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Religious Experience, Personality Style, Moral Character, and Social Intelligence in Relation to Performance on Interpersonal Helping Skills

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RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, PERSONALITY STYLE, MORAL CHARACTER, AND SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE ON INTERPERSONAL HELPING SKILLS

by

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VITA

The author, Donald Joseph Miro, is the son of Dewey and Mildred (Passarella) Miro. He was born February 4, 1948, in Los Angeles, California.

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INTRODUCTION

This investigation into the relationship between religion, personality characteristics and prosocial, helping behavior is theoretically situated under the general rubric of the psychological study of religion.

Researchers in the psychology of religion have attempted to study these complex phenomena by classifying the religious variable in terms of basic areas or dimensions. One widely utilized classification is provided by Glock (1965). He divides religious phenomena into five basic areas: belief, practice, experience, knowledge, and effects. These five areas can also be understood, respectively, in terms of five dimensions of religion as follows: the ideological, the ritualistic, the experiential, the intellectual, and the consequential.

In his review of the research on the relationship between religion and personality factors related to psychological health, Becker (1971) utilizes Glock's classification to categorize the existing studies as follows: (1) religious belief studies; (2) religious practice studies; (3) religious knowledge studies; (4) consequences of religion studies; and (5) studies on experiential religion.

1. Religious--belief studies. Research in this area is based on the assumption that types of religious belief systems (from orthodoxy to liberalism) might be related to personality characteristics. Ranck (1961) used more than 10 personality tests on more than 800 theology students, finding a significant positive correlation only between the personality characteristic of authoritarianism and the religious belief system labeled conservatism. Becker concludes from this and other studies (Dreger, 1952; Lee, 1965) that: "The content of belief systems is not the richest place in which to find the linkage between personality and religion in their positive aspects." (p. 399).

2. Religious-practice studies. This area of research reflects a theoretical assumption that positive aspects of self-perception are associated with frequency of religious behavior. Studies by Rosenberg (1965): Bierin and Lobeck (1961); and Honawalt (1963) provide inconclusive evidence of any positive correlation between self-esteem and religious practice.

3. Religious-knowledge studies. Research in this area has explored the relationship between level of religious knowledge or information and various personality characteristics. Typical is a study by Martin and Nichols (1962) comparing undergraduates with high and low religious information scores on personality scales indicative of prejudice,

ethnocentrism and suspiciousness. They found no significant correlations for either the religiously knowledgeable or the religiously uninformed and those aspects of personality which indicate ethnocentrism, suspiciousness, or prejudice. Becker concludes that this dimension of religion (level of knowledge) is one of the less fruitful areas to explore a possible relationship with personality traits. (p. 407)

4. Consequences of religion studies. This area of research explores possible effects in everyday life of some aspect of religious belief, practice or knowledge. Significant research has been done on the effects of religious identity, belief, or practice in relation to political decisions, family styles, achievement needs, vocational choices, social attitudes, etc. However, no research has attempted to relate positive personality traits to any of the consequences of religion when they occur in some form.

5. Studies on experiential religion. The area of experiential religion, which focuses on religious feeling and subjective experience, has been generally neglected by researchers. The types of studies cited above typically narrow their subject matter by relating specific aspects of religion (e.g. beliefs, knowledge, etc.) and specific aspects of personality (e.g. prejudice, self-esteem, etc.). While they employ the empirical method, it differs from the naturalistic, wholistic approach to the study of religion

pioneered by people like James and Starbuck. Their work laid the foundation for studying religion from a phenomenological as well as an empirical point of view. Becker (1970) believes this orientation needs to be reconsidered in empirical studies, with more attention given to the experiential dimension of religion. He concludes:

> After the initial flurry of interest in religious conversion by Starbuck, Leuba, and James, which provided the life-giving spark to the psychological study of religion, research on the experiential dimension of religion has virtually disappeared. We pause at this point only to regret that further study of an aspect of religion which might reveal important correlations of personal well-being and religious maturity receives no attention. Whether the quantification and measurement of such experiences can be accomplished remains to be discovered. Unless more empirical attention is turned to this aspect of religion, the study of religion and personality will be unduly limited to the more superficial dimensions of both (p.406).

Hanford (1975) elaborates on the issue of phenomenological vs. empirical approaches in psychological research in the area of religion, and suggests that these two approaches have dominated the field of religious research. The empirical orientation, typified by the philosophy of John Locke and the psychological school of behaviorism, assumes that all experience is capable of being reduced to sensor data. The phenomenological orientation, e.g., the psychology of Carl Rogers, Victor Frankl, et al., emphasizes the understanding of experience in terms of the inner dimension of the individual, the self.

Hanford (1975) goes on to assert that while these two general approaches to the psychological study of religion have often been seen as mutually exclusive or disjunctive, they can be integrated in a synoptic approach, "...which includes the rigor of empiricism without its reductionism, and includes the challenge of the phenomenologists without their insufficient means for validity (p. 220)." Hanford (1975) classifies William James as a synoptic writer and agrees with Becker (1971) that his work serves as a model for the kind of research that is needed in the psychological study of religion. He states: "James...combined the empirical and protophenomenological orientation within a wide frame of reference. In his Varieties, which is still the outstanding production in the psychology of religion, he used a prototypical synoptic orientation. (p. 225)."

Scobie (1975) emphasizes a pragmatic assessment of the significance and value religion has for the individual at a given point in time, rather than how or why such beliefs and behavior were adopted. He notes that the psychological study of religion can clarify the effects that religion has on other aspects of behavior (Glock's con-sequential dimension), and that a fruitful area of investigation in this regard can be understood in terms of moral or prosocial behavior. Although previous research (Wright, 1971) has indicated a negative relationship between other traditional religious practice and higher

levels of moral development, the relationship between other dimensions of religiosity, such as, the experiential dimension, and moral, prosocial behavior remains unclear.

Summarizing the implications of these reviews of the research on the relationship between religion, personality characteristics, and human behavior yields the following suggestions: (a) incorporating a phenomenological approach into present empirical methods, (b) giving more consideration to the experiential dimension of religion, and (c) considering the relationship between religious experience, personality characteristics, and behavioral consequences.

One purpose of this investigation is to explore this relationship by focusing on the mystical-experiential component of religion and a specific type of moral, prosocial behavior, namely, helping in a counseling and human relations context. Severy(1975) suggests that helping in an interpersonal or counseling context can be considered a type of altruistic, prosocial behavior, and that there are individual differences associated with different types of altruistic, helping behaviors. Lesh (1970) found that the practice of Zen meditation, which is associated with mystical experience, increased the level of empathy in counselors as well as their openness to experience. An important contribution to the scientific study of religious experience has been made by Hood (1975) who developed an empirical scale to assess subjective, phenomenologically

reported level of mystical-religious experience.

Another area of research which is relevant to the assessment of individual differences in relation to helper effectiveness in an interpersonal or counseling context has to do with the concept of social intelligence. In the context of the interpersonal skills model for training helpers and counselors proposed by Carkhuff (1969, a,b) and Egan (1975, 1976), social intelligence can be understood in terms of the essential helper functions of discrimination and communication. In their review of the concept of social intelligence, Walker and Foley (1973) present the consensus that social intelligence is composed of the ability to understand (the discrimination dimension) and to act (the communication dimension) effectively in an interpersonal context. An important issue is whether assessesed social intelligence is predictive of effective interpersonal helping behaviors.

Finally, theory and research on personality in terms of interpersonal style (Millon, 1969) provides a framework for understanding personality characteristics both in relation to religious experience and in relation to interpersonal helping behavior. Millon (Note 1) has developed a personality inventory, (the Millon-Illinois Self-Report Inventory, Form P, for normals), which classifies personality types in terms of four basic interpersonal styles: detached, dependent, independent and ambivalent.

One might expect these styles to be differentially related to a degree of mystical-religious experience as well as to performance on interpersonal helping behaviors.

In summary, the present study will explore the relationship between measures of reported mystical experience, moral character, social intelligence and personality style and their usefulness as predictors of effective helping in a counseling and human relations context.

RELATED REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Religion And Personality

A major early contribution to a psychological understanding of the relationship between religion and personality adjustment is provided by William James in his classical work, The Varieties of Religious Experience, (1902).

James suggests two basic contrasting types of religious experience: the religion of healthy-mindedness vs. the religion of the sick soul. The religion of healthy-mindedness is characterized by an optimistic view of life accompanied by feelings of unity, peace and happiness. According to James some exceptional individuals have this kind of religious experience throughout their whole lives, developing naturally with no morbid compulsions or crises. He categorizes such people as the "once-born" type of positive religious consciousness. Most people, however, go through a process of "conversion" to progress to a positive religious state.

These individuals pass from a state of turmoil with feelings of guilt, inadequacy and unhappiness to a unified state with feelings of rightness, adequacy and happiness. Both the "once-born" and the "conversion" types of religious experience represent the "religion of healthy-mindedness."

In contrast, according to James, is the religious experience of the "sick soul." This type of experience is characterized by a pervading consciousness of evil, strong feelings of despair and depression, a pervasive sense of guilt, and an intense fear of the universe. Some individuals struggle with this pessimistic type of religious experience throughout their lives. According to James, they seem to be congenitally fated to suffer from its presence.

It is interesting in James' analysis that he attributes characteristically positive and negative types of religious experience to innate styles of consciousness. Furthermore, his contrasting types--the religion of healthy-mindedness vs. the religion of the sick soul--carry the implication of contrasting psychological states, i.e., mental health vs. psychopathology.

James, however, made no attempt to systematically correlate the religious experience of the sick soul with specific forms of psychopathology. But that his thought was leading in this direction is indicated when he says, "In delusional insanity, paranoia, as they sometimes call

it, we may have a diabolical mysticism, a sort of religious mysticism turned upside down." (James, 1902, p. 326) However, the connection between these pathological states and the religious experience is not clear in his writings. Likewise, James offers no specific hypotheses to suggest a relationship between the religion of healthy-mindedness and positive personality variables.

In their review of the research dealing with the relationship between religion and mental disorder, Spilke and Werme (1971) propose a classification schema which suggests four possible functional relationships between religion and mental disorder. These are: (1) religion as as outlet and occasion for expressing and perhaps even encouraging mental aberration; (2) religion as a suppressant for the symptomatic expression of and an agent for socializing and conventionalizing individual deviations; (3) religion as a refuge or haven from stresses in life which are productive of mental disorder; and (4) religion as a prophylactic or therapeutic occasion for a more constructive handling of stresses and dilemmas.

1. Religion as an outlet for abnormality. Although several studies have correlated intense religious experiences with some of the classical psychiatric categories, it is not clear that the religious experience causes or contributes to the mental disorder. In fact, several authors suggest otherwise. Rosen (1960) noted that mystical identifications which have a high likelihood of being defined

as psychotic could in fact be constructive reorganizations of attitudes, world outlooks, and the concept of the self. He also stated that the apparent symptomatic expression of mental illness in religious terms (such as in some psychotic states) might contribute to a working through of psychic conflicts and a constructive reorganization and maturation of the individual's psyche. Boisen (1958) came to similar conclusions.

2. Religion as an agent of socialization. A number of studies offer evidence for the viewpoint that religiosity is associated with social conformity in beliefs, attitudes and behavior (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford, 1950; Glock and Stark, 1966; Photiadis, 1965). In the area of interpersonal behavior, Fisher (1964) demonstrated that religiousness is associated with social acquiescence. Bateman and Jensen (1958) found that persons raised in a religious environment usually internalized their anger rather than express it.

3. Religion as a haven or refuge. Classical psychoanalytic (Freud, 1927) as well as neo-Freudian theories of personality (Fromm, 1950) characterize the traditional role of religion as providing a shelter or refuge from the normal challenges and stresses of life. Yet Kelly (1961) suggested that the high amount of structure in traditional religious communities often leads to strong feelings of failure for not living up to the demands of this type of life style.

4. Religion as a therapeutic agent contributing to integration and self-actualization. Several authors have theorized concerning the positive function of religion in contributing to mental health and psychological growth. Jung (1962) characterizes the problem of modern man in terms of self alienation and loss of identity, a problem which can only be solved by adopting a religious perspective on life. James (1902) empahsized how a healthy-minded religious faith can ground one's consciousness in an optimistic view of life which promotes self-realization. Maslow (1954) finds similarities in religious experiences and psychological peak experiences and suggests that such experiences are characteristic of highly developed, self-actualized individuals. Fromm (1950) recognizes the value of humanistic religion which is characterized by open-mindedness, social consciouness, and a vital faith which inspires individuals to work for a better world.

However, these reviewers conclude that there is a lack of substantive empirical evidence to validate these theoretical viewpoints which maintain that religion contributes positively to self-actualization. Whether religion increases or reduces, promotes or inhibits, mental health and self-actualization needs to be systematically tested using scientific, empirical methods. There are two major personality theorisits, Gordon Allport (1937, 1950) and Abraham Maslow (1954, 1962, 1967, 1970), whose writings

have generated a series of empirical studies investigating the relationship between religion and personality development. Their theories and subsequent research will be reviewed next.

Allport's Individualized View of Religion

In analyzing the nature and function of a religious outlook on life in relation to the structure of personality, Allport (1950) maintains that a religious sentiment, but that the development of a unique subjective religious outlook is a diverse and complex process.

> "The conclusion we come to is that the subject religious attitude of every individual is, in both its essential and nonessential features, unlike that of any other individual. The roots of religion are so numerous, the weight of their influence in individual lives so varied, and the forms of rational interpretation so endless, that uniformity of product is impossible. Only in respect to certain biological functions do men closely resemble one another. In the higher reaches of personality uniqueness of organization becomes more apparent. And since no department of personality is subject to more complex development than the religious sentiment, it is precisely in this area that we must expect to find the ultimate divergences (p. 29)."

Emphasizing what he refers to as individual subjective religion, in contrast to mere institutional religion, he articulates five areas which affect a person's religious formation in the course of his personality development. These are: 1) his bodily or organic needs, 2) his temperament and mental capacity, 3) his psychogenic interests and values,

4) his pursuit of rational explanation, and 5) his response to the surrounding culture. The areas dealing with response to culture, with psychogenic interests and values, and pursuit of rational explanation are most critical in his analysis.

Allport recognizes that conformity to culture, especially for the young child, is an important origin of the religious quest. Conformity promotes identification with the social group and brings with it secruity, affection, annd approval. The child learns to participate in religious rites and ceremonies before he learns the mythe that explain their purpose. Furthermore, once he learns the myths, his initial response is one of uncritical acceptance due to the same factor of conformity. It is only later in development, usually during adolescence and beyond, that many individuals transcend conventional (conformity-based) religion and form a personal, individualized, subjective religious outlook on life. Religion, for such persons, goes beyond the function of producing social stability. They may still participate in ceremonies, profess the creed and follow the moral code of institutional religion, but their conformity is based on private reasons which give special significance to their personal lives. Their personal religious outlook builds upon and transcends the customs and principles of institutionalized religion.

Based on his distinction between mere institutional (conformity-based) religion and individual subjective religion, Allport adopts a favorable stance toward the role religion can play in the development of a healthy personality. Recognizing that religious belief can be a neurotic function, an "escape from freedom," he sees this primarily in terms of the cultural forces to conform to a second-hand, immature religion. The positive function of religion manifests itself in individuals who in exercising their freedom have formed an individual, personal religious outlook on life. "indeed it is by virtue of their religious outlook upon life-expanding as experience expands-that they are able to build and maintain a mature and well-integrated edifice of personality. The conclusions they reach and the sentiments they hold are various, as unique as is personality itself (p. xii)."

A critical variable, according to Allport, which affects the function and quality of an individual religious orientation, is the psychogenic factor of value. Anything that yields satisfaction or provides the means for satisfaction to a psychogenic or "spiritual" desire he designates a "value." Psychogenic desires, in contrast to viscerogenic desires, are objectified; that is, the objects of satisfaction (values) are located and remain outside of the organism. An important qualification, however, is that not all psychogenic desires and values are good. The major criterion

is the degree to which the desire goes beyond self-interest and results in a more generalized, universal value.

An example of the process of the development of value is seen in terms of the desire for individuality giving rise to the value of the ego. Characteristically in the young child, age two to three, this value takes the form of egoism, a stubbornness and negativism which demands self-expression, craves power, and feels pride. Gradually, however, this value evolves as the child matures and is able to generalize from his desire for individuality to affirm the values of all other egos. Thus the general value of personal integrity, a sense of self, the worth of the person, is affirmed for all men. This process can be further extended to the point of recognizing God as the supreme expression of personality and the final value required to explain and conserve all other values of selfhood.

This example illustrates Allport's contention that religion is motivated by the individual's desire to conserve value. Furthermore, it is when values come into conflict with the struggle for existence that subjective religion is most acutely felt, because of the need for a conserving agent.

In later writings, Allport (1954) explores the values associated with religious practice in relation to the phenomenon of prejudice. Though one would expect religious sentiment to foster humanitarianism and a non-prejudicial

orientation, Allport discovered that on the average, churchgoers and professedly religious people have considerable more prejudice than do non-churchgoers and non-believers. However, as Rokeach (1968) points out, these findings have to be interpreted. While non-believers are in fact generally less prejudiced than believers toward racial and ethnic groups, it does not follow that they are more tolerant in every respect. Allport's conclusion is only valid if by 'prejudice' we mean ethnic and religious prejudice.

Nevertheless, his findings concerning the relationship between religious affiliation and prejudice raise questions about the values associated with religion. However, the reason why churchgoers on the average are more prejudiced than non-churchgoers is not because religion instills prejudice. Rather it is because ethnic and class values hold priority over religious values for some people. Not all churchgoers manifest higher levels of prejudice; some manifest high levels of humanitarianism and social consciousness. The distinction must be made between different types of churchgoers for whom religion functions in a characteristically different way because of their psychological make-up.

Building upon his earlier distinction between institutional and individual religion, Allport (1968) proposes an analysis of the function and content of an individual's religion in terms of the dimension of extrinsic vs. intrinsic value. He views this dimension as a continuum ranging

from the type of religious sentiment that has only instrumental or extrinsic significance in a person's life to the type of sentiment that is itself a major motive in life, and that has intrinsic value. His rational for selecting a particular dimension is based on his previous argument that "religion" is too broad a concept to use discriminately, since the religious sentiment varies greatly from person to person. The dimension of intrinsic vs. extrinsic value provides one criterion for discriminating positive from defensive patterns of religion.

Likening extrinsic religion to a "dull habit," Allport describes it as "something to use, but not to live." It can be used in a variety of egocentric ways: to bolster self-confidence, to improve social status, to defend the self against reality, "and, most importantly, to provide a supersanction for one's own formula for living (p. 149)." It was precisely this utilitarian or extrinsic form of religiousity that he found to correlate positively with racial and ethnic prejudice among churchgoers. This type of religion is a shield for self-centeredness. From a motivational perspective, its formation is immature. It provides comfort but at the expense of an avoidance of reality.

Intrinsic religion, on the other hand, is not based on instrumental or utilitarian foundations. It is religion which is lived as opposed to religion which is used. It is not "primarily a means of handling fear, or a mode of conformity, or an attempted sublimation of sex, or a wish

fulfillment. Earlier in life it may have been all these things. But now these specific needs are not so much served by, as they are subordinated to, an overarching motive (p. 150-151)."

Intrinsic religion is a comprehensive commitment which is fundamentally motivational. It is integral and strives to include everything in experience under the umbrella of increasingly generalized values. It is a commitment to an ideal unification of one's life under a broader unifying conception of the nature of all existence. It does not provide security but rather mental health and integration of the personality at higher levels.

Two aspects of Allport's analysis are interesting for our purposes. First, while noting the distinctions between extrinsic and intrinsic, heposits them on a continuum and recognizes that intrinsic religion can evolve from extrinsic religion in a healthy developmental sequence. Second, the extrinsic-intrinsic polarity is not to be equated with his earlier distinction between institutional and individual religion, although there are significant commonalities. Both distinctions have a developmental perspective: the intrinsic evolves from the extrinsic, the individual from the institutional. Furthermore, they both emphasize development toward that which is individual, subjective and integral to the personality.

However, there are important differences. Individual religion builds upon institutional religion, which retains its foundational quality but is given a personalized function. Intrinsic religion, in contrast, abandons the escapist, egocentric non-integrative characteristics of extrinsic religion. Moreover, these two distinctions focus on different parameters. The intrinsic-extrinsic dimension highlights the quality of the religious sentiment in terms of its integrative function within the personality. The institutional-individual distinction emphasizes social vs. individual aspects of religious involvement. Thus churchgoers, who are involved in institutional religion, may be classified as either extrinsic or intrinsic in their religious motivation. Furthermore, the extrinsic vs. intrinsic variability is related to the particular cognitive style of the individual's subjective religion as well as it is to involvement in institutional religion.

Findings by Allport and Ross (1967) clarify these complex relationships as they apply in their investigations of prejudice. Previous research (e.g. Allport and Kramer 1946, Allport 1959, Rokeach 1960) established three important facts regarding the relationship between prejudiced attitudes and the personal practice of religion:

1. On the average, church attenders are more prejudiced than non-attenders.

2. The relationship is curvilinear: most attenders are more prejudiced than nonattenders, but a significant minority are less prejudiced.

3. It is the casual, irregular fringe members who are high in prejudice; their religious motivation is of the extrinsic order. It is the constant, devout, internalized members who are low in prejudice; their religious motivation is of the intrinsic order.

In a later study which utilized a quantified measure of the intrinsic-extrinsic dimension Allport and Foss (1968) found that "a certain cognitive style permeates the thinking of many people in such a way that they are indiscriminately pro-religious and, at the same time, hihgly prejudiced (p. 238)."

Allport's findings point to the importance of distinguishing not only motivational but cognitive differences in an individual's personal religious orientation. It is those who are indiscriminate in their cognitive embracement of religion who tend to be most prejudiced. This relationship parallels the finding that irregular churchgoers tend to be high in prejudice. Taken together, these findings point to the importance of organization and consistency, both behavioral and cognitive, as factors contributing to a positive, healthy, intrinsic religious orientation.

Research which supports the practical validity of Allport's distinction includes that of Wilson (1960) who successfully isolated and measured the extrinsic religious sentiment and demonstrated its close relationship to anti-Semitism. Wilson found in ten religious groups a median correlation of .65 between his scale and anti-Semitism. In

general these correlations were higher than he obtained between anti-Semitism and the Religious-Conventionalism Scale (Levinson, 1954). From this finding, Wilson concluded that orthodoxy or fundamentalism is a less important factor than the extrinsic level of religious orientation.

Other important research utilizing Allport's extrinsic-intrinsic distinction is the Kennedy and Heckler (1972) study of Catholic priests in the United States. Their findings show a significant positive relationship between level of intrinsic faith and level of overall psychological development. Thus it appears that Allport's concept at least has concurrent validity.

More recently, Bolt (1975) tested Allport's theory that intrinsic religion, in contrast to its extrinsic opposite, provides motivation and meaning for an individual's whole life. In a study conducted with 52 undergraduates, he used Crumbaugh's purpose in life test and the religious orientation scale of Allport and Ross (1967) to test the hypothesis that the intrinsically oriented religious person experiences a significantly higher sense of meaning in life than does the extrinsically oriented. He found that both the intrinsic and the indiscriminately proreligious reported a signifi-cnatly greater sense of purpose in life than the extrinsic.

Rokeach (1968), in reviewing the research utilizing Allport's distinction, concludes that religious people do

differ strongly in their orientations toward life to the extent that their religious outlook is extrinsic or intrinsic. In his own research, Rokeach (1960) found that believers are more anxious than non-believers and complain more often of working under great tension, sleeping fitfully, and other dysfunctional symptoms. Life Allport, however, he interprets his findings in terms of the intrinsic-extrinsic dimension. Rokeach views negative factors associated with religion, whether prejudice or psychopathological symptoms, as the end result of the emergence of the extrinsic orientation toward religion. Recognizing that in most people the extrinsic orientation predominates and is often transmitted through organized religion, nevertheless, he is also optimistic of the resolution of its contradictions in the individual and of societal evolution toward intrinsic religion.

To summarize, I have highlighted Allport's distinctions between individual vs. institutional religion and intrinsic vs. extrinsic religious orientations in an attempt to better understand both paradoxes in religious belief and behavior as well as the positive function of religion within the individual personality. Research in this area demonstrates that the intrinsic-extrinsic variable is more valuable than mere churchgoer--non--churchgoer classifications in understanding the psychosocial significance of religious affiliation. An important aspect of Allport's research is his attempt to relate religious variables to psychosocial

behaviors, e.g. prejudice, although the lack of specific behavioral measures renders his research incomplete.

The research on American priests by Kennedy and Heckler (1972) suggests the desireability of an integrated assessment of both levels of psychological development as well as type of religious orientation in order to better understand the relationship between religion and personality. With this in mind, we turn to an examination of Maslow's theory of self-actualization, its relationship to religious experience, and related research findings.

Maslow's Self-Actualized Individual and Religious Experience

Maslow (1954, 1962, 1967, 1970) has developed the idea of the self-actualized person who is more fully functioning and lives a more enriched life than does the average person. Because of a basic dissatisfaction with Freudian and Behaviorist views of man, Maslow proposed a more humanistic study of human behavior and personality. His theory of self-actualization is a specific attempt to focus on the characteristics of healthy, well-developed human beings.

Maslow's methodology and lack of precise definition leaves much to be desired from a scientific point of view. In attempting to formulate his theory, he gathered scattered data from famous, "outstanding" people, both living and dead, and later added data from the top 1% of the college population

at Brandeis University. According to Maslow, self-actualization, per se, is rare and only occurs in older persons. It is an ultimate or final state of affairs, a far-reaching goal in life characterized by the state of Being and Becoming. It is possible, however, to speak of many people including young adults, who are in the process of becoming self-actualized. Self-actualization, loosely defined, is "the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities... (Maslow 1970, p. 150)."

While Maslow's theory lacks scientific rigor, it is interesting in so far as it proposes characteristics or qualities of the mature, well-developed personality. Many of these characteristics are similar to those in Allport's understanding of the mature personality, yet Maslow provides a more extensive description.

Probably the most universal and common aspect of Maslow's self-actualizers is their ability to perceive reality more clearly and to be more comfortable in their relations with it than are most people. They are less likely to distort reality to conform to their own wishes. IN addition, slef-actualizers are typically more spontaneous, more accepting of self and others, and more concerned with problems outside of themselves rather than ego-centered issues. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954, 1962) they have achieved gratification of their basic needs and are now motivated by Being-needs as opposed to deficiency-needs. According to

Maslow (1967), they are motivated by goals and values which transcend self-satisfaction. Typically, they have a wide frame of reference and a highly developed value system that often results in a sense of mission or vocation to some special task or work in life. Of special significance in relation to religion is Maslow's observation that self-actualizers have an unconventional, individual system of values and code of ethics. Their unconventional orientation, however, is not a wholesale rejection of traditional morality. They seem rather to have transcended cultural norms and values since they are, characteristically, highly ethical people. In a paradoxical fashion, they tend to be autonomous and independent of cultural influences on the one hand; and yet they are freely part of and committed to culture on the other hand.

In another work, Maslow (1964) explores the relationship between the religious experience and self-actualization. Elsewhere (1952, 1962) he describes the phenomenon of peak-experience: mystical, holistic, self-transcendent experiences which are characteristic of self-actualizers. He likens the psychological peak-experience to the religious mystical experience, although recognizing that not all peak-experiences are religious experiences. Key features of both types of experience are a sense of wonder, ectasy and inner peace as well as a reconciliation or resolution of dichotomies, such as "is" and "ought," "spiritual" and "sensual," etc. Maslow maintains that an understanding of peak experiences can

provide insight into the nature of religious experience. Furthermore, he maintains that these types of experiences, while fairly common among self-actualizers, do occur at some time in practically everyone.

Based on his observations of self-actualizers and their characteristic peak-experiences, Maslow argues that the core religious expereince is mystical and individual as opposed to legalistic and organizational. His self-actualizers tended not to be religious in the traditional sense of institutional religious affiliation, yet they manifested deep religious qualities in terms of their "mystical" peak experiences, highly-developed value system, and self-transcendent commitment to life.

Although Maslow's emphasis is on the religious experience dimension of religion, research on the relationship between personality development using his self-actualization model has relied primarily on measures of church attendance to assess the religious variable. Most of this research suggests that the non-churchgoing person may be more self-actualized, typically defined in terms of scores on the Personal Orientation Inventory. Gibb (1968) found that the lack of both religious participation and formal religious training was positively associated with high scores on the Personal Orientation Inventory. Duncan's (1970) study of positive and negative life experiences of self-actualized, modal, and low-functioning college students revealed that the low-functioning

group was the most religiously active and the modal group was the least active.

More recently, Lee and Piercy (1974) focused specifically on the relationship between church attendance and self-actualization among college students at both a state university and a religiously affiliated university. They found that infrequent church attenders scored higher than regular attenders on the major inner-directed scale and on three subscales of the Personal Orientation Inventory, with no differences between the state and religious schools. Their results are consistent with the findings of previous studies (McClain, 1970) that college students who attend church regularly resemble the general American population, whereas infrequent attenders deviate from the norm. However, in contrast to McClain's conclusions that this deviation is generally in the negative direction in relation to personality functioning, they found that deviations by nonchurchgoers in their study reflected above normal rather than below normal personality functioning in terms of the self-actualization model.

Hjelle (1975) specifically tested the hypothesis that self-actualization as measured by the Personal Orientation Inventory is negatively associated with reported frequency of active involvement in religious activities. His findings among a sample of male undergraduates at a Catholic college confirmed this hypothesis. Hjelle suggests that self-

actualizing students construe involvement in religious activities as being detrimental to their psychosocial development.

One reason might be the emphasis in self-actualization theory that is placed on the individual's independence from external forces or institutions. Infrequent church attenders may not represent social apathy as much as personal detachment or transcendence of organizations in general. Organized religion on the other hand, may reinforce in its members attitudes of dependency, since religion is usually defined in terms of human dependence on the divine. Although many contemporary theologians emphasize that dependency on God should have a liberating effect on the person, perhaps most people experience dependency as a personality weakness.

Another factor might be the shift among self-actualizers toward non-traditional forms of religious or quasi-religious involvement. Lesh (1970) found that Zen training contributed to increased self-actualization and empathy among counselors. Seeman (1972) and Nidich (1973) found that a Transcendental Meditation program significantly increased levels of self-actualization. Perhaps these types of experiences associated with mediatation and increased awareness contribute to the kinds of religious experiences Maslow associates with self-actualizers (1954, 1964).

Clearly, there is a need for research which focuses on the experiential dimension of religion as opposed to mere

church attendance. In addition, a limitation of much of the above research is that it was done for the most part with college students. Since Maslow's theory of self-actualization is more relevant to explaining personality functioning in the mature adult, it would be worthwhile to examine the relationship between religious experience and personality in an adult population. We next turn our attention to the mystical-experiential dimension of religion and empirical methods by which to assess it.

The Experiential Dimension of Religion: Mysticism

In her classic work on mysticism, Underhill (1911) recognized the paradoxical nature of the mystical experience in its effect on the mental life of man. Writing on the psychology of mysticism, she asserts that mystics have "thresholds of exceptional mobility" which allow for ready emergence of their latent or "subliminal" powers, powers which can make a man a "genius, a lunatic, or a saint (p. 62)."

Various attempts have been made to explain mystical experience from a psychological perspective. James (1902) outline four characteristics of the mystical experience: ineffability (the subject has difficulty in explaining and describing his experience to others), neotic quality (the individual feels that through the experience he has gained knowledge or understanding), transiency (the experiences are episodic), and passivity (the person feels he is in the grip of a power other than himself. He recognizes the

positive psychological value of mystical experience in the life of the individual who has a "healthy-minded" religious orientation.

In contrast is the psychoanalytic perspective of Freud and his followers. Freud (1927) viewed religion in general as an illusion and mystical experience in particular as a regressive fantasy reflecting an unconscious wish to return to the womb. Current psychoanalytic thinking takse a somewhat less negative view of mystical experience. Ross (1975) views mystical experiences as reflecting the confusion between affect and cognition characteristic of the symbiotic phase of infantile development. While recognizing the positive value of such infantile experiences, he considers it essential for an individual to "reverse the symbiotic dynamics" without a loss of identity in order to develop healthy relationships with one's environment. Horton (1974) suggests that a mystical experience may represent a culmination of a transitional mode of relatedness, and the experience itself may then become a transitional phenomenon. He understands the essence of the mystical experience specifically, and of the transitional experience specifically, and of the transitional experience generally, to be an upsurge of residual primary narcissism which can serve as a defense against overwhelming loneliness. Thus mystical experience can be interpreted as a special, potentially adaptive, ego mechanism of defense.

Until recently, however, there was no scientifically valid method by which to assess the phenomenon referred to as mystical experience or the mystical dimension of religious experience empirically. One study (Aaronson, 1967) investigated perceptual dimensions associated with mystical experience, but was limited in terms of its laboratory setting and nonstandardized assessment of mystical experience. Using James (1902) observation that most mystic experience tends to occur outdoors, Aaronson (1967) suggested that an environment with heightened clarity and sense of depth facilitates mystical experience. In laboratory research with hypnotized subjects, he found an association between an induced perception of expanded depth and mystical experience. Moreover, he found schizophrenic-like experiences to be associated with the induced perception of no depth. He concludes that mystical and schizophrenic states may be opposites, particularly in terms of the contrasting styles of perception and relationship of the self to one's environment:

> Schizophrenic experience results from a perception of space as enclosing and chaotic, with a concomitant drawing in of the self. Mystic experience results from a perception of space as expanding and in interaction with the objects which it surrounds, so that the self itself can expand outward and become a part of the interaction it perceives (p. 252)."

While Aaronson's findings are encouraging in terms of the positive psychological factors associated wtih mystical experience, there was a need for an empirical instrument by which to assess mystical experience, particularly in the context of its association with religious experience.

Hood's Mysticism Scale

Empricial efforts to study the nature of mystical-religious experience and its relationship to other variables have been greatly enhanced by the development and initial validation of an empirical instrument designed to measure reported mystical experience (Hood, 1975).

Hood cites reviews of the literature on mysticism and religious experience (Dittes, 1969; Clark, 1971) which point to the need for greater scientific precision in investigations of religious experience. Summarizing the conclusions of these reviews, Hood makes several points: (1) mysticism is usually classified under the category of intense religious experience; (2) mysticism can be understood as a central component of religion, possible for anyone to experience; and (3) little if any significant empirical research on mysticism has been done.

Hood presents a rationale for bringing scientific methodology to bear on the phenomenon of mystical experience. Previously (Hood, 1974b), he discussed the phenomenon of ego loss in mysticism and noted that intense experience producing such effects are becoming a legitimate topic of research for the social scientist. Furthermore, he maintains that significant empirical research on mysticism has become more feasible due to the conceptual work of Stace (1960) whose outline of the phenomenological characteristics of mystical experience provides a foundation for the developemnt of operational categories. Utilizing these categories, Hood concludes

that mysticism as a human experience can be studied much in the same way as any other human experience.

From the perspective of comparative religion. Stace (1960) made an extensive stydy of mysticism in all the important faiths, both ancient and modern. Although his method is not rigorously social-scientific, he used an inductive empirical approach to isolate the common phenomenological characteristics of mystical experience. In this regard, he follows in the tradition of William James (1902) and the injunctions of critics in this area who call for an empirical and phenomenological approach (Becker, 1971; Hanford, 1975).

Stace's conceptualizations are based on two fundamental assumptions derived from his investigation. First, the mystical experience is a universal experience that is essentially identical phenomenologically although open to wide variations in ideological intterpretation of the experience. Second, the core categories or dimensions of mysticism (of which there are eight according to Stace) are not necessarily all present in any particular individual mystical experience, although any individual who describes a mystical experience is likely to give expression to at least two or three of these factors.

Stace's eight categories which reflect universal characteristics of mystical experiences are: (1) a sense of unity felt either deeply within the self or through the external world; (2) a loss of the awareness of time and space;

(3) a deeply felt positive mood of joy, blessedness, and peace; (4) a sense of the sacred and the holy; (5) a sense that one has been in immediate touch with objective and ultimate reality reality; (6) a definite tendency to explain the experience in terms of paradox; (7) the claim by the mystic that his experience is ineffable; and (8) a sense of loss of self and absorption into something greater, yet maintaining individual consciousness.

Hood (1975) relies on Stace's conceptualizations in the developement of his scale with one exception. He dropped the paradoxicality category and added a category which reflected the experience of the inner subjectivity of all things, even purely material things. Hood's scale constructed from these categories is the Mysticism Scale, Research Form D (M Scale).

Form D of the scale was developed from an initial pool of 108 items revised to 32 items on the basis of greatest empir- empirical validity as determined by discrimination indexes, at the same time retaining face validity in terms of Stace's conceptualizations. The final 32 item scale consists of the two best positively expressed and the two best negatively expressed items for each of the eight categories. Correlation coefficients for item to scale and subscale to total scale relationships are all adequately high, ranging from .29 to .64. Furthermore, correlation matrices on the eight categories and the positive and negative expressions within each

category indicate that almost all categories are significantly correlated as are the positive and negative expressions of each category. These values are based on a sample of 300 college students, most of whom had a fundamental Protestant religious affiliation.

The 8 categories from Stace (1960) forming the subscales are described as follows: (pp. 31-32)

(1) EGO QUALITY (E): Refers to the experience of a loss of sense of self while consciousness is nevertheless maintained. The loss of self is commonly experienced as an absorption into something greater than the mere empirical ego.

(2) UNIFYING QUALITY (u): Refers to the experience of the multiplicity of objects of perception as nevertheless united. Everything is in fact perceived as "One."

(3) INNER SUBJECTIVE QUALITY (Is): Refers to the perception of an inner subjectivity to all things, even those usually experienced in purely material forms.

(4) TEMPORAL/SPATIAL QUALITY (T): Refers to the temporal and spatial parameters of the experience. Essentially both time and space are modified with the extreme being one of an experience that is both "timeless" and "spaceless."

(5) NOETIC QUALITY (N): Refers to the experience as a source of valid knowledge. Emphasis in on a nonrational, intuitive, insightful experience that is nevertheless recognized as not merely subjective.

(6) INEFFABILITY (I): Refers to the impossibility of expressing the experience in conventional language. The experience simply cannot be put into words due to the nature of the experience itself and not to the linguistic capacity of the subject.

(7) POSITIVE AFFECT (P): Refers to the positive affective quality of the experience. Typically the experience is of joy or blissful happiness.

(8) RELIGIOUS QUALITY (R): Refers to the intrinsic sacredness of the experience. This includes feelings of mystery, awe, and reverence that may nevertheless be expressed independently of traditional religious language.

A factor analysis of the Mysticism scale resulted in two factors which seemed to have psychological and conceptual meaning. Factor I is seen as an "indicator of intense experience", which is not necessarily interpreted religiously nor is necessarily positive. No items from the poetic subscale contributed to this factor indicating that such experiences are not necessarily interpreted as sources of objective knowledge. Factor II can be understood as an "indicator of a joyful expression of more traditionally defined religious experiences which may or may not be mystical but which are interpreted to indicate a firm source of obejctive knowledge (Hood, 1975, p. 34)".

Hood sees the results of the factor analysis as consistent with Stace's notion that mystical experiences may occur without a specific religious interpretation given to them. Furthermore, high correlation between the two factors ($r=.47$, $p<.01$) indicates the M Scale can be considered to measure a factor common to Factors I and II. This supports Stace's notion that mystical experiences, including both his "introvertive" and "extravertive" forms, are best conceptualized as forming a single continuum with all the criteria related through a pattern of "family resemblances" (Stace, 1960: 46-47). Hood (1975) concludes:

> "Specifically, it seems reasonable to conclude that the M Scale identifies the report of a single core experience of "mysticism" (Factor I) with a joyful religious interpretation possible (Factor II). This, of course, means that some religious experiences may in fact not be mystical and some mystical experiences may in fact not be interpreted as religious (p. 134)."

Hood (1975) also presents four independent studies which are relevant to the construct validity of the M Scale. These studies report correlations of the total M Scale and each of its 2 component factors with Hoge's (1972) intrinsic religious motivation scale, Hood's (1970) Religious Experience Episodes Measure (REEM), Taft's (1970) Ego Permissiveness Scale, and MMPI scales.

1. Intrinsic religious orientation. Taking into consideration the critical review of the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic religious motivation by Hunt and King (1971), Hoge (1972) constructed an improved religious motivation scale. Previous research by Hood (1973c) demonstrated that individuals with an intrinsic religious orientation are more likely to have had experiences classified as mystical (utilizing Stace's criteria for introvertive mysticism) than individuals with an extrinsic religious orientation. Therefore, Hood predicted that the M Scale should correlate positively with intrinsic religious motivation as measured by Hoge's scale.

This hypothesis was tested in a sample of 65 college students at a fundamental Protestant college. Results confirmed that the M Scale and both of its factors significantly

correlated with Hoge's intrinsic scale (rs = .81, .68, .58, p<.01). These findings are consistent with Hood's previous research (1970, 1971, 1973a) indicating a greater report of intense religious experiences among intrinsically oriented people.

2. Religious Experience Episodes Measure. Hood (1970) developed a measure of reported religious experience, the REEM, consisting of 15 descriptions of intense religious experiences derived from James (1902). This measure has successfully discriminated between intrinsic and extrinsic religiously motivated people (Hood, 1970, 1970, 1972). Accordingly, it was predicted that the M Scale would significantly correlate with the REEM not only because both correlate with intrinsic religious motivation but also because the REEM measures the report of intense religious experiences, many of which have mystical characteristics according to the criteria used in constructing the M Scale.

This hypothesis was tested in a sample of 52 college students with a fundamental Protestant religious affiliation. Results confirmed that the M Scale and both of its factors significantly correlated with the REEM (rs = .47, p<.01; .34, p<.05; .56, p<.01). These correlations are consistent with Hood's previous research (cited above) showing a positive relationship between the REEM and intrinsic religious orientation. In addition, this positive correlation between two independently operationalized measures of mysticism

contributes to the construct validity of both measures.

3. Openness to experience. Taft (1969, 1970) has developed a scale to measure "ego permissiveness," a concept related to the psychoanalytic notion of "regression in the service of the ego" (Kris, 1952). This concept refers to a process whereby the ego can utilize preconscious and unconscious psychic data for ego development. In less psychoanalytic language, Schachtel (1959) refers to this concept as "openness to experience" and Taft (1970) specifies it in terms of a belief in the supernatural, ecstatic emotions, and alterations of consciousness, among other factors.

This study utilized the five scales (peak experience, dissociated experiences, openness to inner experience, belief in the supernatural, and intrinsic arousal) which comprise Taft's Ego Permissiveness Scale (1970). Based on the similarities between Taft's conceptualizations of ego permissiveness and the conceptualizations of mysticism derived from Stace, it was predicted that the M Scale would negatively correlate with Taft's Ego Permissiveness Scale, since a lower score on Taft's scale indicates greater ego permissiveness. This hypothesis was tested in a sample of 83 undergraduate students who had at least a nominal religious preference (mainly Baptist and Methodist).

Results confirmed that the M Scale and both of its factors significantly correlated with Taft's Ego Permissiveness Scale (r_s = -.75, -.75, -.43, $p < .01$). While this is

partially attributable to similar type items on the two scales, it can also be attributed to the fact that persons more open to experience of all types are likely to include persons with greater capacity for mystical experience. It also suggests that persons who are open to experience as measured by Taft's scale are also persons likely to willingly report intense, atypical experiences such as the mystical experiences measured by the M Scale.

4. MMPI Scores. The final study investigated the relationship of the M Scale to MMPI scores. Hood (1974a) found some evidence for a relationship between reported religious experience and "weak ego strength" as measured by the MMPI. However, noting that religious content items of the MMPI create interpretive problems in relation to a religious population, Hood reversed the scoring of religious items and found that this relationship did not hold up.

In this study conducted with psychology undergraduates, the MMPI and the M Scale were administered to 29 students with either a Baptist or Methodist religious affiliation. A correlation matrix was computed and showed the majority of correlations were not significant. However, a significant positive correlation was found between the Hs, Hy, and L Scales of the MMPI and the M Scale (rs = .38, $p < .05$; .47, $p < .01$; .31, $p < .05$). Hood interprets this in a non-pathological context as reflecting the fact that a concern with bodily process (reflected in the Hs Scale) and intense experiential states (reflected in the Hy Scale) are

aspects of the mystical consciousness, and therefore these correlations are reasonable.

The L Scale (Lie score) is presumably a measure of the willingness to falsify scores by placing oneself in a favorable social light. In this study its significant correlation with Factor II and the total M Scale (but not with Factor I) would be indicative of a social response set for religiously inclined respondents who may feel pressure due to religious commitment to present themselves as "religious" on the M Scale, particularly Factor II (the religious interpretation factor).

In summarizing the results of these four studies, Hood (1975) concludes that the M Scale can be a useful instrument for empirical investigations of mystical experiences, expecially within a religious context. It is based on Stace's conceptualizations of mystical experience which are presumably cross-cultural, ahistorical and unbiased by religious ideology (Stace, 1960: 38-40). In terms of empirical fruitfulness, Stace's typology has been useful in training raters to reliably classify intense human experiences according to their degree of mystical quality (Clark and Baskin, 1967; Hood, 1973a; Pahnke, 1963; Pahnke and Richards, 1966).

The above investigations confirmed the internal consistency of the M Scale. In addition, a factor analysis indicated two major factors which can be reasonably interpreted in terms of a general mysticism factor (I) and a religious

interpretation factor (II), both of which are consistent with Stace's conceptualizations. Factor's may also be understood as representing a more inclusive phenomenon, a capacity for intense experience, of which mysticism is only one type.

In addition, the four correlational studies mentioned above indicate a preliminary construct validity for the M Scale. This scale was found to significantly correlate as expected with Taft's Ego Permissiveness Scale, Hoge's Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale, and Hood's Religious Experience Episodes Measure. Furthermore, its positive correlations with the Hy, Hs, and L Scales of the MMPI can be understood from the perspective of a nonpathological assessment of mystical experience, which recognized the "validity" of a heightened concern with body states and of intense experiential states. Hood (1975) concludes that these studies indicate a reasonably consistent profile of a person who because of a high level of "openness to experience in fact experiences the world atypically and who, if he is devoutly oriented, identifies these experiences as sacred and joyful (p.40)"

Mystical Experience, Personality Style and Interpersonal Helping

From his investigation of the relationship between the M Scale and the MMPI, Hood (1974a) concluded that further investigations of the relationship between mystical-religious experience and personality characteristics should utilize a

broader based, less pathologically oriented isntrument for personality assessment.

One such instrument for general assessment of personality style has been developed by Millon (1969, 1974, Note 1). The Million-Illinois Self-Report Inventory is based on his biosocial learning approach to understanding personality, and yields a set of scores for an interpersonal assessment of personality. An important feature of this inventory is its separate forms for clinical vs. nonclinical populations.

The inventory has eight basic scales which reflect eight different interpersonal styles. Millon (1969) suggests that these eight styles, whether normal or pathological, relfect ingrained, pervasive patterns of functioning across a wide range of human behavior.

The eight styles consist of an active or passive variation of four basic interpersonal coping strategies: detached, dependent, independent, and ambivalent. Since religiously oriented individuals are seen as highly dependent from a psychoanalytic perspective (see above), this instrument, in connection with Hood's M Scale, provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between mystical-religious experience and personality style.

Still there remains the important issue of behavioral effects associated with religiosity, and in the context of

this study with the mystical-experiential dimension of religion. We will address this issue in terms of the effects of mystical experience and personality style on interpersonal helping behaviors in a counseling and human relations context. To aid in understanding individual differences in relation to interpersonal helping behaviors, we will draw upon conceptual and empirical resources in the areas of moral character and social intelligence.

Moral Character

Wright (1971), in his comprehensive review of the psychology of moral behavior, outlines five major categories of moral behavior: resistence to temptation, guilt, altruism, moral insight, and moral belief. He goes on to suggest that the concept of moral character can be used to explain characteristic overall patterns or styles of moral response.

Drawing from developmental psychology, Wright suggests that certain character structures can be viewed as more mature than others, if one assumes certain criteria are associated with maturity. He suggests that the most desirable (mature) character type is that which combines independence and individuality with moral sensitivity and concern for others--a type he refers to as "autonomous-altruistic (p. 205ff.)"

He postulates that the autonomous-altruistic character type incorporates a balanced consideration of authority and peer influences with a highly developed, internalized and

independent set of moral principles and consequent behaviors.

In a related context Hogan (1973), outlines five dimensions of moral character: moral knowledge, socialization, empathy, autonomy and moral judgement. It is noteworthy that Hogan's dimensions of autonomy and empathy correspond conceptually to Wright's identification of mature character as autonomous and altruistic, if one understands empathy as a foundation for altruism.

Hogan (1969) developed and validated an empirical isntrument for the assessment of empathy. His Empathy Scale (1969, 1975) uses sets of personality scale items that represent what people believe to be true of the "empathic man," and respondents rate themselves on these items. A high score reflects an orientation toward others and an acceptance of their views.

Hogan (1975) suggests that his scale can be used to predict the performance of counselors in a helping situation:

> Empathic counselors will tend to foster and promote a non-threatening context for their clients' efforts at self-exploration, self-expression and self-disclosure, and these efforts should be facilitated as a consequence (p. 17).

In a similar vein, Kurtines (Note 2) has undertaken the development of an empirical instrument to assess the autonomy dimension of moral character. Drawing upon Piaget's (1964) conception of moral development on a continuum from heteronomy to autonomy, Kurtines suggests that the morally

mature person should be governed by his own personal moral code and the implications of that code for others. Consequently, his actions and decisions will be relatively independent of immediate social pressure and influence, and thus provide the impetus for adaptive social change. Thus, the morally mature person will be autonomous as well as empathic.

Kurtines understands autonomy primarily in terms of inter-personal independence. His investigations leading to the development of an Autonomy Scale indicated that individuals rated high on autonomy are seen by others as independent in judgment, dominant in social interaction, persistent in attaining goals, achievement oriented, and possessing qualities which lead to status (they are capable and effective). In his paper, Kurtines provides substantial evidence for the validity (construct and predictive) as well as the reliability of his instrument.

Interpersonal Helping

The above conceptualizations and empirical research in the area of moral character have potential utility in the study of interpersonal helping behavior. Severy (1975) suggests that helping in an interpersonal or counseling context can be considered a type of altruistic behavior. Distinguishing psychological from task help, he classifies helping in a counseling context as psychological help, in

an emergency or crisis situation which would be an example of task help. Furthermore, Severy suggests that individual differences in helping dispositions can be conceived of as personality attributes which can be assessed by means of empirical instruments.

Egan (1975, 1976) presents a three stage model for training individuals in interpersonal helping skills. The interpersonal skills of primary and advanced accurate empathy are of critical importance in training counselors to be effective in stages I and II of the helping model. However, Egan (1975) maintains that many counselors never go beyond these stages to Stage III. where the counselor takes a more active role in facilitating behavior change.

The concept of the highly developed moral character as both empathically altruistic and autonomous may provide a useful framework for assessing individual differences in relation to effective interpersonal helping. Moreover, the empirical instruments developed to assess empathy (Hogan, 1969, 1975) and autonomy (Kurtines, Note 2), could be evaluated in relation to a specific type of moral or prosocial helping behavior that is helping in an interpersonal or counseling context. Furthermore, exploring the relationship between moral character and reported mystical experience may provide an important theoretical link between the experiential and consequential dimensions of religion.

Social Intelligence

A related area of research having to do with individual differences in relation to prosocial, interpersonal behavior centers around the concept of social intelligence.

Walker and Foley (1973) in a review of the literature, trace the history of the concept of social intelligence as well as attempts to measure it. They note that Thorndike's (1920) original conception of social intelligence as the ability to: (a) understand others and (b) to act or behave wisely in relating to others contains the two essential and distince aspects of social intelligence - understanding and acting. Later conceptual and empirical efforts to understand and measure social intelligence and related concepts (Chapin, 1942; Dymond, 1950; Feffer and Suchotliff, 1966; Flavell, 1968; Gough, 1968; Moss, Hunt, Onwake, and Woodward, 1955; O'Sullivan and Guilford, 1966; Vernon, 1933) have focused on either the faculty, the understanding dimension, or the behavior, the acting dimension, or in some cases (Flavell, 1968) both aspects of social intelligence.

Walker and Foley point out that while Thorndike's definition seems to have captured the essence of social intelligence many later investigators have used different theoretical formulations and have often ignored or confounded the two distinct aspects of understanding and acting. They suggest that knowing and acting must be evaluated separately before their interaction can be assessed, since while it is

"true that wise social action presupposes social understanding, social understanding itself is a necessary but not sufficient cause for wise social behavior" (p. 846).

In considering the "understanding" dimension of social intelligence the concept of role-taking from cognitive developmental theory is relevant. Feffer (1959, 1966) and Flavell (1968) have utilized Piaget's (1950) conceptual framework to investigate cognitive development in terms of human objects in an interpersonalcontext. Feffer and Suchotliff (1966) have proposed that Piaget's concept of decentering, i.e., shifting focus from one part of the perceptual field to another, can be extended to interpersonal behavior. This ability to engage in "balanced" decentering is assessed through a Role-taking Test utilizing TAT-like pictures. Subjects are rated in terms of their ability to take the role of the other while simultaneously maintaining their own perspective in a social interaction situation. This test seems to measure an aspect of Thorndike's "understanding" dimension at the same time clarifying this dimension of social intelligence in terms of the cognitive activity involved in successful role-taking.

Turning to the "action" dimension of social intelligence, Walker and Foley suggest that research on the concept of empathy is relevant. Dymond (1948, 1949, 1950) developed instruments to measure empathy defined as "the imaginative transposing of oneself into the thinking, feeling,

and acting of another" (Dymond, 1950, p. 343). More recently Hogan (1969, 1973) working in the area of moral development, has constructed a 64 item empathy scale with demonstrated validity and reliability. Hogan (1973) notes that role-taking ability is an important antecedent to developing empathic behavior. Thus, Hogan's empathy scale can be seen as a complementary tool to Feffer's Role-taking Test for measuring the "action" component of social intelligence. Walker and Foley concur that Hogan's instrument has interest and promise.

Walker and Foley's analysis of the understanding vs. action dimensions of social intelligence is analogous in an interpersonal helping context, to the essential helper functions of discrimination and communication outlined by Carkhuff (1969, a,b) and Egan (1975, 1976). These authors maintain that the effective helper can both discriminate, that is, understand accurately the situation of the client, and communicate, that is actively demonstrate that understanding in a therapeutically facilitative manner. One would expect that social intelligence, in terms of the understanding and action dimensions, would be related to effective helping in an interpersonal or counseling context.

HYPOTHESES

In summary, the following hypotheses are put forth for the present study:

1) Moral character, as measured by Hogan's Empathy Scale and Kurtines' Autonomy Scale, will be

positively related to reported level of mystical experience, as measured by Hood's Mysticism Scale.

2) Mystical experience, moral character and social intelligence will be positively related to helping skill performance in a counseling analogue situation.

3) Mystical experience, moral character and social intelligence will be positively related to helping skill performance in an interpersonal human relations training group.

4) The discrimination dimension of social intelligence as measured by Feffer's Role-Taking Test, and the communication dimension of social intelligence, as measured by Hogan's Empathy Scale, will differentially predict performance on helping skills, based on whether the skill primarily involves the ability to understand (the discrimination dimension) or the ability to act (the communications dimension).

In addition the relationship between personality style, as reflected on the Millon-Illinois Self-Report Inventory (Form P, for normals), and reported level of mystical experience will be explored using an adult, religiously oriented population in an effort to better understand the relationship between the experiential dimenison of religion and broad-based personality characteristics.

Finally, the effect of Millon's four basic interpersonal styles: detached, dependent, independent, and ambivalent, on helping skill performance will be investigated.

METHOD

Subject: The subjects for this study were 32 graduate students enrolled ina two course sequence in basic helping and human relations training at the Institute of Pastoral Studies of Loyola University. The majority of these subjects were Catholic priests and sisters; the remainder were religiously oriented laypersons. Subjects were asked to participate in a research project to evaluate the skills training program. All students participated in the study.

Materials: The following instruments were used in the study: Millon-Illinois Self Report Inventory (Form P, for use with normals, Millon, 1974); Hood's Mysticism Scale (Research Form D, Hood, 1975); Hogan's Empathy Scale, (Hogan 1969); Kurtines' Autonomy Scale (Kurtines, Note 2); Feffer's Role-Taking Test (Schnall and Feffer, Note 3); and helping skills rating sheets adapted from Egan (1975, 1976) and Carkhuff (1969, a,b). In addition videotape equipment was used to record the counseling analogue sessions; and an overhead projector was used to administer Feffer's Role-Taking Test.

Procedure: During the first week of class subjects were administered the paper and pencil tests, which were completed at home. Feffer's Role-taking Test was administered to the whole group in class using an overhead projector. Also during the first week each subject participated in an individual counseling analogue session. During this five-minute session, which

was videotaped, they were instructed to counsel a professional counselor who uniformly presented an authentic personal problem to each subject. After all subjects were videotaped, each subject was given feed back on their helping style in the session by the counselor who served as their client. Two supervisors in the program independently rated the performance of subjects in the counseling analogue session, utilizing the helping skills rating sheets. A Pearson correlation was done on the ratings of the two supervisors, $r = .74$. $p < .001$, which indicated an acceptable degree of interrater reliability. In addition, two trained graduate students in psychology independently rated performance on Feffer's Role-Taking Test using criteria provided by Schnall and Feffer (Note 3). Final score was determined by consensus.

At the end of the six week training program, subjects were asked to fill out a helping skills rating sheet (mentioned above) on the members in their skills training group. The trainers in each group were also asked to complete rating sheets on all members in their group. Subjects and trainers were instructed that these rating sheets were solely for research purposes, would remain confidential, and would not affect students' course grades. After this phase of the data collection was complete the specific nature of the research project was explained to all students in more detail. Subjects were also given feedback on all individual test data at this time, and assured that this data would remain confidential.

RESULTS

Results concerning the relationship between moral character and mystical experience, personality style and mystical experience, and the effect of moral character, mystical experience and social intelligence on helping skill performance were analyzed with Pearson *r* correlation matrices (*N* = 32, *df* = 30). Results concerning the effect of specific personality style were analyzed with oneway analyses of variance (ANOVAS).

Moral Character and Mystical Experience

Hypothesis I, that moral character would be positively related to mystical experience, was confirmed. Combined scores on the Empathy Scale and the Autonomy Scale (reflecting moral character) were positively related to scores on the Mysticism Scale ($r = .36$, $p < .03$).

A further analysis of the relationships between the two major factors of the Mysticism Scale: General Mystical Experience (Factor I) and Religious Interpretation (Factor II), and moral character was done. A significant positive relationship was found between General Mystical Experience and moral character ($r = .43$, $p < .02$); however, the relationship between the Religious Interpretation factor and moral character was not significant ($r = .09$, *ns*).

A final analysis investigated the relationship between mystical experience and the components of moral character:

empathy and autonomy. There was a significant positive relationship between the Mysticism Scale and the Empathy Scale ($r = .37$, $p < .02$); however, the relationship between the Mysticism Scale and the Autonomy Scale, although positive, was not significant ($r = .21$, ns). The General Mystical Experience factor was positively related to the Empathy Scale ($r = .44$, $p < .02$), but the Religious Interpretation factor showed no significant relationship to the Empathy Scale ($r = .09$, ns).

The results of the above analyses are summarized in Table 1. They confirm that moral character is significantly related to mystical experience, and that this relationship can best be understood in terms of the relationship between empathy and general mystical experience, rather than mystical experience associated with a religious interpretation.

Counseling Performance

Results related to Hypothesis II, that mystical experience, moral character and social intelligence would be positively related to helping skill performance in a counseling analogue situation, are summarized in Table I. Counseling effectiveness was assessed by averaging the ratings of two expert judges across the various helping skills (interrater reliability was assessed, $r = .74$, $p < .001$). No significant relationships were found between the subject variables: mystical experience, moral character and social intelligence;

and helping skill performance in the counseling analogue situation.

However, in a separate analysis of the components of moral character, the Empathy and Autonomy Scales, there was a significant positive relationship between scores on the Autonomy Scale and helping skill performance in the counseling analogue situation ($r = .34$, $p < .03$).

Human Relations Performance

Results related to Hypothesis III, that mystical experience, moral character and social intelligence would be positively related to helping skill performance in a human relations training group, are summarized in Table I. Human relations effectiveness was assessed by averaging the ratings of peers and trainers across the various helping skills at the conclusion of the training group. No significant relationships were found between the subject variables: mystical experience, moral character, and social intelligence; and helping skill performance in the human relations training group.

However, in a separate analysis of the components of moral character, the Empathy and Autonomy Scales, there was a significant positive relationship between scores on the Autonomy Scale and average performance on helping skills in the human relations group, as rated by peers and trainers ($r = .30$, $p < .05$).

TABLE 1

CORRELATION MATRIX FOR MORAL CHARACTER, MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE, SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE, AND COUNSELING AND HUMAN RELATIONS PERFORMANCE

	Moral Character (E+A)	Empathy (E)	Autonomy (A)	Counseling Performance	Human Relations Performance
Moral Character					
(E+A)				.20	.01
Empathy (E)	.37**			.07	-.17
Autonomy (A)	.21	.47***		.34*	.30*
Mysticism (M)	.36*	.37*	.21	-.21	-.12
General Mysticism (Factor I)	.43**	.44**	.25	-.16	-.16
Religious Interpretation (Factor II)	.10	.09	.06	-.30	.01
Social Intelligence				.02	-.13
(RTT+E)				.02	-.13
Role-taking Test (RTT				-.04	-.03
Empathy (E)				.07	-.17

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .02$; *** $p < .01$

($n = 32$)

A further analysis separated the trainer ratings from the peer ratings of helping skill performance and found that only the peer ratings were positively related to Autonomy Scale scores ($r = .40$, $p < .01$). This can be attributed to the greater variance in the trainer ratings ($n = 2$) as compared to the peer ratings ($n = 4$ or 5).

Discrimination and Communication

Hypothesis IV, that the discrimination dimension of social intelligence, as measured by Feffer's Role-Taking Test, and the communication dimension of social intelligence, as measured by Hogan's Empathy Scale, would differentially predict performance on helping skills, based on whether the skill primarily involves the ability to understand (the discrimination dimension) or the ability to act (the communication dimension), was not confirmed. A correlational matrix utilizing combined peer and trainer ratings on helping skills is presented in Table 2.

A further analysis revealed the interesting finding that scores on the Autonomy Scale showed a highly significant positive relationship to social intelligence ($r = .56$, $p < .001$). Analyzing the relationship between the Autonomy Scale and the two components of social intelligence, reflected in the Empathy Scale and the Role-Taking Test, indicated significant positive relationships for both components (for Empathy, $r = .47$, $p < .01$; for Role-Taking, $r = .34$, $p < .05$).

TABLE 2

CORRELATION MATRIX FOR SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE, AUTONOMY, AND HELPING SKILLS PERFORMANCE IN HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING GROUP

	Social Intelligence (RTT+E)	Role-Taking Test (RTT)	Empathy (E)	Autonomy
Autonomy	.57***	.34*	.47**	
Helping Skills				
Accurate Empathy (primary)	.17	-.12	-.12	.21
Respect	-.14	-.11	-.10	.11
Genuineness	-.45	-.23	-.42**	-.03
Concreteness	-.13	.05	-.27	.30
Accurate Empathy (advanced)	.09	.06	.07	.44**
Immediacy	-.03	.07	-.13	.38*
Self-disclosure	-.12	.01	-.19	.26
Confrontation	-.21	-.12	-.19	.15
Alternate Frame Of Reference	.01	.04	-.03	.27
Facilitating Action	.03	.07	-.04	.26

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

($n = 32$)

These results are also summarized in Table 2.

A final analysis was done to assess the relationship between socres on the Autonomy Scale and performance on specific helping skills at the end of the human relations training group. A significant positive relationship (r = .43, $p < .02$) existed for the skill of advanced accurate empathy (AEII) and for the skill of immediacy (r = .38, $p <$ .04). These results are summarized in Table 2.

Personality Style and Mystical Experience

Although not related to a specific hypothesis, the relationship between personality style, as reflected on the eight scales of the Millon-Illinois Self-Report Inventory (MI-SRI, Form P) and mystical experience was explored through a correlational analysis. These results are summarized in Table 3.

There was a significant negative relationship between scores on the Mysticism Scale (M) and scores on Millon's Passive-Ambivalent Scale (r = -.40, $p < .03$). In a further analysis of the relationship between personality style and the two factors of the M Scale, General Mystical Experience and Religious Interpretation, a significant negative relationship was found between socres on the General Mystical Experience factor and scores on the Passive-Ambivalent Scale (r = -.39, $p < .03$); and a negative relationship approaching significance was found for scores on the Passive-Detached Scale (r = -.33, $p < .07$). The Religious Interpretation

TABLE 3

CORRELATION MATRIX FOR PERSONALITY STYLE AND MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

Millon's Personality Scales	Mysticism Scale (Factors I & II)	General Mysticism (Factor I)	Religious Interpretation (Factor II)
Passive-Detached	-.26	-.33	-.04
Active-Detached	.05	-.02	.20
Passive-Dependent	.11	.04	.30
Active-Dependent	.12	.17	-.03
Passive-Independent	-.07	.02	-.26
Active Independent	-.10	.04	-.38*
Passive-Ambivalent	-.40*	-.39*	-.31
Active-Ambivalent	.31	.28	.30

* $p < .05$
($n = 32$)

factor was negatively related to scores on the Active-Ambivalent Scale ($r = -.39$, $p < .03$).

Personality Style and Helping Skill Performance

The effect of specific personality styles on helping skill performance in both the counseling analogue and human relations settings, as well as, change in performance over the course of training, was analyzed in three separate oneway analyses of variance (ANOVAS).

Personality style was determined by highest scale score on the Millon-Illinois Self-Report Inventory (MI-SRI) corresponding to one of the four basic Millon interpersonal styles: detached, dependent, independent, and ambivalent. The effect of personality style on helping skill performance in the counseling analogue situation was not significant, $F(3,28) = 1.91$, $p < .15$). However, there was trend for the detached personality style to be less effective than the ambivalent style, as determined by a post hoc analysis using a multiple range test, LSD procedure, ($p < .05$). These results are summarized in Table 4.

The effect of personality style on helping skill performance in the human relations training group was found to be significant, $F(3,26) = 3.44$, $p < .03$. A post hoc analysis with a multiple range test LSD procedure, ($p < .05$), indicated that the detached or independent styles. These results are summarized in Table 5.$F(3,28(= 3.496$, $p < .03$. A

TABLE 4

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE AND MULTIPLE RANGE TEST FOR THE EFFECT OF PERSONALITY STYLE ON COUNSELING PERFORMANCE

Analysis of Variance

Source	df	Ms	F
Group	3	19.44	1.91*
Error	28	10.17	

* $p < .15$, ns

Multiple Range Test

Mean	Group	Dependent	Independent	Detached	Ambivalent
15.75	Dependent				
16.38	Independent				
16.75	Detached				
19.60	Ambivalent	**			

** Denotes pairs of groups significantly different, LSD procedure, $p < .05$

TABLE 5

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE AND MULTIPLE RANGE TEST
FOR THE EFFECT OF PERSONALITY STYLE
ON HUMAN RELATIONS PERFORMANCE

Analysis of Variance

Source	df	MS	F
Group	3	149.31	3.44*
Error	28	43.38	

* $p < .05$

Multiple Range Test

Mean	Group	Independent	Detached	Dependent	Ambivalent
69.34	Independent				
69.78	Detached				
76.25	Dependent				
80.59	Ambivalent	**	**		

** Denotes pairs of groups significantly different, LSD procedure, $p < .05$

hos analysis with a multiple range test, LSD procedure, ($<.05$), indicated that the dependent style improved in performance significantly more than either the detached or independent styles, and the ambivalent style improved significantly more than the detached style. These results are summarized in Table 6.

Counseling Performance and Human Relations Performance

Although not related to a specific hypothesis, a correlational analysis of helping skill performance in the initial counseling analogue session in relation to helping skill performance at the end of the human relations training program was done to assess the impact of initial skill level on final performance. These results are summarized in Table 7.

The correlation matrix indicates several significant positive relationships between initial skill performance and final skill performance. Especially interesting is the finding that overall initial skill performance was positively related to overall final skill performance ($r = .42$, $p < .02$).

A further analysis investigated the relationship between initial level of performance and change in performance. Results summarized in Table 7 indicate no significant relationship. In addition, a matched t - test using initial and final skill levels was performed to determine if there was a significant change in performance as a result of training. Results summarized in Table 8 indicate that training led to a significant improvement in helping skill performance,

TABLE 6

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE AND MULTIPLE RANGE TEST FOR THE EFFECT OF PERSONALITY STYLE ON IMPROVEMENT IN HELPING SKILL PERFORMANCE AS A RESULT OF TRAINING

Analysis of Variance

Source	df	MS	F
Group	3	124.77	3.50*
Error	28	35.69	

* $p < .05$

Multiple Range Test

Mean	Group	Independent	Detached	Dependent	Ambivalent
52.97	Independent				
53.04	Detached				
60.50	Dependent	**	**		
60.99	Ambivalent		**		

** Denotes pairs of groups significantly different, LSD procedure, $p < .05$

TABLE 7

CORRELATION MATRIX FOR HELPING SKILL PERFORMANCE IN COUNSELING ANALOGUE AND HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING GROUP

Helping Skills In Human Relations Training Group	Helping Skills in Counseling Analogue Session							
	AEI	R	G	C	AEII	I	SD	TOTAL
Accurate Empathy (primary, AEI)	.43*	.42*	.32	.37*	.05	.10	.07	
Respect (R)	.43*	.39*	.16	.33	.07	.26	.29	
Genuineness (G)	.41*	.37*	.14	.35*	.07	-.08	.01	
Concreteness (C)	.45**	.51**	.34	.45**	.11	.03	-.03	
Accurate Empathy (advanced, AEII)	.52**	.47**	.30	.42*	.15	.07	-.07	
Immediacy (I)	.53**	.42*	.27	.47**	.16	.09	.18	
Self-disclosure (SD)	.32	.25	.16	.26	.11	.20	.28	
Confrontation[1]	.52**	.43*	.22	.52**	.22	.15	.17	
Alternate Frame of Reference[1]	.48**	.45**	.34	.60**	.28	.20	.25	
Facilitating Action[1]	.48**	.39*	.26	.44*	.18	.18	.26	
Total Helping Skills (TOTAL)								.42*
Change in Helping Skills								-.04

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
1 These skills were not rated in initial counseling analogue session

$t(31) = 17.39$, $p < .001$. These results suggest that, while training had a significant positive effect on helping skill performance, improvement was not related to initial skill level.

TABLE 8

MATCHED T-TEST FOR CHANGE IN HELPING SKILL PERFORMANCE AS A RESULT OF TRAINING

	Mean	SD
Initial Helping Skills (Counseling Analogue)	16.59	3.33
Final Helping Skills (Human Relations Training Group)	26.87	2.57

Difference Mean	SD	t	df
10.28	3.35	17.39*	31

* $p < .001$

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provided some empirical support for conceptualizations concerning the relationship between religious and personality variables, and behavioral effects.

One important finding, that mystical experience is positively related to moral character, suggests that the experiential dimension of religion may be a fruitful component to focus on in investigations of the relationship between religion and personality adjustment. Of particular importance in this study, was the finding that the significant relationship between reported mystical experience (Mysticism Sale) and moral character (Empathy and Autonomy) could be attributed primarily to the relationship between the general mysticism factor and the empathy component of moral character.

Hood (1975) suggests that the general mysticism factor is best conceived as an indicator of capacity for intense experience, not interpreted religiously. Gladstein (1977), in a review of empathy measures in relation to counseling outcome, suggests that Hogan's (1969, 1975) Empathy Scale primarily assesses the cognitive, or role-taking, dimension of empathy, which is understood in terms of a cognitive-affective dimension.

One possible theoretical explanation for the relationship between general mystical experience and the capacity

for empathy would be that both are a reflection of a higher level of cognitive development which expands an individual's ability to understand and integrate a broader range of experience.

The present study, however, failed to confirm any specific relationship between the religious interpretation factor of the Mysticism Scale and moral character. Hood (1975) suggests that this factor is best conceived as an indicator of a joyful expression of more traditionally defined religious experiences, which may or may not be mystical, but which are interpreted to indicate a firm source of objective knowledge. Maslow's (1969) theoretical understanding of peak experiences as mystical experiences, which may or may not be given a religious interpretation, is consistent with Hood's empirical findings.

The present study confirms this distinction. Not only were the two factors of the Mysticism Scale differentially related to moral character, but they also manifested a differential pattern of relationships to the various scales of Millon's personality inventory (1974). The Passive-Ambivalent and Passive-Detached Scales were negatively related to general mystical experience, but not to the religious interpretation aspect of mysticism. This relationship is theoretically consistent with Millon's (Note 1) description of the Passive-Detached Scale as reflecting individuals who tend not to get emotionally involved with others and do not

often feel strongly about things; and the Passive-Ambivalent Scale as reflecting individuals who try to keep their emotions in check and prefer to live in an orderly, well-planned fashion while avoiding unexpected experiences. Thus, it seems that individuals with high scores on these scales are not likely to be open to the intense experiences associated with general mysticism, although they may, nevertheless, be quite religious in a traditional sense.

In contrast, the opposite pattern was found for the Active-Independent Scale, which reflects individuals who are strong-willed, tough minded, and who tend to be dominating in relation to others as well as impatient with their weaknesses. Individuals with high scores on this scale were not likely to interpret their experience in a traditional religious sense, yet they could be open to intense mystical experience in general.

While the above findings concerning the relationship between mystical-religious experience and personality characteristics are of value in themselves, a more significant issue, and the major concern of this study, has to do with the behavioral effects of these various individual characteristics on behavior, specifically, interpersonal helping behaviors. We will next summarize the findings in this area.

The major variables (mystical experience, moral character and social intelligence) which were predicted to have a positive relationship to helping skill performance in a

counseling and human relations context manifested no significant relationship. However, an important finding was that the Autonomy Scale used to assess a component of moral character significantly predicted helping skill performance in both the initial counseling analogue session and at the end of the human relations training group. In addition, the Autonomy Scale showed a significant positive relationship to both measures hypothesized to assess the understanding and action dimensions of social intelligence, namely, the Role-Taking Test and the Empathy Scale. Together, these findings suggest that the Autonomy Scale may actually be a better measure of overall social intelligence, conceived as understanding (i.e. discriminating what is going on in others) and then acting (i.e. communicating that understanding effectively), than either the Role-Taking Test, or the Empathy Scale, or a combination of the two.

This interpretation is consistent with Kurtines' (Note 2) conceptualizations regarding autonomy. He suggests that the autonomous individual is both concerned aboutothers and their welfare, and is able to act efficiently, capably, and in a manner that is little influenced by interpersonal pressure. These qualities are reflective of the mature, highly skilled helper (Egan, 1975)who is able to understand and challenge others as well as facilitate action leading to constructive change in behavior.

Further evidence for individual characteristics associated with effective interpersonal helping was found through an examination of Millon's four basic interpersonal styles in relation to helping skill performance.

Analysis of performance at the end of the human relations training indicated that those whose fundamental interpersonal orientation was to be detached or independent were generally perceived as less effective across a range of interpersonal helping behaviors than those with an ambivalent orientation.

Since all who manifested an ambivalent style in the present study were of the passive-ambivalent type, this finding suggests that those who are conscientious, efficient, orderly, and hard-working are perceived as effective helpers.

In the initial counseling analogue session, those with an ambivalent style were also rated the highest in helping skill performance, and significantly more effective than those with a dependent style. This finding is consistent with Millon's (Note 1) description of the dependent style as being overly concerned wtih the reactions of others. Since most of the population in this study with a basic dependent style were of the passive type, it is not surprising that they tended to perform less well in an initial counseling analogue session.

However, an interesting finding emerged in exploring the relationship of interpersonal style to <u>change</u> in helping

skillperformance over the course of training. In this analysis, those with a dependent style improved significantly more in interpersonal helping skills than those manifesting either the detached or independent styles; and those with an ambivalent style improved significantly more than those manifesting a detached style. Thus, it appears that a dependent interpersonal style, with its strong orientation toward others, can be a predisposing factor which facilitates improvement in helper functioning over the course of training. In like manner, the ambivalent style appears to facilitate improvement in helper functioning. However, those with a predominantly detached or independent interpersonal style do not appear to benefit as mucy from a training program in helping skills.

However, in spite of the above considerations, this study did suggest that training led to significant improvement for the group as a whole. This supports the contention of Corkhuff (1969) that even less effective helpers can benefit from training. Moreover, this study indicated that initial skill level was not significantly related to improvement over the course of training. Thus, even though initial helping performance was positively related to final helping performance, the effect of training on performance was relatively constant across the range of initial helper ability.

Future research in this area should utilize an improved design which incorporates equivalent pretest and posttest measures of helping skill performance. This could be done

by either repeating the videotaped counseling analogue session at the end of training or having peers and trainers rate performance of group members during the initial phase of training. Of these two, the counseling analogue procedure is more adviseable, since it is less susceptible to social desirability factors which might conpound ratings of fellow group members.

Although the Mysticism Scale was not positively related to helper performance, future research with a population which is not as characteristically religious, as in this study, may generate different results. This is suggested by the finding that the general mystical experience factor, but not the religious interpretation factor, was significantly related to the empathy component of moral character. In addition, the use of a measure of self-actualization related to Maslow's (1964) theory of personality could further clarify the relationship between mystical-religious experience and personality characteristics.

SUMMARY

In summary, this study provided some initial support for examining the experiential dimension of religion in relation to personality characteristics and behavioral effects. The core of general mystical experience was found to be positively related to an empathic component associated with moral character. In addition, general mystical experience and a religious interpretation factor associated with mystical experience were found to be negatively associated wtih different personality styles.

In terms of behavioral effects, a measure of autonomy and personality characteristics associated with interpersonal style were found to be significantly related to helping skill performance in a counseling and human relations context. Examination of pre-training and post-training performance usggested that training led to more effective helper functioning, and that this improvement was unrelated to initial levels of helper skill. Limitations of the current study and suggestions for future research were discussed.

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APPENDIX A

I. MYSTICISM SCALE

Age _____

Sex _____

Religion_____

INSTRUCTIONS

The attached booklet contains brief descriptions of a number of experiences. Some descriptions refer to phenomenon that you may have experienced while others refer to phenomenon that you may not have experienced. In each case note the description carefully and then place a mark in the left margin according to how much the description applies to your own experience. Write +1, +2, or -1, -2, or ? depending on how you feel in each case.

+1 THIS DESCRIPTION IS PROBABLY TRUE OF MY OWN EXPERIENCE OR EXPERIENCES.

-1: THIS DESCRIPTION IS PROBABLY NOT TRUE OF MY OWN EXPERIENCE OR EXPERIENCES.

+2 THIS DESCRIPTION IS DEFINITELY TRUE OF MY OWN EXPERIENCE OR EXPERIENCES

-2 THIS DESCRIPTION IS DEFINITELY NOT TRUE OF MY OWN EXPERIENCE OR EXPERIENCES.

2 I CANNOT DECIDE.

Please mark each item trying to avoid if at all possible marking any item with a 2. In responding to each item, please understand that the items may be considered as applying to

several different experiences. After completing the booklet, please be sure that all items have been marked - leave no items unanswered.

____ 1. I have had an experience which was both timeless and spaceless.

____ 2. I have never had an experience which was incapable of being expressed in words.

____ 3. I have had an experience in which something greater than myself seemed to absorb me.

____ 4. I have had an experience in which everything seemed to disappear from my mind until I was conscious only of a void.

____ 5. I have experienced profound joy.

____ 6. I have never had an experience in which I felt myself to be absorbed as one with all things.

____ 7. I have never experienced a perfectly peaceful state.

____ 8. I have never had an experience in which I felt as if all things were alive.

____ 9. I have never had an experience which seemed holy to me.

____10. I have never had an experience in which all things seemed to be aware.

____11. I have had an experience in which I had no sense of time or space.

____12. I have had an experience in which I realized the one-ness of myself with all things.

____13. I have had an experience in which a new view of reality was revealed to me.

____14. I have never experienced anything to be divine.

____15. I have never had an experience in which time and space were non-existant.

____16. I have never experienced anything that I could call ultimate reality.

____17. I have had an experience in which ultimate reality was revealed to me.

____18. I have had an experience in which I felt that all was perfection at that time.

____19. I have had an experience in which I felt everything in the world to be part of the same whole.

____20. I have had an experience which I knew to be sacred.

____21. I have never had an experience which I was unable to express adequately through language.

____22. I have had an experience which left me with a feeling of awe.

____23. I have had an experience that is impossible to communicate.

____24. I have never had an experience in which my own self seemed to merge into something greater.

____25. I have never had an experience which left me with a feeling of wonder.

____26. I have never had an experience in which deeper aspects of reality were revealed to me.

____27. I have never had an experience in which time, place, and distance were meaningless.

____28. I have never had an experience in which I became aware of a unity to all things.

____29. I have had an experience in which all things seemed to be conscious.

____30. I have never had an experience in which all things seemed to be unified into a single whole.

____31. I have had an experience in which I felt nothing is ever really dead.

____32. I have had an experience that cannot be expressed in words.

II. EMPATHY SCALE

PERSONALITY INVENTORY

Directions: This survey consists of numbered statements. Read each statement and decide whether it is true as applied to you or false as applied to you.

You are to mark your answers to Part I on the first answer sheet, and those to Part II on the second sheet. I the statement is true or mostly true, as applied to you, blacken between the lines in the column headed T. I the statement is false or not usually true, as applied to you, blacken between the lines in the column headed F. Do not leave any spaces blank.

Remember to give YOUR OWN opinion of yourself.

PART I

1. A person needs to "show off" a little now and then.
2. I liked "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll.
3. Clever, sarcastic people make me feel very uncomfortable.
4. I usually take an active part in the entertainment at parties.
5. I feel sure that there is only one true religion.
6. I am afraid of deep water.
7. I must admit that I often try to get my own way regardless of what others may want.
8. I have at one time or another in my life tried my hand at writing poetry.
9. Most of the arguments or quarrels I get into are over matters of principle.
10. I would like the job of a foreign correspondent for a newspaper.
11. People today have forgotten how to feel properly ashamed of themselves.
12. I prefer a shower to a bathtub.
13. I always try to consider the other fellow's feelings before I do something.
14. I usually don't like to talk much unless I am with people I know very well.
15. I can't remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
16. I like to keep people guessing what I'm going to do next.
17. Before I do something I try to consider how my friends will react to it.
18. I like to talk before groups of people.
19. When a man is with a woman he is usually thinking about things related to her sex.
20. Only a fool would try to change our American way of life.

21. My parents were always very strict and stern with me.

22. Sometimes I rather enjoy going against the rules and doing things I'm not supposed to.

23. I think I would like to belong to a singing club.

24. I think I am usually a leader in my group.

25. I like to have a place for everything and everything in its place.

26. I don't like to work on a problem unless there is the possibility of coming out with a clear-cut and unambiguous answer.

27. It bothers me when something unexpected interrupts my daily routine.

28. I have a natural talent for influencing people.

29. I don't really care whether people like me or dislike me.

30. The trouble with many people is that they don't take things seriously enough.

31. It is hard for me just to sit still and relax.

32. Once in a while I think of things too bad to talk about.

33. I feel that it is certainly best to keey my mouth shut when I am in trouble.

34. I am a good mixer.

35. I am an important person.

36. I like poetry.

37. My feelings are not easily hurt.

38. I have met problems so full of possibilities that I have been unable to make up my mind about them.

39. Often I can't understand why I have been so cross and grouchy.

40. What others think of me does not bother me.

41. I would like to be a journalist.

42. I like to talk about sex.

43. My way of doing things is apt to be misunderstood by others.

44. Sometimes without any reason or even when things are going wrong I feel excitedly happy, "on top of the world."

45. I like to be with a crowd who play jokes on one another.

46. My mother or father often made me obey even when I thought that it was unreasonable.

47. I easily become impatient with people.

48. Sometimes I enjoy hurting persons I love.

49. I tend to be interested in several different hobbies rather than to stick to one of them for a long time.

50. I am not easily angered.

51. People have often misunderstood my intentions when I was trying to put them right and be helpful.

52. I am usually calm and not easily upset.

53. I would enjoy beating a crook at his own game.

54. I am often so annoyed when someone tries to get ahead of me in a line of people that I speak to him about it.

55. I used to like hopscotch.

56. I have never been made especially nervous over trouble that any members of my family have gotten into.

57. I frequently undertake more than I can accomplish.

58. I enjoy the company of strong-willed people.

59. Disobedience to the government is never justified.

60. It is the duty of a citizen to support his country, right or wrong.

61. I have seen things so sad that I almost felt like crying.

62. I have a pretty clear idea of what I would try to import to my students if I were a teacher.

63. As a rule I have little difficulty in "putting myself into another's shoes."

64. I am usually rather short-tempered with people who come around and bother me with foolish questions.

III. AUTONOMY SCALE

PERSONALITY INVENTORY

PART II

1. I would like to be a journalist.
2. Sometimes I think of things too bad to talk about.
3. It is annoying to listen to a lecturer who cannot seem to make up his mind as to what he really believes.
4. I like to be the center of attention.
5. I can be friendly with people who do things which I consider wrong.
6. Planning one's activities in advance is very likely to take most of the fun out of life.
7. I wake up fresh and rested most mornings.
8. I like tall women.
9. I have wanderlust and am never happy unless I am roaming or traveling about.
10. In school I always looked far ahead in planning what courses to take.
11. Teachers often expect too much work from the students.
12. I am certainly lacking in self-confidence.
13. My parents have generally let me make my own decisions.
14. The most important things to me are my duties to my job and to my fellowman.
15. Once in a while I laugh at a dirty joke.
16. At times I have worn myself out by undertaking too much.
17. I like to plan my activities in advance.
18. I always try to do at least a little better than what is expected of me.
19. I enjoy man different kinds of play and recreation.

20. I think I would like to belong to a motorcycle club.

21. I often wish people would be more definite about things.

22. I go out of my way to meet trouble rather than try to escape it.

23. I must admit I am a pretty fair talker.

24. Some of my family have habits that bother and annoy me very much.

25. I have strong political opinions.

26. I think I am usually a leader in my group.

27. I am known as a hard and steady worker.

28. My mouth feels dry almost all of the time.

29. It is pretty easy for people to win arguments with me.

30. I daydream very little.

31. I'm not the type to be a political leader.

32. I get tired more easily than other people seem to.

33. Once a week or oftener I become very excited.

34. Whenever possible I avoid being in a crowd.

35. Perfect balance is the essence of all good composition.

36. When I start work on something new I always take time to plan in advance the way in which I will work.

37. I value being independent of other people.

38. I often feel as if things were not real.

39. Many of the girls I knew in school went out with a fellow only for what they could get out of him.

40. I hardly ever notice my heart pounding and I am seldom short of breath.

APPENDIX B

HELPER BEHAVIORS: A RATING SCALE

Use the following rating scale to rate helper behaviors:

1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0
poor		below average		average		above average		excellent

____ Accurate empathy (primary): The helper communicates an accurate understanding of the feelings and behavior (content) of the helpee's experience. He experiences the "world" of the helpee and communicates his understanding.

____ Respect (warmth, being "for"): The helper communicates respect for the helpee (especially through his efforts to understand the helpee's experience). He is unconditional or conditional in his regard as the phase and content of the helping process demand.

____ Genuineness: The helper is himself, not phony; he does not hide behind professional roles: he is spontaneously himself, yet does not overwhelm the helpee with himself.

____ Concreteness: The helper deals in specific, concrete feelings and behavior; he deals in relevant behavior (not "storytelling"); he deals in specific instances and specific details.

____ Accurate empathy (advanced): The helper communicates an understanding, not only of what the helpee actually says, but also of what he implies, hints at, or says nonverbally. He begins to make connections between seemingly isolated statements made by the helpee.

____ Immediacy: The helper explores the here-and-now, the relationship between helper and helpee; he relates what the helpee is saying to this relationship; he understands and deals with the helpee's subverbal and nonverbal messages.

____ Self-disclosure: Moment-to-moment sharing of what the helper feels is happening to him in the helping process itself is most important; the helper also shares other experiences when these are relevant and helpful.

____ Confrontation: The helper does this by pulling together the behavior of the helpee and letting him see it clearly for himself; he challenges the strengths rather than weaknesses of the helpee; he points out the discrepancies in the helpee's life (e.g. between what he wants to do and what he does).

____ Alternate frame of reference: The helper offers the helpee alternate frames of reference for viewing his behavior which are more accurate and more constructive than those of the helpee.

____ Facilitating action: The helper directs the helpee's attention to "choice points" in the helpee's life; he proposes concrete courses of constructive action; he points out alternate courses of action; he trains the helpee in problem-solving skills and helps him apply these to the concrete problems of the helpee's life.

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Donald Miro has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

April 18, 1980
Date

Michael J. O'Brien
Director's Signature