



Quo Vadis offers therapy services to:

- Individuals
- Couples
- Families

For:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Couples/family issues
- Grief/loss
- Marriage prep & enrichment
- Personal growth

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Quo Vadis Therapy Center

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The Senses of "Journey" Growth and Healing

Jenny and Rob embarked on a journey together some time ago. Expecting that this trip would be full of enjoyment, they are both now frustrated that a few detours have diverted them far from their intended course.

By simple definition, a journey may not be anything more than a trip from one place to another. Originally, a journey spanned about a day's length of time. However, the present nuance of "journey" implies an arduous process of some kind lasting well beyond a day. Geographical distance may not have anything to do with our use of the word. Rather, a journey often encompasses experiences we have in going from one place to another in the process of living, and often implies facing physical, mental, or emotional trials, or all of the above, along the way.

Journeys often have value through contributing to some form of personal growth, or at least in demonstrating our ability to persevere amidst hardships. Even attempting to avoid a journey still contributes to it and

the potential for growth .

Jenny and Rob were married 7 years ago, and they looked forward to years of being together. However, Rob's father died suddenly a



year ago, which has been hitting Rob hard. Jenny recently lost her job, and with it their health insurance. Things have gotten difficult for Jenny and Rob, and their conversations often lead to disagreements and arguments.

Many people are on journeys, by choice or by circumstance, where the energy required to navigate through the turbulence encountered leaves them vulnerable to feelings of depression, anxiety, and relationship difficulties. Regaining stability might be too much to do on one's own at times.

Counselors and therapists can be signposts to help

people through the places of depression, anxiety, and relationship challenges, as well as a variety of other life experiences, assisting people to learn and grow during the journey. Therapists can join you for a time on your journey, helping you to discover meaning while you're passing through the turmoil en route to growth and healing.

Rob was telling a friend about the things he and Jenny were facing, prompting Rob's friend to recommend a therapist he knew. With the therapist's help, Jenny and Rob are coping better and healing together by learning how to support each other in their trials.

*This issue contains examples of journeys that people may experience and find help from working with a therapist. **These accounts are fictitious**, but are representative of just some of the situations that lead many people to talk with a therapist during their journeys.*



Where are you going?

Will I Ever Find a Job?



Ben sat on the edge of his chair talking to me. He was wondering what he was going to do after weeks of trying unsuccessfully to find a job. "I'm anxious about everything," he said. His thoughts came one after another. "I can't relax, I can't sleep through the night, and my wife tells me I'm always cranky. What if I'm still unemployed six months from now? I'm thinking about this even when I go in for interviews. I don't feel con-

fidant, and I'm sure it shows. Who's going to hire me? I cancelled my last two interviews because I knew I didn't have the qualifications they were looking for. I wasn't going to go through the game just to get another rejection."

As Ben continued, it became apparent that his worries about a lot of things kept him from getting things he needed in life. Once we started gath-

ering evidence that enabled Ben to begin to question several of his deep-rooted worries and worked on how to be more assertive in getting his needs met, Ben's confidence began to grow. Ben also found a few sessions with a career counselor I recommended as very helpful in improving his résumé, focusing his job search, honing his interview skills, and getting some interviews through job recruiters.

I'll Just Stay Home



Monique scheduled an appointment with me after various friends and family began asking her why she hadn't been spending as much time with them over the past few months. Monique explained to me that she didn't seem to have as much energy recently, and felt like being alone. She admitted that it wasn't that she found being alone more enjoyable. Rather, she found most things less enjoy-

able lately such that staying home alone was all the same as being out with friends. Monique felt ashamed when she thought about how she would make up excuses to her friends for not going out with them. She couldn't explain why she felt the way she did, and was sure her friends would shun her if they knew she was sitting at home on her couch instead of going out with them. On the other hand,

she didn't think her friends noticed her absence much anyway.

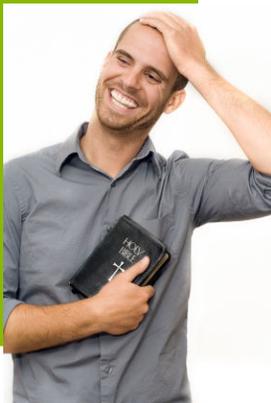
Monique came to therapy because her days had become filled with guilt and sadness, which led her to tears. In therapy, Monique learned that her situation was not unusual, and she gained hope as we challenged some beliefs she had of herself, of which she wasn't even aware, that were dragging her down.

Quo Vadis
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I'm Not Sure a Therapist Is What I Need



Tony was a bright guy of deep religious faith. He had studied for awhile at a seminary before deciding to "take some time away." Tony wasn't sure he could fulfill the duties of a religious vocation as well as he believed he should, which he attributed to his own sinfulness. He talked about these concerns with others at the seminary, who suggested he was probably being overly scrupulous. Nonetheless, his

doubts continued to nag him, prompting a classmate to suggest that Tony meet with a counselor. Tony dismissed that idea, seeing his concerns as a spiritual matter that he needed to manage with prayer.

Two years removed from being in the seminary, Tony was on his fourth job and feeling aimless. He came to me saying, "I'm not sure a therapist is what I need, but I

started to think maybe my old classmate's advice was part of an answer to my prayers."

Tony and I explored the obsessional nature of his self-doubts and began to see how he had internalized his self-worth through disapproving people from his past. We work in collaboration with his spiritual director. Tony is considering returning to the seminary.

Lenten Journey Faith and Psychology

The season of Lent is closely connected to desert imagery partly because Christians are reminded early in Lent of Jesus' retreat into the desert before he commenced his public ministry (Mark 1:12-15). Likewise, Christians are encouraged to make Lent an interior journey into a personal wilderness to root out

those things that get in the way of right relationships and all the other graces that God intends for us.

However, altering certain behaviors may be more difficult when they are entrenched as habits or in certain rules and loyalties passed on to us by our families or culture. We may not even be aware of

how we honor such rules. Therefore, it can be helpful to make this inward journey with a companion. Pastors, spiritual directors, and spiritually-sensitive therapists can be helpful in your Lenten journey and beyond.



Discovery in the Desert Ancient Scrolls and Family Life



In 1947, a Bedouin shepherd discovered ancient scrolls in a desert cave near the Dead Sea, which is now part of Israel. The significance of the scrolls was not immediately recognized. However, the Dead Sea Scrolls, as they are called, were eventually determined to be original copies of Biblical texts and other writings of a particular Jewish sect dating back to the first century BC. The Dead Sea Scrolls are perhaps one of the greatest archaeological finds of the last several decades, and certainly

one of the greatest Biblical discoveries in recent history.

Much of the value of the Dead Sea Scrolls comes from their providing Biblical documents that are much closer in time to their original sources than other known extant documents, and in giving us more information about a Jewish community that became obscured over time. Essentially, the Dead Sea Scrolls provide the world with a part of its history that had been mostly lost or forgotten, or at least removed from our direct awareness.

Despite the centuries that passed without knowledge of the Dead Sea Scrolls or the details they contained regarding the communal and religious life of a particular people, we may

surmise that not all aspects of the history they preserved were lost in a cave for 2,000 years. That is, some things that were lost for centuries in documented form probably lived on in practice in various ways.

Every family has a particular way of life. It's probably unusual for a given family to write down and codify their communal, religious, and other practices as the small Jewish community near the Dead Sea did 2,000 years ago. However, just as we might expect that aspects of that ancient Jewish community's way of life continued even after written knowledge of those things were lost, so do certain hopes, expectations, and ideas get passed down from one

"Every family has... hopes expectations, and ideas [that] get passed down from one generation to subsequent ones... that impact the behavior of each individual member...."



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Where are you going?

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About Quo Vadis Therapy Center

QVTC is the private psychotherapy practice of Joseph W. Pribyl, M. A. Joe received his master's degree in counseling psychology with a concentration in family psychology from the University of St. Thomas. Prior to that, Joe worked as a lay minister for several years in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis, and also earned a master's degree in Catholic Studies from St. Thomas.

Joe currently has openings for individuals, couples, and families interested in receiving therapy to address difficulties related to depression, anxiety, family and marital stress, grief/loss, and personal growth. Joe also works with couples on pre-marital counseling/education and marriage enrichment.

Joe has presented on mental health and relationship dynamics at retreats and to various groups. Inquire about **free** seminars for parish/church groups interested in knowing more about the causes of and help for depression, anxiety, couples/family difficulties, and other therapy topics. Permission to reproduce and distribute this newsletter is granted by Quo Vadis Therapy Center, LLC.

Discovery in the Desert

Ancient Scrolls and Family Life *(continued from page 3)*

generation of a family to subsequent ones. Loyalties to relatives and family practices become multi-generational rules that impact the behavior of each individual member of the family.

Rules in family life are not necessarily in themselves good or bad, they can be merely the ways in which families create order by filtering information to make sense of it and respond accordingly. However, there are some rules that are problematic, and there are rules that become problematic when applied to situations for which they're not intended. Consider the following example of a family that came for therapy.

The Smiths came to therapy because mom and dad could not manage Jimmy's acting out.

Jimmy, age 15, was sneaking out of the house at night, refusing to participate in family events, and talking back to mom and dad. Jimmy was a stark contrast to his younger sister, Sarah, 8, who mom and dad praised as a "good child."

As it turns out, the rules of discipline being applied to Jimmy, which were the same as what mom learned when she was growing up, were appropriate for Sarah, but weren't working for an adolescent who's seeking greater independence. Further, because dad grew up in a house where his mother dis-

ciplined the kids, he withdrew when Jimmy misbehaved and let mom deal with Jimmy, which made mom feel unsupported. Sarah tried to play the good child as she believed mom and dad desired, but she suffered quietly.

Many things were going on in this family, and it didn't necessarily make sense to find out who caused what. What helped in therapy, though, was encouraging mom and dad to see what was not working and how to parent together according to rules that affirmed them both as partners in raising their kids and respected Jimmy's age level.