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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

SPIRITUALITY IN A PASTORAL COUNSELING CONTEXT

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN PASTORAL COUNSELING

INSTITUTE OF PASTORAL STUDIES

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY 1998
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I am deeply grateful to many people who have journeyed with me, during the last two years and through the writing of this thesis. I need to thank a few very specially.

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What little I have learned, I have learned well!
DEDICATION

To the community at the Institute of Pastoral Studies
Loyola University Chicago.
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This thesis explores 'spirituality', 'religion' and 'sacredness'. A view of spirituality is proposed.

Spirituality is holistic, involving all aspects of human life. Some aspects are easily perceivable, while others are mysterious. Spirituality is also inclusive, extending through religions, cultures, and economic, intellectual, and moral levels.

Spirituality describes relationships with oneself and with others, others meaning nature, people or 'god'. A human comprises body and mind. The body includes two distinctive dimensions, the physical and the physiological. The mind includes emotions and intellect. These dimensions are coexistent and interdependent. A person’s spirituality involves the way a person’s receives and processes experiences, and how the person expresses and communicates.

Spiritual maturation, is lifelong growth in awareness, authenticity and 'connectedness', in a way that is both intensive and extensive. Since daily life is a significant part of every person’s spirituality, daily and special rituals are suggested as tools to explore a person’s spirituality.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THESIS

Spirituality is a very broad and widely descriptive term. There is no single
definition of the term. As in terms such a ‘god’ and ‘love’ and ‘human’, there are many
understandings of the term ‘spirituality’, almost as many as there are people. One factor
that may have had a strong influence on my experiences and my views on the subject is
the fact that I was brought up in India, with a relatively strong Western (British,
European, American) influence. In addition to being Indian, I am a woman, a Christian
and a pastoral counselor.

The purpose of my writing this thesis is to explore spirituality as an experiential
reality for all peoples. I strive to challenge the undermining of daily living and ritualizing
in the light of the more exalted religious living and religious ritualizing. I strive to make a
statement for the inherent sacredness of all humankind.

Having studied many models of the development of the human being, from
physical, emotional, cognitive, faith and other perspectives, I have found that human
development is very wholesome, related as it is to the entire multifaceted human person
and all a person’s relationships, including a person’s relationship to himself or herself.
My notion of spirituality and the three-dimensional model of spiritual maturity that I
describe in this thesis, have been influenced by these awarenesses and understandings.

1. ASSumptive BASE OF THESIS

a. Sacredness is not restricted to the realms of religion alone.

b. Religion is a human creation

c. The individual self comprises the tangible (physical and physiological) body and the non-tangible (intellectual, emotional, mystical) mind.

d. The individual person has consciousness of self and other-than-self.

e. God is named and described after some fairly universally accepted attributes and some individually perceived and experienced ones. Conversation about god is not limited to religion or to the religiously affiliated people.

f. Religion and god may or may not be included in the description of a person’s spirituality. Every human being has a spirituality. Spirituality spans all cultures, religions and other classes of humans.

Spirituality describes the totality of who a person is and how a person relates with himself or herself and with others. ‘Others’, in this case, would include anything outside the realms of the self. It could include god, nature, or people.

2. PERSONAL LEARNINGS THAT GUIDE THIS THESIS

The Power of Religion

Early in life, I began to be aware of various values, behaviors and beliefs that were taught to me and my friends from different religious traditions. We shared many values, and,
in retrospect, a great number of unhealthy habits. We differed in some key daily rituals. For example, I was brought up to say 'grace' before and after meals, they were not. My Hindu friends were given the offerings after their mothers had prayed early in the morning. My Muslim friends prayed several times a day, facing their Holy land, Mecca.

On a more societal level, I was also surrounded by Hindu-Muslim violence. People hurting one another because they were of a different religion. Hindu temples were desecrated by Muslims, in sheer spite. Muslim communal prayers were frequently disrupted by Hindu instigated riots. On another dimension, as a Christian, I could not invite my friends to share communion in our church, although they were free to partake of every other part of the Eucharistic celebration. I joined in all their religious celebrations, but my family discouraged me from eating of their 'prasad', offerings of food that were blessed by the priests.

On a different note, many of the rituals that religion propagated were very valuable and even enjoyable. Religions indoctrinated people with respect for life and food, acknowledging a power that was greater than human power, of love in relationships and connection with the earth. There was paradox in the whole picture, making religion uncomfortable to live with, but eliciting the work of a lifetime to process religion and filter wealth from it. Religion was an area of daily attention. Yet few cared about how religion fit into our life experiences. I could not but see the tremendous power that religion had over our lives, a power that went beyond reason, and often beyond virtue.

Spirituality Beyond Religion

I learned early in life to respect, learn from, and share wisdom among religions.
Although I was not always aware of this process, I was profoundly impacted by it. We could, as friends, have dialogue about all kinds of topics, using the language of religion. We shared beliefs and stories handed down to us with some degree of pride, even though we often came up against impasses of unreasonable or ridiculous sounding material.

How could there be one god? While I was taught that Jesus was God, they believed in Krishna or Allah. Early enough we decided that we would not talk about these things except to mention god whom we all seemed to assume existed. We would bring home to our parents the incomprehensible, with the utmost hope that they would surely know. This was often not the case. We were left as bereft of ‘the truth’ as before we had approached them. We had more in common and the paradox lay in the differences we claimed to have and hold.

Today, I am grateful to all my friends from religious traditions other than my own, to those who abandoned their religious traditions in claiming to be atheists, and to those of my own religion, all of whom pressed me to think, to search and question and to be comfortable to express in ordinary language, the extraordinary in our lives. They propelled me on the path to consciousness, authenticity and integration.

We were able to relate at a deep level on issues of meaningfulness and purpose of life, on issues related to the supernatural, and on issues related to daily living. We shared our food, our families and our lives. We helped each other and challenged each other and disagreed and forgave. We shared a spirituality beyond the confines of our individual religious traditions and beliefs.

Connectedness

I have had a growing awareness of how compartmentalized we are as a human
community and how well we internalize that. We divide ourselves up into groups based on social classes, economic standing, religion, gender, age, language . . . While serving to name various aspects of our personal and social reality, these divisions have often succeeded in segregating us in our relationships and communication. Internalizing this, we find that we have defined ourselves in terms of classifications such as those determined by our religious or cultural inheritance. We fail to acknowledge the range and diversity of qualities that human beings possess while remaining so connected. We tend to view ourselves as somewhat confined by compartments, rather than finding ourselves on a continuum.

Another effect of our lack of connectedness may be seen when we find that we do what we do not really believe in, that we say what we do not really mean, that we do not understand our tiredness until our bodies give way. It seems that our bodies, our intellects, our religious life, our social life, our jobs each have a life of their own in us. This happens for various reasons. Sometimes it is because we adopt, most often unconsciously, the values of our elders and culture, without personalizing them. Sometimes, because we are too afraid to stand out as sore thumbs among our peers. It could also happen that in unsure and in transition. We are in a state of defining our particular belief or point of view. At this stage, our intellects may not be in synch with our emotions or actions. While boundaries in all these areas exist and are real, they are more interrelated than meets the eye. Scientists, psychologists and physicians are among those who are beginning to take heed of our basic holistic nature.
Awareness and Development

Adolescence was a time for me to question and rebel, often covertly, since I had strict parents and lived in a very conservative milieu. However, my father, whom I silently adored, a good man, in my opinion, was not what one would call, religious. He did not join us for family prayers, for example, although he did come to church with us to fulfill our Sunday obligation. My observations extended to the role of people in religious institutions, to the role of religious charity in the economy, to the conflict of religious and human values.

Rich literature, deep conversations and honest reflection added to my formal education which included philosophy, economics and psychology. I learned through my vulnerability, interdependence on family, as well as, differentiation from them. Intellectual gymnastics and silent reflection that marked this time in my life, led to insights about the human being, human potential and the mutual influence of the individual and society. I also began to realize the fact that human authors wrote the sacred books in each religion, and religion itself was of human making. I wrestled with ideas of divinity and if and when divinity met and parted with humanity.

Institutions and Authenticity

My experience of being closely involved in institutional life as a ‘professional’ religious brought a deep understanding of the wisdom of shared life and combined efforts. I also became acquainted with the sin of institutional rigidity and the authoritarian powers that seem to quietly and insidiously infiltrate institutions. This time spent with some of the most genuine, loving and life giving individuals with whom I have been blessed, brought the
richest experiences of group processes and influences, both healthy and unhealthy. The power arrangements that constitute the Catholic church, and that can unintentionally bring about intellectual dwarfism, moral asphyxiation and hurts and pathologies of endless varieties are painful to observe. I cannot accept that this is the only alternative to having an active religion. Yet, the price to pay for change, is very high. I learned that I needed to begin to authentically integrate all that my consciousness birthed, in order to deepen and widen the quality of my life and my relationships with my self and with other-than-me, nature, god, people, life’s circumstances and the like. I needed to individuate.

The Sacred in The Ordinary

As I develop in time, I am beginning to realize the sacredness of ordinary life. Ordinary people are sacred. Ordinary life and rituals are sacred. We choose, as our perceptions and attitudes demonstrate, the things we believe and treat as sacred and esteemed.

I do not necessarily need to consciously see god in everything, to respect and pay attention to them. I have developed a sense of reverence for humans, and for all of nature. I have been increasingly aware of the beauty and importance of every ritual in which I participate, from waking until I turn in for the night. This has been the theme of my recent reflective experiences. I realize how a sense of sacredness is communicated, and how the simplest things that really matter to a human being can be displaced with what one is told one should believe or what one habitually believes is important.
3. OUTLINE OF THESIS

In this introduction I have pointed out some of the assumptions and statements that flow through my thesis. Having described some of the circumstances that have influenced the selection and writing of this thesis, I proceed to present an outline of the thesis.

Many definitions of spirituality and religion have been proposed. I select a few for the purpose of discussion in the second chapter. Many distinctions and overlaps may also be found in literature. I explore and critique these perspectives on spirituality and religion, and explore how they overlap in their content and yet are distinct in themselves. I do this in order to set religion in a healthier and more realistic perspective in human life. I draw on the concept of spirituality to include the various dimensions of a person (those of body and mind) that are the receptors of experience. This whole person is again the source of expression (as is demonstrated through relationships with family, work, art, etc.).

In Chapter III, I propose an understanding of spirituality from the perspective of a pastoral counselor. I would hope that this would be the perspective of a maturing human being, as well.

In Chapter IV, I present and critically analyze various models of spiritual development and maturity that have been proposed by various researchers, practicing professionals in the field of human care, and philosophical thinkers. I explore the factors that contribute to and operate in spiritual maturity, and the ways in which they manifest themselves in a person and in human expression.

Chapter V is about how I view spiritual ‘maturation’, in terms that are more dynamic and process-oriented than I observe in definitions of spiritual ‘maturity’. I propose that
awareness, authenticity, and connection, which I describe at length, are three dimensions along which a person develops toward spiritual maturation. Rather than viewing them as residing and developing in an ascending-descending paradigm, I view them as residing in a deepening and broadening spectrum.

In the sixth chapter, I present and critique models of spiritual assessment. I favor the word ‘exploration’, rather than assessment, which is in abundant use in academic and clinical situations. Exploration, seems to lean toward understanding as opposed to the goal of merely reaching conclusions.

In the seventh and final chapter, I explain the significance of my perspective of spirituality, of spiritual maturation and of spiritual exploration to the practice and profession of pastoral counseling. I summarize the primary statements and presentations in the thesis that are briefly mentioned at the very beginning, in Chapter I.

In presenting this thesis, I have chosen to use masculine and feminine pronouns in random alternation. To constantly acknowledge both genders in my writing, has been for me a challenge. However, this style is advantageous in that it does away with the tedious task of mentioning both genders in every instance of reference. I intend this to be a more smooth reading style for the reader, as well as a challenge of flexibility and openness.

Should the reader have any responses or insights to share, I would be delighted to be in contact with you through the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University Chicago.
CHAPTER II
WHERE RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY MEET AND PART

1. RELIGION

Through life experiences, through my observations and through formal training, I have come to realize the enormous power that religion has over our lives. This power has extended over generations and geographical grids. I have seen how religion has come to be associated with what is the deepest and most meaningful in a person’s life. Religion is an arena where one often finds the space to dally over issues such as love and justice and compassion and purpose in life. Religion is the one place where anyone who cares to can legitimately grapple with ideas, concepts and experiences that are otherwise denounced by the very scientific, logical and reasonable world.

On another level, religion gives people a reason to enact, realize and celebrate with others, their common beliefs and values. Religion enables ritualizing of certain commonly held values and beliefs, not otherwise claimed. So, belief in god, or belief in some attributes of nature or form may be celebrated by a group of people claiming a particular religion. While there is a common thread running through concepts of god held across different religions, there are also many differences in understanding or expressing these concepts.
I would think that a high majority of people are born into a community that holds to some form of religion or a religious group. Religion has been the reason for people to come together in communities to share life and relationships. It has often raised on a pedestal what unfolds as some very basic processes in life such as births, meals, and relationships. Each religious community has its history, traditions and practices. It also has its biases, prejudices and limited mind set. This does not mean that each individual is necessarily limited by his religion, but it does mean that each individual is influenced by religion.

Religion has been the language that has enabled the creative expression of fine art, music and theater. It has given voice to the deep and noble sentiments of the human person, which helps transcend the shackles of earthly existence. Religion has been the platform for the imagination to soar into understanding and conceptualizing what is beyond space and time.

On the other hand, religion has also been that for which people have fought and slain each other in numbers. Religion has enabled people to be blind to the connectedness underlying all humanity. Religion has facilitated suppression of the human spirit and maiming of the powers that humans truly possess. Religion has labeled, segregated and dehumanized. It has justified and rationalized and defended evil, all the time, in the guise of good. “Sometimes it appears that evil is clothed in religious language, which make matters confusing. Religion is multidimensional, and some aspects of what is labeled religion are clearly not constructive” (Bergin, 1991).

A term related to religion is religiosity, describing a person’s religious values.
Allport and Ross (1967) coined the terms intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity and suggested that the extrinsically religious person uses religion to obtain security or status. The intrinsically religious person internalizes religion independent of social pressure.

Typically, religion is associated with a set of rules and practices, beliefs and rituals. Religions have also prescribed literature, particular emphases on certain values and often an organized administrative body that holds people together. Words such as ‘holy’ and ‘sacred’ are associated with much of what has been mentioned above. These words are potent in that they give great power to that with which they are associated.

It is here where I would like our attention to focus. Where does the power in religion reside? Does the power in religion blackmail us into being who we are not? Does it manufacture guilt because our lives seem to be going in a direction different from that which our religion prescribes? Is that guilt transformative and directive or deterministic and inevitable? Do we use religion to our welfare and for the welfare of all, or do we make religion the watchdog that constantly and insidiously guides our lives.

It seems that religion has come to play a degree of importance that is not necessarily always healthy or useful to a person. Millions of people have unknowingly allowed religion to control the quality of their lives, as opposed to utilizing organized religion for life and growth in their lives. Relativity needs to replace absolutism. Notions of the will of god, vocation and the like are instruments of power, and of human creation, can be used by people to victimize and control themselves or others.

There is a language of religion that provides for those things that are associated with daily living. However, there are a few things that cannot be replaced with the
language of other disciplines. These have to do mostly with the superhuman elements or with mystical phenomenon. Some examples of these are *avatars*, angels and redemption.

In a similar vein, a popular theme for some adolescent groups I have worked with was that god did not make junk. This was used to communicate worth to young people who typically encounter personal conflicts and societal insecurity. Through these means the youth were being told that if god had created them and god does not make junk, they must by logical conclusion, be beautiful and worthwhile.

While this does work in many instances, I see how problems do arise at some point in the lives of these people in question. At some point they question the Adam and Eve story of creation, they perhaps are taught that it is really a story to communicate a deeper truth. The logical sequence of their self worth in being god’s creation is lost. They may lose faith in their teachers, in religion, in god or themselves. There is a way by which many religious teachings do not earn the respect of fully functioning human beings, gifted with intellect, senses and decision making abilities. Religion should avoid misleading people.

This is not to discount the place of mystery which is a vital part of our faith as limited human beings. There is a place for faith in our lives. This faith is truly active when there is an honesty connected with reality, when we are guided to embrace the reality of unresolved mystery. When there is story telling around the inexplicable with a surety that is encouraged to go unquestioned, faith is not the issue. Rather than accept that one does not have answers, we often concoct stories to account for the inexplicable.
However well meaning the teachings, they are in truth a diversion from reality, and their teaching inadvertently a manipulation.

It may be discovered through simple conversation even with children that they are able to fathom a great amount of the reality and mystery of life. They are also able to accept the lack of understanding and unavailability of answers to queries about what they experience. For reasons I fail to fathom, we have tales woven into our religious traditions, which are not necessary, and in fact are harmful.

Stories such as those contained in the Koran, the Bhagvatgita or the Bible communicate deep truths. By the very ambiguous nature of a greater part of reality, many discussions lead to unanswerable searches. The authors of all sacred books are human beings who are products of society, culture and tradition. The language used to communicate needs to be considered in the process of understanding the sacred truths they communicate. However, we are seldom taught from this holistic perspective. It is common to hear of sacred literature being the word of god or written by god. There would be fewer conflicts if we were to acknowledge the sacredness of god within the human. Again, we would need to understand that as humans, the authors of ‘sacred’ literature are not unreal perfections of any sort. In misinterpreting what the authors of the texts mean, we are truly in grave error. We not only disrespect the authors, but discount the source of their inspiration.

We seem to create and sustain forms of religion to meet our many individual and communal needs. However, through the mechanisms of handing down knowledge and learning from generation to generation, and across global grids, we also create situations
and conditions where people absorb information and internalize it without deciphering its validity or importance to them personally. Both healthy and unhealthy transference of knowledge occurs this way. We need to encourage healthy dialogue around any teaching or learning processes.

The term *Religion*, is dated back probably before 1200, to *religion*, a religious order or community. It is borrowed from the Old French *religion*, religious community, and more directly from the Latin *religionem* (nominative *religio*), a respect for what is sacred. The word *religare* meaning ‘to bind’ is what Funk (1950) believed to be one of the more popular origins of the word religion. It is an interesting observation that all these meanings have to do with the collective nature of religion.

Corbett (1990) defines religion as “an integrated system of belief, lifestyle, ritual activities, and institutions by which individuals give meaning to (or find meaning in) their lives by orienting them to what is taken to be sacred, holy, or the highest value” (In Kelly 1996; p.2). We see here how he has tapped on some primary needs of the human person that are met typically in religion. One is the need to believe in something or someone bigger and more powerful than oneself, than human kind. The content of religion that deals with the supernatural or with the mysterious is what satisfies this need. In this context Jung (1966) states that religion is an attitude of the human mind related to *religio* which has to do with powers and spirits, demons, laws, and all that is found worthy to be “devoutly adored and loved” (p.5).

Helminiak (1996) wrote that in the West, religion means theism, and entails belief in god. The same is not true for the bulk of humanity. But Western tradition
continues to color the use of the term ‘religion’. I appreciate his naming of this narrow line of thinking which pervades literature in the area of spirituality in the West.

There is also the factor of lifestyles. We hand down styles of living and relating that we have inherited or created or modified from our parents and grandparents. A lifestyle is often dictated by the beliefs and mores of a religious culture. Then there is the need for meaning in life. While religion may not always provide it, it often serves to nurture or entertain this in discussion. Institutions are the final need that we as a community have. Institutions serve the need to bring structure to, to organize, grant leadership, and to provide security, to ground the culture of a given body of people. Religion as explained by Corbett acknowledges these and we may see how different religions incorporate these into their systems.

Alfred Adler (1927) described religion as guiding fiction, Gordon Allport (1900) as the unifying philosophy of life, and Abraham Maslow (1988) as a matter of peak experiences. Jung (1996) wrote that ‘Religion is... a careful and scrupulous observation of what Rudolf Otto aptly termed the ‘numinosum’ that is a dynamic existence or effect, not caused by an arbitrary act of will. On the contrary, it seizes the human subject, which is always rather its victim that its creator’ (p.4). Religion is a human creation. It needs to remain and be acknowledged more aggressively as a human creation. Religion has also evolved as human life and culture has evolved over thousands of generations. We may choose to use a particular religion to form the basis for one’s life to whatever extent suits us. We may choose also not to.

Albanese (1992) identifies two major dimensions of religion. The “extraordinary”
religion involves “an encounter with some form of otherness.... And helps people to move beyond their everyday culture and concerns” and “ordinary” religion that is “more or less synonymous with culture... and background out of which the norms arise that guide us in our everyday life” (In Kelly, 1996; p.3). There is a greater stress on the extraordinary than on the ordinary. I find this a very comprehensive approach. Yet, a number of the problems we have today, stem from the fact that religion, while it has a great influence on people’s lives, consciously or unconsciously, does not necessarily aid the integration of these values/ beliefs in daily life. In fact, the two paths of religion and life, both often seem to run both parallel and in opposite directions to each other. It is not unusual that we fail to pay attention to the integration of our mental processes as expressed by our philosophies, beliefs, convictions and our daily life.

Albanese here acknowledges the very mundane, daily elements of spirituality as well as the mystical ‘other’. Both elements are part of the reality that is so integral to our daily lives. It is not often that people acknowledge the fact that what happens on a daily basis is an integral part of our religion, or that it would best be that way. Paul Pruyser in the course of his lifelong study showed how religion was an answer to human needs, whether it dealt with the tangible or the mysterious. He saw reality and illusion as not contradictory. Illusion is a human creation and fulfills a human need.

As Benner (1989) puts it, “All persons are created spiritual beings. To describe someone as spiritual and someone else as not is to describe their differing awareness of, and response to these deep strivings for self-transcendence, surrender, integration, and identity”(p.21).
As pastoral counselors, this perspective or process of thought contributes significantly to our personal authenticity, and to the quality of service we offer society, to the pastoral counseling profession and to our clients. It determines the quality of our professional presence, and the empathy with which we reach out to our clientele. The final chapter of this thesis will elaborate on this vitality in greater detail.

2. SPIRITUALITY

Unlike physical reality, defining spirituality is not an easy task, and one perhaps could question the very need to define it. I myself refrain from defining spirituality, but rather seek to describe it in order to differentiate it from religion and religiosity. I seek thereby, to put religion into perspective, among pastoral counseling researchers and practitioners. I hope that the effects of this understanding will reach the people served.

When we call someone spiritual, do we mean that the person is gentle, selfless, and loving? Do we mean that the person is prayerful, hermit-like, and contemplative? Do we mean that the person is religious and committed to his faith community? Do we mean that the person is well integrated in the various aspects of his life, or that he is intimately connected with himself and with his environment? Answering these may help us name our personal outlook on spirituality.

It appears that spirituality has been an active concept in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Sandra Schneiders (1986) explains that spirituality was “originally a term from Paul’s letters referring to all Christian life according to the Holy Spirit, it gradually came to mean that life as the special concern of ‘souls seeking perfection’ rather than as the
common experience of all Christians” (In Conn, 1989; p.13). Such Judeo-Christian terminology in the conversation on spirituality is not uncommon. Part of the reason to remain oblivious of the other religions, cultures and belief systems could be the limited awareness or experiences of the authors. While it could true be that these writers do not think that spirituality could be a legitimate claim for others, I would rather give them the benefit of the doubt. They just choose not to mention people other than those in their own religious experience.

When we speak casually in Judeo-Christian circles of spirituality, we really mean the religious belief system that comprises a person’s ideology, and perhaps her life. I write perhaps because it is not an understatement that a person’s daily life is synonymous with her world view, religious belief system or philosophy. Spirituality is a term that has been used synonymously with religiosity or with personal relationship or beliefs about god. Fitchett (1993)consciously uses these terms synonymously stating that their differences were insignificant in his study. His book consists in research leading up to a model of spiritual assessment. I differ from Fitchett in the emphasis placed on the difference between the two terms. In fact, I believe that in his work, the difference is important enough to take note of.

Confusions in these differences are some of the reasons why, I believe, many people do not consider themselves spiritual or holy or even good. What is religious is considered sacred. What is spiritual unconsciously is not. Besides being associated solely with belief in and relationship with a transcendent God, a value component has been attached to religion, so that, often, a person’s value is judged in terms of her ideological
or practical relations with the transcendent, or with organized religion.

The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology (1995) defines *spirit*, whose origin is dated to about 1250 AD, as an animating or vital principle, as breath of life. It is borrowed from the Old French *espirit*, and taken directly from the Latin *spiritus*, soul, courage, vigor, or breath, and is related to *spirare* meaning to breathe. The Old English uses of spirit are mainly derived from passages in the Vulgate, in which the Latin *spiritus* is used to translate the Greek *pneuma* and Hebrew *ruah*. The meaning of *spirit* as supernatural being is first recorded probably before 1350, and its meaning as a sense of the essential principle (as in the spirit of independence), before 1382. The Webster Ninth New collegiate Dictionary reiterates the meaning as breath and adds ‘of wind’, which seems to add the element of movement or dynamism. Throughout this thesis, I will have the reader keep in mind the meaning of spirit as breath, as a symbol of life, being, and spirituality.

Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf and Saunders (1988) hold that spirituality which derives from the Latin *spiritus* meaning breath of life, is a way of being and experiencing that comes about through awareness of a transcendent dimension and that is characterized by certain identifiable values in regard to self, others, nature, life, and whatever one considers to be the Ultimate (In Kelly, 1996; p.10). Spirituality, they add, also means “living out these values with discernable effects on oneself, others and nature, whatever one considers to be the Ultimate” (Kelly, 1996; p.4). I strongly support this view.

Michael Forrest Maher (1996) wrote “A myriad of cultures and populations are searching for a meaningful spirituality that affirms them on a personal level as well as on
a greater social level”. He wrote about experiencing a paradigm paralysis in dealing with the term spirituality because he has found boundaries that have seemed both prohibitive and culturally exclusive. As Kelly (1995) observes, one person’s spiritual loyalty may be another’s disdain. In this context, it is encouraging to see the movement of the US Organization of Counselors at a summit, endorsing a definition of spirituality that is inclusive and holistic. I myself support this view.

Given this perspective, it would benefit us to stretch our concept of spirituality to embrace the human condition across the globe, to include people who affiliate with other religions, those who do not affiliate with any religious group but ascribe to a religious spirituality, as well as those who do not ascribe to any religious spirituality, in equal light. Some of us may need to ‘de-pedestalize’ those with strong religious spiritualities. We may have to raise ourselves or our parents or the kid in the street, to higher than where they have found themselves in our hierarchy of spiritual levels.

In the following instances we will see how spirituality has been referred to in literature. Conn’s (1989) Spirituality and Personal Maturity, should more appropriately be entitled Spirituality and Personal Maturity from a Christian Perspective. If nothing else, this title would awaken the reader to the concept of there being Spirituality and Personal Maturity beyond the Christian arena. Charles Shelton (1990) writes an informative book entitled Adolescent Spirituality. In defining spirituality, he writes “Essentially, spirituality is concerned with personal response to and growth in the Lord” (p.8) I can see my own urge to dismiss the book as inappropriate to its title. This totally lacks the awareness of the many religious and secular traditions that do fit the picture.
Christian spirituality has developed, based on the life and teachings of Jesus, a man of Middle-Eastern origin who did not found a religion but initiated a group of friends and followers to take his message to the ends of the world. What happened then was that this movement, began to develop structure and form and became institutional. Today, there are many variations of Christian spirituality, within one religion. These spiritualities are not mutually contradictory, but differ in emphasis on values.

This diversity in spirituality may also be seen in the experience of the vowed Catholics in religious orders. Within each congregation, people have their own spiritualities. There has been a recent (since Vatican II) move for individuals in religious orders to want validation of their own spiritualities, alongside their common vision and shared life with the group. Spirituality has been challenged in many ways with regard to its perimeters. Not only has spirituality been linked with religion, but with the male and the hierarchical model. Feminists and others have conceived of spirituality beyond religion, beyond the models it fits into until now. Patty Paul’s (1989) A New Spirituality Beyond Religion is but one example of this trend.

Imants Baruss (1996) writes with effective sarcasm that “Some people imagine that spirituality is like floating down a tropical river, sipping a cold pina colada, while palm trees gently wave in the breeze” (p.122). He notes that “What often happens is that ... Who we are spiritually is thought of as being other than that which we are identified.” (p.26) Our personal spiritualities are taken to be only a part of, or even totally different from who we are and how we live. What seems to be the point here is that spirituality is perceived as outer-worldly or beyond the realms of life and reality. I share this
observation. Harris (1989) in her book Dance of the Spirit speaks of the conceptual and experiential separation of our bodies from what we consider our spirits, a divorce between reality and spirituality.

I attribute a great deal of this truncated spirituality to Western thought with its focus on the concept of a transcendent god. I use the term truncated because of my own understanding of a wholesome spirituality being one that integrates body and mind and spirit, the tangible and mysterious aspects of human experience and reality. I lobby the support of other theorists and practicing professionals who share the view that spirituality really needs to be conceived of as interrelated with the human body, with daily life, with the world views and personalities of people. Thomas Hart (1994) in the introduction to his book Hidden Spring: The Spiritual Dimension of Therapy, defines spirituality as “....the way one lives out one’s faith in daily life, the way a person relates to the ultimate conditions of existence”(p.2).

Helminiak refers to spiritual as “an intrinsic principle of authentic self-transcendence, the dynamic human spirit”(p.35). This understanding is based on Lonergan’s analysis of intentional consciousness of spirit, proceeds to regard authenticity as the primary criterion of spiritual development. It is in response to the apparent human drive toward development and transcendence. Helminiak refers to the spiritual as a “strictly human reality” with no theistic or religious connotations (p.35). I disagree with Helminiak on this count. I think that the theistic or religious may be included in the spiritual, though not necessarily so.

Helminiak goes on to say that psychology, with a philosophical viewpoint, more
than theology and religion, "properly treats the spiritual" (p.35). Perhaps this is explained by Jung (1966) when he says that "...psychology is only concerned with the fact that there is such an idea, but it is not concerned with the question of whether such an idea is true or false in any other sense. It is psychologically true in as much as it exists" (p.3). The spiritual, in as much as it is related with the person and thereby with reality, is not something to be questioned but rather something to be dealt with and treated. Theology and religion typically deal with ideas and are the products of people's spiritualities. They too would fall into the realm of psychology in order to be understood in the context of human reality and treatment.

Karl Rahner is known to consider every theology, first an anthropology. In other words, whatever genuinely clarifies the human condition could contribute to theology (Conn, 1989; p.1). What this seems to mean is that our notions of God and the mysterious world of conjecture, are in a deep way an outcome of lived experience and reflection. If it lacks this sequence, it is likely that the theology is but a figment of intellectual exercise, and irrelevant for meaningful study or application.

Jenkins, responded in Interaction (1997) to an article in the summer 1996 issue of Interaction, a newsletter of the Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling - a division of the American Counseling Association. The 1996 article was about the Summit on Spirituality held in Oregon. Jenkins quotes the two fundamental qualities that the summit found, that defined spirituality. First, that spirituality is the animating force in life, experienced both as an active and a passive process. Secondly, spirituality is innate and unique to all persons, as may be expected of the capacity for
creativity, and development of a value system.

Jenkins found these views impractical as they seemed to locate the spiritual life of a person almost solely in subjective experience. Further, it appears that spirituality encompasses various aspects of experience such as knowledge, connectedness, and growth. He finds that “a significant number of people who do not view themselves as spiritual or who endorse a spiritual point of view only because it is socially acceptable” (p.2). He objects to the thrust of the definition being on self transcendence, a “spirituality of the human spirit, not a spirituality grounded in the transcendent Spirit of God”. Jenkins concludes with a definition based on his personal and clinical experience, as “the human response to a mysterious, transcendent Other who for unknown reasons cares enough about us to initiate a relationship with us” (p.2). This definition is very narrow, restricted to the human response to the transcendent ‘Other’.

I find this writing a trifle appalling. First of all Jenkin’s use of the term ‘human spirit’ gives me the impression that he conceives of it as other than, or disconnected from the human body. Secondly, he objects to the proposition that spirituality is associated with the human being, rather than with the spirit of God. It is the implied understated dichotomy of the two spirits: of human and God that I challenge. I believe that the conversation around spirituality had to do with the spirituality of the human. I can see that he may be contesting the idea of total reliance on the self, on human powers, and a lack of acknowledgment of dependence on God. However, I do not think that this issue is being contested, by the summit. While I challenge Jenkins’ views, I use them as a platform on which to base my own concepts of spirituality, based on my personal and
Sandra Schneiders (1980) explains spirituality based on its philosophical meaning and a distinction between the material and the spiritual. The spiritual is ‘...that capacity for self transcendence through knowledge and love which characterizes the human being as a person.’ (In Conn, p.29). From its religious perspective, spirituality is based on what constitutes the proper and highest actualization of the human capacity for self transcendence in personal relations, namely, relationship with God. What emerges for Conn (1989) is a list of the characteristics of spirituality, as Schneiders envisions it. Spirituality is descriptive and analytic, rather than prescriptive and evaluative. An interdisciplinary approach is essential. Spirituality is committed to an ecumenical and cross-cultural approach. It is the whole person that is in question. It is a ‘participant’ discipline in that the researcher must know the spiritual quest to be able to understand a person’s spirituality. Spirituality is about people, not principles. One studies spirituality, to understand the concept, to ultimately foster one’s own spirituality, and that of others.

My focus in this thesis is on the term ‘spirituality’. I hold that every human being has a spirituality, irrespective of whether the person believes in a god or not, or whether the person is religiously affiliated or not. Our spiritualities are defined by the situation we are born into and brought up in, by the persons we are and are becoming, and by the choices we make in our lives.

3. RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

The previous sections in this chapter have dealt with concepts which might have
raised some questions in the reader. In view of this, I will now deal with a few pertinent terms that need to be clarified and understood. One may observe from each of the theorists, a struggle to differentiate the two terms, religion and spirituality. It is not surprising that they are often used synonymously. Both concepts have been used to address the mystical and moral realms of life. Both religion and spirituality have been used to bracket who or what is sacred. Both tend to deal with issues that are very close to human passions.

Before we discuss the relationship between religion and spirituality, I will draw the reader’s attention to some nuances in terminology. On a personal level, it could be very appropriate to associate one’s religion with one’s spirituality. This brings us to differentiate the terms ‘spirituality’ and ‘spiritualities’, ‘religion’ and ‘religions’. The singular form of both these terms, in a very broad sense seems to indicate a more general and inclusive subject, which relate to people. The plural forms of the words carry a more specific notion of or set of ideas of particular configurations of people.

In other words, one may speak of a person’s or a group’s spirituality or religion, each of which would include a set of descriptive terms. For example, an individual’s spirituality could include the person’s relationships, work ethic, daily ritual life, relationship with god. In the very broadest sense of the word, his religion could include all of the above, or merely his religious orientation with the Sikh or Buddhist beliefs and community, for example.

When one speaks of spiritualities or religions, we may have in mind many examples of the two, each of which is linked to a descriptor, for example, creation
spirituality, religious spirituality, or the Jain or Tao religions. These bring to mind a specific set of descriptive principles that define a particular individual or group of individuals. An individual or group could have many such ‘spiritualities’ or ‘religion’ incorporated into the person’s or group’s individual spirituality. In this thesis, I deal essentially with the singular usage of both the terms spirituality and religion. The focus of my interest is on the human person and human life in community. I reinforce that my goal is not to get stuck with terminology, but to essentially free the concept of spirituality, with its common implications to sacredness and inclusiveness and personal wholeness, from the realms of the more rigid notions associated with religions.

Helminiak (1996) wrote that “... If spirituality is the first and foremost a basic human thing, the various religions must be different ways of expressing human spirituality” (p.6). Kelly (1996) names as forms of religion, world religions, indigenous or primal religions such as the Yoruba practiced by some Nigerians, and the Shamanistic religion of parts of North America. In speaking of spiritual movements, he includes New Age spirituality, the spirituality of the Twelve Step program of AA. He also addresses contemporary American spirituality in terms of a bridge between religion and humanism. An active search and an innate capacity and tendency to seek are implied by these views, a psychological position from which one processes life events. In discussing ‘religions’, here, Kelly’s focus is on the nature of the characteristics of each. We may observe how Kelly’s examples demonstrate the differences I have just elaborated upon.

What spirituality and religion have in common is the personalization of beliefs, ideas, concepts and attitudes and the way of life of the person. Bullis (1993) defines
spirituality as the human drive for purpose and meaning in life's experiences, and religion as the systematic body of beliefs or practices related to this search. Again he adds that while spirituality is the human search for organizing purposes or principles in life, religion is the outward, external expression of that search. He quotes Joseph (1988), Canda (1988), and Fournier (1990) who look upon spirituality as the human quest for meaning and connectedness in the world, while religion is the concrete expression (through ritual, dogma, beliefs, and worship) of that search.

In my view, spirituality would include both the search and the expression of this search. A person’s religion has to do with that part of a religion or more than one religion that a person incorporates into her spirituality. This could take the form of principles, beliefs, a way of life or attitude toward something. The content of both of these, as we can see overlap greatly. One factor that differentiates religions from any of the terms in question is the element of doctrine and dogma. Doctrine and dogma are descriptive of specific religions and are less flexible to change than any personal changes.

Religious scholar Huston Smith believes that religion is grounded in authentic spirituality (In Kelly 1996; p.9). While I think I understand Smith’s understanding of religion being grounded in a spirituality, I would seek to clarify his understanding of ‘authentic’ and ‘spirituality’. What makes a spirituality or religion authentic? These are important clarifications that would be necessary for a depth understanding of these concepts.

Legere (1984) speaks of this distinction in that spirituality is not a religion. Spirituality has to do with experience, religion has to do with the conceptualization of the
experience. Spirituality focuses on what happens in the heart, religion tries to codify and capture the experience in a system (In Frame and Williams, 1996; p. 376). I agree with the first statement with reference to experience. However, I do not ascribe to spirituality associated with the heart alone, because of its one-sided implications. I ascribe to a more holistic version of the analogy. Spirituality has to do with heart and head in experience and expression.

Eugene Kelly (1996) notes that while the terms religion and spirituality have overlapping meanings to the extent that they both pertain to a transcendent, meta dimension of reality, spirituality generally signifies an affirmation of and participation in the in-depth, transcendent, holistically connected and inherently meaningful dimension of reality. Religion, in its fuller meaning includes spirituality, but additionally implies “specific modes and systems of belief, imaging, and practice that are often institutionalized in creeds, rituals, and moral codes....” (p.xiv). Religion, he holds, is embodied in religions. He has support of other theorists like Bergin and Jensen (1990), Ingersoll (1994), Shafranske and Goruch (1984) and Shafranske and Malony (1990a, 1990b) who share the same opinion about the concepts of religion and spirituality.

While religion and spirituality may have a lot in common, they also have some clear distinctions. Recently, professionals interested in these concepts are beginning to be concerned about the relation and application of spirituality or religiosity to daily living. Speaking as a person, a woman, an Indian, a Christian, a pastoral counselor, it appears to me that this relationship is of vital importance to every person’s life.

I would explain spirituality as what is closer to the authentically held and lived
reality of a person or group. To the extent that a person’s affiliation with a religion is a personal reality, it is part of his spirituality. Religions and spiritualities could become an essential part of a person’s or a group’s religion or spirituality. Before I conclude this discussion, I will address again, the sense of sacred that I have already written about. I do this because it seems important to expand the notion of ‘sacred’ beyond the confines of religion.

A sense of the sacred is one of the key factors that is crucial to both religion and spirituality. My experiences and observations have been such that most of what falls into ordinary daily living is most often left out of what is commonly considered sacred. Only a small portion of daily life, as commonly understood, rests in the realms of the sacred. Sacredness is found typically in places of worship, or in rituals of worship outside temples or gurudwaras, or in people designated the title.

I address this issue in some detail because of its impact in the lives of people across the world, over the centuries. It is my desire to bring, however vicariously, a sense of sacredness to the most ordinary and routine elements of our daily lives. This could perhaps help us to find meaning in the simple, rather than to wait for or create the spectacular, the sensational and the extraordinary, in order to have a meaningful life.

Rudolf Otto (1917) coined the term ‘numen’ and ‘numinous’ from the Latin numen meaning god, to express the non-rational feeling that he thought represented an experience of response to a positive and effable mystery. This term was also characterized as wholly other than ordinary experience. It expresses mysterium (mystery), fascinosum (alluring), and tremendum (the feeling of overpowering might and presence).
This might explain how it comes about that what is sacred is deemed extraordinary. It is no wonder that it is so hard, especially for the Western world, to accept as sacred what is ordinary, to not look outward for what is sacred. (Smith, 1995). However, there are many traditions which communicate the importance of the simplest events and things in daily life.

Many Christian traditions practice the ritual of prayers before and after meals or morning and night prayers. This is done to acknowledge reverence for the meal time and gratitude for the gift of the food. Hindus greet each day with cleansing rituals and prayer. There is an element of sacredness attached to daily living. It is not an entirely new concept that our daily lives are important and sacred. This however, has lost some of its power in more recent times.

Universally, what comes to be associated with god becomes sacred. Hence people and nature become often better appreciated when looked upon as creation of god. I often hear people speaking of someone seeing Jesus in another person, and being motivated to service, for example. I would hope that people live in a state where religious beliefs would not be the governing criterions to the value and respect with which one approaches ordinary living.

While religious beliefs and practices serve a purpose, their limitations need to be acknowledged. I believe that by being aware of how these beliefs and practices are human creations and acknowledging that they serve human purposes, they could be healthy ways to help us live happy and meaningful lives.
CHAPTER III
SPIRITUALITY: A HOLISTIC CONCEPTUALIZATION

Having reviewed in the previous chapter, an array of definitions and understandings of spirituality, I now present my understanding of spirituality. What will be presented to the reader is an array of factors that I consider to influence and be included as spirituality. The truth is that much of what will come across as complexity is a result of my response to common assumptions made about spirituality or human nature. My response takes the form of contesting the ideas, emphasizing a point or suggesting a new way of looking at a concept.

1. SPIRITUALITY DESCRIBED

   Spirituality seems to encompass the essence of a person, the unique ‘spirit’ of a person that results from all the factors that contribute to who the person is in his or her relationships to self, and others (people, nature, God, mystery, supreme Being, creator of the world etc.).

   I dwell on the roots of the word spirit which means animating principle and breath of life. Whatever then it is, that enables and contributes to the breath of life, has its roots in life itself. Food, water and relationships are tangible necessities for a full human life.
Mystery, ambiguity and elusiveness too, are part of daily life. This may be seen in our own experiences of relating with people, in observing the way our circumstances unfold, by the way events occur that defy reasonable explanation or deductive conclusions. It should not be difficult then, to accept the place of god, as in the breath of daily life in tangible for and non-tangible form.

In exploring spirituality, we need then to look at the various contributing factors in the person. We need to look at how the person views himself, experiences himself, and treats himself. We need to look at how the person relates to (perceives, experiences, communicates with, and responds to other (other, as referred to above).

More commonly, when we speak of a person's spirituality, or the spirituality of a group, we refer to their ideology and understanding of god, life or certain principles of living. In describing spirituality, in this thesis, I include these elements. However, I also mean by spirituality, the way that these ideologies integrate with the people and their lives, if they do at all. The fact that they do not, should that be the case, would be significant to the person's spirituality. As I will elaborate a little further, integrating one's ideology, or the product of one's thoughts and feelings in behavior is one of the indications of maturity in spirituality. Each of us would find ourselves on a continuum and would, in growing spiritually, grow in integration of the mental and behavioral dimensions of our lives.

We could speak of a person having a Christian spirituality. That person would, then, in my understanding believe in and live a Christian-centered life. If a person has no particular religious group affiliation, but is religious, she might be described as having a
religious spirituality. Yet another person may have a day-to-day spirituality, since the person’s spirituality centers around his day-to-day rituals. This does not mean that other descriptions do not hold for a person’s spirituality. Spirituality can be described variously, as Native American or inclusive (inclusive would need to be further defined), or religious. A particular individual’s spirituality could be described as both Christocentric and feminist. In fact, it would be difficult to adequately describe a person’s spirituality in just one word or in just one way. Spirituality can also belong to a group of people. All that we describe about an individual’s spirituality would hold true for that of a group. For example the spirituality of an Alcoholics Anonymous group is very particular to that group by the very nature of what distinguishes them as a group. Similarly, a womans’ group, or a recent immigrant’s support group will have a very special spirituality because of their particular group characteristics.

I understand spirituality as a concept that describes a person’s relationship with the tangible and non-tangible aspects of self and other-than-self. The physical and physiological aspects of the self are what the body self is. The intangible aspects of self are the emotions, principles, values, ideology, cognitions, commonly known as the mind. What I refer to as other-than-self includes other people, nature, and what may be known by terms such as ‘god’, ‘ultimate principle’ or ‘mystery’.

These aspects of self are influenced by, and determine a person’s perceptions, cognitions, emotions, a person’s experience of self and other-than-self. In other words, they create a person’s experience. They also influence the person’s expression through communication, choices, behavior and way of life.
In this discussion, what I imply by *person*, in this context, is *consciousness*. What I include in *self* are the tangible and non-tangible aspects of a person. In other words, a person is comprised as it were, of self and consciousness. The self comprises the mind and body, representing tangible and non-tangible aspects. Consciousness is that part of the person that is non-tangible, but which enables the self to be ‘self-aware’ and aware of other-than-self. Bernard Lonergan (1957, 1972) described human consciousness as the “peculiar awareness that conditions and constitutes the highest functioning of the human mind” (In Helminiak, 1996; p.13). While Lonergan specifies consciousness as a function of the mind, I do not. I see consciousness as belonging to, or being intrinsically connected to both body and mind. In other words, we may speak of someone being aware of his body, or of his thoughts and feelings. Helminiak (1996) wrote of the human being in tripartite terms, as comprising organism, psyche and spirit, all involved in the person’s spirituality. Yet, he added “Spirit is the ultimate organizing principle in the human being” (p.248). I prefer to visualize the human as comprising body and mind, with the element of consciousness, like a circle around the two inseparable dimensions. I agree with Helminiak that human integration is really spiritual integration.

In this thesis, by *tangible* I imply those qualities that may be assessed, measured and clearly observed by the senses or by instruments of measurement. These would include the physical and physiological aspects. The *physical* aspects would comprise those aspects such as color, temperature, complexion, shape and size, smell, and agility. The *physiological* aspects would include the blood pressure, sugar levels, cholesterol levels, nature and condition of the digestive or reproductive systems.
The *non-tangible* aspects of the self would include those features that are accessible to understanding dependent on communication by the person in verbal or nonverbal ways. Some examples are intelligence (of the various kinds), emotions, cognitions, values, desires and motivations. They may be understood by the person communicating. This could take the form of narration, written forms, non-verbals, or interpretation from behaviors in particular situations.

My concern in describing spirituality is not to argue about having the right words, but to understand and emphasize all that spirituality embraces. In particular, my motives focus on distinguishing religion from spirituality. I also try to communicate the importance of the human body in a person’s spirituality, and the fact that spirituality is not at the level of just concepts or ideologies, but lived values. Finally, I hope to emphasize that one’s external environment (e.g. family, geography or culture) is vitally influential in and expressive of one’s spirituality.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF SPIRITUALITY

Some of the assumptions and defining characteristics of spirituality should best be spelled out for clarification and discussion.

1. **Spirituality relates to all human beings.** For the purpose of our awareness, human beings include such a wide variety of classes and descriptions. They may be described by their gender, their age group, their economic status, sexual orientation, their particular deviance from the norms of their culture or their singular circumstances. Women, men,
adolescents and children; homosexuals and heterosexuals; the rich, the middle income group and the economically poor; the religious, non-religious and anti-religious; those who are healthy and those who have acute or chronic illnesses; the physically normal and those with physical disabilities; those of high, average and low intelligence; those who are right-brain dominant and those who are left-brain dominant; the educated and the uneducated, those from large families, from single parent families and those who are only children: each has a spirituality.

We include in our awareness people from various parts of the world, from various religious backgrounds and various life experiences. This awareness would help us to embrace in our understanding of spirituality, the fact that all people are spiritual beings, differing in their spiritualities, but certainly not bereft of spirituality. The intellectually subnormal, the sex offender and the psychopath have a spirituality too!

2. A second element of spirituality is the notion that spirituality both determines and is determined by a person’s values, principles, ideologies, cognitive pattern and behavior. One of the factors that needs attention is the concept of ‘sacredness’ or ‘value’. That seems to be an important component of spirituality. What one values highly, what one holds as sacred, shapes a person’s spirituality. Also how one understands or comprehends different life experiences, including global perspectives of issues, geographical or developmental concepts shapes a person’s spirituality. These, it must be noted, have some amount of stability and certainty in that they have developed over a period of time and are associated with a certain personality. In some ways, what we are referring to here, is the
genetic component as it relates to a person’s situation. Besides this given element, there is
the factor of learned patterns of thinking, feeling and behavior. Conditioning is another
way to express this characteristic, although it is a less popular term. The concept of
conditioning seems to rob the human person of freedom, dignity and choice. It is not a
very palatable description, although it contains within it an element of truth. However, it
makes some experiences and behaviors more habitual.

3. The element of dynamism is another characteristic of spirituality. People’s
spiritualities evolve in time. Sometimes a change in the person’s status quo is temporary,
and sometimes relatively permanent. People change with time. People’s circumstances
change too. What then one understands by a description of a person’s spirituality is a
combination of these two factors, and an understanding of the dynamic nature of reality.
Lonergan upholds this concept of the dynamism of the human spirit. (In Helminiak,
1989; p.31). In some cases it may be pertinent to point out that a person has retained a
particular part of her spirituality even under circumstances of a changed life situation.
Both the ‘given’ element, and the element of will and choice, contribute to a person’s
spirituality. People change internally, perhaps, with regard to their basic belief systems,
and noticeably in response to their environment. While there is a theoretical separation of
these factors, it is impossible to separate them in reality. We can only guess at the
underlying influences of a change or the development of something new within a person.
There is no way to identify the cause-effect relationship in matters relating to a human
being.
4. A fourth element of spirituality is the observation that spirituality is personal and subjective. The experience of a person comes from two sources: physical/physiological and psychological. Again, it needs to be mentioned here, that the two cannot realistically be separate. They are two integral processes. What is seen or heard or felt is instantly processed and encoded and stored in the memory of the body. What happens is that some of the processes in the body are overt and others only available to observation through technical equipment. Other movements occur in the cognitions or feelings, ways of processing experiences and perceived data. A person’s spirituality determines and describes how a person experiences life, how the person perceives and processes life events and observations. What this means is that spirituality is a subjective concept when describing a person or group. It is unique to a person or a group.

5. Spirituality is relational in that all experience is truly relational; it involves relation with self, with other people, with nature, mystery, or imagination. While a person’s relationship with other people, nature etcetera, is a common concept, a person’s relationship with him/herself is not as common.

Assagioli elaborates on the complex nature of the self, and adds that “There are not really two selves” (In Helminiak, 1989; p.31). He ascribes that every person is simply one human reality, one self. He speaks of a higher self in trying to explain the nature of the human being. I understand our need to speak of selves as being a need to identify the element of human consciousness. Consciousness enables one to look at oneself, almost as at another. This us why I speak of self intimacy, as a person’s relation to herself or
himself. To the extent that we can be intimate with ourselves, we can, I believe, be intimate with others. This is also how I understand the Christian concept of loving our neighbors as ourselves (Lk 11:27).

6. Another feature that spirituality points to is the expressions of a person, the person’s communication and creations. People reflect their spirituality in the way they speak and relate with other people, in the way they spend their time and riches, in the way they understand and explain their circumstances and general observations, in the way they live. I refer again to Biblical passages. “This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me” (Mt 15:8). Matthew 7:18 talks about the logical concept of a good tree producing nothing but good fruit. Although we live in a world where evil abides, that world does not describe who we are, yet, it certainly influences us and needs to be taken into consideration in understanding who we are.

7. A final element of spirituality is that it describes reality, both in its tangible and intangible aspects, its observable and merely experiential aspects; its comprehensible and mysterious aspects. This dual nature of reality may be described within a person and in a person’s relation to ‘other’ including a form of what the person may consider as god. We need to admit here, that god is a subjective concept, significantly related to one’s experience, despite a globally objectified understanding. Upon some inquiry it may be found that for one person god includes nature and people, for another god is an invisible ‘Being’. For some this ‘Being’ has a form, and for yet another it does not. Since god is
not a purely tangible concept, one needs to know how a person conceives of god, who or what god is for a person.

To conclude this section, I state some emphases I have made.

A. A person comprises both physical/physiological aspects and psychological: intellectual/emotional aspects.

These aspects affect the person's spirituality. I have not read or heard about theorists, making a distinction as well as laying the emphases on the dual aspects of physiology and the physical aspects of a person. An example may help to see both the distinctions I make, as well as why I emphasize the importance of both these aspects of the human being. The fact that one is suffering from lung cancer would affect a person's spirituality in a way starkly different from someone who has no cancer, and even from someone who has cancer, but cancer of the breast. The dynamics of each are quite different and significantly affects the entire person.

The person who is thin and tall will have his spirituality differently influenced than a person who is obese and tall. This is also culturally related. How the person sees herself and fits into her lifestyle, with her given body structure will affect her spirituality. Similarly it does make a difference for a person to have either a dark complexion, or a complexion marked with acne. It is important to observe whether these factors make a difference to a person, or not. Either way, the information throws light on a person's spirituality. Various psychosomatic and bio-spirituality studies will confirm my emphases on the importance of these aspects of a person's body in the understanding of the person's
spirituality (Myss, 1996; Campbell and McMahon, 1997; Yogananda, 1990)

Baruss (1996) explains the physical embodiment principle whereby humans rely tremendously on the neurophysiological activity of the brain for their life and development. Mind and consciousness cannot exist but in and through the body. Consciousness is derived from physical processes.

B. Persons, other-than-persons (nature, other people, inanimate objects, God etc.)

and experiences have both tangible and intangible elements.

In this instance too, I am not aware of the tangible and non-tangible features of the reality of a person or other realities being distinctly emphasized. What I described as the body in the previous section comprises the tangible aspects of a person. These aspects may be observed and measured with relative ease. The non-tangible features such as a person’s emotional patterns, intellectual particulars, beliefs and convictions are equally important in order to understand a person’s spirituality. Based on these factors a person experiences and processes reality, codes and stores it in the body. An emotionally unstable person’s spirituality would vary immensely from that of a person who is more stable, and even more different from that of someone who is relatively unemotional. The same holds true on the dimensions of particular cognitive or intuitive abilities.

C. The multifaceted elements of self, other and experiences are closely integrated and cannot be separated except conceptually.

While we have differentiated the physical and physiological, we must
acknowledge how intimately related they are. In the same way, the emotions a person experiences are a bodily experience as much as they are aspects of the mind and intangible. The experience of love, or of anger are partly bodily and partly psychological. What is key here, is the awareness that the mind is a product of the brain and other physiological systems. The body is the sole instrument of psychological experience. I emphasize too, the fact that the brain does not, and cannot work in isolation from the rest of the body. We have come to localize certain bodily functions to particular body parts, often unaware that the given body part is integrally connected to the rest of the body and cannot function in isolation. It is part of the mechanism by which we perceive with our senses, process information and perform actions and communicate with others. While this may appear to be reiterating understatements, they are not always foremost in our awareness. This awareness helps to see how interrelated and inter-dependant we are as human beings in ourselves, and in our relationships.

3. A SUMMARY

I now summarize the characteristics of spirituality, as I conceive of the term:
-Spirituality is a concept describing all human beings individually or in groups.
-Spirituality has some relatively stable components, related to personality and learning.
-Spirituality is dynamic, meaning that people and circumstances are never static.
-Spirituality is subjective, influenced by individually determined characteristics and experiences.
-Spirituality is relational; relating consciousness to self and other-than-self.
- Spirituality may be understood through personal expressions, choices and way of life.

- Spirituality involves both tangible and intangible elements of self, other-than-self and experience.
I begin this chapter by exploring some definitions of spiritual maturity proposed by a variety of theorists and counseling practitioners. Some have referred directly to spiritual maturity and others to maturity in general. I have selected a few models in order to describe my own understanding of spiritual maturity. I move on to examine a few theories of human development, termed though they may be, as ego development, or faith development. I conclude this chapter with my reflections and views about spiritual development and maturity.

1. SPIRITUAL MATURITY EXPLORED

According to Baruss (1996) maturity consists in striving to extricate ourselves from living out the expectations of others and being true to ourselves. (p.25) The sad part of our society is that we often suppress the exploration of our consciousness and thereby dwarf our spiritual growth. This is in keeping with the Bowenian notion of differentiation. Murray Bowen, a significant contributor in family therapy explains that there is a process by which a person grows to experience his own identity as separate from that of his family or other close relationships. He develops his own unique
personality and way of life. He individuates.

Grant, Thompson and Clarke's From Image to Likeness: A Jungian Path in the Gospel Journey (In Helminiak, 1989; p.2) uses the Jungian functions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to show how psychological growth is really spiritual growth, throughout the developmental stages in a person's life. Individuation necessarily involves integration of the four functions: sensing, thinking, feeling and judging. The authors show that god is at work in the integrative process of individuation. Helen Thompson in Journey toward Wholeness: A Jungian Model of Adult Growth (In Helminiak, 1989; p.2), also states that spiritual perfection implies psychological wholeness or individuation. Basically she talks about integration of basic polarities in the human. These polarities could be "... material vs. spiritual, conscious vs. unconscious, rational-analytic vs. intuitive-holistic, mind vs. body, reason vs. passion, masculine vs. feminine" (In Helminiak, 1989; p.4). While psychological integration is spiritual growth, its goal is wholeness.

Charles Kao (1988), in Christian Maturity in Psychosocial Perspective, writes that "Maturity is culturally conditioned: it has something to do with social norms, moral values, and religious beliefs that constitute a mythos for the development of personal character and the maintenance of social order. No one can live without it" (p.4). He writes that maturity can be approached as a state of being and as a process of becoming. The 'being' approach is determined by an idealistic element of a static nature, since maturity is derived from the Latin word *maturus*, which means ripe, and implies a static state. The 'becoming' approach, on the other hand, is more realistic in that maturity is the direction, not the destination. It is a process, more appropriately called maturation.
This concept of ripe is not a practical concept, for Kao (1988). Given the realism of change, it needs to be conceived of as dynamic. He concludes his discussion with the idea that maturity is both being and becoming, implying the degree and quality of maturation at each stage of life.

I like to use the concepts of being and becoming in my own explanation of spiritual development. However, I do not use being as a static state. It rather appears to be a continual sequence of present moments. I see the being element important, in the way that a person is able and willing to accept and acknowledge his current reality. It is a definite skill to be able to live in the moment. It is much easier to be linked to the memory of the past or to the vision of one’s future than to revel in the present moment. Living in the present moment is a mark of spiritual maturity. Becoming as a movement toward the maximum possibility of one’s potentials as one lives in society, is another mark of spiritual maturity. Human potential, it may be stressed, operates on what may be envisioned as a continuum, the range covering the good-bad, healthy-unhealthy extremities. I refer to becoming as moving toward greater health, connectedness, goodness and creativity in the positive side of the spectrum.

Speaking of integration as an element in spiritual development, Kao (1988) writes that a person has to be internally and externally integrated. There cannot be a situation when there is internal integration and no external integration. Internal integration is shown in self-acceptance, self-image, and identity. External integration is shown through one’s multiple involvements in external affairs, in one’s attitudes toward other and in one’s concern for the community. This is slightly different from the way I describe
internal and external integration in my thesis. I see internal integration as the mind-body integration, and external integration as the way that a person expresses himself authentically. What I separate for clarity and emphasis in the thesis, is the idea of connectedness which Kao includes in his notion of integration.

In referring to the notion of integration, Baruss (1996) wrote that spiritual development is human development when the latter is conceived according to a particular set of concerns: integrity or wholeness, openness, self-responsibility, and authentic self-transcendence.

The idea of transcendence is noted in the developmental theories of some theorists. I do not make mention of this in my theory because I apply a great deal of importance to one’s circumstances. I believe that the process of maturation is common to all, but has no normative standards. In other words, I refuse to accept that a person is born into a dire economic situation and struggles all her life to feed and clothe herself and her family, is less spiritual because her basic needs have not been met and hence she is humanly incapable of transcendence to the higher needs on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. My description of spirituality and spiritual development points out that she needs to be understood within the context of her situation. Should she come into a counselor’s care for spiritual help, she could be guided toward a greater awareness of herself and her situation, which in turn would probably lead to movement toward integration and connectedness in the woman.

The Center for Human Development (CHD) in Washington, D.C. described growth by nine empirically measurable criterion. The CHD adopts a holistic approach to
spirituality. According to this viewpoint, a healthy spirituality informs all of one's life: intellectual, emotional, physical, relational (In Helminiak, 1989; p.10). A developing self-concept, responsible self-awareness, inner directedness, appreciation of genuine authority, principled morality, a personal orientation, a holistic view of development, present centeredness, and an openness to the 'Transcendent' are the nine elements that guide spiritual development in an individual.

There is mention in their account of development involving a movement from a conventional to an integrated viewpoint. This involves an internalization of learned principles and values. It includes the understanding of the unity of meaning in all of reality. (Helminiak, p.11) and something more than a mere intellectual movement. It is closer to a radical reorientation of one's whole being. One can see how these authors have borrowed the notion of the integration process from Loevinger's and Kohlberg's theories.

With their stress on movement that is developmentally post-conventional, it would appear that they view spiritual development as an adult phenomenon. I would have liked to further explore their reference to metanoia and conversion. It appears that there is something that marks the conversion, a shift that is striking and that is the final result of a process. I differ from this view, in that I see the process itself as spiritual development, which may or may not result in metanoia. In other words, I do not agree that the goal of spiritual development is a radical transformation. I also see that sometimes there could be a movement in spiritual development toward the conventional.

This could happen in the case of a person who has perhaps been brought up with little or no sense of boundaries or discipline, who grows up finding the need for it, and
joins a strict academic or religious program. This person’s process may not take the form of the individuation that another person may need for her integration, but could very well be synonymous with integration. The person could have initially been reactive toward the conventional and has not integrated the wisdom of convention. This move toward the traditional and conventional is a necessity for this person’s spiritual development.

I appreciate the CHD’s stress on holistic development, on present centeredness, self awareness, relationality, and acceptance of self most of all. I also like their way of describing openness to the ‘Transcendent’ as “... A readiness to find mystical experience in the reality of self, others, and the world” (In Helminiak, 1989; p.11). It is in keeping with my reference to one of the elements of the non-tangible in self and other-than-self, the mystical element. This could be theistic, but need not necessarily be so.

2. THEORIES OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT EXPLORED

Fowler’s Stages of Faith Development

James Fowler’s (1969) model of faith development is a very comprehensive work on human development. Fowler presents a perspective of faith development corresponding to the life cycle of a human. Fowler explains that “Faith is a person’s or group’s way of moving into the force field of life. It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relationships that make up our lives. Faith is a person’s way of seeing him- or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose” (In Helminiak, 1989; p.55).

I opted to discuss Fowler’s presentation of ideas as pertinent to spirituality
because his view of faith involves the entire person. Fowler is known to describe faith in terms of the center of value and power, transcendent centers of value and power, the human quest for relation of transcendence. Faith is not necessarily a religious concept for Fowler. Neither is it belief. It appears to be for him, a move toward something that is meaningful and personally driving for the individual. Faith is also relational. He describes this in terms of monotheism, henotheism or polytheism, based on the number of centers that form the focus of a person’s construct of the world. Unlike Piaget and Kohlberg, Fowler does not separate cognition from affection and emotions. He also emphasizes the role of the imagination in learning.

Fowler suggests that the infant moves through three stages of identification with the relational environment, to conventionalism, an individuative-reflective phase, followed by a conjunctive phase of confronting paradox and mystery and finally a universalizing stage of integrated living. What is obvious is the correspondence of these stages with the stages of the life cycle. This makes the elements of faith development and chronological development, as he describes it, both parallel and balanced. Fowler refers to the final stage as the stage of saints, where actual being and doing rather than a mental construct of the same happens. However, people are not perfect. Fowler was influenced by the Judeo-Christian concept of the kingdom of God and by Richard Neibuhr’s ‘radical monotheism’.

Loevinger’s Theory of Ego Development

Jane Loevinger (1977) conceived of the ego both as a structure and as a process.
There is a basic organization of personality, which is constantly in flux. It has a social origin and functions as a whole, guided by purpose and meaning. The ego also functions as a whole, rather than as parts in isolation from one another. Finally, the purpose of the ego is to organize the human toward its personal purpose and meaning.

While there appears to be some inconsistency in Loevinger’s description of the ego, as both the striving and what it is one strives toward, I see her work as an attempt to show the drive for development being somewhat an end in itself, and rewarding in itself. The quality of a person’s process could very well be the goal of the process. Helminiak sees this same apparent inconsistency as the reason for Loevinger’s attempt to incorporate the principle of self-transcendence of the human spirit into the structure of the human personality. What is clear, however, is Loevinger’s view of the communion of the parts of the human person, working in unison toward growth and maturation.

In speaking about ego development, Loevinger refuses to norm ego development according to chronological age. This is a definite contribution to development theory and a delightful one. Development, according to her begins with the pre-social stage, then moves to the symbiotic, impulsive, self-protective and conformist stages. Following these stages is the transitional self-aware level followed by the conscientious stage, the second transition. Then there is the individualistic level and finally the autonomous and integrated stage. One can see the relational element in her development model.

In this context, I will mention that there are different perspectives on what is called the ego. Ravindra (1974) quoted by Helminiak (1987), argues that surrender of the ego or the self is the core of the spiritual life. For him, the ego is one’s external self,
concern for which is expressed in the need for such things as professional credentials and social status. Surrendering this is akin to surpassing the conformist stage of development. In the highest state, therefore, there would be no ego, as he defines ego. This corresponds to many a traditional view of spiritual growth and maturity, in Judeo-Christian terms referred to as ‘dying to oneself’ or ‘abandonment to divine providence’. Further, this is different from Freud’s popular notion of ego.

Loevinger addresses polar variables which are aspects of the ego that continually increase in each developmental stage. These are factors that may be visualized each on a continuum, with the opposites represented at either end. The polar variables in ego development, self consistency, realism, self responsibility and socialty are developmental in nature. To the extent that these four polar variables are expressions of increasing integration of the human spirit, Helminiak considers them spiritual. He also considers Loevinger’s developmental theory one of spiritual development. Loevinger speaks of no highest stage, but only openness to continuing growth, an ongoing process of integration of the drive toward authenticity into the personality. In my theory of spiritual development, her polar variables partially correspond to my notions of authenticity, awareness, and connectedness.

Loevinger and Fowler both deal the entire human life span in their theories. Helminiak does not. He considers only the adult cognitive processes as pertinent to spiritual development. He also names the social/ cosmic implication of spiritual development as is described in Loevinger’s notion of socialty and Fowler’s understanding of universalizing faith. Concern for others, for social structures and the global
environment are a part of maturity.

Helminiak’s Theory of Spiritual Development

Helminiak (1987) proposed a definition of spiritual development as “the ongoing integration that results in the self-responsible subject from openness to an intrinsic principle of authentic self-transcendence” (p. 41). He adds that spiritual development is a human phenomenon, the proper object of study not for theology but for the human sciences and particularly for psychology, within a philosophical viewpoint.

The characteristics of spiritual development as described by Helminiak are as follows. Spirituality is an intrinsic principle of authentic self-transcendence, the possible extraordinary experience of the dynamism of one’s spirit, which in principle is open to transcending space and time. The subject has openness to that principle, a sensitivity to the drive to self-transcendence. Spiritual development involves the whole person, implying a growing self-consistency, self-constitution. Finally, it is an adult phenomenon. It entails self-critical and self-responsible growth.

In other words, there is an element of dynamism in humans which drives us to growth beyond conformism. It appears to be a drive toward authenticity. Helminiak speaks of it as the ‘is’ transcended by the ‘ought’ toward self-consistency. He probably means by this the move of the human potential toward development. I would propose that the ‘ought’ sometimes needs to transcend the ‘is’, in reverse sequence than Helminiak proposes. This is because I emphasize the movement away from the ideals that shadow, often destructively, to a person’s responsible choice of reality. A great part of spiritual
Maturation has to do with integration of the ideal with the real in one’s person and life.

As I mentioned earlier, being could be a goal for one who is constantly looking to the future, to the more and the better in self, the other or from life in general. Completion in oneself and acceptance, or more aptly phrased, choice, of one’s lot takes maturation. Again I would remember the people who are uneducated, impoverished or intellectually not exposed to reflective thought. Would they be left out of this discussion?

In speaking of authenticity, Helminiak draws from Lonergan’s concepts. Authenticity is defined by reference to the transcendental precepts that parallel the four levels of intentional consciousness, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be Responsible. All these levels of consciousness appear to be one sided, excluding the role of the body, as well as the emotive and mystical elements of the mind. I would think that authenticity could not be judged on these alone, but also the capacity and willingness of a person to be aware.

While I agree that spiritual development is a maturity phenomenon, I also hold that chronological adulthood, is no definitive guide to, or indication of maturity. As Kao (1988) writes, it is not how long one has lived, but how one has lived that determines the person’s maturity. It is an issue of kairos rather than of chronos. I admit that age, and cognitive development are crucial elements to consider in a person’s spirituality and maturation process.

Having scanned a few notions of spiritual maturity, and explored the theories of spiritual development by Fowler, Loevinger, and Helminiak, I move on to describe my own theory of spiritual maturation in the next chapter.
CHAPTER V

AVENUES FOR SPIRITUAL MATURATION

I conceive of spiritual maturity as spiritual growth on a continuum. I have described the nature of three continuums that are integrally connected and mutually influential. The three dimensions are the perspectives of awareness, authenticity, connectedness. To avoid confusion in the understanding of these terms, I will expound on them.

Before I get into the substance of each of the terms, I need to mention that one does not necessarily follow the other sequentially. In other words, awareness need not precede the move toward integration. It may happen that growing integration in a person, perhaps not consciously, results in the increased awareness in the person. In another person, pure awareness of the discrepancy in the ideals and values from the lived expression in life, may serve to willfully create authenticity. The processes may happen apparently simultaneously. They may also follow a sequential pattern unique for each individual.

Another principle to address here, is that there is no fixed pattern for spiritual development. While one person who has had little experience of direction or control in his childhood, would perhaps seek greater connection with authority in his spiritual
development, another would spend adolescence or adulthood in individuating from a structured environment. While one person who grew up economically poor, and strives to develop a growing comfort with economic riches, another may feel the need to give up attachment to her economic security. Again, while one man grows up to fit the masculine imago and tries to get in touch with the feminine in himself, another, who for some reason resisted being a male, may need to begin to accept and integrate his maleness into his self. I describe these processes in terms of awareness, authenticity and connectedness.

1. AWARENESS

Benner (1992) holds that to describe someone as spiritual and another as not is to imply their varying levels of awareness of and response to self transcendence, surrender, integration and identity. (In Aden, Benner, & Ellens; 1992). Awareness or consciousness is the characteristic that describes the process by which a person is attentive to the reality of self and other than self. This awareness necessarily involves the processes of observation and acknowledgment. Put differently, awareness involves the use of attention and cognition. While emphasizing the value of listening and genuine caring, in a paper presented at the National Conference of the Association of Women’s Higher Education in Boston, Frances Belmonte (1996) speaks of the word ‘attending’, having its roots in the Latin verb *tendo*, meaning to stretch, or to incline toward. She proceeds to say that attending is a spiritual factor in human relationships. I would imagine that she would agree to its value in our relating to what I describe as other in this thesis.

At its best, awareness is a holistic experience, involving the entire person. The
person’s mind and body are both involved. It could be a sequence of sense perceptions, memory accessing, cognition of present feelings, body changes or thoughts and acknowledgment of the experience reality. In this thesis, I describe awareness as having a depth and a breadth dimension.

By the depth dimension I mean that people can be aware in varying degrees. Growth would take the form of increased awareness of the complexity of the person or the event in consideration. Understanding or cognition is part of the depth aspect of awareness be it of self or the environment. There are people who are aware of a greater range of happenings in the world at large, but are not reflective about these events. Having depth would imply how self-aware a person is of her internal processes and her development. It describes the depth of a person’s awareness of his situation and of the environment at large.

The breadth dimension of awareness describes how expansive is the range of that awareness, of self and of the environment. It would mean that a person could be aware of more than his emotional state and movements. He can also be aware of his relational patterns, his religious attitudes, his intellectual nature and the like. Some people, for different reasons, could be deeply in touch with their interpersonal or sexual inclinations, but are aware of the impact of religion or education in their lives.

The breadth dimension describes the amount, the extensiveness of awareness and information a person may have. The depth dimension describes the degree to which a person can be reflective, make connections, understand the place of these observations in a larger context of self or events.
This distinction is being made, not to merely complicate the concept of awareness, but to bring us to realize that people may have strengths in one dimension and may be guided toward spiritual growth in the other dimensions.

2. AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity refers to the honesty with which a person accepts his or her awarenesses of self and environment. This may seem to overlap the process of awareness, but as we will see later, it does not. For example, a person may be aware of her fear of her mother. She may either attempt to deny it to herself or merely keep it from others. In acknowledging this reality, this woman can express authenticity, although she may not be outwardly expressing it. She is genuine about her fear. She may also be genuine about her internal resistance to admit it. So there is internal authenticity. Authenticity is marked by the movement toward acceptance and integration, and away from denial. Acceptance must not be misunderstood as passive resignation. Acceptance, in the way I understand it, comes from awareness and conscious choice. Awareness tends to lead to internal authenticity, and perhaps the awareness of discrepancy between internal-external authenticity. Finally, there is a movement toward breaching the gap between internal and external authenticity.

Internal-external authenticity will come about if she acts on it by either talking to someone about it, talking to her mother about it, or taking action to counteract that fear in interactions with her mother. A person may understand and hold to the need for education, but not express this value in his choices or behavior. In other words, we are
referring to **acceptance or naming** of perceived reality or truth and the **expression or integration into behavior** of this perceived reality or truth, as the two dimensions of authenticity in a person.

One way of understanding this principle is the connection between being and doing. Much of our lives today is governed by the doing principles. We are judged by and judge ourselves by our performance, our actions, our work. Very infrequently we experience, express or even observe concern over who we are outside of our productivity, or how we are in terms of our state of being and experiencing.

"Only an intrinsic drive toward authenticity, which transcends the ‘is’ with an ‘ought’ and then urges self-consistency, finally accounts for self-principled authentic development" (Helminiak, 1987; p.80). What I believe, Helminiak is referring to here is a process beginning with the awareness of a lack of authenticity, leading to a move toward an ideal ‘should’ and then a process of self-consistency or integration.

The drive toward authenticity comes with a learned value for authenticity. When I write value, I refer to the good-bad continuum. Therefore a value for authenticity, for example could be that authenticity is good. I believe that humans have a natural instinct for authenticity, as is visible in infants and children, more than in older people. Yet, I would think that a person’s circumstances are the motivation for an actual movement towards authenticity. People brought up in severely dysfunctional families or under the influence of strong cultures, such as those in cultures that are built around prostitution, may be taught defensive inauthenticity. This view may appear to be Skinnerian, and it is rightly so. Learning occurs even without our conscious consent.
This movement is elaborated in the stages of faith development expounded by James Fowler (1978). Corresponding to the human life cycle, Fowler proposed that a person goes through stages of conformity into those of conscientiousness. What he proposes coincides with our discussion of authenticity.

During childhood, humans tend to accept without personalizing values and habits. Gradually, there is questioning about what one has chosen for oneself or what is being offered. Finally, there is a process of personalizing, of introjecting into one's repertoire of thoughts, feelings and actions. This is what I describe as growth in authenticity.

There can be growth in the degree of personal acceptance and acknowledgment of what comes into the spectrum of one's awareness. Further, there can be growth in the level of comfort of what arises within the arena of awareness within the social context. Growth would also be expressed in how comfortable a person is in others' knowing what the person has discovered about himself.

Besides awareness, another area of spiritual maturity and development is connectedness, the integration of a person in her totality and with the rest of reality.

3. CONNECTEDNESS

This characteristic of spiritual maturity describes a sense of wholeness that comes with growth in a person. It describes what may also be referred to as integration. Connectedness has two dimensions. The first is the connectedness of the tangible body with the non-tangible mind of a person. The body is the medium of experience in a person. The person has a body which is the only tangible aspect, the means by which a
person may experience. Through the internal body and the five senses, a person is able to experience. The neurological system masterfully enables reception of and response to, various internal and external stimuli, through complex coding mechanisms. When I speak of the body, I clarify that the psychological aspects are the non-tangibles, only a reality when in relation to the body.

The body is the medium by which a person experiences, receives information, processes this information and expresses responses; it is through the body that we can be conscious of our bodies and conscious of other than us; it is through the body that we can be related to ourselves and the other. In this thesis, I may refer to the body as the physical part of the self. I am including in this the physiological, although I see them as distinct, and related. Our size, our color, shape and features are examples of the physical. Our metabolism, sexual drives, circulation are examples of our physiological selves. Our physical part can be assessed by tape measure, weighing scales, electrodes and thermometers. Helminiak acknowledges this aspect of physical bodiliness as a factor to be considered in spiritual development, but admits that more research needs to be done in this area.

The non-tangible part of ourselves, I call the psychological aspects, which are comprised of the intellectual/cognitive aspects and the emotional or responsive aspects. Too frequently we speak loosely of the ‘mind’, the ‘psyche’ or the ‘intellect’. While conceptually differentiated from the body, the body and mind work closely together and are in fact, inseparable. The mind, the intangible part of our self can only be inferred by our spoken expressions, our non-verbals, or by written assessments like personality and
intelligence tests. The body also carries expressions of the mind. Focusing, a technique
development initially by Eugene Gendlin in the early 1970s works on awareness of
bodily experience. This provides direct healing to hurts collected along life’s journey. It
also gives information about processes that would typically fall into the realm of the mind
(In Campbell, 1997).

Harris notes that the awakening of spirituality “starts with this special form of
sensual attentiveness, which all of us possess, to feeling, touching, seeing and hearing, as
well as movement, gesture, and rhythm” (p.4). She adds that “Spiritual Awakening is the
capacity to start connecting with those aspects of ourselves that although real remain
hidden - mystery, love, and sorrow, and dreams or wholeness-- those that make us truly
us” (p.4). What seems to be emphasized here is that spirituality consists of the tangible
and non-tangible aspects of experienced reality, the body and the mind. Spiritual growth
is a move to increased development and connection between the two aspects of a person.

Connectedness also refers to the networking of the various aspects of a person’s
life in terms of what I earlier described as expression, namely family, religion, education,
occupation, or community. How integrated they are will be shown by their role in a
person’s life. Alienation of a particular dimension like religion, for example, alters the
configuration of a person’s spirituality. If a person has been separated from her family of
origin and has not accepted or drawn closure to the experience, she will be less integrated
a person than she could be. We are assuming here that we humans have certain needs that
are met in certain ways. For example, there is a need for being productive, however social
its origin, which could be expressed in fruitful homemaking, a career, or volunteer work.
Similarly there is a need for relationality, which could lead a person to have friends, belong to a community or start a family.

We speak here about the intra-personal and interpersonal connectedness and relationality of the various aspects of a person’s life. A person who is a prostitute and an active Church member may experience a lack of connectedness in her person and life, besides some degree of inauthenticity. She may not experience this disharmony if she sees that she is compelled into this situation and is unable to break out of it. Another example is of a person whose world revolves around his family, and who is quite unconcerned and disconnected with his community, be it a local geographical community or the world community. We live in a world larger than this person’s family. We understand that his connectedness with the larger world would very likely be a path toward greater spiritual health.

As might have occurred to the reader, it is really difficult to see how consciousness, authenticity and connectedness work separately. They do not. They constantly influence one another. Greater self awareness might result in greater global awareness or authenticity in a person’s life. Greater authenticity may show itself in greater connectedness or further increased awareness.

In my understanding, spiritual development and maturity really needs to be looked upon as a complex interaction of maturity in various spheres of a human life process. What is often termed human development, is really describing either of the aspects or all aspects of physical, physiological, emotive, intellectual/ cognitive/ intuitive development. While this is a valid study, it needs to be emphasized that the development
and maturity of each part of the physical and each part of the psychological self affect the
development of the entire person. For example, a diseased body will not have the same
psychological experiences or responses as a non-diseased body would. Again, a mentally
subnormal or an autistic person would develop differently than other people.

Each individual aspect of a person affects the total development process and
maturity in the person. In other words, if a person’s intellectual development has been
thwarted, his entire development will be skewed accordingly. This holds true for social,
emotional or other areas of development. We do not need to speak in terms of having
underdeveloped or deprived development. The very nature of development in any given
area needs to be considered in order to get a whole picture of a person. For example, the
spirituality of a person brought up in a social milieu other than the one in which she now
lives, will have nuances that would not be present, if she now lives in her milieu of
origin.

I reiterate that I have not proposed any particular form by which spiritual
development occurs. Neither do I hold that it is just an adult phenomenon as Helminiak
suggests. If we hold that spirituality is a holistic concept that involves the entire person,
in all the aspects of his life, then development has got to be a reality in a child, in as much
as it is present in an adult. The developmental stage that a person is at, will influence the
person’s spirituality. A child’s spirituality may not be cognitively as sophisticated as an
adult’s. However, authenticity in a child may be more apparent, though not as complex
than an adult’s. Awareness is just one dimension of spirituality. Authenticity may
develop with different levels of will power. This brings us to another realm of
consideration, that of will or desire and ability.

Each of us differs in our ability and in our desire for or will to change. It is impossible to determine the degree of authenticity, awareness or connectedness a person may have. We cannot even determine the contribution of each of the dimensions for ourselves. We need merely to realize that these factors do operate in a person. This awareness will keep us from the judging that scripture, in the words of Jesus, warns us against.

In summary:

- Spiritual maturity and development moves along a continuum.

- There is no sequential pattern in spiritual development.

- There is a constant interplay among the three dimensions of awareness, authenticity and connectedness.

- The intra-personal and circumstantial elements determine and affect a person’s spiritual development.
CHAPTER VI

MODELS OF SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

There are a several models for developing spiritual assessments and a few assessments are actually in use. Some of them are actually religious questionnaires, while others are holistic and include a spiritual dimension. I found that there was a factor used synonymously with spirituality, which is an element, albeit a vital element of spirituality. I have decided to call it the mystical element. This is the element that deals with what is more commonly termed ‘god’, ‘Mystery’, ‘the Ultimate’, the ‘Force’, in a person’s relational life; prayer, meditation and some religious rituals.

When I accessed the models of spiritual development from what were termed faith or ego development, I was actually focusing on spiritual development. I now introduce a few models of assessment that may be known by names other than spiritual development models. This is just to introduce some models of assessment that have spiritual or religious items included. The Family Environment Scale (FES) authored by Moos and Moos (1981) has a Moral-Religion Scale along with nine other subscales. The Mooney Problem Checklist-C (MPC-C) by Mooney (1992) opens twenty out of three hundred and thirty items for consideration with regard to spiritual and religious discussion. A discussion of their value is beyond the scope of this thesis. It is sufficient to know that
such instruments are in use.

Among Wellness Instruments, the Life Assessment Questionnaire (LAQ) assesses ten dimensions, of which one is the spiritual dimension. The Wellness Inventory (WI) was intended to stimulate growth oriented approaches to personal issues. Two out of the twelve spiritually oriented categories correlate significantly with the spiritual dimension of the LAQ (Palombi, 1992). The Holistic Living Inventory (HLI) yields scores suggesting optimal functioning on the four dimensions of holistic living, one of which is spiritual functioning (Stoudenmire, Batman, Pavlov, and Temple, 1986).

The Spiritual Assessment Inventory (Hall and Edwards, 1996) integrates relational maturity from an object relations perspective and an experiential God-awareness based on Christian New Testament teachings and contemplative spirituality principles. What was being measured was awareness and quality of relationship with God. In another factor analysis with a modified version of the SAI, five factors were identified, namely, awareness, instability, grandiosity, realistic acceptance and defensiveness/disappointment. There is potential for this measure in clinical assessment and research.

Having surveyed several measures of spiritual assessment, I will focus on a few in a little more detail.

1. Fitchett’s 7X7 Model of Spiritual Assessment

George Fitchett (1993) believes in the basic wholeness of the human person, and presents a philosophy and perspective that are very comprehensive. He develops, after
research with a team from the hospital situation, a model of spiritual assessment. He refers to his model as ‘a spiritual assessment model that took into account the whole person, both as individual and as part of larger family, social, and cultural systems’ (p.40).

Fitchett defines ‘the spiritual as the dimension of life that reflects the need to find meaning in existence and in which we respond to the sacred’ (p.16). He admits to using the terms spirituality, religion, religiosity, pastoral, faith and belief interchangeably although he is aware that there are ‘sometimes helpful and important distinctions in these terms’ (p.16).

In critiquing other models of spiritual assessment, Fitchett notes that while some only ask about “religious affiliation, that is, what church or synagogue a person belongs to”, others focus only on a person’s religious or spiritual practices, that is, how often the person prays or attends religious services, for example’. He continues: “We felt, by contrast, that it was important to know something about a number of key dimensions of religious beliefs, experiences, practices, interpersonal relations, and change” (p.40).

Fitchett’s lack of congruence in understanding and defining terms in this study is also reflected in his 7X7 two dimensional model of Spiritual Assessment. On the holistic dimension, he includes various individual aspects of family, culture and ethnicity. The last item on this list of holistic assessment, is the spiritual one. He proceeds to elaborate on this in great detail, including items regarding person’s beliefs, their expressions in ritual and community life.

On another score, Fitchett rightly writes that the DSM III-Revised, “provided a basis for our explorations into the multi-disciplinary aspects of assessment” (p.40). This
perspective of being directed by what is lacking, from a socially defined norm in a person, dilutes Fitchett’s claim to being holistic. While it could be argued that this model was created to be functional, a strength-based model would not be any less effective. It would be more pastoral and perhaps more effective. Such a model would not leave out areas that need attention, but draw attention to reality based observations. They would draw direction away from the unhealthy areas that surface. Instead they would consider the possible ways to redirect the person toward further health, based on observed strengths and natural patterns of the person.

I commend the multi disciplinary approach Fitchett uses, as well as his proposed method of gaining information through conversing with the patients. He sees his work as a framework to organize information from patients. His intention has been to develop a conceptually sound approach to spiritual assessment, comprehensive in its view of the spiritual dimension of life and applicable in ministry settings.

I also appreciate that Fitchett acknowledges religious boundaries in spiritual assessment. His work is a movement toward what I call spirituality in this thesis. However, there are pitfalls of boundaries, and definitions, which have extensive implications on basic views about the human processes, and the role of such vital concepts such as religion and faith.

2. FARRAN, FITCHETT, QUIRING-EMBLLEN, AND BURCK’S MODEL

Farran, Fitchett, Quiring-Emblen, and Burck (1989), writing from a nursing perspective, speak of the spiritual dimension as distinguished from the religious
dimension. They view the spiritual as the 'being' and religious as the 'doing' dimension. In explaining their views, they claim to use a functional rather than a substantive definition of the spiritual dimension.

They hold to the totality of the person and use a multi-disciplinary approach. They survey developmental stages, practical approaches to understanding the spiritual dimension, life experiences and attitudes and behavior related to the spiritual dimension. While they hold that spirituality is the core of human existence (a unifying approach), they present spirituality as influencing and being influenced by all human functioning. This makes their model more integrated than unifying. They understand human development as often paralleling physiological and psychosocial human development. However, it is more how the person interprets his circumstances, rather than the circumstances, which are significant in the person’s development.

Their model is multi-disciplinary, utilizing knowledge from philosophy, theology, physiology, psychology, and sociology. Specific assessments of spiritual development have been made in the area of spiritual development and seven practical dimensions of spiritual care. They devised seven major categories for a spiritual assessment. They are belief and meaning, authority and guidance, experience and emotion, fellowship, ritual and practice, courage (hope) and growth, and vocation and consequences. With knowledge of the patients’ developmental stage in mind, a practitioner can assess the patient’s form of logic, current perspective, form of moral judgment, bounds of social awareness, locus of authority, form of world coherence, and symbolic functioning. When the seven categories are juxtaposed alongside the patient’s life experiences, events, and
questions, and her life options-consequences, a comprehensive spiritual assessment and intervention may be completed satisfactorily.

I think that this is a well-developed model. I appreciate several things in particular. One is the multi-disciplinary approach, with a clear category for the physiological. However, beyond its claim to be useful only in health care settings, I think it is critical in just any spiritual assessment. ‘A physiological approach to understanding the spiritual dimension helps us to comprehend the interactions that occur among the body, mind, and spirit in health and illness’ (Farran et al, p.188).

3. GENIA’S SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE INDEX (SEI)

This 1991 model is a measure of spiritual maturity for people of different religious and spiritual beliefs. It is based on a developmental, rather than a multidimensional notion of faith. There is a high reliability to its measuring dogmatism and intolerance of ambiguity, religious participation, intrinsicness and quest. The assessment consists of 38 items in a 6-point Likert scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’.

The SEI is based on Gordon Allport’s theory of intrinsic-extrinsic religious motivation. Extrinsic motivation is the immature, utilitarian approach to religion, as compared with intrinsic motivation that is theoretically characterized by a mature commitment to religious beliefs. This religious motivation affects a person’s psychological and emotional health. Based on some psychoanalytic developmental theories, inadequate nurturance in early childhood causes people to become spiritually
immature adults, perhaps because of a lack of ability to trust. More internally secure individuals are capable of more mature spiritual commitment.

While this scale is a good measure of religious dogmatism, its use is limited. Its focus is on the religious dimension, rather than on a broader area of spirituality, as it claims to assess. This is partly because of the conception of spirituality as mainly religious or God-related. Genia admits that her index may reflect a Western conception of spiritual faith, and may not be applicable to Eastern religious traditions.

4. WITMER AND SWEENEY’S WELLNESS EVALUATION OF LIFESTYLE (WEL)

Witmer and Sweeney (1994) depict their model of spiritual assessment in the form of a layered wheel. The innermost layer depicts the ‘...fundamental sense of oneness in the inner life and with others, purposiveness or meaning in life, hope or optimism, and moral values nurturing one’s own well-being and that of others’ (Kelly, p.162). This is the innermost layer of spirituality. This spirituality is integrally infused into the next layer involving primary self regulating and self-enhancing traits such as exercise, sense of humor, realistic beliefs, cultural identity and sense of worth. These work in conjunction with the other major life tasks, namely, work, love and friendship which comprise the next layer of the wheel. Together they are realized in what is described in the last layer of societal institutions including education, media, family and religion. Global events comprise the outermost layer that has no boundaries.

Influenced as the researchers have been by Adlerian principles, Witmer and Sweeney (1991) began developing their model based on the concepts of life tasks, life
forces, and major societal institutions. Later they developed the model into an integrated paradigm which included eleven characteristics desirable for optimum health and functioning. This also talked about life tasks and life forces. This model has been developed into the Wellness Evaluation of Lifestyle (WEL) questionnaire by Witmer, Sweeney and Myers (1994). Here, spirituality is listed as the first of the five major life tasks. There are sixteen dimensions of wellness and a total wellness score.

What I appreciate about this model is the acknowledgment of the many faceted elements of spirituality. I would replace the term ‘self-regulation/ self-enhancing’ for the next layer, because all the elements are regulated by interrelationships, within and outside the person. The elements included are quite comprehensive, in that they describe what I imply by the body, the psychological aspects as well as relationships with other-than-self.

What is confusing about this layer is that the elements are not equivalent. While they are all descriptive of what is self-regulating and self-enhancing, it is not clear how items that are expressive of roles or group identity, of dimensions of the person and of personal needs and expressions, all fit the same title. Since they represent group identity, aspects of the person, needs and expression, which are diverse descriptors of a person or a group, the items are not appropriate to being on the same list.

I have the same criticism regarding the next layer of major life tasks. They are not clearly different or descriptive of life tasks. Finally the societal institutions appear quite comprehensive. What lies beyond the circles are global events. What their relation to the others layers is, is not clear. I find the element of ‘god’ or a synonymous term missing. What was perhaps assumed is that religion, which is listed as an institution, covers it.
While 'god' or synonymous words may be covered in the content, by other descriptors, they are an important inclusion. They give significant information about the role of these universal concepts in a person’s life. I find this wheel a good attempt to incorporate the elements of a holistic spirituality, but undeveloped in its basic philosophy and unclear in its use of terminology.

5. ELLISON’S SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING SCALE (SWBS)

Ellison (1991) envisioned spirituality with a vertical component (transcendental, religious) and a horizontal component (social-psychological). He shares Witmer and Sweeney’s (1992) view of spirituality as an integrative force interwoven in the whole of the person, the SWBS is suggested as a general indicator of personality integration and resultant well-being. The person is viewed from a systemic perspective. “Spiritual well-being in its most positive expression consists of a securely held set of meta-empirical and natural beliefs and values giving rise to an inner hopefulness about the ultimate meaning and purpose in life, a deep peace that is the source of joy in living as well as the courage to confront suffering forthrightly, and an actively benevolent connection with others and the universe” (Kelly, p.167).

Kelly (1996) points out that spiritual well-being need not be synonymous with spiritual health or maturity. By this he implies that spiritual well-being could include distress that is not necessarily a lack of spiritual health or maturity. Following from this, I can see how spiritual well-being can be congruent to where a person is at a given point. One may not be very spiritually mature, but may be higher on spiritual well-being.
Gartner, Larson, Allen and Gartner (1991) viewed pertinent literature and found that the studies that have a positive relationship between religion and mental health used real-life behavioral situations. Those that related religion to psychopathology used paper and pencil tests. Besides other conclusions that may be drawn from this, I see this as evidence to support testing and well-being exploration beyond paper and pencil tests. I go further to propose that even interviews with a person should include actual incidents as opposed to ideas and spoken beliefs and values. What is significant in understanding a person’s spirituality is the difference between the ideal and the lived.

The SWBS is a Likert-styled twenty item questionnaire covering areas like prayer, understanding about personal origin, evaluation of relationship with God and of one’s well-being, meaning and purpose in life and feelings about life and one’s future. This scale represents well what I call the mystical elements and general evaluations at the level of ideas and cognition, and life in general. The three subscales assess overall spiritual well-being, existential well-being, and religious well-being. Each item is to be marked on a 6-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Ten items measure religious well-being, a term which refers to a person’s relationship with God. The other ten items assess existential well-being, which indicates a person’s sense of life purpose and satisfaction. When the SWBS was researched, data showed that it has merit as a general indicator of health and well being. This research, however, was restricted to Christians.

The Spiritual Maturity Index was developed by Ellison in 1983 to complement the SWBS. It contains thirty Likert-type items ranging on a scale from strongly agree to
strongly disagree. It was designed to assess growth in the Christian faith. Ellison (1983) distinguished spiritual well-being from spiritual health and spiritual maturity in that spiritual health and spiritual maturity are enduring characteristics, expressed in the experience(s) of spiritual well-being.

What appears lacking in their model of spirituality, and really does not contradict their views, is as follows. They have only dealt at the level of ideas, especially focused on God and the mystical elements and self evaluations about life. What is missing is the balance of relationships, with people and creation, and intimacy with self. Also excluded are references to events describing lived spirituality, the role of the body, and the various societal expressions of spirituality.

Their definition is very close to what I include in the realm of spirituality. It has the elements of integration of the dimensions of human existence, the awareness that spirituality affects all major aspects of human life, that it influences and is influenced by all human functioning, and that it happens in differing degrees of intensity. What I do not have in my definition of spirituality is the mention of the positive and negative relationship that spirituality can have with human functioning.

This is because I understand spirituality as descriptive of what may be positive or negative aspects of a person or the environment. I shy from normative terms like positive or negative because they are relative terms and it is impossible to decide who or what is the basis for the norm. All I chose to decide in this regard is what is considered positive or negative is reality that has been assigned a value. This judgmental process sustains, encourages or thwarts spiritual development and maturity based on societal norms, rather
than on personal process and potentials.

Positive or negative then, are aspects of a person or her life, that influence well
being and progress. I cannot conceive of calling a person’s spirituality positive or
negative, though what the authors could mean is that their beliefs or ideologies could
oppose people’s total health. It would be best for a model to refrain from value
impositions on the narrative of a person, but instead identify strengths and weaknesses
additionally. There are many facets to a person, intellectual, emotional or physical that
would not be either strengths or weaknesses. They would, however, serve to understand
the person, to describe the person. I believe that these are significant elements in a
holistic model of spiritual assessment. I would, besides this, prefer to call this spiritual
exploration, leading to a rehabilitative assessment, a treatment plan, that is, therapy goals
or referrals.

Having discussed some models and measures of spiritual assessment, I now
propose that the term *spiritual exploration* be used instead of spiritual assessment. This is
because a spiritual exploration seeks to understand a person in the most wholesome way
possible. Understanding, with a view to helping a person, I believe is what this exercise is
primarily about. The process of exploring with a person who he is, could very well be the
beginning of therapy with the person. By the end of the time with the person, before the
treatment plan really begins, the counselor needs to have a good idea about three areas of
spiritual maturity in the person: awareness, integration and connectedness. The counselor
will also have gained a greater understanding and more information about the person to
be able to have some insight into how therapy may continue. A failure of this approach is
that it is very subjective, lacking the makings of objective testing, reliability and validity. It is, in truth, as subjective and effective as therapy.

In trying to provide for all the limitations that we have in existing models of assessment of spirituality, I have tried to use rituals as one additional area for exploration. I will present a skeleton framework to be further explained and developed in the next chapters.

An exploration should include the two major aspects of a person’s source of personal experience: the body (physical and physiological) and the psychological aspects (cognition and emotions). The exploration should also include the various expressions of a person through people, other life and things/activities. Among elements one could explore is the family of origin, family of choice, social life (people from work, school, community groups, the neighborhood). One could consider people of both genders and different sexual orientations, different developmental levels, race, culture, religion. One would also explore the person’s attitudes and relationship with God, nature and other life, and her education, hobbies, and work.

One way to access a person’s actual, as opposed to verbalized, lifestyle and values are to explore the person’s ritual life. By ritual life, I recommend anything ranging from a person’s daily routine to family routines. I would include the ethnic, religious, and national customs and celebrations in which the person participates. I also include rituals of development or vocational celebrations and accomplishments. This would comprise the second part of the exploration.

The third part of the exploration would lead the person to imagine or discuss
possible changes that he might like to make in his ritual life. This would not only be therapeutically valuable information, but a therapeutic process. Also, it would add to the information the counselor might need concerning the person’s awareness, authenticity, and connectedness.

This process would show how aware the person was of his life correlating with his ideas, how he would express these discrepancies, if any, and any other information regarding this process. This would also suggest the nature and level of authenticity in the person and finally, the connectedness of the various dimensions in a person’s life.

A more structured model needs to be developed to maximum advantage in this exploration. This is ground for introspection and research among pastoral counselors.
CHAPTER VII

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS MODEL IN PASTORAL COUNSELING

In this final chapter, I seek to address questions and issues concerning my views on spirituality, spiritual maturation and spiritual exploration in a pastoral counseling context. To do this I begin with some thoughts on pastoral counseling and also address the role and identity of pastoral counselors.

John Maes in his chapter Maturity in Pastoral Counseling wrote that “Pastoral counseling has arisen as a new form of ministry in response to ancient existential human needs” (Kao, 1988; p.153). He proceeded to enlist developmental phases and critical life events which are potential moments for grief and for growth. Kao in 1988 thought that pastoral counseling had attained “a certain maturity of theoretical and practical explication, resulting in a reasonably clear and unique identity” (p.154). He noted the birth of The American Association of Pastoral Counselors as representative of this growth.

However, over the years pastoral counseling has been through identity crises, and continues to be in transition. Many seek to define who a pastoral counselor is, and how she differs from a psychotherapist, a spiritual director, a secular counselor, and a religious counselor. Some of this ambiguity could be due to inadequate quality research in the field
of pastoral counseling. Another reason could be the very nature of pastoral counseling that has no rigid boundaries. There is often an overlap in the content of these closely related but very distinct practices. It must also be pointed out that this set of professional fields are typical of the West. They are scarcely heard of in the rest of the world.

Ganje-Fling & McCarthy (1991) discuss how spiritual direction and psychotherapy differ. They quote various authors in this connection. A major goal of spiritual direction is spiritual growth and that of psychotherapy is psychological growth (Conroy, 1987). The actual difference between the two fields is difficult for me to understand, given the close connection I see between the two goals and outcomes really are. "...in spiritual direction, interpretation occurs through faith as opposed to through the therapist in psychotherapy" (Dyckman & Carroll, 1981). Spiritual direction focuses mainly on a "growing relationship with God/Higher Power, whereas psychotherapy focuses more on the understanding and resolution of life issues and problems" (Barnhouse, 1979). In their empirical study, Ganje-Fling and McCarthy (1991) found that spiritual directors had a more diverse educational background than did psychotherapists, and used meditation, prayer, and silence more often with clients, than did psychotherapists.

Just as I have distinguished, spirituality from religion, I will now describe my own conception of the role of a pastoral counselor, as distinct from other practitioners. It must be kept in mind that just as many untrained people share the skills and orientation of trained professionals, many may in truth be pastoral counselors without their professions naming them so. On the other hand there may be pastoral counselors who in practice lean
toward being religious counselors or psychotherapists.

Very simply, I will try to define each practice in question. A *psychotherapist* is trained in clinical psychology, including theories of human personality, development and pathology, and theories and techniques for therapy. Therapy in all instances in this discussion begins with the practitioner-client relationship, and includes assessment, diagnosis, therapy and treatment or referral.

A *religious counselor* is publicly known by his religious frame of operation. He is expected to incorporate religious language or religious practices in therapy. In his review Worthington (1986) stated that “Secular counseling, is defined as counseling not involving religious content nor set in an explicitly religious context”. A *spiritual director*, it appears, more than any of the others, is historically from a Christian tradition. There are various forms of spiritual mentoring in other religious traditions. However, they take different forms and fall under different titles. I will restrict this discussion only to spiritual directors in the Christian tradition, because of the confusion of their role with that of the other care givers mentioned above. To the best of my knowledge, while there are many professions, including the ones I have been describing in this chapter, that help people by way of advising, supporting and companioning, spiritual direction involves a more personal relationship. Egan (1990) found that for psychotherapists, self-reference may be antithetical to the maintenance of ‘neutrality’ (In Ganje-Fling & McCarthy). The freedom from legal liability could contribute to this freedom of relationship, in addition to the fact that there are fewer clinical problems in people who that seek spiritual direction, which naturally nurtures more equality perhaps in the director and directee.
Legal policies differentiate psychotherapists, counselors and spiritual directors. A spiritual director would not be equipped to deal with, or be liable for clinical cases. None of these professionals would be expected to be non-religious in their orientation. *Pastoral counselors* who are becoming increasingly known for their sensitivity to the whole person are at this time being trained in the dual disciplines of theology and psychology. In this effort it is hoped that they will be sensitive to the presence and role of god in their clients' lives. It is presumed that they are also attentive to the presence and movement of god in their own lives and in the therapeutic process. This does not presume that the other professionals in the field do not share this trait. They are just not expected, perhaps to be thus inclined.

In exploring why people choose a pastoral counselor over another type of psychotherapist, Posavac and Hartung (1977) found that while many had no preference, 20% of the people chose pastoral counselors for religious reasons. They concluded their discussion by saying that the definition of pastoral counseling is probably for the benefit of the practitioner rather than the client. By this I seem to read that the 'religious' element is somewhat associated with pastoral counselors. However, this element of distinction could often be the way that the counselor views his profession, how he understands himself as a counselor.

"... although the discipline of pastoral counseling demands an understanding of both pastoral care and psychotherapy, the learning of psychotherapy is the first priority... being a *pastoral* counselor is no excuse for being an unskilled therapist" (Posavac & Hartung, p.30). I strongly support this statement. Pastoral counselors owe it to the
profession and to the clientele they are serve, to be well trained in psychotherapy, which should include the psychology of religion.

The essence of the pastoral counselor lies in the quality of her presence. To the extent that the counselor is a person who is the best human he can be, he will also be the best counselor, the effective therapist. van den Blink (1995) writes that the ministry of presence is the “conditio sine qua non for all pastoral psychotherapy” (p.205). From a psychosystems perspective, the profession is defined by “.the person of the pastoral psychotherapist in the activity, in the process and context of doing pastoral psychotherapy”(van den Blink, p.206). This holds true, I believe, for every other kind of therapy and human service.

As is often the case with any bias a counselor may have, the counselor needs to be aware of her power to influence and manipulate the counselee, however unintentionally. Many counseling programs focus primarily in knowledge of human development, on human pathologies, theories of treatment and ethical concerns in practice. Not many programs focus on the person of the pastoral counselor, and how the counselor views the human being and life in general.

Kelly (1994) writes that the therapeutic result of the counselor’s spirituality resides in its power to strengthen the positive therapeutic bond between client and counselor. ‘Spirituality is the counseling art above all means an honoring of the unique human integrity of the client and never, in its authentic expression, takes the form or force contrary to the client’s voluntary participation’ (Kelly, p.96). It takes an emphasis of the program to instill in the counselor the importance of honoring a person and his
Giblin (1993) in describing a training program for pastoral counselors wrote that “Integration is a central goal of training and includes weaving together the personal and professional, theory and practice, affective with cognitive and behavioral, conscious and unconscious, psychological and theological, individual with social and cultural” (In The Future of Pastoral Counseling, p. 61).

This integration results in a self-aware counselor, skillfully relating to the counselee in respectful and loving presence. Such an attitude not only accepts the client but nurtures, supports and challenges the client to greater health and well-being. To the extent that she is aware, authentic and connected, in the way that I have described in my thesis, a person will be a more effective therapist. This holds for all the professions that I have discussed. In reality, it is true of all the healing professions, as well as for any person serving people.

What theology courses should be included in pastoral counselor training? It is feasible to train pastoral counselors in a theology of their own Faith tradition. This brings insights and understanding to the lives they live and the wisdom from their tradition. In programs that involve people from more than one Faith tradition, training needs to be clearly thought out, so that each student has access to guidance and information that benefits the learning process.

The better the program, the more conscious it will be of the quality of life of the person in training. Second in priority, is the knowledge shared. Finally, it is the integration of that knowledge into the pastoral counselor’s personal spirituality that will
prove beneficial. People may choose the theories and therapeutic modes that best suit them, and disregard some others. Moreover, as John E. Hinkle (1993) writes in The Future of Pastoral Counseling, about the basic knowledge for pastoral counselors, “First, the (psychodynamic) psychology of religious experience; second, the spiritualities of various psychodynamics, including awareness of the different personality configurations in clients...” (p. 65). Another consideration in this regard is language, psychological, theological and secular. A pastoral counselor should be open to understanding and using language to communicate effectively with a variety of clientele.

Smith (1995) decries the loss of the importance given to “spiritual experience and religious ideation and modes of being”. He sees how “...spiritual experience and religious ideation are often intricately involved in the values, lifestyles, and personal relationship problems of persons seeking help from mental health practitioners...” (p. xi). He refers to Nietzsche’s diagnosis of the situation as a growing sense of nihilism in Western culture. To the extent that the East adopts western art, the western educational system, and media, it also absorbs some of its skepticism of what cannot be measured or logically fathomed.

van den Blink (1995) also reinforced this point when he wrote that the pastoral psychotherapy movement needs to reconnect with its spiritual roots. Pastoral psychotherapists “potentially and hopefully function as enablers of change and empowerment, as providers of a safe holding environment, as wounded healers...” (p. 204). He continues to state that “The central importance of a genuine spirituality in the work of pastoral psychotherapy therefore cannot be overstated. By spirituality I mean the awareness of the import of our own relationship to God, however we may understand and
articulate that theologically and by whatever spiritual discipline we endeavor to enrich that connection” (p.204). He believes that recovery of authentic spirituality is “...the core issue confronting pastoral psychotherapist and key to a successful transformation of the pastoral psychotherapy profession” (p.205).

Schlauch (1995) envisioned pastoral counseling and psychotherapy as ‘faithful companioning’. Pastoral psychotherapy is, he added, healing through the clinician’s attitude, method, and presence. We can see the different nuances of this profession and how personal approaches seem to both be present and expressed vividly in this field.

Smith (1995) criticizes pastoral counselors for being phobic about religious material for fear of encouraging infantilism or neurotic guilt in the patient. He quotes Howard Clinebell’s (1966) Basic Types of Counseling that failed to sustain a firm dialogue between the theological and human sciences. Smith suggests that it is not clear what pastoral counselors offer their clients, that secular counselors do not. This is what has amounted to an identity crisis in the profession.

In more current literature, van den Blink, in his contribution to Pastoral Care and Social Conflict (1995) writes that the profession is being challenged by transitions in new therapeutic orientations, by changes in the church and in society, which stem greatly from an awareness of the reality of the individual as a member of a complex system. “Pastoral psychotherapy and the pastoral counseling movement, ...will look quite different in the future-in theory, in structure, and in practice (p.195).

van den Blink (1995) names three defining characteristics of pastoral psychotherapists. One is the communal aspect which links them to a faith community of
any kind. The *functional* aspect names their professional relationships and accountability structures. The *intentional* aspect is about the person of the therapist. A pastoral psychotherapist needs to name all these three aspects in order to define himself apart from any other psychotherapist. As mentioned before, I reiterate that although other professionals may be associated with these three features, they need not be distinctive features of their professions. They are important, however, to pastoral counselors, as some literature suggests.

One of the issues van de Blink contests is the ordination requirement recommended by many, of pastoral counselors. They “are not aware of the way the requirement for ordination has favored men over women and heterosexuals over homosexuals, or of the way in which social policy privileges ordained clergy through such legal protections as tax deductions and the confidentiality of the confessional” (In Couture and Hunter, Eds. 1995, p.202). His research reveals that in some places pastoral psychotherapists are being trained in nontraditional settings such as community centers, shelters and store front churches.

I will now discuss how my thesis is a potential contribution to pastoral counseling.

1. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BODY IN SPIRITUALITY

   In Christian literature, both the Old and the New testament usage of words for flesh (*basar, sarx*) refers to the whole person, just as the words for soul (*nephes, sarx*) and for spirit (*ruach, pneuma*) also refer to the whole person, although they also have
partially distinctive meanings. The Saxon word from which *health* is derived is the same source from which *whole* comes. We can see how wholeness and health have been fundamentally related.

In acknowledging his lack of attention to the body in discussing spiritual development, Helminiak (1987) writes: ‘Here I do no more than acknowledge one’s physical bodiliness as also a factor to be considered in spiritual development. Further research needs to be done on this issue (p.90). While my thesis does not involve any further research, it surveys some. More than that however, it includes the body in the whole notion of spirituality than I have not seen described before. This, I hope will contribute to the importance given to the body in understanding the person.

On another level, I hope that besides the body being merely acknowledged for its importance in spirituality and pastoral counseling, it will be seen as composed of both the physical and physiological. They each have a distinct and significant contribution in the understanding of a person, no matter what the nature of the issue in question. This as I have explained, needs to be viewed within the context of culture. It would then offer the therapist fuller understanding of the client. How a person looks has more of a social value than how the person’s internal organs function. These factors contribute significantly to a person’s spirituality.

Another issue in this regard is the value communicated to the client of the sacredness of his body. I discussed earlier the notion of sacredness, and its power among and over people. Viewing the body as sacred and holy would, I believe, instill a sense of respect and valuing of the human body. In the long run this attitude would have extensive
positive effects on individuals and on the community at large.

2. THE SACREDNESS OF DAILY LIVING

I hope that this thesis will help to propagate the notion of the sacredness of daily life. I believe that we need to raise daily life on par with religious life, which is a part of daily life but often occupies close to all of it, in the mind of society at large. Paul Pruyser’s (1987) legacy was this very thing. In Religion in Psychodynamic Perspective, Malony and Spilka (1991) write of Pruyser that in specializing in the psychology of religion, he did not focus on what people do in relation to the divine, as others did. “His interest was mundane and, at the same time, more inclusive” (p.206).

He implied that people have and use their gods although they may not acknowledge them. He encouraged clinicians to look for ‘religion’ even when there was no explicit mention of the word god. He was concerned about the motivation for and the outcomes of religion. He distinguished between ‘coping’ and ‘defensive’ uses of religion. Although he may appear to be as cynical as Freud, he seems to have a more balanced outlook on religion. While I do not necessarily agree with all his views, I highlight him as one who seeks to understand the origins, the process and the role of religion in human existence. I would hope that more of us would dare to really question and search for deeper answers to the powers we assume. In this way we would be more flexible by way of language, to understand and express the deeper and often more mysterious dynamics of different religions and religious sentiments.

The problem typically is that we are nearly forced to accept teachings without
integrating them into our own systems. We fear a loss of faith or grounding if we dare to question or try to understand what we have been told. We need to come to a humble understanding of our need to accept some things without having complete understanding. We need to exercise our imaginations beyond immediate perception or logical reasoning. We need to create. We need god(s). We need religion.

Need is not unhealthy or necessarily demeaning by itself. What becomes unhealthy is when we are in denial of our needs, and think of them as making us less than we are. Then we resort to axiomatic principles that deny the origins of our needs. This happens for example when we need to retain hope in a particular situation of suffering. While it is natural to have this need, we may try to justify that need. We create principles to this end. That is when problems arise. I can see how, for example, suffering is explained as the repercussion of the unrepentant sinner, how abnormality of a child is explained by the faults of the mother, and how god becomes the one who punishes. The story grows into religious dogma. Magnified, this leads to a point where there is no sign of the truth at all. That is when science steps in and becomes the opponent of religion.

3. SPIRITUALITY: A UNIVERSAL PHENOMENON

In this thesis I have described spirituality as common to every human being, yet unique to each. In describing the spirituality of a group, every group has a unique spirituality. This is because of the unique configuration of each group.

What describes a person's spirituality is how a person experiences and how he expresses himself. It may be likened to an input-output sequence. The modes by which a
person receives experience is her body and her mind. Mind and body are intimately related and mutually influential. However, to distinguish the two, the mind comprises intellect and emotions, while the body consists of the physical and the physiological.

These are the same modes by which a person expresses, in terms of self-expression and relationships with others, her family, her friends, work, nature or god. In this model I describe the body as the tangible and the mind as the non-tangible, based on their ability to give information about themselves.

One reason why I differentiate and subdivide the elements of mind and body as I have done, is to draw attention to the singular importance of each element that I believe is often bypassed in discussions on spirituality.

In describing a person's spirituality or that of a group, one may use a variety of descriptors such as ‘creation spirituality’, ‘eastern spirituality’, ‘people centered spirituality’ and the like. What is normally referred to as spirituality, I call the mystical element, in this thesis. This is usually described in the realms of the transcendent, or the mysterious, in oneself or in the other. Lest anyone consider this realm unreal or unimportant, I would reinforce my belief that to the extent that anything is a person's experience, it is real. It is a subjective reality. It is significant.

4. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

Chapman(1996) states that ‘Religion may be an important part of one’s spiritual life, but it is at best one dimension of a seemingly far more complex aspect of the human condition’ (Kelly, 1996). This is one of my emphases in this thesis. Religion has found a
very important place in human life. However, recognizing this, I try to show how it has its place in the totality of life and should not become the center of one’s life. This is in view of the health and well-being of the individual and society at large.

Awareness, authenticity and connectedness are three ways in which I hold that a person grows and matures spiritually. This is, I believe, is a process that would apply to people of different religions, economic backgrounds, cultures and orientations. Although these elements have been described in other studies, they have not been combined in this way. Also, how they have been detailed is unique in this thesis.

I speak of awareness of self and of other-than-self in a depth and in a breadth perspective. I refer to the degree and the spectrum of consciousness that each person or group may have. Where authenticity is concerned, I speak of internal and internal-external authenticity. The former is applicable when a person acknowledges and accepts an awareness about herself or other. In internal-external authenticity, the person is able and willing to express his awarenesses in his relationships with other-than-self, in his behavior.

On the dimension of connectedness, I speak in terms of inter-person and intra-person connectedness. Inter-personal connectedness refers to a unity in all the areas of a person. Intra-personal connectedness is a unity between a person and what is ‘the other’, which could be any of his relationships with nature, work, people or things.

5. MATURATION AND MATURITY

I emphasize the difference between maturation and maturity because of the way
that I conceive of the process of spiritual growth. I see it as a process that is ongoing and lifelong. One is always in a process of maturing, and at no point could she reach a peak of perfection beyond any further development. This difference is to make us very conscious of the fact that maturity is a relative term. I am supported by Maes when he wrote that “Maturity is a process rather than a state.... attempts to evaluate the maturity of persons are descriptions of phases or states selected from that continuing process” (In Kao, 1988; p.153).

Similarly, I make a distinction between assessment and exploration in the context of spirituality. Assessment is a term used in clinical situations. While there is nothing intrinsically problematic with the term, it expresses a sense of evaluation, judgment, and a sense of static. This is the perception of human development held by a part of society. In order to communicate an attitude of respectful search for an understanding of the person's life, I choose to use exploration. I believe it would make a difference in the mind of both the counselor and the client.

6. RITUALS IN SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

Finally, as I conclude this thesis, I offer a suggestion for understanding in the how we can help a client grow in awareness, authenticity and connectedness. I suggest that rituals are a good way to gain insights into a person and her world. Having spoken to the client at length, it would be a good exercise to see how that information related, paralleled or did not, with the person's ritual life.

This assumes that every person has some form of ritual. One may observe that
rituals permeate all of one's life. From day until night, and from birth until death. "It is not as true to say that we human beings invented rituals as that rituals have invented us" (Driver, 1991; p.31). Rituals are about experience. They derive from experience and are celebrated in experience. To emphasize the age and wisdom of attention to ritual, Driver adds that rituals are not our 'mother tongue' but our 'grandmother tongue'.

I will, however mention that by ritual life I mean the routines that grace a person's daily life, and those occasions that celebrate or name events of consequence to a person. A ritual is not to be confused with a ceremony, although ceremony is often part of a ritual. Often, we find ourselves doing rituals that are meaningless to us. Rituals provide a great deal of information about ourselves in our situation. The process of adapting or dismissing rituals of our childhood, offers a wealth of understanding about ourselves. Rituals of national and religious nature, also are important in gaining knowledge about how we experience, and how we express ourselves.

As I conclude this thesis, I realize how driven I have been to include all of humanity to the level of sacredness so often allotted only to the ethereal. I can see that reality is as beautiful, as it is painful and ugly. We need not rely on stories to replace its truth. We are on our way, as a global community, to the realization of the wisdom of our bodies and our minds. Cultures are beginning to be amazed by the supreme interconnectedness of our whole beings, with all of humanity, and with all that exists.


Ellison, C.W., & Smith, J. (1991). Toward and Integrative Measure of Health and Well-


Joya D’Cruz was born in West Bengal, India, where she lived for 22 years. She went to school at St. Joseph’s Convent, Chandannagar and proceeded to study for two years at Dhempe College in Goa. After her B.A. in Psychology from Sophia College in Bombay, she moved on to obtain an M.A. degree in Social Psychology from the University of Bombay.

Having joined a religious missionary group, she moved to Singapore in 1989 for training and service, where she lived for three years. Along with the group, she moved to Nebraska, USA in 1992 where she continued to participate in the mission of the group.

In 1993 the group dissolved and she worked as a nurse aide and as a psychiatric assistant in health care settings, while taking classes in counseling and theology from Creighton University, Omaha. She began training in clinical pastoral education at Glenwood State Hospital and School, but discontinued due to family circumstances.

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THESIS APPROVAL SHEET

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

9/22/97
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