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Do Lay Christian Counseling Approaches Work? What We Currently Know

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San Diego, CA

Paraprofessional counseling has received empirical evidence of its effectiveness, yet the status of lay Christian counseling models remains unknown. The authors review the current research on such approaches. A few models evidence practitioner surveys, client satisfaction research, quasi-experimental studies, or outcomes-based case studies. One eclectic approach had a randomized waiting list control group study. Preliminary evidence for the effectiveness of Freedom in Christ (the Neil Anderson approach) and Theophostic Prayer Ministry was noted. In all studies reviewed, the authors identified methodological limitations; therefore, the broad need for well-designed efficacy and effectiveness research on every model is clear. With current data, we cannot say definitively that lay Christian counseling works. Consequently, the authors make recommendations on potential improved research designs and encourage further investigations.

The role of paraprofessional counseling is increasing both nationally and internationally. Internationally, the breadth of need (e.g., mainland China, Hou & Zhang, 2007), as well as efforts to reduce the cost of some socialistic healthcare programs (e.g., Great Britain, Clarkson, McCrone, Sutherby, et al., 1999) has driven the proliferation of these services. Nationally, limitations in mental health insurance benefits have increased the need and utilization of paraprofessional services. With increased usage comes increased need for empirical evaluation; therefore, this article explores the current research on paraprofessionals who use lay Christian models.

Paraprofessional counselors (lay counselors) are persons who lack formal credentialing, training, and experience as licensed mental health professionals, yet they are involved in the care of emotionally hurting people (Tan, 1997). Example venues for lay counseling include hotlines, peer counseling, home visitation programs, and church-based ministries (Tan, 1991).

Tan (1991, 1992, 1997) described three common models used in delivering paraprofessional counseling. The informal, spontaneous model provides support in natural settings (restaurants, homes, churches, etc.) through informal friendships. These paraprofessionals may or may not have some basic training in helping skills. No ongoing supervision occurs. In the second model, the informal organized model, paraprofessionals still help in informal settings, but they receive systematic training and ongoing supervision. Finally, in the formal organized model, paraprofessionals counsel in more official settings such as a community agency or a church counseling center, receive regular supervision, and are usually trained by mental health professionals. Sometimes, hybrid models that combine the informal organized and formal organized models occur (Tan, 1997).

Research demonstrates the effectiveness of some kinds of paraprofessional counseling. Durlak (1979) reviewed 42 studies comparing professional and paraprofessional counselors. The studies focused primarily on mildly to moderately disturbed clients. Surprisingly, Durlak found no difference in client outcomes and some studies suggested paraprofessionals provided better care. Others reanalyzed the data using meta-analysis (e.g., Nietzel & Fisher, 1981; Hattie, Sharpley, & Rogers, 1984; Berman & Norton, 1985), yet similar results remained. Christensen and Jacobson (1994) conclude:

The later reviews often begin with a criticism of the previous reviews and then try to improve on the methodology. Yet, whatever refinements are made, whatever studies are included or excluded, the results show either no differences between professionals and paraprofessionals or, surprisingly, differences that favor paraprofessionals. (p. 9)
While more refined future studies matching specific diagnoses with particular clinical techniques (cf., Beutler, 2002) might lead to different comparative outcomes between lay counselors and professionals, current evidence supports no difference with generalized client populations. Given the number of studies done, one might anticipate strong current evidence for the effectiveness of lay Christian counseling. Yet, some conservative Christian groups, such as Nouthetic biblical counseling (e.g., Adams, 1970), exhibit a high distrust of psychology and thus have little interest in research or collaboration with mental health professionals. Many other lay Christian counseling approaches exist however (Garzon, Worthington, Tan, and Worthington, 2009). The authors found no summary of research on these approached in the literature.

Indeed, many questions exist regarding lay Christian counseling models: (a) How effective do clients perceive such counseling to be? (b) What does current outcomes research on lay Christian counseling models indicate?, and (c) What future studies on lay Christian counseling programs should be considered? This article will review the currently available research on lay Christian counseling models in an attempt to answer these questions.

**Method**

**Definitions**

For the purposes of this review, lay Christian counseling applies to paraprofessional religious ministries that affirm doctrinal tenets consistent with the Nicene Creed (a standard creed of Christian orthodoxy), that minister or counsel primarily face-to-face, have a clear focus on training non-professionals/non-clergy in their approach, and which focus on a wide variety of client types instead of focusing on one type (for example, Christian 12-Step programs for addiction and Exodus Ministries programs for Christians experiencing same-sex attraction).

The models found in this review appear to derive from evangelical Christian or Charismatic-related contexts. Lay Christian counseling has some commonalities with spiritual direction in that both may explore the client’s spiritual life with the purpose of increasing the person’s spiritual growth. Unlike spiritual direction, lay counseling also generally has a primary mental health goal (e.g., decrease anxiety, improve interpersonal relationships, etc.). Such goals are normally secondary in spiritual direction. Finally, spiritual directors are often clergy with additional training rather than lay people.

**Procedure of the Search**

The writers consulted several databases (Academic Search Premier, Blackwell Synergy, Medline, ATLA, and PsycINFO) to identify pertinent lay Christian counseling research. Dissertations were also reviewed in the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. Search words used included lay Christian counseling, the names of a variety of lay Christian models (See Garzon, et al., 2009, for a table listing these models), the names of lay Christian counseling model developers, religious paraprofessional counseling, and spiritual paraprofessional counseling. Finally, faculty at various integration-focused psychology programs were contacted regarding any on-going lay counseling research.

**Lay Christian Counseling Research**

The authors divide this review of the literature into early research (1980-1990) and then by the four categories described in Garzon, et al., (2009). The reviewed categories include Active Listening, Cognitive & Solution-Focused Approaches, Inner Healing Approaches, and Mixed Models. Nouthetic biblical counseling (e.g., Adams, 1970) was not included given its lack of research and the distrust of some of its leaders in using empirical methods. Specific models with research are briefly described with references provided for further details on the approach. Table 1 summarizes all the studies found in this review. The authors note overall findings, significant limitations, and make design improvement suggestions in the discussion section.

**Early Research (1980-1990)**

The authors identified 3 early studies on lay Christian counseling (Boan & Owens, 1985; Harris, 1985; Walters, 1987), but the articles lacked specific information on the lay ministry approach used. Therefore, the ability to generalize this research to other lay Christian approaches is highly suspect. Many models have developed since this initial research.

**Active Listening Approaches**

Stephen Ministry (Haugk, 1984; Haugk, 2000) represents a classic example of these models. The approach combines Rogerian principles of empathy, positive regard, and supportive listening with prayer, scripture, and biblical themes as
appropriate. No research was found on this or other active listening Christian approaches, although the developers voiced openness to this. See Garzon, et al., (2009) for a description of this ministry’s training and organizational structure.

**Cognitive & Solution-Focused Approaches**

While a number of lay Christian cognitive approaches exist (e.g., Crabb, 1977; Backus, 1985; Tan, 1991), the authors found no outcomes research focusing exclusively on a lay cognitive, cognitive behavioral, or solution-focused strategies. It should be noted however that Christian cognitive therapy approaches have some studies with doctoral level clinical psychology graduate students or professional therapists as the treatment providers (See McCullough, 1999, and Worthington & Sandage, 2002, for meta-analyses). These suggest efficacy with mildly to moderately depressed clients. Lay models with an eclectic framework and a cognitive behavioral component have been researched however. Because of the multiple therapeutic strategies involved, these studies are described under the Mixed category (see below).

**Inner Healing Prayer Models (IHP)**

Hurding (1995) noted that these prayer approaches represent “a range of ‘journey back’ methodologies that seek, under the Holy Spirit’s leading, to uncover personal, familial, and ancestral experiences that are thought to contribute to the troubled present” (p. 297). These troubles may be physical, emotional, or spiritual. See Garzon and Burkett (2002), and Garzon, et al., (2009) for more in-depth descriptions of inner healing prayer. The present authors reviewed only IHP research that focused on clearly identified models.

Christian Healing Ministries (Francis MacNutt, CHM). CHM displays a Christian inner healing prayer focus in lay training very similar to Elijah House Ministries described in Garzon, et al., (2009). One study (Matthews, Marlowe, & MacNutt, 2000) has been done on this approach.

Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM). Theophostic Prayer Ministry was developed by Ed Smith, a pastoral counselor, in the mid-1990’s. Smith (2007) differentiates his approach from inner healing prayer strategies in several ways which will be acknowledged here. It is included in the general IHP research category because of its emphasis on addressing current life stressors through prayer focusing on the client’s past, frequently involving childhood memories.

In TPM, the lay counselor asks the person to focus on the painful emotions involved in her currently distressing situation. The person is then encouraged to let her mind connect to “the original memory container” (Smith, 2007, p. 31) which holds the embedded lies amplifying the distress. “Lies” are similar to core beliefs or schema in cognitive therapy. Here Smith (2007) differentiates himself from typical IHP approaches. He emphasizes that it’s the lies embedded in the memory versus the memory itself that is causing the person’s distress. The person and prayer partner collaborate to identify the lies present in the memory that surfaces. Once these are identified, something similar to what a therapist might identify as an exposure protocol occurs. The person is asked to feel the affect around the beliefs in the memory without resisting the emotions or examining the rationality of the belief. Then, unlike cognitive therapy or exposure protocols, petition is made for the Lord Jesus to reveal the truth to the person about these beliefs. A variety of experiences at this point can occur as the client listens for Christ’s response. Prayer continues until there is a sense of complete peace in the memory. Further information on TPM may be found in Smith’s latest basic training manual (2007 at the time of this article). As some proponents of TPM have at times made dramatic claims based on anecdotal (testimony) evidence and critics have expressed concerns about possible harm from TPM (e.g., Entwistle, 2004), the need for research is apparent. Several surveys and one outcomes-based case study project have been done (Garzon, 2004, 2008; Garzon & Paloma, 2003, 2005; Tilley, 2008).

**Mixed Lay Christian Models**

Mixed approaches have similarities to Active Listening, Cognitive, and Inner Healing Prayer categories, but they have sufficient differences to lead to a separate category. They either reflect a more heterogeneous application of various psychological theory bases, or a more thorough examination of theological aspects, such as the role of the flesh and the demonic in emotional distress, or both. One eclectic lay model and one theologically in-depth model was found with research. These models are described below.

Eclectic with an Integrated Cognitive Behavioral Component (E-CBT). Lay Christian counseling models with an eclectic base that incorporate a clear cognitive behavioral component have received two outcome studies (Toh, Tan,
Osburn, & Faber, 1994; Toh & Tan, 1997). Roge-
rian, psychodynamic, and family systems ele-
ments also composed the eclectic base of these
approaches.

Freedom in Christ Ministries (FICM). FICM pro-
poses that the unbiblical lies Christians believe
often lead to spiritual and psychological distress
(Anderson, 1990a/2000a). These lies can arise
from the flesh, demonic deception, and mes-
sages received from popular culture (Anderson,
1990b/2000b). Seven key areas (described as
“the Steps to Freedom,” or “the Steps” in FICM
literature) are seen as essential for resolution in
order to resolve personal issues. These include
confession and renunciation of occult/non-Chris-
tian religious involvement; confession of defen-
sive strategies outside of Christ; forgiveness of
others, self, and God; confession of rebellion to
proper authority; repentance for areas of pride;
confession and repentance in areas of habitual
sin, and confession of family generation sin pat-
terns (Anderson, 1990/2000b). For a more in-
depth description of FICM, see Garzon, Garver,
Kleinschuster, Tan, and Hill (2001), and Garzon,
et al., (2009). Several preliminary effectiveness
studies of FICM were identified (Garzon, Garver,
Kleinschuster et al., 2001; Combs, 2006; Crabtree,
2006; Fisher, 2006; Seitz, 2006; Hurst, Williams,
King, & Viken, 2008).

Discussion

The writers identified above several conve-
nience sample surveys and quasi-experimental
studies used to investigate lay Christian counsel-
ing, along with one randomized waiting list con-
trol group study. A brief summary analysis of
current research findings, limitations, and future
design recommendations follow.

Surveys of practitioners (TPM) and surveys of
client satisfaction (TPM, FICM) provide a sketch
of the characteristics and satisfaction level of lay
counselors and clients who appear to endorse
these particular approaches. Such effectiveness
evaluations appear very high. Design flaws in
the surveys done however suggest the possibil-
ity of biased sampling, so these results must be
taken with caution. The surveys do suggest that
some mental health professionals are incorporat-
ing lay strategies into their practices. Also, sever-
al approaches (TPM, FICM, Cognitive) appear
open to interact with mental health profession-
als for supervision and referral. Some have writ-
ten explicitly describing potential models of
interaction (Cognitive, Tan, 1991; FICM, And-
son, Zuehlke, & Zuehlke, 2000). This is encour-
aging since it appears lay Christian counselors are
at times treating quite complex conditions.

Improved methodology can reduce the biased
sampling risk. A recent study of religiously-tai-
lored interventions in Christian therapy (Wade,
Worthington, & Vogel, 2007) suggests a potential
design for improved representativeness of survey
samples. In this study, therapists and their clients
were recruited from seven different agencies in
different regions of the country. Anonymous sur-
vey data examined a one week cross-section of
the clients’ experiences for that week’s session
and their satisfaction with the session and treat-
ment up to that point. Information on the length
of treatment, perceived effectiveness of treat-
ment, the therapeutic alliance, and demographics
were obtained. Since all clients for that week
who saw therapists were given the opportunity
to participate, the probability of a more repre-
sentative sample increased.

Given that many of these lay counseling mod-
els are nationwide and have church-based min-
istry centers, the possibility of a similar
methodology to Wade, Worthington, and Vogel’s
exists. Should such a study occur, efforts should
be made to include lay Christian counseling cen-
ters for investigation that operate in ethnically
diverse communities, as this was one weakness
in the Wade, Worthington, and Vogel study.

Single group pre-treatment post-treatment
short term follow-up studies (E-CBT, FICM),
 quasi-experimental studies (FICM, IHP), and out-
comes-based case studies (TPM, FICM) have pro-
duced intriguing results meriting further
exploration. A strength of these studies is their
demonstration of an association between several
approaches (E-CBT, TPM, FICM) and symptom
reductions in naturalistic settings. For additional
studies of a similar design, the writers recom-
mend a time series pre-treatment symptom base-
line to compare with the post treatment
outcome, and longer term follow-up (six months
or more). Only one identified study had a pre-
treatment baseline (Fisher, 2006). Comparison
groups also would be helpful. Only one study in
this category (FICM; Hurst, Williams, King, &
Viken, 2008) utilized such a group.

Mixed design qualitative studies may also be
beneficial (Garzon, 2008). These studies permit
in-depth exploration and comparison of both
positive lay Christian counseling experiences and
negative ones. For example, a quantitative survey
### Table 1

*Summary of Lay Christian Counseling Research*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lay Model</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Major Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-model specific, early lay Christian counseling</td>
<td>Harris (1985)</td>
<td>Four groups with each group having differing levels of “resource person” involvement</td>
<td>Pretreatment-post treatment</td>
<td>Schulman’s (1978) self concept scale</td>
<td>All groups improved statistically and the addition of a resource person improved client outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N = 44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-model specific</td>
<td>Boan &amp; Owens (1985)</td>
<td>Current &amp; past clients of Reformed Church in Carmichael, CA</td>
<td>Lay peer evaluation and mailed client evaluation instrument, survey</td>
<td>Likert scale peer client satisfaction survey</td>
<td>Level of client satisfaction with the lay ministry was not reported, focus appeared primarily on assessing the utility of lay peer evaluations, which were found to be useful in predicting client satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N = 215</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-model specific</td>
<td>Walters (1987)</td>
<td>Clients who received lay counseling from the First Presbyterian Church in Boulder</td>
<td>Evaluations of client change and satisfaction</td>
<td>A primarily Likert-scale item questionnaire (psychometrically researched) developed by the Family Service Association (FSA)</td>
<td>Lay counselors compared favorably with FSA professionals on measures of client change and client satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N = 98</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Active Listening Approaches*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Major Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Ministry</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No research was found on Active Listening approaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1 continues next page*
Table 1 (continued)
Summary of Lay Christian Counseling Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lay Model</th>
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<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Major Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lay Christian cognitive</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Christian cognitive therapy models have been researched in psychotherapy (See Worthington &amp; Sandage, 2002) with good results, but no cognitive therapy studies have utilized lay counselors in their investigation. No outcomes-related research on lay solution-focused counseling was identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approaches</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive &amp; Solution-Focused Approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lay Christian cognitive</td>
<td>Matthews, Marlowe, and MacNutt (2000)</td>
<td>N = 40</td>
<td>Nonrandomized waiting list</td>
<td>Ten medical outcomes measures</td>
<td>Statistically significant differences in two of the 10 outcome categories and a trend towards significance in 7 of the remaining 8 categories were found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approaches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>crossover design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inner Healing Prayer Models (IHP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Healing Ministries</td>
<td>Garzon and Paloma (2005)</td>
<td>Attendees at an advanced TPM training conference</td>
<td>Convenience sample descriptive study</td>
<td>Self report survey</td>
<td>Lay counselors are working with a wide range of conditions using TPM. High perceptions of effectiveness for TPM were found.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 111</td>
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<tr>
<td>TPM</td>
<td>Garzon and Poloma (2003)</td>
<td>TPM email database of purchasers of materials</td>
<td>Descriptive online survey study</td>
<td>Self report web-based survey</td>
<td>Similar high effectiveness perceptions with larger sample. Openness to mental health supervision indicated. No difference between lay counselors and licensed clinicians in effectiveness perceptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 1,352</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TPM</td>
<td>Tilley (2008)</td>
<td>Email respondents from TPM database</td>
<td>Descriptive online survey</td>
<td>Online client satisfaction survey</td>
<td>Participants rated previous non-TPM counseling experiences as effective, but reported TPM’s effectiveness as significantly higher in a variety of areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 2,817</td>
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</table>
### Table 1 (continued)

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<th>Major Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TPM</td>
<td>Garzon (2004, 2008)</td>
<td>Clients from both professional and lay counseling settings N = 22</td>
<td>Outcomes-based time series case studies with 3 month follow-up</td>
<td>SCL 90-R, SWBS, ROS-R, DAS, BPRS, client satisfaction survey, blind independent review post treatment</td>
<td>Case results supported clear symptom improvement, decreased dysfunctional beliefs, and enhanced spiritual outcomes for most clients</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixed Lay Christian Models</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-CBT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toh, Tan, Osburn et al. (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-CBT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toh &amp; Tan (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garzon, Garver, Kleinschuster et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combs (2006)</td>
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</table>

*Table 1 continues next page*
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FICM</td>
<td>Fisher (2006)</td>
<td>Participants at 4-day FICM conference N = 56</td>
<td>Time series one group design with pre and post treatment baseline</td>
<td>SCL 90-R and a 12-item Likert scale questionnaire</td>
<td>The Global Severity Index of the SCL 90R reflected a statistically significant symptom reduction pattern. Client satisfaction ratings at post conference and the three-month follow-up appeared positive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICM</td>
<td>Hurst, Williams, King, and Viken (2008)</td>
<td>Participants at two FICM weekend conferences Treatment group n = 33 Non-treatment group n = 18</td>
<td>Non-randomized comparison group study</td>
<td>12-item Likert scale questionnaire</td>
<td>Results for the treatment group indicated significant differences on all 12 items, and significant differences with the comparison group on all 12 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICM</td>
<td>Anderson, Garzon, &amp; King (2002)</td>
<td>Clients in a clinical setting N = 10</td>
<td>Times series effectiveness case study design</td>
<td>SCL 90-R, DAS, SWBS, and a 12-item questionnaire</td>
<td>The results appeared to suggest a positive treatment effect overall. Therapists varied the timing of Steps implementation according to client characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICM</td>
<td>Seitz (2006)</td>
<td>Clients were referred for treatment by lead pastor of a large church N = 3</td>
<td>Three time series design case studies</td>
<td>DASS, TSOS, SCID I, PAS, DES-II, the BAI, and the BDI-II.</td>
<td>Results for two clients with prominent Axis II features did not reflect a symptom reduction series pattern. The third client reduced in depression symptoms. Nonspecific factors could not be ruled out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with questions focusing on specific intervention aspects could evaluate whether the client experienced the lay model of interest or a “hybrid” developed by the particular lay counselor, while a qualitative semi-structured interview would permit comparisons of clients with positive lay Christian counseling experiences with negative ones.

The presence of only one randomized waiting list control group study (E-CBT category) after over twenty-five years of published lay Christian counseling models is disconcerting. The writers found no placebo or minimal support randomized control group or randomized active comparative group study of any lay Christian counseling approach in this literature review. Undoubtedly, more randomized efficacy and effectiveness studies are needed before a clear assessment of lay Christian counseling can be made. In addition to psychological symptom measures and spiritual outcome measures, these studies should include an instrument measuring the influence of client expectancy effects in treatment outcome, and consider the role lay counselor allegiance to the model might play in the results.

The authors recognize a caveat however for the lack of randomized comparative or control group studies in lay Christian counseling models. Most lay Christian counseling model developers have no research training. Only E-CBT developers had substantial training in this area. Not surprisingly, only this lay model had an investigation that utilized random assignment and a waiting list control group (Toh & Tan, 1997). An informal survey of each of the non-E-CBT model developers (See Table 1 in Garzon, et al., 2009, for a listing of the models contacted) indicated their willingness to cooperate with religiously-sensitive researchers who wanted to do studies on their approaches. Some have already started cooperating (e.g., Matthews, Marlowe, & MacNutt, 2000). This is an encouraging sign.

Challenges remain however. Only one clearly identified research team currently appears to be investigating lay Christian models. Integration-focused clinical psychology and counseling programs can change this. These have existed for over thirty years; thus, the potential for these programs to get more involved in investigating lay Christian counseling models is apparent. Lay Christian counseling model developers need their empirical expertise. Given that some counseling professionals are incorporating lay interventions into psychotherapy, the time for research collaboration with lay model developers is now.

**Conclusion**

Current findings on lay Christian counseling are very limited compared to paraprofessional counseling as a whole. Only one randomized waiting list control group study has been done, this on an eclectic approach with a CBT component. Numerous other lay models exist. Present preliminary studies on two approaches, one from the IHP category (TPM) and one from the mixed models category (FICM) provide a sketch of those receiving these approaches and give some preliminary evidence of effectiveness. These findings need to be confirmed with well-designed efficacy and effectiveness studies. In short, current data does not allow us to say definitively that lay Christian counseling works. Given the openness of lay model developers to collaborate on research, integration-focused graduate programs have an opportunity to address this important gap in the literature.

**References**


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