systems.
- ❖ **Who did, does and will ...model chastity? And, healthy relating AND HEALTHY MANAGEMENT OF EMOTIONS?**
- ❖ This must be part of any assessment(EQ).



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TRAUMA


Trauma is a common, complex and multi-dimensional phenomena:

- ❖ Know the data. Expect this!
- ❖ It requires us to think in multi-faceted and multi-dimensional ways.
- ❖ Remember the “model” is both collaborative and holistic- it is – “bio-psycho-social-spiritual”
- ❖ Use of the Adversive Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire is essential in every assessment and formation will need to know results of this. (Inter-culturally very strong – World Health Organization (WHO) version)
- ❖ If I just ask, have you been abused? One gets a black and white answer...
- ❖ Please go slow and tread gently into a person’s possible his/her-story of pain.
- ❖ *Utilizing and knowing these realities in each person’s mystery is fundamental.*
- ❖ *All of us are wounded... **The BIG Three**: intensity, frequency and duration.*

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Assessing Technology and the Internet


The use of the internet and screening for the severity and extent of abuse is key in any assessment and in formation. More will be revealed... especially with this issue:



1. Know the history, was there a full “financial” - credit history and internet screening done?
2. We have and there is a new “normal.” We may not like it, but...
3. It is no longer **IF** but how much **do you** view Internet Porn. (frequency, duration and intensity)
4. Early exposure is key to know because it points to possible pattern of behavior that might be more difficult to change. Earlier the intervention the better the outcome!
5. Is the accompaniment and therefore also formation assessing and integrating “contemplative computing?” Discernment is especially vital in this area.

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Use of therapy in Formation


1. When is it appropriate?
2. What type of therapist might best be used?
3. When is it not appropriate?
4. When do you say enough is enough?

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 **Resources** 

McGlone, G. & Sperry, L. The Inner life of Priests (2012). Liturgical Press

Ortiz, F & McGlone, G. To Be One In Christ: Intercultural Formation and Ministry (2015). Liturgical Press.

Pang, Alex. Writings on Contemplative Computing –The Distraction Addiction.

Sperry, L. Ministry and Community: Recognizing, Healing and Predicting Ministry Impairment (2000)

Sperry, L. Transforming Self and Community: Revisioning Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Direction (2002)


Sperry, L. Sex, Priestly Ministry and the Church: Understanding and Treating Sexual Addiction (2003)

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 **Questions?** 

•Questions?

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Closing Prayer 

Nothing is more practical
than finding God,
that is, than
FALLING IN LOVE
in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with,
What seizes your imagination,
will affect everything.

It will decide
what will get you out of bed
in the morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you spend your weekend,
what you read,
who you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with
joy and gratitude.

Fall in love, stay in love,
and it will decide everything.

- Pedro Arrupe, SJ

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Contact Information

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Upcoming CMSM Program Offerings

NRVC and CMSM Summer Workshops

- ❖ **July 16th to July 20th**
- ❖ Assessment of Family of Origin Issues
- ❖ **July 20th to 21st**
- ❖ Developing Intercultural Competencies Skills in Assessment
- ❖ **CMSM Pre-Assembly - July 31st 2018 - Saint Louis, MO.**
Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics: When and why are young Catholics leaving the Church? Hear what they are saying and what it means - beyond the statistics.
- ❖ **CMSM National Assembly - July 31st to August 3rd 2018 - Saint Louis, MO.**
Youth and Religious Leadership Together: Discerning in Missionary Discipleship
 This year's theme anticipates the October 2018 Synod on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment and includes a special track for youth, young adult and vocation ministry teams!
 For more information go to the CMSM website: www.cmsm.org





Upcoming RFC Program Offerings

- ❖ **WEBINARS: Getting the Most out of a Psychological Assessment**
Presented by the Religious Formation Conference in partnership with Conference of Major Superiors of Men
 PRESENTER: Dr. Jerry McGlone, SJ, PhD
 May 30: Developing & Managing Inter-cultural Competencies within Formation
- ❖ **ForMission**
For women and men in the ministry of formation
 New cohort begins: May 31-June 8, 2018
 Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL
- ❖ **Life Commitment Program**
For women and men religious anticipating perpetual profession
 July 16-24, 2018
 Marillac Center, Leavenworth, KS
- ❖ **Orientation to Formation**
For formation directors and congregation/province leaders
 PRESENTERS: Helen Cahill, OP & Henry Beck, OFM
 October 12-14, 2018
 Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL

For more information go to the RFC website: www.relforcon.org

