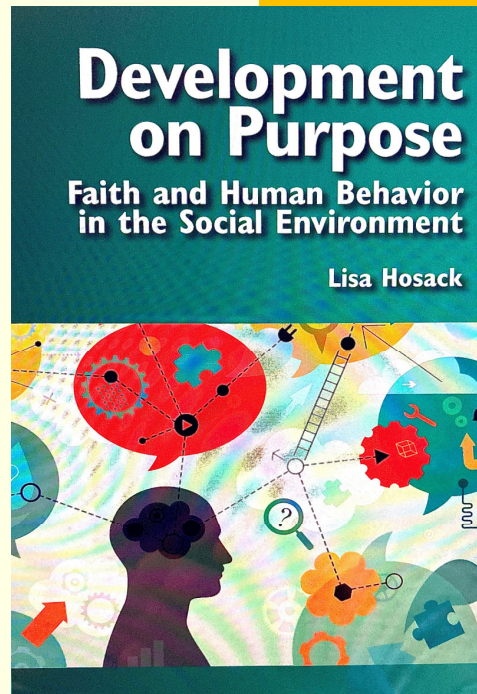


Chapter Two

A Theological Model for
Understanding HBSE



1

Q: What's a challenge
with current HBSE
theories?

A: They point to
varying goals



2

Goals of
biological
theories

- Physical maturation
- Physical growth

3

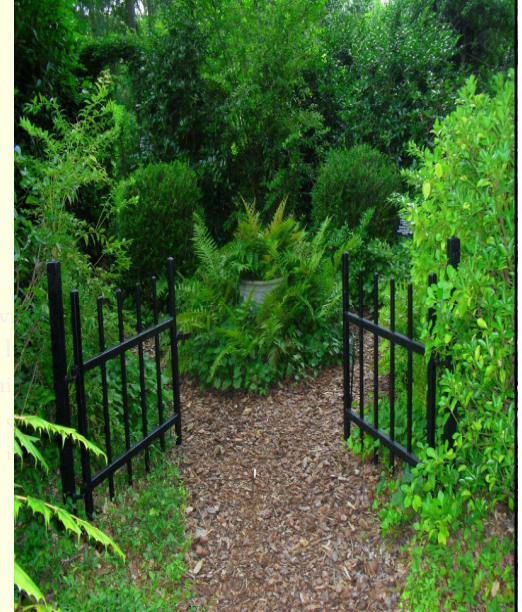
Goal of
psychological
theories

Avoiding
“dysfunction”

4

Q: What has God designed as a goal for our development?

A: That we are securely related to Him, other people, and the environment around us



5

We can adopt this goal—
to nurture growth among persons or contexts toward secure relationships with God and others — for all of our work

6

Q: But what does it mean to be “securely related?”

A: Every person and context is different, but secure relationships have the characteristics of shalom



7

Social workers should focus their energies on facilitating relationships of shalom between persons and God, persons and their environment, and persons and others.

8

Q: And what's a relationship of shalom?

A: It's a relationship that nurtures rich growth and flourishing.



9

Q: What does the Trinity have to do with it?

A: It's a divine model for relationships. In the Trinity, there is both separateness and connectedness.



10

Q: And that relates to secure relationships how?

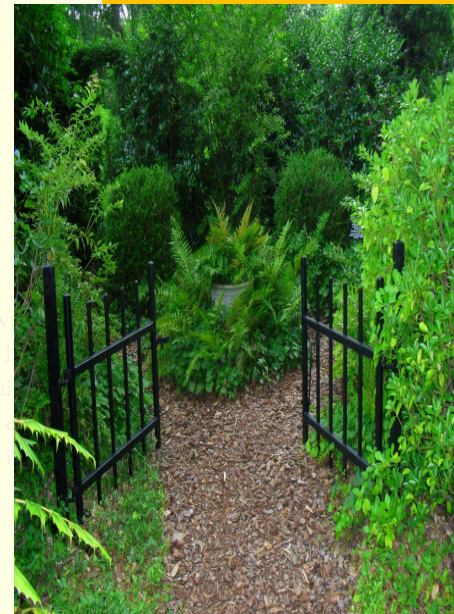
A: Because “secure relationships” similarly facilitate growth within the individual and within the relationship or environment.



11

What does all of this mean for our efforts in social work?

- That our development isn't random or for shallow goals like avoiding dysfunction. We are formed to be in a secure relationship with God, others, and environment
- That social workers are wise to work toward facilitating secure relationships in the persons and environments in which we work
- That working toward this divine purpose encourages and sustains us, especially during times when we see no progress or growth



12

Q: And what if the people or groups we work with don't know God or even reject Him?

A: Great question. We can always encourage growth toward God and others, even when people have no sense of who God is or we work in contexts where faith cannot be explicitly discussed. Any movement toward improved relationships, no matter how small, is movement toward God's purposes for our development.

