Beyond the Natural:
Perceptions of Spirituality and Spiritual Nurturing in Volunteer Pastoral Care Workers in Christian Ministry: Implications for Training

Kay Job

MA (Theo)

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Education

Federation University Australia

PO Box 663

University Drive, Mount Helen

Ballarat Victoria 3353

Australia

August, 2018

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Abstract

Practical and evidence-based research is scarce regarding the perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers. This study set out to explore perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers in a Christian ministry. The aim was to identify what influence their spirituality had on ministry, whether there were links between spiritual experiences, spiritual nurturing and spiritual growth and to develop relevant recommendations to improve training and praxis within the field of pastoral care, an area of increasing interest and demand within the Christian tradition.

Thirty participants from an interdenominational volunteer ministry in the Christian tradition, Victorious Ministry Through Christ (VMTC), were interviewed and data were analysed using principles of Grounded Theory to inform subjective spiritual experiences and discover themes regarding spiritual awareness, sensitivity, and effective practice.

There were strong indications that a totally dependent, reciprocal relationship exists between spirituality and the ability to minister, suggesting a negation of ability could occur by an absence, unawareness of, or disengagement from the existence of a spiritual dimension. The extent to which an individual was able to effectively and sensitively offer pastoral care was dependent on the degree to which properties of Substantive Spirituality were appropriated, demonstrated through strands of spiritual *Sensibility*, capacity for *Reciprocity*, and response to *Modification*, which combined to form Integrative Spiritual Function (ISF).

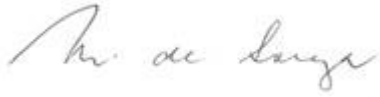
ISF supported mature functioning of the individual personally, was pre-eminent to formation and effective ministry, and integrative for the whole person. ISF also informed the development of SIFTable; an example of an appraisal tool for use in pastoral care contexts to gauge competency.

Recommendations regarding thoughtful and appropriate training of volunteer pastoral care personnel may assist in the formative process associated with ministry to ensure a holistic response to pastoral needs of the volunteer, and the recipient of ministry.

Statement of Authorship

I hereby declare that no work within this thesis has been used in any other form, in whole or in part, for the purpose of publication or qualification for another degree or diploma. I further declare that all work is exclusively that of this author, except where explicitly stated and referenced. No other person's work has been relied upon or used without due acknowledgement in the main text and bibliography of the thesis.

Kay Job



Marian deSouza

Principal Supervisor 30/08/2018

Statement of Ethics Approval

Approval

Human Research Ethics Committee

Principal Researcher:	Dr Marian de Souza
Other/Student Researcher/s:	Mrs Kay Job Dr John Fisher Dr Robert Davis
School/Section:	**Education and Arts, Mt Helen**
Project Number:	**A15-162**
Project Title:	**Perception of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers and implications for training in Christian ministry.**
For the period:	30/11/2015 **to** 30/12/2018

Quote the Project No.A15-162 in all correspondence regarding this application.

Please note: Ethics Approval is contingent upon the submission of a ***Final Project Report*** at the completion/discontinuation of the project. ***Annual Project Reports*** must also be submitted if the duration of the project exceeds twelve months. It is the responsibility of researchers to take note of the following dates and submit these reports in a timely manner, as reminders may not be sent out. Failure to submit reports will result in your ethics approval lapsing.

Fiona Koop

Ethics Officer

30 November, 2015

Acknowledgements

Kay Job is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Fee-Offset Scholarship through Federation University Australia.

My sincerest thanks go to the following:

To Dr Marian deSouza – Thank you for not giving up on the potential of the thesis when all odds seemed stacked against me. Your training and support have been instrumental in my personal and professional growth.

To Dr John Fisher – Thank you for helping me see my potential and encouraging me to always strive for the higher calling. Your support and care have taught me much more than the processes of research.

To Dr Rob Davis – for your crucial input at significant moments, that spurred me on to the finish line.

To Dr Rob Watson, and my colleagues from the GCP and HDR at Federation University - Thank you for sharing the journey and giving me opportunities to learn and grow in research skills.

To the courageous members, the Board of Directors, and the Executive of VMTC, who live the life of substantive spirituality every day – Thank you for sharing your hearts with me and giving me the privilege of unwrapping some of this mysterious thing called spirituality.

To Allan Adair, and the Writing Group – (AKA Support Group Extraordinaire) – Thank you for honing my writing skills and helping me to develop a more objective view of what I produce (with or without commas!).

To Nathan Job – Thank you for being so creative and willing to be the on-site, ever available, and highly skilled personal IT support and saviour for your tech-challenged mother. Every HDR student should be so blessed to have such an easily bribed son.

To Friends and family who encouraged me along the way – profound thanks to my sisters Vicki Elshaug -– for believing I could, to Dr Julie Fletcher – for believing I should, and to Diana Whittle – for believing I would, and to all of you for listening, comforting, and offering tissues (or a cup of tea) when they were needed most. Also, to Rita Baker, Jenny Edmunds, Rani Edwards, Drs Robyn and David Pierce, and many others - thanks for your constant and prayerful support.

To Mum. Thank you. When you urged me to pursue my dreams, little did I know what it cost you.

To David Job – Thank you for the curly questions and thoughtful conversations that continue to challenge my thinking. You inspire me to think deeper. It's a privilege to have a son who also imparts such wisdom so inherently.

To Dwayne Job - Thank you for being such a patient, understanding, faithful, supportive husband, and all-round dishwasher, counsellor, financier, and exhorter. The journey has been mine, but I am so grateful to have you as a witness and Cojourner. I look forward to our next chapter.

To Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – thank you for the privilege of education, of my heart, as much as my mind.

"The spiritual life is not a life before, after, or beyond our everyday existence…the spiritual life can only be real when it is lived in the midst of the pains and joys of the here and now." (Nouwen, 2009, p. 21)

List of Abbreviations

VMTC – Victorious Ministry Through Christ

Sample Diversity –

- Denominations – Uniting Church (UC), Baptist (Bapt), Anglican (Ang), Pentecostal (PC), and Non-specific Christian (Ch).
- VMTC specific roles – Released Support (S), Released Lead (L), Assistant Director (AD), and Director (D).
- Age groups – Baby Boomer (BB) >55 years, and Generation X (GenX) <55 years.
- Gender – Male (M), and Female (F).

SCA – Spiritual Care Australia. The Australian association for organisations and individual practitioners involved in, and offering training in, spiritual and pastoral care.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Topic Statement

Everyone seems to have an opinion about spirituality. In July 2016, *Better Homes and Gardens, Australia*, published an editorial offering direction for the spiritual well-being and health of those seeking connection and peace. While it could not be considered an academic work, it did, however, reflect the generic nature of the public view that spirituality is as easy to access as the latest recipe for haloumi and buttered walnut salad, and implying it is just as optional. However, though the sea of popular opinion may have bleached the definition of spirituality for some, others hold fast to the mooring of a faith tradition. And within those traditions, there are those who take up the task of facilitating the spiritual health of others. How do they provide safe, honourable, and competent praxis? The distinctive approach of this study is the focus on the personal spirituality and spiritual experiences of the volunteer pastoral care worker, in a Christian tradition, and the influences and links between spirituality and beneficial ministry.

After twenty years of experience in the role of a volunteer pastoral care worker, the researcher was prompted to question the seeming disparity between ideals and actuality of effective ministry for individuals involved as volunteers in pastoral care. Was there a causal influence and how did it link to ministry? Did a person's own spirituality have an effect? The larger narrative of personal experience is explained later in this chapter. However, the impetus for this study occurred as a result of personal experience for the researcher, established long before she developed a conscious awareness of such concepts as pastoral care, the personal ability to identify such a thing as spirituality, or an understanding of formation. The journey from those early years until the present time has generated, for her, a new awareness of the need for efficient and comprehensive training and formation for the lives of those involved in pastoral care.

Exploring current perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing in volunteer pastoral care workers in a Christian ministry and the implications of those perceptions on spiritual formation and training of volunteers, this study will identify the matter of limited training and formation of

volunteer pastoral care workers in the context of Christian ministry and addresses links between spirituality, ministry, formation and effective praxis. The subjective spiritual experiences of a relational connection with self, other, and God as contributors to spiritual growth inform the central claim that volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry, who are spiritually mature and 'formed', will have a more effective praxis, with further personal spiritual growth being a likely result. A key aim of this study is to identify the spiritual experiences of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry that may contribute to effective formation and improve praxis. This provides the context in which the Research problem is defined.

1.2 The Context of the Problem

For this study, context is significant, as the foundation for the hermeneutical framework (Sheldrake, 1999), within a Christian tradition. Within that tradition many seek to sustain the church by volunteering to perform various functions as a service to the faith community (Coll, 2002). These tasks can comprise of the basic practical deeds involved in the general running of church buildings and grounds. However, with a gradual decrease in ordained staff, and an increase in situations of adversity within the community, the congregation is now being called upon to fill the void between need and availability (Horan, 1998; Lakeland, 2008; Orr, 2009). The issue of decreasing ordained clergy numbers is not only national but international and cross-denominational. The Catholic church in the United States, and Lutheran, Catholic, Uniting Church, Anglican, Baptist and Assemblies of God in Australia present a picture of declining clergy numbers and an escalating load for volunteer pastoral care workers (Beaumont, 2011; Christian Research Association, 2010; Commonweal Editorial, 2006; Holmes, Hughes, & Julian, 2007; Schoenherr & Young, 1990; Stanosz, 2007; Zock, 2018). There are indications of a growing demand for those in congregations of the Christian tradition to increase involvement in the role of volunteer pastoral care worker due to a shortage in available clergy (Beaumont, 2011; Coll, 2002; Francis, Hills, & Kaldor, 2009; Horan, 1998; Molinari, 1972; Ranson, 2010; Schoenherr & Young, 1990; Stanosz, 2007). Yet, there is an imbalance between what is proclaimed by the 'authorities' as having been set in place, and what ministries, and 'ministers',

are actually being acknowledged as vital and significant (Hahnenberg, 2003). Hence, many from the congregation are being asked to fulfil roles for which they may have had little or no experience, few opportunities to train, and quite possibly, inadequate spiritual growth, yet are expected to carry the responsibilities associated with emotional care and spirituality in the context of the church and the wider community (Davidson, Walters, Cisco, Meyer, & Zech, 2003; Kilmoski, O'Neil, & Schuth, 2005). A lack of understanding of human processes, spirituality, and competency suggests that individuals participating in ministry to those inside the church and outside, to the community, may do so at risk to participant and recipient alike (Clinebell, 1984; Dulles, 2002; Rolheiser, 2003; Tuckwell & Flagg, 1995; Walker, 1989; Zohar, 2000).

1.3 The Problem

Competency is related to personal and task-specific professional growth. In the context of the volunteer pastoral care worker, training may be limited, and spiritual maturity not specifically addressed. For pastoral care to have a positive effect it would seem necessary for those doing the nurturing to be spiritually healthy. Spiritual health, in the Christian context, may be considered the integrated function of body, soul (as the "orientation of the…self"), and spirit (Anderson, 2003, pp. 31, 53; Kessler, 2000; Tisdell & Tolliver, 2001; Zohar, 2000). For the volunteer pastoral care worker in Christian ministry, the capacity to acknowledge and facilitate the spiritual potential of self and other people would be the likely basis of identifying their competence. As the pastoral carer works with those who are vulnerable in some form, questions of competence regarding spirituality and practice are still relevant (Carey & Rumbold, 2015), considering that education of those in professional pastoral practices, such as chaplaincy, entail frequent examination (Fitchett, Tartaglia, Massey, Jackson-Jordon, & Derrickson, 2015). This is particularly the case where there is inequality of power, such as the pastoral care scenario (Noddings, 2012). Noddings considers ethics of care as the relational roles that occur in the scenario of 'caring'. The carer is involved by offering aid, the 'cared-for' must demonstrate some form of receptive action. This concept is recognised as mutual when exhibited in adult relationships, but cannot be expected where power differentials are unequal. Mutual caring

underscores the motivational force of the need observed and communicated, rather than that assumed to be appropriate by the carer. Mutual relational caring, based on equality of power, is contrary to the singular cohort and context of this study, given the imbalance of power between the pastoral care workers and the 'cared-for'. However, understanding the formation of the spiritual dimension intrinsic to personhood is still a largely neglected field of research (Benson, Roehlkepartain, & Rude, 2003).

Spiritual Care Australia suggests that those involved in the spiritual care of others are "ethically bound to take responsibility for their own knowledge, attitudes and skills…" (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014, p. 7). As a practice associated with care of the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual health dimensions, this organisation recognises that those involved in pastoral care may not necessarily be professionally trained. Spiritual maturity and sensitivity, as expressions of competency, are issues that call for definition and further scrutiny, for effective and safe pastoral care.

Spiritual awareness and sensitivity are elements of the multidimensional construct of spiritual maturity, or formation, which present difficulties in considering measurement by linear progression. "Standardised forms of appraisal cannot work easily with something as flexible as the dynamics of the spiritual life" (Hay & Nye, 2006, p. 126). Spiritual formation is not the result of theories or skills applied, but a process of change and transformation (Anderson, 2003). The dynamic experience of spirituality has the quality of journey, where aspects of life are revisited and re-formed, and which seeks to bring integrity to beliefs and the actual existence of associated "…attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and other dimensions" (Astley & Crowder, 1996, p. x; Nelson, 2009; Scott, 2009a). Spiritual formation acknowledges that change or transformation in the spiritual dimension is not only possible, but desirable, for growth and maturation (Benson et al., 2003). Spiritual formation, of volunteer pastoral carers in this study, focuses on supporting, nourishing and fostering specifically within the faith context of the Christian tradition, and is the holistic progress of personhood (Bidwell & Marshall, 2006).

While research has been undertaken in the area of spirituality, spiritual growth, and formation of clergy, and the role of spirituality in adult education (Berringer, 2000; New South Wales College of Clinical Pastoral Education, 2011; Tisdell & Tolliver, 2001), there is a deficit regarding the perceptions and experiences of spirituality in volunteer pastoral care workers, and links with ministry and formation. This study aims to address the deficit and bridge the existing gap in research and literature regarding the spirituality of volunteer pastoral care workers and what implications may be drawn to inform training.

1.4 History of VMTC

The purpose of pastoral care is to bring wholeness and healing to the personal spiritual needs of those struggling with difficult relationships, coping with ongoing effects of personal trauma, or desiring to grow in spiritual maturity within a specific faith tradition. Based on scriptural principles and the teachings of Christianity, the organisation of Victorious Ministry Through Christ (hereafter VMTC) trains individuals in a form of pastoral care that is a simple but effective means of generating emotional and spiritual healing (Victorious Ministry Through Christ, 2018). VMTC was established by Anne S. White as an international and interdenominational ministry over 40 years ago, as a result of the healing of her chronically ill son through her own prayers. Described as a healing and equipping ministry, VMTC aims to facilitate spiritual nurturing and growth, address personal despair and loss, train individuals in the principles of an active faith, and equip them to pastorally care for others (Victorious Ministry Through Christ, 2018).

Since its beginning in 1971, VMTC has been launched in England, U.S.A., Sweden, Finland, Africa, India, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. In 1975, VMTC was established in Australia and has continued to grow, with further outreach to Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Indonesia & Burma. The Australian VMTC Board accredits and trains volunteers who are passionate about holistic well-being and spiritual growth to those in the Christian tradition (Victorious Ministry Through Christ, 2018).

As a completely voluntary organisation, VMTC does not receive payment for ministry sessions and all pastoral carers commit to training and biennial re-accreditation at their own expense. Pastoral ministry sessions are not in response to crisis, but occur as a journey, fostering an environment in which recipients can respond honestly and openly to the pastoral carers and the presence of God in order to assist in their transformative processes (Victorious Ministry Through Christ, 2018). As a training and equipping organisation, VMTC believes that the effective training of volunteer pastoral carers goes beyond the functional processes of a learned skill. A "good" pastoral carer appropriates the skills intellectually but applies them through a dynamic communication and response to the immanence of God.

1.4.1 Describing VMTC ministry.

Applying learned skills in coordination with communication with God, is, in itself, a skill that is learned by practice, rather than intellectual ability. Pastoral care within VMTC relies on the volunteer showing awareness and developing the skill of sensitivity to the spiritual dimension to facilitate a ministry session. Describing the process of a "typical" VMTC pastoral care session is akin to describing waves coming to the shore. One is never the same as another, each having its own character and effect. However, the process is always carried out with a minimum of three persons present – the recipient, one female pastoral carer, and one male pastoral carer. This is to ensure a balanced representation of perspective for the session and provide safety for all involved. On occasion, a fourth person is present to support the pastoral carers. This person is always the same gender as the recipient, again as a measure of safety. A personal and confidential ministry session is generally scheduled to take 3-5 hours.

The session begins with the pastoral carers articulating a series of solicitous prayers, such as thanksgiving, unity of purpose, and protection, to establish a positive and caring atmosphere, after which the recipient of the ministry gives a short narrative of their emotional and spiritual concerns or issues. The pastoral carers respond by drawing out further aspects of the story through sensitive questioning. At a point discerned to be appropriate, the pastoral carer invites the recipient to pray according to scriptural principles in admission of their own wrongs and

forgiveness of others involved in any situation. Then, at this point, the pastoral carer relies most heavily on the dynamic communication with, and response to, God as they verbalize statements and affirmations that initiate freedom from any wounds, scars, and suppression that have existed as a result of life circumstances in the spiritual and emotional dimensions of the recipient. The process concludes with a blessing of the recipient, to consolidate the transformation that is produced. This cycle of narrative, admission, forgiveness, and specific prayers of healing occurs multiple times throughout a given ministry session until both the recipient and pastoral carers sense restoration has taken place, at which time, a further series of solicitous prayers draws the session to an encouraging and constructive close. Change may be experienced by the recipient in some, many, or all aspects of behaviour, worldview, action, emotional response, attitude, or physical well-being, to name a few. The volunteer pastoral care worker is intrinsic to facilitating the process of a ministry session.

1.5 The Rationale and Research Process

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry in order to discover a substantive theory of links between spirituality, ministry and formation. Analysis of data concentrating on perceptions of spirituality, spiritual experiences and spiritual nurturing, and also on the influences of spirituality and ministry and links with spiritual formation has revealed three Substantive theories which have been combined to inform a theory of Integrative Spiritual Function. Attributes of Integrative Spiritual Function emerged from further consideration of the properties involved and were developed into a tool, as an example of potential use, to gauge competency of volunteer pastoral care workers and recommendations for pastoral care organisations.

As a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews, Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2000) informed the analysis of data, thus identifying emerging themes and development of substantive theories. The study focused on the following Research question:

How do volunteer pastoral care workers perceive and experience spirituality?

The following questions explored the influence on and effects of spirituality on individuals:

- What factors influence their spiritual growth?
- How does their spirituality influence their ministry?
- What are the links between spirituality, ministry, and formation?

While multiple definitions of spirituality exist in literature, this study set out to bring further clarity to spirituality, the ministry of pastoral care, and spiritual formation within the context of the Christian tradition within VMTC. The researcher collected data from 30 volunteer pastoral care workers and derived from that implications and recommendations to assist those working and training in the field of pastoral care.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

This study is restricted to participants with a background in the role of Released Support pastoral carer, or above (See 1.9 Definition of Terms, page 13). The study only considers participants from the volunteer organisation of VMTC and may not have broad generalisability to other organisations. Also, results could vary with a greater number of participants, or participants from other organisations in the Christian tradition, or other faith traditions. New insights and categories may emerge in the light of ongoing research into the topic of volunteer pastoral care workers. In addition, there is difficulty in replicating the study, as the perceptions of the 30 participants were peculiar to the historical time and place of interview.

1.7 Significance of the Study

It is important to understand this group of participants since they operate on the frontier of pastoral care in a particular faith community. This study provides information of use to volunteer pastoral care organisations regarding the preparation of personnel for respectful and responsible ministry and implications on training. It is also written for current and potential pastoral care workers, particularly those in volunteer organisations in the Christian tradition. It is possible that

recommendations of the study may also inform duty of care issues for volunteer Christian ministry organisations in the future.

Firstly, this study explores the implications of formation, or deficit of formation, for volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry. As this topic has not been previously addressed, applicability of the research could be transferred to formal and informal Christian ministry training organisations, and also inform disciplines of Education and Psychology regarding adult spirituality.

Secondly, spiritual formation has been conceptualized by some as a linear process where chronological time, maturity, and spiritual maturity are considered comparable (Young, Cashwell, & Woolington, 1998). Other research recognises waves of growth independent of chronological time, as an ebb and flow (deSouza, 2003, 2004). Enduring formation of an individual requires all dimensions of their being are engaged (Tisdell & Tolliver, 2001). To engage in an integrated praxis, the individual may benefit from experiential understanding of spirituality and spiritual nurturing, as "spiritual formation is the formation of our spirit…the process whereby the inmost being of the individual…" is transformed (Willard, 2006, p. 53). There is a deficit of research regarding these concepts in the context of spiritual formation, and in the context of volunteers in the Christian tradition of pastoral care. This study seeks to address this deficit, at least in part, by adding to the body of knowledge, expanding understanding of spiritual formation in disciplines of Education, Pastoral Care, and Adult Spirituality.

Consequently, the ethnographic immersion of the researcher can be considered an advantage since, contrary to criticisms of explicit or implicit values being applied universally (Moberg, 2010), the specific target of this study is a Christian experience of spirituality; a context that has influenced definitions of spirituality but is nominally explored in matters of perception and implications for formation and training. "[T]here are few explicitly "Christian"…[applications] focused directly upon elements of the heart of the value systems…" (Moberg, 2010, p. 110), a deficit that needs to be addressed (Moberg, 2002).

To engage in an integrated praxis, the volunteer pastoral care worker must first have experiential knowledge and understanding of their own spirituality (Dues & Walkley, 1995). Those voluntarily involved in pastoral care may gain insight into perceptions, experiences, and nurturing of spirituality, encouraging spiritual growth, and increasing ability to provide safe but effective ministry.

1.8 The Motivation

When I, the researcher, was eleven years old, I discovered a younger girl crying in the playground, with a cut and bleeding finger. I knew I had to do *something*. I could not leave her crying and in pain. It was her distress that affected me the most. My friend dismissed the matter as unimportant. However, wrapping her finger in a paper towel, I escorted the young sufferer to the staff room, delivering her to the safe keeping of her favourite teacher. What a sense of fulfilment I felt as I walked away. I had missed some of my play time and dared to venture into the hallowed corridors of the school at recess time, risking my reputation (such a good girl) and the wrath of the Headmaster. But I did not care. Without knowing why, and in a matter of moments, something inside me had changed.

My willingness to volunteer to help others seemed motivated by some inherent "duty" to fellow humanity; an unconscious desire to assist those who needed help. By the time I was in my early twenties, it seemed that my kind-hearted disposition was also recognised by those in leadership. Newly married and involved in a local congregation, I was approached to take a place in a pastoral care group for youth from the community. Being only four or five years older than some in the group, I felt at a loss to know how to assist them in their life's struggles, borne from a world of experiences in stark contrast to my own. An uncomfortable question began to form in my mind - How *do* you help hurting people? Certainly nothing that I had learned in my family or faith tradition helped me to answer that question. While I had learned principles of forgiveness, and humility, I still felt at a loss regarding how I could apply it to helping others. The lack of understanding terrified me.

In my thirties I was being asked to help support and encourage people more frequently, people who were often older and had more life experience than myself. What did I have to offer, apart from a listening ear and the capacity to make a good cup of tea? I had heard and watched as other members of congregations had 'ministered' to people but could not understand how they knew what to do, or why they knew things I did not. The point was brought home resoundingly on one particular day, when I was asked to attend to people who had indicated a need for prayer and healing. I floundered. Repeating words and sentences I had heard 'more mature' people use in dealing with others in the same circumstances, I copied as much as I could remember, all the time feeling like a fake and a charlatan. These were hurting people, needing comfort and assurance. All I was offering were some trite and clichéd phrases I had overheard. Who was I, what was I doing, and what could I possibly do to never experience that sense of panic and uselessness ever again?

As life progressed so did the requests for assistance in different fields: working with emotionally abused single women, mentoring children, and young adults; serving those in need of support, encouragement and nurture. The requests came thick and fast and, always, the desire to see change, growth, hope, or ease of suffering in any way, exerted its influence from beyond my consciousness. I sought support from peers and adults, but all of them indicated that they did not know what to do and that only formalised church leaders knew how to 'minister'. The same frustrations of my younger years also continued to plague me. If I was being asked to nurture others, where were those who would nurture me, and how could I learn to nurture others? Both peers and adults actually seemed frightened to be asked; even adults with many more years of life experience than myself. Why was I being asked to help when I had no formalised position, yet others were reticent to help me? What did they, and I need?

In my mid-thirties I became involved in a para-church organisation providing spiritual support and education. The organisation, VMTC, was international and interdenominational and had been operating in Australia since 1975. Those involved were dedicated to facilitating emotional and spiritual restoration of followers in the Christian tradition. As a para-church organisation, the

total workforce was volunteer, the greater percentage of which were unordained. The volunteers were of mixed demographic, socio-economic status, educational background, Christian denomination, gender, and nationality. Training of volunteers occurred through a process of 'schooling' in order to maintain a consistent service, from region to region and state to state across the nation. The training provided volunteers with a deeper understanding of their personhood, spirituality and faith praxis.

Over the next 20 years, as I went through the process of training, gaining experience in life and ministry, then taking on a leadership role within the organisation, I learned that the pattern and process of pastoral care was not the full story of an effective 'minister'. Becoming involved in VMTC brought me into contact with hundreds of volunteers and recipients of pastoral care across the country. I discovered that mine was not an unusual story. In seeking spiritual and emotional support or assistance from peers in my earlier years I had experienced a degree of ineptitude that was unhelpful at best, and offensive at worst. I was also fearful of this being replicated in my own ministry. As others told their stories a common complaint came to light. They, too, had been on the receiving end of ill-conceived and unwise 'assistance'. It appeared that, within the institution of the church, instruction to develop personal and ministry skills was limited in availability, as was appropriateness of content. The frequently heard opinion from fellow volunteer pastoral carers seemed to indicate first, a frustration at being left to develop said skills autonomously and, second, the expectation from leadership within the church and recipients of ministry, to have experience and professional knowledge in dealing with life issues. Like me, those involved in seeking to meet the needs of others expressed a frustration in feeling clumsy or useless through lack of knowledge regarding what our goals were, the reality we experienced in our own personal spiritual growth, and the lack of any nurturing ministry; which I later discovered to be explained best as the 'sanctification gap' (Coe, 2009; Issler, 2009; Muthiah, 2009; Nelson, 2011). This had led many of those involved in pastoral care within their church to seek practical help and training, hence their involvement in an organisation such as VMTC.

Operating in the role of Director within the organisation gave me further insight into the workings of the organisation, particularly the processes of training. It was my responsibility to train others that caused me to revisit my wonderings regarding effective and sensitive ministry. Why *do* some people seem to minister more sensitively and effectively than others? Was it just about training, or were there other elements that influence a person's practice? These thoughts became significant in influencing my views of pastoral care and training and led me, in the first year I received training to become a Director, to present a paper to the Board suggesting that appropriate training (for the role I was currently holding), was relatively non-existent and required attention, to ensure further consistency and assurance of competency for the organisation.

It was because of my passion to explore a holistic approach to spirituality, ministry and formation that I withdrew from duties as a Director during this study to ensure that there was no conflict of interest. My experience in the organisation of VMTC, and the years of practical experience as a volunteer pastoral carer, places me in a knowledgeable position regarding the context of the study, the language and meanings significant to the participants, and the importance of sensitive and competent ministry.

1.9 Definition of Terms

In the context of this study, the following terms can be understood in the light of the provisional definitions:

Assistant Director – Within the organisation of VMTC the Assistant Director has proven they are competent to teach content and train attendees of the Pastoral Care Program.

Call – invitation to special relationship with God as a partner for a work (SOED, 2007).

Competencies – Capabilities, aptitudes, experiences, and attitudes required to perform expected tasks.

Director – Within the organisation of VMTC the Area Director (Director) has shown competency to oversee teaching and training of attendees and Assistant Directors of the Pastoral Care Program and raise the profile of the organisation within the faith community.

Faith community – A population, not necessarily in a physical area, who adhere to particular principles of belief associated with a religious tradition. In this study, that tradition is within a Christian tradition (LDCE).

Formation – Spiritual formation (formation) is the fostering of the human spirit in keeping with a Christian belief system and is evidenced by attitudes and behaviours (Chandler, 2014).

Glossolalia – Colloquially known as 'speaking in tongues', glossolalia is the expression of praise and petition to God in languages that are not learned or native to the speaker, and not comprehended by the intellect (O'Collins & Farugia, 2000).

Ministry – An act that facilitates spiritual, intellectual, emotional, or physical well-being, growth, or encouragement of another person, within a religious tradition (Mathew, 2004).

Pastoral care – The ministry that addresses spiritual health within a specific faith context. Spiritual care operates with broader secular concepts (Schuhmann & Damen, 2018).

Recipient – A person receiving pastoral care as a form of ministry.

Released Lead – Within the organisation of VMTC the Released Lead Minister (Released Lead) has proven to be competent to oversee and train others, and to oversee and facilitate pastoral care sessions.

Released Support – Within the organisation of VMTC the Released Support Minister (Released Support) has shown potential competency in some specific elements of pastoral care sessions but requires further training.

Religion – The theoretical organism in which spiritual experiences may be given meaning (SOED, 2007).

Sanctification – The committed process of spiritual growth and maturity, reflected by lifestyle and choices corresponding with the values exemplified by Christ (Mullen, 1996).

Spirituality – The deep relational knowledge of self in mutual reciprocity with the sacred, through supra-human sensory modes (Okholm, 1996).

Strand – A Strand is comprised of Threads and represents a combined form of attributes that, when all are taken together, produce a spirituality that is integrative and functional.

Threads – These represent the diverse and unique attributes of a person's spirituality, which are interconnected.

Transcendence – Transcendence with a capital "T" refers to transpersonal connection with a divine or supreme being, while transcendence, with a lower case "t" refers to interpersonal connecting with self through rising above the mundane (Trotman, 2016).

Victorious Ministry Through Christ – VMTC – An international, interdenominational organisation that exists to support the work of the church in the Christian tradition.

Volunteer – A person who operates within an independent organisation, across and outside of the institutional church, for the purpose of nurturing and supporting spiritual growth in others (SOED, 2007).

1.10 Overview of the Thesis

In this chapter the topic of perceptions and experiences of volunteer pastoral care workers has been introduced, the potential links between spirituality and effective ministry praxis presented, and the background and context of the study determined. The significance of the study and associated key terms have also been explained and the motivation and relevant background and knowledge of the researcher has been outlined. Literature relevant to the study will be discussed in Chapter 2, outlining current definitions and understandings of spirituality, its relationship with religion, and an explanation of ministry, pastoral care, and spiritual formation in the context of a Christian tradition. Chapter 3 will present the methodology which informs the study, that being

an interpretivist theoretical perspective, and the research method of constructivist Grounded Theory, describing the process of data gathering and analysis. Verification of the study and ethical issues involved are also addressed. The data analysis follows in Chapter 4, thereby, setting out the chosen categories and observations regarding perceptions of spirituality, spiritual experiences and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers. The data analysis continues in Chapter 5, concentrating on observations pertinent to the influences of spirituality and ministry and links with spiritual formation. The discussion is detailed in Chapter 6, describing three Substantive Theories which are fundamental to the Theory of Integrative Spiritual Function. Attributes derived from Integrative Spiritual Function are presented in SIFTable, a tool developed as an example of gauging competency of volunteer pastoral care workers, and recommendations for pastoral care organisations. Chapter 7 provides a summary of the significance and contribution of the study and offers recommendations for future practice and suggests implications for further research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The context and background of this study were introduced and described in the introductory chapter, including the research problem framed around the deficit of research regarding the perceptions and experiences of spirituality in volunteer pastoral care workers, and links with ministry and formation. The rationale, limitations and significance of the research were also provided.

The literature review in this chapter, explores the definitions and perceptions that are fundamental to current considerations regarding spirituality. Comparative to religion, spirituality has been simplistically described as internalised faith well-being (Shults & Sandage, 2006). However, in the contemporary world, which is informed by many disciplines, a more complex understanding of the dimensions of the human person - as spirit, soul, and body - provide a foundation for discussion with other fields, in particular, Education, Positive Psychology, Christian Ministry, and Pastoral Care. This can be used to inform the discussion of spirituality and its influence on pastoral care ministry and amplify the issue of spiritual formation for volunteer pastoral care workers.

2.2 Spirituality

The many definitions of spirituality that exist reflect the abundance and cross section of disciplines that are now involved in researching this dimension. Often the definitions begin from what spirituality is not, rather than what it is, particularly when in comparison with religion. More recently, in response to research findings, spirituality is being acknowledged as an intrinsic dimension of humanity (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2008; Benson et al., 2003; Carr, 2018; Fisher, 2014; McCarthy, 2000; Scott, 2009a; Selman et al., 2017; Spiritual Care Australia, 2014; Young & Koopsen, 2011). For example, “Being spiritual is part of who many people are…it forms the root of their identity as human beings and gives life meaning and purpose” (Koenig, 2007, p. 16).

Koenig goes on to point out that not recognising and addressing the spiritual dimension fails to acknowledge the "whole person" (Koenig, 2007, p. 16). Spirituality has the potential to integrate the whole person independently of circumstances (O'Brien, 2014; Sheldrake, 2010; Willard & Simpson, 2006). The emphasis is on life-style choices and quality (Fontana, 2003; Thayer, 1985), not on external behaviour (Willard & Simpson, 2006).

Both secular and religious definitions suggests a unifying function of the 'spirit' (Fontana, 2003), as an elemental dimension of the human person different to the physical (Willard, 2002), often understood as transcendence (Trotman, 2016), or that which is beyond quantifiable human experience (Carr, 2018). There are also suggestions that biological factors may be of influence (Benson et al., 2003). Other evidence ignored, yet constant throughout the centuries, is that forms of spirituality appear in the history of human kind, regardless of culture (Benson et al., 2003); a common occurrence of innate belief in a presence beyond humanity (Fontana, 2003). This suggests, "The question is not whether spirituality is embodied but whether a person makes spirituality intentionally embodied" (Shults & Sandage, 2006, p. 211). Literature suggests that spirituality is a fundamental dimension of existence for humanity (King, 2009; McCarthy, 2000; Moberg, 2002, 2010). It seems definitions of spirituality, like beauty, tend to be in the eye of the beholder (Gall, Malette, & Guirguis-Younger, 2011). There are so many different contexts and meanings associated with the vocabulary of spirituality that bewilderment prevails (Francis, 2005; Hunt, 2015). A "coherent index" can only benefit from an expansion of the vocabulary to identify some defining features of spirituality (Francis, 2005, p. 34), since an undefined spirituality can enter the territory of simply chasing illusory perfection (Ranson, 2002).

Whether spirituality is recognised intentionally by an individual or not (Benner, 2011; Willard, 2002), the term itself labels two different characteristics. Definitions can be a) *substantive*, where it is focused, or b) *functional*, related to the how and what it does (Moberg, 2002), seen in concepts that Zinnbauer et al. apply when differentiating religion as substantive, and spirituality as functional; that is, as positive and negative respectively (Zinnbauer, Pargament, & Scott, 1999). However, in this study, further differentiation of the substantive and functional concepts of the

vertical and *human-horizontal* (Astley, 2003) can be applied to the spiritual dimension, building on Moberg's work and Astley's argument that two forms of spirituality exist. The human-horizontal includes functional aspects of beliefs and practices, while the vertical is substantive, as a relationship oriented beyond self and other[1]. The two different features of the term spirituality have implications regarding *what* is being defined. However, in both cases, there is consensus on key points.

Functional definitions of spirituality converge upon the 'how to' of spiritual practices and disciplines recognised in different religious traditions, including Christianity, as meditation, prayer, liturgy, reading sacred texts…, which are personal practices that support the specific dimension of the spiritual. In contrast, the relational context of substantive spirituality is defined, in its simplest form, as "…a process of inner change in relation to transcendence", or, the "…highly personal search for ultimate meaning, purpose, and value" (Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006, p. 38). Willard (2012) argues that the performance of particular routine activities does not necessarily reflect lasting internal change. In the context of the Christian tradition, such activities occur in relation to God, based on the values exemplified by Christ (Doohan, 2007; Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). Substantive spirituality is the "cultivation" of a way of being, particularly in relationship (Cully, 1984, p. 14). In actuality, relationship with something Other[2] is a key concept in the defining of spirituality (Young & Koopsen, 2011), as 'connectedness' and 'being' are frequently aligned in literature with words such as:

- relational (Boa, 2001; Chan, 1998; deSouza & Watson, 2016; Gula, 2011; King, 2009; O'Murchu, 2010),
- finding meaning (Astin, Austin, & Lindholm, 2011; Chickering et al., 2006; deSouza, 2003; Fitchett, 1993; Selman et al., 2017),

[1] When used with lower case 'o' it is a collective noun for other persons. This differs from Other, which refers to other persons and God. Self with a lowercase 's' refers to all dimensions of the individual person, that is, spirit, soul, and body, described in 2.6 Pastoral Care.
[2] Refer to Footnote 1 above.

- human nature (Anderson, 2003; Doohan, 2007; Hay, 1982, 2001; Hay & Nye, 1998; King, 2009; McGrath, 1999; Roehlkepartain, Ebstyne King, Wagener, & Benson, 2006; Young & Koopsen, 2011),
- and encounter (Himes, 2000).

In each instance, the focus is on relationship with some Other with a purpose of discovery (Allport, 1950); that is, an increase of knowledge and understanding about self, other, and God. The subjective experience of substantive spirituality is precisely because of the living influence that flows between two individual agents (Allport, 1950).

Augsburger (2006) suggests that the subjective nature of spirituality, considered as a singular or dual focus, that is Self or Self/Transcendence relationship, is too limited; a concept seen by Webster (2009) as a dualistic 'either/or' stance (Webster, 2009). The possibility of spirituality being 'both/and' is supported by Augsburger's proposition of a threefold focus of inward direction, upward compliance, and outward commitment, experienced as discovering self, seeking God, and valuing other (Augsburger, 2006). The implication is one of action toward Other outside of self rather than a statement of internalised principle; an experiential, rather than regimented, faith (Billy, 2000). The internal, transcendent, and connection with other relationships are the marks of integration intrinsic to Christian spirituality (Astin et al., 2011; Davidson et al., 2003). Describing spirituality as an integrative influence (Benner, 2011; Brown, 1987; Willard, 2002) alludes to the work of Allport's "religious sentiment" (Allport, 1950, p. 63) as the "leading directive" (Allport, 1950, p. 141), where 'sentiment' is understood as the attitudes and responses employed to esteem an Other. In this sense, spirituality 'organises' the system of value and meaning located in the relational context of self, other, and God. The emphasis of relationship is not singular satisfaction but reciprocal and mutual understanding: knowing and being known (Palmer, 1993) through listening with the intention of gaining understanding (Holmes, 1980). This has profound influence on aspects of lifestyle (Cully, 1984; Hansen, 1994). Herein, there is a purpose beyond self-realisation and eternal peace of mind (Bosacki, 2001). Christian spirituality involves a significant aspect of action in the understanding of relationship

(Himes, 2000; McCarthy, 2000; Wright, 2005), that understanding being established at variance with intellectual comprehension (Webster, 2009). It is counter to the beliefs of individualism and competition in that it relies upon "inter-relatedness and co-dependence" (Lindsay, 2002, p. 120). The focus is beyond a dual relationship of self and other, but is a triune of self, with other, in and through Transcendence, and is foundational to meaning.

Spirituality is often concerned with what is meaningful in human experience (Holmes, 1982), and regularly connected with religion, especially in Western Christianity, although in some cases this 'connection' is described as a negative one, beset with restricted and clichéd terminology (Gall et al., 2011; Purves, 1989). Some empirical research seeks to measure spirituality and utilises markers of religious activity such as involvement in liturgy, prayer, and meditation, to provide specific identifiers (Koenig, 2007). Such practices, usually associated with religious disciplines, are considered unsuitable measures in the study of spirituality by many (Kettenring, 2008; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Purves, 1989; Worthen, 2012). Practices, or disciplines, need to be understood as the instruments that implement and demonstrate what is internalised and actual as a result of spirituality, rather than the method to embed convictions and concepts (Simmonds, 2016). While there seems to be a relationship between spirituality and religion to those who view both through the lens of a theistic belief system, still others consider this relationship as purely psychological; if there is a link at all (Meier, St James O'Connor, & VanKatwyk, 2005; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; O'Donahue, 1989; Salander, 2012; Streib & Hood, 2011; Webster, 2009).

Evidence from literature regarding spirituality suggests that there is little consensus regarding a specific definition. This may be seen as having negative implications for the study of spirituality, yet the lack of consensus can be viewed as a strength. The deficit of fixed understanding of the construct continues to drive research deeper into an area that appears to defy definition, though recent research indicates that the intrinsic nature of spirituality is an essential element of being human (Koopsen & Young, 2009; Young & Koopsen, 2011). Willard describes this as "the central core" (Willard, 2002, p. 34). Spirituality has seen an increase in interest across multiple disciplines in recent years (Hunt, 2017). Research in Education, Psychology, Health, and

Sciences have explored the effect and significance of spirituality within discipline fields and in interdisciplinary studies. Addressing this one concept from multiple perspectives can bring fresh insight into both common and unique meanings. It can also reflect the understanding of spirituality as intrinsic to the human as an integrated whole. Seeking to discover unanimity regarding definition acknowledges the significant effect of this dimension upon understanding personhood and human development.

From a historical perspective spirituality is considered to be a significant aspect of human nature, evidenced by the commonality of its presence within diverse and unrelated cultures, across time, through the human story. The reason that humanity seeks experience and understanding in this dimension may well be argued and is a debate that goes well beyond the scope of this study. Discussions regarding theological or psychological reasons of 'why?' humanity seeks the spiritual are secondary (in the context of this study and informed by literature), since the foundational basis is that humans *do* seek spirituality. In the Christian tradition, spirituality is a call and response to deeper relational knowledge of self in mutual reciprocity with God (Hansen, 1994; Holmes, 1982; Scazzero, 2006). Some individuals may seek the spiritual more intentionally than others, while some have no conscious recognition of it at all. Whether acknowledged or not, spirituality may be regarded as the dimension that comprises the nature of being human by providing grounds for 'knowing' self and Other intimately in a mode beyond, but not indifferent to, the cognitive process (Cully, 1984; Purves, 1989; Webster, 2009). Spirituality is integral to human flourishing corporately, as much as individually and in community, seen in expressions that signal active demonstration of relational qualities (Holmes, 1982; Seaward, 2001). Being, presence, encounter, and connection are referred to frequently in literature, in the context of seeking to bond with someone, or something, outside of self. It may be considered that the essence of spirituality itself is relationship; a connection with self, other, and something beyond (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014). Psychological attachment theories may well explain the *why* humanity seeks connection (Mitroff, Denton, & Murat Alpaslan, 2009), but this study is focused on *where* connectedness is sought and *how* it is experienced. As Allport suggests, it is not *what* is experienced as spiritual,

but the intention and response of the individual, to the experience, that constructs spiritual significance (Allport, 1950).

Connection is particular to humanity, when directed with intention and purpose for the active pursuit of relationship. At the most basic level, connection with other humans assures continuity of the genetic line. There are further assurances that make connection fruitful – productivity, protection, security, and comfort – and yet it is humans who seek connection for altruistic reasons alone, in actions perceived to be of service for the Other particularly, even at cost or sacrifice to self. While connectedness may supply immediate and actual needs for the physical, emotional and even intellectual dimensions of being human, spirituality suggests a purpose beyond dimensions of the body and soul. Spirituality offers a form of meaning to connectedness that is experiential. These experiences are perceived and given meaning in the context of communally constructed frameworks.

2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality

Perceptions, or meanings, attached to spirituality have recently come under increased scrutiny. Long seen as nebulous and elusive to define, spirituality is now recognised as being no less difficult to explore than other subjective concepts such as attitudes, opinions and beliefs that are currently being studied across disciplines such as Psychology and Sociology (Moberg, 2010). Perceptions are the meanings attached to an actual experience, and in the framework of the spiritual, seek to prioritize "…the inner life over external action and public engagement" (Sheldrake, 2010, p. 62). These meanings can be learned from traditional contexts, instilled communally, or established by the individual. Generally speaking, spirituality is perceived as positive, individual, open, honest and often more broadly considered as an "orientation of the heart" (Mitroff et al., 2009; Moberg, 2010; Willard & Simpson, 2006); an attitude of "active passivity" of the spirit (Holmes, 1982) illuminating conscious awareness.

In faith traditions, communal or individual frameworks, meaning is subjective and established by the context (Gall et al., 2011), created by the interaction of self with Other. When meaning is

collected, instituted, and represented by conventions and rituals in a tradition, spirituality becomes immersed in religion (Gall et al., 2011). However, individuals may experience a 'gap', or a discrepancy, between beliefs of what is meaningful and actual experience thereby feeling a sense of deficiency (Allport, 1950; Coe, 2009; Howard, 2016; Issler, 2009; Nelson, 2011; Purves, 1989; Scazzero, 2006). In their study of a broad cross-section sample, Gall et. al. (2011) surveyed individuals from a variety of backgrounds, nationalities, cultures, ages, genders and education levels. In response to questions, participants' descriptions of their spiritual experiences were analysed using Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), enabling data to be distilled into several key themes, including perceptions of spirituality. As a representative group (limitations of the study notwithstanding), the conclusions indicated that spirituality was perceived as "the nucleus of the self…encompasses key values and ethics…is the key connection between the core self and the Divine" (Gall et al., 2011, p. 176). The differentiation of the "core self" (Gall et al., 2011, p. 176) seeking connection with the Divine, in the context of this study, God, deserves further exploration to discover the context and meaning of subjective spiritual experience. The core self, in active reciprocal relationship with God, is the locus where a sense of deficiency may be bridged by experiential encounters.

As a subjective experience deemed to be a mystical occurrence, spirituality is considered unfathomable in the context of the ordinary (Gall et al., 2011). As such, the very elements of spirituality that are considered significant to defining it positively, as exemplified by Gall et al.'s study, are also cited as the reason for a negative definition. Subjective, inexplicable, and numinous qualities simultaneously confuse and motivate the desire for understanding. Here there is potential common ground for defining spirituality as belief in a higher power and connection with mystery (deSouza & Watson, 2016; Gall et al., 2011). However, overlooking the everyday in relational connection with God denies the correlation between spirituality and daily living, this being the principal platform for the experience of spirituality, rather than through singular or spectacular 'events' (Cully, 1984; Dorr, 2008; Holmes, 1982; McMinn, 2017; Wuthnow, 1997). Seen as an active expression of an established internal impression, spirituality is practical,

ongoing, inherent, and essential (Lepherd, 2015; Purves, 1989; Webster, 2009). These traits may be seen as comparative concepts of spirituality in relationship with religion.

2.4 Religion and Spirituality

Recent research indicates several alternative relationships that are considered to exist regarding religion and spirituality:

1) religion and spirituality are synonymous,
2) religion and spirituality are distinct,
3) religion and spirituality intersect, and
4) religion and spirituality are divergent (Benson et al., 2003; deSouza, 2009; Fisher, 2010; Granqvist & Nkara, 2017; Shults & Sandage, 2006).

Zinnbauer (1999) identifies these relationships as polarising the concepts, making one negative, the other positive, and this is regarded as an impediment to accurate and significant research (Benson et al., 2003; Koenig, 2007; Moberg, 2010; Zinnbauer et al., 1999). Empirical studies seeking to research spirituality often use demonstrations of religiosity as a measure for spirituality, equating religion and spirituality (Brown, 1987; Koenig, 2007). Comparing religion and spirituality offers limited insight for the understanding of diverse experiences expressed by individuals, and removes specific attributes that make defining aspects of the concept of spirituality difficult (Shults & Sandage, 2006). Webster suggests it is spirituality that provides the framework, which is demonstrated through religion (Webster, 2009). On the other hand, "desacralization" of spirituality, or a divorcing of spirituality from the sacred and Divine (Cully, 1984, p. 175; O'Meara, 1999, p. 61) detaches contemporary understandings of spirituality from cogent processes and any form of faith tradition (Barnes, 2012; Carr, 1996; deSouza & Watson, 2016; Lasair, 2017), and establishes it as a form of psychic peculiarity (Ranson, 2002; Webster, 2009).

From its Roman Catholic monastic beginnings the term 'spirituality', understood as an individual seeking to transcend to an external ideal, has undergone modification to become the current

secular concept as the internalised intrinsic presence at the deepest core (Brugman, 2012; Koenig, 2007; McGee, 2003). In efforts to define spirituality with inclusive and non-alienating terminology the term has become indistinct and ambiguous (deSouza & Watson, 2016; Koenig, 2007). Carr (2003) considers that trying to fit definitions of spirituality with traditional and postmodern concepts continues to support a dualistic view in which the different aspects of spirituality, such as the aesthetic and moral, are seen as separate from, rather than 'part of' (Carr, 2003), the idea of a dualistic view being developed further by Augsburger (2006). A constructivist approach, however, seeks to recognise the universal concepts of ego-transcendence and eternal truth. King suggests Positive Psychology, which will be discussed later in this chapter, includes the purpose of discovering and appropriating meaning in life and personal potential (King, 2009). The field of spirituality research might well borrow such a definition for itself in seeking to describe tangible characteristics, whereby spirituality becomes *the state of seeking to achieve meaning in life, which comes from active engagement with the purpose of living, namely, to achieve one's potential*, whether referenced to the sacred or not.

A state of seeking can include what Wilber (2002) relates as four common aspects of spirituality involving:

1) peak experiences or altered states,
2) the highest level of any of the other dimensions (including soul - mind, will, and emotions, and body),
3) being a separate dimension in itself, and
4) an attitude which may or may not be consciously operational (Wilber, 2002).

While the term remains the subject of much debate there have been recent developments of consensus regarding spirituality as:

1) an essential and intrinsic dimension of humanity,
2) one aspect of the diversity involved in holistic development,
3) a condition experienced interiorly, and

4) a highly individual experience.

All of these are contextualised by a cultural worldview (Best, 2000; Hodge, 2011; Hood Jr, 2009; King, 2009; McGee, 2003; Scott, 2009a, 2009b; Wills, 2009). For instance, religion may be defined as the theoretical organism in which spiritual experiences are given meaning and are expressed, if spirituality is linked with a faith tradition (Hood Jr, 2009). Here, *experiential* is a key word in the process of defining spirituality in the context of relationality (Best, 2000; Halstead, 2003). Yet spirituality is also understood to pertain to who we *are*, or be, rather than what we *do* (Brown, 1987; King, 2009).

Current studies in multidisciplinary contexts examine spirituality as significant to well-being and individual development because it contributes to resilience (King, 2009). Resilience is conceptualised in the disciplines of Education and Psychology as the personal resources and ability to be flexible and buoyant through life difficulties, and it offers a common ground of terminology with other disciplines. In this study spirituality would identify with the characteristics of "courage, hope, meaning, fortitude, and transcendence" (King, 2009, p. 313). These are all acknowledged as necessary for an integrated response to recover from difficulty or trauma, as subjectively perceived by an individual. This then supplies a shared understanding for the disciplines of Theology and Psychology to optimise opportunities for human development, through ministry or therapy respectively (Benson et al., 2003; King, 2009). In this way spirituality, within the ministry of pastoral care, is a recognised component of well-being and resilience, within the context of formalised training.

2.5 Christian Ministry

Ministry is traditionally seen as the domain of ordained clergy, but laity also offer assistance where possible, and often in practical roles of property maintenance and liturgical service. Labels of 'clergy' and 'laity' are not helpful in the context of spirituality, as even within the Christian tradition such terms can have multiple meanings attached, depending on the specific doctrine and practices of a denomination. Generally, clergy and laity are formalised positions with specific,

expected functions within a particular faith community. Both clergy and laity are trained, not only for the tasks required by their respective positions, but also at least to some degree in aspects of personal spiritual growth, namely formation (Collicutt, 2015; Purves, 1989). Because of this training and formation, ministry is often seen as a label for the tasks performed by those in such a position; a view based on a professional model that denies the "priesthood of all believers" [1 Peter 2:5] (Holmes, 1982; Worthen, 2012). However, a communal context does provide the necessity for, and the mode by which formation is significant to Christian ministry, in particular because of a relational connection with self, other, creation and God for the purpose of individual growth (Johnson, 1989). Relational connection to facilitate growth is the central focus of ministry (Hughes, Reid, & Pickering, 2010).

Within the communal context of the Christian tradition there is a third group involved in ministry that may individually, or in small groups, be part of a faith community but who operate outside of specific tasks associated with position or profession. These are *volunteers*, and are part of organisations deemed to be para-church; that is, they exist to support the purposes of the institutional church but work independently across and outside of denominations (O'Meara, 1999). In this sense, volunteers 'minister' as they intentionally fulfil a purpose in the active form of attending to spiritual needs. Spiritual Care Australia (SCA)[3], the association of practitioners in chaplaincy, pastoral and spiritual care in Australia, states, "Trained volunteers are an integral part of spiritual care" (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014, p. 6). The spiritual care of those in dilemma underpins the motivation and process of pastoral work as a ministry of the church (Johnson, 1989). In this context, ministry is broadly the "…equipping of people with skills" (Johnson, 2010, 0.30), so that "…truth is understood and integrated into the context of everyday life" (Boa, 2001, p. 379).

What constitutes ministry is open to interpretation, although consensus is based on the community's recognition of skills and ability. In any case, ministry requires an active and intentional choice on the part of the volunteer to participate and be fully engaged in the process of

[3] For further information see http://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au

bringing comfort, aid, or encouragement to those seeking support. There is an element of applying energy to facilitate promotion of well-being in others, an application that demands investment on the part of the giver, regardless of outcomes. This nourishing or cultivation of the spiritual in another referred to earlier in 2.2 Spirituality, page 17, is aimed at fostering growth and development and is pastoral in its purpose, as "[a]t the heart of ministry is not so much giving one's faith to other, but facilitating people in their growth in faith" (Hughes et al., 2010, p. 136). To be pastoral is to help the suffering individual find meaning beyond themselves and inspire efforts to connect with other and God with the goal of healing (Purves, 1989).

Ministry can be defined as the active representation of a world view, and Christian ministry has its foundations in the biblical precedent of facilitating spiritual purposes led by divine influence (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). A 'minister' can be considered a holy vocation, set apart from others, as a symbolic presence of God to the faith community (Holmes, 1982). However, in the context of the volunteer, a minister is a representative who attends to someone in need, suggesting that a sense of belonging is conveyed by the sharing of meaning (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). When the interaction is based on an interpretive approach, the recipient and minister share mutual meaning and understanding. Consequently the minister is offering 'presence' through personal encounter (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). Those involved in ministry motivated by the desire to promote well-being in whatever is vital, can be deeply invested in and attribute great value to its purposes, but specifically in spiritual nurturing (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014).

Seeking to identify ministry as simple application of cognitive logic and pragmatic problem-solving to resolve difficulties and promote well-being denies the intent of Christian ministry which emphasises facilitating maturation of the spiritual dimension (Butler-Bass, 2004; Carr, 1996; Cully, 1984; Hauerwas, 2016; Nelson, 1985; O'Meara, 1999; Webster, 2009): a maturity that acknowledges an intentional quest for one's potential, or *becoming*, as a desired outcome, rather than achieving set criteria; that is *doing* (Benner, 2011; Parrett & Kang, 2009). The aspiration of fulfilment directly connects minister and recipient in the process of spiritual growth

or ‘sanctification’; becoming authentically holy (Gula, 2011; Hauerwas, 2016); holistic healing being the purpose (Purves, 1989). Ministry and spirituality are congruent as both are elemental in providing the space “where woundedness can be confronted at its source” (Purves, 1989, p. 124). The active intention of the minister is to offer compassion to the recipient and is the outworking of their spirituality (O'Meara, 1999; Purves, 1989; Schuhmann & Damen, 2018). Ministry is spirituality in praxis (O'Meara, 1999) and as such is a reflection of each minister’s personal story of spiritual experience (Hansen, 1994). “Since the pastoral ministry is primarily a matter of relating to others in ways that mediate God’s presence, we ought to have the skills and dispositions that foster faith, life-giving relationships with those we are called to serve” (Gula, 2010, p. 13) . Healed woundedness in the minister is exhibited in the style and level of compassion in ministry (Hansen, 1994), such that pastoral care is the demonstration of inner well-being (Purves, 1989).

2.6 Pastoral Care

As a form of ministry, pastoral care is distinctive in its purpose. The seminal work of McNeill[4] defined pastoral care as the ‘cure of souls’ (McNeill, 1951), a concept identified by Burns as “…developing the inner spiritual life, popularly called soul care” (Burns, Chapman, & Guthrie, 2012, p. 39). This was described by Barber and Baker as being conceptualised under the tradition of Christian spirituality as pastoral soul care, incorporating “…nourishing, healing, and flourishing of the whole person” (Barber & Baker, 2014, p. 270). The pastoral approach to caring for souls is focused on spiritual and emotional needs and the facilitation of the spiritual health of the recipient (Anderson, 2003; Catholic Health Australia, 2010; Hiltner, 1959; O'Connor & Meakes, 2005), demonstrated in intentional relational connection (Gula, 2011). Spiritual health can include the capacity to “…form an optimally autonomous perception of life…to discern coherence in experiences and enhance existential problem solving” (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014, p. 111). To care pastorally includes seeking to promote spiritual health specifically,

[4] McNeill, J.T. (1951) *A history of the cure of souls.* New York, NY: Harper, in which he describes the concept of mutual encouragement through pastorally focused conversations.

although it is only one aspect of ministry within the Christian tradition. Given that many involved in pastoral care may not be professionally trained, spiritual competence is an issue that calls for definition and further scrutiny.

As the pastoral carer may work across a broad spectrum of contexts, with those who are vulnerable in some form, questions of competence regarding personal spirituality and practice are pertinent. The condition of spiritual and emotional health of the worker is a significant factor in safe and effective pastoral care (Brenner C.V. & Koenig, 2004). In other words, "Many of the human skills and attitudes that are expected of care-giving professionals…are needed by women and men in helping ministries" (Dues & Walkley, 1995, p. 53). Competence can be defined as having capability, aptitude, and experience to perform in the context of the occupation, and requires an integrated and multidimensional skill-base (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). Competencies require ongoing learning since different contexts prescribe skill sets. Therefore, competency is related to development, although spiritual competence or maturity is relationally-focused rather than skill-based exclusively (Cully, 1984; Purves, 1989). Whilst skills are crucial to overall competency in the context of pastoral care and spiritual health, personal spirituality, as a state of being, is as equally significant as the doing (Hansen, 1994; Purves, 1989). In the context of the volunteer pastoral care worker, training may be limited and personal spirituality not specifically addressed. For pastoral care to have a positive effect it would seem necessary for those undertaking the nurturing to be spiritually healthy (Walker, 1989).

What constitutes spiritual health? Unfortunately, it is not a thing to have its temperature taken or blood pressure or iron levels checked. *Health* can be defined as "…an objective state of physical, mental, and social well-being…[a] subjective attitude on the part of the person" (Anderson, 2003, p. 22), and requires an integration of physical and mental with the social, personal, and spiritual (Anderson, 2003; Fisher, 1998; Koopsen & Young, 2009; McArdle, Tuohy, & Catholic Health Australia Incorporated, 2007; Spiritual Care Australia, 2014). "As health is no longer considered in a one-dimensional continuum, 'perfect health' is an abstract, illusory goal" (Fisher, 1998, p. 21). The earlier view of health as absence of disease (Seaward, 1991) could be applied to a

definition of *spiritual health* in the interpretation of an absence of *dis-ease*, where the absence of pathology equates with health. And yet, "…people can be well, regardless of whether they are healthy or ill" (Fisher, 1998, p. 22) when dimensions of the human person operate in a balance of compensatory capacities. According to the World Health Organisation, "health is a complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease" (World Health Organisation, 1998, p. 1).

The National Interfaith Conference on Aging stated, "spiritual well-being is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community, and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness" (National Interfaith Conference on Aging, 1975). Spiritual health, in this sense, is the unified function of body, soul, and spirit (Anderson, 2003). Consequently, spiritual health and well-being, a sense of wellness dependent on "subjective attitude" (Anderson, 2003) occurs *despite* difficulty, not because of an *absence* of difficulty, regardless of what the catalyst might be (King, 2009; Lun, 2015; Sandage & Jensen, 2013). The clarification of spiritual health is to be found in eudemonic indicators; irrespective of substantive or functional composition. The objective of healing and health is wholeness of the person (Koopsen & Young, 2009) and spiritual health, as a component of holistic practice, is the focus of pastoral care. Based on biblical concepts and practice, the unique point of pastoral care is to "…foster healing, sustenance, guidance, and reconciliation…" in the spiritual dimension of individuals and communally (Cole, 2010, p. 715). The purpose of pastoral care is to recognise signs and symptoms of pathology since "[d]ysfunction [of systems] indicates that the neglect of the spiritual dimension in everyday life has created many problems" (Seaward, 2001, p. 2). This is particularly so in the personal and spiritual dimensions, and by nurturing and nourishing the spiritual dimension, it is possible to facilitate transformation to a state of well-being.

Positive Psychology tends to focus on the soul as the self (Anderson, 2003), with the two concepts of spirit and soul often considered to be interchangeable (Moberg, 2010). Based on the biblical perspective of the human person found in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the Christian concept of humanity

is the three part being of spirit, soul, and body[5]. The soul is unique from the body or spirit (Goeschel & Blow, 1883; Weger & Wagemann, 2015), and is described in Christian literature as including intellect, volition, and emotions (Hagin, 1983; White, 1998). Likewise, soul is described by van Peursen as incorporating consciousness, intention and affections, whereas spirit is "not an immaterial being, but the whole man endowed with a new direction and purpose of his life [that] becomes so only in consequence of the divine initiative" (van Peursen, 1966, p. 101). The spirit is the inspirational essence that informs the soul and body (Anderson, 2003; van Peursen, 1966), a concept best expressed according to Berryman, in the language of "ultimate knowing"; a language expressing the presence of God (Berryman, 1990). Discussing the human response to the presence of God, Berryman suggests that the three human dimensions 'speak' the encounter in distinctive ways. The experience of unity with God is expressed in:

1) the "Ahh!" of the *spirit* being integrated with self within God's presence;
2) the reflection on the experience of God bringing an "Aha!" of the *soul*, as discovery born of awareness of the presence, understood by Anderson (2003, p.142) as the hermeneutic moment of "Now I understand!";
3) and the "Haha!" of the physical *body*, conveying the sensed detection of God's presence (Berryman, 1990, pp. 529-531)

The interaction of these dimensions, as an integrated whole describes the consummate capacity of the human to cognitively process a knowledge that is beyond the natural senses. For the pastoral care worker in Christian ministry this capacity is the basis of their identifying competence.

SCA states, "…all people…have spiritual and pastoral needs that require a sensitive, respectful response from skilled practitioners" (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014, p. 5). The sensitivity and skill of the pastoral carer depends on "…individual capacity, pastoral experience and degree of additional education and training" (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014, p. 7). In a statement quoted earlier in 1.3 The Problem, this association acknowledges that those involved in the spiritual care

[5] 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (New American Standard Bible) "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete…"

of others are "…ethically bound to take responsibility for their own knowledge, attitudes and skills…" (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014, p. 7). If not, forms of dysfunction will result in insensitive and inappropriate connections and practices due to lack of sensitivity and perception (Burns et al., 2012; Pembroke, 2002; Purves, 1989; Scazzero, 2006). SCA documents indicate competence and formation are 'key elements' of effective and responsible care, regardless of certification (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014, p. 15). Cited by Smeets and Morice-Calkhoven (2014), the Dutch Association of Spiritual Caregivers in Care Institutions maintains that spiritual competence begins with the carer being confident in their personal spiritual identity and having a capacity to communicate it. This indicates competence at a personal level. At the level of practice, the pastoral carer should have the ability to recognise a recipient's emotional state and position (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014). A pastoral carer should also reflect essential attributes relevant to the spiritual context at the level of their role, and this should be affirmed by communal agreement (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). Those seeking pastoral care pursue assistance to address specific actual needs – those of a spiritual kind – with expectation of being met from within a particular faith tradition (Cole, 2010). The distinctive care offered by the pastoral carer is founded on personal declarations, principles, and intentional choices of lifestyle in that context (Cole, 2010).

There is a need for the pastoral carer to recognise the extent that their own personal life experiences and the 'flavour' of spirituality can affect their connections with recipients (Hodge, 2011; Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014). While not necessarily agreeing with beliefs or values, it is essential that the pastoral carer operate with empathy and understanding toward recipients (Best, 2000; Hodge, 2011). Competence in delivering assistance to the spiritual dimension of recipients should recognise the variance of individual meaning and expression of spirituality (Hodge, 2011). To do so requires aspects of 'doing' and 'being' spiritual; seen as two sides of the one coin – allied but distinctive (Coyte, 2007). Best (2000) describes recognising emotion in others as "…an essential domain in what has come to be known as 'emotional intelligence'" (p.16); a type of 'sensibility'. It is feasible to apply this concept in the context of pastoral care,

recognising spirituality in others as an essential domain for the volunteer pastoral care worker, which can be understood as having 'spiritual sensibility'. For spirituality to be nurtured, then, there must be experiences of spirituality by the carer (Best, 2000) and recognition of the emotional and spiritual effects (Burns et al., 2012; Purves, 1989; Thomson, 2016). Spiritual sensibility can be compromised by disregarded personal grievances and suffering (Purves, 1989). Such barriers can create a lack of self-understanding that impacts pastoral care as an inability to connect, to offer solidarity and commitment, or be truly 'present' in relationships; where ministry of lasting significance is limited (Pembroke, 2002; Purves, 1989). The relational construct of pastoral care relies on the intentional and intimate connection, at a spiritual level between carer and recipient; a relationship that is mutually transformative. This form of spiritual connection as something 'non-rational' rather than irrational (Tacey, 2009), is the core of pastoral care and the distinguishing feature in contrast to rationalist intellectual models (Thayer, 1985), exemplified by Positive Psychology.

2.7 Positive Psychology

The relationship between spirituality and psychology has been a tenuous one (King, 2009; Rennick, 2005). Christian spirituality has viewed psychology with suspicion because of humanistic orientations, while psychology has accused Christian spirituality of manipulation and abuse (Fontana, 2003; King, 2009). In 1994, Everett Worthington Jr. indicated the need to recognise spirituality as integral to holistic healing processes (McMinn, 1996; O'Connor & Meakes, 2005), and foundations for agreement between Positive Psychology and spirituality originated in the human experience of suffering and the trauma caused by disruptions to relational connections – to self, other, creation, or God (Curtain, 2010; Selman et al., 2017). Resulting emotional and spiritual needs cause an individual to seek community and relational connection; assistance in some form (Bretherton, 2006; McMinn, 1996). Consequently, being in need can be an instrument for spiritual growth and psychological health (McMinn, 1996), as hardship causes the individual to search deeper levels of soul and spirit in answer to existential questions (Burns et al., 2012; Holmes, 1982).

Focused on discovering positive traits to support resilience rather than the traditional pathology of damage (King, 2009; Kwan, 2010; Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2000), the field of Positive Psychology, as mentioned in 2.4 Religion and Spirituality, page 25, can be defined as seeking "…to achieve meaning in life which comes from active engagement with the purpose of living, namely to achieve one's fullest potential" (King, 2009, p. 315). Studies exploring the link between Positive Psychology and spirituality have included psychological type; a constructivist view – based on identifying the human quest for transcendence/truth; attitudes towards Christianity; resilience; and psychology of religion (Carr, 2003; Francis, 2009a, 2009b; King, 2009; Trotman, 2016).

Research surrounding faith experiences, such as spirituality, indicate close association of the development of resulting adaptability and coping leading to well-being (Day, 2010; Hunt, 2015; Spiritual Care Australia, 2014). Spiritual Care Australia refers to a holistic understanding of the connection between spirituality and well-being as central to the human person reaching their potential; where strengths in spirituality provide a framework for sustaining support during times of difficulty. In this study, spirituality is based on a religious understanding and, while some concepts from Positive Psychology such as well-being, can inform the discussion, such concepts diverge from the foundational paradigms of the faith tradition of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry. Well-being, in this study, reflects the notion of a holistic approach of buoyancy and flexibility in spirit, which compensates for pathology in soul, or body, that is, well-being despite pathology.

Positive Psychology explores the effect of the intellect and emotions on the whole person as well (Titus, 2017), but conversely seeks to influence behaviour through the process of self-regulation via the soul – mind, will, and emotions – or the conscious core of self (Fontana, 2003; Root Luna, Van Tongeren, & vanOyen Witvliet, 2017), relying on the emotions as the link with spirituality (Koenig, 2007). Conversely this study, which focuses on the whole person including the spiritual dimension as the central influence, reflects a perspective embedded in the Christian tradition. Therefore, in keeping with the Christian perspective in the context of pastoral care, there are

concerns that, when spirituality is established on a basis of emotional consciousness, it becomes a psychic pursuit rather than one of intimate relational connection (Ranson, 2002). Thus, if the soul is conceived as the agent of behaviour, by application of will rather than as a holistic integration via the spirit generating an incarnated manner of being, or an "…openness to evolution of embodiment of values" (Doohan, 2007, p. 115), the spirit's role in the spiritual nurturing of pastoral ministry is somewhat diminished. Pastoral care includes the spiritual dimension as principal to the health of all other dimensions. Despite these different emphases in understanding spirituality and spiritually related concepts, Positive Psychology and Pastoral Care are unified by their shared objective of healthful connection with Other (Kwan, 2010). Further, Positive Psychology acknowledges the inherent significance of the individual, which is a concept shared in Pastoral Care and spiritual nurturing, in reciprocal beneficial relationships with a community that promotes well-being (Bretherton, 2006).

A facet of Positive Psychology relevant to this study is the focus on well-being within the context of volunteering. As mentioned in 2.5 Christian Ministry, page 27, in this study, volunteers are defined as those operating outside of specific positions or professions within a faith community and in the context of pastoral care. Volunteers are those who, without payment, make an active and intentional choice to participate and be fully engaged in the process of bringing comfort, aid, or encouragement to those seeking support.

The intentional choice is motivated from relational connection with God. Research indicates that a positive relationship exists between religious attendance, well-being, and volunteering (Powell & Robbins, 2015), although data from the Australian National Life Survey does not clarify the context of the volunteer roles (NCLS Research, 2011). Instead, religious attendance is identified as the defining factor in the survey, which points to a deficit of research regarding spirituality and concepts of well-being and volunteering. Indeed, it appears that in the survey, religious attendance is regarded as synonymous with spirituality, despite indicators in contemporary research to the contrary (Roberts, 2015).

One difficulty in exploring concepts of resilience and well-being is identifying characteristics clearly and accommodating contextual relevance (Francis, 2009b; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009). Well-being may be considered as a maintained balance either in the mind and emotions, or in physical health. Fisher (2014) describes well-being as the integration of spiritual-psycho-social-biophysical aspects of the human person in harmonised function, integration being prescriptive of well-being. Spiritual well-being is pre-eminent to personal integration, as an essential element of the spirituality of the human person and integral to all aspects of life (O'Higgins-Norman, 2009). Hope, wholeness, meaning, purpose, and value are all noted facets suggested by Positive Psychology as contributing to resilience and well-being. Importantly these are also intrinsic to the substantive understanding of spirituality and spiritual growth particularly in the light of pastoral care, which seeks to integrate interpretations from psychology in a collaborative effort to develop a holistic understanding of individual personhood, including spirituality, facilitated by relational connection (Brunsdon, 2014; Frederick, 2009). To determine the role of spirituality in pastoral care and Positive Psychology there needs to be an understanding of the self as an integrated whole, as well as a language established in the spiritual domain in which individual and communal experiences may be articulated and understood (Anderson, 2003; Berryman, 1990). Essentially, pastoral care has a unique approach to well-being, through which a dialogue with other disciplines can beneficially take place (Brunsdon, 2014).

Undeniably, the dialogue between spirituality, ministry and psychological care indicates that the interest in viewing the positive aspects of human thought and behaviour has included a focus on connectedness. The Christian tradition acknowledges awareness through connectedness with the actual presence of God, or immanence, as a directive and compassionate resource for the individual (Chan, 1998). Whether through intentional 'centering-prayer', based on the ancient form of contemplative practices by the desert fathers[6] (Blanton, 2011; Brother Lawrence, 2009/1692), or through consciously being relationally in the present moment in continual

[6] *The practice of the presence of God*, written by a lay Brother of the Carmelite Order, Brother Lawrence, was first published in 1692. Multiple editions have been published in different publishing houses across the centuries and the world. It is considered a classic of Christian writing.

conversation, the adaptive process of seeking and experiencing God in proximity increases capacity to accept current events and move forward positively (Brother Lawrence, 2009/1692; Daley, 2009; Gockel, 2009). The capacity to adapt is seen as significant to the processes of human development and flourishing. Enduring through conflict, stress, or difficulty and emerging with deeper self-understanding fortifies the emotional and psychological state to build resilience (Burns et al., 2012; Holmes, 1982; Kettenring, 2008; Lewis Hall, 2016; Sandage & Jensen, 2013). This has the potential to further develop skills in coping and in building self-awareness (Lun, 2015); essential elements in spiritual formation.

2.8 Spiritual Formation

Despite multiple educational and psychological theories on human development, spiritual development as the formation of the spiritual dimension intrinsic to personhood, is still a neglected subject (Benson et al., 2003; Scott, 2009a, 2009b), though there has been a growth in interest (Sandage, Paine, & Gieseler Devor, 2014; Willard, 2002). Defined by Willard as "the process by which the human spirit is given…form or character" (Willard, 2002, p. 19), Burns et.al. consider the essential concept as "the process" of maturing (Burns et al., 2012, p. 19), signifying that an individual never actually "arrives" at a static state of maturity (Cully, 1984). Intention is required, where care of the soul cultivates conditions that support spiritual growth (Burns et al., 2012; Willard, 2002). Spiritual growth that results in spiritual formation is not consequent on performing spiritual tasks since "spiritual experiences do not constitute spiritual formation" (Burns et al., 2012; Willard, 2002, p. 25). Having a "well-kept heart" enables a person to respond positively in relational experiences, emanating from intimate connection with God leading to a full integration of all dimensions – spirit, soul, and body (Groom, 2017; Otto & Harrington, 2016; Willard, 2002, p. 29).

Current considerations in spiritual formation suggest that:

1) dimensions of human progress do not occur in isolation,
2) individuals mature at different rates, and

3) dimensions within individuals can be disparate (Scott, 2009b).

The nature of spirituality, as subjective and intrinsic is difficult to address in the context of developmental theory. Models continue to express development in linear or cumulative representations, despite research providing evidence to the contrary (Andrade, 2014; Coyle, 2011; Cupit, 2009). While folk traditions imply an expectancy of wisdom and self-transcendence increasing with age, the lateral process of chronological age equalling spiritual maturity is not always the outcome (Allport, 1950; Bjorklund, 2011).

There has been much research undertaken on spirituality in children and adolescents and the aged, but there has been less activity in the field of adult growth, particularly within the Christian tradition, unless associated with religious coping and associated health issues. However, findings from earlier research do inform this study, which seeks to explore adult perceptions of spirituality, what implications there are for spiritual formation within a Christian context and to discover what influences there are on spiritual growth and ministry within a cohort that are not in the midst of major life crises. The stage theories of Fowler and Erikson sought to explain emotional or intellectual progression as a series of measured abilities which, once attained, were the platform on which further skills were developed (Johnson, 1989; Parrett & Kang, 2009; Young & Koopsen, 2011). However, spiritual formation as a multidimensional construct presents difficulties in considering measurement by linear progression as there is no hierarchy in spiritual growth (Allport, 1950; Mabry, 2006).

In spiritual growth, ‘stages’ are not attained, but rather the spiritual dimension of self, as a dimension of the holistic understanding of the individual referred to in Footnote 1, 2.2 Spirituality, expands and gains strength – having greater tenacity, exerting more influence and becoming the dominant motivator (Anderson, 2003). The other dimensions, while performing distinctly, create an integrated whole in synergistic relationship (Anderson, 2003). Whatever dimension experiences change, integration of the whole person is required for transformation to occur (Anderson, 2003; Collicutt, 2015). Spiritual formation, or maturity is not the result of theories or skills applied, but a process of internal change and transformation (Allport, 1950;

Lasair, 2017; Wright & Wright, 2012). Rather than a linear construct, the formation of spirituality may be better explained as being a parallel thread independent of yet working in conjunction with the other dimensional threads of intellect, emotion, volition, and body. Growth in one dimension does not guarantee progress in other threads (Wilber, 2002), unless there is an influence which facilitates integration (Anderson, 2003). Wilber's (2002) concept of "concentric spheres of increasing embrace, inclusion, and holistic capacity" point toward the fluid and organic nature of spiritual formation (Ranson, 2002; Scott, 2009b; Wilber, 2002), if not in spheres, then in intertwining threads that aggregate as a mature and formed spirituality and wholeness of person.

Given the interwoven character of spiritual growth, markers can be difficult to determine (Scott, 2009b). Nevertheless, without demarcation of significant achievements in the spiritual dimension there is confusion over what constitutes being 'formed' (Scott, 2009a). A supposition that there is a singular and peak goal to be attained continues to exist (Nelson, 2009), whereas the lived experience of spirituality has the quality of journey or pilgrimage, where aspects of life are revisited and re-formed, seeking to bring integrity between beliefs and actuality (Nelson, 2009; Scott, 2009b). In this sense, ritual or ceremony may provide needed direction for a fluid yet meaningful measure of formation; not in stages, but as indicators of significance: signposts of the journey (Scott, 2009b). "The public ceremony celebrates the learning and acknowledges ritually the passage to the new status, with the taking up of…[new identity]…in the community" (Scott, 2009b, p. 458). The observance in any format that honours, can provide a structure for meaning and values to be imparted. Growth is acknowledged by the individual and community, and new identity established (Scott, 2009b). Practices of honouring recognise attributes that are present within the individual, that indicate a productivity and effectiveness in life; a steadying influence that is determined by selflessness (Allport, 1950; Burns et al., 2012).

In the Christian tradition community culture has, in the past, been the expected source of instruction in spiritual practices but has become increasingly disregarded in the process (Butler-Bass, 2004). Spiritual formation is a continual exercise of transformation aimed at internal change motivating external action in personal and communal domains, although change is not

accomplished by human strength and will alone (Andrews, 2010; Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010; Johnson, 1989; Willard, 2006). "Authentic spiritual formation as both a practice and a goal….is personal, historical, and communal" (Anderson, 2003, p. 66). Participation in and with Other is the essential ingredient in being formed in the defined nature and likeness of Christ (Johnson, 1989; Willard, 2006). Inculcation and incarnation of spirituality increases awareness of others, encourages a conscious engagement with the spiritual dimension to develop, and provides balance between learned knowledge and lived experience (Cully, 1984). Formation occurs as a product of all dimensions being developed by process, spirituality being "the mechanism through which the integration and growth occur" (Westgate, 1996, p. 27), whereby the individual becomes a "spiritually educted person" (Webster, 2009, p. 205), drawing potential from within the person (Hiltner, 1949).

A commitment to change seeks transformation (Burns et al., 2012) and strengthens faith through the process of struggle with self (Allport, 1950; Purves, 1989). Change must occur and effect an enduring higher order of operation (Nelson, 2009). This is often referred to as sanctification; literally 'being made holy' (O'Collins & Farugia, 2000). Historically, Western Christian thought espoused four steps in the formation of the spiritual life:

1) awakening – stirring of feelings occurring within 'encounter' experiences;
2) purgation – growing self-knowledge and discipline;
3) illumination – growing intimacy in sensing the divine;
4) union – joining of wills in love (Nelson, 2009).

Like psychological stage models such as those of Fowler and Kohlberg, (Johnson, 1989; Parrett & Kang, 2009), there is a tendency to view spiritual development as a linear process (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2008). Grounded in psychology, theories of development are inclined to utilise a negative framework of language, expressing pathology that needs to be changed. The concept of resilience is redefining such models with positive language such as "*capabilities, competencies, knowledge, vision, optimism, and hope*" (King, 2009, p. 318). Whether these traits are considered inherent to the individual, or part of the process, in the context of spirituality the development of

such characteristics are evidences of rites of passage for the human experience. "In Christian spirituality a desire for wholeness does not seek to have it all together but it is rather a sense of being on the way: the journey holds precedence over the destination" (King, 2009, p. 324). Spiritual formation is not "behaviour modification" but inner change of character that affects behaviour (Kettenring, 2008, p. 51), born from an inner drive to be in union with God (Yeo, 2016). Intention is required, so intellect and volition are involved, but the motivation is created by a belief system (Cully, 1984; Kettenring, 2008), through which an orderly process occurs (Willard, 2002).

Within the framework of the Christian tradition adopted by this study, spirituality and spiritual formation as a dimension common to humanity, are not only significant to fully understand human development but also desirable for growth and maturation (Benson et al., 2003). Spiritual formation involves a vital interaction of inward reflection and outward connection in an integration across multiple dimensions of the human person, seen as three processes in Positive Psychology, that reflect historical Western Christian thought, mentioned above:

1) awareness or awakening – recognising the relational nature and fostering of identity, meaning and purpose;
2) interconnecting and belonging – importance and mutual reciprocity in relationship;
3) way of living – freedom to express the genuine self (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2008).

In essence, these processes facilitate a new 'knowledge' of 'authentic' self through dynamic movement toward fullness, completeness, and abundance (Allport, 1950; Berryman, 1990). It is important to recognise that the 'movement' while dynamic, is not defined in any specific direction, as to differentiate from *forward*, which may connote linear advance. Spirituality permeates all other dimensions of the individual and cultivates integration (Cully, 1984; Worthen, 2012), symbolised in the ebb and flow of intertwining thread; each thread adding strength to the overall capacity of the whole. Spiritual formation is not a movement in linear progression of parallel human dimensions but is a journey that evolves in continuous loops and overlaps.

The journey of spiritual formation is observed and also attended by a change of behaviours and attitudes (Burns et al., 2012; Cully, 1984) that are actively demonstrated in the everyday practices of lifestyle (Austin, 2016; Burns et al., 2012; Holmes, 1982; McMinn, 2017; Willard, 2002; Worthen, 2012). The functional aspects of religious but not all spiritual formation, involve the disciplines such as confession and forgiveness, prayer, meditation, fasting, and other demonstrations of faithful response. These actions are linked with the paradigm of discipleship, the communal outworking of encouragement and mentoring, which aims at the formation of others as much as the transformation of self (Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010; Holmes, 1982). The regenerative relationship exemplified in outward service acknowledges internal maturity and the capacity to nurture self and other (Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010). Concurring with Anderson (2003), Willard (2010) indicates the transformative process of formation does not include being trained in certain skills to produce carbon-copy robots. The purpose is to generate "formation *of* the human spirit as well as formation *by* the divine Spirit" (Willard, 2010, p. 46). The intent of spiritual formation, in the Christian tradition is the surrender of the heart (Hull, 2010), while the goal is intimacy of relationship with God (Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010).

From this platform of intimacy of relationship, obedience is a relational issue and an agency allowing God to actively influence the individual's life outside the human facility to create and establish a 'knowing' and being known (Holmes, 1982; Palmer, 1993; Willard, 2002). Agency, according to Hauerwas, "…has the power of producing an effect" (Hauerwas, 1979, p. 83), and presumes the capacity to bring about change. As agents, humans have the capacity to self-determine actions, founded on intimate connection, some of which may preclude the generative influence of God. Formation proposes to effect particular character; that is, to bring about the ability of self-agency to choose patterns and being oriented toward God (Hauerwas, 1979). Formation is a process of becoming and being: communal; transparent; encouraging; and accountable (Forrest, 2012).

The ideal of this communal, transparent, encouraging and accountable state of spirituality acknowledges the need to admit internal brokenness and harmful patterns of relational connection

(Dues & Walkley, 1995, p. 155; Scazzero, 2006). In the context of pastoral care, this is "[r]elated to the issue…the need to form lay ministers as professionals" (Davidson et al., 2003). As stated in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30, the expectations resting on volunteer pastoral care workers to provide efficient and safe ministry is equal to those of caring professionals, yet formation is rarely addressed as a necessary aspect of volunteer training; despite a sense of Call. Spiritual formation, generated by, and effecting, relational connection with self, other, and God, is endowed on all, not just the ordained (Worthen, 2012). It occurs in response to the Call, a process of ongoing creative modification of the individual (Howard, 2016; Worthen, 2012). It would seem appropriate to "…judge the effectiveness of ministers not only on the basis of their pastoral skills but also on the basis of their integrity, on whether their personal lives are congruent with their message" (Gula, 2011, p. 46). Positive outcomes for that comparison are reliant on the holistic transformation that occurs through spiritual formation, since "…all of ourself is involved in the spiritual process, all ourself is transformed" (Corcoran, 1982, p. 244).

2.9 Summary

A proposed outcome of this study is its potential to identify criteria which may be used to gauge a substantive spirituality that integrates the whole person, as it aims to move beyond intellectual cognition, which, in the context of spirituality – as the dimension of the spirit – cannot demonstrate competence (Guy, 1987). Given that spirituality aims at relational connection (Lindsay, 2002), not just "external compliance" (McGrath, 1999, p. 99), an active encounter with self, other, and God, is exhibited in awareness of the spiritual dimension, and deep personal transformation for Christian ministry.

The plethora of definitions offered for spirituality indicate the breadth of difference in an understanding of the concept. In the Christian tradition within VMTC, spirituality is founded on relational intimacy with God. As a result of this relationship, some seek to serve the faith community in ministry. Traditionally understood as the role fulfilled by formally trained personnel, in recent years demand has outstripped supply, so volunteers are taking a more active

role in the ministry of pastoral care. Intended to facilitate spiritual health, pastoral care is primarily aimed at the integration of the three dimensions of the human being: spirit, soul, and body. As noted, Positive Psychology shares some common interests with spirituality and pastoral care in developing the individual's strength and resilience, as a method of coping with difficulties of life. However, dealing with emotionally vulnerable and spiritually fragile recipients requires a competency that entails a further dimension that may be overlooked or assumed in the practice of pastoral care. In this study, therefore, the concept of spiritual formation embraces the integration of the whole person and, as such has far reaching implications for the effectiveness and well-being of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry, and also for those who seek spiritual health.

Finally, the literature reviewed in this chapter has given an overview of current considerations of spirituality and pastoral care, particularly within the Christian tradition, and similarities with Positive Psychology that might inform spiritual formation. In the following chapter the Research Methodology is introduced, which suggests a theoretical framework. An explanation of Grounded Theory is offered along with the data gathering procedures, and the significance of the study is identified.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the significant subjective concepts associated with the study of spirituality and spiritual nurturing were explored in the context of volunteer pastoral care in Christian ministry. Key themes from literature concerning spirituality, pastoral care, and spiritual formation, amongst others, provided a platform for an honest and inclusive approach to this study. Understanding and making sense of how those involved as volunteers experience spirituality and spiritual nurturing, provided insight for more effective and formative preparation and training of personnel in Christian pastoral care ministries. The language and distinctive meanings supplied by volunteer pastoral care workers provided a rich source of data to discover themes and gain direction regarding theories for spiritual growth and formation. This chapter includes an explanation of Grounded Theory as a selected methodology to inform this qualitative study, based on the expected insights to be discovered through the interactive process of interviews, which created a collaborative action. The original vocabulary of participants was used to inform the direction of the exploration as well as positing implications which were built upon a solid and relevant foundation.

3.2 Methodology

Situated within a subjectivist epistemology, this study followed the theoretical perspective of a constructivist paradigm. It was experiential, propositional, and focused on practical knowledge which was co-created by researcher and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). As credibility and usefulness are the goals of a trustworthy, authentic and dependable study (O'Leary, 2010), this study sought to provide a flexible exploration and understanding of the phenomenon of spirituality to uncover meaning, sense, and the holistic, phenomenological and illuminative quality and texture of the participants' experiences (Willig, 2001). The participants' descriptions were explored for larger meanings (Creswell, 2008).

In the context of this study, the concepts of a constructivist paradigm were intrinsic to the process of discovery and provided a relevant framework to approach the subjective topic of spirituality and spiritual growth. This assisted the researcher to understand differences involving individual concepts and the frames of reference between participants. Building on the development of meaning as an interactive process of the experiences and thoughts of the individual, unique and specific data provided a deep and rich understanding of the participants' explanations of personal spirituality across a broad spectrum of concepts. This, potentially, resulted in theories relevant to the preparation and training of volunteer pastoral care personnel.

3.3 Qualitative Methodology

Given the multifaceted and reflective nature of personal experiences of spirituality, qualitative research afforded a process of inquiry that enabled a deep analysis of transcripts (Ponterotto, 2005). As well, it anticipated an intended revealing of language and articulated concepts of spirituality, and pastoral care, that might inform training for volunteers in Christian ministry. This study sought to make use of the experiences and personal realities of the participants to explore the unique and specific perceptions of the individual and to construct meaning.

Referring to Dilthey's (Dilthey, 1977/1894) distinction between scientific explanation (*Erklaren*) and understanding (*Verstehen*), Ponterotto (2005) helps disseminate what is 'meaningful' in constructivist stances. Understanding an individual's "lived experiences" of the day-to-day, from their point of view, is the goal of constructivist research, a goal that lends itself to exploring the perceptions and experiences of volunteer pastoral care workers regarding spirituality and spiritual nurturing. Just as Dilthey considered the historical and social context of the participant's experiences to be significant, this study sought to access 'meaning', maintaining consistency between the philosophical context and the method of analysis (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard, & Snape, 2013; Ponterotto, 2005). The study also set out to discover the multiple meanings and interpretations of reality that could provide the parameters of understanding to explore spirituality,

its purposes, impact and influence on the participants' lived experience with others. This aspect was pertinent for both researcher and the participants (Hays & Singh, 2012; Moberg, 2010).

3.4 Epistemology

With unique and personal experiences of researcher and participant involved, the epistemological perspective of this study focused on exploring the depth and richness of human experience, rather than a broad overview (Bryman, 1984; Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). As the philosophical orientations regarding knowledge influenced the choice of questions and methods employed in this study, the choice of research problem, in this case 'the perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of Christian volunteer pastoral care workers', as well as the data gathering procedures, relied on shared meanings and interpretations between participants and researcher. As a topic of sociological research, the critical examination of transcripts regarding spirituality called for a flexible approach in which topic, participants, and researcher were connected in a dialectic of increasing understanding.

Located within the relativist ontology of multiple realities, the study acknowledges the subjectivist dual ownership and creation of knowledge by the 'inquirer' (researcher) and the 'respondent' (participants) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hays & Singh, 2012). Therefore, the researcher's interpretations and worldview were as much a constituent of the constructed meanings as were the participants' (Green, 2000; Hays & Singh, 2012). The collaborative researcher-participants epistemological approach promoted the reflective processes of finding justifiable meaning (Crotty, 1998). This approach was particularly useful, as the spiritual phenomena under exploration were somewhat nebulous for statistical validation (Moberg, 2010). Being intrinsic to human experience (Paterson & Higgs, 2005), spirituality necessitated a reliance on the context of knowledge to explore and demonstrate connections that were relevant to the participants (Koro-Ljungberg, Yendol-Hoppey, Smith, & Hayes, 2009).

3.5 Theoretical Perspective

Situated in the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm, this study explored the personal contextual and experiential knowledge of the participants (Creswell, 2008). Values, such as those identified with concepts of spirituality, the purpose of life and connectedness, for example, were important to this field of research, as the knowledge of all those who contributed would inform meaning for the wider community (Green, 2000; Hays & Singh, 2012).

3.5.1 Theoretical framework.

The interconnected aspects of the Theoretical Framework were situated within a constructivist paradigm. Adapting the theoretical framework of a "multidimensional construct", this study incorporated the significant concepts of spirituality, personhood, relationships, nurture, ministry as pastoral care, and formation (Gall et al., 2005, p. 90). It showed that assumed relationships of concepts in the practice of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry existed (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). At the outset, it became apparent that there was "…no linear dance routine to this model…" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 76), or "periodization", forming the beginning, middle, and end of usual narratives (Kelly, Lesh, & Baek, 2008, p. 329). Instead, the scaffold provided structural elements and a dynamic, cyclic process to outline the integration of concepts related to spirituality and to volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry. These key constructs contributed to an understanding of spiritual formation, as well as provided a representation of how these constructs might function in the process of spiritual nurturing (Gall et al., 2005; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Pargament, 1997).

Figure 1 Theoretical Framework, represents the active and reciprocal relationship between the following constructs, based on the Research Questions:

1) What are the perceptions and experiences of spirituality of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry?
2) What influences their spiritual growth?
3) How does spirituality influence ministry praxis?

4) What are the links between spirituality, ministry, and formation?

Spirituality is represented as an egg shape, which connotes potential for emergence, and is the underlying construct, being intrinsic to all others.

Person conveys the three integral facets of personhood of spirit, soul (as mind, will, and emotions), and body. Each is significant and elemental to wholeness.

Relationships describes the four relational domains of an individual with self, other persons, creation, and God. These constitute the foundation of the human person as Being.

Nurture portrays the personal, communal and transcendent components from which an individual derives support, well-being, and confidence.

Ministry includes competency, embodiment, and praxis as a product and influence on and of the individual.

Formation portrays spiritual sensibility, growth, and transformation as an integration of the three dimensions of Personhood, in the four domains of self, other, creation, and God, through Relationships, Nurture, and Ministry.

Adapted from the form associated with the Pastoral Adaptation of Transactional Model (Lartey, 2000), Figure 1 Theoretical Framework, illustrates the function of personhood as a context that positions the individual as a three-part being, having been described in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30. Spirit is differentiated as the principal means of experiential being, while soul, as mind, will, and emotions, interprets and makes meaning for the body to exist and have purpose. These three dimensions are constituent to, and of, Nurture, on all three levels of personal, communal, and Transcendent encounter and action. They are also fundamental to the four domains of Relational connection – self, other persons, creation, and God. An individual can be considered Being by way of presence in the three dimensions in each of the four domains of Relationships. Personhood is integral to holistic praxis, competency, and embodiment associated with Ministry, in that specific engagement and response across the dimensions facilitates intentional action.

Personhood is also significant to Formation since integration of the three dimensions entails adaptive process expressed as spiritual awareness, growth/maturity, and transformation.

For the purpose of the study, this model of spirituality and formation represented a process of change in, and accomplished by, each of the constituent constructs. It sought to convey the complexity of constructs within the system in order to understand any causal effect found in the interactions. The experience of spirituality and formation seemed reliant on and occurred through a personal lens.

Spirituality plays a significant role in each of the constructs and is the underlying concept that would enable the organic and mutual nature of the process. Adaptation and readjustment through the multiple constructs would initiate further adaptation across the system. As an individual experiences the influence of each construct, separately and synchronously, this causes self to draw different conclusions, hold onto varied truths, or seek unique answers etc. enlarging and increasing potential for new perspective.

Encapsulated within the context of the study, the Theoretical Framework suggests an interactive dynamic between the aspects that focus on the interplay and co-dependence of each construct to form a cohesive representation of personhood and relationship to spirituality.

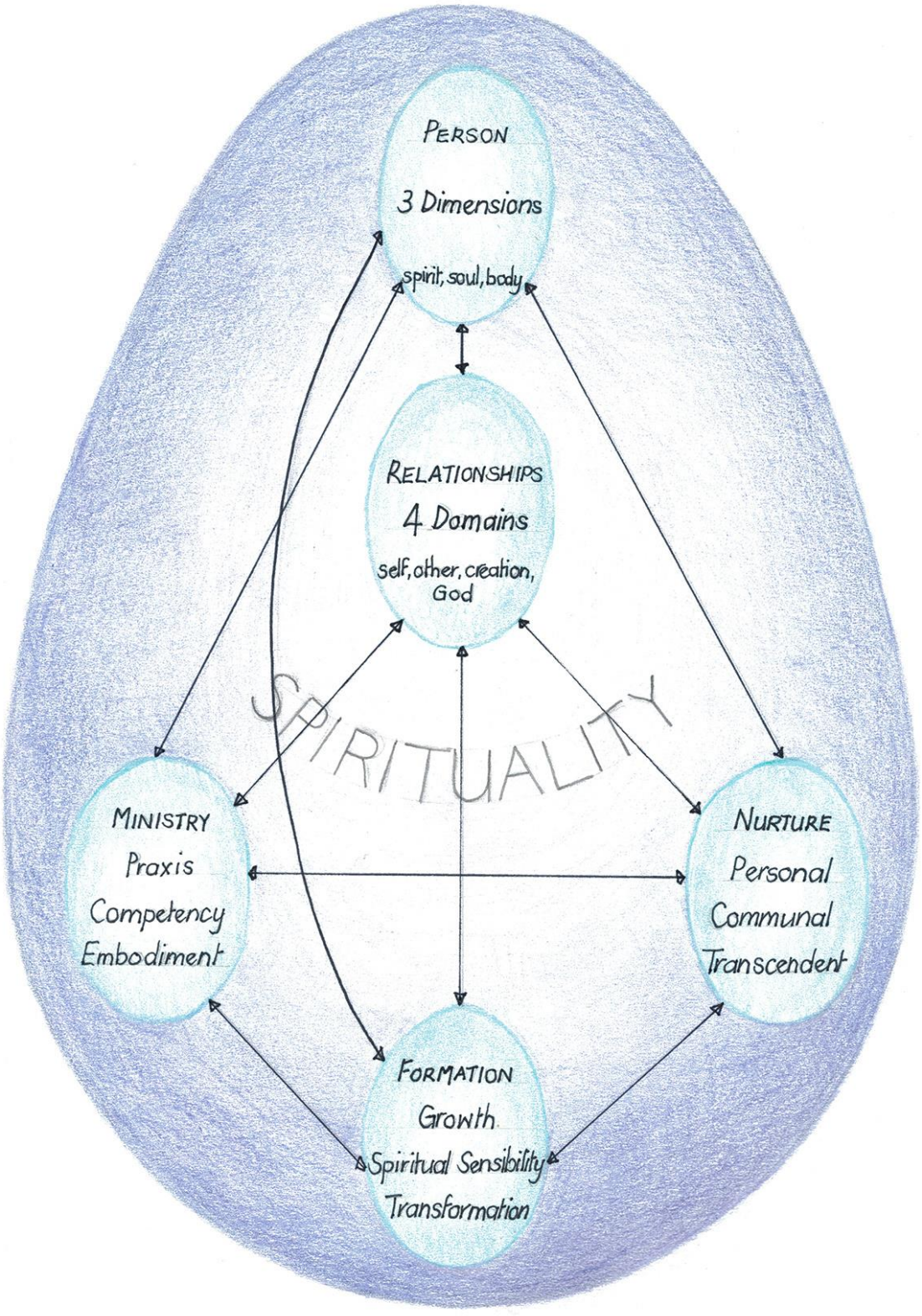


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

3.5.2 Constructivism.

Within the constructivist paradigm, meanings are attributed to the unique experiences of participants through purposeful consideration of their responses (Crotty, 1998), thus developing deeper insight into the constructs of personhood, nurture, ministry and formation in the light of influences of spirituality. Interaction between the researcher and participants is consistent with the character of constructivism, as it is an essential element of the process to discover profound insights into personhood (Crotty, 1998). The purpose of using this approach to the study was expected to facilitate an idiographic and emic approach to the perspective and meaning of participants' voices, while the researcher would explore for themes and unconstructed or identified meanings (Ponterotto, 2005).

The concept of multiple meanings related to the perceptions of those who had the experiences, as well as to the possibility of exposing multiple interpretations of reality by the researcher (Green, 2000; Hays & Singh, 2012; Ponterotto, 2005). This was significant for the study, in that spirituality, as a personal experience, is unique to the individual. Therefore, no single 'truth' could undergo verification and, this being so, each was considered conditional to the context (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), since any other researcher may interpret different themes from the data, which would be, thereby, 'value pluralistic' (Green, 2000). Agreement, expected as a result of discussion (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), and the production of substantial work giving immersive descriptions, indicated the successful capturing of meaning from the data (Ponterotto, 2005). In this study of spirituality, the goal was to explore the problem, rather than answer an hypothesis (Hays & Singh, 2012), and so arrived by preference at a theory that included the researcher's perspective as essential (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, while searching the recorded interviews and transcripts of the participants, the researcher regularly sought to identify her bias, while acknowledging her predispositions and preconceptions regarding meanings that were shared or different, in the process of exploring descriptions (Ponterotto, 2005).

Descriptions were considered unclear and imprecise for comparisons and generalisations regarding outcomes, while undefined variables made it difficult to establish a basis for identifying

key factors; these were understood to be cultural rather than a gendered and political social construction (Candy, 1989; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Ponterotto, 2005). As a constructivist study, the researcher-participants relationship would establish a partnership so that the collaborative process would focus on the improvement and development of pastoral care practice through an understanding of contextualised meaning born from the social agency of the individual (Green, 2000; Ponterotto, 2005). The researcher explicated meanings formed by the participants in an interpretive practice of inquiry that would not always be generalisable in the usual sense, but had "…explanatory potential…" (Payne, 2007, p. 82) in its creative adaptability to similar contexts, thus shaping the content of other studies within the structure of the method (Charmaz, 2006; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

3.6 Research Methodology

Interpretivist and constructivist alternatives in research approaches have emerged since the mid-twentieth century and these have encouraged pluralistic thought at variance with empirical, positivist scientific experimentation (Green, 2000). Initially contested on the reliability and validity of results, qualitative research has gained gradual acceptance by affording exploration of the inner experiences of individuals that inform changing belief systems of our times (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Green, 2000). As suggested in 2.4 Religion and Spirituality, page 25 of this study, the constructivist approach seeks to recognise universal concepts and, therefore, offered a sound yet flexible framework to explore the topic in question.

3.6.1 Grounded Theory.

One such framework was introduced by sociologists Glaser and Strauss as Grounded Theory design (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which enabled a theory to be discovered through the data rather than proving or disproving an already established theory (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2000; Creswell, 2008). A strength of Grounded Theory is "…that it offers a foundation for rendering the processes and procedures of qualitative investigation visible, comprehensible, and replicable" (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 33) and, as a systematic procedure, explains processes or

interactions regarding an experience (Creswell, 2008). The guidelines of Constructivist Grounded Theory informed and were drawn upon by the Researcher to explore and interpret the participant's perceptions of the topic of spirituality and spiritual nurturing, as it provided a mode of representing those experiencing the phenomenon and helped explain the particularity of participant narratives (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Rigour regarding analysis of such an elusive concept came from the constant referral to levels of each consecutive, and interactive layer, and coding of data (Creswell, 2008).

In seeking to balance the participant perspective and the narrative accuracy of the researcher, as per the work of Glaser and Strauss (Creswell, 2008), to move into a less descriptive model labelled by Glaser, this study was enabled by the emerging design of data which led to the development of a theory (Charmaz, 2001a; Creswell, 2008). The guidelines for data collection and analysis provided a structure on which the subjective meaning, defined by the participants' perceptions of their spirituality and spiritual experiences, was explored. As a result, expression of the nuances and constructions of meaning associated with the concepts of spirituality was promoted (Denzin, 2007).

Charmaz developed the constructivist position of discovering meaning, as experienced by participants, and the active role of the researcher, having a voice as author, in approaching interpretation of the data (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2000, 2001a; Creswell, 2008; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006). Accordingly, the codes were distilled and combined with specified concepts, which emerged as key ideas from the participants (Bryman & Burgess, 1994). Categories were revealed through significant patterns of expression, not necessarily volume (Oakley, 1994), and were then employed as principal vocabulary for the process of maintaining a sequential method of logical steps. Additionally, developing categories to identify and understand emerging themes, ultimately, informed a theory that explained the perceptions and experiences under exploration (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2001a; Creswell, 2008; Payne, 2007). Moreover, a verb functioning as a noun (or gerund) was used to indicate the action and purpose of the research – in this study:

It was not only the language of the participants regarding the perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing that provided codes and concepts, which led to categories and developing a theory. The originality of colloquial expression, and frequency of terms used, also indicated significance of meaning in the overall story of experiences of the individual participants and the collective group. This, then, become the ground and spaces for new concepts which encouraged exploration (Charmaz, 2006).

As the experience of participants was the focus, interviewing was sympathetic to the constructivist approach and provided abundant data for analysis (Creswell, 2008). Initial data were collected and analysed for preliminary codes, which indicated areas for further data collection. Subsequent data were used to further refine and develop concepts to clarify meanings (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). This process was repeated until saturation occurred, that is, no new insights were gained from new data (Charmaz, 2001a; Creswell, 2008). In this sense, the inductive process generated comparisons that grounded the evolving codes and categories in the data (Charmaz, 2001a; Crotty, 1998; Hays & Singh, 2012). The researcher identified forms of labels, as *in vivo* codes, or the precise idioms portraying the meaning of participants, from interview transcripts (Creswell, 2008). These codes indicated the direction needed for further analysis and simultaneous discussion in constant comparison between subsequent layers of data (Charmaz, 2001a; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2008; Hays & Singh, 2012).

Coding was significant in the approach of this study, as the researcher proceeded line by line through the data, focusing on the process of coding while simultaneously collecting further data in an interactive method (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2001a). The comparison of similarities and differences revealed uniformities and disparities, from which subsequent layers emerged as categories which, when subjected to further comparison, revealed refined, descriptive emerging themes (Creswell, 2008; Hays & Singh, 2012). The emerging themes, and the underlying categories, were the bases on which the theory provided conceptual explanation of the

experiences of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers, and included implications regarding preparation and training. The theoretical analyses were interpretive representations of the elements rather than merely a description of reality (Charmaz, 2001a).

3.6.2 Data gathering strategies.

Relative "Truth" was discovered through semi-structured interview (Noerager Stern, 2007, p. 119), where a few predetermined key questions were used, and the process shaped by the participants and the researcher responding to one another (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To provide a detailed exploration, this study utilised 30 participants to answer questions in a semi-structured format.

Initially, a letter was sent to Area Directors and Regional Administrators of VMTC, requesting their assistance and support, as contact with potential participants could only be made via these personnel who have privileged access to unpublished contact lists held within each specific region across six states and territories of Australia. An attached letter, outlining the research project and tasks involved, was sent to those on the regional contact lists encouraging participants who were willing to volunteer for the study to make contact directly with the researcher (see Appendix 8.1 Plain Language Information Statement, page 218). Once contact had been established, a letter of informed consent was sent and a mutually agreeable time and place for interview was arranged (see Appendix 8.2 Participant Consent Form, page 223).

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews using the questions mentioned in 3.6.3 Interview questions, page 59. Allowing flexibility to pursue relevant concepts and modify interviews reflexively to each individual while maintaining foundational questions, such semi-structured interviews facilitated an inductive approach leading to a pervasive exploration of participants' stories (Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Newell & Burnard, 2006). The questions were sent to participants two weeks prior to interview for their consideration. Interviews were expected to be 45-60 minutes in duration and were recorded on audio. As well, notes were taken by the researcher. Interviews were then transcribed, and data securely stored.

The individual participants were not identified. Instead, a pseudonym of each participants' choosing were used in the transcripts and the researcher memos. As all participants were legally deemed to be adults, their informed consent indicated their willing involvement and permission to analyse personal narrative. The researcher aimed for transparently explaining the research purposes and the requirements of involvement to the participants. All research materials were stored securely in the home of the researcher and were not accessed by the public.

It was the individuals' personal consent for their availability of time, effort, and interest that was the basis of choice of participants. As such, each person was expected to be treated with equal confidentiality, honesty, and sensitivity (Creswell, 2008). Values of inclusiveness and tolerance dictated interview interactions and interpretive representations of the research.

3.6.3 Interview questions.

Interview questions were prepared and given to the participants prior to the interview for their consideration, to inspire conversation and reduce potential anxieties of the participant (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The following questions provided a framework to begin the conversation exploring volunteer pastoral care workers' perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing:

Spirituality

What does the word spirituality mean to you?

Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?

How do you experience your spirituality?

Spiritual nurturing

What things nurture your sense of spirit?

How? For instance?

Have you experienced spiritual growth? In what ways?

Implications for training

How did you come to be involved in this ministry?

Why do you volunteer in this ministry?

Possible links

In your opinion, do you see any link between spirituality and your ability to minister?

Has this ministry affected your spirituality? How?

Does your spirituality affect how you minister? How?

3.6.4 Analysis of data.

Data analysis relied on analysing the text by describing themes and interpreting findings to discover meaning (Creswell, 2008). In particular, data were analysed to discover how volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry perceived spirituality, what experiences had been significant in their journey, and in what form any link occurred between spirituality and ministry. Because the stories of the individuals were of paramount importance to this qualitative study, every effort was made to give context and authentic representation to each individual's experiences (Creswell, 2008). By maintaining the integrity of participants' representations, significant meanings, constructed from experience, informed the understanding of the concepts of spirituality and spiritual nurturing, thereby, allowing implications regarding preparation and training to be ascertained.

The chosen methodology provided an appropriate model to inform the expression of the participants' stories, as the codes and categories used were developed as products of the original vocabulary of the participants. Consequently, the study provided original yet archetypal language in the representation of the cohort under inquiry. The data were scrutinised to discover further areas requiring exploration, and to identify indicators of significance and meaning, actual phenomena, and other processes that influenced the stories of social, psychological, or structural factors (Creswell, 2008).

The constant comparison of raw data gathered from volunteer pastoral care workers revealed indicators for further investigation, which provided additional data that was compared within and with the original raw data. Identifying commonalities as key words and phrases provided codes which were compared with previous indicators and raw data simultaneously, from which categories arose; these, then, became comprehensive labels for codes and indicators, making connections, and constructing an initial framework for understanding (De Vos, 1998). The categories were subject to further analysis by comparison with previous levels of data collected and developed simultaneously. From the analysis of categories emerging themes became apparent which then supported the development of an explanation regarding spirituality, spiritual nurturing and implications for future training programs in the context of volunteer pastoral care in Christian ministry, informing a Grounded Theory.

3.7 Verification

In order to verify the findings from the study as being a credible, the authentic and respectful representation of the participants' lived experiences, the provision of a balanced representation of those involved (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), and the summary by the researcher of traceable evidence found in the recorded observations provided plausible inferences. In this study, pluralistic values of meaning and specifics - such as sample size and diversity, corroboration from multiple texts, and acknowledgement and recording of the researcher's predispositions - established a sound inquiry (Green, 2000), via simultaneous interpretation and entwined processes (Meyer, 2008).

Reliability was achieved through "internal consistency" of process and analysis, particularly appropriate to the research question, and their diligent application (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 359). Thus, validity was established through a coherent explanation consistent with the participants' stories. Trustworthiness of the data was established by the symbolic constructions of knowledge in the cultural, ideological, and reflexive context of the research and endorsed by participants' language (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Accordingly, the study fulfilled the criteria of credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness for a sound Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006).

3.7.1 Sample size and diversity.

Adequate sample size and diversity was achieved by inclusion of thirty participants across:

- denominations – Uniting Church (UC), Baptist (Bapt), Anglican (Ang), Pentecostal (PC), and Non-specific Christian (Ch),
- VMTC specific roles – Released Support (S), Released Lead (L), Assistant Director (AD), and Director (D),
- Two age groups, labelled for convenience of analysis – Baby Boomer (BB) being >55 years, and Generation X (GenX) being <55 years; and
- relevant to the context of the study, two genders – Male and Female.

These four characteristics were secondary to the factor of having a current active involvement in VMTC as a volunteer pastoral care worker and being over the age of 18. Sampling occurred in an order of contact and availability basis. Consequently, those not currently operating as a volunteer pastoral care worker within the organisation of VMTC were excluded.

In considering literature on the subject of spirituality, it was found that there had been limited research done in the context specific to volunteer Christian ministry. A significant aspect of this study was that when dealing with emotionally and spiritually vulnerable people, those who minister may need to be aware of their own personal spiritual state of being, and to consider whether this has an influence on the effectiveness and sensitivity of their interaction with recipients of ministry. It was important to keep in mind that these participants in this study operated on the frontier of pastoral care in the particular faith community and therefore, their perspectives were expected to provide some representation of others working in a similar context. This is reflected in the participant cohort profiles, which are in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Role	Denomination
Rebecca	F	BB	L	PC
Reggie	M	GenX	L	PC
Hope	F	GenX	L	PC
Ezekiel	M	BB	D	Bapt
Debra	F	BB	L	PC
Duke	M	GenX	L	PC
Simon	M	BB	S	PC
Anthony	M	BB	L	PC
Irene	F	BB	S	UC
Grace	F	GenX	D	Ang
Hanamoa	M	BB	D	PC
Bartholomew	M	BB	D	Bapt
Bear	M	GenX	D	Ang
Peter	M	GenX	AD	PC
Josie	F	BB	D	Ch
Onesimus	M	BB	AD	Ch
Sarah	F	GenX	L	Ang
Esther	F	GenX	S	Ch
Sniffer	M	BB	D	Ch
David	M	GenX	S	Ch
Ned	M	GenX	L	Ch
Dot	F	GenX	S	Bapt
Aloysius	M	GenX	S	Bapt
Blossom	F	GenX	S	Ch
Lachlan	M	GenX	S	Ch
Faith	F	BB	D	UC
Cobalt	F	BB	L	Ang
Robert	M	BB	D	Ch
Sanna	F	BB	L	Ch
Devon Lad	M	BB	L	Ch

3.7.2 Corroboration from literature.

The key themes from literature provided a suitable framework of concepts within which to compare emerging data. Relevant to this study, regarding perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing and implications for further training, were themes that included: a diverse range of meanings attributed to the term "*spirituality*", incorporating comparisons with "religion" while recognising a significant link; in the context of the Christian tradition, *ministry,* was seen as a relational concept identified with communal responsibility for others, a mutual supporting and encouragement of the spiritual aspect of life, being exemplified in texts such as the Bible in 1 Peter 2: 15 as "the priesthood of believers". As such, *pastoral care* was one aspect of 'shepherding' and was specifically focused on providing nurture to the individual on their spiritual journey, as well as recognising spirituality as an intrinsic dimension of humanity.

Acknowledging an holistic model of humanity, such as *Positive Psychology* which recognises the health of an individual as significant to resilience and well-being and contextualised within spirituality for this study, aspects of *formation* went beyond linear chronologically-based models in an effort to define growth and maturity. These key themes presented terminology and concepts against which original and authentic language of participants were compared to provide evidence of conformity and contrast. Complementary language and cross-referencing of data supported the development of a solid and well-balanced argument regarding implications and applicability.

3.7.3 Acknowledgement of the researcher's predispositions.

As a member of a Christian faith community, and also VMTC - the organisation from which the participants were sourced - the researcher acknowledged her predispositions. The collaborative process of the study was beneficially understood and interpreted by the researcher, as one who was familiar with, and already immersed in, the language and concepts that emerged (Moberg, 2011; Sheldrake, 1999), thus implementing the aspiration of being "as close to the inside of the experience as they can get" (Charmaz, 2001b, p. 678). The researcher recognised the strength of shared meaning brought to the study, since terminology communicated by participants may have

confused or distracted the interview and analysis processes to researchers not as immersed in the structures, practices, and language of the organisation, referred to by participants. The theoretical sensitivity of insider knowledge which was implicit, given the researchers' background, provided a backdrop of understanding (Mills et al., 2006), and it made the interview process and data analysis a fluid narrative established in the data that was credible and trustworthy (Mills et al., 2006). In that sense, it was useful in connecting with past literature and projecting significant implications for the field of spirituality and pastoral care workers.

Consequently, the ethnographic immersion of the researcher was considered an advantage as, contrary to criticisms of explicit or implicit values being applied universally (Moberg, 2010), the specific target of this study was the Christian experience of spirituality; a context that had influenced definitions but was only nominally explored in matters of perception and implications for formation and training. "[T]here are few explicitly "Christian"…[applications] focused directly upon elements of the heart of the value systems…" (Moberg, 2010, p. 110), a deficit that compels further research to restore balance (Moberg, 2002).

The researcher also acknowledged the importance of balancing honest and sensitive representation of each participant's "voice, agency, power, [and] trust", with the generalisability of the study and recommendations (Kelly et al., 2008, p. 348). Being guided by the Research Question, that is, "how do volunteer pastoral care workers perceive and experience spirituality?", and by the findings, the researcher sought to consciously withhold her own perceptions throughout the interviewing process to allow participants' meanings to be uncovered. The labelling of the emerging patterns with vocabulary of shared meaning and value was done later (Mills et al., 2006).

As the researcher's notes and memos were written throughout the process of the study - addressing thoughts and responses to literature, observations of participants and participant responses, and personal reflection – these enabled a reflective and iterative practice that gradually assimilated with the data and analysis (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

This elaboration of researcher internal dialogue exposed assumptions that may have led to bias, and informed further direction for data analysis (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

For example, an entry by the researcher acknowledged the variance in responses of participants to a question which the researcher assumed would be viewed in only one way:

> "How do you experience your spirituality?" Two streams seem to be emerging.
>
> 1. What a person experiences their spirituality <u>through</u>; or BY something
> 2. The <u>effect</u> or consequence of their spirituality; or as a PRODUCT.
>
> It is intriguing that, without ascribing a particular object, people view the question from the different perspectives. I had not realised it could be taken in that way. I just assumed that they would think of 'through' what they experience spirituality. Even so, the different streams are showing a tendency to be both/and, rather than either/or.

This extract in an indication of how the researcher recognised and acknowledged the contrasting stance of some participants but also where the data showed conformity.

Participant language was also included in the descriptions within researcher memos (Mills et al., 2006), as the following entry example shows:

> Josie said, "I Googled that [spirituality], because it is like any means to peace, isn't it?"
>
> **This was an interesting definition that came out incidentally as a 'doorknob disclosure'. The fact that she Googled for a definition does not seem important. It is the words she chose after that: "any means to peace."
>
> I feel that Josie actually presented the secular understanding of spirituality. That whatever brings internal peace, individually and communally and globally must be spiritual. And it is considered to be accomplished by ANY means. It is not about being connected with anything that is Spirit particularly. This opinion is corroborated by Bartholomew.

The three aspects of sample i) size and diversity, ii) corroboration from literature, and iii) acknowledgement of researcher's predispositions built upon each other to maintain rigour while exploring perceptions of a subjective nature. This enabled the safe navigation of participants' personal stories while balancing bias and guarding against overlaying of meaning by the researcher, and maintain participants stories within the text, ultimately establishing verification (Mills et al., 2006). Multiple perspectives and understandings were represented as valued voices in the dialectic and were incorporated together so that each diverse aspect provided support for the emerging argument.

3.8 Ethical Issues

Given that the research explored the inner dimension of the personal spirituality of the participants, there was potential for access to sensitive data and participant self-disclosure (Ambert, Adler, Adler, & Detzner, 1995). Planning for minimum disruption to personal lives and relationships of participants required that meeting times were agreed upon by consensus, researcher willingness to encourage counselling post-interview, if necessary, by qualified ministry personnel, and discussing the extent of involvement of the participant in the research prior to consent (Ambert et al., 1995).

Every effort was made to maintain the privacy of potential participants by contacting Area Directors and Regional Administrators, as per the reasons and procedures set out in 3.6.2 Data gathering strategies., page 58, including participant initiated contact with the researcher, and informed consent, before proceeding with mutually courteous and respectful interviews. This 'sacred epistemology' was foundational to this study involving spirituality, as the researcher was consciously and actively aware of her responsibility, at all times, to the individuals being studied, rather than an institution (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

3.9 Summary

The symbiosis of data was made apparent through the emergence of a substantive theory and relationships between the categories (Birks & Mills, 2011). The relational component of the data was reflected in developing an understanding of a practical and sensitive representation of the specific cohort (Piano Clark & Creswell, 2010). This study sought to portray an interpretive description, rather than a precise delineation, of perceptions associated with spirituality, ministry, and formation of volunteer pastoral care workers.

This study has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to knowledge by illuminating further descriptions of the concept of spirituality and begin addressing the lack of training for volunteer pastoral care workers. By exploring "…the views, values, beliefs, [and] feelings…" (Creswell, 2008, p. 439) of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry, some

ambiguities of spiritual perceptions and experiences were filtered, and a rich source of knowledge revealed, to guide further research in the area of spirituality, training, and formation.

To sum up, the method of Grounded Theory, data gathering, and analysis strategies have been described in this chapter, situating the study in a subjectivist, constructivist paradigm. Verification, reliability, and significance of the study have also been identified in the unique and original context of the participants as an under-researched group regarding spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteers and pastoral care. What follows in the next chapter is an explication of the findings from the study, including an overview of participants, categories chosen, and the resulting observations that support the emerging themes.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS – PART A

4.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore answers to the following questions.

1) What are the perceptions and experiences of spirituality of selected volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry?
2) What influences their spiritual growth?
3) Does spirituality influence their ministry? and
4) Are there links between spirituality, ministry and formation?

The key aim was to identify the spiritual experiences of selected volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry which may contribute to effective formation and improve praxis. The previous chapters have described relevant literature for the concepts of spirituality, pastoral care and formation, and explained the methodology and significance of the study of the under-researched area of volunteer pastoral care workers Christian ministry. The following chapters begin the analysis of the findings related to spirituality, spiritual growth, the influences of spirituality and ministry, and possible links between spirituality, ministry and formation. Eight categories emerged from the data and were developed into three substantive theories. This chapter will address the first five categories chosen, listed in 4.3.2 Descriptions of categories chosen, on page 73, which pertains to perceptions of spirituality and the spiritual person, spiritual experiences, spiritual nurture, and spiritual growth. These categories revealed seven emerging themes. The remaining three categories and four emerging themes will be addressed in the following chapter.

Due to the subjective multiple realities of this research, an interpretivist-constructivist paradigm was appropriate for identifying participant concepts of spirituality, as all knowledge contributed had value and meaning due to the personal nature of responses (Creswell, 2008; Crotty, 1998; Greene, 2000; Singh, 2012) This paradigm was also beneficial as a means of analysing data from

within the culture under study, allowing the researcher to give voice to previously unrevealed constructs (Ponterotto, 2005). Spirituality is a distinctive personal experience and, while authentic to the individual, cannot be confirmed or considered constant as fact due to variation in interpretation by any other individual. Therefore, the study explored the problem rather than seeking to provide an answer to an hypothesis (Hays and Singh, 2012). The researcher-participant relationship enabled a partnership to collaboratively explore understanding of relative meanings.

Perceptions associated with spirituality were thought to be significant for spiritual formation. In the context of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry, assumptions regarding spirituality suggested that maturity and proficiency were afforded by age (Allport, 1950; Bjorklund, 2011). However, questions regarding spirituality, spiritual experiences, the nurture of spirituality, and possible influences on ministry were valuable considerations to broaden understanding of the fundamental significance of spirituality, personhood, and ministry practice.

4.2 Overview of Participants

Thirty (30) volunteer pastoral care worker participants were interviewed, over a period of five months, in a semi-structured format using the prepared questions referred to in 3.6.2 Data gathering strategies, page 58. All members of the organisation who met the criteria of operating in the ministry at Released Support level and above (lowest of the four Training levels mentioned in 3.7.1 Sample size and diversity, page 62, and explained further in the following paragraph) and who were willing to articulate their perceptions and experiences of spirituality were invited to participate. Sampling occurred on a 'first in' basis and data collection was cumulative on the basis of theoretical saturation. The Interview questions were pivotal in providing a framework for analysis, as each question provided an acceptable division for Category sections. Definitions of spirituality and subjective experiences were dependent on the participants and were the reference point of the study. Diversity in language and various experiences contributed to a broad sample, thereby assisting in divulging a fuller understanding of the concepts explored. Possible reciprocal

links were investigated, with a view to informing more effective and formative preparation and training.

Participants were sourced as currently active volunteer pastoral care workers involved in VMTC. Time of involvement in the ministry by participants ranged from three years to thirty-four. Males and females were represented in the sample; thirteen female and seventeen male, ranging in age from 25-70 years for females and 30-75 years for males. The age range reflected a typical cross-section of VMTC. The largest female contingent was represented by four 60-65 year-olds while the greater male contingent was comprised of five 65-70 year-olds. Participant age groups were divided into Baby Boomers and beyond (>55 years), and GenX (<55 years). All four different training levels within the organisation of VMTC correspond to participants involved in this study:

1) Released Support Minister – competent in specific elements of pastoral care sessions, but requiring further training,
2) Released Lead Minister – competent to oversee and train others, competent to oversee and facilitate pastoral care sessions,
3) Assistant Director – competent to teach content and train attendees of the Pastoral Care Program, and
4) Area Director – competent to oversee teaching and training of attendees and Assistant Directors of the Pastoral Care Program.

There were four female and four male Released Supports, six female and five male Released Leads, zero female and two male Assistant Directors, and three female and six male Directors. Participants came from five denominations in the Christian tradition, two female Uniting Church of Australia (UC), three female and one male Anglican (A), three female and six male Pentecostal (P), one female and three male Baptist (B), and four female and seven male Christian (non-specified) (C). Participants came from four States of Australia: one female and two males from Western Australia, four females and seven males from Victoria, six females and six males from New South Wales, and two females and two males from Tasmania.

The overall sample of thirty participants (17 male and 13 female) were generally evenly distributed across gender, age, roles, and denomination, which indicated a balanced range within the cohort. The exceptions were in the role of Director, with a greater presentation of Baby-boomers, a majority being male, and the role of Assistant Director, which was under-represented but also male dominated in this cohort. This reflects current ratios within the organisation of VMTC. Baby-boomer Leads were marginally represented by females more than males, though this margin reduced when including both age ranges. Males were primarily represented as Baby-boomer Directors of Christian or Baptist denomination, females as Baby-boomer Leads of Anglican or Pentecostal denomination. The primary denomination represented across gender, age, and role was Christian, as a non-specific designation. Least represented was Uniting Church of Australia.

Twenty-two of the participants were supported by spouse or family who were also involved in VMTC. Among males, there was no marked difference represented between age ranges regarding spousal support, with only three of the total seventeen being without. Of the thirteen females, however, all GenX participants were similarly supported while almost three quarters of Baby-boomer females were not. In both male and female participants, those nominated as Christian were most highly represented among those with spousal support.

Participants' quotations used in analysis were also tracked and counted, with participants most frequently utilised (top four counted) being of Pentecostal and Christian denominations. Of these, two were female and two were male, two being Baby-boomers and two GenX, equally presenting as two Supports and two Leads. All thirty participants were quoted, and views used within the analysis, with counts ranging from twelve to thirty-eight. Equal lowest counts in analysis were presented by one male GenX, Support, Christian, and one male Baby-boomer, Lead, Christian. All identifiable names and places used in participant transcripts were censored with four x's - xxxx – in an effort to protect anonymity.

4.3 How Categories Were Chosen

Categories were chosen as the overarching themes emerged from the data, through constant comparison to previous levels of data and coding (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Terms were chosen as a representation of the data to provide meaningful vocabulary yet remain true to participants' significant expressions. Noteworthy ideas of individuals and distinct perspectives were selected by qualities of:

1) frequency of use by participants,
2) context of the perspective or environment of the individual participant,
3) presumed intention of the speaker/s, and
4) reasons justified by the participant,

to gather meanings and implications that were of import to participants and which expressed data authentically. The categories are not exclusive as the rich data often expressed several concepts within one phrase or sentence from a participant.

4.3.1 Category terms.

Being informed by concepts from Grounded Theory (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007) category labels were chosen as a result of participant language as the preferred and relevant terminology. On occasion, specific participants' expressions were used to encapsulate a particular attitude or response of multiple participants, such as the categories of "Relationship" and "General", under the theme of Perceptions of Spirituality. In other instances, category labels were formed from the data wordlists associated with the Interview Questions to encompass the universal meaning of the vocabulary. For example, Categories of "Transcendent" and "Human" under the theme of Spiritual Nurture. Thus, eight categories were identified, which provided the framework for Emerging Themes.

4.3.2 Descriptions of categories chosen.

1) Categories for Perceptions of Spirituality are:

i. *Relationship* – describing an association or significant bond

ii. *Object* – describing the entity on which the bond is concentrated

iii. *Features* – comprising the qualities of form or condition of that bond

iv. *Internal* – labelling the locus of the association

v. *Intent* – denoting purposeful engagement in and with God

vi. *Aim* – describing believed outcomes

vii. *General* – having universal and undefined parameters

viii. *Negative* – rejected as unhelpful to understanding

ix. *Contrast* – implied as positive in comparison to religion

x. *Conscious Choice* – requiring ongoing personal commitment

xi. *Activation* – motivating discovery of the authentic self

2) Categories for Spiritual Person are:

i. *Label* – acknowledged as a common human dimension

ii. *Form* – as having specific characteristics

iii. *Location* – the site of those characteristics

iv. *Outcome* – producing an effect

v. *Censured* – negative self-appraisal

vi. *Declaration* – statements affirming faith

3) Categories for Spiritual Experiences are:

i. *Precipitant* – persons, actions, creation or attitudes which facilitated experiences

ii. *Context* – uniqueness, intent, or focus of where and how encounters occur

iii. *Product* – relational, personal or pastoral substance of experiences

4) Categories for Spiritual Nurture are:

i. *Participation* – with self, other, creation, and God

ii. *Principles* – values intentionally applied

5) Categories for Spiritual Growth are:

i. *Transcendence* – comprehension of the effect of presence, increased understanding, and intensification of intimacy with God

ii. *Humanity* – changes in character, modification of behaviours, reconstruction of responses, thoughts, and attitudes, reorientation of the body, and reordering of interactions of self

6) Categories for Involvement and Volunteering are:

i. *Self* – invitation or calling, life circumstances, or personal transformation
ii. *Others* – witnessed change, power and presence of God, serve and facilitate healing
iii. *Contribute* – desire to help, teach, and work with others
iv. *Subscribe* – as a response of promise to calling, partnership, or observation
v. *Empowered* – by the effectiveness or product of the ministry and increased sense of worth

7) Categories for Influences of Spirituality and Ministry are:

i. *Builds* – increases capacity, and proficiency as a conduit
ii. *Negation* – reversal of effectiveness by absence
iii. *Condition* – the awareness and enlargement of self
iv. *Disposition* – as a core response
v. *Affirmed* – direct observation or assertion of formation

8) Categories for Links between Spirituality, Ministry, and Formation are:

i. *Impact* – internalised effect, flow experienced, or hindrance by absence
ii. *Importance* – dependent on personal spirituality
iii. *Spirituality* – offers security, sensibility; about 'heart' matters
iv. *Ministry* – as a passage, or instrument; about relationship not rules
v. *Life* – as identity, internal atmosphere, and motive; a balance of spirituality and ministry

4.4 Observations

4.4.1 Perceptions of spirituality.

The following sections of this chapter address the first five of the chosen categories from the findings, explaining emerging themes associated with perceptions of spirituality, perceptions of spiritual personhood, spiritual experiences, spiritual nurture, and spiritual growth, through concepts supported by participant quotes.

The participants revealed an extensive vocabulary regarding spirituality and their experiences. Language was coded and grouped into twenty subdivisions. For the majority of participants, the experience of Divine favour was the means that enabled encounter and connection with God but required purposeful and conscious engagement through what was perceived as the inner core of the authentic self. Spirituality, then, was an essential element that provided purpose and identity for the individual's life.

4.4.1.1 Emerging Theme 1.

Spirituality involves relationship; connects with an object; has particular features; is internal: requires specific internal intent; and an aim.

4.4.1.1.1 Relationship

All participants expressed their perception of spirituality as a responsive interaction in close and familiar union with God. Close association, with implications of companionship portrayed by participants, acknowledged aspirations of familiarity and inherence. The interpersonal dynamic was considered interactive and collaborative, enabling connection. Derivatives of these terms were also used:

- …for me it was about a conscious involvement in aspects of the spiritual [Peter, p. 2]
- …how I interact or live with my spirit side, that is what I call spirituality [Cobalt, p. 2]

Further, intimate connection with God generated a sense of belonging to something outside or bigger than the self, thus, the state of 'being' was about being fully present and reflecting the

essential core or authentic self. This acceptance was perceived as a vital aspect of human life. In listening and attempting to understand the data, it became apparent that relationship was acknowledged by the participants as the key inspiration of spirituality. Various terms indicating connection or encounter suggested an expectation of commitment, belonging, and harmony:

- I would say it is my connection to the Spirit or our connectedness to God….It is how we connect to the Spirit and how we connect to God [Grace, p. 1]
- …to me spirituality is about relationship with Jesus [Esther, p. 2]

Males provided twice as many responses as females in the relationship category, using language of connection and response; and reception and entrusting when describing interaction with God. This appeared contrary to general societal expectations of language associated with gender roles and instincts: that females would be more skilled with regard to relational concepts (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Maddux & Brewer, 2005). However, male perceptions were inclined to be expressed in language linked to external objectives that influenced the internal disposition, while the language of female participants preferred internal transformation that then influenced external dispositions and qualities. In this sense, both genders articulated the same concept but from differing perspectives, thus providing an integrated picture of spirituality; neither alone being wholly true or untrue. The combining of the perceptions gives an holistic understanding of spirituality as having both an internally and externally directed inception, and an internally and externally directed consummation, and is indicative of the simultaneous and persistent potential constituted in the regenerative capacity of union between the Divine and humanity. Spirituality then, while sometimes suppressed, was perceived as the prospective preternatural potency reliant on mutual interaction with God.

4.4.1.1.2 Object

Constructs of relationship had an object, primarily a higher power understood by this cohort as the Trinitarian God of the Christian tradition – that is, God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The specific object named (God) was in keeping with Christian tradition, appearing 112 times from 18 participants in response to the question of defining spirituality, being mentioned 993 times in total

throughout the interviews. The constant use of the preposition "with" indicated a dynamic and ongoing relational context implying "within" as "existing inside as a force or essence"[7] as much as beside or together:

- In a Christian context, spirituality is the ability to work *with* God rather than *for* God [Sniffer, p. 2]

The language indicated that this seemed to be acutely significant for the participants, regardless of the different groups represented. Terminology tended to describe familiarity and signposted intimate, intentional, reciprocal inclusivity that existed beyond the natural sensory province as both an internal and external dimension. The suprahuman, metaphysical qualities were also described as being allied with suprahuman sensory modes:

- …spirituality is your spirit being in touch with God's Spirit [Robert, p. 1]

4.4.1.1.3 Features

Features outlined the occurring state of spirituality as the form or condition generated in the context of relational connection. An emergent consciousness, acknowledging the reality of the spiritual realm and a sense of significance acquired was linked to individual experience as well as being applied to life in general:

- So, spirituality to me is the awakening connection with my spirit [Anthony, p. 2]
- Well, for me, the bottom line always comes back to that I have got a purpose. My life has a purpose and it has meaning [Josie, p. 6]

However, belonging identified spirituality as the agency which established affinity by close association.

- …it has got to do with the deepest issues of meaning, and relationship, and identity [Bear, p. 1]

[7] John Ellison Kahn (ed) (1989) "Within" *Reverse Dictionary*. London, UK: Reader's Digest p. 568.

- …one of the definitions of spirituality can be connection and belonging [Hope, p. 1]

A sense of function and ability included multiple facets that were valuable to a sense of worth and well-being. Forty percent of participants indicated that spirituality was foundational to being, as the 'real', 'true', and 'authentic' self; the original intention of God's creative work; an expression of Christlikeness to which they aspired, for example:

- It has made me what I am today, I think. The person that God has created me to be. Discovering the real me, I think, yeah [Debra, p. 6]
- The word itself is a definition of who I really am [Simon, p. 1]
- I think spirituality means how much you function and relate and how you can benefit the whole, but be yourself and be Christlike, but have a way to be part of the body that is different to other people [Sarah, p. 4]

Typically, male Directors and Leads acknowledged spirituality as the dimension of humanity that was the true, distinctive and unique self; the genuine expression of the "authentic self" as created by God. Supports were not represented within this category, suggesting that the notion of journey, as a constant and cumulative unfurling of understanding of self, occurs only through a process of time and experience.

The process of spirituality, *towards* God as a pursuit and continuous endeavour and *with* God in determining life direction and purpose, was dynamically linked with the assumption of being a prerequisite to journey:

- The most exciting thing in the world has been my journey into spirituality [Reggie, p. 9]
- spirituality, for me, is the pursuit of a relationship with Holy Spirit [Duke, p. 1]

Spirituality was also acknowledged as incorporating the existential awareness of *ability* to live, as well as the *style* in which to live, as a *raison d'être,* giving contentment and accomplishment.

- We *are* a spirit, we live in a body, and we have a soul. But primarily we are spiritual beings [Hanamoa, p. 2]

- So, spirituality, then, is expecting and being able to work in that dynamic of the aliveness of Christ in you to be able to achieve God's purposes [Sniffer, p. 1]
- Because it has brought connection to myself. It has brought connection to others. Connection to creation and connection to God….They bring deep fulfilment, and purpose, and understanding, and meaning, and value to my life, to my spirit, to my soul [Reggie, p. 9]
- …our spirit is the part of us that engages with the spiritual world and, ideally, God [Peter, p. 1]
- But as far as I am concerned, my spiritual fulfilment is certainly tied to very, very much in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit….that is where I find my deepest needs are met, my longings of my heart and spirit are fulfilled [Bartholomew, p. 1]

Baby-boomers were more articulate when referring to spirituality as the mode through which understanding is gained concerning the self, in all dimensions mentioned previously (2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30), spirit, soul – mind, will, emotions -, and body. Greater liberation to freely be oneself as a unique expression of the Creator, as an integrated person, was a strong motivator to pursue, and resulted from, relationship with God. This was also articulated by Baby-boomers as a feature of spirituality, acknowledging an awareness that affirmed the ability to live, as well as the chosen lifestyle. The metaphysical quality of spiritual matters was allied with capacities other than those of human sensory modes, the inner core of self being the place for discriminating such encounters:

- I reckon that everything that we can see and touch is temporary but the spiritual world is the eternal world that is really where we are living [Irene, p. 2]
- …spirituality is me believing that there is more to this life than what we can see and touch [Blossom, p. 2]
- …spirituality has two components. You have got the awareness of the immaterial in your life… [Aloysius, p. 1]

Female Leads, usually GenX, considered spirituality to be a process that was essentially pursued as an ongoing journey, a concept built on by female Lead Baby-boomers as they acknowledged the need for holistic integration and liberation of all human dimensions to be dependent on the continual regenerative process of spirituality. Principally males of Pentecostal and Christian denominations in leadership roles perceived journey as the determined, conscious and internal decision to readily offer availability of self toward God and also be receptive to God as a constant undertaking. Those in Support role were underrepresented in this understanding, possibly indicating inexperience of the concept of journey, or inability to commit without further incentive.

4.4.1.1.4 Internal

Recognised as being experienced in the internal sphere beyond just the physical dimension of personhood, spirituality was also expressed as being part of self while simultaneously being directed and found outside of self:

- It is just a knowing deep in my heart that He is there….The strength is not in myself; my strength is in Him [Bartholomew, p. 7]
- There is something more than what I can see. It is a deep-down knowledge that there is more than I can see, or feel, or understand [Hope, p. 2]
- I guess it is referring to the unseen parts of both within ourselves and outside ourselves [David, p. 1]
- It has given me a sense of freedom to look inside myself and see how I could have reacted differently had I had God's wisdom and ability to forgive [Blossom, p. 9]

Of those operating in differing roles appropriate to levels of training discussed earlier in 3.7.1 Sample size and diversity, page 62, - Directors, Assistant Directors, Released Leads [Leads], and Released Supports [Supports] - Directors articulated spirituality as bringing significance and value to the individual specifically and in life generally, an opinion echoed by male Baby-boomer Leads, who also acknowledged the effect of spirituality on sense of self and motivation for service. The internal nature of spirituality, intrinsic to self, is simultaneously directed outwardly in service as acts of unconditional altruism, according to Baby-boomers. Those in Support role

were significantly underrepresented in the articulation of these aspects of spirituality, revealing either their lack of awareness of this possibility or their inability to perceive the important notion of self-sacrifice to the same degree as those in other roles, where selflessness was an assumed crucial aspect of training and ministry; as reflected in VMTC Competencies for Release, found in 8.3 VMTC Prayer Minister Competencies and 8.3.1 VMTC Director competencies.

4.4.1.1.5 Intent

Choosing to intentionally engage was seen to affect a personal sense of self, motivate for service; and required action. There was a direct impact on the sense of purpose for, and in, life that produced inner peace. Spirituality was perceived as the consequence of intentional choice to acknowledge and engage in, and with, the spiritual dimension. Terms portraying devotion and determination conveyed conscious choice to engage purposefully and produce increased spiritual capacity. Mutual involvement, then, was important as an experience of presence from, and to, God; being absorbed into, and absorbing, God entailed the decision to intentionally embrace availability:

- So, spirituality would be, for me, trying hard to say Yes to God….And cultivating a relationship [Hanamoa, p. 2]
- …it was about a conscious involvement in aspects of the spiritual….about that awareness and conscious decision to engage that aspect of who I am….Intentional….being aware that this is part of who I am…the created aspect of us is a spiritual being [Peter, p. 1]
- You just love God, you just really love God and you have meaning and purpose and identity and all those things [Bear, p. 12]
- I also feel privileged that my life has a real purpose and I am excited God can use me [Cobalt, p. 2]
- Trying to overcome my inherent resistance to His direction. So that would be trying to connect with Him (God) [Hanamoa, p. 2]

- Which, for me then, means peace, finding peace and purpose. That is how I must define spirituality. Having peace and purpose in life [Josie, p. 7]

In general Baby-boomers were far more vocal than GenXs regarding the concept of intent, understood as a determined choice of devotion motivating the self towards relationship with God, which in turn produced increased spiritual capacity and sense of purpose in, and for, life through the fostering of all relationships. The reciprocity of this process, connecting to, and resulting from, relationship with God, was understood as foundational to actual existence.

Exploring the scope and volume of the relationship was determined by personal heart "posture", as a positioning or attitude, and as a response to the active immanence of God:

- But I can see that living according to the spirit, this is the part of us that engages with God, or has the capacity to engage with God….if we live according to the things of the flesh, then they are the things that we ultimately crave. So, I see them both as having the capacity to feed the soul and that, ultimately, our soul will desire that which it is being fed with [Peter, p. 7]
- I perceive God as an active presence and I actually breathe Him, I breathe Him in. And I breathe Him out [Duke, p. 1]

The intimacy experienced by this posture of the heart *led* to a relationship but also resulted *from* a relationship; in this sense being reciprocal. Desire to connect was acknowledged as a relational need:

- …spending time together [with God], it is listening to each other. So, I listen to Jesus, he listens to me. There is that communication back and forth [Esther, p. 2]
- I do not see spirituality as us seeking after God but our responding to His (God) seeking after us [Hanamoa, p. 7]

4.4.1.1.6 Aim

Although similar to purpose, the aim of spirituality pertained to the aspiration of being the best self possible, fully alive and alert to the spiritual sphere and its influence on one's life. Bringing

life, and maintaining life, the flourishing of self as an individual as a result of a relationship with God, was identified as was an ability to comprehend and interpret the spiritual realm with sensitivity:

- My walk with God. Trying to be the best I can be [Blossom, p. 11]
- …the confidence to hear God's voice to be spiritually awake and astute enough [Sniffer, p. 6]
- …almost like a fluid, flexible waltz, perhaps a dance, between my spirituality and Christian faith. You cannot waltz on your own. You have to have both together [Hope, p. 7]

As categories of perceptions, the aim and activation of self-discovery assimilated through spirituality seemed significant to female participants, being the manner and mode through which the potential of self is developed. Both categories focused on development of self through gaining understanding in the three dimensions of spirit, soul, and body. A further consequence of this was the growth in ability to be spiritually sensitive; increased awareness, comprehension, and interpretation of the spiritual dimension being the goal. It also appeared that a desire for spiritual sensibility was an aim expressed more overtly by females than males regarding meanings of spirituality.

4.4.1.1.7 Review of Emerging Theme 1

Emerging Theme 1 indicates spirituality was perceived by the participants as an encounter of self, other, and God, which required purposeful intent from their inner core, and intentional engagement, ultimately provided a sense of identity and spiritual sensitivity.

Within this study, then, participant perceptions suggested spirituality included:

i. *Relationship* with self, other, and God.

ii. was primarily connected with God as its *Object*

iii. had particular form or *Features*

iv. had an *Internal* locus

v. had purposeful engagement and *Intent*

vi. included particular outcomes as its *Aim*.

An intimate, and close, union with God was considered the primary reason, and consequence of, spirituality, which required an active participation on the part of the individual. However, concern was expressed regarding the lack of clarity that existed surrounding current societal meanings of the term 'spirituality'. Primarily 'spirituality' was perceived as an ambiguous term which was considered by the participants to foster misunderstanding.

4.4.1.2 Emerging Theme 2.

Spirituality is a general term that is misunderstood and can have negative connotations, but is considered positive in contrast to religion.

4.4.1.2.1 General/Secular

All thirty participants made some comment on the deleterious influence of labelling spirituality and the confusion that the general and secular understanding of the term causes, and it was also considered effectively redundant by several participants.

- Spirituality, I find in the church, is a confusing word because the church sees it as a worldly term [Reggie, p. 3]
- …it is too general, yeah. And it kind of tries to throw everyone in the same box [Esther, p. 2]

GenX [<55] females despised the secularised meanings (considered prevalent in current culture) that desacralized spirituality by divorcing the term from the foundation of a faith tradition, and they considered spirituality, and its meaning, to have been misappropriated. The theft of the foundational meaning created ongoing identity concerns, as participants were aware that contemporaries may attach different meanings to the term, therefore overlaying an identity and origin of meaning that was contrary to participants' values and beliefs:

- the term spirituality is quite fraught with misunderstanding….not sure that the term is really helpful unless a person is actually able to, or has the space, to define where their foundation is [Hope, p. 7]
- …you hear it a lot now, spirituality, in the context of what I hear on the radio and TV now, [but it] does not really mean anything [Bear, p. 1]

4.4.1.2.2 Negative

Including non-Christian understandings of the term spirituality caused some unease and was construed as negative, with participants perceiving spirituality as redundant and discarded by Western culture and the Christian Church:

- I actually think spirituality is something that Christianity, in the West, has lost [Rebecca, p. 5]
- Australians are, this might sound really bad, but coming from spending a lot of time speaking other languages in other countries, Australians are not very spiritual. We do not trust it and we do not value it [Bear, p. 12]

Negative perceptions of spirituality were not necessarily the personal opinion of the participants, but were often couched as judgement calls on prevailing cultural understandings. GenX participants were substantially more inclined to have negative views of how the "world" perceives spirituality, in contrast to their own understanding; being counter to the essence of beliefs and teachings of the Christian tradition and potentially viewed as repugnant:

- …they see spirituality [Spiritism] in native places and they see that as bad. It is like they have made it [spirituality] a taboo in Christian circles [Rebecca, p. 5]
- It is not primarily a Christian term and it is not necessarily a church term [Reggie, p. 3]
- To me, spirituality is not being a Christian… I do not think that [God's love and trust] would be in a spirituality. I think it [spirituality] is just a whole heap of rules and regulations [Faith, p. 3]

- I recoiled at the word…I do not like that word because I do not feel like it really defines specifically who I am and what I believe in [Esther, p. 2]

Uniting Church participants were underrepresented in some categories. However, as a sub-group of female Baby-boomers, their vocabulary was only limited in categories that perceived spirituality as requiring intent, needing conscious choice, and in contrast with religion. This was counter to generational indicators, where Baby-boomers were well represented in articulating that intent, and choice, were foundational to relationship with God and existence. The participant, Faith, was alone in perceiving spirituality as being totally negative, and employed the same punitive and negative language GenX males used regarding religion to express her perception of spirituality. This participant preferred to use the term "faith" instead, for concepts expressed as spirituality by other participants.

Interestingly, Faith and Esther represent opposite ends of the training and generational spectrum, yet both found the term spirituality to be abhorrent, abounding in false connotations and ambiguity; from which they sought to conclusively distance themselves. This may suggest a female disposition to clarify definitive identity, whereas males were disposed to clarify concepts. Although the perception of spirituality being negative pertained to only 6% of the participants, the divergence of opinion from those reported in the literature, discussed in 2.4 Religion and Spirituality, page 25, and from the majority of those reported here, nonetheless marks a significant aspect of the understanding of perceptions of spirituality within the Christian tradition. In the literature, it was religion, not spirituality which was constructed negatively. From this group of participants, it seemed, the term spirituality could be construed as offensive within a context that is assumed to embrace the concept.

4.4.1.2.3 Contrast

In contrast to religion, spirituality was considered positively by 20% of participants, being conveyed as operating beyond, and above, human constructs. Rebecca found the lack of understanding, or significance, of the concepts of spirituality within the Christian church, to be of concern and confounding, a perspective that ran counter to the responses of Faith and Esther:

- I think that is a tragedy and something that we need to get back into balance. A lot of people out there are not Christians have more spirituality than Christians [Rebecca, p. 5]

Others acknowledged spirituality as being different to religion or exceeding the parameters of religion:

- I guess, for me, my experience was that religion shuts lots of doors. Soon as people hear the word religion or religious it shuts so many doors….to me, religion is visible on the outside but if you look a bit deeper it is not on the inside….I think spirituality means your inside is getting cleaned. And as your inside gets cleaned it is visible, it becomes visible on the outside [Blossom, p. 11]
- I am not religious, in the sense that I do not subscribe to rules and hypocrisy and legalism and basically everything that would miss the heart of myself or another [David, p. 2]
- [Spirituality] generally means more than religion or church. It can relate, I guess, in any broad general sense, to anything that gives meaning or peace to life [Bartholomew, p. 1]

Many participants, notably GenX males, differentiated spirituality positively when contrasted with religion, using deprecatory and legalistic terms to describe religion, while using generous, compassionate and merciful language to describe spirituality. Incorporating both these concepts provide a picture that most GenX participants perceived the term spirituality positively but felt unable to ensure "correct" understanding by other people. Baby-boomer participants seemed to be less vocal regarding this position, possibly indicating a disinclination to focus on such issues from a perspective of their own sure conviction, or from an explicit choice to disregard what meanings others sought to impose.

4.4.1.2.4 Review of Emerging Theme 2

Emerging Theme 2 indicates the lack of clear definition and ambiguous societal meanings associated with spirituality which tend to be perceived as producing negative connotations by the participants within the study, and suggests concerns regarding the term 'spirituality' such as:

vii. the undefined and *General* parameters that currently exist

viii. being *Negative* and unhelpful in trying to communicate their experience

ix. but considered positive when in *Contrast* to religion.

The divorcing of the term 'spirituality' from faith traditions was considered misappropriation by the participants and caused them to lament the negative effect on societal understandings of the term. However, when compared with religion, participants distinctly identified spirituality as a positive experience of encounter with God being based on Divine favour, as opposed to the rules and systems that they believed to be human constructs of religion.

4.4.1.3 Emerging Theme 3.

Spirituality involves encounter and connection with God as a higher power, and requires purposeful, conscious engagement from the inner core of self.

4.4.1.3.1 Choice

Vocabulary suggesting decisive commitment was frequently used. Personal commitment *within* the self and *to* God was a volitional choice and essential catalyst to growth and maturity.

- ► It is a matter of handing over all my life into the hands of another entity. That is the path that leads me to a better spirituality [Ezekiel, p. 2]
- ► …it is about that awareness and conscious decision to engage that aspect of who I am….being purposeful in that. There is a purposeful activation of my spiritual nature [Peter, p. 1]

Thirteen percent of males articulated choice as influential in the overall "health" of personal spirituality. As a category, all roles were represented, indicating that choice to commit underpinned a sense of dedication to the task and willingness to take on relevant responsibilities. Having freedom to choose may be related to allegiance demonstrated in volunteering.

4.4.1.3.2 Activation

Activation of the authentic self; the self fully alive in all dimensions as whole and integrated, was associated with other areas which will be covered later in this analysis. Here spirituality was

perceived as adding dimension and breadth to human experience and capacity, and as a motivating force in life towards discovery of the authentic expression, displaying the uniqueness and diversity of the human individual, as created by God:

- my understanding of spirituality or someone having a type of spirituality….it helps me think about myself and how I fit in. And makes me less pressured to have to be like other people….it has got something to do with what you are like as a person, how you function and where you can…like how you can go best about being yourself but made in the image of God and becoming a healed person as yourself and made to be yourself [Sarah, p. 4]
- …helping someone, and understanding yourself, is working out how do I feel connected to God?...Because there is not a "cookie cutter, one size fits all" thing [Bear, p. 2]

Discovery of the authentic self was perceived as gaining understanding of spirit, soul (as mind, will, and emotions), and body. Twenty percent of participants perceived that all dimensions of the human person (integrated) were subject to wisdom gained through a relationship with God, which brought liberation to freely be oneself:

- I have just learnt more about myself and more about Him [Simon, p. 8]
- Words cannot explain how changed I am and how I am in a much better place than what I have ever been. So, it is quite profound [Anthony, p. 10]

4.4.1.3.3 Review of Emerging Theme 3

Emerging Theme 3 identified spirituality as the positive experiences of encountering God, and participants recognised the need for active participation.

Within the study, participants perceived spirituality as requiring deliberate attention of the individual to:

x. make a *Conscious Choice*

xi. and discover self through *Activation*.

Purposeful involvement of, and with, the spiritual dimension of the self led to greater understanding of self, other, and God. This was significant to participant understanding of spiritual personhood, where spirituality was perceived as fundamental to their being.

4.4.2 Perceptions of spiritual personhood.

Irrespective of gender, age, role or denomination, 66% of participants perceived the human person as being created with a deep capacity for an intimate awareness and knowledge of the invisible realm beyond intellectual understanding. Spiritual personhood was considered an actual reality within the individual and, consequently, was foundational to faith and meaning: an inclusive intimate state with God, that was experienced internally as transformational, while affecting connection with others, creation, and God.

4.4.2.1 Emerging Theme 4.

Being a spiritual person is acknowledged as a generalised label; takes a particular form; has an internal location; aspires to an outcome; and can be censured; or affirmed by declaration.

4.4.2.1.1 Label

For the participants, the spiritual person was perceived as being one who was aware of the invisible realm, as a label for a generalised reality, recognising all persons as having a spiritual dimension, and that all interactions are spiritual as a result. Spirituality was considered innate, whether or not it was consciously acknowledged or pursued:

- I recognise there is a realm that is invisible. And I pursue God at that place, in that invisible realm [Duke, p. 1]
- …we are spiritual beings. Everyone on earth is a spiritual being. Whether you know it or not.
- …we have got a body and a soul, we have got a body that relates to the world, we have got a soul – mind, will, emotions, but we are more than that, aren't we? We have a spirit.

> We *are* a spirit, probably as some would put it. We *are* a spirit, we live in a body, and we have a soul. But primarily we are spiritual beings [Hanamoa, p. 2]

Support and Lead male participants from Pentecostal and Christian denominations perceived conscious recognition of being a spiritual person as being a requisite part of the whole person, and that the ability to perceive, detect, and respond spiritually established a 'spiritual sensibility', referred to in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30. The concept of spiritual personhood was understood as constitutive of the human person and foundational to the capacity to live, breathe, and being in the world. The level to which a person may or may not be aware of this constitutive dimension was understood to affect the manner in which the capacity and form of being in the world was lived.

There was clear acceptance of the distinction of spirit, soul – as mind, will, emotions -, and body, as dimensions of the human person taken up by 43% of participants as representing an important descriptor of being a spiritual person, being directly related to the creative work of God, as being made in likeness of the Creator:

- We are born with a body and our soul, which is our mind, will, and emotions. We are also born with a spirit [Debra, p. 3]
- …[as] human beings we are made body, soul, and spirit. There are the physical needs, the emotional needs, the social needs, and then there are spiritual needs. I think that is the way we are created [Bartholomew, p. 1]
- Because I am made in God's image. God is spirit. God has made all of us spiritual beings [Josie, p. 2]

Being a spiritual person was perceived to influence everything in life by virtue of the intrinsic nature of the dimension:

- I mean all of life is spiritual. Everything we do is spiritual. We are spiritual beings. We cannot do anything without it being spiritual [Ned, p. 7]

For 43% of participants, being a spiritual person was clearly distinguished from the idea of soul as a dimension, the soul being defined by participants as mind, will and emotions, these being

complementary to the body. It was male Pentecostals who explicitly differentiated the tripartite dimensions of spirit, soul, and body, conveying a holistic view of the human person. Perceptions of being a spiritual person were unusual in comparison to literature, which commonly defined being spiritual as a functional action (Moberg, 2002), discussed in 2.2 Spirituality. There is, for example, I pray, therefore I am spiritual. Males particularly expressed being spiritual from a substantive perspective, as more than particular procedures or structure. That is, I am spiritual, therefore I pray. The elemental presence is the reason *for*, not the result *of* the action. To be a spiritual person denotes a synonymous active involvement of that element in an awareness and willingness to engage the spiritual dimension of self; a knowledge that operates outside of intellectual understanding, yet has an effective influence on all aspects of life.

4.4.2.1.2 Form

Being a spiritual person was more than the physical form of procedure or structure for 33% of participants. It was seen to be compelled by seeking beyond logical thought and entailed dynamic involvement of the individual. More than may be logically or rationally explained was actively pursued by the spiritual person:

- So not just an intellectual adherence or assent, but a genuine motivation from a spiritual or nonmaterial sense or awareness [Aloysius, p. 2]
- …my life focus is to discover more of the living God [Sanna, p. 2]

Pursuit required active involvement, which was considered synonymous with having an awareness and being willing to engage the spiritual dimension of self, with full knowledge of operating in a realm outside of intellectual understanding, and allowing its influence on all aspects of life as an effective component:

- I know that there is a wrestle between that [spiritual] aspect of me and the human, fleshly aspect of me as well….I believe that aspect of who I am is activated but I do not believe I am extremely spiritual, if that makes sense? I recognise that I still have this body. I would not class myself as super-spiritual, and I certainly am not constantly in a spiritual

state of mind. Sometimes I need to remind myself of the activity that is not "flesh and blood" [Peter, p. 2]

- …being sensitive to His gentle touch, His gentle whispers in your soul, and sometimes in your five senses of the natural body [Robert, p. 2]

4.4.2.1.3 Location

Being a spiritual person was located internally, and occurred as an encounter with the invisible but influential dimension of human existence, for 36% of participants. Situated as part of the individual, conscious realisation of being a spiritual person was acknowledged as an internal requisite for wholeness, but also described the unseen, but still perceptible and detectable, nature of being a spiritual person:

- …there were parts of me that were dormant. There was a defining moment where I became spiritual, I guess, if that makes sense? In that I can see parts of my life where I had…there was not a division in who I was, but there were parts of me that were not fully alive, fully awakened, to the reality….My spirit was dormant [David, p. 2]
- I believe the spiritual realm is tangible even though you cannot see it [Duke, p. 1]
- …this voice spoke into my inner being, and I just knew that nobody else heard it but me [Devon Lad, p. 3]

4.4.2.1.4 Outcome

Sixty-six percent of participants found outcomes were associated with being a spiritual person, which focused on the dimension being an actual reality within the individual, and the process by which weight and value resulted in it being foundational to faith and meaning. Intimacy with God was part of the inclusive state, essential to spiritual personhood, as was an acceptance of spiritual personhood being of influence on an individual's worldview and behaviours:

- For me, God is very, very real. He is a real person and I seek deep intimacy with Him. I just long for that. I know that my life will never be fully satisfied until I have that deep intimacy with my Heavenly Father [Bartholomew, p. 1]

- Until you get hold of the spiritual aspect of yourself, you do not really know or appreciate who you are. And if you do not appreciate *who you* are, you really have a lopsided view on who God is [Simon, p. 2]
- I would be pretty much fake if I was not [a spiritual person], really [Grace, p. 1]

Being a spiritual person also facilitated communion as a constancy of communication and voiced interaction with God, for 33% of participants; a state of continual reciprocal availability. This concept was based on the expectation of the appearance, display, or demonstration, in some form or other, of the manifest presence of God being encountered or experienced as evidence:

- Because I talk to Him. And He gives me great comfort and guidance [Irene, p. 3]
- …just believing I'm in touch with the Holy Spirit, and Jesus, and God; the Trinity [Lachlan, p. 4]
- On the whole, I am a spiritual person because I recognise the presence of God in me as well as around me [Sniffer, p. 2]

All roles, both genders, but mainly Baby-boomers perceived that being a spiritual person included a desire for constant communication with God through a continual state of voiced interactions. Such interactions were not always audible, sometimes they were just "conversations" that occurred from the internal dimension of personal spirit to, and with, the external divine Spirit; in this case, Holy Spirit, as part of the Triune God. "Conversations" were not necessarily logically thought out sentences, which are usually an accepted ingredient of something like prayer, but they could include sensations, of the body or soul, or the sense of immanence and alliance with Holy Spirit. In sensing proximity, the "conversation" was entered into via an aware response, thus entering into communion. It may be considered that participants were describing a form of mindfulness in entering into communion. However, rather than a psychological process of focusing attention on the present, participants conveyed connection via the spirit, not intellect or emotions; hence, communing was sensed and focused outside the present moment, and space of the individual, in an openness *beyond* the self, rather than centred *on* the self.

The presence was defined as ‘with’ or ‘in’, describing immanence or alliance:

- …just sitting in God’s presence and waiting for Him to speak, that really is the guiding force for my life [Ezekiel, p. 4]
- It is that spiritual thing you know that you know that you are not alone [Faith, p. 3]
- To become still and quiet in a routine way to achieve that end. Yeah. It is more of a continual “practicing of the presence” [Sanna, p. 3]

All female role and denominational groups, particularly GenXs, perceived that their worldview was revealed as it effected choices, attitudes, and actions. For this group, the origin for the perspectives they held concerning life and living was in the core understanding of self as a spiritual person. Such perspectives gave direction and support and were referred back to when encouragement was needed; it is something addressed further - in this category under 4.4.2.1.6 Declaration, page 97.

4.4.2.1.5 Censure

For 20% of participants, a divergence that seems significant, was the articulation of perceptions of self-censure regarding human attainment of measurable degrees of spirituality; a negative consequence that affected confidence. Acknowledgement of deficiency was not previously encountered in the literature, and this divergence consequently seemed significant. A sense of insufficiency of levels of attainment, by comparison to ideals, could occur and give rise to a negative assessment of self as a spiritual person:

- I wish I was more [spiritual] than I am [Hanamoa, p. 2]
- I have never really thought of myself in that term….I have never really thought of myself as a spiritual person [Dot, p. 2]

Participants of both genders, except for the Assistant Director role and Anglican denominations, perceived being spiritual with a sense of personal insufficiency in attainment, when compared with ideals. This gave rise to a negative assessment of self. Such a perception was held evenly by GenX and Baby-boomers and articulated a gap between desired spiritual behaviours, or capacity,

and human capacity to attain those ideals. This revealed an altered state of confidence in self to operate in the spiritual dimension, but did not totally negate the dimension remaining operationally existent within the individual.

4.4.2.1.6 Declaration

For six participants, declarations of commitment within the belief system seemed to support the sense of familiar but unique connection. Being a spiritual person could be affirmed by making definitive statements of the assurance of their faith:

- My life rolls better. It works better [Lachlan, p. 4]
- I seek His wisdom on things and I seek to act accordingly to what I feel He is directing me towards [Blossom, p. 4]
- I am [a spiritual person] because I am God's daughter [Blossom, p. 4]

Apart from the Anglican participants, female GenXs perceived that declaring such definitive statements of faith affirmed their sense of being a spiritual person, referred to in 4.4.2.1.4 Outcome, page 94. These statements ranged from recollections of facts from sacred texts to convictions born of experience. However, all declarations were associated with an interaction with God, ultimately resulting in internal change.

Lead GenX males perceived spiritual personhood as having awareness of the invisible realm, as a specific dimension of the human person, that was differentiated from, yet conjoined with, the temporal, as a simultaneous substructure. Male participants perceived this as being actively engaged in a realm outside intellectual understanding, yet a realm which influenced all of life, regardless of conscious understanding. GenX females concurred with the concept of the holistic nature of the influence of being a spiritual person, though they articulated spiritual personhood as being constitutive of a worldview from which life is affected. Consequently, both genders emphasised different facets of the concept, that is, being spiritual influenced all of the individual's life and that all humans are influenced. There was a modification in this perception by male Pentecostal and Christian Baby-boomers in Lead and Director roles, who qualified statements of

spiritual personhood being innate to all, by suggesting that this was irrespective of personal consciousness, indicating an awareness that not all persons do, indeed, operate in a conscious awareness of the realm.

Male Pentecostal and Christian Baby-boomers in Support and Lead roles perceived spiritual personhood as the ability to perceive, detect, and encounter the invisible, but influential realm through the spiritual nature of the human person. For this group, detection of spiritual activity, internally or externally, preceded the initiation of spiritual experiences and entailed an awareness of spirituality as a dimension.

4.4.2.1.7 Review of Emerging Theme 4

Emerging Theme 4 identified spiritual personhood as innate, regardless of conscious awareness, and is the mode and means of intimate communion with God.

Within the study, the participant perception of spiritual personhood was:

i. a *Label* acknowledging a common human dimension

ii. attributes that gave specific *Form*

iii. a *Location* for particular attributes

iv. effecting of *Outcome*

v. subject to negative self-appraisal and *Censured*

vi. affirmed by *Declaration* of faith.

Negative self-appraisal had the potential to have an adverse effect on perceptions and nurturing of spirituality. However, spirituality was considered to be common to all humanity and, therefore, being a spiritual person endowed attributes and outcomes that were unique to humankind, and to each individual. This distinctiveness was reflected in the breadth of spiritual experiences, based on recognising the spiritual nature of humanity.

4.4.3 Spiritual experiences.

Participants expressed a balance of planned and spontaneous spiritual encounter, and action to facilitate a sense of being "fully alive". In addition, an intentional choice or response was the result of understanding the core identity as spiritual in ultimate unity or closeness with God, and in intimate relationship with self, other, and creation. An internal state of peace, knowledge and steadfastness was recognised as being experienced by the senses.

Spiritual events were described by the participants as those occurrences stimulated by, or in direct interaction with, specific precipitants and encountered uniquely by the individual in the context of the ordinary, with change being the product of those experiences. Participants were readily able to identify incidents and explain significance. Practices, or 'disciplines', assisted the journey but were not the object of the journey.

4.4.3.1 Emerging Theme 5.

Functionally precipitated by persons, actions, creation, or attitude, spiritual experiences are considered to be attributed to distinct locus of the individual, intent, and focus and can be productive relationally, personally, or pastorally.

4.4.3.1.1 Precipitant

Ninety-three percent of participants regarded spiritual experiences to be the result of some type of precipitant: that is, the event or condition of spiritual experiences was caused or stimulated by the persons of God, or friends and family. Some action involving speech, movement, or reading on the individual's part, or encountering creation by direct interaction or through reflective practice were other catalysts for spiritual experiences. Specific attitudes of sharing truth, searching for truth, or the attitude, or positioning, of the heart provided intimate encounters of spiritual effect.

Relational connection with persons conveyed moments of reciprocal intimate communication with God, as being markedly significant, due to the intensity and breadth of effect:

- When you are dealing with an issue that is quite complex and quite difficult, you can call on God to help you through that. And then the sense [of] that strong spiritual connection…the perception of that connection, for me, gets stronger and stronger and stronger. And you learn to know, to hear His voice. His spiritual voice, it talks to you. You learn to hear that voice more clearly. The further you go the more intimate you get with God [Anthony, p. 3]
- …it is really walking with the Spirit. On a minute by minute, day to day basis. Basically, in conversation with God all of the time or through the day….that is that connection to God in that process. And then seeing God connect with me throughout the day [Grace, p. 2]
- …it is the grace of God operating through me that is the experience of true spirituality. Knowing at the end of the day that it is God who has spoken to people, not you. I have been an instrument [Sniffer, p. 3]

Spiritual experiences were precipitated by relational connection with friends and family, including those of like-minded faith, for 50% of participants:

- At times we have shared "worship", whether that is listening to music or just setting aside time to share with another, being in the space with God [David, p. 4]
- …the love of the Body of Christ, the church family….[and] Family, of course [Hanamoa, p .3]
- …spending time with family and friends [Lachlan, p. 6]

Personal action precipitated experiences of spirituality, for 70% of participants. Actions included bodily movement in some form, such as walking, dancing, or other creative, tactile activities. Aspects of speech, such as prayer or worship and reading, including sacred or other faith-centred texts, were also significant contributors to spiritual experiences:

- I love to walk. Love being out in the bush [Hanamoa, p. 3]

- And I know that I am a fairly tactile person. So, things that are tactile really put me in a place of peace [Esther, p. 5]
- I will just be in the moment and I will just talk to God [Grace, p. 2]
- But mainly a peace and also prayer – hearing, getting a sense of what He is asking you to do or sensing what you should do [Robert, p. 2]
- So daily prayer, daily Scripture is really critical for me [Ezekiel, p. 5]
- …certainly one aspect has always been in areas of worship. And whether that is on my own, or whether that is being part of a larger group, or whether that is leading worship or just participating in. But that has been pretty significant in my own experience as a spiritual being [Peter, p. 2]
- For me, worship. Especially private worship. I love quality time [Josie, p. 3]
- And reading books, and studying His Word. I just feel peace [Faith, p. 3]

Thirty-three percent of participants considered encountering creation, by direct interaction or through observation and reflection, was a precipitant for experiences of spirituality; being amongst, and part of, creation was articulated prominently. This idea also figured significantly in concepts regarding 4.4.4 Spiritual nurture, page 107.

- Like watching a sunset as I drive home from work. Or a sunrise [Ned, p. 2]
- Or it can be as simple as swimming in the ocean. Looking at clouds forming. Watching birds on the fence. Walking through the forest. Enjoying God's amazing creation [Cobalt, p. 2]
- Particularly the beach. It is just a landscape that it is an easy place for me to spend time with God [David, p. 3]
- Love bushwalking. Love gardening [Sanna, p. 4]
- …it is pretty impossible to capture God's creation and I marvel at it. I marvel at the patterns and the beauty in the sky, and the formation of the clouds, and the changes of colours. Yep. Same when I get by the sea. I look at the grains of sand gobsmacked [Josie, p. 3]

- Even when I am looking at nature or looking at beautiful scenes, I feel my spirit can engage and I appreciate it much more [Rebecca, p. 3]

Discovering wisdom, sharing truth, and locating the attitude of the heart in a position to 'hear', respond and 'yield' were all important factors in facilitating spiritual experiences:

- The sense of being able to listen, hear God, be effective in a pastoral way [Sarah, p. 5]
- When I am teaching, particularly, it [a spiritual experience] happens more there than anywhere else [Sniffer, p. 4]
- Fresh insights. And that ultimately affects your character and what you are doing. So fresh insights that influence your behaviour [Hanamoa, p. 2]
- It is all about the heart. Heart connections with people….it is also about the attitude of my heart, I think. Because while the attitude of my heart is restful I can see [Josie, p. 2]

Directly related to perceptions of spirituality, and spiritual personhood, experiences of spirituality were diverse in their form and content. Derivative of functional action in some contexts, spirituality was also experienced substantively at a personal level, additionally considered to affect others at a communal level. Ultimate unity and closeness with God were the goal for, and result of, those experiences. For some participants, particular events occurred which heightened and stimulated the sense of connection. For others, intimacy of relationship was assisted by practices and it was acknowledged that certain practices augmented spiritual awareness and enhanced connectedness. However, the nature of experiences of spirituality seemed reliant on personal involvement, and active engagement, in some form.

Personal action in the form of different aspects of speech, such as prayer and worship, facilitated spiritual experiences for both genders and age ranges, and all roles and denominations. The prayer continuum began as personal spontaneous but intentional thoughts (included for the reason they are a logical sequence of words or inaudible expressions), proceeding through personal spontaneous verbalised statements, as well as prepared verbalised statements, to communal spontaneous verbalised statements and formal liturgies. Prayer, however, was described as

'talking', as time was spent in speaking to and 'listening' for response from God. The main purpose of prayer, in this context, was to solicit comfort and understanding from a higher power while expressing the innermost concerns and matters of self. Worship also crossed a divide, expressed in personal tributes to honour God, and communally as expressions of devotion, adoration, and thanks. Again, worship occurred internally, in 'silent' articulation, spoken or sung, or in conjunction with music; this was conditional on an internal resonance with the personal spiritual dimension. Describing prayer and worship, as distinct and prominent qualities of the spiritual experience, occasioned evident emotional associations of the action, with a desired state of spiritual sensibility.

Texts, of sacred or faith-centred content, were also a source of spiritual experiences for a representative group of all participants by facilitating intimate connection with, or furthering understanding of, God. Content for reading included the Bible – the Old and New Testaments, contemplative texts such as *Lectio Divina*, devotional texts of specific daily passages for inspiration, or general reading material based on Christian teaching. Gaining understanding of life principles, applicable in the everyday outworking of the personal, communal, and spiritual spheres, or experiencing a revelation of insight regarding self, other, creation, or God, gave interpretation, meaning, and confirmation to relational and lifestyle choices, thus creating and promoting spiritual experience.

Heart attitude was considered vital to spiritual experiences by both genders, age ranges and all roles and denominations. Heart attitude was suggestive of the core spiritual orientation and emphasis of an individual, that is directed towards, and surrendered to, God. Expressed in positive terms of solicitude and veneration, positioning the heart enabled insight, and gaining of wisdom for self and others; insights understood as Truth, which would otherwise be considered outside normal human capacity to access and comprehend. Clarity, sensitivity, and wisdom were imparted in profound moments of spiritual experience that were understood as effecting character and ability to connect with self, others, creation and God. It was also recognised that, when shared, those insights also facilitated spiritual experiences for others.

4.4.3.1.2 Locus

For 76% of participants, *where* the distinct spiritual experiences were spontaneously encountered, these differed within the holistic locus of each individual. For some, God was experienced within a framework of unique and physical environment.

- …another thing is goosebumps. Spine tingles. Warm fuzzies [pleasant sensations] [Blossom, p. 7]
- …that thing through the body, you know? Just the anointing through my body….I kind of get a tingle [Lachlan, p. 5]

These experiences required an intention to engage. The significantly unique expression of the individual person was often reflected in statements of "I am":

- I experience it by living. It is all I am [Reggie, p. 3]
- I think it is just part of who I am [Dot, p. 2]
- I am at peace in my skin. I am no longer tossed around by rejection, or looking for love. I have got a confidence that is in who I am [Josie, p. 3]

In choosing to engage with the experience, participants expressed examples that described distinct events and the experience that was the consequence:

- There are moments even with cooking that I feel close to God, and really like to involve God in that [Esther, p. 4]
- …just deep breaths, talking to Jesus, looking out the window [David, p. 3]
- It is not a day just to have quiet music. It is a day of intentional engagement with God [Grace, p. 1]

Thirty-six percent of participants also described occurrences of spiritual experiences as spontaneous and part of the everyday or the ordinary:

- …the next thing is, I make them up [prayers], they are creative and alive [Bear, p. 3]

- …it has been spontaneous little things. Things that I have not really planned [Esther, p. 4]
- It is the core of my ordinary life, it is like breathing [Reggie, p. 3]
- If you are walking in the Spirit as a natural everyday life then, in a sense, when you are dealing with people that is the Spirit that is dealing with them as well….that is something in yourself. Every day, as you are growing in yourself [Simon, p. 3]

Both genders and age ranges, all roles and denominations were represented in perceiving spiritual experiences through the context of intentional choice of engaging the spiritual dimension, understood as one of the three dimensions of personhood spoken of in 4.4.1.1.3 Features, page 78, with the spiritual realm, described as the invisible realm outside of intellectual understanding addressed in 4.4.2.1.1 Label, page 91. While intent and engagement have been previously mentioned, this particular group considered intent fundamental to the unique and distinct expressions of how and what was experienced spiritually. For some, it was intentional action, while for others, it was intentionally being still: either state promoting being open. This openness was the intentional state of reception to any of the Trinity, regardless of what 'person' of the Trinity was conveyed.

4.4.3.1.3 Product

Ninety-three percent of participants understood spiritual experiences as having a relational, personal, or pastoral product. There was a yield, or harvest, of changes that effectively led to improvement and understanding of self, others, and God:

- …basically it is in a relational way that I, almost in a covenantal, relational way with the Father, that is through just knowing that I am His daughter. That is that relationship thing [Grace, p. 2]
- So it is a working relationship, or for me, it is often, "Well, what do you think about this, God?" And I will get the whisper back, "What do you think about it?" [Robert, p. 3]
- …being spiritual and being aware of the interconnectedness of us as humans and the desires and needs that we as humans have; to connect and relate [Ned, p. 2]

- In being friends with God, you know, I have the opportunity to have a committed, obedient, full life and I have an opportunity to live "above the line" [a core belief that there is always more] [Reggie, p. 3]
- I am not paralysed by fear. Even though I am hesitant, but I am not paralysed by it and I am stepping out [Debra, p. 4]
- …this knowledge and understanding comes into my being, into my head, that this is what God is saying to me. Or this is what that means. And there is no way that mentally I could find that out any other way [Cobalt, p. 3]
- There have been a few occasions like that, where I have fallen and been physically undone. Not able to stand….when I have fallen, a great sense of heaviness in the limbs. Like you are plastered to the floor [Sanna, p. 3]
- I have a relationship with God and *somehow* I would like to be able to share that with people which would help them solve their own problems [Simon, p. 3]
- …it is one of the sort of things of being heightened in the spiritual sense….caring for people who are unlovely even. Because it is something that you do not do normally and you do not do naturally, as a human being [Onesimus, p. 2]
- When you start to minister to people, in God, the connection amplifies up and you become an instrument in God's hands. So that is how I operate in the spirit. Is when I start to minister [Anthony, p. 3]

Over half of participants, except those from the Uniting Church, considered that spiritual experiences effected changes within the self as a very real and transformative personal encounter. Transformation, resulting from encounter with the immanence of God, improved perspective, ability, capacity, confidence, understanding, emotional state, and even physical condition. Individuals expressed distinctive interactions and responses to unique, significant spiritual events. However, participants commonly acknowledged the result of such encounters as bringing some level of progressive alteration in understanding; affecting meaning and, hypothetically, influencing behaviours.

4.4.3.1.4 Review of Emerging Theme 5

Emerging Theme 5 indicated spiritual experiences were the result of specific precipitants when intentionally engaged, which effected personal, relational, and pastoral change.

Within the study, participant perceptions suggested spiritual experiences were influenced by:

i. a *Precipitant* that facilitated experiences

ii. the individual's *Locus* and focus of encounters

iii. the relational, personal or pastoral *Product* of experiences.

Participants' spiritual experiences were diverse, reflecting the subjective nature of spirituality and uniqueness of human response, yet the distinctive character of spiritual experiences was based on a strong correspondence to what precipitated, gave context, and produced spirituality, within the individual life. Those experiences were not only significant to spiritual personhood, but also to spiritual nurture.

4.4.4 Spiritual nurture.

The primary means of spiritual nurture were described as relational by participants, the principal element being the sense or experience of encounter with God. This may be intentionally sought or spontaneously experienced. Intimate communication through expressed response as an intentional choice, focused beyond self and engaged body, soul, and spirit in extolling the greater qualities of God. This could occur equally meaningfully in communal or private contexts. The significant element to connection seemed to be heart attitude. Encountering God, through such evidences as the Bible, creation, and restorative actions of a divine nature, were balanced by a sense of simply and merely "being", requiring no human intent except receptivity to the presence of God, as a substantive experience. Other activities of intentional engagement were functional.

4.4.4.1 Emerging Theme 6.

The human sense of spirit is nurtured by intentional participation with self, other, creation, and God, and by application of principles, being fundamental truths and values foundational to belief, behaviour, and attitude.

4.4.4.1.1 Participation

Despite variation in the mode of nurture, 100% of participants agreed that nurturing their spirit occurred as a result of participation. Forms of nurture were clearly related to 4.4.3 Spiritual experiences., as similar descriptions of events and activities were described in both. Related experiences and outcomes of nurture seemed to rely on awareness, intentional choice, and engagement involving the whole self. Language tended to indicate insight gleaned from earlier reflection on such practices and, as all roles, denominations, both genders and age groups were represented, it seems apparent that commitment to immersion in the process of spirituality is productive and necessary. Acknowledging the need, and recognising the effect, of practices may not have been a conscious process, but appeared to be a candid response of intrinsic comprehension.

All participants made statements attributing participation *with* self, other, creation, and God as being significant to nurturing their sense of spirit. While very diverse in scope, common components were self in solitude – in reflection and rest, or pursuing knowledge of spiritual matters; inspiration from others – through discussion, ministry, faith narratives and church/fellowship; creation – as outdoors in bush or garden, sunrise and sunset, animals, birds, flowers, and water; and with God – in prayer, reading and study of Sacred texts, submission and obedience to the will of God, and worship.

Sixty-six percent of participants considered that time and solitude for self was essential to nurture one's sense of spirit:

- Sit quietly. Quietly with God [Lachlan, p. 6]
- Silence….Spending time just being still and just contemplating [Duke, p. 3]

Seeking knowledge related to faith nurtured some participants:

- They [podcasts] challenge my thinking and I hear different or new revelations [Hope, p. 2]
- I download podcasts and I'd be listening to at least one a week. I've got my favourite preachers and a lot of people preaching. That nurtures me enormously [Hanamoa, p. 4]

For others, participating in some form of activity nurtured their sense of spirit, including activities that involved relating with others. Hearing testimonies of faith were significant for 90% of participants, that is, the personal stories of life in relationship with God were a catalyst to fostering faith. Personal accounts and experiences of others had considerable influence on promoting a sense of hope for one's own life, by gleaning wisdom or insight from outcomes attested. Similarly, the spirit was encouraged by having opportunities to witness and facilitate the transformative work of God:

- When I am walking there is a rhythm that happens and my whole body is engaged…in communication with God [Hope, p. 2]
- It can be jump on the motorbike and go for a ride [Lachlan, p. 6]
- A really good movie; in the sense of a rite of passage type of movie [Hanamoa, p. 3]
- …hearing other people's stories about what God is doing in their life is hugely nurturing [Esther, p. 6]
- I get nurtured when the Lord uses me to speak truth into people's lives and encourage them [Onesimus, p. 3]
- Seeing the Lord work in people's lives when you are doing ministry [Devon Lad, p. 5]

Forty-six percent of participants expressed their sense of spirit being nurtured by specific involvement in mutual friendship, empathy, and intimacy with others in some form of fellowship. Fellowship here describes the affiliation and communion with those of like-minded or, perhaps in this case, like-spirited beliefs spoken of by Robert:

- I suppose when you are with other people of similar heart and mind. You feel a comfort with them. Not superior to them, in any way, shape, or form. You just know that you are in like-minded, like-feeling type people. And you don't have to explain anything because you all just *know* [Robert, p. 2]
- Fellowshipping with other Christians is a big thing that helps nurture my spirit….going to church, I think is essential to nurture my spirit [Anthony, p. 4]
- Coming together with integrity….The community of God. God's people meeting together regularly, whether it is family or church family [Bartholomew, p. 3]

For many, this was particularly experienced in the context of VMTC:

- Spending time with other Christians…the VMTC Schools have really nurtured me [Debra, p. 4]
- VMTC Schools…nurture the growth and maintenance of the sustaining spiritual sense [Aloysius, p. 3]

Sense of "family", as strong and supportive relationships bound by dedication to ideals of altruism and exhortation, was conveyed by terms of shared experience and consequent trust. The concept of family obviously provided a basis for learning and occasioned confident associations; some participants in this study implied, by tone, their inaugural experience of that level of relationship occurring in the context of VMTC training schools.

A certain degree of "fellowship" was also indicated by 53% of participants in their descriptions of creation nurturing their sense of spirit. Participants were drawn to fellowship with God as a result of encountering creation. Outdoors was specifically referred to and included the Australian bush, gardens, animals, birds, and seeing the sky. In fact, the variety of nature itself was a source of nurture:

- …there are beautiful things, beautiful scenery. You go to the beach and walk along the beach. You snorkel and look at the fish. And the flowers and they all smell as well. And the pretty birds and animals. There is such a variety around [Irene, p. 6]

- Nature…just the bizarre magnitude of the variety. Just…every living thing in nature just blows me away. Everything. Rainbows. Sunbeams and clouds [Blossom, p. 4]
- …being in God's creation. Out in the bush, by the sea, in the country, by a lake, and enjoying the birds and the animals [Robert, p. 3]

Several participants mentioned proximity to water, as included in natural settings; however, 16% of participants remarked on water specifically as an identifiable source of nurture for their spirit:

- …it is good to just get out by the river and spend time with God, that intimate time with Him. And just gazing across the river and the beauty of it [Bartholomew, p. 3]
- And rivers and the beach and water – moving or still….[J]ust looking at those things nurtures my sense of spirit [Hope, p. 2]

Nurturing the spirit occurred within the context of creation as a relational catalyst. Participants described the experiences as prompting reflection or directing thought processes toward God, reminding them of their status and place in the order of creation. Gaining perspective, and a sense of divine presence, prompted meaningful encounters *with* God *through* the elements of creation.

Participation with God through prayer, acknowledged as mutual conversation; reading sacred texts; submission and obedience of the will; and worship, including singing, music, glossolalia [see 1.9 Definition of Terms, page 13], and other forms of acclamation were acknowledged by 86% of participants as nurturing their sense of spirit.

Prayer could be scripted or spontaneous, silent and internal, or publicly spoken:

- …it is a dialogue. Sometimes more one-sided from me and me stopping and being quiet and still and really listening [Sanna, p. 4]
- I just like to talk to Him like a friend, and tell Him what is going on in my life and just have a really good chat [Anthony, p. 4]

Often in combination with prayer, reading sacred texts, including the Bible and other faith-centred texts, was the means of tracking personal faith and moral virtue, as was the intentional and sincere submission and obedience of personal will to God:

- Reading the Bible prayerfully. Doing a self-check, a diagnostic self-check [Sniffer, p. 4]
- Reading the Word. Reading Christian books [Debra, p. 4]
- Continually and regularly inviting Holy Spirit to do more. More and more *in* me and through me….[and] inviting Holy Spirit to come and deal with the things that set up barriers between me and God [Anthony, p. 4]

Worship, in a variety of forms, nurtured 60% of participants. Listening to or playing or singing music, alone or in a united group, recognised God as worthy of reverence and devotion, and was expressed verbally in song, or in action:

- I love worship, when it is sensitive. And when it is praise and it is joyous. I love the diversity of worship….I can just sit with my guitar and play and hum songs on my own….Singing in tongues [glossolalia] is often helpful [Robert, p. 4]

Participation, a sense of sharing of self while receiving, was identified as a compelling contributor to nurture of the spirit. This is consistent with perceptions of intentional engagement being essential to spirituality and spiritual personhood. That all participants agreed upon this component, as a significant ingredient in the nurturing of personal spirituality, seems to imply that mere passive observation of the spiritual dimension will not facilitate healthy increase in understanding of self, others, creation, and God, or in further development of connection. Therefore, proactive immersion of all dimensions of self in the relational domains is necessary to nurture the spirit.

4.4.4.1.2 Principles

The application of learned Principles was associated with nurture of the spirit, by 83% of participants. Again, all roles, denominations and age groups and both genders were represented, indicating a consensus of belief that spiritual nurture is the result of understanding the nature of

the spiritual realm and the result of living with intentional utilisation of those qualities. Examples of truths comprehended and applied to life were given:

- …the positioning, I think, is a heart attitude and a choice. And sometimes that is a cold choice. Sometimes there is no feeling and froth and bubbles and "warm fuzzies"….being positioned is about my choice and about the state of my heart [Peter, p. 4]
- …carrying today versus carrying "to do"….carrying what is eternal versus what is endless [David, p. 4]
- But the way of nurturing my spirit, I have got to slow down enough to be able to listen. To be able to contemplate….[Duke, p. 3]

These participants expressed an understanding of particular principles associated with spirituality that, when applied, had a positive effect on their sense of spirit and spiritual functioning. For others, this was expressed as understanding the sense of need as a catalyst:

- What feeds my sense of spirituality? Would be need. My need. Their need….when you have a need, if it is a pressing need, you really listen, wanting to hear something from Him to guide you on a direction to take [Simon, p. 4]
- …you can feel like the power of Holy Spirit is not all that strong in you until you go and put your hands on someone else [who has a need] and it is like "Boom!" [Esther, p. 6]

Also included was an understanding of the principle of immersing oneself intentionally in things associated with the spiritual dimension, particularly as a result of yielding to God:

- The more you operate in the spirit, the more your spirit gets nurtured and becomes alive [Anthony, p. 4]
- …when I do immerse myself more in the things of God, I notice the difference, it has a lot of power [Hanamoa, p. 4]

4.4.4.1.3 Review of Emerging Theme 6

Emerging Theme 6 described spiritual nurture as requiring encounter with God, whether intentionally or spontaneously experienced, as a result of an attitude of being receptive to God's presence.

Within the study, participant perceptions suggested spiritual nurture was the result of:

i. Self in *Participation* with other, Creation, and God

ii. intentional application of *Principles.*

Comprehending the reality of the spiritual dimension enabled intentional participation to nurture the spiritual life of the participants, especially through values applied in the context of, and giving definition to, everyday lifestyle. This was linked with spiritual growth, as a demonstration of change that was strongly related to spiritual nurture.

4.4.5 Spiritual growth.

Again, there was a great diversity in the detail's participants employed to express the unique subjectivity of their experiences of spiritual growth. The two main categories of Transcendence, in relation to God, and Humanity, in relation to self, indicated aspects of change that influenced understanding and personal capacity for relational interaction.

4.4.5.1 Emerging Theme 7.

Spiritual growth is experienced in relation to Transcendence and Humanity as specific changes affecting understanding and capacity for interaction.

4.4.5.1.1 Transcendence

Eighty-three percent of participants conveyed spiritual growth occurred as a result of relationship with Transcendence. An increase in frequency and effect of immanency of God's presence improved the clarity and scope of the understanding of the spiritual realm and the person of God, additionally intensifying the capacity for, and extent of, intimacy.

Presence, understood as an encounter with the immanence of God, was considered particularly powerful when experienced amid difficult or painful circumstances in life, particularly situations involving close family relationships, such as with a parent or child:

- …the Lord came in a very physical way and showed me that this was a faith journey [Sanna, p. 6]
- God spoke into my ear, heart, spirit…that just brought such a peace to my whole being – body, soul, and spirit [Robert, p. 6]

These moments of intense encounter with the presence of God brought comfort or peace, as expressed by Robert, and encouragement, such as was spoken of by Sanna, to continue through the trial or suffering. This was not a mental vow of stoicism but rather a decision of trust based on the concept of hope and belief in, and of, a compassionate and caring God supplying emotional, mental, and physical strength to not only endure the circumstances, but to be transformed across all dimensions as a result. This was experienced by participants regardless of gender, role, or age group. The sense of enrichment of relational capacity was a concept expressed by some as a universal consequence of encountering the presence of God:

- I really grew in hearing God. And that was incredibly enriching [Sarah, p. 2]
- I can trust Him and I know that He knows He can trust me. Whereas before, I would be fearful [Faith, p. 4]

Growth in understanding of the spiritual realm, and an improvement in clarity and scope of communication with God, was experienced by 60% of participants. The concept was expressed by predominantly male participants, conveying a clear development of ability that was commonly not considered a natural tendency, perhaps indicating that the notion of improved ability to communicate with God was a question of gender rather than an age, role, or denominational concern:

- …learning to listen and be guided by Holy Spirit and put my brain in its box…[Ezekiel, p. 6]

- I have become more confident in my opinion…I am hearing what He is saying [Hanamoa, p. 5]
- …spiritual growth, to be able to be so in touch with God and confident, in fact, that you are hearing God's voice and do this properly [Sniffer, p. 5]

Twenty-three percent of participants, none of whom were Released Supports or Assistant Directors, experienced spiritual growth as an intensification of capacity, and extension of intimacy, in relation to Transcendence:

- …my capacity to be able to know God, to love God….the more my spirit grows, the more I am able to feel His presence within me, and just feel His favour upon me….I can feel Him talking to me. Sometimes I hear it in my thoughts, but sometimes it is just a "knowing"….the more I nurture my spirit the more capacity my spirit has to engage with God [Rebecca, p. 3]
- I have grown from, again, having a superficial relationship to God, to having a relationship that is deep and meaningful and it is really realistic: my life has been transformed….it is prayer and yearning for more of Him; to go deeper with Him. And I am open to do whatever He wants to do in my life. Just seeking Him [Bartholomew, p. 4]

All but Uniting Church participants were included in this group, though marginally few female Baby-boomers expressed the idea. Thus, it appeared that age and gender were the determining factors in experiencing a sense of close and tender familiarity with Transcendence, although with only moderate differentiation.

4.4.5.1.2 Humanity

All thirty participants experienced spiritual growth in relation to humanity, as self. Chiefly noted were specific changes in character; some form of modification of behaviours; a sense of reconstruction of an inner state – in responses, thoughts, and attitudes; a reorientation of the body; and a reordering of interactions with others.

A change in character was recognised as the development of qualities or disposition acknowledged as demonstrative of the Spirit of God [being the Fruit and Gifts] and seen as a marker of growth (Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

- I have grown in the Gifts of the Spirit a lot. And I have grown in the Fruit of the Spirit a lot [Anthony, p. 8]
- …I was not angry but I felt like I was in control….That is a demonstration of the Fruit of the Spirit in who I am now, in that growth [Simon, p. 6]

Thirty-three percent of participants expressed change as a direct modification of behaviour:

- …because I could not speak up….I have grown in that area too. I have got a voice [Debra, p. 5]
- To go from striving to rest is big growth for me [Esther, p. 7]
- I am probably slightly less stubborn….Easier to be entreated by people….Once having opinion, strong opinions, to not having such strong opinions now [Hanamoa, p. 5]

A sense of reconstruction of an inner state was experienced by 66% of participants. It was comparatively more males that articulated the concept, and also that of a reordering of interaction with others. This implied that the form of spiritual growth expressed most consistently by males was associated with connecting with self, others, and God to a level not previously experienced. However, reconstruction of the inner state of personhood was experienced by participants across all roles, denominations, and both age groups, and included a reorientation of attitude to the body as well, though this final concept was not articulated by Directors:

- …the most significant growth I have had in the last few years, is just a sense of great peace within me [Rebecca, p. 4]
- I can now choose to do my life without fear, or blame, or shame, or rejection [Reggie, p. 5]
- …the growth of my spirit has changed the way I view myself and the way I view my care, the care of myself in its entirety – my soul, my spirit, my body too [David, p. 5]

- I have got a deeper sense of self-awareness of who I am as a person. And confidence in who I am as a person [Blossom, p. 6]
- …the more I grow up spiritually, the more I can see that my own demeanour or my own spirit that I operate in affects everybody around me [Ned, p. 5]
- …one other significant way is in my body, particularly my view of my body….my physical health is massively different [better] than it used to be [David, p. 5]

Why Directors did not address a reorientation of attitude to the body is open to conjecture and lies beyond the scope of this study. A small percentage of participants did refer to the concept: and this facet of reorientation of attitude is significant as being diverse to other aspects of spiritual growth discussed above. It was evident that for some, even though this was a small group, spiritual growth had influence on attitudes that affected physical health.

For 53% of participants, the notion of spiritual growth was demonstrated by changes in personal response to others, acknowledging higher levels of patience and acceptance in thoughts and attitudes, as well as action:

- Now I can stand there and be more loving [Irene, p. 7]
- Intimacy with others, intimacy with my wife and kids, has always been a struggle for me. It has improved. Big time [Anthony, p. 8]
- …nurturing my spirit has given me a desire to bless other people [Reggie, p. 5]
- …certainly grown spiritually in the attitude of my responsibilities as a mother and a grandmother. And also in friendship….definitely in the area of leadership and responsibility and influence [Josie, p. 4]

Interactions with others, as a reordering of priorities, was largely mentioned by GenX male participants. The idea, however, was characteristically expressed by participants from all roles, and both ages and genders and most denominations indicating that a growth in proficiency to accommodate others was gender inclined, but not absolutely so. The idea of a change of focus from self to other was thought of as being initiated, or augmented, by spiritual growth.

4.4.5.1.3 Review of Emerging Theme 7

Emerging Theme 7 identified spiritual growth resulted from relational connection with God that brought about increase in understanding and relational capacity.

Within the study, participant perceptions suggested spiritual growth was consequential of and effected relationship with:

i. *Transcendence* by increasing understanding, and intensification of intimacy with God
ii. *Humanity* by changing every dimension of self.

Spiritual growth was experienced as significant change within self, and in relationship with other and God, as a result of relationship with self, other, and God, contributing to enhancement in relational skills and aptitude.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has dealt with the findings that emerged from the data in response to the first two questions of this study, which related to perceptions of spirituality and spiritual growth. From the data, five categories were identified with many elements pertaining to seven emerging themes.

In order to collate a conformed view of participant responses, spirituality was generally perceived by the participants as an intimate connection with God. As the primary or key position of the study, this reviewing statement was evidenced by all participants. At some stage throughout the interview process, even those who, initially, appeared to respond negatively to the term 'spirituality' became more comfortable and positive with the concept of intimate connection as a descriptor of the meanings the participants assigned. The relationship was described in familiar and adoring idioms, yet there were distinct implications of intentionality being required by acknowledging personal responsibility in pursuing, and being responsive to, connection with self, other and God. In general, the capacity to enter into and operate within the context of spirituality began with an acknowledgement of the metaphysical realm that exists outside of the usual human sensory modes. However, spirituality was maintained and nurtured by intentional engagement of the spiritual

dimension of the self in encounters that nourished and challenged values and constructs, all of which supported the projected purposes of intimate connection.

The following chapter continues the data analysis and describes findings of participants' perceptions in response to the last two questions of this study regarding involvement in pastoral care ministry, links between spirituality and ministry, and the implications that arise, which can inform the process of formation for volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS - PART B

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter described the findings resulting from analysis focusing on the first five categories describing multiple elements that emerged from the data in response to the first two questions of this study. The categories addressed:

1) Perceptions of spirituality.
2) Spiritual personhood.
3) Spiritual experiences.
4) Spiritual nurture.
5) Spiritual growth.

Participants had recognised spirituality as requiring intention and awareness, and they had perceived spirituality as an intimate connection with God, which was described in close and sincere terms, while also acknowledging the need for intentional engagement in the process of connection with self, other and God. The ability to participate and operate within the metaphysical realm follows from recognition of the spiritual dimension. Spirituality was sustained by encounters that fostered and explored beliefs and paradigms, which ultimately supported the effects of internal and relational intimate connection.

In this chapter findings regarding the final two questions, listed in 4.1 Introduction, page 69, focus on the three remaining categories:

6) Involvement and volunteering in ministry
7) Influences of spirituality and ministry
8) Links between spirituality, ministry and spiritual formation

These categories revealed four emerging themes that will be detailed in their relevant sections.

6) Categories for Involvement and Volunteering are:
   i. *Self* - invitation or calling, life circumstances, or personal transformation

ii. *Others* – witnessed change, power and presence of God, serve and facilitate healing

iii. *Contribute* – desire to help, teach, and work with others

iv. *Subscribe* – as a response of promise to calling, partnership, or observation

v. *Empowered* – by the effectiveness or product of the ministry and increased sense of worth

7) Categories for Influences of Spirituality and Ministry are:

i. *Builds* – increases capacity, and proficiency as a conduit

ii. *Negation* – reversal of effectiveness by absence

iii. *Condition* – the awareness and enlargement of Self

iv. *Disposition* – as a core response

v. *Affirmed* – direct observation or assertion of formation

8) Categories for Links between Spirituality, Ministry, and Formation are:

i. *Impact* – internalised effect, flow experienced, or hindrance by absence

ii. *Importance* – dependent on personal spirituality

iii. *Spirituality* – offers security, sensibility; about heart matters

iv. *Ministry* – as a passage, or instrument; about relationship not rules

v. *Life* – as identity, internal atmosphere, and motive; a balance of spirituality and ministry

5.2 Observations

5.2.1 Involvement and volunteering.

Becoming involved in pastoral care ministry and continuing to volunteer was perceived by participants as a responsive choice. Though the catalyst for the response differed across gender, age, role, and denomination, the product was to answer a perceived invitation to facilitate or embrace change.

5.2.1.1 Emerging Theme 8.

Volunteer pastoral care workers became involved in ministry as the result of experiences associated with self or with others, as a response to a catalyst.

5.2.1.1.1 Self

For 93% of participants, becoming involved in ministry was the direct result of experiences associated with the self. This included some form of invitation being issued from either another person, to which the participant responded, or from God – considered to be a Calling. On other occasions there was a desperation within the participants' personal circumstances that caused them to seek assistance. For others, after initially receiving ministry, the personal radical transformation that occurred consequently inspired involvement and further training.

Sixty-three percent of participants experienced an invitation from another person or God, as a catalyst for involvement in the ministry. This was relevant irrespective of role or denomination, although males were more highly represented. Relationships with those already involved in the ministry of VMTC were integral for those who perceived this offer as an encouragement:

- …xxxx kept talking about it and saying, "You should come. You should come!" [Dot, p.1]
- So xxxx was involved in it and xxxx invited me to come [Onesimus, p.4]
- I knew I trusted these people that I had spent…a fair amount of time with [David, p.1]
- I guess I would have to say that I had a sense of Calling [Grace, p.6]

All roles and denominations were included in this group, with comparatively more males. This seemed contrary to expectations with respect to relational motivators being a female trait (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).

Seeking out the ministry as a result of desperation in personal life circumstances was the underlying catalyst for 43% of participants. A sense of deficit of skills and support system complementary to the need, experienced as internal, caused these participants to seek assistance from the ministry, and then become involved:

- I was desperate for help. And my life was a life of survival most of the time. And then, quite often, I felt like I was not surviving. So I was searching for something that would change. My life needed change. I was desperate [Hope, p. 1]
- I came looking to be fixed [Duke, p. 5]
- I think I am alive actually today because of it, because I was physically ill. And I had several near-death things. And I kept going with VMTC because I needed it [Bear, p. 7]
- I just felt so *passionate* that I wanted that freedom [Sarah, p. 9]
- …personally it was important to me because I needed a whole lot of healing, a whole lot of change, a whole lot of figuring out what life was about so that life could actually be a joy and not a burden [Ned, p. 2]

Ten of the thirteen participants who responded with this concept were GenX, which seems to indicate an inclination of the age group toward communal support systems regardless of denomination, role, or gender; an inclination that appears, indicated by this cohort, to be inadequately addressed by the institutional church or other relational contexts. While not within the scope of this study, for GenX, it seems that emotional and spiritual support systems via favoured relational contexts, such as social media, are not effective in meeting a need for relational connection. However, it also seems apparent that the institutional church, the "home" of spiritual support in the context of a specific faith, is construed as either irrelevant to the process or ineffective in practice in a number of cases.

A sense of radical personal transformation was a significant catalyst for 70% of participants. Transformation occurred as a result of initial ministry, which promoted a pronounced sense of change, motivating the individuals to further their involvement:

- Because it changed my life…right from the beginning there was a sense of hope [Hope, p. 1]
- I had my ministry session and it was absolutely life changing. I walked out a different person [Ezekiel, p. 7]

- …realising that you can be effective as a Christian and realising that I never want to go back to the powerlessness and ineffectiveness of how prayer was before that [Sarah, p. 3]

Transformation was a prominent motivator for involvement in ministry for all roles, denominations and both age groups and genders. The experience of liberation from long-held obstructive mindsets and practices was perceived to enable individuals to seek further breakthrough, then interest in facilitating mental, emotional and spiritual well-being for others.

5.2.1.1.2 Others

Ninety-three percent of participants became involved in the ministry of VMTC as a result of experiences associated with others. A marked change in others was witnessed, the power of God was observed to be at work in others or was experienced through themselves to others, or there was a desire to serve others and facilitate healing. Often, the change witnessed was in a close friend or family member, though observing or experiencing God at work in others of lesser acquaintance was equally corroborative:

- …my wife went and came back a much better person…So I went [Ezekiel, p. 7]
- …because my son had been…and I saw the change that it made in his life [Rebecca, p. 1]
- I just enjoy seeing people set free and the change in them [Faith, p. 1]
- It was something God was involved in. God made a difference [Ned, p. 2]
- To see God work. To see people…And to walk out and see them renewed and rejuvenated [Lachlan, p. 1]

In comparison to experiences associated with the self, invitation and transformation being the most significant, the desire to serve others and facilitate healing was noteworthy, as an expression of participants seeking to foster opportunities to promote well-being. Forty-three percent reflected both age groups and genders, all denominations but Baptist, and all roles except Assistant Directors. Restoration was a central concept:

- I want to see others healed and restored. That is a desire of mine: to see people healed and restored [Debra, p. 2]
- You want to see more, you want to see people free, let go of their baggage [Blossom, p. 1]

- …because I felt like I had been given so much hope that I wanted to give that to anybody who would take it [Hope, p. 1]
- …you get the joy of knowing that you are…potentially the primary person to bring significant change to people's lives; godly change to people's lives. And that is a buzz [Reggie, p. 2]

Volunteer pastoral care workers continue in ministry due to a sense of opportunity to contribute to others, to subscribe in response to the work of God in a partnership and being empowered to do the work.

After initial experiences of pastoral care ministry, participants chose to continue to volunteer in order to help, teach and work with others. There was a recognition of invitation to partner with the work of God – as a Calling, and in observation of His work. Being empowered by the effectiveness of the ministry and seeing the product of the ministry increased a sense of worth.

5.2.1.1.3 Contribute

Fifty-six percent of participants expressed the view that being able to contribute to others, by helping, teaching, or working alongside, was the reason they continued to be involved in pastoral care ministry. A sense of excitement and satisfaction, borne of an attitude of servanthood intrinsic to the faith tradition, was the core motivation:

- He has blessed me in lots of ways. I would love to pour that blessing out onto some other people that are struggling [Irene, p. 2]
- …because it is about others, it is other-centred. Like it is actually about setting others free [Grace, p. 6]
- I want to see and be part of other people receiving that same freedom and healing [Cobalt, p. 2]
- I am just really wanting and willing to help other people to experience the kind of freedom God can give a person the way that I have been [Ned, p. 2]
- …to guide and to train others. I find that fulfilling to see others rising up and stepping up as they are trained and equipped in ministry [Bartholomew, p. 6]

- It is hard work at times, but when you see the smiles on people's faces and see the lives that are changing it just makes it worth coming back [Rebecca, p. 1]

While all denominations and roles were represented, it was particularly Baby-boomers who responded with this concept. Males indicated that helping and teaching others were substantial motivators, exemplified by Directors only, in this case, indicating teaching. This may be the result of expected responsibilities associated with the role of Director, as other roles within the ministry carry minimal responsibility of this task. It is also a required competency for the position. Therefore, teaching may not register as being significant for other roles. Female Baby-boomers more often expressed being motivated to maintain involvement because of opportunities to help others to find hope and mental, emotional, and spiritual healing.

5.2.1.1.4 Subscribe

To subscribe was a response of agreement by pledging to partnership with God and being empowered to do the work, to observe His work, and as a response to a Calling – identified as being dedicated and devoted to a specific vocation. This was crucial for 63% of participants. To subscribe also included the sense of having a choice to partner with God and witnessing His work, as a result of the ministry:

- I am in the ministry because I feel God wants me there [Ezekiel, p. 7]
- …the other reason I volunteer is God showed me pretty clearly that is what He wants me to do….so that is why I do it [Anthony, p. 2]
- I felt absolutely called to be trained to become more effective as a person and as a Christian, able to pray for other people [Sarah, p. 8]
- I choose to be embedded in that partnership with God to facilitate change [Reggie, p. 2]
- I experienced a real shift, to seeing what God was doing in others, and was certainly really captivated by the amazing privilege we had of being part of other people's healing as well [Peter, p. 6]
- I have never seen anything else that changes a person's life as much as what I have seen happen consistently with the way God works with VMTC [Ned, p. 2]

5.2.1.1.5 Empowered

Seventy-three percent of participants expressed a sense of being empowered as the motive to continue as a volunteer pastoral care worker. Most of the language associated with this category tended to focus on result, product, material, action or process. This involved the effectiveness of the ministry, the product of the ministry, and an increased sense of worth as a result:

- Its effectiveness….I feel like you see the results [Hanamoa, p. 6]
- Because it is effective….It is still the most effective ministry that I have seen [Robert, p. 1]
- It is really powerful and that is what keeps me coming [Debra, p. 2]
- I see it as a way of applying the healing of Jesus in practical ways. And it works….it is life changing. Not only for me but specially for others [Josie, p. 2]
- There is a massive buzz when you come out of a ministry and you see the change in people. It feels like such a privilege to be able to be part of that [Esther, p. 1]
- …because we, ourselves, found such life changing dramas happening in our lives [as a result of the ministry] [Sanna, p. 2]
- Because I am able to use the giftings I have….I just find it very uplifting. Exhilarating [Simon, p. 2]
- I figure you will not do anything worthwhile until you step out of the boat, out of your comfort zone. So I force myself to go and believe that God is going to use me somehow [Irene, p. 2]
- I also feel privileged that my life has a real purpose and I am excited God can use me [Cobalt, p. 2]

All roles agreed that the result of the ministry was a significant influence in maintaining involvement, though male Baby-boomers were primary advocates of this reason, while females in lower roles (that is, Released Support and Released Lead) tended to articulate that an increased sense of worth, following from being involved, was the inspiration for continuing. An increased sense of worth was also associated with a sense of personal progress.

5.2.1.1.6 Review of Emerging Theme 8

Emerging Theme 8 described that becoming involved and training in pastoral care as a volunteer was founded on a personal choice to commit to helping others.

Within the study, participant perceptions regarding involvement and volunteering included:

i. *Self* responding to invitation and personal transformation

ii. witnessing change in *Others* and serving and facilitating healing

iii. the desire to *Contribute* to others

iv. to *Subscribe* in a pledge of partnership with God and others

v. being *Empowered* by ministry and an increased sense of worth.

For these participants involvement in pastoral care ministry as a volunteer worker was significantly influenced, by the intimate connection with God, because of their spirituality. Response and commitment were fuelled by the desire to facilitate wholeness in others and enjoy the sense of worth associated with partnering with God and active involvement of valuable contribution to others, God, and the faith community.

5.2.2 Influences of spirituality and ministry.

5.2.2.1 Emerging Theme 9.

Volunteer pastoral care workers acknowledge that personal spirituality affects the building of ability and capacity to minister, and affirming this ministry affects the condition and disposition of spirituality.

5.2.2.1.1 Building

Ninety-three percent of participants considered that spirituality affected ministry by building ability, as capacity, and as a conduit for the power of God. However, 23% recognised that an absence of spiritual awareness would necessarily negate ability and effectiveness in ministry. An increase in volume and competence within self, and for the ministry, was conveyed by 73% of participants, and was seen as a direct correlation to spiritual confidence and sensibility:

- …the more my spirituality grows, the more effectively I am able to minister [Rebecca, p. 5]
- …an increase in my spiritual growth or a broadening in my spirituality has led to a greater ability to listen [Hope, p. 6]
- …it definitely has made me more useful to the person receiving ministry because I have got over my own fears and doubts and can readily just hear what is best for them [Sarah, p. 12]
- …if you are nurturing the more spiritual side of you, or the spiritual essence of your life, then it will make you become more effective spiritually. So your ability to hear God's voice becomes sharper. Your ability to minister becomes sharper [Aloysius, p. 5]
- …you become [clearer] in the ability to truly hear Holy Spirit but also to hear what the recipient is actually saying without your own stuff clouding your mind [Blossom, p. 10]
- My relationship with the Lord has grown my ability to minister and my ability to minister and learning to trust the Lord has grown my relationship with Him, because I trust Him more [Faith, p. 5]

Twenty percent of participants used language indicating their own spirituality as a vehicle or vessel through which others could encounter God:

- It is more about being in that real, exact moment for that person and being a conduit between them and God [Hope, p. 6]
- …if we go back to that conduit, the pipe. Where we are just the pipe between God and the person. If there is crap in our pipes then flow is restricted and what is coming out is not as good as if the pipe was clean and polished. It would just flow out [Anthony, p. 9]
- …you just could not do it without Holy Spirit….your spiritual journey is part of the ministry [Devon Lad, p. 8]

All denominations and roles and both genders concurred that spirituality affected ability to minister. However, a minor dissonance occurred between age groups; GenX considering that

competency to minister was the primary facet affected, while Baby-boomers considered that being a conduit was more significant to efficacy.

5.2.2.1.2 Negation

Twenty-three percent of participants considered that the ability and effectiveness of competency for ministry were affected by an absence of spirituality, if understood as awareness and sensitivity to God.

- I do not think the ministry is as effective because it is a general sense of "mechanical process" [Grace, p. 7]
- Obviously, if you are not in tune with the Lord, it is not going to work [Hanamoa, p. 8]
- I think that my spirituality affects how I minister, because without that it is definitely just reason and logic and good intent and counselling and rational [thought] [Peter, p. 7]

All roles considered that an absence of spirituality would affect ministry negatively, though, to some extent, this was noted more by GenX males. Though not largely representative of the cohort, the concept of negation suggests that an admission of personal deficit and reliance on wisdom beyond self can positively affect ministry, which illuminates literature regarding ministry, formation, and competency, discussed earlier in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30.

Participants considered that ministry affected their spirituality in three ways: *condition* – as an increased awareness and enlargement of ability; *disposition* - as how one approaches others and the personal core; and *affirmation* – as witnessed by observation and strong assertion.

5.2.2.1.3 Positive condition

Seventy-six percent of participants experienced ministry affecting spirituality as an increase in spiritual awareness and recognising an enlargement in spiritual ability, positive conditions that were perceived to enable greater capacity to discern and understand the spiritual realm, plus personal aptitude in the spiritual dimension:

- Yes, you become more aware of who you are, but also become aware of what God is doing [Simon, p. 7]

- I am now much more aware of the things I participate in, watch, read, as well as aware of the effect it has on me spiritually [Peter, p. 6]
- …the more Jesus removes the broken, hurt places in me, the more I am able to hear Him. And the more authority I have. The more I know myself. The more I can see God's power at work in me [Esther, p. 8]
- It [ministry] has affected it [spirituality] because it has opened my eyes, to see how God heals, why God heals….you have to understand the spirit world to be able to minister [Cobalt, p. 4]
- It [ministry] has grown it [spirituality]. From the point of view of being ministered to myself. But also we found that this is part of actually nurturing the spirituality [Devon Lad, p. 7]
- It has definitely increased my ability to hear from God. And be sensitive to what He is doing [Onesimus, p. 6]
- Being empowered to use that [awareness] and then being more, having knowledge….and how you can use that with other people [Dot, p. 5]
- …helped me understand what Jesus' tools are, how to use them….Knowing how to apply it [Lachlan, p. 7]

All roles, denominations, and age groups were represented in this category, and both genders, although males particularly made comment on increased spiritual awareness. It seems possible that males experienced an illumination and expansion of relational capacity beyond previous comprehension, as a result of ministry. In this sense, transformation occurred in the internal condition of personhood enabling a holistic understanding and awareness of the relational domains of self, other, and God in particular, thus increasing spiritual sensitivity.

5.2.2.1.4 Disposition

Ministry affected spirituality as changing the disposition in approaching others, and within the personal core, for 60% of participants. Change in attitude and method of connecting with others was the result of inner transformation:

- You have tolerance for so many different people with different perspectives [Grace, p. 6]
- It has given me a sense of freedom to look inside myself and see how I could have reacted differently had I had God's wisdom and ability to forgive [Blossom, p. 9]
- It has made me bolder with people [Irene, p. 8]
- It has taught me to keep short accounts with God. It has taught me how to release myself from ties and bondages of the past. To identify spiritual oppression [Bartholomew, p. 7]
- It is a way of seeing what we understand in our minds. But it feels deeper than that. It is a knowledge that gives space for your heart and for the rest of you….It is some kind of knowledge that respects the other parts of you as a whole [David, p. 7]
- …when the wounds and scars…were removed it was like a whole new spiritual realm for us. It was utterly life changing. Utterly! [Sanna, p. 4]

Both genders were equally responsive in this category, acknowledging transformation that affected personal outlook and constituent attitudes. The effect of ministry on spirituality as facilitating interior, or internal, change was significant for those in all roles, denominations and age groups, however GenX predominantly felt change in capacity to tolerate and accept other to be a notable outcome. That ministry has the potential to assist spiritual growth, which effects inclusivity, appears to be likely.

5.2.2.1.5 Affirmation

Affirmation of ministry affecting spirituality was testified to in strong assertions, by 63% of participants. Proclamations regarding the effect of ministry, and VMTC ministry in particular, supported the perception of ministry as constructively influential:

- …it is through teaching at the Schools, to some degree. But it is much, much more through witnessing God at work in other people's lives [Ezekiel, p. 8]
- …seeing it in a person's life. And not just reading it in a book, or hearing it on a cassette or CD. But a flesh and blood person of my own culture, my own demographic; this works! [Hanamoa, p. 8]

- …therefore, my spirituality and my relationship with Father God has developed big time, because of that [ministry]. So the connection between ministry and my spiritual growth is huge [Anthony, p. 9]
- …it [ministry] has furthered it [spirituality]. It has moved it along, I believe. Trust has grown. The belief has grown [Irene, p. 8]
- …the ministry itself was a very spiritual experience and then after that was sort of the transformation [David, p. 6]
- …it has been an organisation that has really put wheels on my wheelbarrow, I suppose. [Smiles] It is very practical [Ned, p. 7]

All denominations and both age groups and genders were represented in this category; consequently the effect of ministry on spirituality was attested to by a diversity of roles. This implied that ministry affects spirituality, regardless of position, age, denomination, or gender and is a generalisable concept within the context of the Christian tradition. However, the participants' acknowledgement of the particular effectiveness of VMTC as a ministry possibly presents a bias on the part of these participants and questions the effectiveness of other ministries to accomplish the same outcomes. Further research could clarify this situation.

5.2.2.1.6 Review of Emerging Theme 9

Emerging Theme 9 identified the cumulative, reciprocal influences of spirituality and ministry as increasing awareness and sensitivity and spiritual ability, resulting in growth of capacity to be an effective conduit.

Within the study, participants considered influences of spirituality and ministry were that:

i. both spirituality and ministry *Builds* and increases capacity and proficiency as a conduit

ii. there can be *Negation* of capacity to minister by an absence of spiritual awareness

iii. both spirituality and ministry enlarge the *Condition* of Self

iv. *Disposition* towards others was improved by personal change

v. direct observations *Affirmed* and supported formation.

Change associated with ministry had a positive effect on spirituality, which in turn strengthened capacity and sensitivity in ministry. Having a sense of increased efficacy gave participants confidence but also refined praxis by producing deeper compassion for others, and even self. Capacity could also be negated, by lack of awareness regarding the spiritual realm and personal responsibility to intentionally engage.

5.2.3 Links between spirituality, ministry, and formation.

A definitive opinion, of the dependency of ministry on spirituality, was articulated by all thirty participants. During the process of data collation, it became evident that a reciprocal relationship was considered to exist between spirituality and ministry, which had a direct influence on spiritual growth, development, maturity and formation in a cycle of nurture and increased sensibility.

5.2.3.1 Emerging Theme 10.

Volunteer pastoral care workers perceive a positive link between spirituality and the ability to minister.

5.2.3.1.1 Impact

The link between spirituality and the ability to minister was perceived to have an impact on the heart, as a process of internalised change. This supported an increased breadth and 'flow' to capacity for ministry; spirituality was presumptive of relationship with God, as Trinity. Seventy-three percent of participants considered that internalised change, as a process, was the causal link between spirituality and ministry:

- ► It is a change from book learning knowledge, into the heart, into your actual being [Simon, p. 7]
- ► …you cannot help someone if you are not growing [Bear, p. 9]
- ► …if I had been ministering before I did training in VMTC I would have been ministering out of head knowledge [Josie, p. 4]

- …you can never give something that you have not received…for me to continue to operate in the ministry of VMTC, it is imperative for me to continue to grow up. So that I will have more to offer [Ned, p. 6]
- …my spirituality is the hose that, hopefully, will connect between God and the person I am ministering to. And the bigger that hose is the more hope and healing a person at the other end of the hose can get [Hope, p. 5]
- …if we are 'peaced out' and walking as close with Him as possible, then we are a better conduit [Bear, p. 9]
- Without relationship [with God], for me, I do not think I could be an effective conductor [Blossom, p. 8]

All roles agreed that spirituality affected the ability to flow and be effective in ministry. This was often related to the concept of hindrance in flow, from an absence of spiritual awareness and sensibility. Males, generally, perceived the link between spirituality and ministry to be fundamentally that of facilitating internal change which, in turn, increased competency.

In contrast to this concept, 36% of participants expressed a strong opinion that a lack of spirituality, as awareness and capacity, would hinder ministry and would, therefore, be a negative link:

- …if my spirituality is up the putt I am not hearing from God. And if I do not hear from God then I cannot minister…And if He is not there, then I am doing it. In which case it is just human counselling, which is bullshit [Ezekiel, p. 8]
- If I am not right with Him well, it could be a blockage, a hindrance, in what He wants to do in other people's lives [Bartholomew, p. 6]
- …if you were unaware of the spiritual realm you would be unable to minister [Aloysius, p.4]

Baby-boomers principally articulated hindrance, which prohibited ministry, as a specific concern. It is possible that life experience, as a result of age, has given this group insight into effectiveness in ministry, or intolerance to incompetency. Participants in Pentecostal and Christian

denominations also articulated the importance of ability to flow in the spiritual realm, as did Anglicans. Although these groups are traditionally considered opposite ends of the doctrinal spectrum, this agreement indicated the assigned significance of internalised change and resulting flow to the process of ministry.

5.2.3.1.2 Importance

Eighty three percent of the participants described the level of importance of the link between spirituality and the ability to minister as 100% dependent:

- They [spirituality and ministry] are inseparable. Spirituality, for me, is based in love, and I minister out of my spirituality. So spirituality is love expressed. Therefore, ministry is part of my spirituality [Reggie, p. 5]
- If I did not have my spirituality I would not be able to minister. It is not a link, it is *It*. It is because of my spirituality that I can minister…my ability to minister is 100% dependent on my spirituality [Ezekiel, p. 8]
- It is essential! If I have not got that link between my spirituality and my ministry then, well, it is a lost cause. It cannot happen. You should be ministering in your own strength [Anthony, p. 8]
- It is the outworking of my spiritual connection. I do it because of my link with God, because of my connection to Spirit. And I can only ever, ever do it with Holy Spirit [Grace, p. 6]
- If I were not a Christian, I would not do it, would I? I mean, it would be pointless [Dot, p. 5]
- …this needs to be our spirit activated and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit; to function without spiritual eyes and ears would purely be a formula [Peter, p. 6]
- Without an understanding of my own spirituality and how God works, my words as a minister would be solely based on my own thoughts and not God's….Otherwise you are just going off your own understanding. Your own judgements and your own perspective [Blossom, p. 8]

- I believe this is a Holy Spirit ministry, led by the Holy Spirit, the more I am filled with the Holy Spirit and the knowledge of His Word, I am more confident of what and where to minister and I believe it comes a lot clearer and, therefore, you are more equipped to go deeper and to understand the root causes [Cobalt, p. 4]

Participants in all denominations, roles, and both age groups and genders agreed that the ability to minister effectively was totally dependent on personal spirituality. The data provided strong opinion from participants on this point. Appraisals of the link were articulated in language of imperatives, almost to the point of incredulity at expecting successful ministry without spirituality.

Twenty-three percent of participants implied a negation of ability and effectiveness for ministry by an absence of spirituality:

- [Without Holy Spirit] I do not think the ministry is as effective because it is a general sense of "mechanical process" [Grace, p. 7]
- Obviously, if you are not in tune with the Lord, it is not going to work [Hanamoa, p. 8]
- If it is not spiritual, it isn't anything. It is academic. Trained religion [Robert, p. 8]

5.2.3.1.3 Review of Emerging Theme 10

Emerging Theme 10 described the dependent relationship of spirituality, ministry, and formation as cyclical and absolute.

Within the cohort of this study, participants considered there was definite reciprocal link between spirituality and ministry experienced and demonstrated as having:

i. an internalised effect that *Impact*ed capacity and awareness to flow with Holy Spirit leading, which could be hindered by an absence of spirituality or personal healing through ministry

ii. *Importance* due to ministry being perceived as totally dependent on personal spirituality.

Internalised change was seen to be fully dependent on awareness of, and engagement with, spirituality as a dimension. Growth in spiritual Sensibility was reliant on personal internal change consequent of not only facilitating ministry but submitting self to regular pastoral ministry also.

5.2.3.2 Emerging Theme 11.

Volunteer pastoral care workers perceive spirituality as integral and intrinsic, having a definitive and reciprocal effect on ministry and life.

Within the cohort of this study, participants expressed a perception of positive effect of spirituality on their ministry and life and summarised the experience in relational, reciprocal, and essential terms:

> *iii Spirituality* offered security of identity and purpose, awareness and capacity in the spiritual dimension, and was concerned with matters of the heart
>
> *iv Ministry* was perceived as a passage, or instrument to spiritual growth for self and other, reliant on relational intimacy with self, other, and God; not prohibitive rules
>
> *v Life* was given identity, a stable inner state, and motive; by having a balance of spirituality and ministry

The positive and reciprocal effect of spirituality and ministry became the integral factors in describing links and influences on self and life and gave rise to the category being summarised into the following Substantive Theories, describing implications of spirituality and spiritual experiences of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry.

5.2.3.2.1 Spirituality

Eighty-six percent of participants considered that spirituality established security in their relationship with God, enhanced their sensibility and awareness beyond the temporal realm, gave definition to matters related to the 'heart' of the person - including the personal core being challenged or transformed, and was focused on relationship with God, others, and self - focusing on relationship, not rules:

- …my security is in God….I am successful in God because I am His son. And I have this close, intimate relationship [Anthony, p. 10]
- Just to know that I am actually important, a privileged part of God's kingdom. A privileged part of what He is doing. He *wants* me [Sniffer, p. 7]
- …overall, it [spirituality] would have helped me to grow closer to God and grow as a Christian and grow in my Christian walk [Dot, p. 6]
- …my eyes have been opened to there is more than what you can see with your senses. In a sense, my spiritual eyes have been opened, my spiritual ears have been opened….getting more sensitive to what God is doing [Onesimus, pp. 6/7]
- Spirituality, it affects life in a fairly holistic way, in the sense that the decisions that you would otherwise make without referring to spiritual awareness of God, you start to seek those [making decisions with awareness] more first, rather than just go on [Aloysius, p. 6]
- It is hard work. But it is very rewarding in your *heart* [Faith, p. 6]
- …a true spirituality is actually changing you from the inside [Blossom, p. 11]
- …it is like a resuscitation machine. Because if I did not have it, I would die [Robert, p. 8]
- Because it has brought connection to myself. It has brought connection to others. Connection to creation, and connection to God [Reggie, p. 9]

All groupings agreed that they experienced heightened spiritual sensibility. Females acknowledged security in intimacy and Baby-boomer females acknowledged positioning of the heart to be significant outcomes of, and influences on, spirituality. Males perceived spirituality more significantly as relational, rather than formulaic. Overall, males indicated an increase in spiritual sensibility and females an increase in self-discovery experienced as a flourishing of self, as a result of ministry. Males seemed to experience an emergence of relational consciousness, and ability to connect, beyond established expectations of rational logic. Females experienced a fostering of personal identity, as a consequence of increased intimacy with God. For males, spirituality is perceived as having enabled relational connection and for females, it is perceived as enabling a sense of worth.

Spirituality was considered, by all roles, denominations, both age groups and genders, to provide, and follow from, valuing self and other; intentional positioning of the heart; and security in awareness of, and intimacy with, God. This constitutes the first Substantive Theory which is:

Spirituality provides, and follows from, valuing self and other, positioning the heart, and awareness of, and intimacy with, God.

This theory strand is labelled.

5.2.3.2.2 Ministry

Eighty-six percent of participants perceived that ministry expedited spiritual progress in self and others, developed skills to be effectively spiritually equipped, and was reciprocal in effect with spirituality. Reciprocity indicates mutual relationship, which implies it is cyclical in nature:

- I see that there are patterns, and strategies, and plans with ministry that are really helpful….They create the timelessness and unchangeability of God in a flexible situation that is unique for that person sitting in front of you [Hope, pp. 7/8]
- …there was just so *much* freedom, even just from one ministry….it does keep transforming your mind and all your thoughts [Sarah, p. 12]
- …the confidence to hear God's voice, to be spiritually awake and astute enough to be able to minister, not in the power of the flesh or the words or in human cleverness, but actually with spiritual power that actually brings about God's purposes [Sniffer, p. 6]
- So being teachable as well as teaching others what you have learned, to encourage them in their walk [Dot, p. 6]
- It affects my ministry in that I have the ability in God, in Christ, to do things that I could not do as a human being in the power of humanness….Day to day decisions, relationships. The grace of God flows through me. It is the ability to cope with unpleasantness [Sniffer, p. 6]

- ...you start to tap into wisdom that is beyond your physical control and start to seek a wisdom that is a greater wisdom…that understanding that you could not have from a physical point of view [Aloysius, p. 6]
- …my spirituality, that area of me hearing Holy Spirit clearly, makes me even better at my job….in myself, my spirituality has given me a self-worth, which oozes into every pore and out of every pore. It gives me confidence [Blossom, p. 10]
- …you just cannot minister to people without growth [Devon Lad, p. 8]
- Before I had any sense of spirituality I did not have any ministry [Ezekiel, p. 8]
- I think that ministry comes out of the spiritual life [Bear, p. 12]
- Ministry without the resuscitator is a waste of time. It has to have an effect and it has to be life changing [Robert, p. 9]
- Because God can do nothing through us until He does something *in* us. I would say, that is a continual process [Sanna, p.7]

All roles, apart from Released Support, and primarily males, recognised the cycle of influence between ministry and spirituality. It is possible that those in higher level roles, predominantly males, have gained insight as the result of experience. However, earlier results discussed under 5.2.3 Links between spirituality, ministry, and formation, page 135, indicate that Released Supports adopted the view of intrinsic influence, despite a failure to articulate reciprocity as a concept. GenX found the role of ministry in the process of spirituality to be specifically meaningful, possibly in response to an expectation or understanding of holistic approach. Males perceived that developing skills, to be equipped to effectively minister, was important. Participants from all denominations and both genders acknowledged ministry as essential to the process of spiritual growth and transformation, as it enabled development of effective practices and methods while influencing personal capacity.

Spirituality was considered, by all roles, denominations, both age groups and genders, to be intrinsically linked to ministry and fostered engaging with self and other persons and God;

spirituality optimised spiritual nurture; and generated intimate relational encounter. This constitutes the second Substantive Theory which is:

The link between Spirituality and Ministry effects spiritual growth by expediting engaging with self and Other, optimising nurture, and generating encounter in a reciprocal cycle.

This theory strand is labelled *Reciprocity*.

5.2.3.2.3 Life

Eighty-three percent summarised life being inspired by their spirituality - for identity, enabling the inner tone and environment of self to be embraced, and giving sustaining motive for faith and service. Fulfilment and effectiveness in the journey of life was perceived as a balance of ministry empowered by spirituality.

Participants viewed the effect of recognising and functioning in the spiritual dimension as providing an inspirational understanding and empowering of their 'true', or authentic, self:

- …it is part of the makeup who we have been created in spirit, soul, and body [Peter, p. 7]
- …all you have got to do is know who you are in Christ, in the Father. That is your *true* identity. And your spiritual identity, then, is the leadership and headship of who you are: soul and body [Anthony, p. 10]
- It feels like I am being let out of a box, out of prison. And becoming who I always was but not allowed to be….I feel happier being myself now that I have ever felt. And I have more peace and more joy and more confidence in doing life [Rebecca, p. 7]
- An inward atmosphere of love, peace, and belonging. Very comfortable in your skin in where you are at [Simon, p. 8]

Statements, regarding life motive being sustained by spirituality, implied gratitude and affirmation. It was obvious that reducing the vital and elemental nature of the dimension of spirituality to a condensed few sentences in an interview context was challenging, but it also appeared to be validating, and the experience was expressed by participants post-interview, as a

spiritual process in itself. Service, purpose, and transformation were signatures identifying profound concepts in minimal text:

- My life is to serve Him….I just want to serve God. Because it is the best most fulfilling life you can possibly imagine; serving Him. Whether it is in ministry…or whatever you do [Simon, p. 9]
- It has given me fulfilment in life. It has given me a purpose to get up every morning [Bartholomew, p. 7]
- It would be like, "How has being alive affected your life?" It is that fundamental to who we are as humans [Ned, p. 8]
- …instead of pursuing the many goals and the myriad attractive options that the world presents you start homing in on one those things of true worth and value [Aloysius, p. 6]

Spirituality, ministry, and life were connected specifically, by 30% of participants. Referring to spirituality as the integral source of empowerment for life and ministry, descriptions of balance and stability to personal faith and transformation, relational contexts, and direction for life, were summary statements regarding perceived links and effects:

- …VMTC…Holy Spirit…All of that started to bring all the right ingredients for an actual balanced life [Sarah, p. 13]
- It [spirituality] has given me more confidence in ministry. To a *big* extent, I would think. Confidence as a leader….Confidence is probably the key word there. In my abilities. In my God given abilities. And confidence to be able to *do* the ministry, the way God wants me to do it, not necessarily the way man wants me to do it [Faith, p. 6]
- I think it is all positive. I am happy with the changes I have seen in myself…through an increase in spirituality. In increased understanding [Blossom, p. 11]
- …I think, a true spirituality is actually changing you from the inside….actually changing your mindset to say I actually do not want to do those things because that would not please God [Blossom, p. 11]

- … spirituality means your inside is getting cleaned. And as your inside gets cleaned it becomes visible, it becomes visible on the outside [Blossom, p. 11]

Male Baby-boomers were well represented in this category, indicating a growth in awareness of personhood. All roles and both genders perceived spirituality brought a balance to life and ministry, more notably among GenX, while Baby-boomers considered it to be the primary motivator for the demonstration of their faith.

Spirituality was perceived to provide the source of inspiration for life, which facilitated understanding and acceptance of all dimensions of self by all roles and both age groups and genders. Spirituality imparted the capacity of committing to facilitating, and submitting to, change in self and others; transforming all dimensions of personhood; and consolidating spiritual growth. The third theory.

This constitutes the third Substantive Theory which shows cause as a consequential process which is therefore dependent:

For participants in the study, Spirituality is considered to provide the basis for the capacity for committing to change, transforming all dimensions, and consolidating progress toward an integrated functionality.

This theory strand is labelled *Modification*.

Participants experienced dependent and crucial links between spirituality, ministry, and formation which had a significant impact on ability to minister, and nurturing of the formation process. Regularly submitting self to the process of ministry strengthened spirituality and gave direction to the formation process. Life was improved by a holistic approach of intentional engagement in spirituality, ministry, and formation.

5.3 Summary

This chapter has continued with analysing data from thirty participants' interviews of those voluntarily involved in pastoral care via VMTC. By categorising responses to the two last

questions of the study, the three remaining categories and four resulting emerging themes regarding involvement in pastoral care ministry, links between spirituality and ministry, and the implications for training, suggested that spiritual maturity and proficiency in ministry are not necessarily correlated with age. Rather, there were identifiable links between spirituality and ministry, when this was intentionally sought by the individual.

Volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry perceived and experienced that:

1. Spirituality was positive, in contrast with religion, and a dimension common to all humanity. Spirituality was seen as a potential influence beyond natural, intellectual understanding that relies on intentional interaction with God. Such encounters were precipitated by persons, actions, creation, or attitude of the heart, as an intention to engage and spontaneously respond, which produced relational, personal, and pastoral change, though self-censure and/or absence of awareness of the dimension could be prohibitive.
2. Spiritual growth was influenced by nurturing the sense of spirit in participation with self, other, creation and God and by application of truths and principles to beliefs, behaviours, and attitudes discovered through those relationships. Spiritual growth was experienced as an increased understanding and personal capacity for intimacy with God and with humanity, affected by, and affecting, involvement in pastoral care.
3. Both spirituality and ministry affected spiritual capacity and competence by increasing spiritual awareness, enlargement of self, including transformation that affected core responses to others. Enhanced spiritual sensitivity, or spiritual sensibility, influenced ministry by increasing proficiency and capacity to 'flow'. An absence of spiritual sensibility could hinder competency. Initial involvement, and continuation, in volunteering was determined by response to an invitation, or personal need, seeing others being transformed, and personal experience of ministry effectiveness. Desire to partner with God, and contribute to others, were strong motivators to maintain involvement.
4. Links between spirituality and ministry were totally dependent in an intrinsic, internal, reciprocal relationship that facilitated spiritual growth and formation across all

dimensions of personhood for effective functioning as a person and as a pastoral care worker.

5.3.1 Overall findings.

The first seven emerging themes, discussed in the previous chapter, considered the perceptions of participants regarding spirituality, spiritual personhood, and spiritual experiences, spiritual nurture, and spiritual growth. The Substantive Theory of Sensibility draws from emerging themes in 4.4.1 Perceptions of spirituality, page 76, 4.4.2 Perceptions of spiritual personhood, page 91, and 4.4.3 Spiritual experiences, page 99, pertaining to spirituality being intrinsic to humanity and producing personal and relational connections that provide, and follow from, valuing self and other; intentional positioning of the heart; and an awareness of, and intimacy with, God.

The Substantive Theory of Reciprocity draws from emerging themes in 4.4.3 Spiritual experiences, 4.4.4 Spiritual nurture, and 4.4.5 Spiritual growth, regarding spiritual experiences, spiritual nurture, and spiritual growth, recognising relational connection occurs with, and through, self, other, creation, and God. Section 5.2.2 Influences of spirituality and ministry, considers this relational effect on ministry by fostering the engaging of self with other persons and God; whereby spirituality is optimised by spiritual nurture and generated through intimate relational encounter.

The final four emerging themes in 5.2.1 Involvement and volunteering., 5.2.2 Influences of spirituality and ministry., and 5.2.3 Links between spirituality, ministry, and formation, indicate the Substantive Theory of Modification, which considers spirituality as the basis for the capacity of committing to facilitating, and submitting to, change in self and others; transforming all dimensions of personhood; and consolidating spiritual growth. Spirituality was perceived to provide the source of inspiration to facilitate understanding and acceptance of challenge and change in all dimensions of the human person.

In summation, an analysis of the themes identified Sensibility, Reciprocity, and transformation, or Modification, as Substantive Theories, which provided a framework for understanding

spirituality. Following this, it is proposed that personal perspectives of stability or deficiency regarding the robustness of personal spirituality have the potential to promote or destabilise spirituality, which operates in reciprocal relationship with ministry. Further discourse in CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION will show how these combined themes inform an integrated state of spirituality, leading to the development of recommendations supportive of effective formation and improvement of praxis.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This study set out to explore perceptions of spirituality and spiritual experiences of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry, to identify what influence their spirituality had on ministry, and to recognise implications for further training. In the previous two chapters findings described categories and emerging themes derived from the data. There were strong indications that a totally dependent, reciprocal relationship exists between spirituality and the ability to minister, suggesting a negation of ability could occur by an absence, unawareness of, or disengagement from the existence of a spiritual dimension. The extent to which an individual is able to effectively and sensitively offer pastoral care is dependent on the degree to which the properties of spiritual *Sensibility*, capacity for *Reciprocity*, and response to *Modification* are appropriated; properties derived from the data as substantive theories discussed in 5.2.3.2 Emerging Theme 11, page 139. In this chapter the Grounded Theory of Substantive Spirituality, demonstrated in the integration of the three strands of the substantive theories, will be explained as producing a formed spirituality that supports mature functioning of the individual personally, which essentially generates capability in ministry. Spirituality will be revealed as pre-eminent to formation and effective ministry, and stability in the three strands is integrative for the whole person, while the cohesive state may be compromised by deficiency. Pre-eminent, meaning 'to come before', is relevant to describe the causal relationship between spirituality and formation as being dependent on one another.

As discussed in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30, volunteer pastoral care workers operate within a multitude of contexts for the purpose of fostering spiritual growth. For many volunteer pastoral care workers opportunities for training may be limited and developing personal spirituality, or formation, not specifically addressed. In Christian ministry, pastoral care focuses on spiritual nurture and growth to support the process of spiritual formation. In this chapter, the substantive theories of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, presented in 5.2.3 Links between

spirituality, ministry, and formation, page 135, and summarised in 5.3.1 Overall findings., page 147, represent the immeasurable nature of spiritual formation as an overlapping progression in an evolving journey, describing the process of spiritual growth and formation. Identifying the links between spirituality and the ability to minister suggested that there are Markers associated with spiritual formation that could assist in explaining essential attributes of volunteer pastoral care workers for effective and safe ministry. What follows is an explication of the themes associated with perceptions of spirituality and spiritual experiences, spiritual nurture and growth, and links between spirituality and ministry, as related to the literature, as well as a presentation of the three strands of the substantive themes, Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, as a Grounded Theory of Substantive Spirituality.

Thirty volunteer pastoral care workers were interviewed. They were selected because of current involvement in a nominated parachurch organisation, that being VMTC. The study aimed at discovering their perceptions of spirituality and spiritual experiences. Processes of spiritual growth were also explored, in conjunction with discovering perceptions of the influence of spirituality on ability to minister and, finally, what links, if any, existed between spirituality, ministry, and formation. Grounded Theory was selected as the optimum research methodology for its effectiveness to inform exploring subjective concepts. In summary, the themes that emerged were:

- Spirituality is positive, integral, requiring intentional interaction, and intrinsic to the human person, providing identity and spiritual sensitivity.
- Spirituality is identified positively in comparison with religion
- Spirituality requires active, intentional engagement.
- A sense of deficiency was potentially nullifying to perceptions and possible nurturing of spirituality.
- Spiritual experiences are occasioned by specific encounters, and also spontaneous responses, which produce relational, personal, and pastoral change.
- Spirituality relies on an attitude of receptivity to presence of self, others and God.

- Increased spiritual understanding, capacity to connect, and a greater freedom for intimacy with self, other, and God typify spiritual growth and arise from nurture which is inspired by interaction with other, creation, God, or self in solitude.
- Spirituality is the inspiration for response and commitment in caring for other.
- Ministry affects spirituality by expanding personal awareness and capacity (designated as spiritual sensibility), while spiritual sensibility influences ministry by increasing proficiency as a conduit and capability both personally and pastorally.
- The link between spirituality and ministry is seen to be totally dependent and reciprocal in influence.
- Both spirituality and ministry are required for formation to promote effective functioning as a person and pastoral care worker.

Participants showed an understanding of the difficulty of performing the task of pastoral care by application of mental processes alone, thus describing O'Meara's idea of employing intellectual reasoning as denying the intent of Christian ministry, as observed in 2.5 Christian Ministry, page 27. For these participants *ministry was spirituality in action* (O'Meara, 1999). Competence, therefore, is closely aligned with a sense of confidence and understanding of personal spirituality, and also quality of relational connection with a Trinitarian God, referred to in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30, by the SCA and Cole (Cole, 2010; Spiritual Care Australia, 2014).

The concept of spiritual formation, as an individual process, was recognised by participants, which aligned with the observations of Allport, Bjorklund, and Mabry discussed in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39, contesting the idea of a sequential process of chronological age equalling spiritual maturity (Allport, 1950; Bjorklund, 2011; Mabry, 2006). This was affirmed by stories acknowledging recent significant challenges and the resulting transformation by older participants, such as Anthony [p. 8]. It is spirituality, according to the participants, that facilitates the needed integrating influence, addressed by Allport (1950), Anderson (2003) and others (Scott, 2009b; Wilber, 2002) on all dimensions of the human person, when it is intentionally

acknowledged and engaged. The "formation *of* the human spirit as well as formation *by* the divine Spirit" discussed by Willard (Willard, 2010, p. 46) was experienced by participants as generating an effect on attitude, behaviour, and character, which brought about the ability of self-agency to choose positive patterns and be orientated toward God (Hauerwas, 1979). From the participants, formation was shown to be a process of becoming and being (King, 2009). The integrating influence of spirituality on ministry and formation became the significant feature of this study and was instrumental in the revelation of an overarching theory, describing the spiritual maturation process.

6.2 Perceptions and Themes

Themes expressed by participants were condensed into codes, as collected ideas, with commonalities explored and categorised to discover patterns associated with spirituality and ministry. This led to the emergence of a three strand Substantive Theory regarding influences and links between spirituality and ministry, particularly in the framework of growth and transformation, or formation, associated with pastoral care.

6.2.1 Spirituality.

Participant perceptions were harmonious with concepts from the literature that were discussed in 2.2 Spirituality, regarding spirituality as an intrinsic dimension of humanity (Benson et al., 2003; Fisher, 2014; Spiritual Care Australia, 2014; Young & Koopsen, 2011), and part of the integrated "whole person" (Koenig, 2007, p. 16; O'Brien, 2014). As discussed in 4.4.1.1.3 Features, page 78, participants deemed spirituality to give a sense of meaning to life (Astin et al., 2011; deSouza, 2003) and, in 4.4.1.3 Emerging Theme 3, page 89, to be fundamental dimension of human existence (King, 2009; Moberg, 2010). Most participants considered perceptions and experiences of spirituality to be primarily about connection in the domains of self, other, creation, and God, as seen in Fisher's Four Domains Model (Fisher, 1998). In the context of this study, that of pastoral care in the Christian tradition of VMTC, spirituality was primarily focused on connection with self, other, and God; although the domain of creation was often addressed as 'nature', particularly

in relation to spiritual nurture and growth in 4.4.4 Spiritual nurture, page 107. Words like relationship, intimacy, intentional, intrinsic, foundational, immediacy, immanence, presence of God, as very specific expressions of this intimacy, relationship, or connection, prevailed in the articulation of spirituality, the spiritual personhood, experiences of spirituality, and language expressing immanence thereby reflecting Berryman's "articulations" of encounter considered in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30 (Berryman, 1990). The participants described an intimacy that provides a platform for valuing self and others through the perspective of an awareness and sensitivity to the spiritual realm, spoken of by Augsburger (2006), which will be discussed further in this chapter. The underlying premise is that each individual is a spiritual person, so that meaning and value are assigned accordingly. The valuing of self and other is a constituent aspect of the strand of spiritual Sensibility, a concept developed earlier in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30, from the work of Best (Best, 2000).

While past research and literature frequently address connection or relationship, this cohort very clearly expressed this connection as an immanence, a sensed nearness and contact with, and of, God's presence. This is language addressed in the literature, reminiscent of Daley, Gockel, and Lawrence (Brother Lawrence, 2009/1692; Daley, 2009; Gockel, 2009). Relationships resulting from this understanding of spirituality offer security and an enhanced ability in personal life to help identify the quality and existence of relational connection as differentiating spirituality from religion. Religion is about systems, rules, and instructions, while spirituality is about relationship, supporting Gall's observation of negative connotations (Gall et al., 2011). As mentioned in 2.4 Religion and Spirituality, page 25, the four views in literature pertaining to the relationship between spirituality and religion suggest

1) spirituality and religion are synonymous,
2) spirituality and religion are distinct
3) spirituality and religion intersect, and
4) spirituality and religion are divergent (Benson et al., 2003; deSouza, 2009; Fisher, 2010; Shults & Sandage, 2006)

Yet, for this cohort, experiencing spirituality as relationship, not as rules, embraced the integrative nature and influence of spirituality, or the "unifying function" spoken of by Fontana, that thereby surpasses religion and supports the idea discussed by Koenig which questions the equality of religion and spirituality addressed in 2.2 Spirituality, page 17 (Fontana, 2003; Koenig, 2007). Spirituality is integrative because it is holistic, influencing the entirety of the person. This proves the integrational potential of spirituality, despite circumstances, discussed in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30. It is not a separate dimension or aspect of our personhood that we "do", a concept which challenges a dualistic approach in the style of Augsburger (2006). The spiritual disciplines and spiritual events that occur have their place, as will be discussed later in this section, but spirituality is experienced in the spontaneous, and that spontaneity is specifically related to the everyday, ordinary life of the individual. This concept sits in contrast to the idea by Gall referred to in 2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality, page 23 that as mystery, spirituality is unfathomable in the ordinary (Gall et al., 2011). For this cohort, spirituality was expressly definable *because* of the everyday and ordinary context in which it is experienced (McMinn, 2017). Therefore, spirituality is experienced in the general life of personhood and integrates the whole person.

Moberg suggested definitions of spirituality tend to be learned – in traditional contexts such as church, instilled by community, including family, or established by the individual through experience and reflection (Moberg, 2010). Spirituality, as expressed by participants in 4.4.1 Perceptions of spirituality, page 76, corresponded with current literature regarding the essential, intrinsic, interior, and highly subjective dimension of spirituality (Best, 2000; Hodge, 2011; Hood Jr, 2009; King, 2009; McGee, 2003; Scott, 2009a, 2009b; Wills, 2009). However, in this study, *where* spirituality was located and directed distinguished participant responses from the *how* and *what* of spirituality addressed in other research. Meaningful connection with self, other, and God in reciprocal and mutual understanding was significant to positive outcomes, as mentioned in the work of Wills (2009) and Bosacki (2001) discussed in 2.2 Spirituality, page 17. Valuable relationship with self and others occurred as a result of the conciliation of God. In this sense, the

immanence of God guided connection and supported wholesome and beneficial relationship in an intimacy that was integral to the strand of Sensibility.

Understanding spirituality as being beyond the natural, physical and intellectual processes of humanity, as an alertness to the spiritual realm, and its influence on one's life, requires purposeful commitment and, concurring with Cole (2010), engagement of the inner self via intentional response to God; an awakening that is formative. Spiritual experiences are about interaction, and those experiences are influential over the entire person; all dimensions of spirit, soul – being mind, will, and emotions – and body. However, in contrast to spirituality being experienced as an "event", or a series of events, or the result of crisis or a major happening in a person's life precipitating some form of quest, a counter view presented the concept of spirituality as being part of the spontaneous and the everyday, in the ordinary. Spirituality, as it is experienced, in the ordinary, everyday life, is related to a disposition or "orientation", as discussed in 2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality, page 23 (Mitroff et al., 2009; Moberg, 2010). This was labelled as the "positioning of the heart", which involves maintaining a disposition that recognises the priority of yielding and surrender, a relinquishing of the personal will and agenda to that of God, rather than prioritising convenience or personal comfort. Based on principles from the Christian tradition, positioning the heart involves submitting personal choice to that which is perceived as God's will. The attitude of the heart, or positioning, is an important component of the strand of Sensibility.

Attitude of heart, as a choice, is elemental to spirituality, to enable connection and intimacy foundational to spiritual awareness. This is not a "one-off" or occasional circumstance, perhaps perceived as a "mystical swoon", but a constancy of state, hence living the ordinariness of life pervaded by spiritual influence. The whole issue of relationships and immanence, and their occurrence, is related to an integration, in that they happen simultaneously with the temporal. Spirituality is not a dimension set aside from the physical, or any other dimension. Individuals are spiritual and they live in the temporal world. Spirituality creates significance and value for the person - value of self, value in living, and the liberation of the real self, the genuine or authentic self. Freedom is found, through spirituality, to *be* one's true self (Gall et al., 2011), addressed in

2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality, page 23. Spirituality, as innate to the human person, is the genuine, or authentic, self as the unique creation of God.

The symbolic language used by participants corresponded with Happold's explanation of similar features as characteristic of mysticism, though only as a representation of the spiritual state (Happold, 1970; James, 2004/1874). Participants expressed the view that spiritual awareness, referred to in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39, adds quality and breadth to spiritual experiences, affecting the capacity to be the authentic self; described by Cully (1984) as a sure sense of personhood that enables the best of one's being to be directed toward others. It was described, in 4.4.1 Perceptions of spirituality, page 76, that the misappropriation of the term, and the desacralizing of spirituality in non-faith contexts continues to cause confusion, demonstrating proof of assertions in literature of inclusive language divorced from faith traditions causing alienation (Barnes, 2012; Brugman, 2012; Carr, 1996; Cully, 1984; Koenig, 2007). However, with meaning represented by the collective context (Gall et al., 2011), spirituality was seen as positive in contrast with religion, reported in 4.4.1 Perceptions of spirituality, page 76. In a similar vein to King, participants articulated 'being' as more important than doing (King, 2009), contrary to accepted measures of spiritual maturity, or disciplines, of liturgy, prayer, and meditation. The participants in this study articulated the view that these disciplines are demonstrations *resulting from* their spirituality, rather than a *means to* produce spirituality. For them, being and becoming were directly related to the internal connection as a goal, from which behaviours or actions arose as the result. As stated earlier, the elemental presence of spirituality was the reason for, not the result of, the action. Attributing this meaning of being as connection to spirituality enabled consideration of self and others as having worth and was regarded as a significant influence on considerations of human personhood having innate and infinite value. Valuing self and other is constructed on an understanding of solidarity, that all humans are created as spiritual beings with the ability for relational connection; this is foundational to Sensibility.

Not clearly specified in earlier literature quoted herein, spirituality was also perceived to have negative properties, or rather, there could be negative convictions allied with spirituality. The two

issues of self-censure or negative self-assessment, and the misappropriation of the term 'spirituality' affected confidence and ability to function in the dimension of spirituality. Hanamoa's comment [p. 2], "I'm not saying, I'm not spiritual. I just feel like I wish I was a bit more…. I wish I was more [spiritual] than I am", expressed lament at the "gap" between the ideal of personal spirituality and his current capacity, conceivably negating spiritual 'existence' rather than potential in the current moment (Coe, 2009; Howard, 2016; Issler, 2009; Muthiah, 2009; Nelson, 2011). There was recognition of room for improvement, possibly understanding this to be humility, however, the belief that one was deficient in the dimension of spirituality had an effect on ministry, as will be discussed later in 6.2.3 Links between spirituality and ministry, page 164, and 6.4 Deficiency, page 183.

Further, participant responses to the misappropriation of the term spirituality, or misrepresentation by other interpretations, offered insight into the struggle to maintain open and honest connection with the world, while seeking to express a definition of specific meaning – established in the historical context of the Christian tradition within VMTC. Repugnance seemed a strong word to use at this juncture, yet several participants voiced this exact response to the misappropriation of the term, and the word, spirituality itself. For example, Esther's "I really recoiled at the word!" [p. 2]. Alternative terms such as 'faith' or 'relationship' were used to express meanings articulated by other participants as spirituality. The broader desacralized definition was not accepted because of the breadth of concepts and beliefs included; beliefs that, for some participants, were considered contrary to a theistic view. In 4.4.1 Perceptions of spirituality, page 76, participants articulated frustration and disappointment regarding the commandeering of the term spirituality for non-theistic frameworks. Amongst the group, an older female Director and a young male Released Support both addressed the exasperation of attempting to speak about spirituality, and the confusion that continued to exist regarding its meaning. This sat in disparity with the larger group of participants who embraced the term spirituality positively, even more so than religion. This was significant, in that all participants were committed to their faith, with a strong sense of Call, as will be discussed later in 6.2.3 Links between spirituality and ministry,

page 164, and operated in an emotionally and spiritually intense ministry. The disparity within the participant cohort reflected the disagreement found generally regarding the roots, ownership, and rights to the term 'spirituality' across contexts.

Despite the disunity around the definition of spirituality, perceived experiences of spirituality clearly bridged perceptions and nurture of the sense of spirit. Having experiences that were spiritual, while being significant moments within the individual's life, also nurtured the sense of spirit within. As suggested in 2.4 Religion and Spirituality, page 25, and 2.7 Positive Psychology, page 35, it was the active engagement of the personal dimensions with the experience that created openings for nurture. Spiritual experiences of worship affected and effected spirituality, as did experiences with creation/nature. Spiritual encounters which nourish the spiritual dimension resulted from either direct interaction with, or reflecting upon, creation. Creation has been noted in literature as a domain with which the human spirit finds connection (Fisher, 2010; Johnson, 1989). However, in this case, creation was the means not the ends for the connection. Interaction with creation, or nature, such as walking in the bush or watching a sunset, and reflecting on creation, where the environment brings much more than just tranquillity, was sought as an experience to connect *with* God, out of which the spirit was nurtured. The affinity that was experienced through the symbolic understanding of creation often facilitated immanence, where the sense of proximity of God's presence could be experienced simultaneously while being fully aware of the temporal surroundings. This revealed an awareness and sensitivity to the spiritual realm that was a crucial aspect of an intimacy, integral to Sensibility, that permeated the entire person in an experience of pervasive and mutual interfusion with God.

Perceptions and experiences of spirituality that express qualities such as worth, attitude, and awareness - of the spiritual person, their position in comparison to God, and a sensitivity to the spiritual realm - constitute a strong and vibrant connection with self, other, and God. Valuing self and other, positioning the heart in an attitude of surrender, and intimacy through an awareness and sensitivity to the spiritual realm represent spirituality and experiences of spirituality. These threads are seen to be elemental aspects in the formation of Sensibility, as part of a pattern

indicating an integrated spirituality. Matters relating to spiritual nurture and growth also reveal a pattern.

6.2.2 Nurture and growth.

In line with literature, common elements contributing to a sense of nurturing the spirit are creation, prayer and worship (Koenig, 2007; National Interfaith Conference on Aging, 1975). A noteworthy clarification for the participants of this study was the specific articulation of the Australian bushland, and water. These two aspects of creation offer a significant contribution to facilitating engagement with self, other, and God, by providing an atmosphere conducive to reflection. From this study, expressing bushland as a preferred environment for spiritual connection could warrant further research exploring interactions of non-indigenous spirituality and the 'land'. However, this was not within the bounds of this study. Departing additionally from previous literature, regarding nurturing a sense of spirituality, are faith narratives such as biographical stories and other Christian Classics that provide inspiration to nourish the spirit and encourage growth. These types of "story" are almost as important as, yet differentiated from, sacred texts and the Bible.

A point of difference from past literature is the discovery of movement as nurturing the spirit. Whether that is dance or just walking, the actual rhythm experienced within the body is the spiritual experience, described by [Hope, p. 2]. Movement, particularly walking, may seem to cross-over with creation as the catalyst, but Hope indicated that the rhythm of breathing and the rhythm through the whole body brought a peaceful state of mind and spirit, enabling spontaneous moments of nurture through contemplation. In this sense, the activity itself could be deemed meditative. Buddhist teaching associates this practice with mindfulness, however, in the Christian tradition, the contemplative nature of the activity expressed by Hope is suggestive of the reflective and inspirational ritual in the style of walking the labyrinth (Smith, 2018), though in this case, the action itself was the spiritual experience.

Personal growth was also described in the context of healing, whether physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual, supporting statements in 2.7 of this study, expounded by Positive Psychology (King, 2009; Kwan, 2010; Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2000). Identifying an initial sense of lack, or deficit, or pain, was necessary for growth to be recognised, a view suggested in 2.7 Positive Psychology, page 35 (McMinn, 1996). Healing within all dimensions involves the further discovery of aspects of self, of the genuine or authentic self, a theme discussed earlier, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39. Alongside healing, the three areas of life where nurture and growth are experienced – the personal, the relational, and the pastoral - may be argued as being allied and leading to well-being. The capacity to interact with others and cope with life was significantly enhanced by personal healing, and acknowledging this concept was a further catalyst for being able to engage with others. Growth, in the sense and understanding of the self, advanced expansion in relational ability, which then influenced pastoral capability, demonstrating the standards recommended by the SCA and discussed in 2.6 Pastoral Care, page 30 (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014). A reciprocal relationship existed between self-understanding and interaction with others, which required engagement. Spirituality provided the sustaining motive for understanding self, relational ability and pastoral capability. Compatible with the focus of Positive Psychology, spiritual growth also provided enrichment, influencing the ability to more frequently and more effectually optimise opportunities that result in nurture and areas of growth for self and other. Optimising opportunities was essential to the strand of Reciprocity.

The disciplines, repeatedly addressed in literature about functional spirituality (Moberg, 2002) as a standard of behaviour to measure success of "being" spiritual, did provide further opportunities for nurture and growth. However, understanding the activity of particular tasks as constituting spirituality and spiritual growth was contrary to relational intimacy for these participants. An orchestrated routine did not represent or signify spirituality, *per se*. Disciplines did not bring about spirituality but were engaged in *as a result* of spirituality. This concept, discussed earlier in 2.2 Spirituality, page 17 and 4.4.3 Spiritual experiences, page 99, characterised spirituality and one's personal spirituality specifically, as the motivating force to engage in such activities. There

was certainly effect from the activity of given disciplines but as these participants had friendship with God as the goal, relational connection was prioritised, and tasks or activities were confirmation that the relationship was occurring dynamically. In essence: *What I do does not instigate my being. Rather my being, that is, in relationship with God, inspires what I do*. The effect of disciplines ensued as an expression of the relationship. It was a perspective of meaning that differentiated the disciplines from being a spiritual experience in and of themselves, to that of a cooperative application. Activities, generated *by* relationship, emerged as an additional clarification of the nature and purpose of the disciplines in the context of nurture of the sense of spirit.

An atypical perspective was also evident in the theme of "heart attitude" stated by Josie [p. 4] and Peter [p. 4], or positioning the heart referred to in 4.4.3 Spiritual experiences, page 99, and 6.2.1 Spirituality, page 152. What it is that nurtured, and how those occurrences impacted on spiritual growth with regard to spiritual experiences, was reliant upon the heart attitude, as a lifestyle of deliberate awareness toward self, other, and God, in a state of openness. This disposition of yieldedness occurred in the ordinary, everyday experiences of life and was not expressed as an exclusive, set-aside, meditative, sought after event. However, while this aligns with Berryman's "Aha!" moments (1990), the structure of experiences that nurture and cause growth were embedded firmly in the ordinary, though still requiring intentional engagement, that was a choice to participate in and seize the opportunity, as it arose. For example, the choice recognised by Peter suggests opportunities exist that require intentionality to optimise effect: "it's finding that balance of what is healthy and intentional. Again, knowing that some days you may feel something and some days you may feel nothing. But yet making that choice day by day" [Peter, p. 5].

The theme of intentional engagement was considered substantive in the process of describing spirituality, its experiences, and nurture and growth. Spirituality was not to be considered a passive process. The perception of spirituality as a superfluous aspect of the human person was thought to support a notion of spirituality just "happening", in a vague fashion defined by Pop-

theology, following the form of popular culture. As a requisite to wholeness, and giving meaning to life, individuals were compelled to take proactive and practical involvement, not intermittently but persistently, through the awareness and sensitivity of Sensibility. Passivity was contrary to nurturing a sense of spirit and optimising growth. Willingness to learn and be actively engaged were the equivalent of watering a plant that needed care and protection to proliferate. Owning spirituality, as an intrinsic and influential dimension of the self, positioned a sense of spirit in constant readiness to promote, or generate, encounter in a realm beyond the natural at any moment. Generating encounter as a form of presence, for self and Other (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014), as discussed in 2.5 Christian Ministry, page 27, is an important aspect of the strand of Reciprocity.

Another avenue, through which nurturing the self and furthering encounter occurs, is crisis (Lewis Hall, 2016; Lun, 2015). Often described in reference to the "dark night of the soul" (Saint John of the Cross, 2003/1579), experiencing difficulties and trial are often acknowledged as catalysts for spiritual growth (Culliford, 2011). Hardship teaches its own lessons that may be difficult to accept, but nonetheless bring a hard-won wisdom, a further affirmation of McMinn's work (1996), mentioned earlier in this section. Appreciating crisis and trial as actual opportunities to *nurture* the spirit may seem counter-intuitive, but Grace [p. 6] and Bartholomew [p. 7], for example, recognised the sustenance that difficulties brought to the spirit and fuelled the desire for intimacy with God. This was partially due to times of solitude that occurred simultaneously with the distress.

Solitude is considered foundational to contemplative processes to nurture the spirit, by establishing an internal serenity and gaining understanding of self, other, and God, as suggested in 2.7 Positive Psychology, page 35. Much has been written regarding the nature and purposes of solitude which does not bear repeating here. Yet there was still further understanding of solitude that can offer greater understanding of spirituality and its processes. Solitude, in the context of contemplation or meditation, is sometimes portrayed as a choice and, while agreed with in this study, an indication also appeared that sometimes solitude was "thrust" upon one, through life

circumstances, trials, and coinciding events. Seclusion, isolation, and loneliness are the perceptible experiences of solitude. In such a scenario, at a time when some may reach out for assistance, or even just company, a distraction it may be said, some stayed in the solitude that was imposed, and found solace and succour, not as a remedy to extricate them from the situation, but as an elixir, a tonic to strengthen them and endure, as displayed by Esther's comment, "I think that's what God's really teaching me in this season. Is how to endure and not give up" [Esther, p. 7]. This sits adjacent to the ideas of Bretherton (2006), mentioned in 2.7 Positive Psychology, page 35, suggesting individuals will seek community in response to need. For some participants solitude provided opportunity for reflection, to receive insight, and time to focus on the spiritual realm, thus nurturing self, whether solitude was sought, or whether it overcame them. In essence, the same could be said for fellowship, that is, it could be sought to aid nurture, or it could be rejected to provide space for nurture. As two sides of one coin are presented in both solitude and fellowship, the effect extends to encountering and nurturing others as well as self.

While church attendance and other markers of religiosity are mentioned in 2.2 Spirituality, page 17, as a gauge of religious conviction (Koenig, 2007), fellowship, as a catalyst for spiritual nurture and growth, described a closer and more proximal affinity with fellow believers than mere attendance. Exchange of thoughts and ideas, prayers for comfort and healing, and sharing the journey of life and faith were the purpose and product of fellowship. It was not merely a sociability that existed, although this was a meaningful attribute to the affiliations. A mutual and reciprocal camaraderie built self and other through communion, in common understanding and unity of purpose; that is, intimacy with, and immanence of, God, a concept which builds on Greenman's work (Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010) referred to in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39. Spiritual identity was fostered in the context of solitude and fellowship, as individuals apprehended their unique authentic self: thus, generating a confident sense of self and nurturing a communal identity, also encouraging growth to contribute to the needs of the faith community.

Nurture of the sense of spirit and spiritual growth that was expressed as qualities of spontaneity, meaning, and encounter – with self, with other, creation, and God, and expediting spiritual

engagement – constituted a capacity to give and receive sustenance to all dimensions of self and other. Engaging with self and other, optimising opportunities to nurture self and other, and generating encounter for self and other in the context of connection with God indicated spiritual growth and growing maturity. These threads were seen to be elemental in the formation of Reciprocity, as part of a pattern indicating an integrated spirituality. Importantly there were links between spirituality and ministry that revealed further aspects of the pattern.

6.2.3 Links between spirituality and ministry.

Links that occurred between spirituality and ministry revealed positive effects on the person, and their efficacy in ministry. As previously explained in 2.5 Christian Ministry, page 27, the term Laity, in the context of spirituality and the related topic of religion, tends to be referenced within the church, and has specific meanings unique to diverse denominations and ecclesiastical environments. To avoid confusion, the label of pastoral care worker was chosen to indicate volunteers who operated outside of the church environment, that is, in a parachurch context, yet supported the work of the church. They operated separate from, and were not specifically attached to, a church or denomination. Rather, it was the faith tradition that framed their ministry. In this sense, ministry was any work that supported the faith of the particular tradition. Ministry has historically been considered to mean the sacraments and other tasks of the ordained clergy. However, as referred to in 2.5 Christian Ministry, page 27, there is a clear indication that ministry occurs as an assignment or job undertaken when motivated by devotion to serve (Johnson, 2010; O'Meara, 1999; Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014).

In addition to the literature regarding intention and response (Allport, 1950), intentional engagement is also relevant as a link between spirituality and ministry. Mentioned above in 6.2.2 Nurture and growth, page 159, intentional engagement motivated the deliberate and purposeful participation of all dimensions of personhood in contemporary circumstances. There was a committed purpose to facilitate change, to be responsive to the immanence or direction of God, with the focus aimed outside of self, that is, what was to be received for others from God, or "How could I facilitate the needs of other to be met?" Whether based in a perception of

spirituality, or in response to nurture and growth, intentional engagement was foundational in spirituality's influence upon ministry, indicating a strong link between spirituality and ministry.

The reciprocal cycle of the link between spirituality and ministry was confirmed as being totally causal. The instrumental contribution to the improvement of spirituality and ministry was the 100% reciprocal dependency of both elements. The link was experienced as an enlarged capacity, as the aware and engaged strand of Sensibility, that expanded ability in ministry. Empowerment, flow and increased awareness, built the volume and capacity to function personally and in ministry. The Reciprocity strand of nurture and growth was advanced, as a result of ministry augmenting a sense of being equipped. The converse could also be experienced if there was a breaching of either path in the cycle. If spirituality is compromised or misdirected, the capacity to minister is directly affected. Spirituality can also be reciprocally affected by diminished or impaired efficacy in ministry. This is explained further in 6.4 Deficiency, page 183, and Figure 15 Deficiency in the Integrative Spiritual Function, page 184.

Spirituality and ministry were mutually linked in a continuous revolution (Allport, 1950), which created a holistic effect on spirituality and the other dimensions of soul and body; journey was expedited and a sense of capacity and extent was connected to being equipped; further describing the beneficial functioning described by 2.7 Positive Psychology, page 35. The mutual link was experienced as a recognition of the inner self being transformed, to varying degrees, as a consequence of ministry, such that spirituality was affected. Witnessing change in self generates confidence to pursue relational connection, which was then experienced as a shared journey that brings insights and challenge for further change through fellowship and communion, thus affirming Fisher's idea of well-being linked to harmonious functioning considered in 2.7 Positive Psychology, page 35. If the purpose of intentional engagement was to facilitate pastoral ministry, in due course the self and other were affected. Consequently, ministry was conducted through the conduit of spirituality. As Anthony and Ned state: "If you haven't got that link between my spirituality and my ministry then….It can't happen" [Anthony, p. 8] and, "you can't impart something that you haven't already received" [Ned, p. 7].

When growth occurred, or was recognised as occurring, an increased confidence in self and one's capabilities was created, which feasibly negated beliefs associated with self-censure. Confidence also increased in relational and pastoral capacity, not only in competence but also in capacity and level of skill. The resulting ability and effectiveness were vitally allied to Sensibility and Reciprocity. Confidence to engage intentionally in relational connection and partnering with God to contribute to others was realised through the conduit of an aware and sensitive spirituality. Aptitude in these qualities and aspects of spirituality fostered the desire to continue to embrace transformation through receptivity to the adaptation of new and reformed thoughts, behaviours and attitudes, thereby consolidating growth. The resulting sense of empowerment inspired and enabled further capability to minister. Having a sense of inspired purpose and capacity was constitutive of confidence. Consolidating change, by accepting adaptation, was imperative to the strand of Modification.

Inspired purpose was also reflected in consciousness of a Calling. Describing two facets, Calling was i) an earnest urge, almost a compulsion, of response, and ii) the invitation and beckoning to partnership, in this case, with God. Referring to earlier discussion in 5.2.1 Involvement and volunteering, page 122, Calling is often perceived as a priestly or religious vow and dedication (Howard, 2016). However, commitment of self to the service of God and other was not perceived as the monopoly of those in religious leadership. An intense dedication to contribute, by teaching, mentoring, supporting, listening, praying or any of the tasks undertaken by a volunteer pastoral care worker, affirmed confidence, which stirred the desire to serve (Howard, 2016). Not to be confused with an imagined sense of career or occupation, a sense of Calling was instrumental as a link between spirituality and ministry. It referred to transformation of, and commitment to, self and other, across dimensions. Committing to change, in self and other, was crucial to the strand of Modification.

Transformation was another elemental aspect of Modification that links spirituality and ministry, as it assisted in the realisation of personal potential. Realisation here, referred to the comprehension and consciousness of the true, real, or authentic person of self, as God created, and

also the fulfilment and achievement of operating particularly and explicitly in that understanding. Further to the discussion in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39, Transformation was assimilated as "lessons learned", that is:

- new knowledge (as facts) - "my self-concept was changed from performance creating my identity" [Bartholomew, p. 4],
- understanding (as comprehension) - "the growth of my spirit has changed…the way I view myself" [David, p. 5],
- or wisdom (as application) - "there's no way that mentally I could find that out any other way" [Cobalt, p. 3].

Transformation was also experienced as emotional, volitional, and somatic changes. Assimilated transformation established new pathways of attitude, behaviour, and action, consolidated by ongoing commitment and established within the individual life by habit; confirming Nelson's view that change must be enduring (Nelson, 2009). Again, there was a correlation with previous aspects of Sensibility and Reciprocity, such as valuing self and other, and generating encounter for self and other, as realisation and transformation informed spiritual Sensibility, and enabled Reciprocity. Through ministry challenging systems of belief, attitude, or behaviour, persons gained understanding about self, both positive and negative. Committing to internal change, allowing transformation to take place, and embracing an adaptation of thought or behaviour, consolidated spiritual progress. This is the concept of journey suggested by Nelson (2009), reported in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39. However, differing from the literature, the concept of realising potential as a product of ministry was found to be conditional. That is, all potential, spiritual or in ministry, could be negated by an absence or severing of any of the qualities or aspects associated with an integrated spirituality. This implied ministry could be negated by the absence of awareness of spirituality. Conversely, spirituality could be negated or inhibited by an absence of transformation via ministry.

Totally dependent links between spirituality and ministry were expressed as qualities of empowerment, equipping, and assimilation. Committing to internal change, being transformed in

all dimensions, and consolidating change by embracing adaptation indicated an ability to advance in the maturing process. These threads were elemental in the strand of Modification, as part of the pattern indicating an integrated spirituality. Each of these three strands, being themes, Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, combined equally to create an integrated and holistic model to interpret spiritual aptitude and competence for ministry understood as Formation.

Drawing from the strands of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification and their subsequent threads founded on the data, correlations with the literature consolidated the relationship between the data and the themes. The themes were seen in the greater contexts provided by the literature in dialogue with the data, informing a Grounded Theory of Substantive Spirituality. That is, embodied spirituality and ministry efficacy have an irrefutable reciprocal link, affected by the perceived or enacted level of stability or deficiency of the individual. This can be articulated as Integrative Spiritual Function, and includes:

1) spirituality is defined by a perspective of stability or deficiency;
2) sensibility, reciprocity, and modification are essential elements for the pre-eminence of spirituality; and
3) there is a mutual correlation between Integrative Spiritual Function (ISF) and ministry in supporting and advancing growth and effectiveness; that is, Formation.

The theory suggests that the influence of stability or deficiency, as potential perspectives regarding the robustness of personal spirituality, promote or suppress ISF, which is the result of reciprocal relationship of spirituality, ministry, and formation. In the following section the implications informed by the Grounded Theory will be explored and a discussion of the implications for training will be considered.

6.2.4 Implications.

So far, the three substantive themes of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification that emerged from the data have been considered, and these can be aligned with the themes identified in literature discussed in CHAPTER 2, regarding perceptions of spirituality, spiritual growth, and

links between spirituality and ministry. In this section the three strands are drawn on to create a model of integrated spirituality, indicating significant areas that denote a volunteer pastoral care worker's capacity and potential for sound and effective ministry. The model of ISF, as a framework of a stable and maturing substantive spirituality, provides a list of qualities that are preferable, if not essential, in the character and disposition of a volunteer pastoral care worker. Such qualities are pertinent to, and markers of, the capability and sensitivity of those working with the emotionally and spiritually vulnerable.

ISF represents a realised, holistic unity within the individual, and a formed capacity to be in union with self, others, and with God (Yeo, 2016); to be spiritually integrated, to function well, to do ministry efficaciously. This is symbolised below as a three-stranded braid, each strand being made up of three threads, being nine threads in all, which convey the qualities that constitute the properties of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification. The three properties are reminiscent of three processes integral to Positive Psychology, referred to in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39, which are awareness, interconnection, and lifestyle, as suggested by Benson and Roehlkepartain (2008). These processes may inform the study regarding human capabilities, however, this study centres on the integrated nature intrinsic to the human dimensions in synergistic relationship with God as the catalyst.

The properties are:

Sensibility, which includes the qualities:

- *valuing* self and others – representing responsibility and action, in 2.2 Spirituality (Augsburger, 2006) and by interaction, in 2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality (Gall et al., 2011),
- *positioning* the heart – indicating an orientation towards, in 2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality (Mitroff et al., 2009; Moberg, 2010) and surrender of the heart, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Hull, 2010), and

- *intimacy* and awareness – meaning intimate relationship, in 2.2 Spirituality (Webster, 2009), and conscious recognition of the relationship, in 2.3 Perceptions of Spirituality (Holmes, 1982),

Reciprocity, comprised of the qualities:

- *engaging* with self and other – seen as nurturing self and others, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010), and facilitating growth, in 2.5 Christian Ministry (Hughes et al., 2010),
- *optimising* nurture – indicating active opportunities to grow, in 2.4 Religion and Spirituality (Benson et al., 2003), and experiences that nurture, in 2.6 Pastoral Care (Best, 2000), and
- *generating* encounter – signifying relationship with God, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Greenman & Kalantzis, 2010), offering 'presence', in 2.5 Christian Ministry (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014), and part of developing faith, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Nelson, 2009),

and Modification, which includes the qualities:

- *committing* to change – representing growth in self-understanding, in 2.6 Pastoral Care (Pembroke, 2002; Purves, 1989), and maturation of character, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Burns et al., 2012),
- *transforming* in all dimensions – meaning holistic integration, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Anderson, 2003; Collicutt, 2015), and
- *consolidating* adaptation – denoting a key element, in 2.7 Positive Psychology (Hunt, 2015; Spiritual Care Australia, 2014), and internal process, in 2.8 Spiritual Formation (Lasair, 2017; Otto & Harrington, 2016)

These are the thematic strands which, together, form the model of ISF. The level to which a person operates in each of the three properties, and consequent nine qualities, can indicate the level to which formation is in process.

6.3 Integrative Spiritual Function

As discussed in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39, Wilber (2002), Anderson (2003), and others, describe the need for 'an influence which facilitates integration'. However, the subjective nature of themes and perceptions associated with spirituality presented a challenge in representing any model via diagrammatic illustration, as any such model would necessitate some degree of fluidity or organic impression. Nevertheless, the findings of the study have led to the model of the interwoven Braid, Figure 2, which seeks to describe the complex relationship between the three strands of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, as patterns which reflect considerations of perceptions and experiences of spirituality, its influence on ministry, and what links exist between spirituality and ministry. Emergent themes exploring perceptions associated with spirituality and ministry are indicated by three strands, each constructed of three separate threads that are first braided together. Individual fibres within the threads would represent the diverse and unique characteristics of a personal spirituality, interconnected yet limited in tenacity.

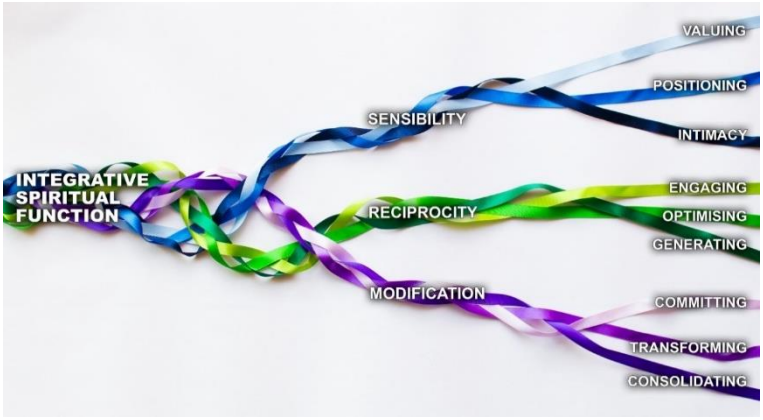


Figure 2 The Braid of Integrative Spiritual Function

Each strand of the Braid, in Figure 2 The Braid of Integrative Spiritual Function, represented by a different colour group, is of equal importance, indicated by relatively uniform thickness. Strands may be weakened, split, or extricated, by deficiency in any of the nine category threads. Deficiency does not mean the Braid is rendered completely ineffective, however, there may be weaknesses within a strand affected by deficiency. If multiple threads, or even whole strands, are

affected the stability of the Braid is threatened and the whole becomes compromised, potentially leading to failure in a particular strand, or the associated spiritual function in entirety.

Applying the concepts of strands and threads to those of the properties and qualities of ISF, the properties of Sensibility, Reciprocity, or Modification may be weakened or severed by deficiency in any of the qualities. The extent to which qualities are compromised by being severed, absent, or dormant will necessarily affect strength within the relevant property, and overall function of integrated spirituality; a concept related to exerting influence, suggested in 2.8 Spiritual Formation, page 39, in Anderson's work (2003). The word "strength" is used here to indicate tenacity, which denotes textile strength – a seemingly unfathomable quality analogous to specific strength, a concept that reflects the immeasurable (Moberg, 2010) of the "where?" and "why?" of spirituality in this study, rather than "how much?". Only by the qualities being braided together and then those into the properties, does the tenacity increase. Tenacity is important as a label indicating a growth in capacity of markers of character, attitude, and behaviour that are required as an ongoing process throughout life, rather than "arrival" at a measurable standard.

A further reason for the choice of the braid, as a model, is to represent the stability that is fundamental to its design. It is flexible yet strong, less prone to bends, snarls, and rotational characteristics of twisted cord, and maintains load bearing qualities despite some damage (McKenna, Hearle, & O'Hear, 2004; Mellor, 1997). These features are prized by those who rely on braided cord as their literal lifeline; such as arborists and mountain climbers, for example. In the context of this study, then, the braid offers an appropriate metaphor for the qualities and properties of the ISF. Data indicate that the qualities of each is significant to the overall efficacy and strength of the properties, and they, as an integrated whole, provide the support, sustenance, and also means for recovery, defence, resilience, and well-being of personal spirituality and capacity to minister in the pastoral arena with sensitivity and capability. The ISF describes a lifeline for health and growth in spirit, soul, and body, as all dimensions are transformed as a result of ministry, through the link with spirituality; following from intentional engagement and awareness. While ISF may occur outside of ministry, processes of self-awareness and integration

may be limited by the degree of holistic understanding of the dimensions. It is not only spirituality that is affected, but also the soul – mind, will, emotions - and the body, when formation occurs. The holistic effect of ISF develops the capacity for flexibility, maintains alignment, establishes stability, and supports functional capacity across all dimensions of the human person, thus fortifying and enriching the self and praxis; a process understood as formation.

The qualities related to the ISF of valuing, positioning, intimacy, etc., were scrutinised to be further informed by Grounded Theory, employing fundamental concerns (Charmaz, 2006), or elementary factors, to provide a framework of social, emotional, and behavioural elements founded on the data. The resulting descriptors translate the links between spirituality and ministry as a practical outworking based on the data. Reconsidering the Grounded Theory, in the light of elementary factors to inform significant aspects of the qualities, was vital to understanding the finer implications and associations of the data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 138). Compiling the elements into a table of Spiritual Integrative Function offers an example of how the qualities of ISF can inform discovery of preferred competencies of a volunteer pastoral care worker. In this study, the elementary factors suggested by Charmaz that are relevant to the context described are:

1) what form of consciousness prevails and embodies the quality;
2) what function is involved;
3) what action demonstrates the quality;
4) what constrains behaviours and directs choice in reference to the quality;
5) what provides relevant meaning;
6) what practice or habit demonstrates the quality;
7) what is the purpose of the quality;
8) what structure and process is shaped by the quality; and
9) how can deficiency in a quality be recognised?

In answering these questions, detailed insight into the data can provide some answers to the Research Questions stated in 1.5 The Rationale and Research Process, page 7, and provide a basis

for the implications to be apprehended. In considering the elementary factors, the properties and qualities of an integrated spirituality are observed within an individual as Markers, which may demonstrate indicators of capability and awareness, as suggested by the qualities of ISF. The following section introduces the Markers, relating the elementary factors to each of the qualities, as relevant to ISF properties of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification.

6.3.1 Sensibility.

Figure 3 The Strand of Sensibility

Shown as a strand of three blue threads, Figure 3 The Strand of Sensibility, denoting the properties of Valuing, Positioning, and Intimacy, expresses underlying factors that outline specific Markers relevant to qualities associated with spirituality and spiritual experiences.

6.3.1.1 Valuing self and other

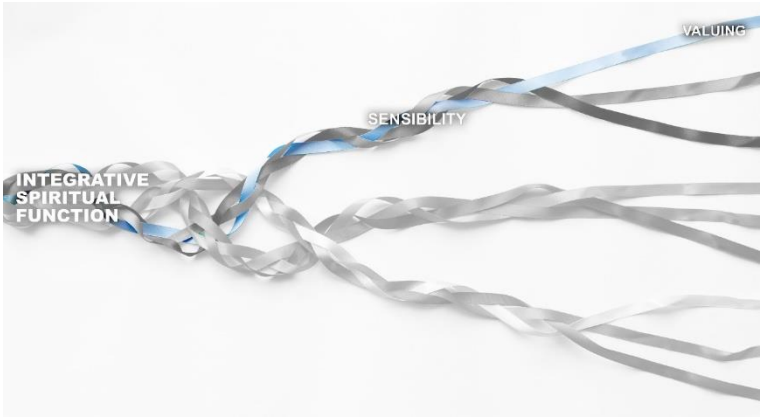


Figure 4 The Thread of Valuing

Sensibility includes the thread of Valuing self and other, Figure 4, which is displayed in an embodied consciousness of being supportive of self and other. Acknowledging self as sharing the human experience and offering harmonious support to other is an extension of the function of mercy, shown through actions of treating others with dignity and respect. These factors are based in the choice to ascribe worth to self and other, as God-created beings, finding meaning in sensitivity towards, and demonstrated in the practice of "preferring other", i.e., prioritising being aware of, sensitive to, and accommodating the needs of others. The purpose of Valuing self and other is to display compassion, as "…a ministry to the whole person…" (Purves, 1989, p. 27), which is "…person – and need – specific…" (Purves, 1989, p. 32), and is structured to gain knowledge and understanding of the human experience, through which spirituality is shaped by functioning with these qualities.

6.3.1.2 Positioning the heart

Figure 5 The Thread of Positioning

The strand of Sensibility is revealed by the thread of Positioning the heart, Figure 5, embodied as being reliable – a devoted endurance. This is exhibited as an attentiveness to service, serving others and God, and is demonstrated in action as hospitality, showing generosity and openness. The choice of an action is checked by humility, and meaning is found through helping others in whatever domain is necessary and to whatever capacity is possible. Positioning the heart is seen in the practice of being teachable – willing to learn – and is recognised by the fruition of practical

purposes. Discernment of the spiritual realm and motivations of the human person display the structure which Positioning the heart enables.

6.3.1.3 Intimacy

Figure 6 The Thread of Intimacy

Sensibility is also revealed by the thread Intimacy, Figure 6, embodied as connection with self, other, and God and shown in the function of giving – of self, time, and energy. Actions of Intimacy are associated with tolerance, as acceptance and patience with and of difference, which prompts intentional choice of words and actions. Meaning, in Intimacy, is established by presence, an availability to other "…with all of one's attention and energy….quality of relationship" (Purves, 1989, p. 38), and expressed through the practice of relating. The purpose of Intimacy is sharing of resources in all dimensions and domains, with wisdom revealing the structure of close and familiar processes.

6.3.2 Reciprocity.

Figure 7 The Strand of Reciprocity

Shown as a strand of three green threads in Figure 7, Reciprocity, denoting the properties of Engaging, Optimising, and Generating, expresses underlying principles that outline specific Markers relevant to qualities of mutual connection and influences of spirituality, spiritual growth, and ministry.

6.3.2.1 Engaging

Figure 8 The Thread of Engaging

Reciprocity is demonstrated, firstly, by the thread of Engaging in Figure 8, requiring a consciousness of being encouraging to self and other. The function of Engaging is exhortation, through appeal and inspiration, seen in actions of dedication as a result of a choice to be involved

in encounter. Meaning is established in Engaging by Cojourneying[8] – sharing the journey through exploring, guiding, building, and mentoring – which operates through the practice of including others. The purpose of Engaging is to encourage growth and is based in a structure of affirmation.

6.3.2.2 Optimising

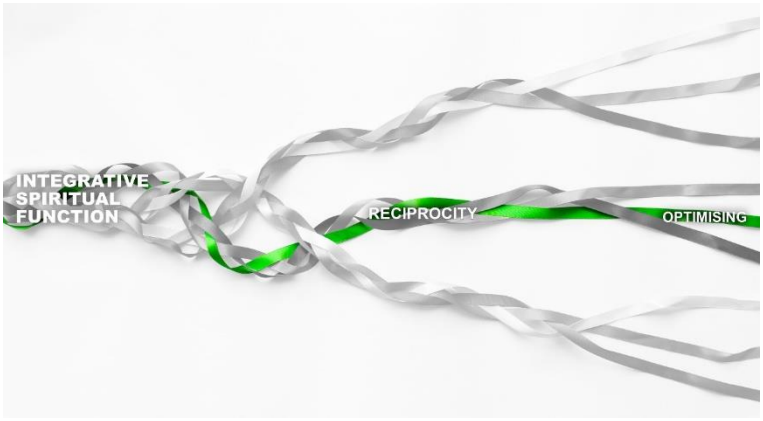


Figure 9 The Thread of Optimising

The second thread of Reciprocity is Optimising, Figure 9, which is embodied in a consciousness of facilitation – enabling and furthering mutual connection in spiritual experiences and influencing ministry. The function of Optimising is leadership, the style of which is based in the action of mutual sharing and focused on listening as a choice. Accountability provides meaning for Optimising and is demonstrated in fulfilling the responsible practice of comforting other. The purpose of Optimising is offering assistance, enacted in the process of consideration of others.

[8] Cojourneying. (Davy, 2007) Based on the concept of the Cojourner developed by Keith Davy. CUPress. Used with permission.

6.3.2.3 Generating

Figure 10 The Thread of Generating

The strand of Reciprocity is also expressed by the thread of Generating, Figure 10. This is displayed by a consciousness of encounter – experiencing a convergence of contact – with self, other, and God, for the specific function of interacting. The action of Generating is found in yielding, for by yielding self, the individual can learn from encounter. Preparation – planning and organisation – is important as a choice to facilitate meaning being experienced within fellowship. The practice of participating demonstrates the eagerness for Generating mutual encounter, the purpose of which is deeper understanding and discovery of self, other and God. This relies upon an operational process and experience of trust.

6.3.3 Modification.

Figure 11 The Strand of Modification

Shown as a strand of three purple threads in Figure 11, Modification, denoting the properties of Committing, Transforming, and Consolidating, expresses underlying principles that outline specific Markers relevant to qualities of formation and the links between spirituality and ministry.

6.3.3.1 Committing

Figure 12 The Thread of Committing

Modification is revealed in the thread of Committing, Figure 12, as an embodied consciousness of change – internally, within self, and externally in understanding and relational connection with other and God. When directed by change, the function of Committing is to gain insight, effecting and assisting change. The action of Committing is that of challenge – challenging personal mindsets and practices of the past and current belief systems – preparing self for the choice of reconciliation, not only with others, but within self in embracing a shift to a new reality, understood as truth. Meaning in this thread is conferred by graciousness – a benevolence and courtesy towards self and other in the difficult cycle of change. Committing is seen in the practice of perseverance and demonstrated in the maintaining of truth as a moral rather than ethical proof, a process that is shaped by advocacy.

6.3.3.2 Transforming

Figure 13 The Thread of Transforming

The strand of Modification is seen in the quality of Transforming, Figure 13, as a consciousness of inclusivity – the encompassing and acceptance of diversity – in order to function in unity; within self and with other and God. Displayed through the responsive action of adjusting language, physical proximity, or other behavioural cues to ensure safety and comfort for other, the constraining choice of Transforming is facilitation of restoration, either for self, or in other, as the priority. Taking responsibility for and consequences of one's own actions give meaning, while the practice of reflection can inform transformative opportunities. The purpose of Transforming is to become dependable – operating with consistency - particularly in the context of pastoral care ministry. The structure of Transforming is focused on increasing understanding of self, other, and God.

6.3.3.3 Consolidating

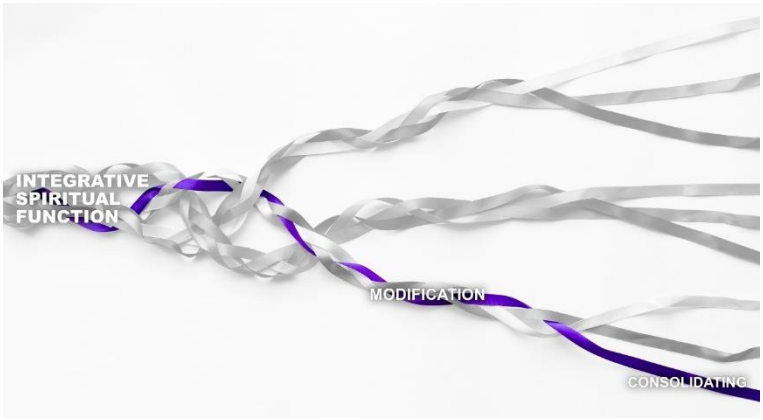


Figure 14 The Thread of Consolidating

Consolidating is a thread of Modification, Figure 14, that describes a consciousness of adaptation. A willingness to pursue revision and alteration of self is foundational to the function of improvement. The action involved in Consolidating is accommodation – regulation and amendment across the domains of spirit, soul, and body. This is the result of a choice for renewal, with meaning being found in Consolidating by refinement – improvement by attending to subtle and more nuanced aspects of thinking and behaviour. The practised habit of flexibility facilitates the purpose of becoming and openness based on a structure of intuition – an instinctual comprehension.

When combined, the qualities and properties describe ISF, a representation of an ideal state of spiritual awareness and practice. While individuals may not operate with a full complement of qualities described by Markers, these Markers act as indicators of explicit areas that clarify capability; areas derived from the data. The Grounded Theory of the mutual, reciprocal link existing between spirituality, ministry and formation of substantive spirituality suggests that there is a need to ascertain the capability of those volunteering in pastoral care ministry but the subjective nature of spirituality has precluded a standardised format. By using ISF as a foundation, the threads, that is the qualities, in dialogue with elementary factors, supply identifiers for a Marker Index, Table 2 The Integrative Spiritual Function Marker Index. Prior to explanation of the Table it is necessary to discuss Deficiency in greater detail.

6.4 Deficiency

Deficiency, in the context of ISF, is recognised as a sense of deficit in the individual, regardless of cause, and stands in contrast to, or even despite, the stability established by an integrated spiritual function. The properties of the ISF may be compromised in numerous ways and to a variety of levels – from dormancy, withdrawal, or abandonment - of a single quality or an entire property. If qualities or properties are non-functional, or impaired in function, integrative spirituality is altered, and functionality becomes limited.

Figure 15 Deficiency in the Integrative Spiritual Function, page 184, illustrates an example. If the property of Modification, for example, is inconsistent, as a result of perceptions, or damaged by choice of will or response to life experiences, the qualities of committing, transforming, or consolidating may become disconnected or restricted from exerting formational influence. In the case shown, transformation and consolidating adaptation have been disengaged, with consolidation ultimately disconnected, leaving a tenuous influence of Modification in the process of formation, understood as ISF. This is not to say that consolidating and, therefore, the strengthening of Modification, cannot be reengaged and integrated at any point in the journey of spiritual formation in the future. It will, however, require other properties and qualities to "bear the strain" for the duration, and explicit effort to reconnect the quality. Thus, for example, if further qualities such as Engaging or Optimising are disengaged then further weakening occurs in the processes of an integrated spiritual function, causing further strain on other threads and properties. The absence of multiple threads would, therefore, compromise the integrity of the integration of spirituality as a whole and the level of positive influence on the other dimensions of the person. If few threads remain functioning, the dimension of spirituality could be considered fragile or even inactive.

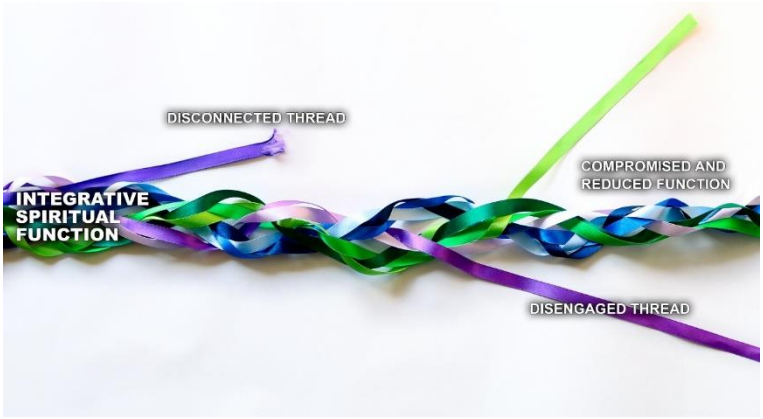


Figure 15 Deficiency in the Integrative Spiritual Function

Perceived deficiency can remove, inhibit, or discontinue properties or qualities, shown in Figure 15. Tenacity is determined by functioning in the properties and qualities, that is, spiritual strength and durability are subject to, and follow from, response and perception of the individual. An absence of intentional engagement or conscious awareness, self-censure of commitment or capacity, or a confused perspective of meaning and understanding can prohibit qualities from being drawn into the cohesive narrative that defines an integrated state of spirituality. Given the context of the study, within the Christian tradition, the model fits comfortably as a metaphor of stable strength, endurance, and durability, expressed in Ecclesiastes 4:12, "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken". Some concepts of the model are transferrable to other forms of spirituality, such as the model of ISF, the strands of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, and the qualities referred to as part of each ISF strand, though to what degree needs to be the subject of further research.

Given the inherent and intrinsic nature of spirituality, all properties should be considered relevant to the human person, regardless of awareness or worldview, though capacity to demonstrate ISF may well be problematic, in light of the effect of deficiency. As suggested by the data, ability to embody an integrated spirituality is founded on intentional engagement in a faith tradition and reciprocal encounter with an immanent God. Without these facets, conceivably only partial integration may be achieved. However, there is a Marker Index which can be used to define areas

of competence, or deficiency, that may be recognised and offer an indication of spiritual aptitude. The Marker Index is discussed further in 6.5, page 187.

By applying the final elementary factor, referred to earlier in 6.3 Integrative Spiritual Function , to the qualities associated with Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, Markers of deficiency can be recognised and indicate conditions associated with a compromised spiritual function. Just as the damage or removal of threads or strands within a braid can reduce tenacity and, therefore, efficiency for purpose, the loss or denial of qualities and properties of spirituality will diminish integrative function and, therefore, competence and efficacy in ministry.

The strand of Sensibility can be flawed by an absence of the quality of valuing self and others, displayed as insensitivity and indifference to the unique and distinctive worth of the individual, while any form of deficit in positioning the heart can be apparent in a disconnection and distraction towards others and God. A lack of intimacy with self, other, and God can be exhibited as unavailability and preoccupation, maintaining distance and barriers.

Inadequacy in the strand of Reciprocity can be shown by dismissive and disapproving responses to engaging with self, other, and God, with insufficient optimising of nurture resulting in inattention and thoughtlessness, and non-committal and evasive behaviours, responses and language revealing a lack of generating encounter.

Insufficiency in the strand of Modification can be recognised by a deficit of committing to change, exhibited as critical and pedantic reactions and conduct, while arrogance and opinionated demeanour can indicate opposition to transformation in all dimensions. A weakness in consolidating adaptation can be observed through inflexible and stubborn resistance.

Deficiency Markers are contrary indicators of the qualities. These, in conjunction with Markers derived from the previous elementary factors, produce 81 identifiers that are described in Table 2.

Table 2

The Integrative Spiritual Function Marker Index

ELEMENTARY FACTOR	Embodiment and consciousness	Function	Action	Choice and constraint	Meanings	Ritual and ceremony	Purpose	Structure and process	*Deficiency*
STRAND									
SENSIBILITY									
Valuing	Supportive	Merciful	Showing dignity and respect	Attributing worth	Sensitive	Preferring others	Compassionate	Knowledgeable	*Insensitive Indifferent*
Positioning	Reliable	Attentive	Hospitable	Humble	Helpful	Teachable	Practical	Discerning	*Disconnected Distracted*
Intimacy	Connected	Giving	Tolerant	Intentional	Present	Relating	Sharing resources	Wise	*Unavailable Preoccupied*
RECIPROCITY									
Engaging	Encouraging	Exhorting	Dedicated	Involved	Cojourneying[1]	Including others	Encouraging growth	Affirming	*Dismissive Disapproving*
Optimising	Facilitating	Leading	Mutually sharing	Listening	Accountable	Comforting	Assisting	Considerate	*Inattentive Thoughtless*
Generating	Encountering	Interacting	Yielded	Prepared	Fellowshipping	Participating	Discovering	Trustworthy	*Non-committal Evasive*
MODIFICATION									
Committing	Changing	Insightful	Challenged	Reconciling	Gracious	Persevering	Maintaining truth	Advocating	*Critical Pedantic*
Transforming	Inclusive	Unifying	Adjusting	Restoring	Responsible	Reflective	Dependable	Understanding	*Arrogant Opinionated*
Consolidating	Adaptive	Improving	Accommodating	Renewing	Refining	Flexible	Open	Intuitive	*Inflexible Stubborn*

[1] Cojourney. Keith Davy. Describing the relationship of Explorer, Guide, Builder, Mentor to others. Used by permission. CUPress.

6.5 SIFTable Marker Index

The Integrative Spiritual Function Marker Index lists the nine qualities, under the designated properties of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, in the left column, with Elementary Factors associated with the data being listed on the top row. The application of an elementary factor to a quality intersects at a Marker, interpreted from the data. For example, the quality of *optimising* intersects with the associated elementary factor of *action* at the Marker of *mutually sharing,* thus indicating how optimising may be observed in action, that is, through demonstrated mutual sharing in any appropriate dimension. As a further illustration, the quality of *committing* intersects with the elementary factor of *ritual* at the Marker of *persevering*, thus indicating committing requires perseverance to be exercised. If the quality of *valuing* intersects with the associated elementary factor of *deficiency*, the Markers will indicate an individual's manner and responses to be *insensitive* and/or *indifferent*.

The Marker Index supplies vocabulary as a means of utilising the information associated with ISF. Markers allied with each of the strands, and therefore qualities, are listed to gain an overview of anticipated attributes that would be expected as evidence of a spirituality that is integrative in function. In the context of volunteer pastoral care work, this vocabulary should provide a guide for consideration of potential candidates. As an example of how this may be used as an accessible system in the field, the table has been formatted for use as the Spiritual Integrative Function Table, or SIFTable, Table 3, page 188.

Table 3

SIFTable

Valuing self and other	**Positioning** the heart	**Intimacy** with self, other, and God	**Engaging** with self, other, and God	**Optimising** opportunities	**Generating** encounter	**Committing** to change	**Transforming** all dimensions	**Consolidating** formation
Supportive	Reliable	Connected	Encouraging	Facilitating	Encountering	Changing	Inclusive	Adaptive
Merciful	Attentive	Giving	Exhorting	Leading	Interacting	Insightful	Unifying	Improving
Showing dignity and respect	Hospitable	Tolerant	Dedicated	Mutually sharing	Yielded	Challenged	Adjusting	Accommodating
Attributing worth	Humble	Intentional	Involved	Listening	Prepared	Reconciling	Restoring	Renewing
Sensitive	Helpful	Present	Cojourneying[1]	Accountable	Fellowshipping	Gracious	Responsible	Refining
Preferring others	Teachable	Relating	Including others	Comforting	Participating	Persevering	Reflective	Flexible
Compassionate	Practical	Sharing resources	Encouraging growth	Assisting	Discovering	Maintaining truth	Dependable	Open
Knowledgeable	Discerning	Wise	Affirming	Considerate	Trustworthy	Advocating	Understanding	Intuitive
insensitive indifferent	*disconnected distracted*	*unavailable preoccupied*	*dismissive disapproving*	*inattentive thoughtless*	*non-committal evasive*	*critical pedantic*	*arrogant opinionated*	*inflexible stubborn*

[1] Cojourney. Keith Davy. Describing the relationship of Explorer, Guide, Builder, Mentor to others. Used by permission. CUPress.

Developed to provide an example of use for those overseeing the process of determining the potential of volunteer pastoral care workers in training, the Spiritual Integrative Function Table – SIFTable - can be used as an appraisal method. Often considered immeasurable, the nature of spirituality has been resistant to the need to identify attributes, whether positive or negative, particularly with respect to aspects of competency. Markers of spiritual function, as an integrative influence on the dimensions of spirit, soul, and body in the context of formation, were developed in response to significant factors revealed by research, which gave voice to the positive experiences of perceptions and growth of spirituality, as well as implied deficiencies, in conjunction with ministry. By reflecting on the evidence of behaviours, attitudes, actions, words, and interactions observed in the conduct of a candidate throughout training sessions, and through feedback from others connected with the candidate, the overseer is able to record their responses and considerations by indicating the relevant attribute Markers on the SIFTable. Columns and rows of SIFTable are not cumulative, nor do they ascend or descend in order of precedence. SIFTable Markers are illustrations of concepts to offer an overview of the candidate, showing areas of strength and weakness (deficiencies are indicated by *italics*) in spiritual function and capacity for integration. Questions such as "What am I seeing and hearing here?" "Are they showing…?" "Are they being…?" Or a statement such as "I see this person is…" will direct overseer observation of the candidate. For example, seeing the candidate being sensitive and compassionate and showing others dignity and respect are evidences of the quality of **Valuing** self and others. Likewise, demonstrating wisdom in their dealings with others, being tolerant, intentional, and present are some indications of capacity for **Intimacy**. Similarly, capacity for listening and comforting, plus a willingness to be accountable, display evidence of ability for **Optimising** opportunities of encounter. By circling, crossing, or ticking the Markers, a candidate's aptitude to operate in properties of SENSIBILITY, RECIPROCITY, and MODIFICATION will become apparent; as will *deficiencies*. These three properties are identified as the features necessary for ISF, a model of dynamic and holistic formation that influences personal spiritual growth and ministry efficacy. The greater the number of positive Markers, the greater the level of ISF.

It is not expected that all Markers will be identified as being present. However, as a guide, it is suggested that approximately 50% (36) of all positive Markers be present for a candidate to be considered as having a basic level of ISF, indicating the candidate has some pastoral capacity. This would suggest there is potential, but further personal growth and sensitivity would be required before the candidate could provide safe and efficient ministry. By maintaining this as a confidential record, progress and integration can be observed over time. Approximately 75% (54) of all positive Markers would be desired for a candidate to be approved for pastoral care ministry. This would suggest the candidate is operating at a moderate level of ISF and, would therefore, have developed the personal spiritual capability to provide stable pastoral care ministry. It would then be expected that approximately 90% (65) of all Markers would be preferred for a candidate to be considered to operate at a high level of ISF, capable of supporting leadership and training responsibilities within pastoral care. These percentages are suggested as indicators of capability and should be considered carefully in the light of identified deficiencies, particularly if those deficiencies persist over a period of training and time. Ultimately, those overseeing potential candidates could use SIFTable as a guide, defining attributes and capabilities to assist in identifying competency for pastoral care ministry volunteers in the Christian tradition. Other faith traditions and secular organisations could find SIFTable helpful in identifying Markers of ISF for potential volunteer pastoral care workers, though accepted indicator levels may require further consideration to obtain applicable ranges within the given context.

6.5.1 Using SIFTable.

It is suggested that a leader or overseer of pastoral carers would undertake the following steps to make the best use of SIFTable.

1) Taking approximately 10 minutes to assess an individual candidate, using insight gained through professional and personal experience over time, and from numerous interactions with the candidate, the pastoral care overseer, in private, should reflect on their observations of attitudes, behaviours, opinions, and actions of the candidate as objectively as possible.

2) In an organisational context, the reflective process may include other leadership team members, to include professional and personal experience of all those who have 'worked' with the candidate. In the context of the Christian tradition, this would involve discernment associated with prayerful communication with God. Some discussion may be necessary to ascertain team responses. In this case, confidentiality regarding the team discussion would be recommended, and outcomes not revealed to the potential candidate.
3) SIFTable is then utilised by the overseer by signifying (in whatever form is preferred, for example using a tick, or a cross, or circling beside or over a word etc), each and every appropriate attribute that is known, observed, or has been reported by others. It is suggested these be indicators of yes/no responses, not graded or quantified in any form. The attribute is observed, or it is not.
4) On completing SIFTable, an overview of attributes, competencies, deficiencies, or areas still requiring growth should be apparent as a result of which Markers are seen to be present and which are not.
5) Notes to clarify the resulting observations may be made at this point, in any location on the printed sheet. For example, the number of attributes signified present, those that are absent, or those which are deficiencies.
6) It is suggested that a marked SIFTable be stored securely, away from public access, to protect confidentiality of the information. SIFTable may then be used as a comparative record of further growth of a candidate, and an indicator of competency for involvement in pastoral care or promotion in a given organisational role.

6.5.2 Feedback on the use of SIFTable.

As the heuristic tool of SIFTable was indicated by the findings, on the basis of participant comments, the researcher decided that it was useful to employ a trial application to provide constructive feedback. Therefore, the tool of SIFTable was retrospectively applied to two participants from this study, in this case, via sections of the interview transcript regarding

concepts of spirituality, ministry, and formation, which were addressed in 5.2 Observations, page 122. It is hoped that by using the researcher's field experience and her in-depth knowledge of the context, an application of SIFTable to the transcripts may enable better comprehension of how SIFTable can be enacted, and what might be a suitable interpretation of the outcomes.

Viewing a potential candidate through written responses would not be the standard scenario to utilise SIFTable, as in a "real life" situation, further observation would be required to clarify the presence of possible attributes. SIFTable is designed with the potential to gauge competency through observed evidence. However, providing an exemplar of its use may demonstrate the validity of SIFTable by revealing relevant attributes of a "potential" candidate.

By comparing statements from the transcript made by the first participant (Ppt 1) with the attributes listed in SIFTable, an indication of attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and actions may be ascertained. For example, Ppt 1 acknowledges, "I guess I would have to say that I had a sense of Calling". Hypothetically, this statement could indicate a level of commitment to God incorporating attributes of being: connected, intentional, relating, assisting, humble, dedicated, involved, yielded, and challenged. A further statement, "I was searching for something that would change. My life needed change" could indicate a commitment to change that included attributes of being: insightful, persevering, participating, discovering, reflective, and open.

Ppt 1's statement, "Because it changed my life…right from the beginning there was a sense of hope", this could be interpreted as indicating attributes of: changing, improving, renewing, teachable, listening, encountering, trustworthy, adaptive, and flexible. Ppt 1 then acknowledges, "I felt like I had been given so much hope that I wanted to give that to anybody who would take it", which could indicate attributes of being: merciful, compassionate, attributing worth, helpful, practical, giving, present, encouraging, Cojourneying, affirming, facilitating, mutually sharing, comforting, assisting, interacting, fellowshipping, restoring, and understanding. The statement, "an increase in my spiritual growth or a broadening in my spirituality has led to a greater ability to listen" could indicate Ppt 1 has attributes of being: discerning, attentive, sensitive, knowledgeable, tolerant, reconciling, adjusting, adaptive, refining, and intuitive.

Ppt 1 also acknowledges, “my spirituality is the hose that, hopefully, will connect between God and the person I am ministering to. And the bigger that hose is the more hope and healing a person at the other end of the hose can get”, which could indicate attributes of being: supportive, preferring other, wise, exhorting, leading, interacting, gracious, advocating, and responsible. In stating, “there are patterns, and strategies, and plans with ministry that are really helpful….They create the timelessness and unchangeability of God in a flexible situation that is unique for that person sitting in front of you”, Ppt 1 shares an attitude and understanding that could indicate being: accommodating, inclusive, maintaining truth, dignity and respect, including others, dependable, and encouraging growth.

From this example, Ppt 1 shows a high level of ISF, with 67 of the 72 positive attributes marked. In actual situation of training, Ppt 1 may score higher still, as attributes of hospitality, exhorting, and prepared are difficult to gauge without practical evidence. The high score indicated by SIFTable suggests that perhaps Ppt1 was operating at a role level well below his/her competency within the organisation.

Comparing the statements, from the transcript of another participant (Ppt 2), with the attributes listed in SIFTable revealed a different level of competence. Ppt 2 stated, “____ invited me to come” which could indicate being: connected, relating, involved, interacting, and fellowshipping. Ppt 2 also acknowledged, “It has definitely increased my ability to hear God. And be sensitive to what He is doing” possibly indicating attributes of being: sensitive, discerning, humble, listening, encountering, participating, changing, insightful, refining, and open.

In stating, “…my eyes have been opened to there is more than what you can see with your senses. In a sense my spiritual eyes have been opened, my spiritual ears have been opened….getting more sensitive to what God is doing”, Ppt 2 reveals possible attributes of being: attentive, knowledgeable, intentional, dedicated, discovering, challenged, adjusting, understanding, adaptive, and accommodating.

Unfortunately, there were no further quotes from Ppt 2 in the relevant sections from 5.2 Observations, page 122. It may be conjectured that further attributes could have been observed or identified if there had been further disclosures. However, despite these limitations, it would appear from the above Markers, Ppt 2 would show only a basic level of ISF, showing 25 of the 72 positive attributes, indicating a lower level of competency due to key areas of growth required. One conclusion is that they were assigned a role that could possibly be considered well above their level of competency, indicated by SIFTable. Some form of mentoring or close supervision, including focused formation, would seem appropriate for those operating in roles indicated as being above their competency, while those operating in roles below their indicated competency may benefit from opportunities to operate in roles with greater responsibilities.

Using the above process in an initial evaluative loop analogous of active enquiry, the researcher applied SIFTable to the rest of the participants. This proved to be a useful process as it provided a further level of data which corroborated the Markers as examples of indicators of competency strengths and weaknesses thereby suggesting a level of reliability of the operative levels of ISF. In general, the results of this reflective process indicated 18 participants were operating below their potential for roles, according to the Markers. Nine participants were operating at a comparable level to their competency, and 1 other was operating in a role above their competency level.

For the participants of this study, Consolidating, Transforming, and Generating, in successive order, were the top three threads indicated as requiring further growth and Formation. That the largest proportion of growth required lay within the strand of Modification may indicate that Formation is difficult to assimilate, even within a context where major supporting factors of Sensibility and Reciprocity exist. Further research would be helpful in the pursuit of relevant implications of this finding.

The deficiencies that were rated most highly within the participants were disconnection, preoccupation, and distraction. Personal perceptions, opinions, and priorities seemed to affect the

capacity of participants to remain present and focused within a ministry session. Further exploration of these and other mindsets may reveal further implications for training.

The top two elementary factors that indicated need for further growth were embodiment, and action. Dynamic operation in a deeply relational and incarnational spirituality seemed to be a challenge for these participants, even though they may be considered to be experienced and well trained in their field, and shows potential areas where further work is needed within the organisation, and in research regarding training and Formation.

6.5.3 Further trialling of the use of SIFTable.

Further qualitative feedback was obtained from seven experienced pastoral overseers who agreed to trial SIFTable, six within the organisation of VMTC, and one religious leader in the Christian tradition but outside of the organisation. Their feedback discussed below suggested that SIFTable showed potential to be a valuable tool, while being simple and easy to use.

The feedback offered from those experienced in leadership in pastoral care ministry attested to SIFTable's usefulness as an informative tool in gaining a comprehensive overview of candidate suitability for pastoral care. For instance, one well Experienced Person (hereafter EP) 1 wrote, "it is comprehensive and thorough, covering most aspects of character, and behavioural patterns….in having access to, and following a chart such as this, would lead us beyond what we first see as competencies and attributes, to looking deeper into the various aspects of a person's character and capabilities, and to what potential may be found that could be developed. For example, is the person just passive, lacking desire or interest, or does the person show tendency to know it all, and therefore, possibly [be] unteachable?!"

SIFTable was also considered useful to discover areas where targeted formation could assist in spiritual nurturing and growth to support effective and safe ministry, thus leading to ongoing improvement of efficacy of a pastoral care organisation. EP 1 considered that SIFTable "could be very useful in determining someone suitable for release into a ministry position", as did EP 6 by stating, "[SIFTable was] a good gauge for competencies." EP 3 suggested that SIFTable may be

applicable outside of the specific context in which it was developed by stating it was, “easy to use on any one-off appraisal for Leadership position, or for on-going assessment of progress, even in any secular domain….other faiths could find it non-threatening, useful, a very good 'guide'”, while EP 2 echoed the generalisability to different contexts in, “using two of the pastoral carers (hospital visitors) as “guinea pigs””. EP 2 acknowledged that, in the hospital context, “…matching the attributes of each person with the words on the table was straightforward and comprehensive.” EP 6 considered SIFTable, “could be understood and used for application in other organisations.”

The comprehensive list was seen to facilitate direction for the process of deliberating on “suitability” of a candidate in the initial stages of involvement in pastoral care, or for promotion, by defining particular qualities, or attributes. EP 2 said, “It certainly is a comprehensive list of attributes to be intently looking at, or, to look for a candidate’s possible development in the future….I could see it being implemented to SIFT candidates.” EP 3 believed that SIFTable, “covered the subject deeply with the chosen wording.” EP 4 liked, “the idea of being able to [label] some of those characteristics of people that [you cannot] quite put a finger on. For instance, somebody who you do not know all that well and are considering for release may be very likeable, while leaving you with a slight uneasiness. This uneasiness may be discernment, or it may just be something you have not been able to sit down and define yet. For cases like that, this is a useful tool.”

The negative attributes were seen to be just as helpful by EP 5, “The negative attributes were very useful indeed. These really help to bring perspective. I think it would be very interesting to try this tool in a number of contexts and see how they fly in real scenarios.” EP 2 also felt, “It will be a good tool!”

Other comments from EP 4 indicated that the recommended “…percentages worked out quite effectively”, while EP 1, EP 2, and EP 3 confirmed the “Layout and ease of use are very good”, “I found it easy use”, and that the “…explanation as to how it ought to 'work' is very clear.” EP 6

suggested that training in the use of SIFTable would provide the most effective utilisation of the tool and avoid possible misunderstanding or misuse.

The feedback from this trial suggested that SIFTable had the potential to be useful in identifying and describing the deeper and various aspects of a person's character and capabilities and, therefore, could be helpful in determining if a person was suitable for pastoral care, or promotion to a particular role. It was also considered that SIFTable would provide an easily utilised tool for one-off appraisal or on-going assessment of progress of an individual, possibly even outside of faith contexts. By identifying a range of attributes and qualities that are perceived as both necessary and beneficial to a fully functional and efficient workplace environment SIFTable was considered by the trialling team to be comprehensive and thorough.

By proposing the tool of SIFTable there is an acknowledgement of the need for further research to test for validity. The tool was proposed as a suggestion for further study to be investigated. However, it was useful for the Researcher to appraise for practicality and, therefore, it was trialled with a small group of people, just to obtain feedback. A description of this feedback was added to the discussion to show how this could be applied to future research. No claims were made regarding the findings of the trialling process.

The feedback from both processes discussed suggests that organisations appointing volunteer pastoral care workers may find it helpful to consider specific factors that align themselves to aspects of maturity in the spiritual condition and training of potential candidates, as Formation.

6.6 Recommendations

Following the development of the ISF and further clarification of qualities that describe a well-formed spirituality in the SIFTable, the following recommendations are suggested for organisations considering appointing volunteer Christian pastoral care workers.

6.6.1 Contextual definition.

There is a presumption that we all mean the same thing when the word "spirituality" is used. However, this has been shown not to be the case. Most perceive spirituality as positive in contrast to religion, but some do not. The data shows religion is generally viewed as being regulatory expecting adherence to prescribed behaviour, often in contrast to the core of the spiritual dimension. Those who see themselves as spiritual but not religious equate religion with negative concepts. This is regardless of gender, age, role, or denomination. However, the term spirituality has been used to describe an intimate and intrinsic relationship with God (deSouza & Watson, 2016), or Trinity in the context of the Christian tradition of VMTC, despite what has been deemed as misappropriation of the term by secular and non-faith belief systems. From these findings, then:

> *It is important that a common understanding of the term "spirituality", as a faith statement, is represented within any given Christian organisation as an agreed reference point.*
>
> - A belief statement regarding a unified, or at least general, understanding of the concept of spirituality should be developed within the context of the organisation to avoid confusion or misunderstanding of its members.

6.6.2 Competency Markers.

Some volunteer pastoral care workers struggle to articulate their experiences of spirituality because of the disunity in the understanding of the concept of spirituality, which may be mirrored in a lack of confidence within the training context. Lack of articulation can be mistaken as lack of understanding. The reverse is also true, constant and voluble articulation can be mistaken as extreme understanding.

> *Knowledge of a potential candidate for promotion (to any role) should entail an understanding of personal beliefs, motivations, and heart attitude of the candidate;*

something that is demonstrated over time and can be gauged by application of the SIFTable.

- Those in leadership of volunteer pastoral carers should err on the side of caution in appointing candidates for roles, rather than defer to the tyranny of urgency. This crucial step could circumvent inappropriate promotion by gaining knowledge of a potential candidate, ensuring recipient and pastoral carer's well-being and safety. Any promotion should entail an understanding of competencies such as personal beliefs, motivations, and heart attitude of the candidate; made clearer by referring to the SIFTable indicators.

6.6.3 Reflective evaluation.

A common response expressed by these volunteer pastoral care workers, to questions associated with a link between spirituality and ministry, communicates an increased ability to hear and respond to the Holy Spirit. It suggests that pastoral carers are not experiencing or learning this skill in the context of their church or fellowship, and possibly only employ it when involved in ministering in the voluntary role within the stated organisation. This may also be problematic within other organisations.

There is a need for some form of education in the application and employment of skills learned within the organisation for personal daily life beyond Training or Ministry sessions; that is, undergoing regular submission to the pastoral care process of the organisation and showing demonstrated practice of relevant ministry principles within their personal life in an ongoing process of transformation.

6.6.4 Debriefing and training.

There is a reciprocal relationship between spirituality and ministry.

The cyclical influence of spirituality and ministry is a process increased by intentional engagement. Self-censure of personal spirituality can negate ministry effectiveness.

More deliberate and focused debriefing opportunities within training may circumvent self-censure.

- Opportunities for debriefing should be reviewed, clarified, taught, and provided to those advancing in training.

6.6.5 Providing opportunities for praxis.

Volunteers referred to the "confidence" they gained as a result of ministry affecting their spirituality; that is, an increase in confidence to do, to trust, to act, to hear. There is a validation that occurs within the processes, as well as within the spiritual dimension, that provides an environment for incentive.

Appropriate training nurtures the spirit. The patterns of ministry, and policies of the organisation, in partnership with God, create an exponential effect. Personal resilience may be increased by opportunities to minister.

6.6.6 Ongoing training.

Summarised perceptions were that spirituality was about the heart, ministry was about relationship, not rules, and both need to be in balance. This balance is maintained in ministry by spiritual formation.

Spiritual formation has the potential to influence ministry effectiveness and resilience in life; for individuals and communities. Training programs that facilitate ongoing opportunities for spiritual growth and ministry practice, in conjunction with theoretical instruction, will provide exponential effect.

6.6.7 Gender differences.

The study showed a significant gender difference regarding the outcome of the reciprocal relationship of spirituality and ministry, in that males tend to learn relational skills and women become empowered.

Personal transformation and formation of the whole person occurs due to the presence of God, as Holy Spirit, facilitated by ministry and the practices of the ministry, via inculcation into the volunteer pastoral care worker's daily life. Recognition and training of different gender perceptions may assist in increasing ministry capability.

6.6.8 Clarifying and applying.

Further opportunities to train and develop personal spirituality will have the greatest impact on ISF for volunteer pastoral care workers. It is recommended that by creating opportunities to learn how to apply the principles involved in ministry, in everyday learning and living the lifestyle, ministry capability will increase in conjunction with spiritual formation.

Further work should be done in addressing approved capabilities, or competencies within an organisation with a view to clarifying, instructing, and improving capability levels within the ministry.

- Organisational competency statements associated with gauging spirituality are often vague and ambiguous. Further clarification of what constitutes a demonstration of the skills and gifts of an integrated and competent volunteer pastoral care worker can be clarified with the use of the attributes listed in SIFTable.

6.6.9 Further training.

An organisation should continue to maintain its appointment of volunteer workers but provide more specific formative training and support for those who desire to avail themselves of the opportunity. This includes those that may already operate in the field of pastoral care as volunteers, even those that might be deemed 'experienced', as formation is not guaranteed by time. Logistics for options pertinent to the organisation need to be researched within its context.

- Options for efficient dissemination and accessibility of any program should be explored by those involved in developing further training for formation within an organisation.

6.7 Summary

This chapter has explained the amalgamation of the substantive theories of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification into a Grounded Theory of Integrative Spiritual Function, and an associated Marker Index developed into the SIFTable.

What was found here was that age and maturity being considered equivalent, intensity of spiritual experience being equated with a singular event, and spirituality being confined to profound or major "religious" events were some constructs which have been challenged, as was the idea of undertaking spiritual disciplines to produce spirituality. The everyday and relational nature of spirituality was an ongoing and, to all intents and purposes, infinite journey, regardless of age, story, or knowledge. These ideas, and others resonated with the participants in this study, who said that involvement in the research was a reflexive and personally informative process. The resulting implications and recommendations suggest that opportunities for formation for volunteer pastoral care workers will increase ministry efficacy and personal well-being.

Change that endures is seen to be the result of the equipping that occurs through the process of ministering to others and being ministered to, through the conduit of spirituality. The passion of the participants, and an understanding of the need for personal wholeness to provide sensitive and effective care to all dimensions of the human person is testimony to the need for formation of those who volunteer in pastoral care work, for the spiritual benefit of those receiving and providing ministry.

Operating in pastoral care, when reliant on intellectual reason rather than spiritual connection, is an unrealistic mission and rejects the idea of spirituality as a holistic and integrating influence. Awareness and sensitivity to the spiritual realm in the context of the ordinary and everyday

spontaneous encounter with God is an expression of intimacy that directs the volunteer towards purposeful commitment to self, other, and God, and capability in ministry.

Not to be considered a passive process, the intentional engagement of spirituality generates opportunities for growth and transformation in response to the immanence of God. A totally causal relationship exists between spirituality and ministry resulting in increased confidence, understanding and realisation of the authentic self, and commitment to change. A sense of Calling affirms and inspires the individual to undergo and facilitate transformation, even in times of trial or distress; which is considered to build endurance and resilience across all dimensions. There is a stability that increases and is pervasive in its influence.

The visual model of a Braid, described and explained earlier in 6.3 Integrative Spiritual Function, page 171, provides a representative model for the process and consolidation of spiritual formation, and depicts the iterative nature of the research and the topic under study, thereby leading to the advancement of new concepts (Kelly et al., 2008). Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification are properties of ISF, a model of pre-eminent spirituality, which provides a framework of qualities preferred, described by a Marker Index of attributes represented in the SIFTable, to discover the competencies of a volunteer pastoral care worker. The stability developed by ISF can be reduced or negated by any sense of deficiency, such as self-censure or an absence of qualities and properties. How an individual perceives their spirituality has a direct effect on the stability or deficiency of ISF, influencing growth and capability in both spirituality and ministry. Ability to operate proficiently in most qualities of ISF is enhanced by ministry which, in turn, increases the tenacity of attributes associated with an integrated spirituality. Together, an integrated spirituality and responsiveness to ministry provide the foundation for formation in the volunteer pastoral care worker.

This study has provided information that can inform future practice and contribute to advancing the quality of care provided by pastoral care organisations, in training and facilitating volunteers. Further, the ISF and SIFTable provide options to enable clarification of descriptors associated with the spiritual awareness and abilities that are aspired to as hallmarks of competent praxis.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Review

The Research Problem of how volunteer pastoral care workers perceive and experience spirituality and what effect it has on their ministry praxis inspired this exploration of the subjective topic in order to discover what implications might inform future training and formation. In this study thirty participants from an interdenominational volunteer ministry in the Christian tradition were interviewed and data were informed by Grounded Theory to explore subjective spiritual experiences, spiritual nurturing, and links between spirituality and ministry, to discover implications for training. Emerging themes identified three strands of characteristics, called properties in this study, which were the embodiment of an integrated spirituality. Properties associated with strands of spiritual *Sensibility*, capacity for *Reciprocity*, and response to *Modification* were revealed, and were combined to form Integrative Spiritual Function (ISF) which gave stability and direction to life. ISF was pre-eminent to formation and effective ministry, and integrative for the whole person. A strong reciprocal relationship was found to exist between a stable or integrated spirituality and the ability to minister, indicating a negation of ability could occur due to deficiency of awareness and engagement of the spiritual dimension. In dialogue with elementary factors, the concept of ISF also revealed attribute Markers of competency for pastoral care work, which were further developed into SIFTable as a potential tool to be utilised in pastoral care contexts.

7.2 Findings and Their Significance

This study was situated within a voluntary Christian ministry which aims to facilitate the healing of lives and relationships with self, other and God. Therefore, it centred on VMTC pastoral care workers who carry out the ministry on a voluntary basis. Identifying attributes of an integrated spirituality that supports Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, and competence for ministry assists in discovering areas where formation, the constant process of internal transformation and training can contribute to efficacious and safe praxis for volunteer pastoral care workers.

Using Grounded Theory methodology to interpret the data collected from semi-structured interviews, themes defining spirituality, spiritual experiences, spiritual nurturing, effects of spirituality on ministry, and links between spirituality and ministry were discovered. This study sought to explore the following research question:

> What are the perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing in volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry and the implications of those perceptions on spiritual formation and training of volunteers?

There were four sub-questions which provided the basis of the interviews with volunteer pastoral care workers and the answers were analysed to reveal the following key findings:

- How do volunteer pastoral care workers perceive and experience spirituality?

In general, the participants perceived spirituality as encounter with the Trinitarian God, as an ongoing dynamic practice, and foundational to their being. Spiritual maturity is not a matter of chronological age but, rather, a result of reciprocal and intimate connection with self, other, and God. Spiritual experience occurs in the everyday, as an intentionally engaged lifestyle and spiritual disciplines are a *result of* a relational and maturing spirituality. Spirituality is a spontaneous and transformative state, condition, and process that can be negated by perceived deficiency within the individual, or by lack of awareness.

- What factors influence their spiritual growth?

Ministering to others, and being ministered to, increases spiritual growth and is the result of intentional engagement across the three dimensions of spirit, soul, and body, achieved through the aspect of spirituality in dialogue with the domains of self, other, creation, and God. An awareness and sensitivity to spirituality, and the needs of others, produces a desire for personal wholeness, which drives choices and also receptivity to everyday spontaneous occurrences, seen as having spiritual significance. The resulting spiritual growth is predicted to effect sensitive and competent

ministry by developing Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification as an Integrative Spiritual Function necessary for formation.

- How does their spirituality influence their ministry?

Described as a mutually reciprocal relationship, spirituality and ministry are inextricably linked with the purpose of spiritual growth and competency in ministry. One is dependent on the other, and an integrated spirituality is the essential element that influences the volunteer towards purposeful commitment to self, other, and God, and capability in ministry. The relationship between spirituality and ministry is totally dependent. Spiritual growth occurs as a result of involvement in ministry, and also the submission to regular ministry, which then nurtures spiritual growth. Spirituality was revealed as the conduit which enhanced individual practice and sensitivity to others through spiritual growth.

- What are the links between spirituality, ministry, and formation?

A causal relationship is seen to exist between spirituality and effective ministry and formation. Volunteers endure individually unique journeys which produce transformation to their personal lives, relationships, and pastoral ministry, as a result of change inculcated from experiences. Spiritual growth, competency in ministry, and formation operate as a constant ebb and flow of reciprocal influence, increasing stability and integrative spiritual functioning of the individual.

Spiritual experiences are not seen as formation in themselves. Generally, a reflective process and acceptance of speculated change is necessary. A complex system of paradigms is affected within an individual in the process of discovering different reasonings and meanings. The experiences of spirituality and formation seem reliant on and occur through a personal lens. However, spirituality plays a significant role in the process as an integrative factor that enables maturation of the human person. Adaptation initiates a process of further transformation across the three dimensions of the human person.

Embodying a relational spirituality appears to be difficult, even for spiritually well-integrated persons, regardless of gender differences. While males testify to growth in relational aptitude and females bear witness to growth in confidence, holistic formation relies on the totally dependent relationship between spirituality and ministry, as a catalyst to awareness and sensitivity in the spiritual dimension. Such awareness and sensitivity provide a stable foundation for intuitive response to God's immanence, thus filling any perceived "gap" of human insufficiency. Equally, relying on logic and intellectual reason to minister pastorally is contrary to the concept of ministering spiritually, as a holistic and integrating influence.

7.3 Relevance of Literature and Applicability to Other Contexts

The findings of this study corroborate much of the existing literature. A substantive spirituality is the result of cultivating a relational lifestyle of connection with Other, as others and God, and is defined by both/and paradigms, such as the valuing self and other, positioning the heart, and intimacy correlated to Sensibility, and an engaging with Other, optimising encounters, and generating connection allied with Reciprocity. The study affirms the literature that spirituality is more than a connection, being perceived as an immanent nearness almost to the point of indwelling, resonant with Daley, Gockel, and Lawrence (Brother Lawrence, 2009/1692; Daley, 2009; Gockel, 2009). Spirituality and pastoral care, in this study, are not viewed as an intellectual exercise, but acknowledge sensory modes beyond cognitive processes as the means through which pastoral care is facilitated and demonstrated in an attitude of intentional awareness and engagement in the dimension, within the day-to-day experience of life. The purposeful commitment in response to God is a consequence of emotional and spiritual motivation, such as described by Cole, and ongoing state that pervades all of life (Cole, 2010). This view stands in contrast to the idea of spirituality being incomprehensible in the ordinariness of life. However, deficiency in spirituality, perceived or otherwise, causes a gap between expectations and experiential being, affecting confidence and competency in ministry and personal life.

This research indicates that definitions of spirituality which are divorced from a faith tradition, in an effort to be inclusive, can cause confusion and lead to ambiguity for many, such as those described by Barnes and Brugman (Barnes, 2012; Brugman, 2012). This study was based on an understanding of spirituality which encompassed religion inclusively, but it also exceeded the functional aspect of 'doing', associated with religion, by expressing the experiential core of self as 'being'. Ministry, and pastoral care, is the practical outworking of that 'being' applied to the real world. Agreeing with concepts suggested by King, 'being' was more important than doing (King, 2009) and the application of 'being' was recognised as an orientation of the heart, in keeping with Mitroff and Moberg (Mitroff et al., 2009; Moberg, 2010). As volunteer pastoral carers exhibit their 'being' through their ministry, the findings of this study point to the need for some scrutiny to be undertaken to assess personal wholeness, well-being and competence of individuals involved in pastoral care as volunteers. Ability to positively respond to relational contexts is not merely a skills-based practice but relies on the spiritual and psychological health of the individual minister. The ability for relational intimacy was recognised as essential and in keeping with SCA Standards of Practice (Spiritual Care Australia, 2014). Chronological age is not necessarily constituent of this ability, as linear progression misrepresents the non-hierarchical journey of integrated dimensions of personhood (spirit, soul, and body) under the influence of spirituality, understood as formation. Being committed to the journey of change, being transformed in all three dimensions, and consolidating adaptations, are aligned with Modification as a property of an integrated spirituality and are indispensable for the process of formation.

The literature review informed the selection of descriptive labels, enabling identification of specific properties and attributes that qualify spiritual growth and competency for ministry. This was a valuable product of the data analysis. Understanding personal spiritual growth and its influence on capacity, sensitivity, and efficacy of pastoral care gives direction to observing and distinguishing a 'maturing spirituality', seen in Integrative Spiritual Function. Indicators of strengths and weaknesses, in a candidate for volunteer pastoral care, suggest that guidelines, for releasing of volunteer pastoral care workers to their ministry, might benefit from clear definitions

of competency and associated attributes. To provide safe and efficient ministry, volunteer pastoral care workers may profit from receiving pastoral care, as part of the process of formation, as much as facilitating pastoral care.

Aspects of this study may be of interest to leadership of pastoral care organisations and religious leaders responsible for training volunteer pastoral care workers. It is hoped that recommendations for organisations, and implications for training, will benefit organisations and individuals by providing insight into the deficiencies and strengths of volunteer pastoral care workers, which influence ministry competency.

People developing formation programs, and volunteer pastoral care workers themselves, may find SIFTable helpful in gauging progress, deficiency, and competency for ministry. An individual or organisation that considers pastoral care, or 'soul care', important as part of a holistic approach to well-being and resilience may discover language and concepts to assist in the understanding of an Integrative Spiritual Function and its effect; find suggestions regarding fundamentals for training programs useful; and/or gain insight into the subjective nature of spirituality and its practice in ministry.

7.4 Contribution of the Research

This study presents several concepts to add to the overall discussion and understanding of spirituality. It also addresses some experiences of spirituality, influences of spirituality on ministry, and links with ministry and formation.

1) The model of Integrative Spiritual Function is a visible representation of the multiple and complex constructs that combine to form a stable and maturing spirituality. By adding description to some concepts associated with spirituality, this study has labelled aspects of a substantive spirituality, augmented vocabulary and concepts, and added to the dialectic surrounding spirituality.
2) The constituent strands of ISF, properties labelled as Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, combine to form a model of stable and increasing spiritual awareness

and capability that effects, that is brings about, ministry competency. Each of these three properties is represented by three qualities. These properties give focus and direction to nebulous characteristics of what are components of mature spiritual functioning and give direction to preferred attributes that demonstrate competency. Operational ISF demonstrates 1) immersion in Formation; and 2) readiness for Formation.

3) Attribute Markers can indicate areas of strengths and weaknesses in individuals, who are training in pastoral care ministry. Providing a list of recognisable traits, behaviours and attitudes, the Marker Index suggests areas of spirituality that may be visibly or audibly demonstrated, enabling a more specific gauging of propensity and capability for ministry, and competency in ministry.
4) SIFTable is provided as an example of a simple tool to guide assessment of subjective concepts and attributes associated with spirituality and its influence on the volunteer and their ministry. By using a simple tool such as SIFTable, pastoral care leaders or overseers may determine candidate compatibility for pastoral care initially, as well as track spiritual growth, targeting areas where formation may be required to support safe and effective ministry. Further research with the application of SIFTable, across contexts, is needed to provide additional evidence of its generalisability.
5) A deficit of spiritual awareness, or perceived insufficiency of spirituality, can threaten ISF and resulting ministry competency. SIFTable displays relevant terminology to facilitate recognition of deficits. An ability to recognise, label, and address deficiencies gives opportunity for pastoral care overseers to locate and train specifically, rather than employ an inefficient, generalised cast of instruction.
6) Diverging from some literature, spirituality was essentially viewed as surpassing religion, by encompassing yet going beyond it, due to the relational imperative of connection associated with spirituality. Spirituality surpassing religion augments some current interpretations of the comparative relationship, as spirituality enhances and supplements, building upon, while also increasing, religious commitment and

associated behaviours. This is different from diverging from, or intersecting with religion, as such terms tend to indicate equality of position. In surpassing, spirituality incorporates and rises above. However, further research exploring different contexts may provide further insight.

7) The discovery of significant links, between spirituality and the ability to minister, suggest that consideration of spiritual formation for volunteer pastoral care workers could assist effective and safe ministry. This study has begun to address the deficit of literature and knowledge regarding volunteers in pastoral care, in Christian ministry, and highlight the need for responsible preparation of volunteer pastoral care workers. Further research regarding what training and formation would be most efficacious would be worthwhile.
8) Lasting change occurs through the agency of spirituality. Personal wholeness is a determining factor in sensitive and capable praxis in ministry. Formation can be expedited by regular sessions of pastoral care for the spiritual benefit of the volunteer. Suggesting that the 'spiritual care of the spiritual carer' is a prerequisite to effective ministry and formation, even in the context of volunteer pastoral carer in Christian ministry, this study has sought to bring further awareness regarding the condition of personal spirituality and the ability to minister. Further research could well be advantageous in clarifying recommendations related to duty of care.

The familiarity of researcher and participant with the topic gave sufficient data to develop a broad coverage of original concepts that were directly linked to the Research Questions. In the context of spirituality studies and the originality of the cohort under investigation, the consequent categories and theory were theoretically significant for future research in spirituality and pastoral care, training, formation, volunteer, and theological studies. Socially, the study supported the consideration of competency and formation as being significant to sensitive and efficacious practice, and to corresponding strength of personal character. Further research could include Australia-specific contextual studies of spiritual experiences and interactions with creation,

gender-specific studies regarding perceptions and experiences of spirituality in volunteer pastoral care organisations, and theological development of formational training programs for volunteer pastoral care workers.

7.5 Significance of the Research

This study provides information, relevant to volunteer pastoral organisations, of implications regarding training and preparation of personnel for respectful and responsible ministry. It informs argument for competency and efficacy of praxis in the future regarding Duty of Care issues for volunteer Christian ministry organisations.

Recent literature characterizes understanding spirituality as an integral dimension of humanity that is critical to effective care, with holistic integration facilitating resilience and well-being. Aspects of personal integration and spiritual growth and maturity affect the individual and their ministry. Such integration is standard, across denominations within the Christian tradition - for the formation of clergy, though it is only occasionally accessible to or expected of the volunteer.

Since it focused specifically on a Christian context of VMTC, this study has a limited, although valuable, application to an under-represented group in research. Nonetheless, the insights gained from this study, potentially, could inform other volunteer pastoral care organisations, and those involved in Christian ministry, so that ongoing spiritual formation could benefit from the unique perspectives regarding spirituality and spiritual nurturing. As well, it is possible that some aspects of this study could be applicable to other religious faith communities and significant to broader contexts.

As the study explored perceptions of spirituality within the specific niche of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian Ministry, from the viewpoint of volunteer pastoral care workers in the Christian tradition, it provides insights to add to the overall understanding of spirituality and its effects on the human person.

Firstly, this study explored the implications of formation, or deficit, for volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry. Applicability of the research could be transferred to formal and informal Christian ministry training organisations, and also inform the disciplines of education and psychology regarding adult spirituality.

Secondly, spiritual formation has been conceptualized by some as a linear process where chronological time, maturity, and spiritual maturity are considered comparable. Other research recognises waves of growth independent of chronological time, as an ebb and flow. Enduring formation of an adult individual requires all dimensions of their being to be engaged. To engage in an integrated praxis, the individual may benefit from experiential understanding of spirituality and spiritual nurturing, since spiritual formation is dependent upon the transformation of the spirit, as the integrative core of self. There is a deficit of research regarding these concepts in the context of adult spiritual formation - in the Christian context of volunteers in pastoral care - a further reason for the use of Grounded Theory to build on what little is known in this area. This study sought to address this deficit, at least in part, by adding to the body of knowledge, and expanding understanding of spiritual formation in disciplines of Education, Pastoral Care, and Adult Education.

The spirituality of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry was a significant topic for research in the context of preparation and training for holistic models. Establishing insights into this as yet under-researched area, of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry, provided not only understanding of the perceptions and processes of individuals, but has supported development of theories regarding links between personal spirituality and ministry effectiveness, indicated by competencies applied in the development of SIFTable, and recommendations to improve training and praxis within the field of pastoral care, an area of increasing interest and demand within the Christian population.

7.6 Limitations

Focused specifically on a Christian context, this study has limited, although potentially valuable applicability to other volunteer pastoral care organisations, in that it may give unique insights regarding spirituality, its influence on ministry and links between spirituality, ministry, and formation. Some aspects of this study may also be applicable to other religious faith communities. It was not intended to be a study of care ethics or enter into the discussion regarding moral action.

As the subjective topic of spirituality was the focus of this study, any manner of variation of results could be expected. The relational nature of the data suggests developing a sensitive interpretation of participant input is descriptive, rather than prescriptive. The researcher was surprised by the intensity of negative response to the term 'spirituality' by some participants, while others embraced the term enthusiastically, considering that all participants were from the same context of a pastoral care organisation. The researcher suggests this may be proof that unity is not the same as uniformity.

7.6.1 Researcher limitations.

The process of researching spirituality has brought multifaceted challenges to the researcher. Being willing to hear and report perceptions that were not in agreement with those of the researcher, compelled her to take a stance of intentional objectivity, while interpreting concepts from a place of common meaning established by immersion in the context. At times, this intentional objectivity was instrumental in enabling the researcher to identify her own thoughts and responses to the data, initiating a reflective process that generated personal spiritual growth.

The further challenge of acquiring the skills requisite for Grounded Theory was an immersive and organic experience that taught the researcher that the further she went in the process the less she realised she knew. This had the effect of increasing the sense of mystery and revelation being foundational to the journey of research in general, and research about spirituality in particular. As St Paul states in 1 Corinthians 13:12, "What we see now is like a dim image in a mirror….What I

know now is only partial". The endeavour to uncover such mystery, even a minute portion, has afforded the researcher the privilege of discovering facets that may, in their way, contribute to the larger picture of spirituality and its influence.

In retrospect, the researcher would have made many more and much more comprehensive notes through the coding and categorising process than she did. She discovered there is no such thing as having too many notes when it comes to applying Grounded Theory to a subjective topic; perhaps with any methodology. In that regard, the researcher has been cautious in her recommendations and suggested implications to reduce her own bias. With this constant awareness, the researcher has attempted to convey and interpret the participants' perceptions as accurately as she can.

Further limitations which may have affected outcomes of the study, were the researcher's speculations regarding volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry. She presumed effective praxis and spiritual growth were symbiotic, thus linking spiritual formation with spirituality and ministry. This grew from the foundational premise of the Research Questions regarding perception, experiences and links of spirituality, ministry and formation. It was also motivated, at least in part, by the researcher's own experiences, referred to in Chapter 1. Nevertheless, the researcher believes the data do bear witness to further research being required with regard to formation and training of volunteer pastoral care workers.

7.7 Implications for Further Research

The theory of Substantive Spirituality, derived from combining the properties of Sensibility, Reciprocity, and Modification, developed from the data, has potential to inform further research by providing a basic representation of concepts associated with spirituality, the ministry of pastoral care, and Formation. The model of Integrative Spiritual Function that emerged from the study could inform research regarding other faith traditions and volunteer pastoral care workers, as well as organisations that exist outside of faith traditions, as some aspects of spirituality, and its processes and structures, are common to humanity. Further clarification may influence directions

in training. The implications and recommendations of this study suggest that opportunities for formation for volunteer pastoral care workers will increase efficacy and personal well-being.

The theory of Substantive Spirituality is the outcome of each particular context of this study, that is:

17 men and 13 women;

who are volunteers;

in a pastoral care ministry;

from a particular organisation;

and Christian faith tradition.

The possibility of other outcomes is assured by changing even one variable. Hence, a multiplicity of options opens itself to the potential researcher.

Further research regarding gender specific responses to perceptions and experiences of spirituality, would be valuable in elucidating the discovery of gender differences affected by spirituality and ministry. It was not within the scope of this study to explore this topic, yet gender differences in relation to spirituality could provide constructive feedback for those developing training and formation programs.

Comparative studies of other pastoral care organisations within the Christian tradition might corroborate findings of this study, or challenge the theory of Substantive Spirituality, as may research focusing on non-faith tradition pastoral care organisations or paid pastoral carers. Each context would broaden the understanding of spirituality and its relationship with the ministry of pastoral care, and the implications for training in general, and within the given context.

7.8 Summary

This study defines spirituality for volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian ministry as the intrinsic and intentional response of the ‘heart’ to the immanent presence of the Trinitarian God. Spiritual growth is influenced relationally, primarily through the domains of self, other and God.

Spirituality and ministry have a mutually reciprocal influence, and both are undeniably linked with Formation. Understanding the dimension of spirituality as a powerful and effective integrative force gives insight into personhood, informs training, and has the potential to safeguard the integrity of volunteer pastoral care workers, the organisations of which they are a part, and the people whose lives they contact.

Applying reason and learned skill is not enough in the realm of pastoral care. The personal, spiritual health of a volunteer pastoral care worker has a definitive effect on the style and sensitivity of ministry. Thoughtful and appropriate training of volunteer pastoral care personnel may assist in the formative process associated with ministry, and influence spiritual growth, to ensure a holistic response to pastoral needs of the volunteer, and the recipient of ministry. Understanding the perceptions and processes of these individuals has led to the development of a Substantive Spirituality, the model of Integrative Spiritual Function, illustrated by the appraisal tool of SIFTable, and recommendations to improve training and praxis within the field of pastoral care, an area of increasing interest and demand, within the Christian population. The emotional and spiritual well-being and health, of those involved in spiritual care of others, is significant in the provision of safe, honourable, and competent praxis.

CHAPTER 8 APPENDIX

8.1 Plain Language Information Statement

Plain Language Information Statement

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & ARTS

PROJECT TITLE:	**Perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers and implications for training in Christian Ministry.**
PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER:	Honorary Associate Professor Marian de Souza
OTHER/STUDENT RESEARCHERS:	Adjunct Associate Professor John Fisher Dr Rob Davis Kay Job, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student

Dear Sir/Madam

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted through Federation University Australia, that is supported by the Executive Committee of Victorious Ministry Through Christ, Australia (VMTC).

This letter is to explain the project to you in simple terms. Please read this letter carefully and be sure you understand its contents before deciding whether to proceed with participation. If you have any questions about the project, please contact Dr Marian de Souza on 0417.529.842.

Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?

Kay Job is conducting this research as a Doctor of Philosophy student and Professor Marian de Souza is principal supervisor.

Federation University Australia Human Research Ethics Committee and the Executive Committee of VMTC have given their approval for this research project to be conducted.

The aim of this research is to explore the perceptions of volunteer pastoral care workers regarding spirituality and spiritual nurturing and implications for training in Christian Ministry.

Voluntary participation in this project is being sought via Regional Administrators of VMTC, seeking expressions of interest from voluntary pastoral care workers in that organisation. If you are willing to participate please contact the Student Researcher, Kay Job, directly via the email or mobile phone number listed below.

Why have you been approached?

Through your involvement with VMTC, you are considered a volunteer pastoral care worker in Christian ministry. You operate within this ministry in one of the following 4 positions: 1. Released Support, 2. Released Lead, 3. Assistant Director, or 4. Director.

Please be aware that all research in this project is focused on your personal thoughts and experiences regarding spirituality. VMTC, as an organisation, is not the subject of this research, though your experiences may have been in circumstances relating to VMTC.

Even though your participation is voluntary, this researcher will still be asking for your informed consent, as the research will involve discussion of what may be considered sensitive personal information.

What is the project about?

Plain Language Information Statement

This project is about the perceptions of Christian volunteer pastoral care workers regarding their spirituality and experiences of spiritual nurturing. A Full study will involve 30 participants.

If I participate, what will I be required to do?

Participation will require one 45 – 60 minute interview with Kay, at a location that is practical and agreeable for both you and Kay. The interview will ask you about your choice to volunteer in pastoral care ministry, your perceptions of spirituality, what nurtures your spirit, and any link you see between your spirituality and your ability to minister. Example questions may be, "What does the word *spirituality* mean to you?" or "How do you experience your spirituality?" You will be given the questions for the interview at least 2 weeks in advance of the agreed time so that you may consider your answers if you desire. The interview will be in an unstructured form, where the given questions will introduce a topic and the conversation will flow from there, as a time of sharing. If you are uncomfortable with a question, please don't hesitate to discuss your concerns or possible discontinuation of participation. Try to share your thoughts and feelings as honestly as possible.

It is also important to understand that your interview will be recorded and hand notes taken by Kay in order to compile data for the research project. Your consent to participate will assume permission for recording to take place. However, you are assured that no identifying information will be kept in connection with your interview transcript. So, even though only a small number of people will participate in this project, your comments will be anonymous. Therefore, no comments you make in this project can have any impact on your continuing involvement with VMTC. To aid confidentiality, you are encouraged to offer a pseudonym, of your choosing, for Kay to use until the information has been integrated, at which point all identifying factors will no longer be relevant.

How will selection of participants take place?

Participants will be selected on a "first in" basis, which means Kay will do interviews as participants become available and will continue to do interviews until she has reached a saturation of data, ie; no new themes arise.

What are the foreseeable risks in participation?

The only foreseeable risk in your participation in the project is emotional distress caused by discussing sensitive personal information.

To compensate for this risk a list of contact details, including Lifeline and Regional Administrators in VMTC follow at the end of this letter. If you have any concerns as a result of the research interview, please feel free to seek out assistance for emotional or spiritual distress.

As the sample to be employed in this study is small there may be implications for privacy. However pseudonyms will be used if a person is quoted directly and no identifying features will be used in any report.

Kay will also offer you a debrief opportunity at the conclusion of the interview. If you have concerns or queries regarding the interview or research, please use the opportunity. Kay will also be available to be contacted after the interview to discuss the research project.

What are the benefits of participation?

The results of the study will assist Christian volunteer pastoral care ministries, psychologists, and educational and social science researchers to better understand spirituality as an important dynamic in a

Christian person's life, and its influence on their ability to minister. The results may also help develop more effective preparation and training within the context of pastoral care ministries such as VMTC.

What will happen to the information I provide?

Your recorded interview will be transcribed and both recording and transcript will be stored securely, not accessible to the public, and separate from any identifying information. Once analysis of the information has been completed all identifying information will be irrelevant. All recordings and transcripts will be destroyed after 5 years in accord with ethics requirements of Federation University Australia. The results of the research may be published in journals and available to Christian pastoral care ministries, conferences and other sources.

What are my rights as a participant?

- You have the right to withdraw from participation at any time.
- You have the right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed at any time.
- You have the right to have any questions answered at any time.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

You should contact Associate Professor Marian de Souza on 0417.529.842 if you have any questions on the project. If you need support as a result of your participation in the research project you may call Lifeline (Phone 13 11 14) or you may approach the Regional Administrator for your area or region, or any Released Lead Minister of VMTC with whom you are comfortable.

Thank you for your willingness to participate.

Kay Job.

kayzl.job@gmail.com

Mob Ph: 0458077990

CONTACT DETAILS of Regional Administrators, VMTC

QUEENSLAND

Anne Smith 0400622099 Amanda Cooper 0412593558 Geoff Weingarth 07 4069 5969

Suzanne Hodgson 0407396225

NSW

Carolyn and John Leer 02 65694267 Barbara McDonald 02 65694267 Cheryl Cottrell 02 67694337

Warwick & Dorothy Harris 02 69265967 Barbara Ramsay 0413668074

Don & Margaret Hewitt 02 47355119 Peter & Renee McClure 02 68644488

ACT

Chris Cartwright 02 62303202

VICTORIA

Rita Carter 03 59786661 John Robertson 0488211192 Leonne & John Carmen 0427504012

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Barbara Cockram 0419131899

TASMANIA

Kiri McKenna 0408503725

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Graham & Lynn Gill 08 85529599

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION GROUP, VMTC

Bronwyn Jones 0488211192

Ian Cullen 08 95311098

Joy Van Namen 0409318349

Peter Cartwright 02 62303202

If you have any questions, or you would like further information regarding the project titled *Perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian Ministry,* please contact the Principal Researcher, Dr Marian de Souza of the School of Education & Arts:
PH: 0417.529.842
EMAIL: marian.desouza@bigpond.com

Should you (i.e. the participant) have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research project, please contact the Federation University Ethics Officers, Research Services, Federation University Australia,
P O Box 663 Mt Helen Vic 3353 or Northways Rd, Churchill Vic 3842.
Telephone: (03) 5327 9765, (03) 5122 6446
Email: research.ethics@federation.edu.au

CRICOS Provider Number 00103D

8.2 Participant Consent Form

Consent Form

Federation UNIVERSITY · AUSTRALIA

PROJECT TITLE:	**Perceptions of spirituality and spiritual nurturing of volunteer pastoral care workers in Christian Ministry**
RESEARCHERS:	Dr Marian DeSouza Dr John Fisher Kay Job Dr Rob Davis

Consent – Please complete the following information:

I, ... of . . . . . .

. . . . . .

hereby consent to participate as a subject in the above research study.

The research program in which I am being asked to participate has been explained fully to me, verbally and in writing, and any matters on which I have sought information have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that: all information I provide will be recorded and transcribed for the purposes of research only and will be treated with the strictest of confidence and data will be stored separately from any listing that includes my name and address.

- aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals
- ***I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained from it will not be used.***
- ***once information has been aggregated it is unable to be identified, and from this point it is not possible to withdraw consent to participate***

SIGNATURE: . . . . . **DATE:** . . . . . .

8.3 VMTC Prayer Minister Competencies

SECTION II.7

VMTC
Prayer Minister Competencies

Levels	How Many Times	What (Processes)	What (Skills & Gifts)
Own PM session	1		
Intercessor/ Observer (Must have attended at least 1 School or Freed to Live 101 Course and received personal Prayer Ministry)	Unlimited	• Fruit • Gifts • Armour • Own Confession	Develop gifts & skills • Words of knowledge • Discerning of spirits
Support in Training	A minimum of		
(Freed to Live 102) (Schools)Live-In or Modular (Training Days)	2 or more 2 or more Optional	• Preparation Prayers • Check List - Instruct recipient - Cleansing Prayer • Circle of God's Love • Pre-natal Prayer • Closing Prayers	• Develop listening & questioning skills • Hearing Holy Spirit • Assurance of pardon • Loosing of Bondages • Binding & Casting out • Healing Prayers
Released Support Prayer Minister			
Lead in Training	A minimum of		
(Schools) Live-In or Modular (Training Days)	3 or more Optional	• Shape a session - Preparation Prayers - Check List - Listening time - Closing Prayers	• Listening skills • Asking open ended questions • Identifying root causes • Wisdom • Prophecy • Encouragement • Spiritual warfare
Released Lead Prayer Minister			
Team in Training			
		• Able to teach & nurture others in training • All aspects of a Prayer Ministry session	• Leadership gifts • Exhibit Fruit of the Spirit • Integrity of Character
Released Team Member			

8.3.1 VMTC Director competencies.

Section II. 3 **Duties Of Directors**

Directors may be pastors or lay people, men or women. We need to encourage pastors to be directors in order to help provide pastoral and theological depth to the ministry, and to allow the ministry to grow in churches.

- To have demonstrated teaching and leadership abilities in VMTC and the wider church.
- Willingness to submit to the Leadership of the National Board and to the standards of the International Board.
- To be able to take responsibility for live-in and non-live-in training courses, and effectively teach all the required teachings, do the PM scheduling, and organise the timetable and personnel for courses.
- To be available for at least two training courses per year.
- To be approved by the National Board.

CHAPTER 9 REFERENCES

Allport, G. (1950). *The individual and his religion*. New York, NY: MacMillan.

Alvesson, M., & Sköldberg, K. (2000). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research*. London, UK: SAGE Publications.

Ambert, A. M., Adler, P. A., Adler, P., & Detzner, D. F. (1995). Understanding and evaluating qualitative research. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 57*(4), 879-893.

Anderson, R. (2003). *Spiritual caregiving as secular sacrament*. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley.

Andrade, A. (2014). Using Fowler's Faith Development Theory in student affairs practice. *Student Affairs Leadership, 1*(2).

Andrews, A. (2010). *The Kingdom life: A Practical Theology of discipleship and spiritual formation*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

Astin, A., Austin, H., & Lindholm, J. (2011). *Cultivating the spirit: How college can enhance students' inner lives*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Astley, J. (2003). Spiritual learning: Good for nothing? In D. Carr & J. Haldane (Eds.), *Spirituality, Philosophy and Education* (pp. 141-154). London, UK: RoutledgeFarmer.

Astley, J., & Crowder, C. (1996). Theological perspectives on Christian Education: an overview. In J. Astley, L. Francis, & C. Crowder (Eds.), *Theological perspectives on Christian formation: A reader on Theology and Christian Education* (pp. x-xix). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B.Eerdmans Publishing.

Augsburger, D. (2006). *Dissident discipleship: A spirituality of self-surrender, love of God, and love of neighbor*. Grand Rapids, IL: Brozos Press.

Austin, N. (2016). Spirituality and virtue in Christian formation: A conversation between Thomistic and Ignation traditions. *New Blackfriars, 97*(1068), 202-217.

Barber, B., & Baker, C. (2014). Soul care and spiritual formation: An old call in need of new voices. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, 7*(2), 270-283.

Barnes, L. P. (2012). *Debates in Religious Education*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Beaumont, S. (2011). Pastoral counselling down under: A survey of Australian clergy. *Pastoral Psychology, 60*, 117-131.

Benner, D. G. (2011). *Soulful spirituality: Becoming fully alive and deeply human*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.

Benson, P., & Roehlkepartain, E. (2008). Spiritual development: A missing priority in youth development. *New Directions for Youth Development, 118*(Summer), 13-28.

Benson, P., Roehlkepartain, E., & Rude, S. (2003). Spiritual development in childhood and adolescence: Toward a field of inquiry. *Applied Developmental Science, 7*(3), 205-213.

Bernard, R. H., & Ryan, G. W. (2010). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Berringer, A. (2000). In search of the sacred: A conceptual analysis of spirituality. *Journal of Experiential Education, 23*(3), 157-165.

Berryman, J. (1990). Teaching as presence and the existential curriculum. *Religious Education, 85*(4), 509-534.

Best, R. (2000). Empathy, experience and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education). *Pastoral Care, December*, 8-18.

Bidwell, D. R., & Marshall, J. L. (2006). Formation: Content, context, models and practices. *American Journal of Pastoral Counselling, 8*(3/4), 1-7.

Billy, D. (2000). Moral mysticism in a parish setting. In J. Keating (Ed.), *Spiritual and Moral Theology: Essays from a pastoral perspective* (pp. 8-37). New York, NY: Paulist Press.

Birks, M., & Mills, J. (2011). *Grounded Theory: A practical guide*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Bjorklund, B. R. (2011). *The journey of adulthood*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Blanton, P. G. (2011). The other mindful practice: Centering prayer and psychotherapy. *Pastoral Psychology, 60*(1), 133-147.

Boa, K. (2001). *Conformed to His image: Biblical and practical approaches to spiritual formation*. Grand Rapids, MC: Zondervan.

Bosacki, S. (2001). 'Theory of mind' or 'Theory of the soul'? The role of spirituality in children's understanding of minds and emotions. In J. Erricker, C. Ota, & C. Erricker (Eds.), *Spiritual education: Cultural, religious and social differences. New perspectives for the 21st century* (pp. 156-169). Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic.

Brenner C.V., & Koenig, H. (2004). *Spiritual caregiving: Healthcare as a ministry*. West Conshohocken, PE: Templeton Press.

Bretherton, R. (2006). Can existential psychotherapy be good news? Reflections on existential psychotherapy from a Christian perspective. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture, 9*(3), 265-275.

Brother Lawrence. (2009/1692). *The practice of the presence of God*. London, UK: The Epworth Press.

Brown, L. B. (1987). *The Psychology of religious belief*. London, UK: Academic Press.

Brugman, L. (2012). Spiritual definition: A moving target. In M. Fowler, J. D. Martin III, & J. L. Hochheimer (Eds.), *Spirituality, theory, praxis and pedagogy* (pp. 3-14). Oxfordshire, UK: Inter-Disciplinary Press.

Brunsdon, A. F. (2014). A three musketeering approach to pastoral care: Reflections on collaboration between pastoral care, narrative theory and Positive Psychology. *Verbum et Ecclesia, 35*(1), a865.

Bryant, A., & Charmaz, K. (2007). *The SAGE handbook of Grounded Theory*. London, UK: SAGE.

Bryman, A. (1984). The debate about quantitative and qualitative research: A question of method or epistemology. *The British Journal of Sociology, 35*(1), 75-92.

Bryman, A., & Burgess, R. G. (1994). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London, UK: Routledge.

Burns, B., Chapman, T. D., & Guthrie, D. C. (2012). *Resilient ministry: What pastors told us about surviving and thriving*. Downers Grove, IL: IVPBooks.

Butler-Bass, D. (2004). *The practicing congregation: Imagining a new old church*. Herndon, VI: Alban Institute.

Candy, P. C. (1989). Alternative paradigms in Educational research. *Australian Educational Researcher, 16*(3), 1-11.

Carey, L. B., & Rumbold, B. (2015). Good practice chaplaincy: An exploratory study indentifying the appropriate skills, attitudes and practices for the selection, training and utilisation of chaplains. *Journal of Religion and Health, 54*,(1416-1437).

Carr, D. (1996). Rival conceptions of spiritual Education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 30*(2), 159-177.

Carr, D. (2003). Three conceptions of spirituality for spiritual Education. In D. Carr & J. Haldane (Eds.), *Spirituality, Philosophy and Education* (pp. 213-225). London, UK: RoutledgeFarmer.

Carr, D. (2018). Spirituality, spiritual sensibility and human growth. *Journal of Philosophy and Religion, 83*, 245-260.

Catholic Health Australia. (2010). *Pastoral services in Catholic health, community, and aged care: Contemporary practice*. ACT, Australia: Catholic Health Australia.

Chan, S. (1998). *Spiritual Theology: A systematic study of the Christian life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Chandler, D. J. (2014). *Christian spiritual formation: An integrated approach for personal and relational wholeness*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Charmaz, K. (2000). Constructivist and objectivist Grounded Theory. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 509-535). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2001a). Grounded Theory: Methodology and theory construction. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 6396-6399). Amsterdam, Netherlands: Pergamon.

Charmaz, K. (2001b). Qualitative interviewing and Grounded Theory analysis. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 675-694). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London, UK: SAGE Publications.

Chickering, A., Dalton, J. C., & Stamm, L. (2006). *Encouraging authenticity and spirituality in higher Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
Christian Research Association. (2010). Power and the churches. *Pointers, 20*(2), 10-12.
Clinebell, H. (1984). *Basic types of pastoral care and counselling: Resources for the ministry of healing and growth*. London, UK: SCM Press.
Coe, J. (2009). Spiritual Theology: A theological-experimental methodology for bridging the sanctification gap. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, 2*(1), 4-43.
Cole, A. H. (2010). What makes care pastoral? *Pastoral Psychology, 59*, 711-723.
Coll, R. (2002). *The heart and soul of parish ministry*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications.
Collicutt, J. (2015). *The psychology of Christian character formation*. London, UK: SCM.
Commonweal Editorial. (2006). Tomorrow's priests. *Commonweal, 133*(19), 5.
Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing Grounded Theory* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
Corcoran, D. (1982). Contemporary forms of spirituality and monastic life. In W. Skudlarek (Ed.), *The continuing quest for God: Monastic spirituality in tradition and transition*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
Coyle, A. (2011). Critical responses to Faith Development Theory. A useful agenda for change? *Archives for Psychology of Religion, 33*(3), 281-298.
Coyte, M. E. (2007). Spiritual practice day by day: Conversations with those who know. In M. E. Coyte, P. Gilbert, & V. Nicholls (Eds.), *Spirituality, values and mental health: Jewels for the journey* (pp. 194-207). London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publications.
Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.
Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspectives in the research process*. St Leonards, Australia: Allen and Unwin.
Culliford, L. (2011). *The psychology of spirituality: An introduction*. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
Cully, I. (1984). *Education for spiritual growth*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
Cupit, C. G. (2009). The dynamics of spiritual development. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, D. Scott, & J. O'Higgins (Eds.), *International handbook on Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 291-310). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
Curtain, K. (2010). Preface. In G. H. Brenner, D. H. Bush, & J. Moses (Eds.), *Creating spiritual and psychological resilience: Integrating care in disaster relief work* (pp. vii-x). New York, NY: Routledge.
Daley, K. (2009). Be there now: There is no time like the present for living in God's presence. *U.S. Catholic, 74*(1), 37.
Davidson, J. D., Walters, T. P., Cisco, B., Meyer, K., & Zech, C. E. (2003). *Lay ministers and their spiritual practices*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing.
Davy, K. (2007). *CoJourners: Joining others in spiritual journey*. http://cpupressgreen.com/cojourners-transferable-concept/ Crupress, Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc. Used by permission.
Day, J. (2010). Religion, spirituality, and Positive Psychology in adulthood: A developmental view. *Journal of Adult Development, 17*(4), 215-229.
De Vos, A. S. (Ed.) (1998). *Grassroots: A primer for the caring professions*. Pretoria, RSA: Van Schaik Publishers.
Denzin, N. K. (2007). Grounded Theory and the politics of interpretation. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of Grounded Theory* (pp. 454-471). London, UK: SAGE Publications.
Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
deSouza, M. (2003). Contemporary influences on the spirituality of young people: Implications for Education. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality, 18*(3), 269-279.
deSouza, M. (2004). Teaching for effective learning in Religious Education: A discussion of the perceiving, thinking, feeling and intuiting elements in the learning process. *Journal of Religious Education, 52*(3), 22-30.

deSouza, M. (2009). Promoting wholeness and wellbeing in Education: Exploring aspects of the spiritual dimension. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 937-942). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

deSouza, M., & Watson, J. (2016). Understandings and applications of contemporary spirituality: Analysing the voices. In M. deSouza, J. Bone, & J. Watson (Eds.), *Spirituality across disciplines: Research and practice* (pp. 331-347). Switzerland: Springer.

Dilthey, W. (Ed.) (1977/1894). *Descriptive Psychology and historical understanding*. The Hague, Netherlands: Matinus Nijhoff.

Doohan, L. (2007). *Spiritual leadership: The quest for integrity*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.

Dorr, D. (2008). *Spirituality: Our deepest heart's desire*. Dublin, Ireland: Columbia Press.

Dues, G., & Walkley, B. (1995). *Called to parish ministry: Identity, challenges, and spirituality of lay ministers*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications.

Dulles, A. (2002). *Models of the church* (Expanded ed.). New York, NY: Image Books.

Fisher, J. (1998). *Spiritual health: Its nature and place in the school curriculum.* (PhD Dissertation), University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Fisher, J. (2010). The Four Domains model: Connecting spirituality, health, and well-being. *Religions, 2*, 17-28.

Fisher, J. (2014). *Importance of relating with God for spiritual well-being.* (PhD Dissertation), Federation University Australia, Ballarat, Australia.

Fitchett, G. (1993). *Assessing spiritual needs: A guide for caregivers*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress.

Fitchett, G., Tartaglia, A., Massey, K., Jackson-Jordon, B., & Derrickson, P. E. (2015). Education for professional chaplains: Should certification competencies shape curriculum? *Journal of Health Care Chaplaincy, 21*,(151-164).

Fontana, D. (2003). *Psychology, religion and spirituality*. Malden, MA: BPS Blackwell.

Forrest, B. K. (2012). *Modelling spiritual formation in Distance Education: 28th Annual Conference on Distance Teaching and Learning*. Retrieved from www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/Resource.library/handouts/55873-2012.pdf:

Francis, L. (2005). *Faith and Psychology: Personality, religion and the individual*. London, UK: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Francis, L. (2009a). Psychological type theory and religious and spiritual experiences. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 125-146). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Francis, L. (2009b). Understanding the attitudinal dimensions of religion and spirituality. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 147-168). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Francis, L., Hills, P., & Kaldor, P. (2009). The Oswald Clergy Burnout scale: Reliability, factor structure and preliminary application among Australian clergy. *Pastoral Psychology, 57*, 243-252. doi:10.1007/s11089-008-0165-7

Frederick, T. V. (2009). Models of Psychotherapy: Implications for pastoral care practice. *Pastoral Psychology, 58*(4), 351-363.

Gabriel, S., & Gardner, W. L. (1999). Are there "His" and "Hers" types of interdependence? The implications of gender differences in collective versus relational interdependence for affect, behaviour, and cognition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*(3), 642-655.

Gall, T. L., Charbonneau, C., Clarke, N. H., Grant, K., Joseph, A., & Shouldice, L. (2005). Understanding the nature and role of spirituality in relation to coping and health: A conceptual framework. *Canadian Psychology, 46*(2), 88-104.

Gall, T. L., Malette, J., & Guirguis-Younger, M. (2011). Spirituality and religiousness: A diversity of definitions. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health, 13*, 158-181.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.

Gockel, A. (2009). Spirituality and the process of healing: A narrative study. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, 19*(4), 217-230. doi:10.1080/10508610903143248
Goeschel, C. F., & Blow, S. E. (1883). The immortality of the soul. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, 17*(2), 154-162.
Granqvist, P., & Nkara, F. (2017). Nature meets nurture in religious and spiritual development. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 35*, 142-255.
Green, J. (2000). Understanding social programs through evaluation. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 981-1000). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
Greenman, P., & Kalantzis, G. (2010). *Life in the spirit: Spiritual formation in theological perspective*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
Groom, S. (2017). The language of formation in official Church of England documents. *Anglican Theological Review, 99*(2), 233-254.
Gula, R. (2010). *Just ministry: Professional ethics for pastoral ministry*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.
Gula, R. (2011). *The way of goodness and holiness: A spirituality for pastoral ministers*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
Guy, J. (1987). *The personal life of a psychotherapist*. New York, NY: James Wiley and Sons.
Hagin, K. (1983). *Understanding the anointing*. Broken Arrow, OK: Faith Library Publications.
Hahnenberg, E. P. (2003). *Ministries: A Relational Approach*. New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing.
Halstead, M. J. (2003). Metaphor, cognition and spiritual reality. In D. Carr & J. Haldane (Eds.), *Spirituality, Philosophy and Education* (pp. 83-96). London, UK: RoutledgeFarmer.
Hansen, D. (1994). *The art of pastoring: Ministry without all the answers*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
Happold, F. C. (1970). *Mysticism: A study and an anthology* (Revised ed.). London, UK: Penguin.
Hauerwas, S. (1979). *Character and the Christian life: Study in theological issues*. San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press.
Hauerwas, S. (2016). Character convergence: The prospect of holy living. In D. J. Chandler (Ed.), *The Holy Spirit and Christian formation: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
Hay, D. (1982). *Exploring inner space: Scientists and religious experience*. Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books.
Hay, D. (2001). Spirituality versus Individualism: The challenge of relational consciousness. In J. Erricker, C. Ota, & C. Erricker (Eds.), *Spiritual Education: Cultural, religious and social differences* (pp. 104-117). Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic.
Hay, D., & Nye, R. (1998). *The spirit of the child*. London, UK: Fount.
Hay, D., & Nye, R. (2006). *The spirit of the child* (Revised ed.). London, UK: Fount.
Hays, D. G., & Singh, A. A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2006). *The practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
Hiltner, S. (1949). *Pastoral counselling: How every pastor can help people to help themselves*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
Hiltner, S. (1959). *The Christian shepherd: Some aspects of pastoral care*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
Himes, K. (2000). The formation of conscience: The sin of sloth and the significance of spirituality. In J. Keating (Ed.), *Spiritual and Moral Theology: Essays from a pastoral perspective* (pp. 59-80). New York, NY: Paulist Press.
Hodge, D. (2011). Using spiritual interventions in practice: Developing some guidelines from evidence-based practice. *Social Work, 56*(2), 149-158.
Holmes, D. H., Hughes, K., & Julian, R. (2007). *Australian Sociology: A changing society* (2nd ed.). Frenchs Forest, Australia: Pearson Education Australia.
Holmes, U. T. (1980). *A history of Christian spirituality: An analytical introduction*. New York, NY: Seabury Press.
Holmes, U. T. (1982). *Spirituality for ministry*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse.

Hood Jr, R. W. (2009). Mystical, religious and spiritual experiences. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 189-208). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Horan, M. P. (1998). Lay Pastoral Theology: Fostering spiritual adulthood in a priest-short church. *The Way, 38*(3), 260-270.

Howard, P. T. (2016). Vocational formation: Navigating leadership disorientation. In D. J. Chandler (Ed.), *The Holy Spirit and Christian formation: Multidisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 167-184). Cham, Switzerland: SpringerLink.

Hughes, P., Reid, S., & Pickering, C. (2010). *Shaping Australia's spirituality*. Preston, Australia: Mosaic Press.

Hull, B. (2010). Spiritual formation from the inside out. In A. Andrews (Ed.), *The Kingdom life: A practical theology of discipleship and spiritual formation* (pp. 105-136). Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

Hunt, C. (2017). Editorial. *Journal for the Study of Spirituality, 7*(1), 1-6.

Hunt, S. (2015). "Spirituality": A word that everyone uses and some believe that they know what it means. *Implicit Religion, 18*(1), 107-131.

Issler, K. D. (2009). Inner core belief formation, spiritual practices, and the willing-doing gap. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, 2*(2), 179-198.

James, W. (2004/1874). *The varieties of religious experience: A study in human nature*. New York, NY: Touchstone.

Johnson, S. (1989). *Christian spiritual formation in the church and classroom*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.

Johnson, S. (Writer). (2010). Subversive spirituality in ministry at the margins: Youth resisting empire. In.

Kelly, A. E., Lesh, R. A., & Baek, J. Y. (Eds.). (2008). *Handbook of design research methods in Education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kessler, R. (2000). *The soul of Education: Helping students find connection, compassion, and character at school*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Kettenring, K. (2008). *The Sanctification connection: An exploration of human participation in spiritual growth*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Kilmoski, V. J., O'Neil, K. J., & Schuth, K. M. (2005). *Educating leaders for ministry: Issues and responses*. Collegeville, PA: Liturgical Press.

King, P. (2009). Does Positive Psychology have a soul for adolescence? In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 311-328). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Koenig, H. (2007). *Spirituality in patient care: Why, how, when and what*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

Koopsen, C., & Young, C. (2009). *Integrative health: A holistic approach for health professionals*. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Koro-Ljungberg, M., Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Hayes, S. B. (2009). Epistemological awareness, instantiation of methods, and uninformed methodological ambiguity in qualitative research projects. *Educational Researcher, 38*(9), 687-699.

Kwan, S. M. (2010). Interrogating "hope" - The Pastoral Theology of hope and Positive Psychology. *International Journal of Practical Theology, 14*(1), 47-67.

Lakeland, P. (2008). *Catholicism at the crossroads: How the laity can save the church*. New York, NY: Continuum.

Lartey, E. (2000). Practical Theology as a theological form. In J. Woodward & S. Pattison (Eds.), *The Blackwell reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (pp. 128-134). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Lasair, S. (2017). Reconciliation through narrative: Toward a Theology of spiritual care in Public Health Care. *Practical Theology, 10*(2), 160-173.

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal and coping*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

LDCE. (Ed.) Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online.

Lepherd, L. (2015). Spirituality: Everyone has it, but what is it? *International Journal of Nursing Practice, 21*, 566-574.
Lewis Hall, M. E. (2016). Suffering as formation: The hard road to glory. In D. J. Chandler (Ed.), *The Holy Spirit and Christian formation: Multidisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 69-88). Cham, Switzerland: SpringerLink.
Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies and contradictions, and emerging influences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
Lindsay, R. (2002). *Recognizing spirituality: The interface between faith and social work*. Crawley, Australia: University of Western Australia Press.
Lun, M. W. A. (2015). A qualitative study of students' perception of spirituality and religion. *Social Work and Christianity, 42*(2), 178-192.
Mabry, J. R. (2006). *Faith styles: Ways people believe*. New York, NY: Morehouse Publishing.
Maddux, W. W., & Brewer, M. B. (2005). Gender differences in the relational and collective bases for trust. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 8*(2), 159-171. doi:10.1177/1368430205051065
Mathew, T. K. (2004). *Spirit-led ministry in the 21st century: Empowered preaching, teaching, healing and leading*. NA: Xulon Press.
McArdle, P., Tuohy, A., & Catholic Health Australia Incorporated. (2007). *On being pastoral*. Deakin, Australia: Catholic Health Australia.
McCarthy, M. (2000). Spirituality in a post-modern era. In W. J. & S. Pattison (Eds.), *The Blackwell reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (pp. 192-206). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
McGee, M. (2003). *Making spirits attentive: Moral-and-spiritual development*. London,UK: RoutledgeFarmer.
McGrath, A. E. (1999). *Christian spirituality*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
McKenna, H. A., Hearle, J. W. S., & O'Hear, N. (2004). *Handbook of fibre rope technology*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
McMinn, L. G. (2017). Perceiving the cultural sea that is our home - Spiritual formation and Western 21st century culture. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, 10*(2), 147-158.
McMinn, M. R. (1996). *Psychology, Theology and spirituality in Christian counselling*. Forest, PA: Tyndale House Publishers.
McNeill, J. T. (1951). *A history of the cure of souls*. New York, NY: Harper.
Meier, A., St James O'Connor, T., & VanKatwyk, P. L. (2005). *Spirituality and health: Multidisciplinary explorations*. Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
Mellor, D. (1997). *Rock climbing: A trailside guide*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton
Meyer, M. A. (2008). Indigenous and authentic: Hawaiian epistemology and the triangulation of meaning. In N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln, & L. Tuhiwai Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies* (pp. 217-232). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
Miller, W. R., & Thoresen, C. E. (2003). Spirituality, religion, and health: An emerging research field. *Amercian Psychologist, 58*(1), 24-35.
Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The development of Constructivist Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods., 5*(1), 25-35.
Mitroff, I., Denton, E., & Murat Alpaslan, C. (2009). A spiritual audit of corporate America: Ten years later. (Spirituality and attachment theory, an interim report). *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 6*(1), 27-41.
Moberg, D. (2002). Assessing and measuring spirituality: Confronting dilemmas of universal and particular evaluative criteria. *Journal of Adult Development, 9*(1), 47-60.
Moberg, D. (2010). Spirituality research: Measuring the immeasurable? *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith, 62*(2), 98-114.
Moberg, D. (2011). Expanding horizons for spirituality research. Retrieved from Hartford Institute for Religion Research website: http://www.hartfordinstitute.org/sociology/Expanding%20Horizons%20for%20Spirituality%20Research%202011.pdf
Molinari, P. (1972). Education for maturity. *The Way, 15*, 16-28.

Mullen, B. A. (1996). *Baker's evangelical dictionary of Biblical theology* (W. A. Elwell Ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
Muthiah, R. A. (2009). *The priesthood of all believers in the twenty-first century*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick.
National Interfaith Conference on Aging. (1975). *Spiritual well-being: A definition*. Athens, GA: NICA.
NCLS Research. (2011). *Australian National Church Life Survey*.
Nelson, J. N. (2009). *Psychology, religion and spirituality*. New York, NY: Springer.
Nelson, P. K. (2011). Discipleship dissonance: Toward a theology of imperfection amidst the pursuit of holiness. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, 4*(1), 63-92.
Nelson, S. T. T. (1985). *Spirituality and pastoral care*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress.
New South Wales College of Clinical Pastoral Education, I. (2011). Definitions. In *Handbook* (pp. 10-11).
Newell, R., & Burnard, P. (2006). *Research for evidence-based practice*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
Noddings, N. (2012). The caring relation in teaching. *Oxford Review of Education, 38*(6), 771-781.
Noerager Stern, P. (2007). On solid ground: Essential properties for growing Grounded Theory. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of Grounded Theory* (pp. 114-126). London, UK: SAGE.
Nouwen, H. J. M. (2009). *Making all things new: An invitation to the spiritual life*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
O'Brien, M. E. (2014). *Spirituality in nursing: Standing on holy ground* (5th ed.). Burlington, MA: John and Bartlett Publishers.
O'Collins, G., & Farugia, E. (2000). *A concise dictionary of Theology*. Mahwah, NY: Paulist Press.
O'Connor, T., & Meakes, E. (2005). Towards a joint paradigm reconciling truth and research. In Meier A., St James O'Connor T., & P. L. VanKatwyk (Eds.), *Spirituality and health - Multidisciplinary explorations* (pp. 11-22). Waterloo, Canada: Wilfred Laurier University Press.
O'Donahue, W. (1989). The (even) bolder model: The clinical psychologist as metaphysician - scientist - practitioner. *Amercian Psychologist, 44*(12), 1460-1468.
O'Higgins-Norman, J. (2009). Integrating spirituality, care and wellbeing in educational settings. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 937-942). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
O'Leary, Z. (2010). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
O'Meara, T. (1999). *Theology of ministry* (Revised ed.). Mahwah, NY: Paulist Press.
O'Murchu, D. (2010). *Adult faith: Growing in wisdom and understanding*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
Oakley, J. (1994). Thinking through fieldwork. In A. Bryman & R. G. Burgess (Eds.), *Analyzing qualitative data* (pp. 18-34). London, UK: Routledge.
Okholm, D. L. (1996). *Baker's evangelical dictionary of Biblical theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
Ormston, R., Spencer, L., Barnard, M., & Snape, D. (2013). The foundations of qualitative research. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. McNaughton Nicholls, & R. Ormston (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for Social Science students and researchers* (pp. 1-25). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
Orr, D. (2009). Educating for the priesthood of the faithful. *Worship, 83*(5), 431-457.
Otto, P., & Harrington, M. (2016). Spiritual formation within Christian Higher Education. *Christian Higher Education, 15*(5), 252-262.
Palmer, P. (1993). *To know as we are known*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
Pargament, K. I. (1997). *The psychology of religion and coping*. New York, NY: Guildford Press.
Parrett, G. A., & Kang, S. S. (2009). *Teaching the faith, forming the faithful: A biblical vision for education in the church*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity.
Paterson, M., & Higgs, J. (2005). Using hermenuetics as a qualitative research approach in professional practice. *The Qualitative Report, 10*(2), 339-358.

Payne, S. (2007). Grounded Theory. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data in Psychology* (pp. 65-86). London, UK: SAGE Publications.
Pembroke, N. (2002). *The art of listening: Dialogue, shame, and pastoral care*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.
Piano Clark, V., & Creswell, J. (2010). *Understanding research: A consumer's guide*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.
Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in Counseling Psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosphy of Science. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 52*(2), 126-136.
Powell, R., & Robbins, M. (2015). The churches and well-being: Perspectives from the Australian National Church Life Survey. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture, 18*(1), 1-7.
Purves, A. (1989). *The search for compassion: Spirituality and ministry*. Louiseville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
Ranson, D. (2002). *Across the great divide: Bridging spirituality and religion today*. Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls.
Ranson, D. (2010). Priesthood, ordained and lay: One in the heart of the other. Possibilities and challenges in the Australian pastoral context. *The Australian Catholic Record, 87*(2), 146-161.
Rennick, P. J. (2005). A critical dialogue between Theology and Psychology. In Meier A., St James O'Connor T., & P. L. VanKatwyk (Eds.), *Spirituality and health - Multidisciplinary explorations* (pp. 23-42). Waterloo, Canada: Wilfred Laurier University Press.
Roberts, E. (2015). *Spirituality: Global practices, societal attitudes and effect on health*. New York, NY: Nova Publishers.
Roehlkepartain, E., Ebstyne King, P., Wagener, L., & Benson, P. L. (2006). *The handbook of spiritual development in childhood and adolescence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
Rolheiser, R. (2003). *The restless heart: Understanding loneliness*. London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton.
Root Luna, L. M., Van Tongeren, D. R., & vanOyen Witvliet, C. (2017). Virtue, Positive Psychology, and Religion: Consideration of an overarching virtue and an underpinning mechanism. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 9*(3), 299-302.
Saint John of the Cross. (2003/1579). *Dark Night of the Soul* (E. A. Peers, Trans.). Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.
Salander, P. (2012). The Emperor's new clothes: Spirituality. A concept based on questionable ontology and circular findings. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion, 34*(1), 17-32.
Sandage, S. J., & Jensen, M. L. (2013). Relational spiritual formation: Reflective practice and research on spiritual formation in a seminary context. *Reflective practice: Formation and supervision in ministry, 33*, 95-109.
Sandage, S. J., Paine, D. R., & Gieseler Devor, N. (2014). Psychology and spiritual formation: Emerging prospects for differentiated integration. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, 7*(2), 229-247.
Scazzero, P. (2006). *Emotionally healthy spirituality*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
Schoenherr, R. A., & Young, L. (1990). Quitting the clergy: Resignation in the Roman Catholic Priesthood. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 29*(4), 463-481.
Schuhmann, C., & Damen, A. (2018). Representing the good: Pastoral care in a secular age. *Pastoral Psychology, 67*, 405-417.
Scott, D. (2009a). The role of spirituality in human development and identity: An introduction. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *The International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 269-274). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
Scott, D. (2009b). Coming of age as a spiritual task in adolescence. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 453-468). Drodrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
Seaward, B. L. (1991). Spiritual wellbeing: A Health Education model. *Health Education, 22*(3), 166-169.

Seaward, B. L. (2001). *Health of the human spirit: Spiritual dimensions for personal health*. Needham Heights, CA: Allyn and Bacon.
Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikzentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive Psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 5-14.
Selman, L., Brighton, L., Sinclair, S., Puchalski, C., Powell, R., Karvinen, I., . . . InSpirit Collaborative. (2017). Patients' and caregivers' needs, experiences, preferences and research priorities in spiritual care: A focus group study across nine countries. *Palliative Medicine, 32*(1), 216-230.
Sheldrake, P. (1999). The study of spirituality. *The Way, 39*(2), 162-172.
Sheldrake, P. (2010). *Explorations in spirituality: History, Theology, and social practice*. Mahwah, NY: Paulist Press.
Shults, F. L., & Sandage, S. J. (2006). *Transforming spirituality: Intergrating Theology and Psychology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
Simmonds, G. (2016). 'Spiritual but not religious' - Some final reflections. *New Blackfriars, 97*(1068), 218-230.
Smeets, W., & Morice-Calkhoven, T. (2014). From ministry towards competence: Changing perspectives in spiritual care in the Netherlands. *Journal of Empirical Theology, 27*, 103-129.
Smith, A. T. (2018). Walking meditation: Being present and being pilgrim on the Camino de Santiago. *Religions, 9*(3), 82-88.
SOED. (Ed.) (2007) Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
Spiritual Care Australia. (2014). Standards of Practice. Retrieved from http://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au
Stanosz, P. (2007). The other health crisis: Why priests are coping poorly. *Commonweal, 134*(20), 15-17.
Streib, H., & Hood, R. W. (2011). "Spirituality" as privatized experience-oriented religion: Empirical and conceptual perspectives. *Implicit Religion, 14*(4), 443-453.
Tacey, D. (2009). Spirituality and mental health: The mystery of healing. In M. deSouza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins, & D. Scott (Eds.), *International handbook of Education for spirituality, care and wellbeing* (pp. 275-290). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
Thayer, N. S. T. (1985). *Spirituality and pastoral care*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press.
Thomson, J. (2016). *Relationships and emotions after Christendom: Practical help for constructive relationships*. Bletchley, UK: Paternoster.
Tisdell, E. J., & Tolliver, D. E. (2001). The role of spirituality in culturally relevant and transformative Adult Education. *Spirituality in Adult Learning, 12*(13), 13-14.
Titus, C. (2017). Aquinas, Seligman, and Positive Psychology: A Christian approach to the use of the virtues in psychology. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 12*(5), 447-458.
Trotman, D. (2016). Towards a spiritual pedagogy of pastoral welfare and care. *Pastoral Care in Education, 34*(3), 122-132.
Tuckwell, G., & Flagg, D. (1995). *A question of healing: Reflections of a doctor and priest*. London, UK: Fount.
van Peursen, C. A. (1966). *Body, soul, spirit: A survey of the body-mind problem* (H. Hoskins, Trans.). London, UK: Oxford University Press.
Victorious Ministry Through Christ. (2018). Our Ministries. Retrieved from http://www.vmtc.org.au/about/our-ministries
Walker, D. (1989). Spirituality and ministry. In N. Brown (Ed.), *Faith and culture: Challenges to ministry*. Manly, Australia: Catholic Institute of Sydney.
Webster, S. (2009). *Educating for meaningful lives: Through existential spirituality*. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.
Weger, U., & Wagemann, J. (2015). The behavioral, experiential and conceptual dimensions of psychological phenomena: Body, soul and spirit. *New Ideas in Psychology, 39*, 23-33.
Westgate, C. E. (1996). Spiritual wellness and depression. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 75*(1), 26-35.
White, A. S. (1998). *Freed to Live*. Winter Park, FL: Victorious Ministry Through Christ, Inc.

Whittemore, R., Chase, S. K., & Mandle, C. L. (2001). Pearls, pith, provocation: Validity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 11*(4), 522-537.
Wilber, K. (2002). Waves, streams, states and self: Further consideration for an integral theory of consciousness. In J. Andersen, & Forman, R.K.C. (Ed.), *Cognitive models and spiritual maps: Interdisciplinary explorations of religious experience* (pp. 145-175). Thoverton, UK: NavPress.
Willard, D. (2002). *Renovation of the heart: Putting on the character of Christ*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.
Willard, D. (2006). *The great omission: Reclaiming Jesus's essential teachings on discipleship*. New York, NY: HarperOne.
Willard, D. (2010). The gospel of the kingdom and spiritual formation. In A. Andrews (Ed.), *The Kingdom life: a Practical Theology of discipleship and spiritual formation* (pp. 27-58). Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.
Willard, D., & Simpson, D. (2006). *Revolution of character: Discovering Christ's pattern for spiritual transformation*. Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press.
Willig, C. (2001). Introducing qualitative research in Psychology: Adventures in theory and method., from Open University Press http://mcgraw-hill.co.uk/openup/chapters/0335205356.pdf
Wills, M. (2009). *Communicating spirituality in health care*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
World Health Organisation. (1998). *Health promotion glossary*. Geneva, Switzerland: Division of Health Promotion, Education and Communications.
Worthen, J. (2012). *Responding to God's call: Christian formation today*. London, UK: Canterbury Press.
Wright, E., & Wright, A. (2012). Thinking skills. In L. P. Barnes (Ed.), *Debates in Religious Education* (pp. 223-234). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
Wright, S. (2005). *Reflections on spirituality and health.* London, UK: Wiley.
Wuthnow, R. (1997). *The crisis in the churches: Spiritual malaise, fiscal woe*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
Yeo, R. S. (2016). Emotional formation: A Trinitarian interaction. In D. J. Chandler (Ed.), *The Holy Spirit and Christian formation: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 33-47). Cham, Switzerland: SpringerLink.
Young, C., & Koopsen, C. (2011). *Spirituality, health, and healing: An integrative approach* (2nd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.
Young, J. S., Cashwell, C. S., & Woolington, V. J. (1998). The relationship of spirituality to cognitive and moral development and purpose of life: An exploratory investigation. *Counselling and Values, 43*(1), 63-67
Zinnbauer, B. J., Pargament, K. I., & Scott, A. B. (1999). The emerging meanings of religiousness and spirituality: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Personality, 67*(6), 889-919.
Zock, H. (2018). Human development and pastoral care in a postmodern age: Donald Capps, Erik H. Erickson and beyond. *Journal of Religion and Health, 57*, 437-450.
Zohar, D. (2000). *SQ: Spiritual intelligence: The ultimate intelligence*. London, UK: Bloomsbury.