

Thoughts regarding the Life Model “Pass the Peace” (PtP) version of the Immanuel Approach:

(Karl D. Lehman MD, June 8, 2023)

The Pass the Peace (PtP) version of the Immanuel Approach is so dramatically different from the process that I teach that many cannot even recognize it as the Immanuel Approach. In fact, people in the wider Immanuel Approach community have come to me in varying degrees of confusion and distress, asking why those using the PtP version even refer to it as the Immanuel Approach. Hopefully the explanations below regarding the dramatic differences between the Pass the Peace version and my version will be helpful.

I. Dramatically simplified to make it more accessible (easier to teach, easier to use): The Pass the Peace (PtP) version of the Immanuel Approach is dramatically simplified. This makes it more accessible by making it easier to teach and easier to use. This change with the PtP version will be especially beneficial in situations where time for teaching is desperately limited, resources of every kind are desperately limited, and many participants cannot read.

A. Positive memory recall & deliberate appreciation dramatically simplified: The gratitude step in the PtP version is much less complicated than the positive-memory-recall and deliberate-appreciation steps in the Lehman version of IA.

B. No connect-with-God step: The PtP version does not include an explicit connect-with-God step. That is, there is no explicit invitation and prayer to help the recipient perceive and connect – there is no explicit, direct effort to help the recipient perceive God’s tangible, personal presence or establish an interactive connection.

C. No Immanuel intervention troubleshooting: The PtP version does not include any troubleshooting for people who do not spontaneously perceive God’s tangible, personal presence and establish an interactive connection.

D. No teaching or coaching regarding “describe everything”: The PtP version does not include any teaching about how our brains work better in community, or any coaching to “describe everything that comes into your awareness, regardless of whether it makes sense, feels important, or is neatly packaged.”

E. Safety net dramatically simplified: With the PtP version, the safety net is to help the recipient get back to “peace island” if they encounter trouble of any kind. And, as mentioned above, the gratitude step in the PtP version is much less complicated than the positive-memory-recall and deliberate-appreciation steps in the Lehman version of IA. Furthermore, peace island (the initial place of gratitude) with the PtP version does not include the additional step of helping the recipient to establish an interactive connection with God in the context of their initial positive memory. So

setting up peace island with PtP is much simpler than setting up the primary safety net in the Lehman version.

F. Avoids talking about trauma, avoids deliberate trauma-work: Recipients can sometimes receive healing for trauma if they are already connected to trauma as they go into the PtP process, and if they happen to establish a connection with the Lord that leads to resolution of trauma. But the PtP booklet does not include any teaching about trauma, and the facilitator does not initiate or lead trauma work in any way. In fact, PtP deliberately, explicitly avoids talking about trauma or initiating trauma work of any kind.

G. Minimal teaching regarding theory: The PtP booklet includes minimal teaching about any of the theory behind any of the components of the Immanuel Approach.

II. Dramatically modified to decrease certain risks and make it more accessible to non-

Christians: The Pass the Peace (PtP) version of the Immanuel Approach has also been dramatically modified to make it more accessible to non-Christians, and to decrease certain risks that can be especially concerning in certain extreme situations.

A. More accessible to non-Christians: Eliminating steps that explicitly invite God, explicitly facilitate connection with God, and troubleshoot regarding connection with God all make the PtP version easier to use with non-Christians. This was/is one of the major motivations for these major modifications -- PtP was deliberately, explicitly prepared to be able to be used in disaster-care situations anywhere in the world with any population, including non-Christians and even people who might be suspicious/hostile toward Christianity.

B. Decreased risk of unwanted trauma-triggering, trauma overwhelm: The deliberate, explicit avoidance of talking about trauma or proactively initiating any kind of trauma-work decreases the risk that recipients might be triggered to trauma that they do not want to deal with and/or are not yet ready to deal with. This avoidance of talking about trauma or proactively initiating any kind of trauma-work decreases the risk of people being overwhelmed and/or being re-traumatized by traumatic memories getting stirred up. *NOTE: many facilitators can use the full process that I teach and deliberately avoid all of these problems, but this takes some additional skill, knowledge, and discernment. Some beginners, who are less experienced, less knowledgeable, and less discerning, can (and sometimes do) cause problems related to unwanted triggering.

C. Decreased chance of disclosing information that will put recipient at risk: Not only does PtP not include teaching and coaching regarding “describe whatever comes into your awareness,” it explicitly teaches that the recipient should be as vague as possible in many situations. And this is not just to avoid triggering others with similar trauma, but also to avoid disclosing information that might put the recipient at risk. This is because PtP was developed (at least in part) for extreme situations in which perpetrators might be present, in which informants who might pass information to perpetrators might be present, in which people who might use sensitive information unwisely might be present, and in which even the translators who are facilitating the work might not be trustworthy.

III. Much less effective: HOWEVER, while these dramatic simplifications and modifications make the PtP version more accessible to some (much easier to learn, much simpler to use, minimal stumbling blocks for non-Christians), and safer for some (less risk of stirring up trauma, less chance of sharing information that will put the recipient at risk), it will also be **much less effective** for many.

A. Positive memory recall & deliberate appreciation dramatically simplified: To my assessment, the much simpler PtP gratitude step is also significantly less effective – less effective for getting the recipient’s relational circuits strongly online, less effective as the positive-memory context for connecting with Jesus, and also less effective as the safety-net homebase.

B. No connect-with-God step: While recipients going through the PtP process do sometimes experience an interactive connection with the tangible, personal presence of God, my perception is that this is less consistent and less common, as compared to the Lehman version of IA, which includes a step where the coach proactively, explicitly helps the recipient to perceive the Lord’s presence and establish an interactive connection.

C. No Immanuel intervention troubleshooting: Again, some recipients going through the PtP process do perceive God’s tangible, personal presence and establish an interactive connection. However, if there are blockages hindering this perception and connection, the PtP version does not include any troubleshooting to find and remove these blockages. In contrast, the Lehman version of IA includes a rich troubleshooting toolbox, so that blockages can almost always be identified and resolved, and recipients who initially encounter blockages almost always eventually perceive the Lord’s presence and experience an interactive connection.

D. No teaching or coaching regarding “describe everything”: As mentioned above, the PtP version does not include coaching to “describe everything that comes into your awareness, regardless of whether it makes sense, feels important, or is neatly packaged.” So it loses the benefit of this aspect of how our brains are designed to work best in community – it loses the benefit from the way this piece helps the recipient to catch subtle manifestations of the Lord’s presence and subtle content from the Lord.

E. Safety net dramatically simplified: The PtP version does not include any teaching about safety nets, it’s gratitude step establishes a peace-island home base that is not as strong as the safety-net home base established by the Lehman version positive-memory-recall and deliberate-appreciation steps, and it’s peace island does not deliberately, explicitly include an interactive connection with the Lord. So if the recipient does get into trouble of any kind, the peace island safety-net is not as robust as the safety net established with the Lehman version of the Immanuel Approach.

F. Avoids talking about trauma, avoids deliberate trauma-work: With the PtP version, recipients can sometimes receive healing for trauma if they are already connected to trauma as they go into the process, or if trauma comes up spontaneously during the process; but the facilitator does not initiate or lead trauma work in any way. In fact, the PtP version deliberately, explicitly avoids talking about trauma or initiating trauma work of any kind. In contrast, with the Lehman version of the Immanuel Approach, which includes a lot of teaching about trauma and steps to address trauma,

trauma work is routine and common. If a recipient wants help with resolving trauma, the facilitator can coach them through a well-established process for doing this. If a recipient is persistently avoiding trauma that is disrupting their life, the facilitator can help identify and address this persistent avoidance. And if there are blockages and/or defenses hindering trauma resolution, the facilitator can help to identify and resolve these blockages and/or defenses. Overall, the PtP version of the Immanuel Approach is much less effective for identifying and resolving trauma.

G. Minimal teaching regarding theory: Some people (like myself) will be more open to the Immanuel Approach, will be able to facilitate more effectively and efficiently, and will be able to receive more effectively and efficiently if they understand the theory behind each of the components of the process. For these people, eliminating almost all teaching regarding theory will significantly reduce openness, effectiveness, and efficiency.

In the *Pass the Peace* booklet, Dr. Wilder mentions that people are unusually open to God's presence during times of crisis and that God seems to release special grace to people in crisis, and I agree with this assessment – I have observed these same phenomena. And when it is being used in the extreme situations for which it was designed, these beneficial factors for people in crisis will certainly decrease the negative impact of the ways in which PtP is less effective. However, even with these special beneficial factors, there will still be some people for whom the differences between the PtP version of the Immanuel Approach and the Lehman version will mean the difference between the process working or not working.

Furthermore, if those who learn the PtP version end up using it wherever they go, and not just in the extreme situations for which the major modifications were specifically developed, it will be **much** less effective for many recipients. For example, at the Urbana 2023 conference, our estimate from facilitator feedback is that 20 to 40% of the recipients required some amount of troubleshooting to be able to perceive and connect with the Lord and have a positive experience; and my perception is that these recipients would have had disappointing, negative experiences if we had been using the PtP version (that does not include any troubleshooting). Therefore, my request/recommendation is that we use the PtP version only in the extreme situations for which it was designed and where it is truly needed.

IV. Inoculation against the Immanuel Approach (potentially huge cost): Mediocre, disappointing outcomes are an immediate disappointment for the specific session that goes poorly, but a much larger, more important concern is inoculation. If recipients try PtP and have a disappointing experience, they will be inoculated against the Immanuel Approach. They will believe that they have tried the Immanuel Approach, and that it was minimally helpful. At any point in the future, these individuals (and any others in their community that witness and/or hear about their disappointing experience) will be uninterested: "We already know about that – we've already tried that – it was a disappointment and we're not interested."

In light of this additional concern, I *strongly* request/recommend that people in the Immanuel Approach community use the PtP version only in the extreme situations for which it was designed and where it is truly needed.

V. Causing confusion in the wider IA community: The PtP version of the Immanuel Approach is so dramatically different from the IA process that I teach that many cannot even recognize it as the Immanuel Approach. As mentioned above, people in the wider Immanuel Approach community have come to me in varying degrees of confusion and distress, asking why the PtP version is even called the Immanuel Approach. Hopefully these explanations regarding the dramatic differences between the PtP version and the Lehman version will resolve unnecessary confusion and/or distress.