

# GETTING UP OFF THE MAT

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There's a TV ad running currently showing people in the workforce lying down in a boxing ring and the idea is that "The American People" have been decked by hard economic times. However, the message is that *we can get up and fight back. We are resilient!*

Psychology has played a role in developing resilience. It grew primarily as an academic discipline in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and then as a mental health profession during the second half of the century and beyond. This latter development came about primarily as a consequence of World War II and the subsequent need of many veterans for help other than physical.

Human behavior can cause preventable pain, suffering and death, such as war, and these experiences are recorded in our brains as neurological equivalents (NEs) of the experiences, that may need to be counterbalanced if their activation impairs functioning.

Research can reveal the roots of these negatives and lead to prevention of them with *Fore(In)Sight*. We who try to travel the *Fore(In)Sight* road focus primarily on prevention of life's negatives by understanding these roots and preventing them where we can with education. However, as we live in the real world in which already developed problems often demand attention before we have the luxury of time and money for prevention, we can use the development of a problem as a sign that something was missing in our education.

Such is the case with Problems that develop with military personnel and their families after war experiences. Where we can, we work at preventing war, whether by diplomacy, "intelligence" (actually collected data), working in religious organizations, peace organizations, etc. Nevertheless, war occurs and PTSD, or *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*, becomes a household concept for many in the *other* 1% of our population (those not necessarily in the wealthiest 1%, but in the 1% that serve in the military and who carry out the constitutional mandate to "provide for the common defense... of the United States.")

For the January seminar of the *Fore(In)Sight* Adult Positive Christianity Association we will have the opportunity to learn more about the stresses of military life, such as for the estimated 45,000 military personnel who have come home from the now-concluded War in Iraq – as well as for their families. We will use two brochures made available by the American Psychological Association and our discussion will be led by a psychologist from the Veterans

Administration. The announcement of this event is at the end of this newsletter. We would be pleased to have you join us to learn about how we all can work at “getting up off the mat.”

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It may be of interest to you that our group’s founder, Dr. Bernard C. Murdoch, after graduating from Duke University at age 24 (the youngest in his class), was inducted into the Army and then was transferred to the Air Force in World War II. He was sent to the NYU Master’s Program in meteorology. After graduation there he was eventually sent to Sudbury, England where he was involved in five European battles and was awarded battle stars for the Battle of the Bulge and others. Upon re-entry into civilian life Dr. Murdoch spent his career working for prevention of many of life’s negatives, such as in doing research for the American Council on Education in Washington D.C., as a Dean of two colleges and as a Full Professor until retiring as Professor Emeritus from Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. During his civilian professional career he was also a licensed psychologist, president of the Georgia Psychological Association and chairman of the Georgia Licensing Board for Psychology. He was featured in Who’s Who in America from age 30 on.

Dr. Murdoch wanted to share the best of his profession of psychology and retired in the early 1980s to write books on Applied Psychology. He established the Fore(In)Sight Foundation to continue a truth-seeking quest with sharing about how we can use psychological knowledge to help our fellow man, as the major religions encourage us to do.

## Fore(In)Sight Regarding Conflict

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As you know, our basic reference book is entitled **Love and Problems of Living**. The “Love” part of the title refers to the Christian definition and ideas about it have been written about in earlier publications. Love is considered to be the primary ingredient which MUST become widespread for reducing or eliminating man’s inhumanity to man.

In the following essay is our definition of love. As we get insight about the roots of our problems, we can benefit from using this more concrete definition than is usually used. We can examine the connection between ourselves and others, whether individuals or groups, and begin to get insight about whether we can project helpful positive behavior toward others in the future, or injurious negative behavior. The origin of conflicts of war and even divorce can become clearer.

Sandra C. Lewis, Ph.D.  
Editor

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## CHRISTIAN LOVE

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The most significant writing anywhere on the topic of love may be found in the Bible – I Corinthians 13.

Love is

Patient and kind  
Not jealous or boastful  
Not arrogant or rude  
Is not irritable or resentful  
Does not rejoice at wrong  
Rejoices in the right  
Bears all things  
Believes all things  
Hopes all things  
Endures all things  
Never ends

No one can be all of the above all of the time. Also, it seems clear that each person's behavior relative to one of the above may, probably will, be only partial, such as when one is patient, but not completely. Therefore, it seems reasonable to think of the above as being continua, rather than dichotomies.

Love, or its antithesis of hate -- being affect -- may be placed on a scale, such as

With regard to the DEGREE to which a person:

Positive (or +)

1. Thinks about enhancing the other's welfare
2. Is (or would be if situation warranted) patient and kind with the other
3. Desires to empathize with the other and is caring
4. Desires to facilitate the other's needs and interests
5. Is other-centered toward the other
6. Has a mental set to optimize the other's well-being
7. Is thoughtful and considerate toward the other
8. Is unselfish toward the other
9. Desires to give the other priority
10. Desires to increase the other's self esteem and self confidence

Negative (or -)

1. Thinks about blocking or reducing the other's welfare
2. Is (or would be if situation warranted) impatient and unkind to other
3. Does not want to empathize with and does not desire to be caring toward
4. Desires to block the other's needs and interests from being satisfied
5. Is self-centered toward the other
6. Has a mental set not to optimize the other's well-being
7. Is thoughtless and inconsiderate toward the other
8. Is selfish toward the other
9. Desire to ignore the other
10. Desires to increase the other's self-esteem and self confidence

Based on the above 10 positive and 10 negative points, the degree of love or hate is consistent with the following:

- +10 – almost always
- 8 – most of the time
- 6 – very often
- 4 – frequently
- 2 – occasionally
- 1 – seldom
- 0 – never

We can see, therefore, that Christian love has to be learned and developed. It will be incomplete; one can regress; but it is fundamental that one who desires to exhibit Christian love perceives Jesus as the “north star,” guiding us toward perfect love.

Bernard C. Murdoch, Ph.D.  
Founder