

Mars Hill Graduate School | Writing Center

This APA style sample paper offers a brief example of appropriate APA style and academic writing conventions, including a thesis statement and appropriate use of sources. Included in this sample are an introduction, a conclusion, and excerpted sections from an original student essay. Any use of this written material except as a stylistic writing sample is expressly prohibited.

Course Number & Name

Instructor Name

Final Paper

December 31, 2007

Growing Toward Childlikeness

Paradoxically, the psychological development of adults often leads them to possess many qualities often found in children. Childlikeness is a sign of adult well-being, maturity, and health. The process of development is to become more childlike—not to dwell in our childhood but to grow the characteristics of a child. Honesty, absence of relational inhibition, ability to trust, willingness to not understand, and zest for life are qualities of both children and well-adjusted, relational adults. However, moving toward childlikeness requires a painful process of being reborn. In both life and psychotherapy, humans must move from a state of reliance through a process of regression that involves breaking, dismantling of false selves, surrendering, and entry into death. From that place of regression comes an openness to reflect and to hold mystery and face the unknown. This movement brings us into a new life of relationship—with God, humans, creation, and self. As we develop and grow in life and through psychotherapy, we find that the whole of this movement through regression and reflection is really a coming back, a return to childlikeness.

The Christian gospel and psychotherapy share in common the paradoxical necessity of death in order to live, surrender in order to receive, regression in order to grow. In the gospel of John, Jesus says, “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls

Comment [MA1]: MHGS formatting guidelines:

- Use 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper.
- Type or word process the paper.
- Use black 12-point type and a serif font.
- Margins should be 1- to 1.25-inches.
- Text should be double-spaced.
- Do not include a title page.
- The header should include the course number and the date.
- Pages should be numbered.
- Titles should be centered in regular font.
- Student name should appear on the back of the paper.

Comment [MA2]: Thesis clearly makes a unique claim that the rest of the paper will support with logic and evidence.

Comment [m3]: Paragraph offers a clear topic sentence.

to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds” (John 12:24, NIV). By dying, new life is possible. Jesus also says, “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 10:39, NIV). Christ calls us to let go, to die in order to find life.

Comment [m4]: Example of biblical citation in APA style.

Thomas Merton, in his 1949 *Seeds of Contemplation*, writes, “In order to become myself I must cease to be what I always thought I wanted to be, and in order to find myself I must go out of myself, and in order to live I must die,” (as cited in Conn, 1998, p. 327). The Christian gospel leads its followers on a journey into death in order to find life, whether by choice or circumstance. At some point, we all encounter life-rattling suffering and trials. Alan Jones (1985) writes:

Comment [m5]: The author clearly introduces sources in the text of the paper.

Trials and humiliations are necessary only insofar as they are the means by which our true life is uncovered. To come to this place where one is truly alive, one must hit rock-bottom. There must be a breakthrough to the point of deepest helplessness. (p. 83)

Comment [m6]: When working with secondary sources, it is always best to obtain the original source. However, if this is not possible, use this example as an appropriate citation of a secondary source. On the references page, list only the source you read.

Though the language is typically different, the Christian notion of that one must die in order to live is also true in psychotherapy, which requires a dismantling of false selves, a regression, and a reentry or reexperiencing of the painful past in order to freely live in the present. Psychotherapist Roy Barsness (2006) expresses this paradoxical reality within the therapeutic relationship and life in general. He says, “In order to know, we must not know; in order to find ourselves we must lose ourselves; in order to experience, we must forfeit explanation” (p. 50).

Comment [m7]: For long quotations over 40 words, block the quotation. Double space the quote and indent the entire quotation half an inch. Do not add quotation marks at the beginning or end of the quotation.

In traditional psychoanalytic and Freudian thinking, the surrender of illusions in favor of reality is essential for patients, and thus everything that is not empirically true

Comment [m8]: This sentences both introduces a source and transitions smoothly from a claim to the supporting evidence provided.

must be stripped away. This type of movement can be helpful, but at the same time, it can often be detrimental. According to Doug Hansen (2006), psychologist D.W. Winnicott countered Freudian thought by saying that illusions actually give our life meaning.

Instead of the idea that a child should give up illusion, fantasy, or play to face the hard facts, Winnicott said that illusion is essential to meaning, life, and existence. For example, Winnicott furthered the discussion of children's transitional objects, saying that the objects are both fabricated and discovered; thus, the meaning of an object is not just what a child discovers but also what the child applies to that object (Hansen, 2006).

Without such an "illusion," the object lacks meaning, and as such, the illusion is then a necessary part of the object's meaning. Similarly, as humans grow interpersonally, a childlike acceptance of the unknown—not an absence of illusion—is what demonstrates maturity.

Rather than dismissing children and hurrying them into adulthood, we should heed the words of Isaiah, which state that "a little child will lead them" (Isaiah 11:6, NIV). Children model trust and live with an absence of pretense; they are willing to stand in uncertainty and surrender to relationship. As adults, we would do well to grow into the maturity of a child.

Comment [m9]: These three sentences provide clear attribution of a source summarized from lecture material.

Comment [m10]: Appropriate citation of lecture material.

Comment [m11]: The conclusion provides a clear and satisfactory culmination of the essay. The author returns to a biblical understanding of the topic and reemphasizes the claim of the essay.

References

Barsness, R. (2006). Surrender and transcendence in the therapeutic encounter. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 25(1): 45-54.

Buber, M. (1970). *I and Thou*. (W. Kaufman, Trans.) New York: Simon & Schuster.
(Original work published 1923)

Conn, W. (1998). Self-transcendence, the true self, and self-love. *Pastoral Psychology*, 46 (5): 323-331.

Hansen, D. (2007, October). From Freud to Winnicott. Lecture delivered for Human Growth and Development at Mars Hill Graduate School, Seattle, WA.

Holy Bible: New international version. (1978). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Jones, A. (1985). *Soul-making: desert way of spirituality*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.

Comment [m12]: APA style references page entries should be alphabetized and double-spaced with a hanging indentation. Center the title: References.

Comment [MA13]: Note the capitalization and formatting of article and book titles.

Comment [MA14]: Appropriate reference entry for lecture material.

Comment [MA15]: APA Style states that reference entries are not required for the Bible. If you choose to list the Bible, this is the appropriate citation.