

## Reflections

### Jesus - the best psychologist

WE are continually searching for ways and means to enrich our lives to make us happier and healthier.

Some of us go crazy if we can't find whatever it is we seek. Sometimes what we search for is just round the corner but we fail to see it because we are too familiar with what is in front of us.

We are not seeing that Jesus can be the key to our happy and healthy life.

As a doctoral researcher in the field of psychology, I regularly come across pearls of wisdom from Jesus' life and teachings. They are embedded in the therapies of effective modern clinical, counselling psychology and psychotherapy.

Jesus has laid the vast, strong spiritual and philosophical foundation for the rest of us to build therapy models and to customise these to suit needs and circumstances.

Jesus was a powerful therapist. His healing interactions were based on the virtues of care and compassion, aspects of which are acclaimed as the core requirements of psychological therapists today.

He used a variety of approaches in his healing, with special attention given to the individual's cares and needs. In healing the crippled man (Mark 2:9-12), the ten lepers (Luke 17: 12-16), and the blind man at Siloam pool (John 9:6-7), Jesus showed blanket compassion and empathy to all of them.

Yet he treated each person distinctly and according to their needs and



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circumstances. Today we call this person-centered therapy, a technique that is largely ascribed to Carl Rogers (1902-1987).

Jesus' method of teaching is underpinned by his ability to persuade people to change their perception, feelings and behavior to achieve better and happy lives — these are the main components of today's evidence-based cognitive behavioral (CBT) therapy.

This is reflected in Jesus' saying: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 18:3).

Jesus' meditative and personal prayer has huge influence on the popular concept of mindfulness. His coping strategy when faced with stressful and anxious moments in his life — such as at the garden of Gethsemane, the last supper and the raising of Lazarus — involved contemplative prayer,

His healing, preaching and teaching ministry is evidence of his engagement in talking and listening therapies. In our pursuit of a happy and healthy life, let us first think of Jesus who is always with us, or just around the corner.