



# CASE STUDIES

Leadership by Discernment

Chiangmai WISL 1



- Case study 1: Child of the Benefactor
- Case Study 2: Colleague with sick child and financial difficulties
- Case Study 3: Money for use
- Case study 4: Holiday use of time.



# CHAT





# CONSOLATION AND DESOLATION

Leadership by Discernment

Chiangmai WISL 1 2018

# Thomas Merton

*“I have no idea where I am going.  
I do not see the road ahead of me.  
I cannot know for certain where it will end.  
nor do I really know myself,  
and the fact that I think I am following your will  
does not mean that I am actually doing so.*

*But I believe that the desire to please you  
does in fact please you.*

*And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.”*





BE  
ATTENTIVE



## REFLECTION

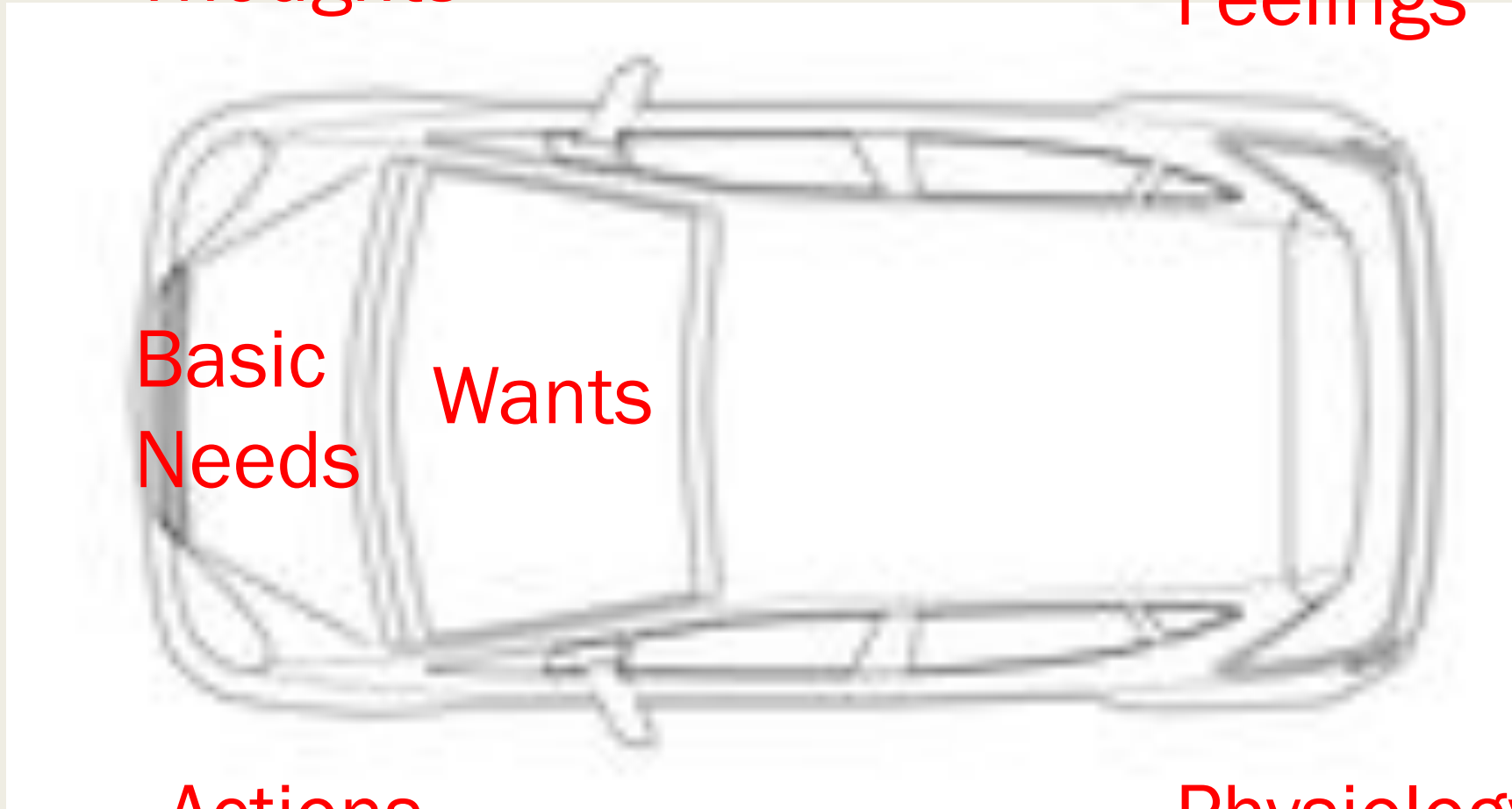
“The unexamined life is  
not worth living”  
(Socrates)

“The unlived life is not worth  
examining.”  
(Ron Rolheiser OMI)

# TOTAL BEHAVIOUR

Thoughts

Feelings



Basic  
Needs

Wants

Actions

Physiology



Discernment is about



**GOOD**  
**GOOD**

FEELINGS  
and  
THOUGHTS






# DISCERN YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS SO WE CAN GET CLOSER TO GOD

Know your automatic thoughts and default feelings



ONLY GOD CAN  
GO DIRECTLY  
TO OUR  
FEELINGS



Good and evil  
spirits affect  
our thoughts.



DEFAULT  
FEELINGS AFFECT  
OUR FREEDOM

“What we don’t name we enable....We take the unacceptable as natural.”

Joan Chittister, Called to Question



To name is to claim and empower



Discernment is  
about Freedom.

Freedom to become  
the person you are  
meant to be,  
to love and to accept  
love,  
to make good  
decisions and  
to experience the  
beauty of creation  
and  
the mystery of God's  
love.

# Ignatian Indifference

- Passion and concern for mission
- Strong Preference
- Free to accept a different decision



# TEMPTATIONS/ HUNGERS

- 1.Security and comfort - Riches and pleasure
- 2.Support and affirmation - Social approval and Honor
- 3.Control over my life - Power and coercion over others
- 4.Intimacy - Love and infatuation



# In Ignatian Discernment there are two key words: Consolation and Desolation

- When we talk of these, we are really only taking about our **orientation** basically, which direction our life is taking us: is it taking us:

Toward God  
Consolation

Away from God  
Desolation

Margaret Silf: Inner Compass



# God wants us to be Happy

≠

life will be without pain and suffering;

=

God wants to be a consoling presence to us even in the inevitable pains and sufferings of life.



Ignatius believed that the way to be happy and fulfilled is to be in tune with God's dream for the world and for us. In the terms of this book, the way to be happy and fulfilled is to accept God's offer of friendship and to live in accordance with that friendship. If we are trying to do this, according to Ignatius, "consolation" is the order of the day.

# Consolation

More than  
happy.

Hearts beat  
in harmony  
with God

Drawn toward  
God despite  
circumstances

The epicenter  
is God, not  
us.

Deep  
connectedness  
with God

Peace, joy,  
hope,  
generosity

# Consolation

Evokes quietness and inner stillness, a presence of faith realities and a sense of being a channel of God's action.

Refers to any experience of desire for God, of distaste for one's past sins, or of sympathy for Jesus or any other suffering person.

Come with the fruit of the Spirit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" these come with



## *In Consolation:*

- Tell God how you feel and thank God.
- Store this moment in your memory to return to when things get tough.
- Add this experience to your life map.
- Use the energy you feel to further your deepest desires.
- Let the surplus energy fuel the things you don't like doing, and do them.
- Go back to 1.



# Desolation

Turmoil in  
our soul

Agitated,  
angry,  
resentful

Impulsive  
motion toward  
low and earthly  
things

Separated  
from God.

Lack of faith

Anxious,  
unhappy,  
listless



# Desolation

- Is experienced as frustration and pain.
- The person is tempted to throw tantrums and to retaliate blaming others for the way he/she feels.
- Becomes jealous and tells lies.
- Anger may be directed towards God or self and accompanied by feelings of listlessness and depression.
- Desolation can lead to engaging with activities that help him or her escape



# In Desolation

- Tell God how you feel and ask for help.
- Seek out companionship.
- Don't go back on decisions you made in consolation.
- Stand still and remember your inner map.
- Recall a time of consolation, and go back to it imagination.
- Look for someone who needs your help, and turn your attention toward them.
- Go back to 1.



# CONSOLATION

Towards God

Encouragement

Hope

Balance

Confidence, trust

Truth

Ordinary reality

Gentleness

Sorrow

Respecting difference

Trusting in process

# DESOLATION

Away from God

Discouragement

Cynicism

Exaggeration

Fear, anxiety

Illusion

Absolutes

Bullying

Guilt

Rejecting difference

Impatience with process

	CONSOLATION	DESOLATION
EASY	<p>EASY CONSOLATION</p> <p>Enjoyable, peaceful, leads to greater love of God</p> <p>When here pray in gratitude, build good habits</p>	<p>EASY DESOLATION</p> <p>Enjoyable, peaceful but no good fruits,</p> <p>When here pray for greater desire for God</p>
HARD	<p>HARD CONSOLATION</p> <p>Difficult but leads to greater trust in God, resolve, peace</p> <p>When here pray for help and trust that you can rely on God</p>	<p>HARD DESOLATION</p> <p>Difficult, leads to distance from God, lack of peace</p> <p>It won't last forever , intensify prayer, invite God</p>

# **Discernment and making decisions/choices**

**1 Fundamental Rule  
=**

**Never make a  
decision in the  
dark**

# Discernment

## Towards God

- ❖ Open to growth and change
- ❖ Taking time to listen and reflect
- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ In touch with real desire
- ❖ In relationship

## Away from God

- ❖ Locked into my view
- ❖ Quick to judge
- ❖ Rigidity
- ❖ Moralising (shoulds)
- ❖ Self-centered

# Indifference



- State of inner freedom, openness and balance.
- Ready to be drawn toward the love of God and embody that love for others
- It is the ability from the very beginning to be influenced in the process by God's guidance.

# **Good choices are those which**

- **consider the impact on others**
- **consider the longer term**
- **consider the bigger picture**
- **draw me towards the good  
spirit/good wolf in me**
- **promote life in me and others**





# A Discernment Process

Identify

- What is the question or issue?
- Do I have all of the information?

Examine

- Initial inclinations/biases
- Default feelings, automatic thoughts, hungers
- Underlying values and personal concerns

Strive

- For Ignatian Indifference or Interior Freedom

Pray

- Take time to pray
- Notice where I am being drawn

Decide

- Using both heart and head

# A Discernment Process cnt'd



Discuss

- With a spiritual companion



Dialogue

- With those who will be ultimately affected



Live

- Out your decision with courage, hope and trust

# Revisit your case study

- Sit with the decision you made
- Are you consoled by the decision you made?
- Is there anything you could do differently or any step you would include in your discernment of this issue?

