

Growing Up Your Inner but Hurting Child

Hazel Percy
Bob Bodenhamer

I (Bob) have been working with Hazel for some time, assisting her in the healing of unwanted fears and internal hurts that she had had for many years. On December 11th 2014, I sent Hazel an e-mail, addressing various points that she, as a Person Who Stutters (PWS), had raised in previous e-mail interchanges. Some of this related to the 'teenage 1part' of Hazel (See "Endnotes" for a further discussion about "Parts").

I gave her further questions to consider, and in addition, suggested that she run the 'Growing Up' Pattern (Technique or Exercise). The Pattern is found at the end of this article. However, bear in mind that before she ran the Growing Up Pattern, Hazel had already done some previous work on her memories as a teenager. She did this over several weeks. This work took place during the second half of last year (2014). My work with Hazel consisted of our using both the telephone and e-mail to communicate with each other.

For example, in January Hazel said: "I'd gone through many childhood/teenage memories using the 2nd Bitter Root to Jesus Pattern", giving the pain to Jesus, with child/teenage me and the adult me forgiving the people involved. Also, during December, I had those two inner 'conversations' (self-talk), associated as teenage me, with Jesus and adult me. I had these conversations as a result of you (Bob) asking me the following, which related to the issue of 'teenage me' needing to feel good about herself:

- What is blocking her from feeling good about herself?
- Does her knowing Christ help her to feel good about herself?
- Become that teenager; associate into her body, and ask her the above questions.
- Let me know if you get anything new.

Associating/Dissociating

Note: In recalling a past memory, we can recall it in basically two ways:

1. We can recall it "**associated**", which means that we mentally place ourselves back in that memory seeing through our own eyes, hearing the same sounds and feeling the very same as we did in the memory. You know that you are associated when you recall a memory and **you do not see yourself** in the memory. When associated, you are imagining yourself there in your body; thus, you are looking through the eyes of "then" and not the eyes of "now".
2. The second way that we recall a memory is to recall it "**dissociated**". When recalling a memory dissociated, you **see yourself in the memory**. You are recalling that memory and visually you see yourself back there in that memory. You see the younger you from the present you. *Dissociating from a memory for most people*

greatly reduces the emotional intensity of that memory. Likewise, associating yourself into a memory greatly intensifies the “feeling” that you receive from the memory.

So, to summarize:

1. When you recall a memory and you **do not see yourself** in that memory, you are **associated** in that memory, experiencing that memory *as if there* and this for most people greatly **increases** the feelings that they experience from that memory.
2. On-the-other-hand, when you recall a memory and you **see yourself** in that memory, you are **dissociated** from the memory as you are **seeing yourself from the present** and that allows you to be more objective about what happened. Thus, to see yourself in the memory will, for most people, **decrease** the intensity of the feelings from that memory.

As an example, PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) happens when the soldier is triggered back to the frightful experience on the battlefield. He mentally goes back there and associates into that memory. He is telling his body that that event is happening all over again. There is no wonder that he experiences so many emotions. However, when the soldier dissociates from the memory and by doing so he sees himself on the battlefield from his present position of being safe at home, the intensity of that memory will be dramatically reduced.

Two Re-imprinting Therapeutic³ Interventions used with Hazel – “Re-imprinting” is a common term used in NLP and in other areas of psychology. An imprint is the modeling by the child of the behavior of the parents or other significant care-giver. Usually, the term refers especially to learning experiences where the child builds his or her identity. You learn how to identify yourself by the feedback from these experiences with parents and others. Regrettably, this works for both bad memories and happy memories.

Children learn by imitating others – by modeling them. New born infants can be seen making facial expressions of those around him. This can happen within hours of birth. Imprinting all happens unconsciously because the child cannot sort the good from the bad. The child experiences parental responses mainly at first through the tonality, the volume and the facial expressions of the parent and how tender or not by the parent. For the first several years of a child’s life, the non-verbal feedback from the parent has a much bigger effect on the child rather than the content of what is said.

Regrettably, a lot of children experience a lot of pain, rejection and even beatings before they are 2 or 3 years old from their parents or caregivers. These experiences are deeply imprinted within the child’s brain and they are oft a challenge to fix; or, as we say, to re-imprint those old painful memories with new and more positive imprinting. Richard Bandler once said that “it is never too late to have a happy childhood”. That statement gets to the heart of what NLP and Neuro-Semantics (NS) are all about. I have yet to

meet a PWS that didn't have deeply embedded negative imprints that contribute to triggering their stuttering habit.

We will share two simple methods of re-imprinting.

I used two different interventions with Hazel, to further assist her in healing the memory from her as a teenager. The first intervention consists of Hazel's being with God and **seeing herself** with the problem but seeing herself **from God's perspective**. From this perspective, Hazel watches herself grow up. This first intervention involves Hazel's being **dissociated** from herself on earth. She **sees herself** from God's perspective.

The second intervention utilizes Hazel's being **associated** here on earth. However, she utilizes her oneness with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as her number one resource in healing hurtful memories. In beginning the re-imprinting Pattern, Hazel places herself back before she was born when she existed with God (See Jeremiah 1:5 below). And, remaining with God, Hazel travels through her life with God bringing healing to those memories from the past. This is one of the best re-imprinting Patterns that I use with Christians.

Hazel continues from earlier, "I shared these 'conversations' in a couple of e-mails to you (Bob), in mid-December. The outcome of these conversations was that 'teenage me' now feels 'good about herself' as a person. What I'm saying is that, a lot of the hurt/pain/feelings of rejection coming from me as a teenager had already been dealt with/healed by Jesus, before I ran the Growing Up Pattern. But not quite all of it, as Jesus still had things to say to me, as I ran that Pattern."

From our work, Hazel has a real experiential knowledge of Neuro-Linguistic Programming's (NLP) focus on the Representational System, i.e. the Rep System (pictures, sounds, feeling, smells and taste).

Hazel thus understood how all humans use this system in the making of internal movies. I wrote up a procedure for her to experiment with. It comes from a re-imprinting Pattern that Michael Hall and I created several years ago called "Why Don't You Just >Insert> Jesus?"

"http://renewingyourmind.com/Techniques/Insert_A_Resource.htm".

For some years now I have been teaching clients how to do this and they have found it helpful. In this process I have altered somewhat the original Pattern spoken about above. Instead of beginning the procedure at the point of pain, I instructed Hazel to imagine herself back to before she was conceived. I pointed out to her what God said to the Prophet Jeremiah when He called him. In Jeremiah 1:5 (NIV) we read these words of God to him:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, **before you were born** I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

When the Apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Church at Ephesus (Ephesians 1:4, NIV), he spoke of the very same dynamic that Jeremiah speaks about in his call; and, that is, that we indeed were with God before we were conceived.

“For he chose us in him **before the creation** of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

Growing Up from God’s Perspective

1) Healing through Dissociation

Here the Scriptures state that somehow, in the mysteries of God, **we existed with God before we were conceived**. Think of a problem or issue that you are now facing. Take notice of how you feel when you think of this problem or issue. **Now, imagine yourself with God before you were conceived**. In other words, you have dissociated yourself from here on earth and mentally you have moved up to be with God.

Now, from the viewpoint of being with God, **see yourself down here**. And, from that advantage point, out in front of you, see your mother as she carries you in her womb. See your mom as she gives birth to you; see yourself as an infant growing bigger and stronger until you are one year old. And, see “you” who is one year old become two years old and then three years old and continue watching yourself grow up through each subsequent year, all the way to the present.

During this time of watching yourself grow up, you remain with God. Now, do you remember that problem or issue that you had? See yourself out there in front of you having this problem. If you can remember the cause of the problem, see yourself out in front of you during the installation of that problem. If not, being with God, just see yourself having the problem.

Remaining there with God and seeing the “you” out in front of you and seeing that troubled you from God’s perspective, what happens to that problem? That issue? How do you feel about the problem(s) and/or issues while you are being with God **practicing the Presence of Jesus?**

For most people, any hurt and pain from those memories will be gone or at least diminished. If they are not gone, visualize yourself giving them to God and following His instructions as you give Him that pain and hurt. If it still isn’t working, keep practicing for in all likelihood it will go away. *This is true because what happens to emotional hurt and pain in the Presence of God?*

2) Healing through Association

The second intervention that I used with Hazel utilizes our abilities as humans to imagine ourselves going back in time and re-living an experience **as if there**. Based on how much *meaning* and how much *intensity* we place on a past experience, we will naturally re-experience it as either **dissociated** or **associated**.

When a soldier experiences nearly being killed in a firefight, that soldier will more than likely automatically recall that memory **associated**. He does this because of the *emotional intensity* of the experience. We know that the higher the emotional level when experiencing the trauma, the deeper the emotional pain. If, on-the-other-hand, he has come to terms with the experience and it carries very little or no emotion when he recalls it, in all likelihood, he will recall that memory **dissociated** – he will *see himself* in the firefight but he experiences it from being his proper age and from being safe back home.

These two neurological realities are extremely important to most people. Do yourself a favor and experiment with this new knowledge about how we perceive the past, the present, and the future. Understanding the difference between **association** and **dissociation** and being able to switch between these two mental states, could very well mean the difference between suffering greatly from something in your past; or, being able to let the hurt from your past go by giving those painful memories to Jesus. This will free up your life enabling you to enjoy Jesus in the present. I love what our Lord tells the disciples in John 10:10b (NIV): “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” Healing those hurts from the past will enable you to both understand and experience what Jesus has promised you – an “**abundant life...**”

The past is not real today – it only has the *meaning* that you give it in the present. Something that happened 30, 40, or even 50 years ago **is not real today**. You are living today as if you have **never grown up enough** to just learn from the past and let the hurt go. Give that painful childhood memory a new meaning. This is called re-framing. Put a frame around those old painful past memories that will serve you today. ²*Give that little “you” in that memory to Jesus.* This is what Hazel did.

Isn't it time to **let go** of that hurt? You may need to forgive someone who hurt you. And, you can do it. You can do it by seeing that old, probably childhood memory way back in your past. **See yourself at the age** you were when this painful trauma happened. These strategies that Hazel used can work for you as well and this perceptual tool could very well provide you a sense of being free with the Lord Jesus as you have never experienced before. **You will be able to enjoy Jesus** in the fullness of His forgiveness as well as enjoying the presence of the Holy Spirit continually. There are no more “Bitter Roots” to hold you back. You are His child. He wants you to enjoy being His child.

In the context of stuttering, a hard speech block is psychologically **a panic attack** experienced from a lot of pain from the past. This indicates that a lot of painful memories are recalled **associated**. Through years of living on an emotional roller coaster as a person who stutters (PWS), the PWS creates a very deep and powerful emotional connection with their stuttering.

Growing up being made fun of because you stutter; growing up trying to please a perfectionistic parent; growing up being ridiculed by a school teacher; growing up being a loner because of the difficulty that you have as a PWS who has great difficulty speaking; growing up being rejected by employer after employer, over and over

because you stutter; when your blocking and stuttering speech strategy is triggered because you are in a context where you feel threatened, in all likelihood and unconsciously, you will recall those painful memories **associated**. And, because you recall them associated, this means that the *intensity* of the experience will be greater. Yes, indeed, it triggers a Panic Attack called a speech block.

Another point, since as humans, when we recall a past painful experience **associated**, our brains are telling our bodies that we are **the age of the memory that we are recalling**. And, when many painful memories are triggered, as in the case of blocking, we mentally respond out of the earliest memory of pain. If you are a PWS, ask yourself, **“how old do I feel when I am blocking and stuttering?”** You may be surprised at the answer.

We now turn to Hazel’s learning how to “let go” of those hurts, that for her, rooted both in her childhood and her teen years. This entire article draws from her experiencing the Lord Jesus in all of His love and forgiveness for that hurting child and teenager of her past.

The following is Hazel’s description of her experiencing “Growing Up Her Inner Child”:

“A while ago, you asked me to let you know how the ‘growing up a part’ goes. Well, I was finally able to do it over this weekend.

I imagined myself (associated) with Jesus, before conception. Then, in my mother’s womb (that was weird!), I grew up month by month but when I reached 4 months, I sensed fear coming from my mum. I remember her telling me years ago, that she had some organs in the wrong place in her body and because of this, there was more concern than usual over the pregnancy/birth. In the womb Jesus said to me: ‘Simply acknowledge your mum’s fear, but you don’t need to absorb it. You are safe with me. I will protect you. I am greater than your mum’s fear. My love will protect you.’

I had a sense of well-being again, so continued on to 5,6,7,8 months, then came the time for me to be born. I felt anxious – so did my mum. I felt scared, but Jesus said to me: ‘I will be with you. I will help you. I will help your mum.’ As it turned out, I was born by Caesarean and the whole procedure was filmed for medical reasons (I was an unusual birth!) Yep, I was born a film star 😊

After I’d been ‘pulled out’, I felt abandoned by my mum as she was asleep and I was carried off away from her. But Jesus said: ‘Even though she’s not with you, I am with you – I will look after you.’ So I was aware of Jesus’ love surrounding me.

I continued growing month by month until I was 1 year old, then year after year, without interruption, until I reached age 13. Then life started feeling like a rocky, bumpy ride and I was feeling insecure. I imagined myself at school, sat next to

Jesus on one of the chairs there. He said to me: 'This is going to be a difficult time in your life, but I will help you through it.' I thanked Jesus for being with me even before I was born, and for helping me through this coming stage in my life. I imagined Jesus carrying me through my years from ages 13-16. When I was 16, He put me down and we held hands, continuing on along my time-line.

When I reached age 20, that was when my mum died suddenly. He picked me up again and carried me through the couple of years following that event. I was really holding onto Him tightly during that time! Then aged 23-25 he put me down and we held hands again. Aged 26-35 I had a feeling of heaviness and frustration, weighed down by my speech problems and a sense of 'will it ever end?' It felt like I was wading through deep water. Every day was a struggle but Jesus continued to be with me in the deep water, still holding my hand. At age 35 (when I first joined the McGuire Programme for people who stutter), I came out of the deep water and onto drier ground but the path was still rocky. Jesus continued to hold my hand. At age 48, I was again going through deep water (last year, 2014). Then we moved onto drier ground again and came to the present time. I paused for a moment, then continued on into the future, until my body died and I went to be with Jesus.

As you suggested, I repeated the above about 4 or 5 times in total, getting faster each time. The last couple of times, I wasn't aware of all that detail, but was simply 'growing up', knowing that Jesus was with me continually year after year.

I'm not sure how I'm meant to feel after doing all that. *At the moment it seems as if the young child part and the teenage part have kind of been merged into the adult me.* I'm guessing that's what's supposed to happen? And I'm more aware than before, that Jesus has always been with me, even before I was conceived, and will continue to be with me throughout the rest of my life on earth, and beyond.

It was an interesting experience!"

The Pattern:

First, I sent her a simple Pattern for Growing Up the Inner Child being **dissociated** from down here and being "up there" with God. This is the Pattern we covered earlier, under the heading '**Healing through Dissociation**'. Following that, I wrote out a more detailed **associated** Pattern that involves her utilizing her faith in Jesus as a mighty resource to bring healing to her inner hurting child, to her teenager and to her adult.

1. Imagine yourself with God before you were conceived. God told Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb, **I knew you and I called you** as a prophet unto the nations."
2. Now, maintaining that sense of being with God, imagine yourself in your mother's womb at 1 month old.

3. Next, being in the womb with God at 1 month old, come forward with God being 2 months old.
4. Continue doing this until you reach the 9th month (or, at whatever month you were borne). You are in the womb and the Lord is in there with you.
5. Suddenly, you get a sense that you don't belong in there any longer, you are ready to be introduced to the world and you with the Lord come through the birth canal and you start breathing and crying really loud. Jesus is right there with you.
6. Now, continuing on with Jesus with you, become 1 month old, 2 months old, 3 months old, all the way forward with the Lord until you are one year old.
7. Next, come forward in increments of one year with Jesus with you, become 2 years old, 3 years old, etc. reliving each year but with Jesus with you.
8. When you reach the age of you as the teenager we just worked on, you may need to pause there and let the Lord do some healing with that teenage Hazel.
9. Once she is healed, continue coming forward year after year with the Lord until you reach the present time.
10. Pause here at the present moment with the Lord and then imagine yourself growing on up with the Lord going out into your future with the Lord as far out as you would like to go.

Watch for this – as you come forward with the Lord through your younger years, you may come to a time where you get the sense that you need to spend some time there, allowing the Lord to do some healing during that moment in your history. Remain there until the Lord gives you the go ahead to continue on up each subsequent age.

After you successfully complete this, go back to before you were conceived; when you were with God before conception. Then repeat the above but a little faster. Repeat it 3 to 5 or more times, each time doing it faster and faster. Now, as you recall that teenager, how is she feeling?

How did I utilize this procedure with Hazel? Very simply, rather than leading Hazel from the point of the pain which in her case was when she was a teenager, I asked her to imagine herself before she was conceived, with Jesus. And, being with Jesus, she maintained the presence of Jesus with her as she imagined entering her mother's womb and becoming that one month old fetus but this time she knew Jesus was there.

Thanks for reading this article and feel free to contact us about any questions or comments that you may have:

Endnotes:

¹By “**Part**” I am referring to the neurology, physiology and the behavior that produces some unwanted consequences (See Luke 11:39). Indeed, based on the intensity of the “part”, it can have a life of its own. Some of these parts behave as if they are a totally different personality due to the person’s inability to control them. Indeed, when the part is created through a lot of sexual abuse, Multiple Personalities are the result. It is believed that in Multiple Personalities, the neurology of each personality is not neurologically connected to the rest of the brain.

²You will find the “**How to take a Hurt (Bitter Root) to Jesus**” on our website at: <http://renewingyourmind.com/Techniques/BitterRoot.htm>.

³**Therapeutic Interventions** are about the therapist taking actions to better the patients’ health and well-being. Interventions are things that the therapist does in leading the client to make positive changes to their negative thoughts-behavior. Newberg and Waldman in their book *How God changes your brain* states:

"Gus's scans (brain scans) showed that it takes less than two months to alter the overall neural functioning of the brain. This is amazing because it demonstrates that we have the power to consciously change our brains, and improve our neural functioning, in far less time than scientists used to think. As noted in Chapter 1, we can see permanent changes in single neurons in a matter of days, and as other studies have shown, most forms of meditation (A “Therapeutic Intervention”) will create subtle but significant changes in a couple of months."

The evidence is overwhelming that the brain creates new neural networks as it learns new things. And this “learning new things” is what the therapist seeks to lead the client to do. NLP and Neuro-Semantics offer many tools for the therapist to use in teaching clients how to “learn new things”. We seek to “intervene” in their present thinking, to challenge them to think in far healthier ways than they have been thinking. The dis-ease “part” is either deleted from lack of use or the neurons are taken over by the positive meanings *applied* to the negative thought.

A point to keep in mind is that the brain processes imaginative thoughts as reality. Proverbs 23:7a (KJV) states, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he..." This ancient Jewish Proverb goes straight to the heart of Cognitive Psychology in that man’s reality is determined by his thinking. Therapeutic Interventions are so designed to lead the client in changing unhelpful thinking to the kind of thinking that is congruent with his higher beliefs. For the Christian, it is the aligning of our thoughts about ourselves with God’s thoughts about ourselves.

Authors

Hazel Percy - hazelpercy@talktalk.net

Bob Bodenhamer - bobbybodenhamer@yahoo.com