A POSSIBILITY OF EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE OF GOD AS SELFOBJECT IN THE CALMING STRUCTURE OF THE SELF: FOCUSED ON AUTOGRAPHICAL STORY

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Abstract

We face hardships everyday, and such hardships are described as “Limbo”, which is characterized of indeterminateness, dullness, darkness, not-clearness. And in this essay, limbo is defined as psychological hardships, and we are to stay there, even if we don’t want to. In this paper, “Limbo” is used as a metaphor of various psychological hardships in life. I found an good example as limbic experience in Psalm 23. In Psalm 23, King David confessed that he had walked through the valley of the shadow of death, and that he had realized of God’s staying with him. We all know that God is invisible but the realization of God’s presence can be possible through experience. I rephrase David’s confession as “Walking with the Guiding Hand” and this phrase associates me with my father’s hand that grasped mine when I(as a child) used to wake up with dread in the dark night. In this essay, I tell my limbic experience about two times of new-born baby-losses. And I use Heinz Kohut’s “Selfobject” and Donald Capp’s “calming of the self” to explain my own experience-process of walking through the limbic experience, getting calmness of self(depicted as finding a guiding hand in dream) by help of empathic people, up to the realization of the presence of God. I conclude that there is a possibility of experiencing the Presence of God as Selfobject through the recovering calming structure of the Self, by help of empathic pastoral counselors and christians.

Keywords
I. INTRODUCTION

The author of Psalms sings, “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” ¹ Here we read the author’s confession that the Lord walked with him through the valley of the shadow of death.

According to the Bible, King David spent his adolescent times under the threats of King Saul, death always ambushed near him everyday. So he lived in those years, just like walking through the valley of the shadow of death. But he survived and walked out of the deadly valley, and he confessed that he owed his life to the Lord, describing “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.”

All of us live through the moments of hardships and we may feel extreme threats, just like “walking valley of the shadow of death.” Here I want to rephrase “walking through valley of the shadow of death” as walking through the valley of hardships and “for you are with me” as “Guiding Hand.” And I concern the process of walking through the valley of hardships, by experiencing the presence of God and explaining my own story in light of Self Psychology and Pastoral Counseling. As a Methodology, I tried to recount my own psychobiography² on a specific theme as limbic experience with baby-birth and articulate its meaning through experiencing the presence of God as Selfobject³ So

¹ Psalm 23:1-4 (NIV).
² I address the more salient arguments that have been used to challenge the psychological study of historial individuals. … I contend that the psychobiography of individuals and psychohistory of groups can be done responsibly if one attends to these issues of methodology.” Donald Capps, Jesus: A Psychological Biography (Chalice Press, 2000), xi.
³ The Selfobject empathically respond to certain potentialities of the child(aspects of the grandiose self he exhibits, aspects of the idealized image he admires, different innate talents he employs to mediate creatively between ambitions and ideals), but not
This research is processed upon a autobiographical story.

In this essay, my argument processes in three parts. In the first part, I explain the meaning of hardships as Limbo and Selfobject. In the second part, I tell my own limbic experience and what I have found through it. In the third part, I insist on the calming structure of the self by empathic people and the presence of God. Finally, I conclude that we can find a possibility of finding the presence of God as Selfobject through recovering the calming of the self through our hardships, even if we are in a limbic experiences, metaphorically.

II. MY STORY OF LIMBIC EXPERIENCES

1. Limbo and its meaning

Every day, we wait in lines, we wait for a letter or e-mail, we wait for the light to turn green. During much of our life, everyday, even in some moments, we experience some aspects of waiting as intermediate or indeterminate. We are in-between beings, face many different uncertain situations. Such situations are called as “Limbo.” In fact, limbo has many meanings. The dictionary also mentions a dancer named the Limbo, that originated in the West Indies, in which the dancers bend from the knees as far back as possible to pass beneath a bar that is put lower and lower. Donald Capps and Nathan Carlin, Living in Limbo: Life in the Midst of Uncertainty (Cascade Books, 2010), 3.

The first definition view limbo as a place for individuals who have already died, but the second and third meanings view it as a situation in which living persons may find themselves: ① “In some Christian theologies, the eternal abode or state, neither Heaven nor Hell, of the souls of infants or others dying in original sin but free of grievous personal sin, or before the coming of Christ, the temporary abode or state of all holy souls after death”; ② “Any intermediate, indeterminate state”; and ③ “A place or condition of confinement, neglect, or oblivion.” Agnes, E. Michael. Webster’s New World Dictionary (John Wiley and Sons Inc, 2004), 832.
limbo is especially acute due to certain circumstances, and my primary concern is with these more acute experiences of being in limbo.  

Donald Capps describes limbo as hardships and want to tell his emphasis on the limbic states. He explains that someone may feel that we should use the word transition to describe the situation that are related to limbo. Transition is used by psychologists to discuss our lives’ changing circumstances, especially as we move one stage to another. Transition is also a word that we commonly use to describe changes in our own lives, as when we talk about leaving home to go to college, retiring from full-time employment, or experiencing divorce and marriage. But transition focuses on the passing from one condition to another, limbo tends to focus on the experience of being in the in-between and therefore neither in the one condition nor the other, and this state of being in-between is an “indeterminate” one. According to Capps, we may regard limbo as transition of life, or indeterminate state, and we may face limbic experiences everyday, too.

In this essay, when I say “limbo”, it also means that “limbic experience, or hardships”, so I use “limbo”, “limbic experience” and “hardship” in a exchangeable way. And especially, I focus on the Limbo as psychological hardships which are indeterminate, in-between and unstable states. I also mean that we face it in our daily life. Sometimes, we feel it bearable, but sometimes, we feel it deadly painful, as if we are walking through the valley of death. Here I will try to recount my own limbic experience with baby-birth after marriage, but in Psychohistory, I already have been there as a child.

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6 Some acute limbo situations occur in our infancy, childhood, and adolescent years, such as waiting to be fed; waiting to be punished by a parent waiting for our parents to reconcile after a disagreement or fight; expecting to be called on to speak in class or to say one's lines in play or to exhibit one's ability or skill in an athletic contest; waiting for some who has shown an interest in us to ask us out on a date, and the anxiety of waiting for a second invitation; waiting for one's future life to unfold or waiting for the outcome of applications for employment, college, military service, and the like. Donald Capps and Nathan Carlin, Living in Limbo: Life in the Midst of Uncertainty, 3.

7 Ibid., 8.
2. My Limbic experience as a child

When I was a child, I used to wake up in the midnight, and as I couldn’t see anything around, I felt dreadful in the dark, even getting angry and used to burst into crying. In fact, I suppose that both of angry and dreadful feelings inflicted on me, and I got harassed with mixed feelings (Until now, I’d say that I often feel both at the same time).\(^8\) Then my father grasped my hand and I sensed that from the bottom of heart, safe and comfortable arose and began to find myself calming down. Just by grasping my hand, My father gifted his empathy for me and guided me from fearful path to peaceful one. In fact, my realization of his staying and presence with me led me into inner safety.\(^9\)

How could this be possible? What kind of change occurred in my mind in spite of the same dark? Here I would like to depict darkness as tiny limbo and father’s hand as supportive power to calm down me. About at the age of 10, I could keep peace and calmness in the dark, without grasping father’s hand. At that time, My father did not sleep beside me anymore, but in my mind, he still guided me from fear to peace, as internalized object. I’m sure that father’s support has been internalized as Selfobject and with the help of it, I’m enabled to fight

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\(^8\) We often experience fear and anger simultaneously. Something that frightens us may also make us angry, and something that makes us angry can be terrifying … A key factor that determines whether we feel either fear of anger is our perception of the environmental circumstances. When our interpretation of the threatening environment is characterized by the sense of being overwhelmed and is marked by the desire to escape the threatening situation, we are more likely to name that emotion “fear”. When our interpretation is characterized by the desire to move against of defend against the threatening situation (seeing someone hit a child), we usually call the arousal pattern “anger.” Often, of course, we feel both. Andrew D. Lester, *The Angry Christian: A Theology for Care and Counseling* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 82-83.

\(^9\) Stated in descriptive terms: the behavioral base line with regard to aggressiveness is not the raging-destructive baby—it is, from the beginning, the assertive baby, whose aggressions are a constituent of the firmness and security with which he makes his demands vis-à-vis Selfobject who provide for him a milieu of (average) empathic responsiveness. Although traumatic breaks of empathy (delays) are, of course, experiences to which every infant is unavoidably exposed, the rage manifested by the baby is primary. Heinz Kohut, *The Restoration of the Self* (Chicago, 1977), 118.
and win over fear of dark night.\textsuperscript{10}

According to Heinz Kohut, when we live through good times, we feel ourselves as strong ones, but in bad times, we become weak, even fragmented in the acute hardships. But internalized Selfobject can help to keep our head above water.\textsuperscript{11} In that sense, I insist that well internalized Selfobject should play a role. King David's realized of God's staying with him while walking through the valley of the shadow of death. And in my case, I experienced father's presence and hand as Selfobject.\textsuperscript{12}

Here I accept the fact that my early limbic story was not special, because children easily feel agitated during nights, so their parent often comfort their children until morning sun visits. I have an important purpose on telling my early limbic story, because it has special meaning, when it is connected with next limbic story in which I felt same fear and dreadfulness, again. But in intensity, I became much more overwhelmed, compare to those in my early days.

\textsuperscript{10} Heinz Kohut says that another feature is cohesion in space and continuity in time. There is also a sense of cohesion versus fragmentation; a sense of the harmony of oneself versus a sense of weakness, lack of vitality; a sense of feeling alive. We must feel alive. Part of being less than self (as amusing as that sounds) is not to feel alive. Heinz Kohut, \textit{Self Psychology and the Humanities: Reflections on a New Psychological Approach}, ed. Strozier, B. Charles (Norton: New York, 1985), 234.

\textsuperscript{11} So much depends on how we conceive or what we discover and how we add to our understanding of the essence of that central experience of being self. There are a number of things that defines this experience. The self is the center of initiative. We experience ourselves as the center of initiative. We know we are influenced, we know we listen to the other people's opinions, we consider choices. And yet somewhere there is sense of comparative independence, of assertiveness, of initiative. That's one feature. Ibid., 234.

\textsuperscript{12} If the Selfobject's empathic resonance to the child is absent or severely dulled, either diffusely or vis-à-vis selected areas of the child's experience, then the child will be deprived of the merger with omnipotent Selfobject and will not participate in the aforementioned sequence of experiences (spreading anxiety, anxiety signal, calmness) and will therefore be deprived of the opportunity to build up psychological structures capable of dealing with his anxiety in the same way. And if, to adduce another example, the Selfobject reacts hypochondriacally to the child's mild anxiety, then the merger with the Selfobject will not produce the wholesome experience of mild anxiety changing into calmness, but, on the contrary, will produce the noxious experiential sequence of mild anxiety changing into panic. Heinz Kohut, \textit{The Restoration of the Self} (Chicago, 1977), 89.
III. MY EXPERIENCES OF SELFOBJECT

1. My Limbic Experience with Baby-birth

Self-examination has a rich history in Christianity, dating back to Saint Augustine and continuing through nineteenth-century Methodism, and the pastoral care case may be thought of as belonging to this tradition. Unless there are compelling reasons for not doing so, priority should ordinarily be given to using the pastoral care case as an opportunity to engage in self-examination. I explain my limbic experience as a self-examination and it has a both purpose of looking inside of me in detail and providing a case for others.

There are many kinds of limbic experiences as explained above, and I have had several limbic experiences in my life, but here I tell my limbic experience with two times of baby-born hardships. At aged 31, I lost a newborn baby within first month after delivery. At that time, I was in my M.A. course of English Literature at a graduate school, married to my wife for 4 years and she was walking as a part-time nurse at a local hospital. And she felt something went to wrong about the fetus about 5 months of pregnancy, because she couldn’t sense of her fetus’ moving or kicking in the womb.

That was a ominous sign, but my wife had to work to finance my study, trying to believe that there would be no worry. At the beginning of 7 months of pregnancy, she started to sense her blood pressure went up inch by inch, feel dizzy and nauseated, and could not work at last. And when we dashed to a hospital, we found out that it was too late. The fetus stopped couldn’t get any nourishments from the womb and stopped growing. Some quick emergent steps should be taken. Doctors operated an urgent caesarian section and the baby was carried into the incubator for nourishments, just right after coming into the world. But the baby was born with bad lungs, having a serious problem of breathing and died in 10 days, despite intensive medical treatments.

13 Donald Capps & Gene Fowler, The Pastoral Care Case: Learning about Care in Congregation (Wipf and Stock, 2001), 114.
Tragically, until the baby was gone, my wife hadn’t have a chance of bracing her baby in her arms for just one time. I couldn’t believe such catastrophe happened to us. All I think was “How God allowed us to face such a tremendous hardship?” At that time, I was already walking in the midst of the valley of limbo.

In the mean time, I graduated from my M.A. Course in English Literature and entered into M.Div. Course at a Seminary. And my wife got pregnant again during my preparation for entering the Seminary, we paid all our cautions for fetus’ health with necessary medical screenings (as you know, my wife was a nurse!). But by the time of entering the Seminary, another limbo showed up. We hadn’t detected any bad signs about fetus during the pregnancy, but after 3 days of delivery, a baby-caring nurse sensed that our baby’s heart beats abnormally. At that news, abruptly, we felt anxious and a serious of precautious screenings proved that our second baby had a severe heart problem. According to the doctor, at least 3 rounds of operations are needed for her tiny and weak heart to be healthy, in theory, but the worst news was that the operations were almost impossible, in reality, and the 2nd baby died again in 2 weeks at the hospital. In extreme suffering, I found out myself walking in the midst of the valley of limbo again.

But in my 2nd deadly walking of the valley of limbo, I could neither light nor way-out, but as time went by, I sensed that my walking continues despite staggering. And it was a surprising notice from inside of my mind, because I have found on one in the path (as I have been in my childhood\(^\text{14}\)), and I still felt extreme pain, but it seemed to me that dim light glimmered from a distance. I wondered “Why I couldn’t find it until now? Who made it possible? It’s a paradoxical experience.

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\(^{14}\text{Such infantility has many features but especially noteworthy are fears that endanger not from without but within and are manifest in one’s “angry drives,” “sense of smallness,” and “split inner world.” Given these, the adult is always irrationally ready to fear invasion by vast and vague forces which are other than himself. Donald Capps, Jesus: A Psychological Biography (Chalice Press, 2000), 93.}
2. People’s empathy, and its functioning as Selfobject

I had to walk through the valley of darkness during twice baby-losses. And my sorrowful journeys took for several years. It never ended over several months. So I describe the journey as psychological limbo. And I really thank all the people who have been empathic to me. They stayed besides me and prayed for me. Surely, I got comforted with the help of them. I found out that I became docile with them, with no shame of exposing my weakness. I really remembered meeting them as a fragile child.\(^\text{15}\) In fact, after I lost first baby, I used to dream of walking in the dark alone, and when I waked up, severe dread fell on me and I was associated with waking up in the dark (as in my early childhood). But what made me more dreadful was that there was no grasping hand in my dream.

But after second hardship happened, in my dreams of walking amid darkness, I used to try to find a hand to lead me out of the limbo, and at last, I’ve found a guiding hand and grasped it, about a year has passed.

Now, as I examine my limbic experience, I remember that warm-hearted people have empathized with my sorrow for at least 3 years (during the period two painful accidents happened) and their incessant love has been internalized as good Selfobject\(^\text{16}\) which empowered

\(^{15}\) And it is the empathic scrutiny of the reactivated and reconstructed relations of the childhood self with the Selfobjects of childhood, and not experience-distant theorizing, however attractive and plausible its results might be, that reveals to us that in certain cases the seeming overcloseness of the adult to the child obscures the child’s essential loneliness, i.e. it obscures the fact that neither the child’s pridefully offered exhibitionism nor enthusiastically expressed idealizing needs had been phase-appropriately responded to and that child, therefore, becomes depressed and lonesome. Such a child’s self is psychologically undernourished and its cohesion is weak. Heinz Kohut, The Restoration of the Self (Chicago, 1977), 275.

\(^{16}\) Kohut’s concept of the Selfobject is directly related to the nuclear self. Originally, the child looked to others, especially parents, to affirm her self-assertive ambitions and to inspire her idealized values. But, in time, another process began to replace this exclusive reliance on parental figures for the maintenance of the nuclear self. This was the development of the self’s relationship to itself by means of internalized Selfobjects. Donald Capps, Social Phobia: Alleviating Anxiety in an Age of Self-promotion (Chalice Press, 1999), 149.
my self to overcome sorrow and frustration (but some people failed in providing me with support\textsuperscript{17}). And I could find a guiding hand again in my dream, and started to see dim light in the valley of limbo.

### IV. A POSSIBILITY OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD AS SELFOBJECT THROUGH THE CALMING STRUCTURE OF THE SELF

#### 1. Calming Structure of the self and realization of the presence of God

As I discussed above, I could walk through the valley of dark with the Guiding hand which I managed to find in my dream, and it was possible with the help of good Selfobject from the internalization of empathic people’s love and support.

Here I confess that I went through something almost like social phobia\textsuperscript{18}. At the onset of first limbo, I rejected meeting people and felt, as if sitting on pins and needles in public. I wanted to escape from them, at least for 2 years. All the people seemed to scorn at me. But there was no calm in my mind, being left alone. Desperately, I hoped of inner calmness and peace.

In the meantime, I read Psalm 23 again and again, I came to realize that I could never be alone, because the Lord stays always besides me in silence, and I sensed two urges (one for being left from others, the other for meeting people) are making conflicts. The conflicts smited me for

\textsuperscript{17} Although not up to traumatic state, if a counselor fails to provide with empathetic supports to a client, he may regress to archaic object relationship, in which he shows various reactions, such as idealizing a counselor excessively, trying to psychological fuge with a counselor, asking immediate and perfect mirroring, or expressing extreme rage. Lee, Jae Ho. “Why Is It So Difficulty to Serve Others?: From a Self Psychology Viewpoint.” *The Presbyterian Journal of Theology* 46-4 (2014), 264-65.

\textsuperscript{18} social phobia has its basis in an excessive fear of external threat. As we seen, the psychoanalytic tradition attributes its excessiveness to the fact that he fears results from internal conflicts that have been projected onto the external situation. Donald Capps, *Social Phobia: Alleviating Anxiety in an Age of Self-promotion* (Chalice Press, 1999), 141.
several months, because I knew that I have to live and work together with people, but at the same time, something inside of me was trying to keep me in loneliness.19 But King David’s heartful confession as “... Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...” resounded in me, again and again, and as I got encouraged to meet empathic people, inner calmness and peace drew near, and I found out a guiding hand again in my dream.

According to Capps, James’ discussion of fear in The Varieties identifies a key feature of the religious temperament that confronts the anxiety and fear endemic to social phobia. This is the sense of the presence of a higher and friendly power, which establishes and undergirds a “quite indescribable and inexplicable feeling of an inner security.” Its practical consequences are a “strength of soul” that views the inhibitions that plague the social phobic—seemingly so omnipotent—as “too insignificant for notice.”20

So in light of his terms, I’d like to say that empathic relationship with people enhanced “my strength of soul” to overcome inner fear. And Their support, love, kindness enabled my soul to awake more deeply internalized Selfobject, “the calming presence of God.”21

I realized of God’s presence inside of me, through walking in the dark. I found out that the presence of God, as calming Selfobject,

19 Why this contradictory behavior? It has a “psychological basis namely, the individual’s unconscious determination never to meet his childhood anxiety face to face again, and his superstitious apprehension leads a glance at the infantile origins of his thoughts and schemes may destroy his single-minded stamina. Donald Capps, Jesus: A Psychological Biography, 93.

20 This religious perspective, however, raises psychodynamic issues that James does not directly address. While he says that a “shifting of a inner equilibrium” and “changes of the personal center of energy” occur as a result of this new enveloping presence around and within self, he does not specify what has actually occurred psychodynamically. Heinz Kohut’s concept of “the calming structure” provides an answer. Donald Capps, Social Phobia: Alleviating Anxiety in an Age of Self-promotion, 148.

21 It is not a matter of changing one’s innate temperament but of awakening “to the knowledge of your real being” (James 1982, 108). Accepting the fact of one’s innate temperament— in this case, of shyness or behavioral inhibition—is critical to the religious experience of many others (such as lesbian women and gay men) for whom innate characteristics originally considered evidence of a flawed self are no longer considered evidence against the self-affirmation that “I am well, sound, and clear already,” Ibid., 153.
always stayed inside of me, after limbic experience.\textsuperscript{22} Capps explains God’s love as calming presence, not only by our success, but also by our failure.\textsuperscript{23} So I insist of God’s calming presence as Selfobject to give us hope through limbic period.

2. A Possibility of the Presence of God as Selfobject

In our life, there is no certain thing under the sun. We don’t know what will happen even in 10 minutes. But we plan something for now and future, and fight against uncertainty. What makes this possible? I think because we are born to have hope in uncertain life. According to Capps, by hoping, we project ourselves into the future and envision our existence being different from what it is at present.\textsuperscript{24} In short, hope can change our life.\textsuperscript{25}

I’m sure, the problem is that we cannot know what will happen in future, because it is concealed. So if our projections are based only what is certain, our calculus will be deprived of the life-changing

\textsuperscript{22} One is that the social phobic may cultivate a deeper awareness for the calming presence of God. Against his natural tendency to believe that he must rely solely upon himself to survive social situations that are anxiety arousing, he may adopt the belief that he has a "higher and friendly power" who is present to him. This calming presence of God does not ensure a "successful" immersion in the feared situation, as though God were her insurance of performing well. Rather, the calming presence of God enables her to believe that success or failure is not the issue. Ibid., 157.

\textsuperscript{23} The divine does not say, “I love your ‘successful’ self but I despise your ‘failing’ self.” Rather, the failing self is precisely the one to whom God reached out and embraces as God’s very one. As the social phobic enters a situation that makes him anxious, God’s calming presence allows him to believe that he has no reason to be anxious; Consider the lilies of the field, the birds of the air. Ibid., 157-58.

\textsuperscript{24} By helping their clients to identify these two self-images present and future, therapists enable them to find ways to close the gap that separates them, usually by assisting them in realizing the future self, enabling it to become more real and more present to the client. Donald Capps, \textit{Agents of hope: A Pastoral Psychology} (Fortress Press, 2001), 69.

potentialities of hope itself. According to Capps, hope’s projections may not turn out to be accurate; they may prove to have been completely wrong. But they should not be discouraged or suppressed, for they are catalysts for what it would have been had we not allowed ourselves to hope. As projections of hope we are in that very act becoming agent of hope.26 So Capps says that hope are not based on calculations of what is realistic on the basis of prior experience, and that they are based on the view that the future is open and that the future is to some degree amenable to put efforts to make a difference. But he also says that hopes change the world of facts, enable our children to accomplish more than we ever thought possible, and also enable young couples to experience marriages that they may in fact be far happier than those of the adults who are cautioning them not to expect more from marriage than they can realistic hope to experience.27

Here I insist that good Selfobject encourages us to hope for the future.28 In this essay, repeatedly, I said that father’s hand-grasping and warm-hearted people’s empathy as good Selfobject, and I suggest that good Selfobject provides room for having hope, even in severe hardships, or limbic states. In light of Self Psychology, this means that God plays a good Selfobject which empowers Jesus to face death for his people. Because there is God as living idealistic Selfobject, and He is empathic love in itself.29 So a hopeful person can be calm and even humorous in the middle of walking in the valley of darkness, because he can sense Selfobject inside of him, as King David experienced.30

26 Donald Capps, Agents of hope: A Pastoral Psychology (Fortress Press, 2001), 70.
27 Ibid., 71.
28 No matter how strong will a man has, to keep hopeful in the series of failures, just human effort isn’t enough. To be more hopeful, a man need to be connected with God, the transcendental being, and live with the help of faith through the connection with Him, despite of successions of gloomy days. Lee, Sang Uk, “Researches on Forgiveness as the Christian Life Derived from the Gospel,” The Presbyterian Journal of Theology 46-4 (2014), 240.
30 Acceptance of one’s impermanence and a sense of humor about oneself achieve the transfer of desires and aspirations once invested in “the cherished self” to
V. CONCLUSION

We live in some kinds of hardships everyday, even in the state of limbo. No one is free from any limbic experiences. And according to Psalm 23, such conditions can be described as “walking through the valley of the shadow of death.” But King David confessed that he was assured of God’s presence with him during painful passage. In self psychological point of view, he experienced the presence of God as Selfobject to get over the limbic experiences, describing as “walking through the valley of the shadow of death.”

Here I insist that when we fell into limbo, we can experience Self-object through relationships with emphatic people (pastors counselors are indebted to whomever they meet), and through their love and support, we can realize that there is God’s presence as Selfobject, and when we realize that true, we’ll be enabled to face hardships, even if in limbic states, metaphysically. In that point of view, Jesus Christ did


31 The strengthened self becomes the organizing center of the skills and talents of the personality and thus improves the exercise of skills and talents, moreover in turn increase the cohesion, and thus vigor, of the self. Heinz Kohut, The Restoration of the Self (Chicago, 1977), 135.

32 This is the place, after all, where we live most of the time, most of our days— which is to say that it is a chronic condition... there are times when limbo situation becomes acute, and such times we become aware that we are, in fact, living in limbo... we are alone in limbo, that we are in the company of others, offer its own ray of hope. Donald and Nathan Carlin, Living in Limbo: Life in the Midst of Uncertainty (Cascade Books, 2010), 121.

33 According to H. Kohut, a healthy self develops in an empathic human environment. However, numerous Korean people, including Korean Christians under an authoritarian social atmosphere, which lacks empathic relationships. Even many local churched fail to provide proper empathic environments for christians. I therefore suggest that they establish and facilitate empathic human environments. Lee, Jae Ho, “Why Is It So Difficulty to Serve Others?: From a Self Psychology Viewpoint,” The Presbyterian Journal of Theology 46-4 (2014), 265.
his role as empathic Selfobject for those who are in limbic experiences and still does so through the works of Holy spirit on the earth. That is also the reason by which we are to determine our minds to do empathic Selfobject for people who are walking in the valley of hardships.

And I insist that more pastoral counselors and christians are to do their roles as Selfobject to give strength and joy to needed people, because God grants them a possibility of experiencing the presence of Him, to help them walk through the deadly valley, through such empathic attitudes of pastoral counselors christians. When people can experience the Presence of God, They will be able to cope with limbic situations through life.

I have explained my discussion in three parts. But I admit that the processes may be not enough to support my point in this essay, and there is much to be developed, with further study.

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34 I propose the image of agents of joy in order to address the theological and cultural contexts of today, just as the previous images or models of pastoral care arose in response to the demands of theological and cultural contexts of various times in history. I suggest that, by defining joy as that which is experienced when we are relationally connected to God, the image of agent of joy can help us claim full-fledge status of joy as one aspect of the fruit of the spirit, address the current societal condition in which a joyless lifestyle is widespread among people, and even overcome the difficulty associated with the current theological and cultural climate of pluralism. Angella Son, “Agents of Joy as a New Image of Pastoral Care,” The Journal of Pastoral Theology (2008), 70.
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한글 초록

자전적 이야기에 근거한 진정시키는 자기 구조 속에서 자기대상의 역할을 하는 하나님의 현존 경험의 가능성에 대한 연구

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우리는 현실의 삶에서 수많은 고난에 직면하게 된다. 그중에서 특히 감당하기 힘든 심리적 아픔의 상태를 “림보”라고 부를 수 있다. 그 특징은 언제 끝날지 알 수 없이 지속되는 덫담함, 무기력함, 어둡고 불확실한 느낌 등으로 묘사될 수 있다. 따라서 이 연구에서 “림보”는 심리적인 고난으로 정의되며, 삶의 현실에서 겪게 되는 다양한 심리적 고난의 은유이다. 본 연구자는 시편 23장에서 이런 림보 경험의 적절한 예를 발견하였다. 시편 23장에서 다윗왕은 “사망의 음침한 골짜기”를 걸었으며, 바로 어둠을 견디어 내야 하는 고난의 과정에서 하나님의 동행하시는 경험을 하였다는 고백을 한다. 본 연구자는 이런 다윗왕의 하나님의 동행에 대한 진출한 경험을 읽으며, “인도하시는 손길과의 동행”이라는 표현으로 나름대로 묘사하게 되었다. 더 나아가서 그 표현은 어린 시절에 어두운 밤에 깨어 두려움을 느낄 때에, 손을 굳게 잡아주었던 아버지의 사랑이 가득하고 다정한 손길을 느끼며 그 두려움을 이겨낼 수 있었던 개인적 경험에서 비롯되었다. 따라서 본 연구자는 다윗왕의 “죽음의 골짜기 걷기”가 림보를 통과하는 경험의 적절한 예라는 관점에 근거하며, 본 연구자가 개인적으로 겪었던 두 차례의 갓난아이를 잃는 아픔을 견디어냈던 과정도 림보의 경험으로 묘사하였다. 그리고 공감적인 이웃과 친구들의 도움으로 그 림보의 아픔을 견디게 된 과정은 하인츠 코ทดสอบ(Heinz Kohut)의 “자기대상”(Selfobject)과 도널드 캠패스(Donald Capp)의 “진정시키는 자기 구조”(calming of the self) 개념으로 설명하며, 결국 본 연구자가 림보를 통과하면서 얻게 된 마음의 평안을, 진정시키는 자기 구조 안에서의 “자기 대상의 역할을 하는 하나님의 현존의 경험”으로 정리하여 보았다. 마지막으로 개인적 경험에 근거해서, 공감적인 목회 상담자와 기독교인들이 림보와 같은 고난을 겪는 이들에게 자기대상의 역할을 감당하면서 궁극적인 자기대상인 하나님의 현존의 경험으로 이끌리게 될 가능성을 발견할 수 있다는 결론을 제시하였다.

주제어
가능성, 하나님의 현존, 자기대상, 진정시키는 자기 구조, 공감적인 상담자와 기독교인

The self-concept is a knowledge representation that contains knowledge about us, including our beliefs about our personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles, as well as the knowledge that we exist as individuals. Throughout childhood and adolescence, the self-concept becomes more abstract and complex and is organized into a variety of different cognitive aspects of the self, known as self-schemas. Children have self-schemas about their progress in school, their appearance, their skills at sports and other activities, and many other aspects. It is hypothesised that the threat of fragmentation is experienced by human beings (individually and collectively) unconsciously as a continual danger. Initially the state of fragmentation is kept at bay by the selfobject functions of the caregivers. The availability of the caregiver allows the child to form a selfobject system that regulates his or her psychophysiological state. Later, the developing child and adult may form selfobject systems with a great variety of human phenomena, drawing upon the available linguistic, cultural, imagistic and behavioural routines and organisations. This pe The argument from religious experience is an argument for the existence of God. It holds that the best explanation for religious experiences is that they constitute genuine experience or perception of a divine reality. Various reasons have been offered for and against accepting this contention. Contemporary defenders of the argument are Richard Swinburne, William Alston, Alvin Plantinga, Alister Hardy, and Dinesh D'Souza. In essence, the argument's structure is as follows John J. McDermottâ€™s presence is not captured by the numerous titles, professional awards, and teaching citations he has earned over the years; nevertheless, these titles, awards, and citations serve as signs of that presence. They tell us to investigate further what this McDermott thing is about. Teacher, philosopher, historian, editor, teacher, social critic interpreted as a radically empirical philosophy of experience. From the time of the nineteenth-century impressionists to the Second World War, these two themes were historically and imaginatively interwoven. We want to Cite this Item. NINETEEN EXPERIENCE GROWS BY ITS EDGES: A Phenomenology of Relations in an American Philosophical Vein.