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Experiences of Divine Grace among Christian Friends

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Experiences of Divine Grace among Christian Friends

by

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Presented to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Clinical Psychology

George Fox University

in partial fulfillment

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Doctor of Psychology

in Clinical Psychology

Newberg, Oregon

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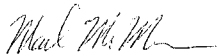
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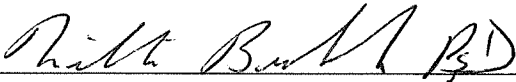
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Experiences of Divine Grace among Christian Friends

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Abstract

Though topics of prayer, forgiveness, and gratitude have received attention in the psychology of religion, there is sparse literature regarding the concept of grace. This study explored how Christians who identify as Friends (Quakers) experience grace from God. Thirty interviews were conducted with Friends in the Pacific Northwest, using a standardized semi-structured interview developed for a larger study of how Christians from various denominations experience grace. Four organizing themes were derived from the interview questions and then grounded theory was used to uncover associated sub-themes within each organizing theme. The organizing themes include the nature of God, the nature of grace, struggles and challenges related to grace, and ongoing disciplines of grace. Participants emphasized the loving nature of God and how grace is a transforming relational experience with God that helps people move toward wholeness and completeness. Though participants sometimes linked grace with questions of eternal destiny, it was also associated with being fully accepted and loved by God in the present moment. Many expressed concerns about conservative Christian perspectives of grace that seem to overly focus on being saved from hell, instead preferring views of grace that are

inclusive and available to all. Ongoing disciplines of grace included being in nature, community relationships, creative expressions, prayer, quiet, and reading sacred texts. These findings are consistent with historical and contemporary distinctives of Friends. Implications for future research are considered.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The psychology of religion involves—among other things—systematic scientific investigations of how individuals and groups experience religious beliefs. Because science involves measurement, it can sometimes be challenging to take something as subjective and experiential as religious experience and capture it in scientific inquiry. Still, this challenge is embraced in the psychology of religion as researchers have studied topics ranging from spiritual struggle to forgiveness to conversion to humility.

A few scholars involved in the psychology of religion have recently turned attention to the topic of grace (Emmons et al., 2017), which is a central construct in the Christian religion while also holding significance in other religions. Grace is particularly challenging to study scientifically, but efforts are underway. A nationwide effort, known as Project Amazing Grace, Phase 2 (PAG-2), was recently funded by the John Templeton Foundation to explore how individuals experience divine grace. Each of eight PAG-2 studies considered unique samples within Christianity, including Mainline, Evangelical, Latter Day Saint, Older Adult, Catholic, LGBTQ, and Quaker Christians (Hall & McMinn, 2020). It is the latter study we report here.

A Nascent Psychological Science of Grace

Despite its popularity in spiritual communities, grace has received minimal attention in the scientific field, including the science of positive psychology (Hodge et al., 2020). In attempt to change this, Emmons et al. (2017) illuminated the existing research concerning grace and

established an argument for why further research is paramount. Emmons and his colleagues defined grace as, “a gift given unconditionally and voluntarily to an undeserving person by an unobligated giver, the giver being either human or divine” (p. 2). They go on to assert that grace is a “necessary prerequisite for human flourishing” (p.4), and that grace is closely related to Carl Roger’s theoretical foundation of unconditional positive regard and acceptance. They establish that grace is mutually exclusive to related constructs (e.g., kindness, generosity, forgiveness, charity, gratitude) as its nature transcends societal expectations of the relationship between giver and receiver. However, despite its distinctiveness, Emmons and his colleagues (2017) suggest that grace may generate kindness, generosity, acceptance, forgiveness, charity, and gratitude, thus making it extremely difficult to isolate and study grace. With this in mind, the authors call for future research to analyze the experiential components of grace, ultimately leading to a more robust understanding of what grace is – what it feels like, its consequences, its unique layers – from the bottom-up.

The view of grace offered by Emmons et al. (2017) includes the possibility of receiving grace from either a human or divine source. Much of their article is devoted to considering the nature of divine grace, drawing especially on the theological work of John Barclay (2015). Barclay explores the representation of divine grace in the Christian New Testament, and especially in the writings of the Apostle Paul. The same Greek word Paul used throughout his writing to discuss grace is also used for the word “gift.” In contrast to the gift-giving common in ancient cultures, the Christian notion of grace is that it comes out of God’s abundance and that God’s motive is not to obtain a gift in response. This self-offering gift of divine grace is viewed as transformative and powerful in the Christian religion.

Divine grace – grace experienced from God – may also lead individuals to experience substantial change (Bronte & Wade, 2012). Bronte and Wade (2012) found that individuals who experience *grace as divine assistance* often endorse feeling “pulled and compelled” by God to make new decisions or changes in their life. Other participants noted that divine grace led to “effortless” and almost miraculous change, that God removed unhealthy desires from their heart without any will of their own.

In the field of health care psychology, something akin to a human experience of grace may occur in some psychotherapy relationships. Similar to Emmons et al. (2017), Bland (2009) relates grace to Rogerian unconditional acceptance. Bland (2009) suggests that grace, within the psychotherapeutic relationship, allows for non-judgmental acceptance between the clinician and patient. When a professional therapist experiences grace toward a patient, the patient is more inclined to internalize the grace and thus experience grace toward himself or herself. When this occurs, the patient is more likely to experience therapeutic change, thus resolving divided self-states and leading to a life that is more integrated with personal values. Consistent with Bland (2009), Burijon (2001) encourages clinicians to utilize grace when working specifically with patients suffering from Narcissistic Personality Disorder. Furthermore, grace been used to implement specific behavioral change in male battery offenders (Ronel & Tim, 2003), couples therapy (Patrick et al., 2013; Sells et al., 2009), and both general group and individual therapy models (Hook & Hook, 2010). Relatedly, others have suggested grace in relation to experiences of psychotherapeutic treatment of shame. Mauldin et al. (2003) conceptualized their treatment of shame in female youth as a, “process [toward] experiencing grace” (p.157), suggesting that awareness of and movement toward grace expunge the power of shame within individuals.

Eriksson and Abernethy (2014) extend the utility of grace beyond the realm of psychotherapy to pedagogy. In discussing their philosophy and approach to teaching a clinical training course with the goal to develop multicultural competence in graduate psychology students, they define grace as “unmerited favor.” From their perspective, grace should be a key theme in multicultural and diversity training. They write:

As students engage in this journey and their awareness of their own "isms" increases, this becomes difficult to tolerate and challenges their self-image ... a reminder of God's saving grace is helpful as an anchor and affords a sense of common connection in the midst of pain (p. 180).

From their experience, grace allows students to lovingly accept themselves – the good and the bad – and further internalize and metabolize the information they were taught throughout the course. Grace then moves beyond the intrapersonal experience and is experienced between the students interpersonally, and eventually (and hopefully) from the students toward their psychotherapy clients.

Though we have just distinguished divine and human grace, they may be viewed as integrated and connected. Within a divine frame of grace exists the Wesleyan concept of *prevenient grace* (Leffel, 2004). Leffel (2004) describes prevenient grace as the ever-present, all-encompassing love of God that predates human consciousness and decision-making. This grace, according to Leffel (2004), is cooperative, therapeutic, teleological, interpersonal in nature, and exists to bring about restoration for all creation. Leffel (2004) extends this divine understanding of grace to a human analog by considering three processes of psychoanalytic therapy: transference, the process of mourning-liberation, and the process of internalizing more mature others. He concludes that this “triple action-process model” (Leffel, 2004, p. 9) is the psychological manifestation of prevenient grace in that it leads individuals to a deep, spiritual-level of personal and relational awareness, resulting in holistic restoration toward a more mature

self. The notion of common grace—the blessings provided from God to all humanity—has also been considered alongside psychotherapy (Kim-van Daalen, 2012). McMinn et al. (2006) add further nuance to the understanding of divine grace in relation to psychotherapy, noting that grace is not fully known without an understanding of sin. They write, “the doctrine of grace, intrinsically linked to the doctrine of sin, teaches that God forgives humans of their sin and offers unmerited kindness and love to whomever acknowledges a need for redemption” (p. 297). McMinn et al. (2006) conclude that patients’ experiences and perspectives of grace and sin should be considered by a clinician at the intake and throughout therapy as they may lead to deeper insight regarding their suffering and healing.

Assessing Grace

Any science, including a new science of grace, requires means of assessing the construct being studied. This often begins with careful theoretical and conceptual analyses, such as the work seen in most of the studies described thus far. Simultaneously, a number of scholars have attempted to assess grace quantitatively through items on existing scales and new scale development (Bassett and the Roberts Wesleyan Research Group, 2013; Beckenbach et al., 2010; Bufford et al., 2015; Bufford et al., 2018; Bufford et al., 2017; Dudley, 1995; Sisemore et al., 2011;; Watson et al., 2011; Watson et al., 1985, 1987). After reviewing these various quantitative measurement efforts, Hodge et al. (2020) conclude that, “measurement of grace appear to lack rigorous methodologies found in more established fields of psychology” (p. 14). The most hopeful effort to date is found in Bufford et al.’s (2015) work to combine three pre-existing measures of grace into a single, stronger unified scale with various subscales. This is a reasonable approach given the various nuanced definitions, contexts, and understandings of

grace, but it still leaves some question about whether current quantitative measures are adequate for plumbing the depths of how individuals encounter and experience grace.

The eight studies included in PAG-2, including this one, involved systematic qualitative exploration of how Christians experience divine grace, with each study a set of standard interview questions (see Table 1). This choice reflects an awareness that how people experience divine grace may or may not match well with currently established quantitative measures. As is true with many constructs in social science, thorough qualitative research can help establish a conceptual base for future quantitative scale development.

Grace among Christian Friends

This study involved participants who identify with the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quaker, a religious movement founded by George Fox in 17th century England. The development of the Quaker church was largely founded in unrest toward the dominant Anglican system that held to a strict church hierarchy and was frequently identified with abusive power over finances and spiritual experiences (Ingle, 1996). George Fox, among other founding Quakers, sought to spread a nuanced approach to theology, suggesting that all people (not just those who identify as priests or church leaders) can experience the presence of God by attending to the “inner voice of Christ.” The Quaker movement grew to become synonymous with social change and justice advocacy across Western Europe and America, as Friends became leading voices for passivism and abolitionism, educational opportunity for the poor, as well as racial justice, and prison and health care reform. As Quakerism continued its spread across America, it became intertwined with the Christian Evangelical movement: a movement founded in personal conversion experiences, the authority of Scripture, evangelism, and maintaining a spiritual community of other believers (Beebe, 2003). The emergence of Evangelical Quakerism thus

Table 1*Semi-Structured Interview Questions*

Theme	Question
Christianity	Please tell me the story of how your experience as a Christian has played out in your life?
Your View of God	In your view, what is God like? Can you think of a particular story or example that has helped you understand God?
God's View of You	We've talked a bit about how you view God. How does God feel about you? Again, a story or example would be very helpful.
Saving Grace	[I've heard you mention the word grace] OR [Christians often speak of grace]. Christian theologians often mention the concept of salvation by grace. What does it mean for you to be saved by grace? And not just what does it mean in your in terms of theological knowledge, but what does that mean to your own personal identity?
Accepting Grace	Do you find it difficult to accept God's offer of salvation by grace? Are there concerns that the term raises in your thinking or in your experience?
Sanctifying Grace	We've just discussed the idea of being saved by God's grace. Are there other ways you experience God's grace in an ongoing way in your life?
Spiritual Struggle	What is the hardest thing you have ever gone through? Did it change your experience in being a Christian?
Common Grace	How does God feel about those are not Christian? Does this topic of grace apply to those outside the Christian faith?
Explicit/Implicit Views of God	Sometimes what people believe in their head about God doesn't fully match what they experience in their experience of God. On the topic of grace, how does your head knowledge and your experience of God differ, and how are they the same?
Spiritual Practices	Are there particular spiritual practices that you find helpful in experiencing God's grace? If so, talk some about how you experience that practice.

became a popular expression of Quakerism in American society and is the predominant religious experience of the participants in this study.

Though Friends are historically rooted in Christian beliefs, not all Friends today identify as Christian (Friends General Conference, n.d). Friends are organized into regional groups known as Yearly Meetings. These groups often gather annually to worship together and consider matters of business, governance, and policy. Yearly Meetings are comprised of Monthly Meetings, which are local congregations that typically meet weekly for services and monthly (more or less) for business matters. Over time, and especially in the 19th and 20th Centuries, various Yearly Meetings separated from one another over issues of doctrine. Evangelical Friends emerged from this divisive time as a group of Quakers who continued to identify with Christian beliefs. Terms such as “Christ-centered” and evangelical are often used to identify this group of Quakers, though these terms lack nuance.

Evangelical Friends International (n.d.) identifies four branches of Quakers. First are those who meet for unprogrammed silent worship and hold great diversity of beliefs (ranging from Unitarian Universalist to Christ-centered). Second, some Quakers meet for unprogrammed silent worship in groups that are mostly Christ-centered. Third, some meet for more programmed forms of worship, led by pastors, and are Christ-centered but may or may not be evangelical. Fourth, some Quakers meet for programmed worship in groups that are both Christ-centered and evangelical. Consistent across all Quakers is the belief that something of God resides in every person, a resolve to listen to that inner witness, and a deep ethical commitment to attend and respond to the needs and injustices of the world.

Hall and McMinn (2020) analyzed selected data from seven of the eight studies in PAG-2 and noted that participants shared a common understanding of grace best defined as, “the

unmerited expression of God's love, in which God offers the gift of relationship with Godself" (p. 11). Beyond this, some dimensions of grace are contested among Christians, with evangelicals, Catholics, and Latter Day Saints inclined to add particularity around the work of Jesus. This more particular definition of grace is summarized by Hall and McMinn (2020) as, "the unmerited expression of God's love, in which God offers the gift of relationship with God through the work of Jesus, whose death on the cross allows for the forgiveness of sins which separated people from God" (p. 11). Quakers in the Hall and McMinn analysis tended to fit in the former category, sharing the common understanding of grace that focuses on relation with God, but not as much the second category, which focuses more on the particular work of Jesus as a remedy for the problem of human sin. McMinn et al. (2006) suggest an essential link between doctrines of sin and grace, but this link may be less prevalent among Quakers than with other Christian groups (Hall & McMinn, 2020). Put another way, evangelical Friends may not be that evangelical when it comes to understanding grace.

Those identifying as Evangelical Friends are enigmatic and stand out amongst other evangelical denominations for several reasons. First, evangelicalism promotes a faith that prioritizes scripture above all religious ways of knowing, often regarding scripture as the *inerrant* and *inspired* word of God. From this perspective, the Bible contains infallible text and communicates objective truth to those who read it. Quakerism, on the other hand, prioritizes spiritual experiences with God as the primary means of encountering truth. Roots to this authority of experience are traced to Quakerism's founder George Fox, Robert Barclay, and other 17th Century leaders in the Religious Society of Friends. Beebe (2003, p. 16) writes:

Barclay begins with inward objective manifestations in the heart: a living religious experience of God. These are distinct experiences originating outside the self, yet realized within. No external mediator is needed to interpret these experiences, and they live beyond language, form, creed, or religious tradition.

The convergence of evangelicalism and Quakerism thus suggests an interwoven, albeit complicated, relationship between authority given to Scripture and authority given to experience. This was evident in the interviews as many participants described their relationship and understanding of God and divine grace through the lens of experience, with scripture often filling in the gaps and providing vibrancy and scaffolding to said spiritual experiences. Our findings also revealed this marriage of scripture and experience as participants identified many experiential activities along with scripture reading as practices of divine grace.

A second theological conundrum found in Evangelical Quakerism lives within the name itself: *evangelism*. American Evangelicalism is most strongly identified with the revivalist movement; a movement often synonymous with large religious gatherings, boisterous, charismatic preaching, and the goal to foster “born-again” Christians. For most every American evangelical, the primacy of evangelism is rooted in what is known as “The Great Commission,” detailed Matthew 28:18-20:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (NIV).

The Great Commission became the backbone of The Great Awakening and prominent American ministers for generations to come. Jonathan Edwards, an 18th century preacher considered to be a figurehead of The Great Awakening and American Evangelicalism, is perhaps best known for his sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of Angry God*. This epitomizes the evangelical position on salvation, grace, and the afterlife. Edwards argues for Christian conversion by warning his listeners of eternity in Hell, damnation, and a God who, at any passing moment, could condemn the world. According to Edwards, it is only grace, via the death of Christ that exclusively saves

the “children of the covenant” from this eternal damnation. Thus, it was imperative for believers to evangelize and save their neighbors from “the lake of burning brimstone.”

While 18th century Evangelicalism sprouted roots in a movement bent on creating “God fearing” Christians, 18th century Quakers developed a theology bent on inclusivity. John Woolman, a prominent 18th century Quaker theologian, held the belief that every individual, regardless of religion, ethnicity, generation, or location had the opportunity to experience God, even if it was experienced outside the vernacular of Christianity. He writes:

There is a Principle which is pure, placed in the human Mind, which in different Places and Ages hath had different Names; it is, however, pure, and proceeds from God. It is deep, and inward, confined to no Forms of Religion, nor excluded from any, where the Heart stands in perfect Sincerity. In whomsoever this takes Root and grows, of what Nation soever, they become Brethren (Woolman, 1752, p. 50).

Woolman’s theology, founded in the Quaker belief of the Inner Light, suggests far broader access to God and God’s promises than his evangelical contemporary. Furthermore, Woolman’s theology does not inherently necessitate a call to “go and make disciples” because all are created with an internalized call. In light of this historical contrast, it is not utterly surprising that Friends participants in the Hall and McMinn (2020) study tended to differ from evangelicals in their understandings of grace.

Whereas Hall and McMinn (2020) analyzed findings from five theoretically rich interviews in seven of the PAG-2 studies, the study reported here considers all 30 interviews with Friends participants. Thus, the present study is a qualitative exploration of how Christ-centered Quakers understand and experience divine grace.

Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Thirty individuals who identified as Quaker tradition were recruited from local Quaker churches in northwest Oregon, a Quaker university, and a Quaker-based retirement center in the community. Recruitment was accomplished with announcements, emails, and flyers.

The average age of the participants was 55.80 years, with ages ranging from 19 to 82 years. All but one Asian American participant identified as European American. Twenty respondents identified as female and 10 as male. It was a highly educated sample, with 8, 10, and 8 participants having a bachelors, masters, or doctoral degree as their highest degree, respectively. On the average, participants had identified as Quaker for 38.42 years (range from 3 to 82 years) and as Christian for 47.53 years (range from 14 to 76 years). Almost half ($n = 14$) of the participants identified being a Quaker longer than a Christian, speaking to the robust Quaker identity that many participants held. When asked about the importance of their religion, from 1 (*I have no religion*) to 5 (*Extremely important*), participants averaged 4.63 (std. dev. = 0.84).

Materials

Informed Consent

Participants reviewed and signed a consent form before participating in the interview.

Demographic Questionnaire

Participants completed a brief demographic questionnaire prior to or after the interview. The questionnaire assessed participant age, ethnicity, gender, education, current employment, marital status, years identifying as a Quaker and a Christian, and importance of religion.

Semi-structure Interview

The instrument used in this study was developed for the PAG-2 studies, as described earlier. It is a semi-structured interview comprised of 10 free-response items designed to inquire about an individual's experience of divine grace (see Table 1). Appropriate prompts were given as required to improve the collection of relevant data. Interviews lasted between 44 and 94 minutes, with an average of 61.93 minutes.

Procedure

Interviews were conducted in person, were recorded with a mobile device and accompanying lapel microphones, and then transcribed using an online automated transcription service (temi.com). A research assistant then cleaned the transcript before it was reviewed by a dissertation coordinator who was trained to assess the proper depth of interview questions. Based on the coordinator's feedback, adjustments were made in the number of follow-up prompts offered in subsequent interviews.

Grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Ponterotto, 2005) was used as the guiding methodological strategy for analyzing interview findings. Grounded theory assumes the underlying perspectives brought by each interviewee is knowable, but imperfectly so. The investigators also bring certain perspectives into the data analysis process, making it particularly important to both recognize subjectivity in the process and to look for consistent underlying themes that emerge in multiple interviews.

After interviews were transcribed, the research team participated in “bracketing” (Fischer, 2009; Tufford & Newman, 2010) to acknowledge each person’s history and experiences of Christianity, and then to reflect on ways their biases might affect data analyses. Next, five collaborators reviewed the transcripts to identify potential themes. Collaborators then met to discuss the themes that seemed apparent to all authors. After themes and a basic codebook were established, two collaborators coded each interview and met to review areas of agreement and disagreement after a block of five interviews was coded. Once all transcripts were coded and discussed, the authors identified and analyzed primary and secondary themes found in the data. Upon completing a preliminary draft of the findings, all participants were contacted for purposes of member-checking (Birt et al., 2016). This provided opportunity for participants to challenge or affirm conclusions the researchers derived from the interviews.

Chapter 3

Results

In every interview, participants reflected on their religious/spiritual development. Most participants identified with a theologically conservative upbringing, often inheriting the belief system of their parents or grandparents. Many narratives included having older family members involved in ministry, such as pastors, elders, and worship leaders. Whereas conversion experiences are quite popular and common in most Evangelical circles, only 16 of 30 participants reported a *conversion* experience, whereas the other 14 described their faith development as a seamless, unremarkable event. Though most participants described a more conservative upbringing, a large portion reported a shifting of belief throughout their spiritual development, citing times of conflict or doubt that have shaped their current beliefs. A final developmental factor cited by several participants was an experiential approach to theology. Within Quaker traditions, it is not uncommon for personal experience to shape interpretation of scripture as well as other spiritual beliefs and practices. Several participants cited their dependence on spiritual and relational experiences for faith development and orientation.

Based on the interview questions we organized the data analysis around four major themes.: (a) the nature of God, (b) the nature of grace, (c) struggles and challenges concerning grace, and (d) spiritual disciplines involved with grace. Grounded theory was then used to discern subthemes within each of these four organizing categories. Examples of each organizing theme and subtheme are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Themes and Subthemes from Interviews

Primary Theme	Secondary Theme	Frequency of Coding	Example
The Nature of God	God With Us	28/30	<p>I have been conservative, I've been fundamentalist. I've been evangelical. I've been none of the above... But regardless, it feels like I've always known, even before I was a Christian, that I've always known that God was there..."</p> <p>And he was there. Jesus was there. And I knew I had a friend and it wasn't a big emotional thing ... I was just peaceful.</p> <p>God is in the muck. God is in the dirt. God is suffering with. I won't say that always makes it okay or it doesn't explain it away ... God's there. God cares. and we're not alone in it.</p>
	God's Loving Character	27/30	<p>God is love. The essence of God is love and God is in relationship, the trinity kind of understanding of God in relationship. And that relationship is defined by love.</p> <p>My personal definition of God is loving relationship ... God is there just wanting so much to pour love into me and to you and to the world and it's just God's doing the loving and God doing the work.</p> <p>I think I'm very blessed with the gift of a very deep assurance of God's love for me... I've been through clinical depression, I've been through abuse where I really, really, wanted to turn my back on God.... But yet he was like, just patient with me there, waited. I never felt judgment. I just felt like it was okay.</p>

<p>God's Mysterious Nature</p>	<p>14/30</p>	<p>Once we define God, we're wrong.</p> <p>The metaphor of God being a deep and shallow as the ocean and you know, accessible but mysterious.... You don't control God's waves of the spirit of growth in your life, but you put yourself in the path of those waves. And the picture of the ocean being like God to me is that God is available and God is always sending waves, but not to order.</p>	
<p>The Nature of Grace</p>	<p>Unearned</p>	<p>20/30</p>	<p>In order to receive something as immense like [grace] in my mind, our modern world would lead me to think that you'd have to earn it. But that's not how God works.</p> <p>As a divorced person... and to actually see those practical things that God put in my life, His care for me, that was grace.</p>
<p>Forgiveness</p>	<p>13/30</p>	<p>God gave me the assurance that those things sins, mistakes, whatever we want to call them, were covered by His grace. That was part of what his redemption covered.</p> <p>As I try to separate out grace, for me it is a willingness to accept someone for all their flaws and willingness to almost already have forgiven them for something before it has happened, before you even know it's going to happen.</p>	
<p>Movement toward Wholeness</p>	<p>20/30</p>	<p>The more grace we experience, we are more able to be vulnerable, and the more we learn to be our true self.</p> <p>I have the capacity to be transformed and the transformation is going to give me a much more peaceful, centered life in the midst of the storms that will always come and the sadnesses of the world that will always be there.</p>	
<p>Eternal Consequences</p>	<p>25/30</p>	<p>[Grace] is a little taste here of what living with God for eternity in heaven and his Kingdom will be like, I think.... It will just be happening all the time. I think it'll just be how we live: joy and just pure joy and pure light.</p> <p>Well, that's an interesting question because the word <i>saved</i> I think has been</p>	

		<p>weaponized, shall we say, by Christianity. And so, I don't really like that word so much.</p>
Relational	20/30	<p>I think of grace as a way to enter into a spiritual relationship.</p> <p>I would define grace as acceptance and belonging. My understanding of salvation has definitely changed from Calvinism, but I view sin not as behavior, but as a break in relationship, a more Jewish understanding. And so, if [sin] is a break in relationship, then grace is that all of me belongs.</p> <p>So, receiving grace from God in turn almost demands that I give that grace to other people... [Grace] helps me be more understanding, more gracious with people that aren't perfect, that don't do things the way you want them to, aren't the way you want them to be.</p>
Miraculous and Surprising	5/30	<p>I just said, "God, if you're there, if you're really real, I really need help with my relationship with my mom cause this is so bad and I can't be a mother while I'm resenting my mother. I just can't do it." And I just felt like there was this quietness in the room. James (pseudonym) was sleeping there, but the room filled with a kind of light and I just felt the presence of God and He just said, "I'm here."</p> <p>Every morning I step out of my apartment on bare feet onto my patio and admire the fact that the squirrel ate the last of the cherries out of my cherry tree. You know, he was cute and he needed the nourishment and so on. There's always a serendipity.</p>
Common Grace	29/30	<p>I see God's grace in people willing to transport me. I see God's grace in <i>Sarah</i> (pseudonym) willing to be take care of my finances if I become incapable.</p> <p>I live right by a canyon. Now I can walk ... a trail in the woods and just breathe again and go, I'm still here. You know, I'm like breathing and I still have a body that can walk.... So, kind of recalibrate no matter what, how much worthlessness or shame</p>

might be creeping in. I can recenter on essentially that grace, I get to be here. I get to be alive, I get to work, I get to have children and a wife.

I feel like God's grace is experienced through the ability to question. I think that the shame - there was so much shame that I felt as a younger teenager - left me feeling unable to question and being able to relax into the grace of knowing that He's right there and He's not going anywhere as an adult has allowed me to ask questions without fear of repercussions.

Struggles
and
Challenges
Related to
Grace

Concerns with
the Concept

13/30

Well, I mean I think we've, the American church ... has so oversimplified what salvation means, you know, so if salvation just means going to heaven after you die, that doesn't make a huge impact on your life.... And I don't think that's really what salvation is really about. I don't think that was Jesus' intent. I mean, I think salvation was about a way of looking at life in the present moment.

The Kingdom
of Heaven is
Here and Now

13/30

So for me, being saved by grace isn't being saved by grace from hell, unless hell is a depression or unless hell is the slums or endless hell.... I think grace is one of the ways that will lead to vulnerability, that can lead to an intimate, deep community.

On the other hand, the heaven or the afterlife, that's really not the point ... I mean, that's such a mystery that we really don't know, and I think to put much emphasis on that really speaks to our own insecurity about what's next, you know? ... [It's] less about whether we're not, we, you know, get in and more about how we're formed to be God's people.

Inclusive
Views

30/30

That's Quaker doctrine. There's that of the light that's in every single person that comes in the world. And there's just got to be a way for that person to respond. That's grace, you know?

With my belief, I don't necessarily have formed words for it, but, more or less universalist belief that most people can find their way to God and a form of grace for salvation and heaven in most faiths.

Obstacles	18/30	<p>Memory. I don't always remember to think about it, or sometimes I'm just going about my daily life and I'm not as mindful as of that sort of thing, perhaps.</p> <p>And sometimes fear overcomes me. And not knowing exactly, confusion sometimes, and anxiety about, "What does it mean to really let go of everything in the relationship with God?"</p> <p>Yeah, well I think self-reliance is a huge one. I think it's really hard to accept somebody else's provision for you if you're busy trying to provide for yourself.</p>	
Spiritual Struggles	12/30	<p>I spent a year in [COUNTRY], I think I mentioned earlier, and it was the worst year of my life. I felt like I had been abandoned by God, felt like God had called me in to do something, and then left me there just by myself.</p> <p>[After the death of a child]. But it was just like, where is God in this? And pretty much, just in the last six months, I've just decided to turn off the expectation in Psalm 23 about after you go through Death Valley, goodness and mercy follow. I've just not seen the goodness.</p>	
Ongoing Disciplines of Grace	Nature	12/30	<p>So when I wake up I can just go out to our gardens and just walk around...I get a cup of coffee...and I just look at these plants and these flowers, or this hummingbird and the birds are there is, it's just awesome.</p>
	Community	18/30	<p>Gathering together for communal worship, teaching, eating, and singing and things like that. Connecting with a community of Christ followers has been important. And service for me, it's been really important working, serving within the church but also serve as outside of the church as well.</p>
	Creative Expression	15/30	<p>He [God] says, "I love it when you sing. I love it when you play piano.</p> <p>Cooking. I love cooking and I didn't like it when I had kids that didn't like anything, but my housemates love anything I make.... That's a spiritual practice.</p>

		Journaling. Journaling, yes. Journaling how I feel and what I've experienced in what won't get out of my head. Uh, and taking time to just be with God.
Prayer	21/30	Yeah, so centering prayers is one I've been doing about two years now.... The exercise of just showing up saying, "So I'm here, God," you know. And I'm going to fail to not have my mind constantly being [centered], but that letting go and then seeing the power of how much easier it is for me in daily life to [let go].
		I believe we pray without ceasing, so I don't sit down and pray specifically. My mother always made us pray before dinner and I get really irritated by being forced to pray before dinner ... I just believe it's like a constant communion. And so I consider that a spiritual practice.
Quiet	14/30	Open worship, to an extent, sitting in community with the group, intentionally taking time and taking silence to turn inwards and to take time with God, would be a big one.
		Every morning I step out into the real world ... and spend a few minutes ... just taking a few minutes of quiet.
Sacred Texts	10/30	We led a Lectio Divina class at our church and that was a very impactful and just opening up the scriptures and have God speak to you in the moment.
		So, reading the Bible is really important to experiencing God. It's just not head knowledge. I mean, read the story of Rahab helping the spies. And I think, she's got plenty of scarlet rope because of her profession, but I just see God's grace all over that. Who Does God use? He uses rascals, you know?

The Nature of God

One organizing theme pertained to how participants understand the nature of God. Three secondary themes emerged from grounded theory analyses, including God with us, God's loving character, and God's mysterious nature.

Quakers believe God is ever-present and relates to humanity as a companion. This highly relational understanding of the nature of God is a distinctive of the Quaker tradition. God is often identified as *friend*, which is drawn from the words of Jesus, spoken to his disciples: "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15). God's felt presence seemed notable during times of hardship and struggle. According to the participants, God does not watch while His creation is in turmoil, but rather draws near and sustains in times of suffering.

Participants not only reported that God is a loving God, but that love is, in fact, the very nature of God. Indeed, God cannot be understood or experienced in the absence of love. This was not just a theological assertion that God is by nature love, but also a very personal and experiential one. Participants expressed their sense that God loved them individually and personally. Thus, as we seek to understand how participants experience divine grace, it is important to recognize that the giver of grace is identified as the embodiment of love, both in terms of theological belief and personal encounter.

In addition to being present as a friend, and loving, God is described as mysterious and immeasurable, often leaving participants in states of wonder, awe, and even fear. When one ponders mystery, it often provokes a desire to solve, to don the inspector's hat, grab the magnifying glass, and bring clarity to the clouded. However, as participants discussed the

mysterious of nature of God, the provocation was not to demystify, but rather accept and relish in the mystery; paradoxically saying “yes” to both uncertainty and a profound assurance of God’s presence.

The Nature of Grace

Participants frequently noted how grace transformed them or their circumstances in both gradual and radical ways. But what is this thing that changes them? How do they understand the nature of grace? Several distinct aspects to grace were defined in the following sub-themes: unearned, forgiveness, movement toward wholeness (or refining), eternal consequences, relational, miraculous and surprising, and common grace.

Participants described grace as an experience they did not have to work toward. That is, it is not a transaction or exchange, but is simply a gift given, even when the receiver might feel unworthy or undeserving.

Several participants likened the transformative nature of grace to an experience of both divine and interpersonal forgiveness. One participant reflected on the sudden death of her husband, and the forgiveness she experienced regarding their last interaction. Another reflected on how divine grace inspires her to treat others similarly, extending forgiveness while offering interpersonal acceptance.

In addition, grace was often likened to a refining process, a movement toward wholeness. In this sense grace is transformative, allowing one to move closer to one’s true self and values while also allowing hardship. Grace is seen as a refining flow that we are invited to immerse ourselves in.

As might be expected, participants reflected on grace and its relationship to heaven and the afterlife. However, this theme was presented in a plethora of ways, with some participants’

unquestionable acceptance and belief in traditional evangelical eschatology whereas others were uneasy with questions regarding grace and the afterlife. Participants unanimously endorsed that there is a relationship between grace and eternal consequences, however, there was wide discrepancy on how participants felt and thought about the connection.

Participants tended to frame divine grace as a relational experience. Grace ushers people into a spiritual relationship with the divine, allowing them to be fully accepted and to experience union with God. Still others focused on passing grace on in interpersonal relationships because of receiving grace from God.

Though not a prominent theme, several participants reflected on God expressing grace to them via particularly surprising or miraculous means. One participant shared a time when she experienced God's physical presence and voice. Others find themselves surprised by the regular events, such as noticing grace through events in nature. Whether it be life-changing miracles or seemingly small surprises, participants acknowledge that God interacts with humanity in unexpected ways.

Common grace, as juxtaposed with saving grace, refers to grace that is common to all humankind as opposed to a specific, salvific encounter. Throughout the interview, most participants often described common grace experiences even after being asked to reflect on saving grace. When prompted to return discussion to salvific grace, most participants would explain that "all of it" is "just grace," and that it is a mistake to separate the two. This everyday experience of grace was sometimes observed in provision of a specific need, in nature, and in the freedom to hold curiosity and questions.

Overall, participants reflected on grace as being an unearned, refining, relational experience, where God meets humanity in sometimes miraculous and sometimes mundane ways.

Grace is related to forgiveness and the afterlife though many participants struggled with the notion of “salvation by grace” as it seemed reductionistic. Participants were far more likely to encompass salvific and common grace as one overarching experience rather than parsing the theological distinction of the two.

Struggles and Challenges Related to Grace

Participants also described difficult questions when contemplating grace. This theme can be further understood by its five secondary themes: concerns with the concept, the Kingdom of Heaven is here and now, inclusive views, obstacles, and spiritual struggles.

Nearly half of the participants reported having concerns with the statement, “saved by grace.” Participants were oft disillusioned with what they perceived to be a fundamentalist approach to salvific grace and desired to emphasize nuanced approach to this theological concept—one that has bearing as much bearing on their present day lives as it does for the afterlife.

Accordingly, many participants frequently noted that the Kingdom of God is active and present, opposing views of grace where the main purpose is a heavenly afterlife. For example, one participant conceptualized salvific grace as “saving” from a here-and-now hell, leading to relationship and community in the present. Another noted that a future-oriented view of salvific grace misses the point of what we are called for in the present.

Participants commonly reported a theological shift from a conservative upbringing to a more inclusive perspective. Thus, narratives frequently included a discussion of the inclusive, all-encompassing nature of grace. Several participants reflected on the Quaker tenet of the *Inner Light*, that every human, as created in God’s image, bears the light of Christ. Many participants used the term universalism to describe their current understanding of grace and salvation. Not

every person in the sample named or described a Universalist view, but the majority did. As a whole, participants viewed grace to be far more inclusive than the more conservative doctrines they grew up with. Among the participants who described themselves as universalists, most still associated this with the work and light of Christ in the world—something that might be best described as Christocentric Universalism.

Participants also described various obstacles to experiencing divine grace. Cognitive engagement with the theology of grace is an interesting and paradoxical finding. On one hand, some noted that thinking too little about grace can be an obstacle. On the other hand, some found it better not to try to think so much about grace in order to experience it more richly. For example, one person noted: “I think my role is to get out of the way and quit thinking.” Various emotions and self-appraisals also serve as obstacles at times. Across the narratives, participants described experiences of pride, self-reliance, selfishness, shame, fear, anxiety, the absence of humility, lack of self-compassion, and a depleted sense inner peace as roadblocks to fully living into God’s gift of grace.

Some participants described experiencing times in their lives when God felt absent. These instances often led participants to deeply doubt their understanding or belief in God. Concerns related to death and loss, mental health, and worldwide disasters were cited by participants as spiritual struggles, leaving them with experiences that at times have seemed irredeemable, irreconcilable, and void of grace.

In sum, participants endorsed experiencing several challenges in relation to divine grace. Whereas some of these obstacles were related to avarices, such as pride, greed, and sloth, others were based in death, disaster, and episodes of depression and psychological suffering. Some participants voiced concerns regarding conservative views of salvific grace in relation to the

afterlife, arguing for a grace that is constant, present, and focused on reconciliation here-and-now and then also in the afterlife. Finally, many participants challenged their previous understandings of how far-reaching grace may be, suggesting that grace and heaven may in fact be universally inclusive.

Ongoing Disciplines of Grace

The final primary theme identified related to spiritual practices that enhance experiences of divine grace. Renowned Quaker author, Richard Foster (1978) notes that spiritual disciplines are practiced in order to put us in a position of noticing and experiencing God's grace. This often occurs in the ordinary moments of life, and not just in relation to reflections on the salvific nature of grace. Because many in our sample resisted the distinction between common and salvific grace, so also their spiritual practices that help them experience grace were often quite ordinary activities of daily life. The themes we observed included grace experienced through nature, community, creative expression, prayer, quiet, and sacred texts.

Many participants find nature to be an important means to experiencing grace from God. These experiences were not limited to monumental encounters with nature's grandeur, but often showed up in the everyday practices of life.

Participants often cited engaging with community as a discipline that revealed God's grace. These engagements include communal gatherings and serving others as a practice of grace.

Several participants identified artistic expression as an ongoing discipline yielding a deeper connection to God and grace. This was commonly described in the form of singing while other participants revealed the practice of cooking, baking, journaling, and art as means of experiencing God.

Another commonly cited practice was prayer. Participants identified different forms of prayer, including centering prayer and prayer of examen, as daily spiritual practices resulting in closeness to God. Others specified that prayer is a constant flow of communicating and relating to God. Though prayer is often considered verbal or word-based, one participant suggested other means of experiencing prayer, stating, “I experience prayer through visions, pictures, and things like that.”

Spiritual practices of quiet frequently appeared as well. Quakerism is an ecclesial tradition that calls believers to silent worship and emphasizes listening for God. What happens in the meeting house for Quakers often extends into the natural world, so quiet in nature was also described. Some participants cited walking a labyrinth, in silence, as a valuable spiritual practice.

Participants also cited reading scripture as a spiritual discipline. Some discussed the practice of *Lectio Divina* as a means of God meeting them in the texts they read. Others reflected on Scripture having less to do with increasing head knowledge but more to do with understanding and experiencing grace from God.

Overall, participants highlighted more Quaker-based, contemplative practices of experiencing nature, silence, and meditative prayer as disciplines yielding closeness to God and God’s grace. Concurrently, participants also regarded more traditional practice of community, creative expression, and reading Scripture as valuable spiritual disciplines.

Chapter 4

Discussion

One of the most prominent overall findings is the relational nature of grace to these Quaker participants. Grace is a reflection of God's loving character, and a gift given out of that loving character. Moreover, grace invites them into a relationship with God that exists right now in the present moment, and in every nuance and detail of life, as well as in the afterlife. In his groundbreaking New Testament scholarship, Barclay (2015) equates grace with gift, and this is certainly consistent with the narratives we analyzed for this study. Whereas theologians tend to parse certain types of grace, including common and salvific grace, this parsing did not seem helpful or necessary for most of the participants in this study. They experienced just one grace and reveled in the fullness of its meaning for the present and the future.

Though the study was conducted in a particular pocket of the Pacific Northwest where Evangelical Friends have gained a prominent presence, none of our participants identified as an "Evangelical Quaker." In fact, when the term evangelical was brought up, it was often associated with the participant's past religious identity and something from which they were moving away. This is evident in the results, as interviewees tended to view grace in relational, present-moment terms more than in the traditional evangelical parlance of Jesus paying a debt for our sin so that we can have eternal life with God. Grace to our participants was about both eternal and immediate consequences, but the weight of the conversation leaned at least as much toward the here-and-now more as the eventual eternal consequences of grace. Some distancing from

traditional evangelicalism was also evident in the struggles and challenges many had with grace, as there was a movement away from the typical evangelical understandings of what it means to be “saved.” Many of the participants tended toward more inclusive understandings of eternal destiny than what might be expected for evangelicals. Many cited the Quaker theology of Inner Light to support this, while others specifically used the term universalism to describe their belief system. Furthermore, several participants discussed deliberate distancing from evangelism, noting that the term holds less weight than it once did, and that outreach ministry is less about conversion and more about social justice and advocacy.

Another reason why Friends might move away from traditional evangelical language is related to the increasingly divisive political arena that has adopted (and some might say, coopted) Christian language, such as the word evangelical, to identify voters and ideologies. Friends have always been socially progressive and egalitarian, making them likely to reside on the other side of political conversation from those who proclaim evangelicalism as a mandate for socially conservative policies.

Dropping the evangelical identifier may also reflect a larger, ever-expanding movement within Christianity regarding religious language and its use. In his book, *Speaking Christian*, Christian theologian Marcus Borg (2011) identifies the heaven-and-hell framework and its insidious ramifications on Christian language. Terms that once held complex and vibrant meaning, such as *salvation*, *mercy*, *faith*, and *peace* have come to be understood solely from the lens of eternal life or eternal damnation. He argues that this dualistic frame has drastically altered Christian language, leading some to abandon the language altogether while others, similar to Borg, seek to reclaim what once was. Perhaps participants in this study find themselves in a similar conundrum. When asked about being *saved* by *grace*, participants may hear those words

through the heaven-and-hell paradigm, thus reacting in a more defensive tone and seeking to clarify what grace means to them, opting for descriptions that supplement, or even replace, traditional salvific expressions of grace.

Implications

When studying any group there is a creative interplay between etic and emic perspectives. An etic perspective is likely to focus a set of groups that share commonalities, such as Christians or African Americans or sexual minorities, whereas an emic view considers what experiences are discovered within a particular subgroup or community. Studying how Christians experience divine grace is an etic perspective, and some of the findings presented here can be helpful in that regard. At the same time, this study focused on a specific subgroup of Christians that perceive grace somewhat differently than other Christian subgroups (Hall & McMinn, 2020). This emic view is also important to consider in understand how Friends understand and experience divine grace.

In relation to psychology of religion research as well as clinical implications for those working with Christian clients on issues related to grace, this highlights the importance of assessing denominational and theological affiliations as these factors likely impact how one understands and experiences of divine grace. Though the interview questions were carefully crafted to be approachable for a diverse array of Christian participants (i.e., an etic view), some of the verbiage insinuated assumptions that did not align with an emic understanding of Friends' beliefs. The definition of grace offered by Emmons et al. (2017), "a gift given unconditionally and voluntarily to an undeserving person by an unobligated giver, the giver being either human or divine" (p. 2), is generally consistent with the findings of this study of Friends, though the word undeserving might be called into question. Unlike other Christians who link the doctrine of

sin with the doctrine of grace (e.g., McMinn et al., 2006), this link did not seem apparent for most of the participants in this study, which makes the word undeserving potentially irrelevant for a Quaker understanding of grace.

Qualitative research in the psychology of religion is typically exploratory, designed to foster scale development and future quantitative research. As such, the diversity and complexity of the grace narratives found here suggest that future standardized measures of grace should be multidimensional in nature, thus controlling for diverse expressions and experience of grace. Current instruments have heavily influenced by evangelical perspectives, and lack the methodological rigor expected in other areas within the psychology of religion (Bassett and the Roberts Wesleyan Research Group, 2013; Beckenbach et al., 2010; Bufford et al., 2015; Bufford et al., 2017; Hodge, 2020). Due to the growing diversity within Christianity as well as the transformation of language in an emerging postmodern society, standardized measures need to assess for an array of beliefs. Based on the present findings, it seems particularly important to consider the here-and-now consequences of grace, and not just those related to salvation and the afterlife. Similarly, scales to assess Christian understandings of divine grace would do well to consider issues of ubiquity and universality of grace. Christian groups are likely to differ from one another in these regards, so a nuanced scale that detects these differences seems important.

Finally, as grace research continues, subsequent studies should consider divine grace alongside clinical applications. As this study uncovered, grace can be described as a state of embodied, non-judgmental, all-encompassing acceptance. This language is reminiscent of person-centered therapy (Rogers, 1961) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes et al., 2012). From an ACT perspective, patients who experience psychological distress are encumbered by psychological inflexibility, struggle to experience acceptance toward their

oppressive thoughts and emotions and find themselves often exacerbating symptoms by futile attempts of control and symptom reduction. Healing occurs when the patient moves toward psychological flexibility by engaging in acceptance of the self and symptoms while simultaneously moving away from an either/or paradigm to a both/and paradigm. This clinical rhythm is much like the movements of grace described by participants in this study. Future studies might assess participants' experiences of divine grace alongside their psychological flexibility.

Limitations

Several limitations warrant consideration. First, we utilized convenient sampling. Nearly all participants reside and attend churches within the same town in northwest Oregon. Thus, there are likely trends and biases that cannot be assessed or controlled for within this sample. Second, a large majority of participants completed an undergraduate degree ($n = 26$) and 18 of those participants went on to obtain graduate degrees. Thus, this highly educated sample is not representative of Quakers or Christians, more generally. It is also important to remember that the Religious Society of Friends contains several groups, described earlier. Whereas this sample consisted of attending Christocentric meetings, there are Quakers who identify as non-theists.

Qualitative research is inherently limited in its ability to draw definitive conclusions, make generalizations, and identify relationships among variables. The descriptive nature of this study sets the stage for future researchers who seek to quantify potential relationships or themes identified by this study.

Divine grace is a central doctrine in Christianity and an emerging area of interest in positive psychology. Participants in the current study represent a particular form of Christian belief and experience in their identification as Friends. To these Friends, grace is an ongoing,

ever-present experience of acceptance from God, experienced in the moment-by-moment life and in relationships with one another and the divine.

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Appendix A

Curriculum Vitae

KYLE T. WEBSTER

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“Eager to learn and works hard in every aspect. He is an extremely thoughtful and insightful person, reflecting on his patients in a holistic manner.”

EDUCATION

Doctoral Candidate (PsyD), Graduate School of Clinical Psychology George Fox University, Newberg, OR <i>Current 3.95 GPA</i>	2016 – Current
MA Clinical Psychology George Fox University, Newberg, OR	2016 – 2018
Bachelor of Science in Psychology Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministries – Emphasis in Youth George Fox University, Newberg, OR	2012 – 2016

GRANTS AND AWARDS

- Project Amazing Grace Grant, Templeton Foundation 2018
- Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges 2016
- Graduated *Cum Laude* status 2016
- Psychology Scholarship Award, George Fox University 2012 – 2016
- Duke Distinguished Scholar Award, George Fox University 2012 – 2016

SUPERVISED CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Internship, Behavioral Health Consultant **June 2020 – Current**

Providence Family Medical Center

Anchorage, Alaska

Integrated Primary Care and Community Mental Health

- *Supervisors:* Sarah Dewane, PhD, Virginia Parret, PhD, Erin Iwamoto, PsyD.
- *BHC Duties:* Provide consultation for a wide range of physical and mental health concerns. Conduct traditional psychotherapy with community members as well as brief interventions via warm hand-offs from medical providers. Conduct comprehensive chart review, needs assessments, consultation, and treatment for OB, Diabetes, and refugee, and substance use rotations.

Behavioral Health Consultant

August 2019 – May 2020

West Hills Healthcare Clinic

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Integrated Primary Care and Neuropsychological Assessment

- *Supervisor:* Joy Mauldin, PsyD.
- *BHC Duties:* Conduct assessment and consultation for a wide range of physical and mental health concerns in an Integrated Behavioral Healthcare setting. Provide both scheduled and warm hand-off individual and family intervention, as well as consultation to medical staff in the setting of pediatrics, family medicine, and internal medicine.

Behavioral Health Crisis Consultant**May 2018 – May 2020***Willamette Valley and Providence Newberg ED, ICU, and Medical Surgery Units*

Yamhill County, Oregon

Behavioral Health Crisis Consultation Team

- *Supervisors:* Mary Peterson, PhD, Luann Foster, PsyD, Bill Buhrow, PsyD.
- *BHC Duties:* Conduct risk assessment and crisis intervention for patients who are presenting with suicidal ideation, homicidal ideation, psychosis, and inability to care for self. Provide complex case management and consultation with patient, patient's family members, medical staff, law enforcement, and inpatient care coordinators.

Practicum Therapist**August 2018 – May 2019***Chemawa Behavioral Health Center*

Keizer, Oregon

Outpatient Community Mental Health

- *Supervisor:* Kristie Knows His Gun, PsyD.
- *Therapist Duties:* Provided short-term and long-term individual therapy for Native American adolescents who reside at the local boarding school. Significant exposure to treating patients with extensive trauma histories and substance abuse. Developed skills in trauma-informed care and culturally specific intervention.

Practicum Therapist**August 2017 – May 2019***Chemawa Indian School*

Keizer, Oregon

School-Based Assessment and Therapy

- *Supervisor:* Kristie Knows His Gun, PsyD
- *Therapist Duties:* Developed, administered, and scored complex assessment batteries (cognitive, achievement, personality, behavioral, neuropsychological, etc.) to high school students for the initial evaluations and re-evaluations of their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Composed comprehensive reports and provided consultation to school staff, faculty, students, and families. Provided crisis intervention and school-based treatment for students within the Special Education Department (SPED). Provided professional training and consultation for school administrators, staff, and faculty.

Behavioral Health Consultant**August 2017 – July 2019***Chemawa Indian Health Center*

Keizer, Oregon

Integrated Primary Care and Neuropsychological Assessment

- *Supervisor:* Kristie Knows His Gun, PsyD
- *BHC Duties:* Developed integrated care program at multi-disciplinary, Indian Health Services (IHS) clinic. Provided individual therapy for scheduled and warm hand-off Native

American patients across the lifespan. Developed neuropsychological assessment program and provided assessment services for community patients experiencing cognitive decline.

Pre-Practicum Therapist

January – May 2017

George Fox University

Newberg, Oregon

University Mental Health

- *Supervisor:* Dr. Andrews, PhD, MSCP, ABPP
- *Therapist Duties:* Provide psychotherapy for undergraduate students. Developed skills in electronic record keeping and case management.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

“Multivariate Correlational Research”

2019

Guest Lecturer, George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

PSYC 391 – Research Methods

- Created and presented lecture, created assignment, and graded assignment related to multivariate correlational research for undergraduate class of 30 students.

“Bivariate Correlational Research”

2019

Guest Lecturer, George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

PSYC 391 – Research Methods

- Created and presented lecture, created assignment, and graded assignment related to bivariate correlational research for undergraduate class of 30 students.

“Barriers to Treatment”

2019

Guest Lecturer, Graduate School of Clinical Psychology

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

Behavioral Health Crisis Consultation Team

- Created and presented lecture to Crisis Consultation Team of approximately 40 team members at George Fox University.

“The Psychometric/Intelligence View of Cognition”

2019

Guest Lecturer, George Fox University, Newberg, OR

PYSC 314 – Adolescent Development

- Created and presented lecture, created assignment, and graded assignment related to the psychometric view of cognition for undergraduate class of 40 students.

“Harm Reduction, Decriminalization, and Legalization of Drugs”

2015

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

PSYC 430 – Substance Use and Addiction

- Presented class lecture on the complexities of drug use and addiction to class of 40 undergraduate students.

“Reactive Attachment Disorder: When Children Have Nowhere to Turn”

2015

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

PSYC 420-Abnormal Psychology

- Presented research and lecture on Reactive Attachment Disorder to undergraduate class of 40 students.
- Presented research and lecture to for staff training at Chehalem Youth and Family Services.

“BDSM and Kink in the Christian World”**2014**

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

PSYC 460 – Human Sexuality

- Created lecture and presented research to undergraduate class of 40 students.

Peer Advisor**2013***How to Thrive...Not Just Survive* - First year seminar class

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

- Developed curriculum and course structure alongside professor. Taught several lectures regarding academic and social development for young adults in college. Taught to class of 20 undergraduate students.

ADDITIONAL CLINICAL, TRAINING, TEACHING, AND OTHER RELATED EXPERIENCE

Substitute Psychology Professor and Teaching Assistant**August – December 2019**

PSYC 382 – Advanced Counseling

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

- Assisted in curriculum development, presented weekly on topics related to clinical psychology, and led weekly meeting with a group of four senior undergraduate students who are pursuing graduate degrees in clinical psychology. Reviewed *mock therapy* videos and provided structured feedback to students.

Gender and Sexual Diversity Certificate Course**September – November 2018**

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

- Completed approximately 12 hours of seminar training on various topics related to enhancing clinical practice in regard to sexuality and gender diversity.

ACT Bootcamp**February 2018**

Burbank, California

- Completed approximately 24 hours of intensive training over 3.5 days on the theory and application of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) at a conference led by ACT researchers and practioners.

Attachment in Psychotherapy Certificate Course**January – May 2018**

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

- Completed approximately 15 hours of seminar training on various topics related to utilizing Emotion Focused Therapy and Attachment Focused skills in individual, group, and family therapy.

Youth Treatment Specialist**May – September 2015***Chehalem Youth and Family Services*

Newberg, Oregon

Inpatient Residential Treatment Facility

- *Duties:* Provided crisis intervention and led weekly Dialectical Behavioral Therapy groups for residences. Facilitated psycho-education groups for youth who presented a with a variety of mental illness, including, trauma, substance use, psychosis, and developmental disabilities.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

- Webster, K.** & McMinn, M. (2019). *Experiences of divine grace among Christian Friends*. George Fox University, Newberg, Or. Doctoral dissertation set for publication in 2020.
- Webster, K.**, Schollars, N., Sallee, C., McMinn, M. (2019). *Encounters of grace and therapeutic implications*. A poster presented at the annual meeting of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies, Atlanta, Ga.
- Webster, K.**, Campo, V., Knows His Gun, K., High Bear, R. (2019). *Discovering yidong xinag: A curriculum that enhanced self discovery in american indian adolescents*. A poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, Il.
- Webster, K.**, Sallee, C., Hegeman, C., Peters, K., Goodworth, C. (2019). *Enhancing population health with a marginalized group: targeting faculty's intrapersonal approaches*. A poster accepted to be presented at the annual meeting of the Oregon Psychological Association, Eugene, Or.
- Sallee, C., **Webster, K.** (2018). *Psychological flexibility and its connection to white privilege*. A poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, San Francisco, Ca.
- Spromberg, C., Andrews, G., Robertson S., **Webster, K.** (2018). *Influential factors for conformity to masculine responses*. A poster presented at the annual meeting of American Psychological Association, San Francisco, Ca.
- McMinn, M., **Webster, K.**, Wade, L., Schollars, N. (2018). *Contours of grace: A grounded theory definition of human grace*. A poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, San Francisco, Ca.
- McMinn, M., **Webster, K.**, Wade, L., and Schollars, N. (2018). *Contours of grace: An exploratory qualitative study*. A symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies, Norfolk, Va.
- Knows His Gun, K., Andrews, G., Campo, V., Conklin, C., **Webster, K.** (2017). *Speaking the language through clinical practice: going beyond the textbook for cultural competence*. A poster presented at the annual meeting of National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology, Las Vegas, Nv.
- Webster, K.** (2015). *The effects of music on word recognition*. A poster presented at the George Fox University undergraduate symposium.
- Webster, K.** (2013). *Non-cognitive effects on academic achievement and social adjustment*. A poster presented at George Fox University's *Research Methods* seminar.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Active Shooter Task Force – George Fox University

2015 – 2016

Associated Student Community – President – George Fox University	2015 – 2016
Spiritual Life Advisory Committee Member – George Fox University	2015 – 2016
Facilities Committee Member – George Fox University	2015 – 2016
Academic Appeals Board Member – George Fox University	2015 – 2016
Animal Care Subcommittee Member – George Fox University	2015 – 2016
Serve Day Committee Member – George Fox University	2014 – 2015
Experiential Ministries Coordinator – George Fox University	2014 – 2015

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Oregon Psychological Association Student Committee, Member	2019 – Current
Admissions Committee, Senior Member – George Fox University GSCP	2019
Admissions Committee, Member – George Fox University GSCP	2018
Student Interest Group (SIG) Leader – George Fox University GDCP	2018 – 2019
Neuropsychology Lab Coordinator – George Fox University GDCP	2017 – 2018
Student Orientation Committee, Member – George Fox University GSCP	2017 – Current
Community Gathering Coordinator – George Fox University GDCP	2017 – 2019
Health Psychology SIG, Member – George Fox University GDCP	2017 – Current
Pediatric Psychology SIG, Member – George Fox University GDCP	2017 – Current
High School Youth Leader – Countryside Community Church, Sherwood, OR	2013 – 2016
Kenya Serve Team Leader – George Fox University	2015
Local Outreach Coordinator – George Fox University	2014 – 2015
Serve Trip Coordinator – George Fox University	2013 – 2014
Flying H Youth Ranch Serve Team Leader – George Fox University	2013 – 2014
Serve Trip Assistant Coordinator – George Fox University	2012 – 2013
Community Outreach Intern – Heart of the Canyons Church, Valencia, CA	2012 – 2012

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Psychological Association (APA)	2016 – Current
American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS)	2016 – Current
Association for Contextual Behavioral Sciences (ACBS)	2017 – Current
Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS)	2017 – Current
Collaborative Family Healthcare Association (CFHA)	2017 – Current
Oregon Psychological Association (OPA)	2018 – Current