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An Investigation into Adolescent Male
Spirituality in Catholic Schools in the
Edmund Rice Tradition:
Examining the Implications of
Incorporating Spirituality into Counselling

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in August 2009

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Statement of Contribution of Others Including Financial and Editorial Help

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Abstract

A change in the multicultural nature of Australian society over the last generation, a growing acceptance of pluralism and secularism and the exposure through the media of many varied faiths and religious practices has changed the cultural landscape of this country. This, combined with a decline in traditional cultural practices that supported and encouraged involvement and practice in mainstream Christian faiths, has led to many questions being raised as to the role of spirituality in the life of young people. The situation of increased questioning has been made more complex by the rise in the prominence of fundamentalism in some denominations.

Even though society has become more complex, there still exists in all, especially the young, a desire to ask questions around issues of a spiritual nature as this will assist them in the journey towards the articulation of their own identity. Another by-product of a society that embraces daily change and technological advances is an increase in the demand for the helping professions, especially ones of a psychological or counselling nature.

In exploring the idea of adolescent male spirituality, the 'context' (referring to aspects such as family type, socio-economic status, school environment, social network, ethnicity, religious beliefs and cultural experiences and practices) of an adolescent male's life was examined. The thesis also takes an in-depth look at developmental theory as relevant to this age group. More importantly, a theoretical framework around the key concepts of personal, professional and spiritual support for counsellors and school leaders who journey with adolescents daily was developed. To achieve this, an investigation into the relationship between spirituality and counselling was undertaken, looking specifically at the spiritual dimensions of the therapeutic relationship and therapeutic approaches to spirituality.

The key therapeutic theoretical framework that is explored is cognitive behaviour therapy. This is most appropriate, as it is a structured, short-term, present-oriented psychotherapy directed at solving current problems by modifying biased thinking and behaviour. It can be easily applied to teenagers.

The research investigated the role of spirituality in the life of adolescent males in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition and any difference that can be made by psychotherapeutic interventions. This was done within the context of looking at developmental theory in its application to adolescents within an educational environment. The research methodology was a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. The initial research method used was the Delphi technique. This technique required the use of an expert panel in the process of developing the research instruments, thus ensuring relevance and the collection of reliable information. The research at the school stage followed a four level programmatic approach. The four phases were quantitative instrument, qualitative interviews, focus group discussions and the interviews with counsellors and adults. These followed a sequence progression method.

The results of the study revealed that adolescent males in a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition were attentive to a spiritual dimension in their lives. Entry points to this spiritual dimension are different from the traditional expectations typically identified within formal religious traditions. Spiritual engagement was found to be fostered by the experience of personal relationships, involvement in social justice activity and awareness of the impact of the environment on their spiritual journey. An openness exists to share experiences and reflection with counsellors on processes that nurture development across spiritual and associated developmental domains. A specific sensitivity exists to operate with trusted and appropriate adults, such as counsellors in areas of spiritual challenge and growth.

An interpretation of results centres around a discussion of spiritual development as a contributing factor to the expression of adolescent identity; student well-being as connected with spiritual development; the developmental stage of adolescence as a sensitive period for enhancing spiritual growth; a significant role for counsellors in supporting the spiritual journey of adolescents; the wider impact that holistic development has on teaching and learning; and the formation of a whole school approach to the support of adolescent spiritual development. A final observation was the need to ensure that the religious dimension of the school is consistent with the spiritual development of the individual.

The study concludes that Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition that proclaim to have a values focused education based on a religious background or tradition must constantly recognise the creative tension that exists between remaining faithful to their mission and meeting the developmental needs of the adolescent males who are coming to school from an increasingly pluralistic and complex society. The changing nature of the adolescents' search for spirituality and identity also necessitates that existing paradigms that define the response to these questions by church and schools need to be evaluated.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The greatest glory in living lies not in never failing but in rising every time we fall. (Nelson Mandela, 1994, cited in Williamson, 1992, p. 11)

1.1 One Friday Afternoon

The bell had just rung to signal the start of last lesson Friday. As principal, my desk was clear of all obstacles except one last task. This task was the only thing between me and Friday staff drinks, something that was enjoyed by one and all.

‘Speak to Andrew re: his smoking of Marijuana’ my note told me. Andrew was a very presentable and social eighteen year old senior who would cheerfully inform people he had a choice of five partners for the upcoming graduation. A pleasant young man, his mother had come to the school to enlist my aid regarding Andrew’s growing addiction to Marijuana.

‘Can you speak to him Brother?’ his mother said. ‘He’ll listen to you; he won’t listen to a word I say’. As a trained counsellor, I knew that a one-off talk, especially from a person in a dual role such as mine was never going to be sufficient to address an addiction issue. However, out of a sense of pastoral care, I agreed to speak with Andrew.

How's life, Andrew? I started.

Good, thanks Brother.

I am hearing whispers that you are getting into the pot on the weekend. This was not unusual as I did have a reputation for knowing more about the students, especially the seniors, than I really did.

Mum's been up hasn't she? he said in a calm and respectful manner.

It doesn't matter how I know Andrew, but I am worried about you I replied.

At this stage, the confident young man was replaced with an unsure, emotional and anxious little boy.

You know Brother, I am sick and tired of people around here pulling me up in the street and telling me that they are my half brother or sister. When I go home to mum, she doesn't deny it and says there are no more but then it happens again.

We then spoke about issues around relationship and trust. Andrew was a very open and sensitive young man despite these issues with his mother and an aggressive and domineering father who pushed his son too hard.

The interview was abruptly interrupted with an urgent knock on the door. It was Casey. I had many dealings with Casey as he was a victim of child abuse at the hands of his father for many years. He was a volatile young man who would react in a hostile manner to any signs of overt masculinity that reminded him of his father. Unfortunately, in an all-boys' school, these occurred more frequently for Casey than he liked. However, Casey was not here on his own behalf.

‘Brother, you have to come quickly, David is going to commit suicide by jumping off the roof.’ Even though my chat with Andrew had not concluded, he understood that David’s need was greater and was understanding of the fact that I had to leave.

David was a narcissistic Year 9 boy who had never come to grips with his parents’ break up and his mother’s remarriage. His stepdad was a reasonable but demanding dad who was not going to let David ‘get away with his nonsense’. For the next thirty minutes, much to the amusement of a nearby Nine Gold English class who thought this was the best last lesson that they had experienced in a long time, I talked David off the roof, always ensuring that two Physical Education teachers were underneath, ready to catch him like a pair of slips fieldsmen, should he jump.

It was at this stage I thought that something more can be done to assist young men, in a values or faith based school, who have issues that they need to address. Not only did the students need some kind of framework around coping with emergencies, trauma or just day-to-day ups and downs of life, but the staff needed assistance too so that they can best help them.

Clinical and spiritual supervision of people in roles that require them to help others has long been accepted as an important tool in providing the support and challenge to individuals in order to improve their quality of service to others (Burke, Chauvin & Miranti, 2005, p. 3). It is also recognised that working with adolescents provides special challenges and opportunities that become immediately apparent when some of the therapeutic, ethical and legal issues relating to confidentiality and young

people are considered (Kendall, 2000, p. 6). My experience, as described above, challenged me to explore in-depth issues related to spirituality and counselling of young men, especially within the concept of Edmund Rice Education.

These challenges revolve around providing young men in a faith or values based school at all times in their life, but more particularly in times of crisis or emergency, a framework for them to look at the issues that are of significance to them. Hopefully, this framework can exist within the context of some understanding of the spiritual component of their lives and be open to assistance of significant others in their lives. This would be consistent with my vocation as a Christian Brother and the values of Edmund Rice Education.

Edmund Rice Education is named after the founder of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Ignatius Rice. The hallmark of Edmund Rice Education is liberating education for all, especially the poor and the marginalised, by way of holistic education that has Gospel values as its base. Edmund Rice modelled this style of education by feeding the boys of his school at the bakery, which was a part of the school, by providing such subjects as navigation, as Waterford in Ireland was a busy trading port, and by providing each boy with a suit when they left school to assist them in future employment. Instruction in the Catholic faith and prayer were daily occurrences.

It is interesting to note that this emphasis on practical education that educated the whole child, which began in the time of Edmund Rice and is still a hallmark of Edmund Rice Education today, is consistent with, and supportive of, the educational philosophy articulated in the 2000 Adelaide Declaration – Goals for Schooling for a

Future Australia (Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA, 2000). This was a meeting, held in 1999, to establish national bases goals for education.

Psychologists, like EP Shafranske from the American Psychological Association, justify the integration of the study of spirituality with the mental health professions by contending that personal values inevitably participate in the practice of psychology. Shafranske also states that he has been “struck with the organizing capacity of religious faith to shape the construction of personal identity and to maintain and transform meaning in times of comfort and in moments of adversity” (1996, p. 15).

Intrinsic to this study of spirituality and the counselling process is the concept that there is no such thing as therapeutic neutrality, as values are always inherent in any therapeutic measures that are employed. When comparing the concepts of spirituality (the spiritual part of the journey in life and an openness to connection with the transcendent) and counselling (providing appropriate psychological interventions to people to deal with issues and emergencies in life) it would be advantageous to address the religious dimension in aspects that are relevant to the clinical practice of psychology. The religious dimension would be present in the behaviourist, psychoanalytic and humanistic dimensions of psychology. This could include what Shafranske (1996, p. 47) refers to as the cumulative tradition of religion, which refers to observable contents such as temples, scriptures, myths, codes and social institutions that are accumulated and passed on to succeeding generations. This is different to concepts of spirituality, which are more difficult to measure, and faith, which encompasses one’s

orientation towards oneself, other people and the universe, as they are experienced in the light of the transcendent dimension.

Critical social science as methodology was ideal for this thesis as its imperatives were very closely aligned with the nature of the topic and the values base of the participating institutions. This point is highlighted when the Mission Statement for all Schools: The Charter (The Charter) (see Appendix A) is not seen merely as a group of individual cultural characteristics but a holistic document that achieves its uniqueness by the combination of all the cultural characteristics. Neuman (2000) indicates that “critical researchers conduct research to critique and transform social relations. They do this by revealing the underlying sources of social relations and empowering people, especially less powerful people.” (p. 76) This is perfectly aligned to the mission of all the schools involved, as expressed in the Charter, especially the cultural characteristics of Community, Pastoral Care and Service of Others. Furthermore, Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) state:

Critical research can best be understood in the context of the empowerment of the individuals. Inquiry that aspires to the name ‘critical’ must be connected to an attempt to confront the injustice of a particular society or sphere within society. Research thus becomes a transformative endeavour unembarrassed by the label ‘political’ and unafraid to consummate a relationship with an emancipatory consciousness. (p. 140)

This aligns with the cultural characteristics of the Charter that include ‘being just’, ‘at the margins’ and ‘stewardship’.

Neuman (2000) also indicates that critical social science “empowers people to change society radically ... helps people see the way to a better world [and] begin with a value position” (p. 85). This legitimises a stance that can be based on faith and spirituality and is clearly aligned to the Charter cultural characteristic of ‘Reflective Practice’. It could be argued that Edmund Rice took a critical social science stance in Ireland in 1802 when he provided the poor young people of Waterford with life changing and liberating education that radically addressed the issues of why they were poor.

The challenge for professional and spiritual supervision is to create a supportive learning context so that both client and counsellor can develop appropriate frames of reference to review many activities, such as decision-making and ways of communication. This study investigates developments in this field within the context of a theoretical and therapeutic framework that is psychologically sound and spiritual in its orientation.

1.2 Fundamental concepts for the study

The story at the beginning of this chapter challenged me to focus on what were fundamental concepts for young men in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition that would influence their lives, especially when looking at issues around spirituality and counselling. Six such fundamentals were identified. They are the following.

1.2.1 The changing role of institutional churches especially in education

Up until the end of the 1960s and the advent of Vatican II, (the Catholic Church’s attempt to evaluate its own relevance to its people and the development of a

plan for renewal of the church) society supported and encouraged the practice of Christianity, most notably if it was tied to a mainstream religion (such as Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian or Lutheran) if for no other reason than to ensure the enforcement of a moral code. Vatican II was a most significant part of the history of the Catholic Church in that it challenged all members of the Church to look closely at the rituals and practices of the Church and examine them in terms of their relevance to society and the members of the Catholic Church. It was a most traumatic time for the Church as traditionalists, who did not want to change, challenged the many directions of Vatican II; directions that many church members, who were more liberal, were willing to embrace.

More recently, numbers of clergy and members of religious orders have declined significantly. In 1965, there were 3,232 Christian Brothers in the world; in 2006, there were 1,468 (Congregation of Christian Brothers, 2006). Also, the confidence the community has in its religious leaders has diminished. This is due, in part, to scandals around child abuse and the rise of fundamentalism. For Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, this and other issues associated with the Mission of the Congregation has resulted in very few Christian Brothers (the founding order) now being involved in the schools and the move to lay leadership at all levels of the schools and the network.

1.2.2 The changing nature and role of the Catholic school in providing meaningful education that is spiritually or religiously based

The Catechism is now replaced with an integration of experience-based learning and interactionism that examines faith experience as well as religious knowledge. Marcellin Flynn (1979, 1985, 1993) completed in-depth studies on this issue and the

results that it had on traditional Catholic schools. It is also interesting to note that the percentage of non-Catholics in Catholic schools has increased significantly over the last forty years. In 2003, non-Catholic students accounted for 16.3 percent of the total Catholic school enrolments in Catholic schools. In 1965, the non-Catholic enrolment was just 1.3 percent (Belmont & Cranston, 2007).

Like the Church, Catholic schools are no longer set within a cultural milieu that encourages a closing off from the world. Whereas in the pre-Vatican II Church there existed a homogeneous Catholic subculture of practising Catholics who sent their children to Catholic schools to support and affirm the values that had been nurtured at home, the situation has now changed (Ryan, Brennan & Wilmett, 1996). The attendance of a significant number of non-Catholic students, however, may have nothing to do with the belief in the teachings of the Catholic Church or a desire to embrace the Catholic life. This situation will have a significant impact on the spirituality of the students, as students will be coming to Catholic schools with an increasing understanding of pluralism and secularism and be more open to contemporary expressions of spirituality. Ryan and Malone (2003) indicate that even though these students are academically able in terms of the formal curriculum, the same students are generally illiterate and uninterested in matters of the experience of Catholic traditions and its teachings

1.2.3 Significant development in research in the area of psychotherapeutic intervention and counselling

Burke, Chauvin and Miranti (2005) continually challenge peoples' understanding of counselling issues. The research of Clineball (1965) and the more modern work of Bongar and Beutler (1995), Geldard and Geldard (1999) and Kendall

(1984, 1991, 2000), who specialise in adolescent therapy, are demonstrating that the field of psychotherapy and counselling is not a static field of study. The work of Corey (2001) is often used in teacher education and Sharry (2001) is a modern critical theorist who constantly challenges the work of his colleagues. Significant developments relevant for this study include the debate on age-stage theories of development, the role of healthy spirituality in the context of counselling, professional guidelines to ensure the respect of the client at all times (which includes counsellors being aware of their own values system so as not to deliberately or inadvertently pass on their values to the client), issues around transference and counter transference and the need for continuing research and a positive attitude to critical theory.

1.2.4 A renewed interest in spirituality and an attempt to distinguish it from mainstream religious practice

Diarmuid O'Murchu (1997, 2000) claims this is the most significant issue for the institutional churches to face this new century. David Tacey (1997, 1998, 2000) takes up the same point and explores it in a uniquely Australian context. In terms of Catholic schools in Australia, Rymarz and Graham (2005) indicate that one of the greatest concerns since the large increase in non-religious order teachers in the 1970s and 1980s is the rejection of the institutional church by young people. Rossiter (2000) proposes that "increasing numbers of Catholics [are] maintaining fewer links with the church, becoming what has been described as 'four wheeler Catholics': pram for Christening, taxi for Marriage, hearse for burial; or the 'hatch match and despatch' role of the church" (p.59).

1.2.5 Significant recent study that has been done looking at the role of spirituality in the counselling process

Miller (2003), Wiggins-Frame (2003), Hinterkopf (1998) and Cortright (1997) all contend that spirituality can be very effective when integrated appropriately into psychotherapeutic intervention.

1.2.6 Male students learn and respond differently especially in a single-sex school context

Recently, there has been an explosion of theories on males' learning styles, coping mechanisms and understanding of concepts, such as masculinity and how males cope emotionally with issues. Lillico (2001) would be the foremost Australian educator in this field and authors such as Biddulph (2003) have written popular books on the issues.

These are all issues facing the young men whose lives were depicted in the story at the start of the study and the educational leaders of this new century who will need to understand their impact on the lives of these same young men.

1.3 The research problem and research questions

This study focuses on the relationship between the psychotherapeutic intervention called cognitive based therapy and spirituality as related to adolescent males in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition. One of the greatest challenges for the schools mentioned in this study, and the other Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, is the continuing of this values based education. This challenge has been addressed by articulating the identity components of Edmund Rice Education (see

Appendix B) as being Foundations (the theological underpinnings of Edmund Rice Education), the Charter (the mission statement), Renewal (how to ensure schools remain authentic to the vision) and Formation (professional and personal development).

At a practical level, this tradition has been articulated within an educational context by the development of The Charter; a proclamation of an authentic expression of Edmund Rice education as applied to Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition 2004. This Charter developed eleven cultural characteristics of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition; Holistic Education, Spirituality, Faith in Action, Community, Pastoral Care, Service of Others, Being Just, At the Margins, Compassion, Stewardship and Reflective Practice.

It needs to be understood that the obligation of teachers, counsellors and educational leaders to provide direction and pastoral care goes beyond the number of students who would present themselves (either voluntarily or by their inappropriate behaviour) as being problem students. The true understanding of holistic education would mean that all students in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition would be exposed to best practice in pastoral care that would be psychologically sound and spiritual in its orientation.

The research question can therefore be stated as “ What, if any, is the relationship between Spirituality and Cognitive Behavioural Development in the search for identity for the adolescent male?

Thus, the specific research questions addressed in this thesis are:

1. To what extent is spirituality important for adolescent male students?

2. What is the difference between religion and spirituality, and how are these relevant to today's young men?
3. What are the key areas of spirituality for adolescent males? Specifically:
 - 3.1 What role do relationships play in the spirituality of the adolescent male?
 - 3.2 What role does social justice play in the spirituality of the adolescent male?
 - 3.3 What role does the environment play in the spirituality of the adolescent male?
4. How can spirituality be integrated into psychotherapeutic interventions for adolescent males?
5. How can counsellors integrate a behavioural intervention appropriate to adolescent males, such as cognitive behaviour therapy, into their understanding of spirituality?
6. What competencies and professional techniques do counsellors need to deal with adolescent males to allow them to integrate spirituality into their work in values and faith based schools?
7. What are the ethical issues around integrating spirituality with conventional counselling techniques?

1.4 Structure of the thesis

In investigating issues around adolescent male spirituality and counselling, this thesis examines the 'context' (aspects such as family type, socio-economic status, school environment, social network, ethnicity, religious beliefs and cultural experiences and practices) of an adolescent's life and investigates the appropriate theoretical frameworks to assist the counselling process. More importantly, this thesis developed some findings for educational leaders and counsellors that may be used to construct a

theoretical framework around the key concepts of professional and spiritual supervision of people who counsel adolescents. It is hoped that this could be easily translated into school-based programs that would be implemented by school leaders and counsellors.

All schools visited for this study were Catholic schools and would indicate that the Catholicity of the school was equal in priority in terms of achievements of the school with other pursuits such as academic, cultural or sporting. Even though they were diverse in terms of geographic location and socio-economic clientele, they all would indicate that belonging to the universal Catholic Church was a unifying factor for all Catholic schools. The fact that the schools were also Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition (Christian Brothers schools) meant that they had even more in common, as they shared the Charism of Edmund Rice and were all founded by the same religious congregation. The most observable similarity is the Charter of values shared by all the schools.

Counsellors, principals and male senior students from the following schools were asked to participate (a fuller description of each school is provided in section 5.1):

- country day boys' secondary school – Ignatius Park Townsville
- country boarding boys' secondary school – St Brendan's Yeppoon
- city day boys' secondary school – Gregory Terrace
- city boarding boys' secondary school – Nudgee College
- regional day boys' secondary school – St Patrick's College Shorncliffe.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study. It describes the research problem and articulates research questions that will assist in the inquiry. It also provides a look at fundamental concepts for the study.

Chapter 2 looks at the concept of developmental theory and the works of some developmental theorists that will be explored. It also looks at work on the stages of spiritual development and an introduction on how counselling can effectively use developmental theory. This chapter covers research questions one and seven.

A key part of the study was looking at the implications of developmental psychology for the use of cognitive behavioural therapy with adolescents. The psychological treatment of children can be informed and advanced by the introduction of developmental principles into clinical concepts and techniques. Some of the developmental factors that are important when working with adolescents include developmental myths, developmental psychopathology, developmental norms, developmental levels, developmental transitions and developmental predictors.

Chapter 3 has psychotherapy for adolescent boys as its main theme. It explores adolescence and its effect on males. The chapter addresses issues relating to best practice in terms of counselling adolescents. This chapter also looks at cognitive behavioural therapy, clinical processes associated with it, why it is useful in the counselling process and how spirituality can be integrated with it. It addresses research questions one, six and seven.

Chapter 4 explores the spiritual dimension of personality and explores important differences between religion and spirituality. It focuses on spirituality in terms of a renewed interest as opposed to interest in institutional or hierarchical religion and looks at the psychology behind it. Spirituality is explored in-depth, especially how it relates to

adolescent males and the counselling process and the differences between healthy and unhealthy spirituality. This chapter also investigates the relationship between spirituality and psychotherapy, looking specifically at the spiritual dimensions of the therapeutic relationship and therapeutic approaches to spirituality. It addresses research questions two, four and five.

Chapter 5 examines more detailed background information on the schools that participated in the study. It then looks at integrating spirituality with psychotherapy for adolescent males. It does this by focussing on transpersonal theory and the significance of the adolescent worldview. It explores the therapeutic implications of the worldview and how spirituality can be integrated into the assessment and treatment of teenage males. The other key component of this chapter is its dealing with ethical issues around spirituality and counselling and issues that need to be addressed for an effective and ethical response to psychotherapeutic issues. It addresses research questions two, three, four and five.

Chapter 6 contains the research design and methodology. It looks at both qualitative and quantitative research and the argument to combine them. Ethical issues of research in general and both research types are addressed. This chapter gives the details of the research project. It shows how the Delphi Technique was used to develop the research instrument and how the school communities participated in the study.

Chapter 7 provides a detailed analysis of the data and starts to draw important conclusions for the study. The key areas, of social justice, relationships and the

environment, in this study are seen as important to the respondents the close link between counselling, and spirituality is established.

Chapter 8 draws the study together by providing a summary and looking at the insights and implications of the study. It provides findings for school principals, counsellors, teachers and network leaders in the area of counselling and spirituality for adolescent males.

The next chapter, Chapter 2, will look at the relevance of developmental theory in the life of the adolescent male. It will examine the various debates about applying developmental theory to counselling and compare various theorists' stages in terms of how they effect, individually and in combination, the life journey of the young man.

Chapter 2

The Developmental Process: Theory and Psychotherapeutic Practice

Developmental perspectives offer a ‘way of seeing’ and ‘must include the idea that change must increase a person’s differentiation and coping power’.

(Petersen, 1989, p. 17)

2.1 Understanding developmental theory

This chapter will demonstrate by way of a literature review, that developmental theories are integral to counselling as they give scaffolding to understand the nature of the young person’s needs and they also provide an appropriate platform from which to base a response. All of these theories can be the basis of a Cognitive Behavioural response, either individually or in connection with each other. They never preclude the option of integrating spirituality into any counselling response. This chapter will also complete a comparative analysis, examining the links between the theories, and look at the role of spiritual development, especially within a psychological framework. Finally, this chapter will explore the links between the developmental theories and spiritual development and discuss how this is relevant to counselling.

The literature review is very important as it gives an historical review of developmental theory that is used throughout the thesis. Definitions and expressions that are used throughout the thesis are explained within the context of the research

question and relevant existing theory practice is explored. The arguments for and against various issues are explored and information is given to help understand the research done and conclusions drawn

The literature review is based on the assumption that knowledge accumulates and that we learn from and build on what others have done. The goals of this literature review are to explore previous research in the relevant area and demonstrate how this research is linked to this study. It is also important to integrate and summarise what is known and show familiarity with the body of existing knowledge in the chosen area.

The literature chosen was done so for its significant contribution in the fields of counselling and spirituality. Core issues such as developmental theory, adolescent male psychology, the debate between spirituality and religion and theories of counselling were explored in depth so as to create the platform from which the research could be based and hypothesis drawn.

The young men in this study are negotiating developmental stages of many aspects of their lives. They are changing physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually more than at any previous stages in their lives. These various stages of development cannot be compartmentalised, as eventually they will all integrate to create a young adult who, although confronting the same issues as his peers, will develop a unique identity.

Bee (2006) sees development in terms of increasingly higher, more integrated levels of functioning that take into account continuity and change within human experience, that incorporate uniqueness as well as patterns of commonality and which provide ways of telling our narrative or autobiographical story (p. 16). A common element of developmental perspectives is that they will maximise coherence and meaningful interpretation of life events and that counselling events are contextualised within personal, interpersonal, social and cultural milieus and are informed and illuminated by a developmental interpretative framework.

Usually, the idea of human development includes changes that are age-related, relatively permanent, qualitatively different and irreversible. However, the notion of 'development' may not be synonymous with 'change'. Peterson (1989, pp. 17-24) argues that development must include the idea that change must increase a person's differentiation and coping power. Bee sees 'development' "in terms of increasingly higher, more integrated levels of functioning" (2000, p. 16), compared with 'change' which she understands as variations that are ambiguous in nature or not clearly 'developmental'. She also recognises that 'development' may involve increases or decreases in some function or skill.

In this context, developmental theory assumes there is some goal or end point toward which the adolescent moves, and that this end point is potentially better or more mature than what is seen at earlier ages. A theory of change in contrast assumes no such end or goal nor any improvement in growth. 'Antistage' theorists, such as Orville Brim (1976), argue against stages asserting that there are no shared crises in life and no expectable integrity in old age. Instead, there are many pathways, many patterns with

adult life and a process of constant change and flux (Brim, 1976). Some theorists (Corey 2001; Corey, Corey & Callahan, 1997) take the middle ground, indicating there are sequences but not stages. These sequences refer to orderly, predictable sequences of experiences or changes in adulthood but these changes may not be integrated into shared, internal or external structures. Counselling in terms of developmental theory increases a person's ability to make developmental shifts out of raw data or experiences, to move towards greater maturity and personal responsibility within the contexts of their own lives.

A key component of understanding adolescents is to reflect on their journey and the journey of the counsellor from the perspective of developmental theory. Several theorists can be used to provide a map for growth in both the client and the counsellor. Key developmental theorists who can be integrated within the context of cognitive behaviour therapy and spiritual and professional supervision include:

- Erickson's (1950, 1959, 1963, 1966, 1980) Stages of Development. This developmental framework consists of eight stages that cover the entire life span. At each stage, the individual is confronted with a central conflict and the task of overcoming it.
- Loevinger's (1976) Ego Development. A key feature of this theorist is his emphasis on the religious dimension in assessment and treatment.
- Maslow's (1968, 1970) Needs Hierarchy. This layered approach explores psychological needs, safety needs and the need for loving, belonging, self-esteem and self-actualisation.
- Kohlberg's (1964, 1973, 1976, 1981, 1984) Development of Moral Reasoning. This involves six stages through which each person passes in order, without

skipping a stage or reversing the order. Not all people pass through the six stages.

- Fowler's (1981, 1987, 1991, 1996a, 1996b) Stages of Faith (based on Piaget's Cognitive Development). Each individual develops through a shared series of faith structures or worldviews. The sequence of stages is only roughly associated with age.
- Kegan's (1982) Stages of Faith and Self-hood negotiates a movement between the polarities of connection and independence.

2.2 Erickson

Erickson was a devotee of the Freudian theory of psychoanalytical development. His theory of human development recognises two influential components in the process of orientation and growth of the psyche. According to his theory, development functions by the epigenetic principle. By this, he means that human beings grow according to a series of steps or stages that are innate to the human psyche and that the journey through these steps results from crisis or conflicts arising out of social interaction. Erickson identifies eight stages across the human lifespan, each of which is linked to balancing a pair of competing experiences and will result in the acquisition of a fundamental psychological quality.

Erickson's work is often described as a psychosocial theory because of the relationship he sees existing between the in-built stages of psychological development and the social context needed to provide the catalyst for these stages of development to be realised. The outcome of achievement of these eight stages is the development of self-hood and the acquisition of eight-core qualities that will assist in the journey to

identity and self-fulfilment. The eight qualities are hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care and wisdom. Each of these qualities is achieved when the setting and circumstance of the individual's life provide a platform from which the individual can grow. Erickson believes that these stages are directly connected to the biological growth and development of the person (Erickson, 1980).

Erickson's stages are necessarily invariant and sequential. The movement from one to the next is reliant on the qualities achieved previously. Throughout the first four stages there is a significant reliance on the support of others and confirmation in the development of the self. Beyond stage four, the individual has developed a maturity that promotes a greater reliance on one's self for growth and development.

Each stage or growth point is identified with a dilemma that seeks a balance between two competing and polarised experiences. Successful negotiation of each stage does not represent one experience overcoming or extinguishing the other but rather a suitable balance being achieved in which the more desirable experience outweighs the less desirable experience. This point is particularly significant. The repression or total removal of one experience from an individual's view of the world promotes dysfunction and naiveté. A mal-adaption exists when the individual erases all of the negative side of the competing experiences. The removal or repression of the positive side of the competing experiences will lead to a harsh dysfunction called a malignance.

Table 2.1 Erickson’s stages of human development

Life Stage	Conflicting Experiences	Psychosocial Quality
Infancy	Trust vs. mistrust	Hope
Early Childhood	Autonomy vs. shame	Will
Play age	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose
Primary School age	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence
Adolescence	Identity vs. role confusion	Fidelity
Young Adult	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love
Midlife	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care
Later Life	Integrity vs. despair	Wisdom

A key point about Erickson’s theory is his contention that their dilemmas or crises are forced on individuals as they move through the life cycle. Unlike other stage theorists, such as Loevinger, Erickson contends that each person is pushed through a sequence of dilemmas by biological maturation, social pressure and various roles assumed by the individual.

Another issue with Erickson’s theory is what happens to adults who cannot successfully negotiate stages of development because they carry forward a residue of distrust, guilt diffusion or self-absorption from earlier stages. The unsuccessful resolution of any one stage leaves the individual with “unfinished business” (Bee, 1996, p.59), unresolved conflicts that are carried forward to next stage making it “more difficult to resolve the next stage” (p. 59) successfully. Thus Erickson is proposing a set

of stages that are not only “inevitable and in a fixed sequence, but are also cumulative” (Bee, 1996, p. 59).

Finally, when looking at Erickson the concept of ‘off time’ needs to be explored. To be ‘off time’ is to address any one dilemma or crisis out of order, such as a teenage parent facing the demands of generativity before coping with either identity or intimacy. In this view, being off time is not just a question of being different from one’s peers but of being psychologically off time for the task involved.

2.3 Loevinger

Jane Loevinger’s (1976) theory of Ego Development is somewhat similar to Erickson’s, although the stages in this theory are sequential and cumulative not inevitable. The theory consists of ten stages from birth through to adulthood with each stage building on the one that precedes it. A key difference in the two theories, however, is that, in Loevinger’s view, a shift to the next stage only occurs when an individual has completed the development of the current stage.

Loevinger’s Stages of Ego Development speaks of a pre-social stage where the baby must learn to differentiate from surroundings; to develop object constancy. The child then moves to the symbiotic stage where the baby retains a symbiotic relationship with the mother (or other major caregiver). The major task is to emerge from that symbiosis, in part through language.

The next stage, the impulsive stage, is significant in this study in that identity is beginning to be established. Here the child asserts a separate identity, partly by giving

free rein to impulses. Others are valued in terms of what they can give. Those children remaining too long at this stage may be 'uncontrollable' or 'incorrigible'. Being stuck at this stage can significantly impair social and emotional development for the adolescent male.

The self-protective stage could equate with some of Kohlberg's work as it looks at issues around morality. The child learns self-control of impulses by anticipating immediate, short-term rewards or punishments. The child understands existence of rules but tries always to maximise gain. Once again, failure to negotiate this stage can significantly impede development. Some adolescents, and even some adults, still function at this stage.

The next stage is the conformist stage. Here, the child or adult identifies welfare with that of the group and attempts to model behaviour along the lines of group expectations. Individuals in this stage tend to be insensitive to individual differences and to be highly stereotyped in response, particularly about gender roles. Inner life is seen in black and white; happy/sad, good/bad. This then leads to the self-aware level. This is a transition level between conformist and conscientious stages. Self-awareness increases, as does acceptance of individual differences and shadings of feelings and opinions. Stereotypic categories such as gender, marital status and education, rather than other people's individual traits or needs however, are likely to be the basis of judgments.

The next stage is the conscientious stage where individually created rules and ideals have now been formed and the person attempts to live by them. Adults at this

stage have a richer inner life, with many more shadings of feelings; similarly, the adult's view of other people becomes more individualistic, the relationships more mutual. After this stage, the individual moves to the individualistic level. This is a transition level between the conscientious and autonomous stages. Individuals at this level are focused heavily on the question of independence and dependence. They are also more aware of inner conflict. This stage is followed by the final stage, the autonomous stage. Adults in this stage (comparatively rare) are fully independent individuals with a capacity to acknowledge and deal with inner conflict. Other people are accepted and cherished for what and whom they are with no attempt to change them.

Loevinger's model describes a pathway action, along which individuals must move, but the rate of movement and the final stage of this pathway will differ from one person to the next. Loevinger suggests that virtually all adults successfully move through the first few stages. Some will be stuck on the self-protective stage while others may move to the conformist stage and no further. This is an important issue for the study as the young man's concept of spirituality will be affected by the stage he is negotiating (that is, a black and white view of the world rather than an integrated one) and young men who become stuck in various stages will be more in need of psychotherapeutic intervention than those who are successfully negotiating the stages.

Loevinger's theory has gained influence in recent years as strict age listed stages are not a key to the theory. Adults of any one age are widely different from one another. Loevinger's theory helps describe these differences. In addition, Loevinger and her colleagues have been able to develop a sentence completion test or ego development instrument to measure a subject's position in the stage continuum.

It is very important to note that even though Loevinger is a stage theorist, she was able to advance beyond biological and cultural parochialism. The stages of development that she identifies as being most relevant to adolescence are the conscientious, individualistic, autonomous and integrated stages. At the conscientious stage, one moves from the conformism of adolescence, where peer imitation and rule-following predominate, to the development of an internalised conscience. This attainment is similar to Kohlberg's (1973) stage four moral reasoning, which emphasises the internalisation of the conventional moral order.

2.4 Maslow

Abraham Maslow is a scientist, philosopher and psychologist whose research and work identified that individuals seek meaning and fulfilment in a series of stages based on an innate set of hierarchical human needs. He believed that people developed in response to their achievement or satisfaction of these needs. His needs hierarchy moved through a series of fundamental human concerns beginning with physical needs and culminating in self-actualisation. His work received quite significant recognition throughout the sixties and seventies, particularly among behaviourist theorists and related fields. The model he developed is simple and to some extent based on biological life stages.

Maslow's theory (1968, 1970) was based on a compounding principle that stated that the achievement of higher needs could only be realised if lower level needs had been met. If an individual's life circumstances changed and their basic needs were exposed or threatened, they may regress through the stages. Maslow believed that the lowest common denominator of human motivation was the will to live. This desire

underpinned our most basic actions. His stages were an analysis of how human beings go about achieving that most basic principle. In a sense, his model attempted to answer the question, 'what does it mean to live?' For each of his stages he identifies a central motivation for the response of the individual to this challenging question.

Maslow termed his first stage the physical needs stage. In biological life terms, this takes place during infancy. The most basic concerns of the child are around survival and this centres on the need for food, warmth and shelter. The failure to meet such basic needs is life threatening and, therefore, they are central to our initial concern. These needs are elementary to all human existence but will be superseded once we feel assured that our source of fulfilment of these needs is guaranteed. Once a child becomes consciously aware that their parents will provide for these physical needs their concerns move beyond survival to security.

Stage two is known as the physical stage and relates to the achievement of personal security. This stage is common in children up until early adolescence. The individual becomes consciously aware of their own vulnerability and desire to feel safe in their environment. A child's sense of security may relate to being free of pain, protection from animals or people who may hurt them or even the dark. For an adult, the issues may be more complex. Until the individual feels that structures have been put in place to confirm their sense of security, they will be unable to move beyond this level of human motivation.

The third stage relates to our emotional needs for love and acceptance. Maslow identifies that, with the onset of adolescence, the individual develops significant

emotional needs relating to identity within the group. The individual is reliant on significant others for confirmation of their own value and worth. Prior to this stage, a child's understanding of love is related to a self-centred desire for attention, protection and affirmation. Now those emotional needs relate to a realisation of a deeper level of relating to others that is connected to genuine feelings and expressions of the self. The young adolescent male experiences his own ability to care, love and accept and recognises that the sharing or giving of these experiences is not automatic or guaranteed. This unsettles the young adolescent male and creates an emotional insecurity that becomes the focus and motivation of their action.

Figure 2.1 Maslow's being needs



With the resolution of stage three, the young adolescent male grows towards, and then into, adulthood and the needs of the individual turn to self-esteem and status. During this stage, an individual desires recognition of their achievements by the social group. Respect, prestige and commendation build the individual's concept of self and provide them with a deeper sense of meaning and place in the world. Maslow concludes that, for most people, this is the highest stage of needs development that is ever achieved. Maslow identifies his final stage of human needs development as the desire for

self-actualisation (see Figure 2.1). At this stage, the individual is concerned for others and what can be done to make the world a better place for all. It involves a realisation of who one is and what it means to be alive. It involves finding satisfaction in contributing to society rather than in personal gain. It is reflected in altruism, selflessness and personal integrity.

In terms of the young men in the study, all would have had access to the basics of food, shelter and clothing (deficit needs). Whilst the socio-economic status of the group was varied, none of the individuals would have been anxious about from where their next meal was coming. Safety needs were never an issue for any of them, which did allow the study to concentrate on psychological, belonging, esteem and self-actualisation needs, the basis for forming identity.

2.5 Kohlberg

Lawrence Kohlberg (1964, 1973, 1976, 1981, 1984) is best known for his work in the development of moral reasoning in children and adolescents. Seeking to expand on Jean Piaget's (1929) work in cognitive development and to determine whether there are universal stages in moral development as well, Kohlberg conducted a long-term study in which he recorded the responses of boys, aged from seven years through adolescence, to hypothetical dilemmas requiring a moral choice. The most famous sample question is whether the husband of a critically ill woman is justified in stealing a drug that could save her life if the pharmacist is charging much more than he can afford to pay (Kohlberg, 1976). Based on the results of his study, Kohlberg concluded that children and adults progress through six stages in the development of moral reasoning.

He also concluded that moral development is directly related to cognitive development, with older children able to base their responses on increasingly broad and abstract ethical standards.

Kohlberg's first level, the pre-conventional morality level, speaks about two stages. The first is the punishment and obedience orientation stage. In this stage, the individual (usually a child) decides what is right or wrong based on what is punished; if something is punished, it must be wrong or bad. The individual obeys others if they have superior power. The next stage refers strongly to the concepts of individualism, instrumental purpose and exchange. Here, the individual defines what is good or right in terms of what brings pleasure, thus sometimes called 'naïve hedonism'. There is also an emphasis here on fairness and on reciprocal advantage; 'I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine'.

Kohlberg's second level is the conventional morality level and it starts with stage three. Here, mutual 'interpersonal expectations', 'relationships' and 'interpersonal conformity' are central. 'Being good' becomes important in and of itself and strong emphasis is placed on living up to the standards and expectations of the family or other significant groups. If parents or teachers say something is good or right, it is normally questioned without argument. The second stage in this level is based around social systems and conscience (law and order). Right and wrong are defined by larger social groups or by the whole society. Laws are seen as nearly absolute definitions of right and wrong. The fulfilling of duties is also seen as a basic good.

Kohlberg's final level speaks about principled or post conventional morality. Stage five is the first stage of this level and it speaks of 'social contract' or utility and individual rights. The adult in this stage sees laws and values as relative and changeable but believes that rules should be normally upheld to sustain the basic social order. That which achieves the 'greatest good for the greatest number' is thought of as most moral, but there may also be some basic non-relative values identified, such as the importance of life and liberty.

Stage six is the final stage for Kohlberg and he describes it as the universal ethical principles stage. At this stage, the individual develops and follows self-chosen ethical principles in determining what is right. These principles are part of a thought-out, articulated, system of values and ideas that form the basis for the individual's actions and life pattern (Kohlberg, 1976).

It was obvious that the adolescent males in the study were at various stages of this developmental schema. Whilst the vast majority would have been at least in the early stages of level two, the responses indicated a wide spectrum in terms of where they were within this level. It is interesting to note that some adults never leave stage three and most adults will never reach level six (Kohlberg, Levine & Hewer, 1983).

Kohlberg argues that forms of moral reasoning emerge in a fixed sequence and that the stages are hierarchically organised with each stage growing from, and eventually replacing, the previous one. Each successive stage is more differentiated and integrated than the last one. During the transition, however, from one stage to another, people will use reasoning reflecting more than one stage but eventually the lower levels of reasoning will drop out and be replaced with a more complex, more integrated

system of reasoning. This is in contrast to Erickson's stages that are sequential but not hierarchically organised. In Erickson's system (1959, 1963) each new stage ushers in a new set of issues but the old issues do not vanish and there is no assumption that the new stage involves some new internal model; some integration and reorganisation of an old way of thinking.

Kohlberg also speculates about the existence of a still higher stage, stage seven (Kohlberg 1973; Kohlberg et al., 1983), which he thinks might emerge only toward the end of life, after an adult has spent some years living within a principled moral system. It is the confrontation of one's own death that can bring about this transition. As they ask the fundamental questions, such as 'why live?' and 'how to face death?', some individuals transcend the type of logical analysis that typifies all the earlier forms of moral reasoning and arrive at a still deeper or broader de-centring. As Birren describes it:

The individual shifts from seeing himself as the centre of the universe to identifying with the universe and seeing himself from this perspective. What results is that the individual senses the unity of the universe in which he is but one element ... (It is a nondualistic, nonegoistic orientation). (Birren, Sloane & Cohen, 1992, p. 122)

Kohlberg describes stage seven as a response to ethical and religious problems based on constructing a sense of identity or unity with being, with life, or with God (Kohlberg et al., 1983).

One of the greatest criticisms of Kohlberg's work is that he was interested in concepts of justice, not concepts of care, so his theory and research largely ignore an ethical or moral system based on caring for others (Gilligan, 1982).

2.6 Fowler

The work of Fowler is significant in this study as the schools chosen clearly identify that they are faith and values based schools that emphasise holistic education. This means that not only does Fowler need to be explored in term of his own unique contribution to faith development but also within the context of other developmental theorists. Fowler would maintain that faith is integral to identity (Fowler, 1981), thus creating a strong link to other theorists, most notably Erickson in terms of identity development, Kohlberg in terms of Moral development and Loevinger in terms of ego development.

According to Fowler (1981), faith develops through six invariant stages, which occur in a fixed order (without substantial omission or regression) and represent successively more complex ways of organising meaning in the person's life. In Fowler's scheme, the development of faith does not correspond perfectly to age (Fowler, 1981).

The development of faith begins with stage zero, undifferentiated faith. This pre-stage is pre-conceptual and largely pre-linguistic. It involves a sense by the infant of trust, courage, hope and love as over against abandonment, inconsistency and deprivation. Generally, the transition to the first stage of faith begins with the development of thought and language.

Fowler (1981) identifies six stages of growth. In stage one he refers to intuitive-projective faith. This involves images of parents' formal religion and of normal family life, such as favourite stories, anecdotes, family rituals and other stimuli that give family life coherence and meaning for the child. The transition to the second stage of faith is generally signalled by the onset of concrete operational thinking (usually from age seven to eleven).

Fowler refers to stage two as the mythic-literal faith stage and is characterised by the child's attempts to impose some order on the stories, beliefs, rules and attitudes in his or her milieu. The person in stage two can describe a narrative of religious and historical events but has little conceptual perspective on its meaning. The transition out of stage two, if it ever occurs, is stimulated by the application of formal operational thinking to literal thoughts and beliefs and by the discovery of apparent contradictions that the child (or adolescent or adult) cannot explain. This was an important consideration for the study as the adolescent men involved have all moved to the formal operational thinking stage.

The third stage is called the synthetic-conventional faith. It gives coherence to family, school, work, peers, media and, perhaps, formal religious environments. The person must create some sense of security in living in a pluralistic society. The faith that is developed is particularly sensitive to the beliefs and expectations of people who inhabit the person's world; it is conformist faith. This is an important issue when dealing with young men who are involved in schools that actively promote faith development. When beliefs are strongly held, the person has usually not analysed them systematically or reflectively. The transition from stage three to stage four faith is often

stimulated by (a) contradictions between two or more valued authorities, (b) changes in official policies by an officially sanctioned leader, or (c) encounters with experiences or perspectives that promote critical reflection on one's beliefs and values.

Stage four, individuative-reflective faith, involves creation of a rational worldview. Religious symbols are demythologised. Transition from stage four to five is characterised by disillusionment with the compromises that one made during stage four, by an awareness of paradoxes and by a recognition of life's complexities.

Stage five is referred to as the paradoxical-consolidative faith stage. It involves the reintegration of elements of the self that had been ignored or evaded during the rational certainty of stage four. Symbols, myths and rituals are appreciated – whether one's own or those of others. Most people do not reach stage five and it is almost never found prior to midlife. This stage, or following stages, were not relevant to the study.

The final stage (stage six), universalising faith, is characterised by an awareness that one's ultimate environment includes all beings. People in this stage live sacrificial lives, given for the transformation of humankind (Fowler, 1981).

It is important to realise that, like Kohlberg, Fowler assumes that these stages occur in a sequence but that the sequence is only very roughly associated with age, especially in adulthood. Some adults remain in the same meaning system, the same faith structure, their entire lives. Others make one or more transitions in their understandings of themselves and their relationships with others. Fowler also contends that each stage has a 'proper time' of ascendancy in an individual's life, a period of time at which that

particular form of faith is most consistent with the demands of life. Each stage, at its optimum time, has the “potential for wholeness, grace and integrity and/or strengths sufficient for either life’s blows or blessings” (Fowler, 1981, p. 274). This is an important consideration for the research project, as some young men may never negotiate beyond one level of moral or faith development where others, by the time they reach Year 12, could be more advanced.

2.7 Kegan

Kegan (1982) proposes that each individual has two very powerful and equal desires or motives that are intrinsic to their being. One is a desire for inclusion, to belong and to be integrated with others. Competing with this is an equally strong desire to be separate, independent and differentiated. Kegan refers to the balance between these two as the ‘evolutionary truce’. One of these two forces will eventually dominate the personality of the young man, thus meaning a need in relation to the other will not be met. For example, one might make a decision that will mean that he or she is a part of a group but, in doing so, he or she will compromise individuality. Eventually, the unmet needs become so strong that our internal system is forced to change an understanding. This creates perpetual movement between perspectives or meaning systems centred on inclusion or union and perspectives centred on independence or separateness.

For Kegan, maturity involves a series of steps by which we progressively disembed the self from these psychological processes. Once disembedded, a vantage point exists from which to ‘see’ ourselves in our environment more objectively. Over a lifetime, the psychological processes by which one may successively disembed the self

are sensations, impulses, enduring dispositions (needs, interests and wishes), interpersonal mutuality and identity. Moving out of embeddedness in any of these areas is a complex process because we first have to struggle to differentiate an area of our consciousness and, as it were, project it outside ourselves so that we can 'see' it as object and then relate to it.

Kegan's stages of self-hood that have relevance to adolescent males in the study are stages two, three and four. In stage two, embeddedness moves from impulses to needs. The person is no longer at the mercy of unfathomable impulses or perceptions. Kegan's name for this stage, the imperial self, captures the sense of independence and agency that comes with this emergence from embeddedness in impulses and perceptions. It is an independence frequently expressed in 'imperial' manipulation of others to attain personal ends. Such manipulation is intrinsic to this stage because the imperial self is still embedded in enduring dispositions (needs, wishes, interests). What cannot be 'seen' objectively at this stage are internal stages. Neither can a stage two person imagine the internal states of others. Kegan sums this up by saying she "knows 'what' she is, but not 'who' she is" (Kegan, 1982, p. 87). In the absence of a shared context, a shared internal reality in relationship with others, it is imperative to try to control actions so that the hard-won sense of being in control can be expressed.

The development that matures from the imperial self is the competence to coordinate needs, to integrate one's enduring dispositions with those of another, to have a sense of inner states and feelings. This internal ability is complemented by the achievement of mutuality. Now one is not embedded in one's enduring dispositions; they can be 'seen objectively'. One can be empathetic; can stand in others' shoes,

experience their viewpoints and understand reciprocal obligations. These are the achievements in meaning making of Kegan's next stage, the interpersonal self. These achievements are competencies that support a new stage of faith development.

Liberation from the interpersonal self comes when one is able to see one's relationships objectively from an 'outside' vantage point. When one is embedded in the interpersonal, one is at the mercy of tensions between differing influences from a variety of relationships whose obligations, expectations and satisfactions can all be in tension. Disembedding from this state comes when one achieves a vantage point from which to reflect upon these elements. This vantage point is found outside relationships in the recognition that there are general principles in social systems, law or morality which can make objective meaning of the interpersonal realm and that out of the increased independence of the interpersonal context comes the emergence of identity.

Kegan's picture of maturity is one in which individuals struggle out of successive forms of embeddedness to achieve successively greater capacity to make meaning of experience. With each move in the evolution of the self, a person makes a better guarantee to the world of its distinct integrity, qualitatively reducing each time a fusion of him with the world, thereby creating a wider and wider community in which to participate, to be connected and for which to direct his concern (Kegan, 1982, p. 71).

Finally for this section it would be appropriate to mention Psychosocial theory. Psychosocial theory attempts to explain human development across the life span especially in patterned changes in ego development which are reflected in self understanding, identity formation, social relationships and worldview. Psychosocial

theory makes the assumptions that human development is a product of interacting factors such as biological maturation, the interaction between individual and social groups and the contribution that individuals make to their own psychological growth (Newman and Newman2008)

2.8 Comparison of theorists

It is important to compare the theorists, especially in the way they describe the young males' various responses to life's issues, as it will give us an insight into the complex way in which the young man articulates and lives out his unique identity within the context of community expectation. The following important points can be made when comparing the theorists. Loevinger's conformist stage is very similar to Kohlberg's conventional morality and Fowler's conventional faith. All three would agree that in adolescence and early adulthood individuals tend to focus on adapting to the demands of the roles and relationships society imposes on them and that assumes the source of authority in external.

Loevinger's conscientious (individualistic) stages are similar to Maslow's layer of esteem needs, Kohlberg's early principled reasoning and Fowler's individuated faith. All four theorists agree that the next step involves a shift in the central source of meaning or self-definition from external to internal.

Loevinger's autonomous stage and Fowler's conjunctive faith are similar, both being related to self-actualisation needs as described by Maslow. All speak of a shift away from self-preoccupation towards a reach for belonging and a shift towards greater tolerance towards both self and others.

There is a correlation about higher stages of development that involves some form of self-transcendence (Kohlberg's stage seven, Fowler's stage of universalising faith and Maslow's peak experience). Both Kohlberg and Fowler's work is strongly cognitive being based on the work of Piaget. Fowler's follow up work (1987) draws on the work of Kegan and speaks of the stages of 'faith and selfhood'. This new dimension of the theory of faith development casts a new light on the integration between the logic of rational certainty and the logic of conviction. For Kegan, meaning making is the most fundamental activity of the human person. In it the cognitive and the affective, or in the above terms, rational certainty and conviction, are inextricably interwoven.

Integration of Kohlberg's and Fowler's theories with those of Loevinger's and Maslow's suggests a common set of stages, moving from conformity to external authority and external self definition towards individuation and then toward universalising or self transcendent meaning systems.

Bee (1996, p. 345) provides a useful summary of four of the theorists, using original source material from each of them (see Table 2.2).

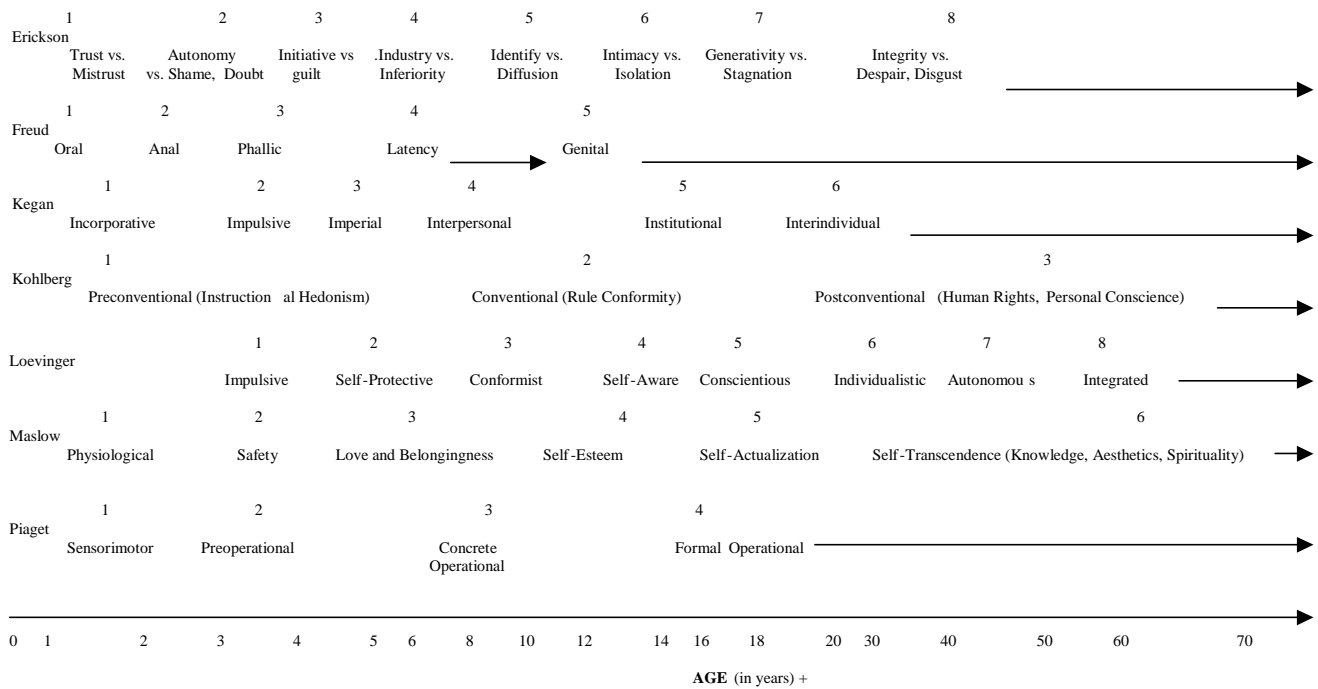
Table 2.2 Bee's comparison of theorists

	Loevinger (1976)	Maslow (1970)	Kohlberg (1984)	Fowler (1981)
Conformist or culture-bound self	Conformist, self- aware	Belongingness and love needs	Conventional morality	Synthetic- conventional
Individuality	Conscientious, individualistic	Self-esteem needs	First stage of principled morality (Stage 5)	Individuative- reflective
Integration	Autonomous and integrated	Self-actualised	Universal ethical principles (Stage 6)	Conjunctive
Self- transcendence	-	Some peak experiences	Ethics based on unity (Stage 7)	Universalising

Another useful comparison (see Table 2.3) is provided by Mahoney (1991, p. 150). He provides a clear table that demonstrates how the different theories could be affecting the individual at a particular age. This table is significant for the study in that it provides a guide to what stage the theorist thought the individuals were at according to age. It also provides a useful tool to look at a particular age, and compare and analyse the stages of each theorist. For example, if we look at sixteen to seventeen years of age (the age of most of the respondents in the study) it can be seen that the norm would be that the young man is confronting self actualisation according to Maslow whilst being in the stage of formal operations according to Piaget and operating at a moral level of two

according to Kohlberg. He would also, at the same time, be dealing with issues around intimacy and isolation according to Erickson.

Table 2.3 Mahoney’s comparison of theorists



2.9 Stages of spiritual development

It would be imperative to look at the previously mentioned theories of development and what affects, if any, that they would have on spiritual development. Erickson’s stages of psychosocial development provide a useful perspective for recognising how religious and spiritual content is woven into major life processes, such as identity formation and interpersonal intimacy. It is interesting to note that Erickson recognises the domain of character in his system. He does this by specifying the specific virtue associated with each stage. He is the only theorist in the fields of moral psychology and moral philosophy who does this. This is an important consideration in

this study as all schools identified that character formation of the young man was core to the schools' mission. Whilst the individual schools did not articulate the virtues identified by Erickson as essential, they did indicate that virtues and values were important, even if they replaced Erickson's virtues with their own.

The following analysis of Erickson's work demonstrates this point. Even though the first three stages are negotiated before the child attends schools, the virtues, if negotiated by the child, will be affirmed at school. If the virtues are absent then schools may interpret this as developmental retardation.

In the first stage, trust versus mistrust, Erickson indicates that, at birth, infants are dominated by biological needs and drives. The quality of their relationship with caregivers will influence the extent to which trust (or mistrust) in others and the world in general is sensed. The virtue of hope is associated with this stage. Hope is a well articulated 'Gospel Value' for all the schools involved.

The next stage is autonomy versus doubt and shame. Social demands in early childhood for self-control and bodily regulation (that is, toilet training) influence feelings of self-efficacy versus self-doubt. The quality or virtue of will, the will to do what is expected and expectable, emerges at stage two. This can be aligned with obedience in the school setting.

Initiative versus guilt is the next stage. During the preschool period children begin actively to explore and intrude upon their environment. The virtue of purpose – the courage to pursue personally valued goals in spite of risks and possible failure –

now ascends. This is the same as motivation to achieve in school and becomes a significant value of reaching your potential.

Stage four is industry versus inferiority. The social context in which the first three crises are negotiated is predominantly the home and immediate family. In stage four, however, children begin school or formal instruction of some sort. Mastery of the tasks and skills valued by one's teachers and the larger society is now the focal concern. The quality or virtue of competence is said to develop. In a school setting, this competence is measured in terms of assessment tasks and comparisons with others is unavoidable.

Identity versus diffusion is the next stage and the one most important for this study as it relates specifically to the stage of life the young men are negotiating. Adolescence is the pivotal time when these young men actively attempt to synthesise their experiences in order to formulate a stage sense of personal identity. While this process is psychosocial in nature – a social fit or 'solidarity with group ideals' must occur – Erickson emphasises the role of accurate self-knowledge and reality testing. Individuals come to view themselves as producers of their previous experiences; a continuity of experience is sensed. Positive resolutions of prior crises – being trusting, autonomous, wilful and industrious – facilitate identity formation; whereas failures may lead to identity diffusion. The virtue of fidelity, namely, the ability to maintain commitment in spite of contradictory value systems, emerges during adolescence. Commitment is key to any values based education and was identified as important by all the schools involved in the study.

The study involved senior students, which meant that many of them were entering the next stage, intimacy versus isolation. In young adulthood, one must be willing and able to unite one's own identity with another's. Since authentic disclosure and mutuality leave one vulnerable, a firm sense of identity is prerequisite. The quality or virtue of love ascends during this stage. In the context of a values and faith based school, this issue becomes complex. The young man must distinguish between love and sex and negotiate some strong views from adults and school rules and guidelines that offer assistance. This is all done within the context of relationship, discovering sexuality and contemplating issues about what the future will look like after school.

The next stage is generativity versus stagnation. This stage is associated with middle adulthood and is the time in the life span when one strives to actualise the identity that has been formed and shared with selected others. It is important for the adolescent as it does rely on successfully negotiating the stages in which they are now operating. The generation or production of offspring, artefacts, ideas, products, and so forth, is involved. The virtue of care now emerges. Generative adults care for others through parenting, teaching, supervising, and so forth, whereas stagnating adults are absorbed in their own personal needs. Care for others is central to all the schools' Mission statements and was reflected strongly in the study by way of the emerging priority of social justice.

Integrity versus despair is the final stage and it focuses on the perceived completion or fulfilment of one's life cycle. The last virtue to emerge is wisdom. The wise person understands the relativistic nature of knowledge and accepts that one's life had to be the way it was (Erickson, 1980).

The link between Kohlberg's stages of moral development and any spiritual formation is not as clear as is Erickson. Kohlberg (1964, 1973, 1976, 1981, 1984) proposes a stage model of moral reasoning based on the structural developmental paradigm established by Piaget. Kohlberg's intent is to describe the developmental process of moral reasoning rather than moral action. He recognises that the theoretical link between moral reasoning and action is elusive, such that individuals can exhibit the same action for different reasons. These stages of moral development serve as benchmarks for comparing other stage theories and even some perspectives, such as the stage theories of faith, self and religious development.

Fowler indicates that faith is directed toward a person's object(s) of ultimate concern, irrespective of the specific content of faith. Fowler (1981) conceptualises faith structurally, rather than in terms of specific beliefs, but recognises that lived faith expressed itself in specific beliefs. In this sense, faith represents how individuals develop cognitively and spiritually in dealing with ultimate, transcendental reality and meaning. Understood in this way, faith is clearly relevant to the spiritual dimension in psychotherapy and counselling since it represents the inner orientation to questions of meaning and value, that is, to questions that for many people are associated predominantly with spirituality and religion.

After interviewing youth of all ages from a variety of backgrounds, Fowler (1981) delineated six stages of adolescent faith development and adolescent spirituality that have come to be accepted by many. The first stage, according to Fowler, is termed mythical-literal faith, the beginning of adolescents' spiritual journey. Still operating in a somewhat concrete stage, adolescents respond to religion according to their cognitive or

intellectual capacity. Due to the differences in maturational levels, no definite chronological age can be placed on this stage. Persons at this stage view almost all stories, particularly religious ones, in literal, concrete ways. God is a spirit being who sometimes takes a human form and resides somewhere in the sky. Many adolescents accept the religious faith traditions of their parents or household with little or no questions asked.

The next stage, according to Fowler, is termed synthetic-conventional faith. As adolescents age and mature, they increase their capacity to think abstractly or, as Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1929, 1930) termed it, they enter the stage of 'formal operations'. The primary task at this stage of cognitive operations is for the adolescent to relate his or her religious view with those of others, even though these views may be quite different. God, at this stage of development, is usually viewed as a personal advisor, friend or guide but sometimes it is not as necessary to personify this figure in a concrete or formal manner.

The last and final stage in Fowler's model of the development of adolescent spirituality is individual-reflective faith. This is obviously the highest level and may not be attained by everyone. Those individuals who have the capacity for such advanced development, however, engage in critical self-reflection and the examination of their personal beliefs and values. This is a crucial stage in the development of the individual as such questioning leads to making personal religious beliefs one's own. Adolescents who are capable of attaining this level of advancement view God in more abstract ways, not just as a personal advisor, but also as a spirit embodying direction that will give moral guidelines.

Given that Fowler's model is based on Kohlberg's research, it should not be surprising that the Faith Development model would be subject to criticism. Ford-Grabowsky's (1987) critique of Fowler's model of faith development is trenchant. Ford-Grabowsky argues that masculine and cultural biases resulted in Fowler's focus on cognition to the neglect of religious sentiments and to focus on the positive aspects of development to the neglect of deception and sin as obstacles to the development of faith. Johnson (1989) has levelled a more basic criticism of stage theories. She contends that because stage theories do not address the matter of character and virtue, and focus rather on ego development, they have limited value in understanding the process of spiritual growth and development, at least from a Christian perspective. Finally, others (Bee, 1994, 1996, 2000) have criticised the basic structural-developmental premise that these stages are universal and invariant.

Although much has been written about the development and dynamics of self, namely, Object Relations Theory and Self-Psychology, there have been relatively few efforts to articulate a stage model of self-development. As previously indicated, Loevinger has extensively researched ego development and devised a theoretically-derived and data-based theory of the stages of ego development. It was Robert Kegan (1982) who proposed a stage theory of self-development that is highly regarded by spiritual directors (Cortright, 1997) and spiritually-oriented psychotherapists (Burke et al., 2005). The appeal of Kegan's model for contemporary spirituality is that it addresses the two basic human desires expressed in all spiritual literature; the desire for attachment or relationship as well as for separation or autonomy. Furthermore, this theory is particularly attractive to therapists and spiritual directors since Kegan

addresses the functions of attachment in women as well as in men (Wolski Conn, 1989).

Some theorists have developed theories of human development that have been focused primarily on stages of spiritual development. The two most notable theorists in this area are Helminiak (1987) and Wilber (1983/1996a, 1993/1996b, 1995, 1999).

Extending the tradition of the structural theories of human development, Helminiak (1987) describes what he calls the stages of spiritual development. His basic assumption is that spiritual development is not a separate line of development alongside physical, emotional, intellectual, moral, ego or faith development. Rather, spiritual development embraces all these dimensions of human development. Spiritual development is best conceptualised as human development when it is characterised by four factors; 1) integrity or wholeness, 2) openness, 3) self-responsibility and 4) authentic self-transcendence. It is the ongoing integration of the human spiritual principle into the very structures of the personality until the personality becomes the adequate expression of the fully authentic person. Helminiak (1987) describes five distinct developmental stages in this process of integration.

The first is the conformist stage. This is the beginning point of spiritual development. It is characterised by a deeply felt and extensively rationalised worldview, accepted on the basis of external authority and supported by approval of our significant others. The next is the conscientious conformist stage. This stage is characterised by beginning to assume responsibility for our awareness that because of unthinking adherence to an inherited worldview, we have actually abdicated responsibility for our life. At this stage, we begin to learn that our lives are what we decide to make of them.

The third stage is the conscientious stage. This stage is the first stage of trust in spiritual development. It is characterised by the achievement of significantly structuring our lives according to our own understanding of things, by optimistically regarding our newly accepted sense of responsibility for ourselves and our world and by commitment to our own principles. The next stage is the compassionate stage. At this stage, we learn to surrender some of the world we have so painstakingly constructed for ourselves. Our commitments are no less intense, but they are more realistic, more nuanced and more supported by deeply felt and complex emotion. We become more gentle with ourselves and with others.

The final stage is the cosmic stage. As this final stage unfolds, our habitual patterns of perception, cognition, interrelation and all others become more fully authentic. We become more fully open to all that is, ever willing to change and adjust as circumstances demand, alive and responsive to the present moment, in touch with the depths of our own selves, aware of the furthest implications of our spiritual nature, in harmony with ourselves and with all else – and all this, not as a momentary, passing experience but as an enduring way of being, permeating the very structure of our concrete selves. There is a profound merging, insofar as it is possible, between spirit and self. It is that state of full integration when the personality is the adequate instrument of the authentic person. It becomes a way of life that has been variously described by the great spiritual traditions as mysticism, *Samadhi*, *satori*, *kensho*, *moksha*, cosmic consciousness or enlightenment.

Wilber (1999) proposes a stage theory of spiritual development from a much different perspective than the one articulated by Helminiak. It is an integrative theory of consciousness that Wilber contends embraces the essential truths of Eastern and Western thinking, from ancient wisdom traditions to modern science. He calls this theory the Full Spectrum Model of the stages of human growth and development.

Over the past two decades, this generic model has undergone changes and modifications. The most significant in terms of this study was evolutionary model of consciousness. Wilber describes the evolving structures of consciousness that make up what he calls the spectrum or the Great Chain of Being. There are six major, increasingly differentiated levels of consciousness from lowest to highest (Wilber, 1983, 1996b). These six levels are:

1. Reptilian consciousness is the most primitive level of consciousness. It is characterised by immersion in nature, immediate fulfilment of instinctual needs, and the absence of any consciousness of self.
2. Typhonic consciousness is the level of consciousness involving the development of a body-self distinct from other objects. It is characterised by the inability to distinguish the part from the whole and images in the imagination from external reality.
3. Mythic membership consciousness is the level of consciousness characterised socially by the stratification of society into hierarchical forms. It is characterised by an unquestioned assimilation of the values and ideas of one's social group and involves the phenomena of over-identification and conformity to the group's value systems. In short, one's identity and self-worth is drawn from one's family, ethnic or religious community.

4. Mental egoic consciousness involves the development of full reflective self-consciousness, beginning with the capacity for logical reasoning at about eight years of age and arriving at abstract thinking around twelve or thirteen. This level of consciousness is characterised by the sense of personal responsibility and guilt feelings regarding one's attitudes and behaviour.
5. Intuitive consciousness is the level of consciousness that is beyond rational thinking. It is characterised by harmony, cooperation, forgiveness, negotiation to resolve differences and mutuality rather than competitiveness. It involves having a sense of oneness with others and of belonging to the universe.
6. Unitive consciousness is that level of consciousness involving the experience of transforming union together with the process of infusing the experience of divine love into all one's faculties and relationships.

Hilminiak and Wilber have a most important thrust for teachers, counsellors and educational leaders. Spirituality cannot be compartmentalised as a competing interest with moral, physical, cognitive and social development. Young men must see it as being integrated into the fabric of all components of their life and something that is essential if integrated and holistic personal growth is to occur. Another very important point raised is the need for the individual young man to assume some responsibility for his own personal growth, especially spiritual growth, rather than leaving it as a responsibility of the school or his parents.

2.10 The worldview of an adolescent

Holmbeck and Shapera (1999) presented this model (Figure 2.2) to assist in understanding the worldview of an adolescent in terms of development and adjustment.

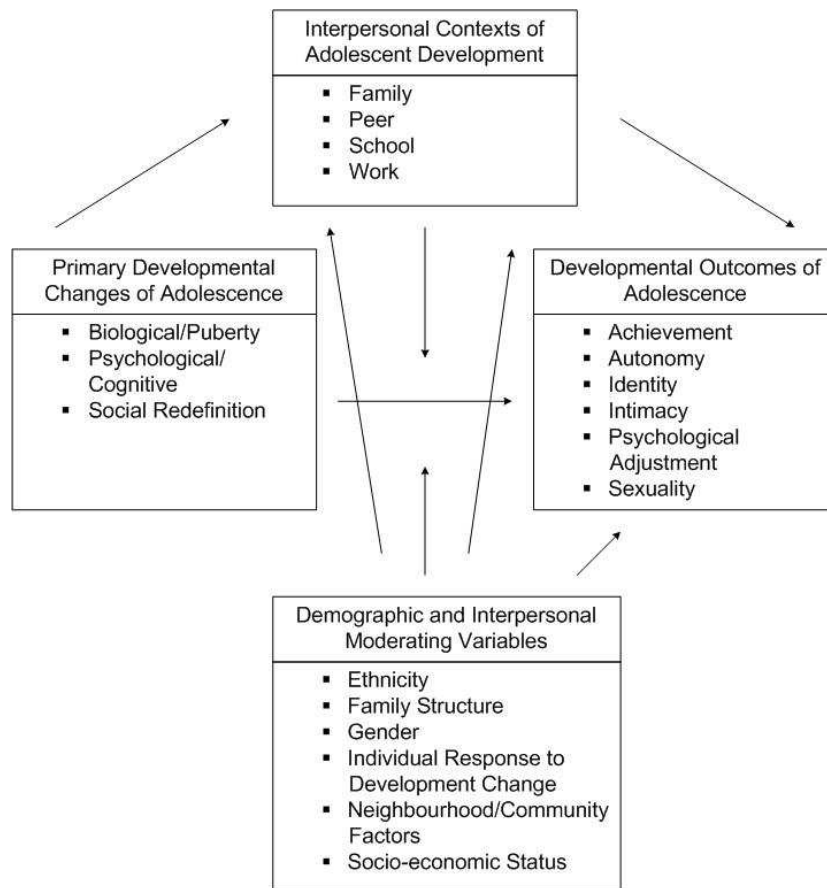


Figure 2.2 Holmbeck and Shapera: development and adjustment

The model presented here is bio-psychosocial in nature, insofar as it emphasises the biological, psychological and social changes of the adolescent developmental period. It also stresses the need to integrate affective elements of the adolescent's development, especially around the issues of relationships. The strong role of key elements of community, such as family, peers, school, and neighbourhood factors, is important to note as spiritual integration can occur through these elements.

Beliefs have emerged as an important focus of clinical attention. Patients' expectations and assumptions powerfully enhance trust and influence treatment outcome (Benson, 1996; Frank, 1991). Addressing faulty beliefs that underlie the

maladaptive patterns is central in both cognitive-behavioural and dynamically oriented psychotherapy (Horowitz 1991; Wright, Beck & Thase, 2003). Furthermore, therapists bring their own values and beliefs to the treatment situation (Kluft 1992; Schafer 2004).

2.11 Developmental theories and counselling

It is reasonable to say that counselling is really about increasing a person's ability to make 'developmental' shifts out of the raw data of experience, to move towards greater maturity and personal differentiation within the contexts of their lives.

It is also important how perspectives on continuity and change through the lifespan open the way for a consideration of counselling as an area of human activity. It is helpful to 'plot' a person's life story in terms of the normative patterns that are embedded at an historical moment, within someone's social and cultural context, that is, to be able to 'place' a person's unique life experiences (biological, psychological and social) within a wider context. At the same time, it is important to understand the nature of the ideas that in our historical, social and cultural context are regarded as 'credible' and 'acceptable' accounts of the human life journey. The ideas (models, theories) do not exist somehow outside, or independently of, the cultures, societies and individual life histories of the people that give rise to them.

It is helpful, also, to see a person in the uniqueness of their accounts and to recognise the interactive nature of the normative and idiosyncratic, how, in fact, the individual nature of experience is often a specific and unique expression and representation of what is a general perspective in our society and culture about the way life processes typically unfold. The ways in which divergence from such 'templates' are

perceived, the permissible range of diversity within a society and culture before labels of 'difference' or 'deviance' are applied (with their consequences for disempowerment and exclusion), will vary.

It is important to remember that counsellors are within, not outside, a set of assumptions about human living and these are brought into every encounter with a client. Exploration and examination of life's narratives will demonstrate that there are influences that shape preferences, values and perspectives or when relating to another person. The normative and idiosyncratic dynamic of pathways and trajectories enable the construction, revision, dismantling and reconstruction of lives many times over, as engagement with the events and phases of our lives occurs. Some argue that such constructions are always social in nature, narratives built in the moment of interaction with another or others, real or imagined presences that shape self-narratives in certain ways. Both counsellors and 'clients' are involved in this process in the development of counselling sessions. Others (Benson, Roehlkepartain & Ride, 2003; Burke et al., 2005; Cortright, 1997) point to the systemic contextual nature of much of our experiencing, drawing attention to the organic, dynamic nature of important relational contexts. It is the life of these groups that gives important insights into the experiences of individuals within them. It is the group narratives as well as the individual narratives that must be experienced and explored for understanding to emerge. For the sake of this study, this research asked challenging questions such as, what is the group narrative of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition and has each individual school got a narrative that will impact in any way on the life of the developing adolescent?

When looking at the spiritual dimension of counselling, Sharry (2001) indicates that Fowler's developmental scheme has several implications. By outlining cognitive, affective and behavioural elements of religious development at different life stages, Fowler provides the counsellor with a way of understanding typical and problematic spiritual development. In terms of counselling, Hilminiak's theory would be more closely aligned to Fowler, as it also speaks of life's stages, whereas Wilber's theory is a more integrative theory that has an emphasis on truth as being holistic.

2.12 Developmental theory: a critical analysis

As suggested by Shirk, "the psychological treatment of children can be informed, and advanced, by the introduction of developmental principles into clinical concepts and techniques" (1988, p. 514). There are several developmental factors that are important to consider when working clinically with adolescent clients:

- developmental myths
- developmental psychopathology
- developmental norms
- developmental level
- developmental transitions
- developmental predictors and protective factors.

A trap for counsellors working with adolescents is 'developmental level uniformity myth' (Kendall, 1984, 2000). This is the tendency of clinicians to view children and adolescents of different ages as more alike than different. The consequence of a belief in this myth is that treatments are more likely to be applied without

consideration of the developmental level (that is, the social, emotional, and/or cognitive-developmental level) of the child or adolescent client.

More recently, Shirk (1999, p. 239) has described a number of interrelated subtypes of the developmental-level uniformity myth. First, there is the ‘developmental continuity myth’. This myth involves the assumption that therapies that are applied to adults can be applied with little modification to children with similar presenting problems. Unfortunately, adult treatments may be inappropriate for children and adolescents, not only because of the complexities of language but also because of the cognitive abilities required to participate in the treatment.

A second myth, ‘the developmental invariance myth’, involves the assumption that a given disorder has a single etiological pathway (Shirk, 1999, p. 241). Contrary to this assumption, it appears that equifinality and multifinality are more the rule than the exception (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1996). Specifically, equifinality is the process by which a single disorder is produced via different developmental pathways; “children may share the same diagnosis but not the same pathogenic process” (Shirk, 1999, p. 65). Multifinality involves the notion that the same developmental events may lead to a variety of different adjustment outcomes; some adaptive, some maladaptive. Given past research support for the concepts of equifinality and multifinality (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1996), it appears that cognitive behavioural therapists are best served by gathering as much developmental and historical information as possible about a given child, in addition to what they already know about the etiology of the disorder in question.

The 'developmental consistency myth' involves the assumption that the same developmental tasks are relevant across different ages. Contrary to this myth, the following is correct:

- 1) The clinical concerns that need to be addressed in treatment are likely to vary as a function of the developmental level of the child (for example, the acquisition of certain conflict-resolution skills may be more relevant at certain ages than at others).
- 2) The therapeutic interventions that will successfully redirect a child from a maladaptive trajectory to an adaptive trajectory are likely to vary developmentally (Shirk, 1999).
- 3) The presence of certain pathologies may make it more likely that a child will be off-time in the development of certain skills. An implication of the last issue is that the therapist may not only need to address the presenting symptoms but also the skills that the child failed to develop because of having a severe behaviour problem (Shirk, 1999).
- 4) Finally, 'the myth of individual development' involves the assumption that treatment can proceed at the individual level without attention to contextual factors (Shirk, 1999).

Weisz and Weersing (1999) have detailed several other cognitive developmental issues that are relevant to the treatment of adolescent clients. First, the degree to which a child or adolescent understands the purpose and process of therapy (as well as the concepts that are being taught) is critical. Second, the degree to which a child can take a perspective may place limits on the effectiveness of certain interventions where such skills are assumed. Third, a child's level of abstract reasoning is an important

determinant of whether he or she will be able to participate in role-playing exercises and other hypothetical situations. Fourth, cognitive behavioural therapy, like all interventions, is dependent on language. The abilities to decode complex and abstract language and engage in private speech may be important moderating factors for treatment effectiveness.

More generally, knowledge of developmental level can be used in a number of ways to modify treatment strategies. Developmental level can provide a basis for designing alternate versions of the same treatment and knowledge of developmental level may guide the stages of treatment.

A review of research literature indicates that there is an appreciable lack of interface between developmental psychology and clinical treatment of adolescents (Kendall, 2000). This lack of attention is also noted by Holmbek and Kendall (1991) and Shirk (1988).

2.13 Developmental theory and spirituality

Spiritual belief is a process of growth in the multiple dimensions of faith; of transforming religious meaning, not clinging to a particular symbolisation or formulation of content. Thus, faced with issues involving the spiritual dimension, the developmentally aware counsellor may help a client examine and transform literal and symbolic formulations of religious meanings and, at the same time, retain the essential reality of religious meaning behind the words and symbols.

In terms of the research questions of this study, the counsellor can integrate psychotherapeutic interventions into counselling by helping the adolescent male

personalise and individualise faith meanings without breaking from the authentic core of his religious roots. For young men who are concerned about remaining faithful to their religious tradition and overcoming the restraints and problems associated with specific symbols or formulations of earlier stages of believing, the counsellor who understands the developmental dynamics of faith may be able to help the client to consider alternative perspectives that are still essentially congruent with the client's core spirituality/religiousness. For example, in terms of this study, for a young man whose disturbance involves a connection between the power of God and the symbol of a stern father, the counsellor may help the client rethink and feel God's power as a supporting, transforming care linked to people who symbolise human care irrespective of gender. Another example would be a young man who is torn by feelings of guilt over issues around sexuality, such as pre-marital sex or masturbation, can be exposed to a God who loves unconditionally rather than a God who punishes.

The next chapter will examine closely the issues around adolescence and begin to link the concepts of cognitive behavioural therapy and spirituality as an appropriate way to deal with issues that confront adolescent males.

Chapter 3

Psychotherapy for Adolescent Males

If we want more good men in the world, we must start treating boys with less blame and more understanding. (Biddulph, 2003, p. 4)

3.1 Adolescence

To journey with young men as they negotiate the joys and trials of adolescence is a privilege and a challenge for a counsellor, a teacher or an educational leader. In this chapter, I will explore issues that are relevant to adolescent males in terms of counselling and psychological development and how they learn and react. I will also look at why cognitive behaviour therapy is the most appropriate form of therapy for this group, using the information on developmental theories of the previous chapter as a base and explore why it is appropriate to integrate spirituality into cognitive behavioural therapy.

Rather than being viewed as the end of childhood or beginning of adulthood, adolescence is now viewed as an area of study within its own right, which has led to an increase in diversification of research. Adolescence has also been looked at more from the developmental view than ever before. A more integrated perspective now exists, one that takes account of the effects of changes in one developmental domain upon development in other domains. This more integrated perspective is not confined to adolescence but may also take account of the interaction between various features of adolescence, such as self-concept and social relations. It can also be used to look at

adolescence in terms of other developmental stages (for example, childhood years). A most significant change in emphasis for the counsellor to be aware of is the amount of weight placed on the individual's active participation in his or her own development (Corey, 1991).

Research has divided adolescent findings into four main areas; physical maturation, identity, problems of adolescent development and social development. All of these areas must be viewed as integrated, as compartmentalising them will hinder the overall holistic development of the adolescent (Corey, 1991).

During the time of adolescence, the individual is exposed to an ever-increasing number of environmental stimuli. Whilst doing this, they rely less on adult input in helping them interpret the many challenges that arise. This means that the young person is continually thrown back to his own resources and the help of peers, when some socialisation has occurred, to make sense of the many changes that are happening. From the counselling point of view, development is seen as arising from interaction between physical maturation, the socialisation process of childhood, the social cultural pressures associated with the adolescent stage and the active involvement of the individual (Geldard & Geldard, 1999).

When looking at issues of adolescence, it is important to note that it is now viewed as being less problematic. The Freudian (1964) concept of 'storm and stress' has been replaced with a broader notion that emphasises the process of change and adjustments which are involved in responding to the varied tasks and transitions which typically occur during the course of adolescent development. An important area of

research in adolescence has centred on the role of maturational timing (Geldard & Geldard, 1999). This is now linked to many more areas of psychological development than first thought. Maturational timing has been researched in areas of stress and cognitive development and is linked to development of temperament.

This developmental research emphasises the need to be aware of the continuity between early and later behaviour, that is, cross stage development, coping behaviour and intervention studies. Whereas the notion of ‘storm and stress’ was founded primarily on stage based, psychoanalytic thinking, developmental theory takes into consideration the active role played by the adolescent in his or her own development. Notions such as transition, active participation in one’s own development, continuity and discontinuity can be seen as a good pattern for progress through adolescence (Kendall, 2000). This is quite different to the static and passive ideas that are presented in the previous chapters of this thesis.

3.2 Adolescent boys: how they learn and react

Much research has been done recently on adolescent boys, how they react and learn, and how they integrate information from their outside environment into their own reality.

The foremost educator in this field currently is Ian Lillico (2001). He indicates that adolescent males would be searching for the following outcomes:

1. a notion of masculinity that is empowering

2. an understanding of the experience of womanhood and how gender is constructed
3. educational experiences that are stimulating, challenging, and value all learners and learning areas
4. positive senior and peer role models
5. the capacity to balance all areas of their lives
6. a respect for their own physical and mental well-being. (Lillico, 2001, p. 4)

Lillico (2001, p. 7) indicates that adolescent males learn by speculation, trial and error, experiencing something, activity and relationships. This is an important consideration when looking specifically at the spiritual development of adolescent males. Harris (1997) identified ten spiritual beliefs of the masculine gender: (a) finding inner wisdom; (b) searching for truth; (c) speaking from the heart; (d) confronting the dark side; (e) loving; (f) working for a better world; (g) passing a test; (h) belonging to something great; (i) following scripture; and (j) believing in destiny. More time will be spent on this later in the chapter

3.3 Adolescent development and counselling theories

When addressing the issue of development in an adolescent, it is important to understand that the first dimension on which theories are organised is their emphasis on development rather than change. As discussed in Chapter 2, it is important to understand that a theory of development will assume there is some goal or end point towards which an adolescent will move and this end point is potentially better or more mature than the previous stage.

Developmental theories in terms of counselling can be broadly put into six categories (Bee, 2000).

3.3.1 Biological theories

Our unique individual behavioural tendencies have their roots in genes or hormone patterns. The most basic proposition of biological theories, such as ethological and neo-ethological theories, is that both our common pathways of development and our unique individual behavioural tendencies have their foundations in the genes, our hormone patterns or in maturationally governed changes in the brain. Even those biologically oriented theorists would not take the extreme position that environment is unimportant; they would insist that behavioural genetic research has made it clear that genetic programming is a powerful framework affecting both shared and individual patterning of development.

Ethological theories emphasise the biological and evolutionary basis of behaviour and are careful observations in naturalistic surroundings to obtain information about development. Santrock and Yussen (1992) emphasise the following weaknesses “at times, even in its emphasis on sensitive periods seems to be too rigid; the critical period concept is too rigid for human development. The emphasis still slants more towards biological – evolutionary explanations of development rather than a biological environmental mix” (p. 439). The strong emphasis on biological factors that cannot be controlled by the person could lead to a sense of pre-determination which would be the opposite of feeling empowered.

Kendall (2000) points out that another criticism of the ethological theories is the virtual absence of attention to cognitive processes and development. The theories have

been slow in developing research about human development and they are better at exploring behaviour retrospectively than prospectively, that is, ethology is better at explaining what caused a child's behaviour after it has happened than it is at predicting the behaviour occurrence in the future.

3.3.2 *Psychoanalytic theories*

Development is beyond awareness and heavily coloured by emotions. A distinctive assumption in psychoanalytic theories is that developmental behaviour is governed by conscious and unconscious processes. A key concept of a psychoanalytic theory is that development is determined not only by current experiences but also by those from early life as well. Environmental experiences can be mentally transformed and entrenched in the mind. This development is usually beyond the awareness of the individual and is heavily coloured by emotion. Psychoanalytic therapists believe strongly that behaviour is merely a surface characteristic and that early experiences with parents extensively shape our destiny.

A critical point in psychoanalytical theories for adolescence is the degree of success an adolescent experiences in meeting the demands of the various sequences. This success will depend heavily on the interactions and objects in the young male's world. This interactive element is central to psychoanalytical approaches.

Another central component to psychoanalytical theories is the client's own reconstruction of the past. This allows a person to be a central figure in his or her own development, something that is important when discussion of appropriate therapeutic approaches takes place. Whereas psychoanalytical theories emphasise unconscious

thoughts, cognitive theories emphasise conscious thoughts. This does not mean, though, that they are mutually exclusive.

3.3.3 *Cognitive theories*

Cognitive theories emphasise that the person is an active participant in the process of development. Conscious thoughts are emphasised and control of the environment is affected using the mind. Developing individuals are perceived as rational and logical people, capable of using the mind to effectively interact with the environment and interpret past experiences. The cognitive theories provide an optimistic view of human development, ascribing to children the ability and motivation to know their world and cope with it in constructive ways.

3.3.4 *Learning Theory*

Learning theory emphasises the dominant role of experience looking closely at what can be measured or observed. “Human nature is characterized by a vast potentiality that can be fashioned by direct and vicarious experience into a variety of forms within biological limits.” (Bandura, 1986, p. 51) This interpretation sees human behaviour as being enormously plastic but shaped by predictable processes of learning.

Integrating learning theory with cognitive theory is quite difficult, although theorists like Bandura have bridged the gap by emphasising cognitive elements in observational learning. He now refers to his theory as social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). This theory stresses the fact that modelling can be a vehicle for learning the abstract as well as concrete skills or information. Here, the observer extracts a rule that

may be the basis of behaviour and learns the rule as well as the specific behaviour. In this way, a child can acquire attitudes, values, ways of solving problems, even standards of self-evaluation, through modelling. These adaptations to traditional learning theory makes the system more flexible and powerful although it is still not a strongly developmental theory in the way psychoanalytic theories are, as they emphasise sequential qualitative change.

3.3.5 Phenomenological and humanistic theories

These theories emphasise continuity. Experience at all points in development is important, especially immediate experience. Environmental influences, such as warmth and nurturance, are important.

3.3.6 Ecological Theory

Ecological theory takes a socio-cultural view of development, emphasising five environmental systems ranging from fine-grained inputs of direct interactions with social agents to the broad-based inputs of culture (Bee, 2000). The five environmental systems are:

- **Microsystem:** immediate environments such as family school, peer group and neighbourhood
- **Mesosystem:** a system comprised of connections between the immediate environments
- **Exosystems:** external environmental settings which only indirectly affect development (parent's work place)

- **Macrosystem:** the larger cultural context and the more recently added
- Chronosystem:** which refers to environmental events and transitions that occur during life.

This model, although one of the few comprehensive frameworks for understanding the environment's role in development does fail to account for the influence of biological and cognitive processes adequately. Once again, a person could feel that their development is taken out of their hands and they are reduced to being spectators in their own development and therapy.

The diversity of the above-mentioned theories makes understanding the idea of human development a challenging undertaking, as it is a complex, multifaceted topic. No one theory alone has been able to account for all its aspects.

One factor that is common in all theories is context. This refers to aspects of people's life such as family type, socio-economic status, school environment, social network, ethnicity, religious beliefs and cultural experiences and practices. The context of a child's life is more significant in that he or she would have less control and fewer influences over their environment than adults would.

It should be realised that no single robust theory is capable of explaining the rich complexity of adolescent development. Each theory can make an important contribution to our understanding of children's development. It is important to know all of the theories and integrate the key ideas into something that can be useful to yourself as a therapist.

3.4 Issues related specifically to counselling adolescents

This section will explore issues relating to counselling adolescents looking specifically at the developmental theorists previously mentioned. The two of Erickson's stages that are most relevant to adolescents are stages five and six. Stage five looks at adolescence (development as a person of faithfulness and fidelity) and stage six at young adulthood (the ability to love). The main stages for Kohlberg's moral development for adolescents are stages one to three whilst Fowler emphasises the difference for adolescents in key areas such as factual truth symbolism and personal experience and these may not be linked to developmental stages. It is especially important to look at the links between these theorists in terms of the research questions.

The fifth stage of Erickson's model relates to the development of the human person through adolescence. The key issue for the young male here is negotiating competing forces such as school, family, peers and media to develop an identity that expresses individuality and is accepted in groups important to them.

During this period of adolescence, the teenage male experiences significant physiological, emotional and cognitive change and development. With so much change taking place, the adolescent finds it difficult to recognise who they are; an experience termed an identity crisis. Adolescents experience confusion, uncertainty and awkwardness about the meaning and purpose of their life and their place and role in the world around them. Prior to Erickson's stage five, the individual develops in response to the indicators and motivations present in their immediate external environment. The movement towards stage five represents the emergence of self-determination in the

process of human growth and development. The individual, while responsive to those around them, is also involved in defining and developing their own expression and image of who they are. The struggle for identity within the adolescent often presents itself in a series of conflicting polarities that the individual is required to negotiate and resolve. These include independence versus dependence, individuality versus conformity and compliance versus self-determination. Significantly, this stage marks a movement away from a reliance on the affirmation and guidance of the primary caregivers towards that of the peer group.

Erickson (1980) identifies that adolescents, during this difficult and challenging stage, find comfort in the experience of clear, consistent and sound points of references in the external environment. The presence of respected adult role models, who maintain positive channels of communication, are extremely important to developing adolescents. They also benefit from the existence of clear rites of passage that signal the movement from childhood to adulthood. Such experience as completing school, getting a driver's licence and being allowed to enter licensed premises all confirm for the adolescent their emerging adulthood and self-identity. The individual who successfully negotiates this stage will emerge with a well-organised concept of self, based on the recognition and ownership of a collection of key values, beliefs and goals to which the individual is loyal and committed. Erickson named fidelity as the virtue acquired through this journey to adulthood. Fidelity is about loyalty to one's self and the society we live in. It is recognition by the individual of their place and role in society.

Erickson identifies that an individual who fails to find balance between the competing forces of identity and role confusion will emerge from adolescence with a

fanatical or repudiated character. If the development of a sense of identity becomes so strong that it blankets any experience of role confusion, an individual can become so focused on their own ideals that they lose sight of the value and place of any alternative position or understanding. Erickson terms such a maladaptation as fanaticism. The lack of identity or the development of a sense of self forms the malignancy Erickson terms as repudiation. Repudiation in adolescence relates to the rejection of a personal identity and their role in society. Symptomatic of such an action is the fusing of one's identity with that of an organisation or group. Organisations that are often linked to an individual's rejection of personal identity include the military, religious cults, vigilante groups, extremist political organisations and gangs. Associated with the rejection of personal identity are withdrawal, self-destructive behaviours and the inability to form positive and sound human relationships (Geldard & Geldard, 1999).

The young adult emerges from adolescence with a deep sense of identity. This is the key psychological link to spirituality that is also about the search for identity. They seek an understanding of their place in the world and acceptance of self. This is when they begin to negotiate Erickson's sixth stage, young adulthood (the ability to love).

The main issues for young adult males, here, is discovering sexual identity and discovering ways to relate more meaningfully to one individual. Issues confronted by the young men in the study that fit into this stage would be issues around homosexuality, especially in a church school and an all male environment, and how to negotiate the 'chicks before mates debate'. This debate refers to the pressure that an all male peer group puts on individuals to remain close to group, often at the expense of developing an intimate relationship with a girl.

Part of the maturing process is a realisation of the significant contribution positive, intimate relationships can have on the growth and development of the individuals involved. During adolescence, relationships are based more on dependence or selfishness than a genuine giving of self. During stage five, an individual becomes aware of their capacity for commitment to relationships, ideals and initiatives. The individual seeks to build deep, committed and genuine relationships as an expression of their deeper sense of meaning, self and identity. True intimacy is the ability to share the stories of one's heart and to allow others to know and share in those beliefs and experiences that are closest to us and form the frameworks of who we are.

Stage six is the time in an individual's life when they redefine their understanding and approach to relationships. In the context of this new worldview, there is often the re-establishment of existing relationships on a new and deeper level. Positive and formative relationships are based on a healthy balance of intimacy and isolation. If an individual pursues intimacy without isolation, co-dependent possessive and obsessive relationships are formed. These mal-adaptions reflect a fear of isolation and a surrendering of identity to a poorly conceived sense of total intimacy. Opposing the individual's desire for intimacy is isolation. Isolation, in one sense, is a confirmation of personal identity and self-hood. Complete isolation or relationships without intimacy are superficial, self-centred and lifeless. The negotiation of this stage effectively results in the establishment of genuine loving relationships. The psychosocial quality achieved by the individual is the ability to love (Miller, 2003).

3.4.1 Kohlberg and Adolescence: The link between morality and spirituality

The main stages of Kohlberg's moral development theory for adolescents are stages one to three.

The pre-conventional morality (aged four to ten years) stage is when the child will do well or avoid wrong with a motive of either avoiding punishment or receiving a reward. This is followed by the conventional morality (aged ten to thirteen years). During this stage, the child or adolescent learns to conform to the society in which they live. The motives for doing well or avoiding wrong depend on the approval of older people. Additionally, there is an emphasis on conforming to law and order.

Most adolescents, by the time they have reached Year 12, their final year in Queensland schooling, would be in the post-conventional morality stage (aged thirteen years onwards). It is important to realise, however, that this is not always the case. Teenagers can regress to a previous stage of moral development, especially in times of stress that may be caused by pressure from things such as relationship breakdown or expectations from adults. During this stage, the individual develops a sense of human rights and starts to develop a conscience. Being aware of human rights may involve thinking about changes in the law to strive for conditions that are more acceptable. Additionally, at this stage, adolescents develop clear ideas about what they believe in and what they are prepared to stand for. No longer does the individual act merely out of fear or the need for approval. Instead, moral principles are integrated within, and owned by, the individual.

It is also important to note that Kohlberg (1984) is conscious that not all adolescents reach stage three. For some adolescents, morality and motives may be at a stage one level. For them, morality is tied up with rewards or with not 'getting caught'. The concept of integrity is important to the young men who were studied. The consensus was that integrity meant doing something when you know that you would not necessarily be rewarded for it. Kohlberg's stage three ties in significantly with the large number of young men in the study who identified social justice as integral to spirituality. This corresponds with Kohlberg's emphasis at this stage on the development of the conscience and issues around human rights.

3.4.2 Fowler and the spiritual development of adolescents

Fowler (1981) believes that spirituality can develop only within the scope of the intellectual and emotional growth of the individual. Wiggins-Frame (2003), Cortright (1997) and Hinterkopf (1998) all argue for the integration of the clients' spirituality into counselling. They see the spiritual beliefs of children, from the age of five and six years, as relying heavily on the verification of facts from authority figures, such as parents and teachers. In early adolescence, the emphasis is on symbolism rather than knowing factual truth. Later in adolescence, personal experiences, symbols and rituals may play a major part in the development of spiritual beliefs. At this stage, the young person is likely to recognise that other people might have different and equally valid ways of understanding and expressing their spirituality.

Geldard and Geldard (1999) make the point that some adolescents find conventional religious systems problematic and inconsistent with their need to achieve some level of separation from their family's traditions and values. Those adolescents

who are struggling with identity formation and are striving to find their place in society may be attracted to unorthodox religious cults and practices in order to explore their spiritual beliefs and values. These could include cults that have an over-emphasis on obedience to a central figure so that discernment is not seen as being important. This can take away the adolescent's need to develop relationships. Another extreme is the 'free love' approach, in which adolescents do not have to take responsibility for sexual behaviour. Some adolescents will look to such cults to provide them with a deeper sense of the meaning of life. Unfortunately, they may then become involved in religious practices that are unacceptable in conventional society. This may lead to the adolescent being marginalised (Kendall, 2000).

All the developmental theorists mentioned have written about the development of identity in adolescence using terms which are individual to themselves such as 'self', 'ego', 'I' and so on. Although they have used individual terms, they all seem to agree that 'personal identity' should be defined in terms of what is taken to be 'self' in contrast to what is considered to be 'other'. The means by which differentiation from others occurs is central to our experience of personal identity.

The adolescent has the task of forming a personal identity that is unique and individual. However, during the process in which a conscious sense of individual identity develops, there will also be an unconscious striving for continuity of the individual's personal character (Erickson, 1980). As personal identity develops, over time, maturation occurs, moving the adolescent towards adulthood.

The study showed results that indicate, for the young male, spirituality is seen to be important in the search for identity. Whilst understanding the role that developmental stages play in this discussion, the young men in the study saw the role of significant relationships as being central to the spiritual journey and the search for identity.

Adams and Marshall (1996), drawing on numerous analyses and studies of the self and identity, suggest the following as the five most commonly recorded functions of personal identity:

1. providing the structure for understanding who one is
2. providing meaning and direction through commitment, values and goals
3. providing a sense of personal control and free will
4. enabling consistency, coherence and harmony between values, beliefs and commitments
5. enabling the recognition of potential through a sense of future possibilities and alternative choices.

Adams and Marshall (1996) believe that the search for identity is a continuing process that is not just restricted to adolescence. They indicate that personal identity can be altered through heightened self-awareness and that there are sensitive points along the life-cycle, one of which is adolescence, where self-focusing and identity formation are heightened. Even though it is agreed that the search for identity is a process that continues throughout life, observations of young people indicate that such self-focusing and identity formation are more pronounced in adolescence and are central characteristics of adolescence.

The adolescent can only construct a personal identity in the context of relationships with others. Having relationships with others unquestionably involves respecting and responding appropriately to their expectations. Society in general has expectations about how adolescents should behave and these will often conflict with adolescent expectations. Hence, the adolescent's need to achieve individualisation provides a conflicting challenge for the young person who is striving for personal identity and is, at the same time, exploring new ways of fitting into society. Consequently, there is likely to be marked ambivalence in many adolescents concerning issues of independence versus dependence, and with regard to expressing attitudinal and behavioural changes while maintaining social relationships (Archer, 1992).

Many of the tasks of adolescence involve strong social expectations. Havighurst (1951) believes that the mastery of the nine developmental tasks (listed below) are critical to adaptive adolescent adjustment:

1. accepting one's physique and sexual role
2. establishing new peer relationships with both sexes
3. achieving emotional independence from parents
4. selecting and preparing for an occupation
5. developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence
6. achieving assurance of economic independence
7. acquiring socially responsible behaviour patterns
8. preparing for marriage and family life
9. building conscious values that are harmonious with one's environment.

Geldard and Geldard (1999) say that this list of tasks might seem daunting for many adolescents. Some will find the challenges overwhelming and will feel alienated from society because they are unable to achieve society's expectations.

As adolescents grow, they start to look like young adults and are able to communicate more maturely and effectively than children are. Consequently, it is understandable why many adults expect that adolescent behaviour should reflect the norms of adult behaviour. The expectation that adolescents will be responsible and will conscientiously set out to meet the developmental tasks of adolescence is unrealistic for most adolescents. The adolescent is in a process of growth and is dealing with new and previously unmet challenges, so is unlikely to stay focused on particular tasks and is sure to make mistakes. Adolescents who are overwhelmed by society's expectations may revert to anti-social behaviour, becoming involved in behaviours ranging from low-level delinquency to serious crime. Some will find ways of satisfying their needs through membership of delinquent gangs. By being in a gang, they may experience the feelings of belonging that they need, along with expectations that they can meet (Kendall, 2000).

The impact of society's stereotypical expectations for adolescents of both sexes has been clearly identified in the relevant literature (Miller, 2003; Schrof, 1995). In spite of the influence of feminism, girls may get messages that their primary role in life is to marry, have children and become good wives and mothers. This may play havoc with their selection of long-term goals and be damaging to some girls' self-esteem. Similarly, the ideas that teenage boys have about being an adult male can be psychologically destructive when they try to live up to them. For both girls and boys, problems ranging

from addiction to violence may often have their roots in the adolescent's inability to cope with the demands of the socialisation process.

Of particular interest at this stage is cognitive development in adolescence, especially in relation to cognitive and cognitive behavioural therapy. According to Piaget (1929, 1950), young people, during early adolescence, typically make the transgression from concrete operations to the formal operations stage. That is, they move from the limitations of concrete thinking to being able to deal cognitively with ideas, concepts and abstract theories. The adolescent is able to become passionately interested in abstract concepts and notions and is therefore able to discern what is real from what is ideal.

Kendall (2000) and Flavell (1977) suggest a number of ways in which adolescent thinking progresses beyond that of childhood. Included among these is the ability to:

- imagine possible and impossible events
- think of a number of possible outcomes from a single choice
- think of the ramifications of combinations of propositions
- understand information and to act on that understanding
- solve problems involving hypothesis and deduction
- problem solve in a wider variety of situations and with greater skill than in childhood.

The adolescent is challenged both in the development of these cognitive skills and in their use. As confidence is gained in using such skills, it is likely that they will be

tried out in new situations but not always with success. Clearly, learning through success and failure is part of the challenge.

3.5 Cognitive therapy and cognitive behaviour therapy

Cognitive therapy and cognitive behaviour therapy are the most appropriate for adolescent males. This is supported by Munoz-Solomando, Kendall, Whittington and Craig (2008), Hofmann, Meuret, Rosenfield and Suvak (2007), Watanabe, Hunotand Omori (2007), Balk (1997) and Beck (1995). The most obvious example was the young man who insisted to me that his parents ‘broke up last night’ because he did not unpack the dishwasher. Cognitive therapy allowed him to understand that, whilst the parents broke up at that time and he may have felt the intense emotional reaction at that time, to tie such an event to one instance was an irrational thought. Further, cognitive therapy enabled him to develop a coping mechanism of understanding that he can still have a close loving relationship with both parents individually but he will have no control over the relationship between his mother and father. Cognitive behaviour therapy can be used for many issues that confront young men, including separation by death or divorce, some depression cases, obsessive compulsive tendencies and issues around relationships and sexuality.

Aaron Beck is the most notable person who has written on cognitive behavioural therapy and is the undisputed expert. The basic theory of cognitive therapy holds that, in order to understand the nature of an emotional episode or disturbance, it is essential to focus on the cognitive content of an individual’s reaction to the upsetting event or stream of thoughts (Beck 1995; DeRubeis & Beck, 1988). The goal is to change the way clients think by using their automatic thoughts to reach the core schemata and begin to

introduce the idea of schema restructuring. This is done by encouraging clients to gather and weigh the evidence in support of their beliefs. Clinical studies indicate the value of cognitive therapy in a wide variety of disorders, particularly depression and the anxiety disorders (Beck, 1991). It has been successfully applied in treating phobias, psychosomatic disorders, eating disorders, anger, panic disorders, substance abuse (Beck 1995; Beck, Wright, Newman & Liese, 1993), chronic pain (Beck, 1987) and in crisis intervention (Dattilio & Freeman, 1994).

Beck (1976) writes that, in the broadest sense, “cognitive therapy consists of all of the approaches that alleviate psychological distress through the medium of correcting faulty conceptions and self-signals” (p. 214). For him, the most direct way to change dysfunctional emotions and behaviours is to modify inaccurate and dysfunctional thinking. The cognitive therapist teaches clients how to identify these distorted and dysfunctional cognitions through a process of evaluation. Through a collaborative effort, clients learn to discriminate between their own thoughts and events that occur in reality. They learn the influence that cognition has on their feelings and behaviours and even on environmental events. Clients are taught to recognise, observe and monitor their own thoughts and assumptions, especially their negative automatic thoughts.

After they have gained insight into how their unrealistically negative thoughts are affecting them, clients are trained to test these automatic thoughts against reality, by examining and weighing the evidence for and against them. This process involves empirically testing their beliefs by actively participating in a variety of methods, such as engaging in a Socratic dialogue with the therapist, carrying out homework assignments, gathering data on assumptions they make, keeping a record of activities and forming

alternative interpretations (Dattilio & Freeman, 1994). Clients form hypotheses about their behaviour and eventually learn to employ specific problem-solving and coping skills. Through a process of guided discovery, they acquire insight about the connection between their thinking and the ways they feel and act.

In cognitive therapy, techniques are most effectively applied in the context of a working alliance, or therapeutic collaboration, between the therapist and client. This position is consistent with the theoretical assumptions that; (1) people's internal communication is accessible to introspection, (2) clients' beliefs have highly personal meanings and (3) these meanings can be discovered by the client rather than taught or interpreted by the therapist (Weishaar, 1993). Cognitive therapists are continuously active and deliberately interactive with clients; they also strive to engage the clients' active participation and collaboration throughout all phases of therapy. The therapist and client work together to frame the client's conclusions in the form of a testable hypothesis. Beck conceptualises a partnership to devise personally meaningful evaluations of the client's negative assumptions, as opposed to the therapist directly suggesting alternative cognitions (Beck & Haaga, 1992). The assumption is that lasting changes in the client's thinking and behaviour will be most likely to occur with the client's initiative, understanding, awareness and effort (Beck et al., 1979; Weishaar, 1993).

3.6 Behaviour-based cognitive therapy

Cognitive behavioural therapy is a form of cognitively oriented behavioural therapy. It has evolved into a comprehensive and integrative approach that emphasises thinking, judging, deciding and doing. The approach retains a highly didactic and

directive quality and is as much concerned with the cognitive dimensions as with feelings. It starts with clients' disturbed emotions and behaviours, and reveals and disputes the thoughts that directly create them.

In order to block the self-defeating beliefs that are reinforced by a process of self-indoctrination, cognitive behavioural therapists employ active and directive techniques, such as teaching, suggestion, persuasion and homework assignments, and they challenge clients to substitute a rational belief system for an irrational one. They do this by continually urging clients to validate their observations and ideas and showing them how to do this type of refutation themselves. They demonstrate how and why irrational beliefs lead to negative emotional and behavioural results. They teach clients how to think rationally and how to annihilate new self-defeating ideas and behaviours that might occur in the future.

It is crucial that cognitive behavioural therapists demonstrate full acceptance and tolerance. They do so by refusing to judge the person while at the same time confronting self-destructive behaviours. Also given primary importance is the therapist's ability and willingness to challenge, confront, probe and convince the client to practice activities (both inside and outside of therapy) that will lead to constructive changes in thinking and behaving. Cognitive behavioural therapy stresses action – doing something about the insights one gains in therapy. Change comes about mainly by a commitment to consistently practice new behaviours that replace old and ineffective ones (Corey, 1996, p. 351).

Cognitive behavioural therapists are typically eclectic in selecting therapeutic strategies. They draw heavily on cognitive and behavioural techniques that are geared to

uprooting the irrational beliefs that lead to self-defeating feelings and behaviours and to teaching clients how to replace this negative process with a rational philosophy of life. Therapists have the latitude to develop their own personal style and to exercise creativity; they are not bound by fixed techniques for particular problems (Corey, 1996, p. 353).

3.7 Counselling adolescents: cognitive behaviour and adolescence

Cognitive and cognitive behavioural strategies are excellent approaches that rely on structured goal-oriented approaches and collaboration between an active counsellor and an active adolescent (Balk, 1997; Corey, 2001). These strategies specifically target behaviour, whereas more symbolic and creative strategies have a more indirect effect on behaviour. In targeting behaviour directly, there is an assumption that, when behaviour changes, emotional feelings will also be positively influenced (Bee, 2000; Bergin, 1988)

It is important to note that when a counsellor uses cognitive behaviour therapy with young clients, it is necessary to modify the challenging processes that are normally used with adults by taking account of the adolescent development process. This can be achieved by complimenting the young client for existing beliefs by validating how they may have been useful in the past in childhood and then challenging some existing beliefs as now being self-destructive and needing to be challenged as a consequence of the adolescent's movement from childhood into adulthood.

3.8 Cognitive behavioural therapy and adolescents: a critical analysis

There is a risk when using psycho-educational models that an adolescent may uncritically accept a complete psycho-educational model and try to fit themselves into

that model. It is more important that the adolescent should be encouraged to examine critically and modify the model so that the modified model fits for them.

The most important thing for an adolescent is to participate in a process of self-discovery. Through this process of knowing and becoming themselves, people construct their being. This being, in turn, is their developmental relationship with their environment and with one another. Counselling and development are forms in which adolescents can experience more freely a greater sense of who they are.

When looking at cognitive therapy for adolescents, two warnings need to be articulated. As people are at the same stage of life, it cannot be assumed that they have either travelled the same way to reach their present state of being or, indeed, they are headed in the same future direction. The empowerment of the individual to be seen as an active participant in their own development does counteract this concern. An important concept that psychoanalytic and cognitive theory share is the assumption that the cause or source of change is internal to the child as well as external.

An over-emphasis placed on 'Lock Step Stages' (Bee, 1996) would indicate it is "more fruitful to examine ways people adapt to the unique Constellations of life experiences that they may face rather than reach for elusive pathways of shared stages" (p. 70).

3.9 Cognitive behaviour therapy and the spiritual person

Cognitive-behavioural therapy appears to offer a treatment approach that is well suited to the assessment and modification of all forms of belief, including religious

beliefs, as they affect the psychological and spiritual health and well-being of individuals (Propst, 1988, 1996). That is because the theoretical perspective of cognitive therapy is a flexible therapeutic framework that can include the spiritual dimension as an active part of the therapeutic process. Although certain intervention strategies and techniques characterise the approach, the content of the therapy can vary greatly based on client need, the creativity of the clinician and what research indicates to be efficacious for the symptoms or concern in question. Propst (1988) describes four intervention strategies in what she calls religious cognitive therapy. They are: 1) understanding the influence of cognition on emotion and behaviour; 2) monitoring cognitions, including thoughts, beliefs, and assumptions; 3) challenging cognitions; and 4) cognitive restructuring and behaviour modification.

Since a basic tenet of cognitive therapy is that clients understand and believe that their thoughts and assumptions strongly influence their emotions and psychological well-being, it follows that religious clients and spiritual seekers probably should be given a spiritual rationale for assessing their thoughts and assumptions. Accordingly, Propst (1996) suggests that theological reflections could be considered a strategy or tool of cognitive therapy.

Spiritual themes are, then, useful therapeutic tools that provide a motivational language to encourage clients to actively monitor cognitions, including their thoughts, beliefs and assumptions. This should help to overcome any initial resistance to therapy. With such a motivating language, many of the therapeutic tools originated by Beck, such as the three column technique (Beck et al., 1979) which looks at setting the agenda in partnership, checking the mood of the client, establishing the place of spirituality in

the client's life, reviewing the presenting problem, discussing expectations and the giving of an out of session task, can be made effective for spiritually-oriented clients. It is called the three column technique, as the three key foci are the situation, the automatic thought and the emotions and the need to distinguish these.

After clients accept the value of monitoring cognitions and can apply this skill, the next process in cognitive therapy is the challenging and subsequent changing of thoughts and assumptions. Themes from most spiritual belief systems can play an important role in this process. Propst (1988) contends that these religious ideas can actually become cognitive restructuring techniques. For example, it is not uncommon for clients to have a cognitive schema in which any error, mistake or a less than perfect solution to a problem can be catastrophic. Thus, they are more likely to have perfectionistic strivings rather than a basic problem-solving orientation toward life. This attitude may be intensified in some spiritual individuals because of the assumption that God expects perfection, which results in minimal risk taking and increased levels of anxiety and depression. Problem solving, on the other hand, means adopting the general orientation that problems are a natural part of life and that coping with those problems is only a natural part of living. Since assumptions or perfectionism can be rooted in an individual's beliefs, Propst (1988, 1996) reasons that therapeutically challenging such perfectionistic schemas can be most effective when such schemas are linked to a client's religious beliefs. She notes that influential thinkers in most spiritual traditions emphasise that life is not perfect, that life has a tragic element and that believers will rarely be problem-free or even find a perfect solution to all their problems.

The effectiveness of cognitive-behavioural therapy appears to be enhanced if aspects of the client's religious belief system are used to provide not only a motivation for self-examination, but also a challenge to some of the client's dysfunctional schemas. Usually, clients are asked to view their religious and spiritual beliefs somewhat differently. Other times, they are asked to pay attention to aspects of their religious beliefs that have previously been ignored. (Sperry, 2001, p. 164)

The theoretical perspective of cognitive therapy on spirituality suggests that cognitive therapy is a highly flexible therapeutic framework for including a patient's spiritual development as an active part of the therapeutic process. Although certain general technique requirements are present, the content can probably vary greatly, being limited only by the creativity of the therapist and what research finally shows to be efficient for the symptoms in question. Shafranske (1996, p. 399) identifies at least four categories of religious cognitive therapy interventions: (a) understanding the influence of cognition on emotion and behaviour; (b) monitoring cognitions, including thoughts, beliefs, and assumptions; (c) challenging cognitions; and (d) cognitive restructuring and behaviour modification.

Burke (Burke et al., 2005) includes many ways in which spirituality can be integrated into counselling, especially when looking at adolescent male clients as in this study. She utilises the work of Harris (1997) when applying the ten tenets of masculinity in spirituality. Below are some examples.

Finding inner wisdom: the belief that an individual contains the divine within himself is powerful and self-actualising. This powerful belief ranked number one in the survey and interviews conducted by Harris (1997).

Searching for truth: as men resolve to lead a more inner-focused life, the search for truth must accompany their journey into the realm of the spiritual. The examination of the very essence of existence is the force that guides the spiritual being. The search for truth is the journey to find the answers to life's greatest question and riddles.

Speaking from the heart: in literature and movies, the heart is the seat of love, compassion and lust. It is often equated with the soul, because of the 'feeling' associated with it. Western men are not usually socialised to deal with issues of the heart but rather to think of everything in rational, precise terms. Issues of the heart are perceived as belonging more to the feminine side of one's nature. In the modern era of this new century, Western men were called upon to demonstrate that their thoughts and actions were derived more from the heart than from the intellect. They were asked to show their 'sensitive' sides more and to make themselves as comfortable in the world of feelings as they were in the world of the intellect (Tacey, 2000).

Confronting the dark side: according to Jungian psychology (Clift, 1983), man always has a dark, or shadow, side to his personality. To many, this is seen as a side of the personality with which one must do battle; however, to the more enlightened, this facet of spirituality is actually very freeing and hopeful. Instead of running away from aspects of oneself that are least desirable, one confronts and conquers them. It is a matter of maximising the positive in one's life and coming to understand the negative

sides of one's personality. It is the age-old battle of good versus evil, humanity versus godliness; "spirituality helps a man come to grips with his shadow side, accepting the contradictions of good and evil" (Harris, 1997, p. 20).

Loving: the realisation that love comes from giving rather than from possessing is a life-changing experience that is also very alien to men to whom success and material possessions have been held up as the true measures of an individual's worth. Many men are socialised to be rather selfish and to think first of themselves, as these are felt to be traits that anyone who really succeeds in business must have. The idea of unconditional love often comes much later in life.

Working for a better world: as a result of the many steps described previously, a man usually comes to the realisation that the universe is basically good and that he must constantly search for evidence of this. Spirituality is what allows him to embrace the good that exists even when its presence is masked in the evil that appears to be all around us. Charity toward others is a natural offspring of recognising the good in all things and the acceptance that all humankind must work to improve social institutions. This is quite a journey from the competitive world of one-upmanship and caring solely for oneself. It is only in working for a better world that a man sanctifies the present and gains hope for a life hereafter; "spiritual men believe that good will eventually conquer evil" (Harris, 1997, p. 24).

Passing a test: two different kinds of 'tests' occur in life. The first of these consists of events over which we have little or no control – illness, accidents, crime, loss of loved ones, loss of employment, natural disasters and war. The second category

consists of mistakes or actions we take that may cause us pain – divorce, unwise decisions, difficult relationships and mistakes we make in general. Life is fraught with pitfalls and these are often accompanied by pain and worry. Most men have been socialised to think that they must be the ultimate problem-solver who is not afraid of anything. This is the tremendous burden under which many men labour, and it may ultimately cause them to cut off all feelings in an effort to appear ‘strong’ and to protect themselves from emotions that are too overwhelming to handle. Spirituality may give a man the strength that is needed to face the hardships and trials of life. It can help a man define for himself the code of conduct upon which he chooses to build his life. Spirituality also allows an individual to forgive himself for the mistakes he has made in life or when he fails to live up to his high ideals. In a word, spirituality provides a balance in life that is hard to attain almost anywhere else.

Belonging to something great: believing in something more powerful than oneself is a great comfort. When a man faces himself and realises how vulnerable he is, the thought of a power greater than himself is very reassuring. Most individuals call this higher power God or Allah. Belief in such a spirit force gives meaning to life and allows one to share life’s burdens. Men contact this greater power through prayer, meditation, dreams, rituals, and so on. A personal relationship with a greater power is an outcome of embracing spirituality. All of this does not, however, imply that man totally understands the God-figure or all of His powers. Faith is the word used to describe the belief in a higher power without totally comprehending who or what that power is. It is in the surrender to a force greater than his own that a man acquires true strength and a relief from always having to be an all-knowing, all-powerful person.

Following scripture: the Bible, the Koran (*Qur'an*), the Book of Mormon, the *Tao Te Ching*, the *Veda*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Dhammapada* and other religious texts or scriptures are believed to be divinely inspired words and they form the basis of spirituality for many people. These texts provide a blueprint for how men ought to lead their lives. In every religious text, certain 'commandments' or basic tenets are there to provide a pathway or guide through the journey of life. Conservative, more fundamentalist sects believe in a more literal interpretation of the holy scriptures of all faiths. Individuals who are more liberal believe that a lot of allegory is contained in these texts and that the words are open to many interpretations. They also believe that religion must change, as the world changes where outward practices are concerned, yet strict adherents do not allow for any change.

Believing in destiny: if one believes in a higher power and that this entity is all wise and all knowing, then there must be a divine plan that is revealed to us day by day. Belief in a higher power implies that this being has control over us, possesses superior knowledge and is able to see all of life at once and not just in small segments as man does; past, present and future are all one to this being.

In examining this list gleaned from an important research study, a counsellor can see that the young adolescent male, as described in this study, does not appear to be looking for a spirituality that is overly feminine or that contains the romanticism portrayed in many religious texts. In moving from a belief in the avenging, wrathful God of the Old Testament to a more merciful and loving God of the New Testament, many religious sects lost their appeal to men. Although many women would argue that this transition was sorely needed because it also brought about an improvement in the

way that men viewed women, many men felt lost in this 'new church'. In the Roman Catholic faith, many of the same types of masculine identity crises occurred after Vatican II and the changes in the Church at that time (O'Murchu, 1997).

This chapter has looked at the significance of spirituality in the search for meaning in the lives of adolescent males, the significance of the role of the counsellor in spirituality issues, especially in faith and values based schools and the significance of cognitive behaviour therapy as the preferred way of dealing with this group, and the importance of the integration of spirituality into counselling. The next chapter will look at the growth in the developing gap between religion and spirituality and how this has affected young men who are going through adolescence.

Chapter 4

Exploring the Spiritual Dimension of Adolescent Males

When it comes to religion many of the most thoughtful young adults are really post denominational. They want spiritual experience and the ethical responsibility it implies, but they are not committed to the us versus them ideology that has accompanied so much of the history of institutional religion. (Fox, 1994, p. 54)

4.1 Values clarification and counselling

The world that confronts the young men of today is vastly different to one that confronted many of the teachers, counsellors and educational leaders who are entrusted with their care. The values of society have shifted and concepts such as spirituality and religion are under the microscope like never before. This chapter will look at the work that has been done on comparing the differences between spirituality and religion and the debate that exists in terms of how this is relevant to young people.

It is now widely understood that a value-free or value-neutral approach to psychotherapy has become untenable and is being replaced by a more open and more complete value-informed perspective (Bergin, 1991; Miller, 2003). Interest regarding

the place of value issues in psychotherapy has accelerated in the past decade or two. Religious and spiritual values, in particular, have been extensively addressed in the therapeutic context, although mainstream psychology has only in the last thirty to forty years shown awareness of this formerly taboo area (Miller, 2003). Biases and stereotypes against spirituality are giving way to empirical findings (Miller, 2003) showing positive relationships between mental health markers and spirituality. Prevalence of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices is high among the general population and stronger among mental health professionals than had been assumed (Miller, 2003).

A clear consensus on some values, of both clinical and traditional origins, among mental health professionals gives evidence of a potential common value foundation (Jensen & Bergin, 1988). However, diversity concerning many other values among clients and therapists challenges the profession to honour individual integrity and provide an ethical experience where growth and change can occur within one's value framework. Given the empirical findings that there may be movement in therapy of client values toward therapist values (Beutler & Harwood, 1995), though not consistently (Kelly & Strupp, 1992), it is essential that relevant values become explicit so informed choice is possible and autonomy remains a reality. Opening the values domain widely, to include the religious and spiritual, raises new issues regarding professional training and competence to deal respectfully with such dimensions of human experience.

According to psychology's revised ethical guidelines by, for example, American Psychological Association (APA) (1992) and, more recently, Cortright (1997) and

Hinterkopf (1998), responsiveness to religious diversity has become not only an opportunity but also an obligation. This is not to disparage traditional training or standard therapeutic approaches, which must continue to be regarded as foundational to any therapeutical endeavour. Rather, integrative advances will continue to bring together techniques derived from standard as well as religious and spiritual resources.

4.2 The psychology of religion

Shafranske (1996) argues that, from its beginnings, the psychology of religion has been marked by two major trends, one descriptive and the other explanatory. The descriptive trend, which has most often been advanced by religiously committed scholars, is concerned chiefly with documenting the varieties and types of religious experience, with age or life stage often serving as a significant variable. If the goal of such an undertaking is made explicit, it is usually the fostering of the religious life, especially through religious education and pastoral care. Widely known exemplars of the descriptive approach included the well documented work of Allport (1950).

Shafranske (1996, pp. 45-46) states that the explanatory trend, which has been promoted primarily by researchers who are suspicious or disdainful of popular piety, seeks to find the origins of religious experience and practice, not in a transcendent realm but in the mundane world of psychological, biological and environmental events. When the goal is not implicitly the advancement in our knowledge of human experience and behaviour, it is explicitly the transforming – if not the elimination – of religion, or at least its most common varieties.

A modern author in this field is Dawkins (2006) who claims that he does not believe in a personal God. He goes on to say that if “something is in me which can be called religious then it is the unbounded admiration for the structure of the world so far as our science can reveal it” (Dawkins, 2006, p. 4). This is in contrast to the writings of Bouma (2006) who challenges the idea that religious and spiritual life in Australia is in decline, arguing “that far from petering out, Australia’s soul is thriving, but in a pervasive way” (Bouma, 2006, p. 7).

With such radically divergent agendas, psychologists of religion are not only attentive to different aspects of religion, but also likely to conceive of religion in starkly contrasting terms. Descriptive psychologists (Allport, 1950) usually identify religion with its experiential core – the inner, subjective states that range from the dramatic ecstasies of the great mystics to the subtle, transcendental moods of the anonymous faithful. Explanatory psychologists (Shafranske, 1996), perhaps because they are typically outsiders, usually equate piety with its external expressions, such as creeds and ritual, which they are likely to view as unfounded and irrational.

It is also important to note that the field of the psychology of religion has emphasised that religion has the power to facilitate and to impede healthy functioning (see section 4.8) and for adults, the link between religion and health has tended to emphasise the psychosocial functions that can exist in the context of religious beliefs and practices rather than substantive elements. These involve such factors as the impact of religion on integration into the community, social support from people with similar attitudes and participation in social activities. Substantive elements, on the other hand,

refer to the specific contents of beliefs and practices promoted by different religions (Shafranske, 1996).

4.3 A renewed interest in spirituality

Tacey (2000, p. 11) indicates that a spirituality revolution is taking place in Western and Eastern societies as politics fails as a vessel of hope and meaning. This revolution is not to be confused with the rising tide of religious fundamentalism, although the two are caught up in the same phenomenon.

He goes on to say that spirituality and fundamentalism are at opposite ends of the cultural spectrum. Spirituality seeks a sensitive, contemplative, transformative relationship with the sacred and is able to sustain levels of uncertainty in its quest because respect for mystery is paramount. Fundamentalism seeks certainty, fixed answers and absolutism as a fearful response to the complexity of the world and to our vulnerability as creatures in a mysterious universe. Spirituality arises from love of, and intimacy with, the sacred; fundamentalism arises from fear of, and possession by, the sacred. The choice between spirituality and fundamentalism is a choice between conscious intimacy and unconscious possession.

Whilst linked, the rise in interest in spirituality cannot be confused totally with the decline in organised religion and political idealism. Schneiders (cited in Zinnbauer, 1997) explains that spirituality has rarely enjoyed such a high profile, positive evaluation, and even economic success, as it does today. If religion is in serious trouble, spirituality is in the ascendancy and the irony of this situation evokes puzzlement and anxiety in the religious establishment, scrutiny among theologians and justification

among those who have traded the religion of their past for the spirituality of their present (O'Murchu, 2000).

The consequences of the spirituality revolution are far-reaching and they are being registered most profoundly in personal identity, something that is central to the adolescent males' search for meaning in his life. An unstable and even anarchic phase of history, where significant dimensions of human experience are not contained by institutions and where individuals have to move beyond conventions to meet the challenges of the time, now exist (Tacey, 2000). Poets, philosophers, artists and reflective people can see what is happening and what is to come. In particular, the spiritual challenges of the time are discerned most dramatically by the young, since they are the ones who are most vulnerable.

It is also a time of a great historical shift, as the secular period that arose with humanism and the intellectual enlightenment draws to an end. Most of our knowledge institutions are products of the enlightenment and, as such, they do not reach out beyond the present.

Tacey (2000) offers this insight to Jung's work and as insight to the inward interest in spirituality:

Under stable social conditions, our energies move outward into life and the world, and the 'heavier' contents fall to the bottom of the stream of life and 'lie hidden in the silt'. But when our forward flow is blocked by disappointments,

wars, depression and doubt, then our energies ‘flow towards their source’, libido is reversed, and the ‘collision’ between our introversion and life’s stream ‘washes to the surface’ those psychic contents that normally lie hidden. (p. 26)

There is an extensive argument as to why spirituality should arise at critical periods of history, indicating that spirituality is not itself a sign of decadence or decay, but a consequence of enforced inwardness and the withdrawal of hopes and dreams from the world. This also gives us a psychological basis for the sudden lifting of the bans against the spiritual dimension of life. The lifting of these bans is not actually our own conscious doing; rather, we are reluctantly forced to lift them because there is so much ‘new’ material that is rising up from within, compelling us to take notice of what we would normally forget (Tacey, 2000).

4.4 Spirituality and religion

Before looking at how spirituality and psychotherapy are linked, a few definitions need to be explored. Tacey indicates that “spirituality is a desire for connectedness which often expresses itself as an emotional relationship with an invisible sacred presence. To those who experience this relationship, it is real, transformative and complete” (2000, p. 17).

Tacey also makes the point that, traditionally, spirituality was a goal or product of religious devotion but, increasingly, it is being separated from religion and experienced as a reality in its own right. Religion, on the other hand, is now commonly associated with institutional churches, hierarchical structures, the pronouncement of doctrine and a fixed system of ideas.

Schneiders' (2003 p 32) addresses the current tension between "religion" (usually understood as institutional structure, dogma, and practice) and "spirituality" (usually understood as personal involvement in the growth and development of the self). She suggests that the conflictual or contradictory relation between the two results from a faulty understanding of both and that, properly understood, religious traditions are the normal and healthiest context for genuine spiritualities.

Schneider's proposes three models for the relationship between Religion and Spirituality. Firstly that Religion and Spirituality are separate entities with no necessary connection. Secondly, Religion and Spirituality are conflicting realities related to each in inverse proportions. This means that the more religious one is the less spiritual and visa versa. Finally some see religion and spirituality as two dimensions of a single enterprise, which like body and spirit are often in tension but are essential to each other and constitute together a single reality. In other words the two are partners in the search for God. Schneiders' accepts the thirds position as most real.

A spirituality, however, that distances itself from mainstream religion is becoming increasingly popular. Diarmuid O'Murchu claims:

For many people it is virtually incomprehensible that spiritual yearnings, feelings or values can arise apart from the context of formal belief; in other words, religion is perceived to be the only fountain from which spirituality can spring forth. Fortunately, human experience suggests otherwise and has done so over many millennia ... it is not a realm of experience that has been researched or studied systematically as has happened in the case of formal religion. Consequently, we rely on anecdotal evidence, which is now becoming so

widespread and compelling that we can't afford to ignore it any more. (1997, p. 2)

Tacey attempts to explore this relationship between an emerging new concept of spirituality and traditional religion:

Religion and spirituality thus face each other as paradoxical twins. Without religion, we have no organised way of communicating or expressing truth, no sacred rituals to bind individuals into living community. Yet without spirituality, we have no truth to celebrate and no contact with the living and ongoing nature of divine revelation. We need both – form and substance – but each can attack and cancel out the other if the conditions are not propitious. We encounter the terrible irony that our attempts to make known the unknowable mystery may have the effect of rubbing out that mystery and alienating us even further from the living depths of the sacred. We live in times where spirituality is privileged and where religion is under attack, which is to say that spirituality holds our hopes for interconnectedness and religion stands accused of mere institutional authority. This is the mood of our age, and we must respect it, but it is still not clear what will bind society together or provide the foundation for community. (2000, p. 28)

O'Murchu makes the point that:

This new spiritual resurgence is not something planned by a specific group of people or by some new organisation that is seeking to undermine the significance of churches, religions or the culture of traditional faith and belief.

This is a proactive rather than a reactive movement. Many of the people involved in this spiritual reawakening have little or no familiarity with formal religion. These people are not anti-religion and should not be confused with those who denounce religion because of some past hurtful or destructive experience. (1997, p. 12)

Another important consideration when looking at spirituality and religion is the fact that Western religion has never fully recovered from the attack made upon it by the scientific enlightenment. The moral and cultural authority of the churches has been in decline since the late medieval period and religion has not been able to claim a monopoly on truth since, at least, the dawn of the scientific era.

It could be argued that the most self-destructive strategy ever adopted by Western religion was its insistence upon the literal reality of its mysteries and miracles. It felt that its mysteries (the creation of the world, the resurrection, the immaculate conception) could be true only if they were literally true; it disregarded the truth of metaphor and symbol, opting instead for the truth of fact and history.

As the Western intellect developed and as science gained in strength and reason, the claims of religion seemed far-fetched. Religion had rejected the truth of *mythos* (story) for the truth of *logos* (reason) (Tacey, 2000), and yet the science of *logos* would rapidly transcend and debunk the claimed truths of religion. In a sense, religion had actually undermined itself by literal thinking and fundamentalist claim and by abandoning its true foundation in myth, metaphor, narrative and story. In time, very few self-respecting thinking people could subscribe to the impossible claims put forward by

religion, which rapidly lost the support of the intellectual classes and has never managed to recapture it. Instead, religion looked for support from the uneducated classes, hoping that they would keep faith with its tenets and claims.

This is an astonishingly weak and negative strategy and religion in the West has never yet made a decent attempt to win back the best and the brightest in society. The Church responded to this crisis by increasing its threats of the moral retribution that would befall those who failed to maintain the faith. Especially in the nineteenth century, it used coercion, guilt and the rhetoric of damnation to maintain its flock, thereby making itself an enemy of reason, social progress and individual liberty. For many creative thinkers, the church has become synonymous with oppression. It could not, by this stage, revert to its grounding in *mythos*, having gone too far down the pathway of literal claims and historicity.

An examination of the key differences between spirituality and religion would be helpful. Religion is born of awareness of the Transcendent together with expression of that awareness in conceptual, cultural and social form (Ellswood, 1990). Religion is about a shared belief system (dogma) and communal ritual practice (liturgy). However, for many people today, religion carries a negative connotation that “spirituality, as opposed to religion, connotes a direct, personal experience of the sacred unmediated by particular belief systems prescribed by dogma or by hierarchical structures of priests, ministers, rabbis, or gurus” (Berenson, 1990, p. 59).

Spirituality is about one’s search for meaning and belonging and the core values that influence one’s behaviour. Spirituality is “harmonious interconnectedness-across

time and relationships” (Hungelmann, 1985, p. 453), “the human capacity to experience and relate to a dimension of power and meaning transcendent to the world of sensory reality” (Anderson, 1985, p. 67), and “the experience of consciously striving to integrate one’s life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives” (Schneiders, 1986, p. 327).

Tacey (1998) makes a helpful distinction between religion and spirituality indicating that not all spirituality is religious, and not all religious spirituality is Christian. All persons are created spiritual beings as they experience a yearning for self-transcendence and surrender. This question becomes religious in relation to some higher power and responds to this relationship with prayer and worship.

Religious expressions tend to be denominational, external, realistic and public. Spiritual experiences tend to be universal, internal, spontaneous, ecumenical and private. It is possible to be religious without being spiritual and spiritual without being religious (Richards & Bergin, 1997). Spiritual and religious belief systems provide faith explanations of history and present experiences. For many, they offer pathways toward understanding the ultimate meanings of life and existence (Campbell, 1988; Coles, 1990); that a moral awareness evolves out of such spiritual belief systems. Moral or ethical values spur the individual to respond to the suffering of others, to feel an obligation to dedicate efforts to help others and to alleviate pain or injustice in society (Bergin & Payne, 1991).

O’Murchu (1997) identifies the shadow side of religion as expressed in the following components:

1. Fear. Most religions claim to reveal a loving God, but in practice what they engender, often to the extent of psychological and spiritual paralysis, is a crippling, destructive fear. Popular preaching and formal rituals exacerbate this fear by emphasising the enormous gap between the all-perfect God and the imperfect human being, who can never hope to attain union with that God without a mysterious divine intervention. This fear often leads to an internalised sense of oppression, a gnawing sense of unworthiness and occasionally feelings of insurmountable guilt.
2. Escapism. There is a great deal of truth in Marx's perception that religion can become the opium of the people. In this case it does not help them to cope with, resolve or endure the meaninglessness they experience in life; rather they use religion to rationalise what is happening around them, sometimes to the extent of totally abandoning all attempts to rectify their problems.
3. Moralism. Religionists claim access to a higher, guiding wisdom in the light of which they claim the right to legislate and dictate what is and what is not morally acceptable. Because of patriarchal and dualistic overtones, a great deal of moralism is aimed at individual behaviour, with little or no cognisance of the surrounding culture and its influences. There are also strong undercurrents of control, not merely over specific behaviour but over people in their entire way of living.
4. Domination and control. Although every religion claims to be at the service of people in leading them to a more spiritual and enlightened way of life, in practice all religion retains a strong semblance of the patriarchal world out of which religion emanated in the first place. Little wonder,

then, that the more recently developed systems pride themselves in being monotheistic and openly pursue a policy of proselytising the ‘unconverted’. All religion carries sectarian undercurrents, a widespread belief that ‘my system is better than all others’.

5. Idolatry. Every shadow experience tends to include dimensions that contradict so blatantly the basic beliefs of life (in a person or a system) that it is inconceivable that they would find a place in one’s behaviour. This is precisely the area where the shadow is most deep and difficult to acknowledge. All the religions claim to have right views and understandings of God, and how God impacts upon our world. The more strongly this conviction is held, the more idolatrous it is likely to become. (pp. 180-81)

Conversely, O’Murchu (1997, p. 78) argues that spirituality, in every age of human and planetary unfolding, is far more versatile, embracing, dynamic and creative than religion has ever been. Contrary to the major perceptions of religionists, spirituality, and not religion, is the primordial source of our search for meaning while also offering us a much more coherent route to a comprehensive experience of divine revelation.

Distinction can also be made at the developmental level between religion and spirituality. Some have defined spiritual development as “the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self-transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred [a process that motivates] “the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose, and contribution” (Benson et al., 2003, p.

207). Others have also suggested that spiritual development is the growth of deep awareness of self in relationship to others – whether divine or human (Hay & Nye, 1998; Reimer & Furrow, 2001).

However, there are ways in which spirituality and religion overlap. Religions – cumulative, organised traditions of belief, practices, symbols, and polity – aspire to facilitate persons’ closeness to the sacred transcendent (higher power, ultimate truth/reality) as well as to foster relationships with, and responsibility to, others in community (King, 2003). Religion can provide a context in which young people can feel a profound sense of connectedness, with either supernatural or human other, an awareness that “often triggers an understanding of self that is intertwined and somehow responsible to the other” (King, 2003, p. 200).

To create some conceptual clarity, one working definition of religious development refers to the qualitative changes in one’s relationship with a particular faith tradition or doctrine about a divine other or supernatural power (Reich, Oser & Scarlett, 1999). This relationship may grow through affiliation with an organised faith tradition and participation in its prescribed rituals and contemplation of, and adherence to, its creeds. Given that religions generally incorporate specific beliefs, moral standards, practices, communities of adherents and the acknowledgment of a divine or supernatural other, religious development would seem to involve many aspects of human functioning. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of religious development would entail an understanding of growth in different developmental domains (for example, cognitive, social, emotional and moral).

No work on spirituality and religion would be complete without looking at the work of David Ranson, a Catholic Priest in Sydney. His work is much more consistent with Catholic teaching as opposed to O’Murchu, also a Catholic Priest, who has been banned from preaching in some Dioceses of Australia. In Ranson’s book, *Across the Great Divide*, he states that “spirituality is a genuine experience of God that emerges from our heart and the heart of our experience” (Ranson, 2002, p. 15). He further adds that we “must recognise the worth and the passion of our own spirituality within our living” (Ranson, 2002, p. 16). This means that for spirituality to be real it needs to be integrated into our lived experience. Ranson would also strongly suggest that spirituality and religion are interdependent, which creates a link between religion and lived experience (Ranson, 2002).

Ranson’s (2007) strong belief is that spirituality and religion, when left unseparated, will give the individual a holistic approach to human growth. Key to his argument are four faulty assumptions to a contemplative spirituality, that:

- we are an appendix to creation – we need to know that we are ‘of the earth’ not on the earth
- our well-being and peace comes through consumption. What we consume leads to our identity – our identity lies in who we are, how we relate and our motivations (that is, why we do things). We have a desire to hoard
- belief that God dwells in a transcendent world. God dwells in us and in creation we need to connect to that mystery and not see God ‘out there’.
- I am my ego – my ego is who I see myself as being – my religion, my education, my culture, my family, my experience, my qualifications – my ego can lead to the false self – the isolated self from my true self – my true self is a greater sense

of being who I am because of my relationship to all creation – ego can be seen as a diversity – me and creation – true being avoids duality.

It is important to note that, historically, many people entered the religious part of the cycle through the Parish or religious denomination school within the context of a society that supported the mainstream practise of religion. Now, young people believe that their interpretation on spiritual issues is just as valid as that of the Church. This has meant that, in the eyes of young people, religion and spirituality have become one of the great dualisms. This dualism has lead to the ‘I am spiritual not religious’ approach of some adolescents. This is the point of view that the Catholic Church disagrees with and is taken up by Ranson in his work.

4.5 Spirituality and psychotherapy

Before spirituality can be successfully integrated into counselling, a strong link needs to established between spirituality and counselling. Integral to this concept is the notion of spiritual formation. Spirituality, of course, does not exist within a vacuum; it needs to be understood in terms of holistic human development. Five dimensions of human experience have been identified and are commonly quoted. They are psychological, social, moral, spiritual or religious and somatic or biological (Wilber, 1999).

The following diagram (Figure 4.1 from Sperry, 2001, p. 25) shows the basic dimensions of human experience. The spiritual dimension is placed at the core of the diagram to illustrate the belief that the spiritual dimension is foundational to all the other dimensions of human experience. This core may or may not involve any formal

affiliation with a religious tradition, but it reflects the beliefs, effects and behaviours associated with the basic spiritual hunger or desire for self-transcendence that all individuals experience.

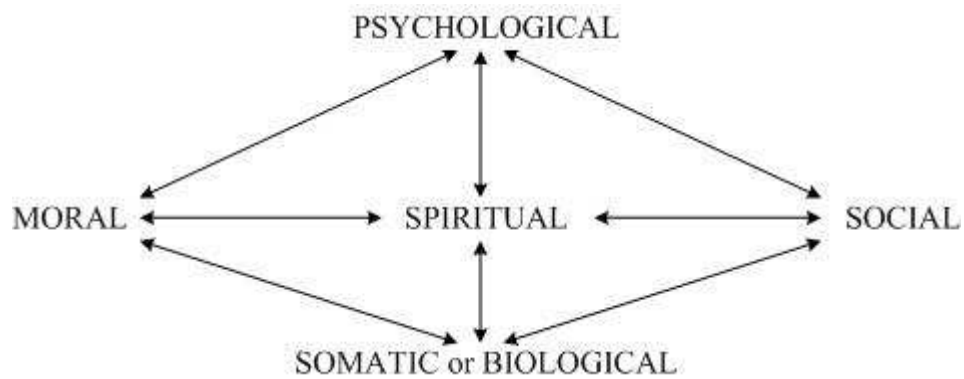


Figure 4.1 Dimensions of Human Development

Sperry (2001, p. 26) also provides useful insights into the concept of incorporating the spiritual dimension into psychotherapy based on the previously mentioned developmental theories.

Table 4.1 highlights the integrated nature of spirituality in terms of human development rather than it being compartmentalised. For spirituality to be authentically integrated into psychological development it must be viewed in developmental terms that are consistent with other developmental theories.

Table 4.1 Spiritual dimensions of psychotherapy

Psychosocial Development	Development is relational, and there is a developmental sequence to the acquisition of virtues.
Moral development	Moral reasoning does not necessarily produce moral actions; women's moral reasoning can differ from men's moral reasoning.
Faith Development	Belief is a process of growth in the transforming of religious meanings rather than the clinging to a particular formulation of the content of a belief or doctrine.
Self development	Spiritual maturity – freely surrendering oneself and risking a genuinely mutual relationship with others and God.
Spiritual Development	Spiritual development – process of developing integrity, wholeness, self-responsibility, and self-transcendence.
Spiritual growth	Depending on the definition of spirituality, spiritual growth may occur before, alongside, or after psychological development, but always requires spiritual disciplines.
Stages of the spiritual journey	Dismantling the false self and recovering the true self is the road map of the spiritual journey; spiritual growth requires meditation/contemplation and spiritual practices.

Currently, there is considerable interest in examining the impact of the spiritual dimension on the psychological, social and somatic dimensions. Considerable research is underway, with Cortright (1997) being the most prolific writer on the topic. Leseho (2007) supports this work, also reporting on the benefits of religious and spiritual behaviours and physical health and psychological and relational well-being. Even more recently, McCorkle & Onofrei (2008) support the claim. Based on over two hundred published studies, it appears that higher levels of spirituality are related to lower risk for disease, fewer medical and psychiatric problems and higher levels of psychosocial

functioning (Blando 2006; Graf, 2008; Koenig, 1998; Levin, 1994; Levin & Chatters, 1998; Young, Wiggins-Frame & Cashwell, 2007). This finding seems to hold regardless of gender, ethnicity, the severity or type of the disease, or how the concept of spirituality is measured or defined or the type of research design used (Levin, 1994).

When religiously committed individuals, families or couples seek the services of a psychotherapist, they may come with a system of religious beliefs and values that affect their attitudes, thoughts and behaviours. Their religious orientation and religiosity influence various aspects of family life, from ideals about marriage and family purpose, to family size, power, sexuality and intimacy, gender roles and methods of raising and disciplining children. As such, religion can serve as either an important resource or a significant source of resistance in therapy. Accordingly, it is incumbent on psychotherapists to understand the role and meaning of religious beliefs and practices of all clients.

Psychotherapists also need to be aware of how spiritual issues can strongly influence the therapy process. Cortright (1997) speaks of spiritual emergence versus spiritual emergency:

Most often spiritual experience develops gradually, with a slow lifting of the veil between normal consciousness and spiritual awareness. Or, when this development is rapid and the person has the inner resources to assimilate it, he or she welcomes it and is able to allow the transformative power of the experience to work on the consciousness. Sudden illumination, descents of bliss, expanding into love or unity, the opening of perception to inner worlds –

whatever the experience, steady spiritual practice, guidance, and purification has laid the foundation for a relatively smooth integration of the spirit's bounty. (pp. 158-159)

Sometimes, however, spiritual experience erupts so forcefully that the usual integrative capacities of the person are overwhelmed and psychological functioning is disturbed. New energies, beings and planes of experience bombard the person resulting in confusion, fear and attempts to control what is going on. At this point, spiritual emergence becomes spiritual emergency.

There are two major circumstances in which spiritual emergency happen. The first is fairly uncomplicated though less common (Cortright, 1997). The person or environment has no conceptual framework to deal with what the person is experiencing. It is then usually pathologised by the person's support system, parents, doctors and so on. This is relatively easy to work with providing a cognitive framework and a supportive environment in which the person can fully experience the process is often sufficient to enable the person to assimilate what is going on. In the second instance, there is not enough physical or emotional resilience within the self to integrate these experiences. Psychological structures become disorganised as the self-fragments.

This second is more difficult to rectify, requiring such things as therapy, experiential work, bodywork and, sometimes, medication and/or hospitalisation to slow down the process. Although this may also be accompanied by a lack of a conceptual framework, just providing a conceptual map is not sufficient to end the crisis, for the structures of the self are disrupted and need to be repaired or transformed.

The three major responses to spiritual emergency are:

1. integrate the experience, move forward in life
2. be overwhelmed for a period, with integration following
3. fixate and fail to integrate; the experience may subside but the person remains fixated on some level, resulting in lessened or marginal adaptation.

At what point spirituality and psychotherapy connect is an issue discussed by many psychotherapists. According to philosopher and psychiatrist Karl Jaspers (1963), the ideal psychotherapist combines, among other qualities, a “profound existential faith [with] scientific attitudes of the sceptic” (p. 808). While possessing a deep sense of a transcendent dimension in all of human experience, such a therapist might well view the particulars of the religious traditions as human constructs that give form to the many faces of the transcendent and provide a mode of human response. From such a perspective, no ‘religion’ is right – and none is sweepingly wrong. When error enters in, it is chiefly in the form of overlooking the human origin of the religious traditions and ascribing too narrow and final a meaning to their contents.

Some version of this perspective has informed the psychology of religion from its very beginnings and it is arguably a standpoint of great heuristic value for psychotherapy as well. There are, nevertheless, some who strenuously object to it either because it assumes a transcendent dimension and takes religious content seriously, on the one hand, or because it rejects the notion of a final, revealed truth and, thus, relativises every religious claim, on the other (Shafranske, 1996). Critics of the relativistic perspective are right in saying that it imports into psychology an epistemological outlook that cannot be derived from psychology itself.

The theories that are most compelling in the psychology of religion will likely be the ones that best account for religion as we experience or understand it. Crucial for clinical practitioners who aspire to a genuine understanding of their clients' religious faith will be the broadest and deepest acquaintance possible with the complex world of religious faith and tradition. Such an acquaintance will make obvious that religion is many things – superstitious habit as well as time-tested procedure, system of control as well as avenue to freedom, neurotic defence as well as impetus to growth, egocentric delusion as well as empathic concern, inchoate intimation as well as articulate world-view. In the face of such diversity, we should be suspicious of any simple formula or typology that aspires to sum it up.

Practitioners should also be wary of the narrowing influences of their own religious views. It may be, as some scholars argue, that those who are not themselves religious, or at least not religious in the usual sense, are destined to remain uncomprehending outsiders, however sympathetic they may be. Yet religious commitment can itself erect barriers to understanding. One may be inclined to construe the other as religiously mistaken, for example, or to assimilate the other's faith to one's own categories or experience. When therapist and client share the same tradition and perhaps even use it as a framework for therapy, such problems as these are largely averted. At the same time, however, the therapist may be blind to dysfunctional aspects of the shared tradition – for example, denigrative views of women or unreasonable ideals of perfection. Sharing a common religious tradition may also foreclose a disinterested evaluation of the origins and dynamics of the client's religious faith.

The same holds true for an understanding of psychology's pluralism. In this case, too, proponents of a particular theory or method are tempted to view it as absolute – that is, as a privileged means of uncovering universal truths. The recent emergence of the constructivist point of view in psychology (Miller, 2003) is now helping psychologists to see more clearly how dependent their knowledge is on historical and contextual factors and, thus, how limited it is in its generality.

4.6 Spirituality and adolescents

Accompanying the exploding physical, glandular and sexual changes brought on by adolescence, there can also be revolutions in cognitive functioning and on the way young men change their interpersonal perspectives. With the emergence of early formal operational thinking (Piaget, 1929), a young person's thought and reasoning develops quickly. Capable of using and appreciating abstract concepts, young people begin to think about their thinking, to reflect on their stories and to name and synthesise their meanings.

This period is punctuated by the emergence of a change in the way young men see the world. This capacity can make youths acutely sensitive to the meanings they seem to have to others and the evaluations those meanings imply. Identity and personal interiority – one's own and others – become absorbing concerns. Personality, both as style and substance, becomes a conscious issue. From within this stage, youths construct the ultimate environment in terms of the personal. God representations can be populated with personal qualities of accepting love, understanding, loyalty and support during times of crisis. During this stage, youths are prepared to develop attachments to beliefs, values and elements of personal style that link them in conforming relations with the

most significant others among their peers, family and other non-family adults. Identity, beliefs and values are strongly felt even when they contain contradictory elements. However, they tend to be espoused in tacit, rather than explicit, formulations. At this stage one's ideology or worldview is lived and asserted; it is not yet a matter of critical and reflective articulation (Geldard & Geldard, 1999).

One decisive limit of the synthetic-conventional stage, according to Fowler, is its lack of the third person being involved in how changes in perspectives occur. This means that in its dependence on significant others for confirmation and clarity about one's identity and meaning to them, the self does not yet have a transcendental perspective from which it can see and evaluate self-other relations from a perspective outside them. In the synthetic-conventional stage the young person or adult can remain trapped in the "Tyranny of the They" (Fowler cited in Shafranske, 1996, p. 173).

As adolescents seek to establish their personal identity, they attempt to find meaning in their lives. They look within themselves to examine thoughts and feelings and to reason about them. This leads many young people to seek answers to questions of a spiritual nature. Conventional religious beliefs and participation in organised religious practices demonstrate aspects of spirituality. However, adolescent spirituality is often demonstrated in a more fundamental way through the adolescent's search for meaning in life's daily experiences:

The transformational story is a story in search of healing and reconciliation. It is a therapeutic story constructed to make right what is wrong in the private story. Transformation may take place in any number of ways through key events or

turning points that expand our awareness and open us to change. (Steere, 1997, p. 190)

Fowler (1996b) indicates that the stage of faith development linked to adolescents is the synthetic-conventional faith (puberty to young adulthood). This stage begins as young people develop a capacity for formal operational thinking (Fowler, 1991). At this point, they have the cognitive ability to think abstractly and to manipulate concepts. Furthermore, individuals at this stage have “the ability to reflect on one’s feelings and thoughts, and see one’s self through the eyes of others, and accept and value the evaluation of others” (Lownsdale, 1997, p. 58). During adolescence and beyond, persons’ worlds are expanded and they must make coherent meaning in the midst of diverse and complex experiences of family, school, work, media and other social contacts. Faith must provide a unifying means of synthesising values and information and must serve as a basis for forming a stable identity and world-view (Fowler, 1981). During this stage, faith is constructed through conformity to a set of values and beliefs with deference to authority. At this point in development, people might understand themselves to have faith but their beliefs and values are typically unexamined. The synthetic-conventional stage is also characterised by a hunger for a close, personal relationship with God; one yearns to be known and loved by God (Fowler, 1987). Fowler maintained that this stage was characteristic of adolescents and normative for adults. A clue that persons are beginning to move beyond this stage is when they begin to question authority and established beliefs and values.

The adolescent period of development has its own unique set of challenges and issues, which frequently are not understood by the adolescent. For him, it is a time to

experience life and to test limits. Impulsive and reckless behaviour may contribute to the adolescent finding him- or herself in dangerous and life-threatening situations. The epidemic of suicide is but one example of impulsivity (Balk, 1997; Geldard & Geldard, 1999) suggesting that crises may provide a catalyst for enhanced spirituality defined as a quest for understanding life's meaning.

All adolescents struggle with change as new developmental capacities emerge. Young adolescents deal with changes in their physical development and the emotional impact that has on their mental psyche. As the adolescent develops new cognitive capacities, such as the ability to think abstractly, experiences and events take on new and different meanings.

An adolescent who has experienced a crisis, such as the death of a sibling either through an accident or suicide, could begin to question why. Death to the adolescent is no longer an event, as it is for a younger child, but rather a process. This death crisis could provide a catalyst for spiritual growth. Balk (1997) notes that such growth is limited to those crises that; (a) include time for reflection, (b) impact the life of the individual permanently, and (c) create a psychological imbalance that resists quickly being stabilised. Butnam (1990) suggests that "spiritual development will often take place when an individual must examine, assess, and reconstruct his or her values and beliefs and then act autonomously on those new values and beliefs" (p. 14).

Burke (Burke et al., 2005, p. 25) indicates that another aspect of the developmental context, allowing for spiritual growth during adolescence, is related to the religious development of the adolescent. Religion refers to the way an individual

expresses his or her relationship to a higher force, being, power or God (Mahrer, 1996). It is expressed through either belief systems or communal rituals, such as prayer and worship, and it is not limited to organised religions (Mahrer, 1996.) The adolescent, because of his or her emerging cognitive abilities, is also able to consider religious beliefs in new ways. It is during adolescence that religious values and beliefs begin to be clarified (Balk, 1983). Fowler (1996b) suggests that because adolescents are able to think abstractly, they are able to construct an image of God in new ways. The new God image may include personal qualities or accepting love, understanding, loyalty and support during crisis. This would seem to emphasise the importance of peer support groups in junior and senior high school.

Addressing developmental concerns can be the best means of supporting the quest of adolescents for answers to profound questions about the meaning of life. Burke et al. (2005) highlight that, for more than a decade, newspaper headlines have highlighted “a generation at risk” (p. 26). The void of spiritual guidance and the lack of opportunities to interact with each other on a deeper level regarding life’s meaning and purpose are still rarely noticed factors contributing to violence in schools. Gangs, drugs, sex and suicide may be a search for a connection and meaning as well as an escape from the pain of not having a genuine source of spiritual fulfilment.

Religious beliefs change as children enter and pass through adolescence as a consequence of maturation and of becoming more global in their thinking. Teens, for example, are less likely than younger children to believe in a literal translation of the Holy Bible. Children are more likely to report that they believe in God because of what their parents tell them. On the other hand, adolescents rely more on rational or logical

thinking in determining their faith, rather than on choices their parents might make and espouse. They believe in God because, for example, the universe is orderly, because they believe there must have been a beginning to all things.

4.7 Spirituality and adolescents: the counselling process

When looking at the spiritual dimension, the narrative remains the central metaphor for counselling. Kelly's three phase model (1995, p. 102) for addressing spiritual issues can be integrated into the models of the developmental theorists described earlier.

The first stage requires the establishing of a counsellor-client relationship that is respectfully open to the spiritual dimension. This will be important in clarifying the function of spirituality in their clients' current life. Identifying blind spots might include recognising clients' unused spiritual resources as well as less healthy spiritual beliefs (and related feelings and behaviours) which are currently keeping them stuck.

The second stage helps clients develop a preferred scenario. This might involve techniques with a potentially spiritual dimension like visualisation or a reframing of their spiritual perspectives. Kelly (1995) calls this the perspective-shifting phase.

The third stage uses positive aspects of their spirituality to help them plan and carry out a problem-solving course of action that reflects the shifts in understanding (and feeling) that have grown out of the process. This might include evaluating the appropriateness of any proposed action plan in the light of their spiritual values, particularly where spiritual growth is their overall goal (Kelly, 1995).

When following such a holistic approach with teenagers, the need arises to conceptualise the client's story within the developmental and systemic contexts. An important consideration at this stage, when it is so important to successfully integrate spiritual components into good psychological practice, is to assess whether or not the client's perceived spirituality could help or hinder the counselling process.

Clinebell (1965) (cited in Richards & Bergin, 1997) asks these important questions about religious or spiritual thought and practice:

Does it:

- Build bridges or barriers between people?
- Strengthen or weaken a basic sense of trust and related need to relate to the universe?
- Stimulate or hamper growth, inner freedom and personal responsibility?
- Provide effective or faulty means of helping people move from a sense of guilt to forgiveness? Does it provide well-defined ethical guidelines, or does it emphasise ethical trivia? Is its primary concern for surface behaviour or for the underlying health of personality?
- Increase or lessen the enjoyment of life? Does it encourage a person to appreciate or depreciate the feeling dimension of life?
- Handle the vital energies of sex and anger in constructive or repressive ways?
- Encourage the acceptance or denial of reality? Does it foster magical or mature religious beliefs? Does it encourage intellectual honesty in respect

to doubts? Does it oversimplify the human situation or face its tangled complexity?

- Emphasise love (and growth) or fear?
- Give its adherents a frame of orientation and object of devotion that is adequate in handling existential anxiety constructively?
- Encourage the individual to relate to his or her unconscious through living symbols?
- Accommodate itself to neurotic patterns of the society or endeavour to change them?
- Strengthen or weaken self-esteem? (p. 188)

Studying the relationship between adolescents' religious beliefs and spiritual practices and psychotherapy represents a formidable task for several reasons. First, religion and the related construct of the spiritual entail complex and diverse constructs. Religious terms encompass such components as cognition (attributions, beliefs, knowledge), emotion (joy, hope, shame), behaviour (church attendance, rituals, prayers, moral actions) and community affiliation (group interactions) distinguished between general measures of religiosity (for example, church attendance and self-reported importance of religion) and measures of religious coping that could include specific religious practices of prayer, confessing one's sins and seeking strength and comfort from God in response to a particular stressor. Religion has been differentiated from spirituality in that the latter is viewed more as believing in, valuing or devoting oneself to some higher power without necessarily holding religious beliefs to be true (Geldard & Geldard, 1999).

It should be noted that being religious could involve an individual holding to certain doctrines within a religious organisation without experiencing or expressing any devotion to a higher power other than intellectual assent to its existence. Thus, a person could be spiritual and religious, spiritual but not religious, religious but not spiritual or none of these. Given the complexity and diversity of these constructs, it is likely that studies involving spirituality and religion will represent diverse psychosocial variables and, therefore, diverse outcomes concerning adolescent psychotherapy would be anticipated (Tacey, 2000).

Adolescent psychotherapy (Geldard & Geldard, 1999) recognises that a stable personal identity is a goal of the completion of adolescence. All children, as they emancipate, must recognise their strengths and weaknesses and how these will be applied in the adult world of love and work. This developmental need for identity is facilitated by healthy family relationships. Spiritual and religious traditions emphasise the place of the person in a created and spiritual order. Through stories, traditions and sacred scriptures, individuals have an identity in a spiritual context and are not seen as the product of time and chance – the purely secular view.

When looking at the counselling process and the spirituality of adolescents, Parrott (1995) enumerates four ‘traps’ or mistakes that should be avoided at all costs by the psychotherapist if the adolescent is to emerge healthy and whole from his or her quest for the spiritual. These traps are:

- Motivating by guilt. The teen years are a prime time for the acquisition of guilt as these young people struggle with unrealistic self-expectations and a relentless, sometimes over-demanding, conscience. So why would someone use guilt to

motivate the already self-punishing? Because, Parrott asserts, it works! Guilt gets results and often rather fast – but it is almost never long-lasting. Guilt fails to instil qualities that are good for the long run. Adolescents can be prompted to donate to charity by a sense of guilt because they have more than others. ‘More’ is a relative term, however, and if the real gift of sharing is not instilled, the gesture becomes self-serving and meaningless. What is created is a desire to clear one’s conscience and to please those who are watching. Guilt eventually engenders anger and will sabotage a true effort to instil the virtue of charity or selflessness in a young person.

- Equating spirituality with youth group activity. Churches sometimes confuse activity with spirituality. Keeping adolescents ‘busy’ does not make them ‘holy’. In today’s world, there are simply too many activities that demand a young person’s time, leaving them little space to simply ‘be’ and ‘think.’ Parrott (1995) warns us that it is simply inaccurate and insensitive to gauge youth’s spiritual maturity by how dedicated they are to our programming.
- Setting our expectations for teenagers too high. Our own high self-expectations often cause us to set the bar too high for others. Having the same expectations of adolescents as that of adults is simply unrealistic. Placing such expectations on adolescents about their spiritual development or religious maturity ensures failure and compounds guilt.
- Setting our expectations for teenagers too low. It is just as easy to err on the other side also. Setting expectations of adolescent spirituality too low can be as detrimental as setting them too high. In communicating lower expectations to an adolescent, we are, in effect, saying, ‘you really are not capable’. Adolescence is often a very idealistic time and youth aspire to lofty goals by nature. To hold

them back is to stunt their spiritual growth. The hardest thing in the world is to let people learn by their mistakes and their, sometimes, too-lofty ambitions; material or spiritual.

It is also important to realise that adolescence presents some challenges for families in which there are strong religious or spiritual affiliations. During this period, adolescents typically explore their world and question their beliefs. They are exposed to ideas and values that may be diametrically opposed to their parents' worldview. Conflicts can arise when youth stray from the family value system, especially in peer contacts and sexual experimentation. Moreover, teens may experience heightened guilt and anxiety if they violate parental codes of behaviour that are religiously or spiritually based (Shafranske, 1996).

4.8 Healthy and unhealthy spirituality

One of the key changes in thinking of people associated with religious and spiritual thinking is the emergence of the concept of healthy and unhealthy spirituality (Cortright, 1997). Rowan (1993, p. 205), who has a more postmodern understanding of spirituality (which means he concentrates on issues of identity and search for meaning rather than doctrine and ritual), identifies healthy and unhealthy expressions of spirituality. He gives the following example of unhealthy spirituality. These lists are important for educational leaders and counsellors, so that values clarification can occur and integrity in terms of meeting the needs of the young men can be achieved:

1. when anger is suppressed because to do so is morally superior; this is called the 'spiritual bypass'

2. submission to others; rationalised as being loving, but actually being much more like co-dependency
3. failure to ask for support and nurturance; rationalised by such views as ‘God is all I need’
4. failure to deal with interpersonal or sexual needs; rationalised as ascetic practice
5. failure to deal with interpersonal problems; rationalised as ‘It’s all a spiritual lesson’
6. claiming special treatment; because of spiritual superiority, known as ‘narcissistic spirituality’
7. offensive spirituality; which consists often in criticising others for not being spiritual enough – often this goes with spiritual perfectionism
8. spiritual avoidance; such as refusing to go in for counselling because it might involve criticising parents, which is forbidden
9. compulsive religiosity; which puts correct observance before healthy and productive personal relationships
10. resorting to dangerous practices; such as exorcism instead of more modest means, such as counselling.

In contrast to these examples of unhealthy spirituality, Josephson and Peteet (2004) give the following as examples of health functions of spirituality:

- Affirm relationships
- Strengthen basic trust in others specifically and in humankind generally
- Foster personal responsibility, including development of personal ethical guidelines

- Emphasise concern for others at a deeper level beyond surface behaviour
- Enhance enjoyment of life through the appreciation of beauty, the encouragement of creativity, and other means
- provide a flexible structure (rules) for life that encourages self-control and discipline and specifically facilitates the safe expression of sexuality and aggression
- Facilitate cognitive, emotional, and behavioural integration
- Provide an intellectual basis to manage doubt and difficult questions and thereby to manage existential anxiety
- Foster self-esteem and provide a sense of identity and ultimate worth
- Provide a sense of purpose and meaning that allows for rational interpretation of life's problems
- Demonstrate that love – and the positive emotions of hope, optimism, and peace – emerge from beliefs, rituals, and practices
- Offer a process of forgiveness and reconciliation that allows for the restoration and renewal of relationships
- Encourage the existence and maintenance of supportive community networks. (p. 36)

Each of these factors may protect individuals from the development of clinical problems. The converse of these characteristics, or their absence, may place individuals at risk for problems.

Finally, Battista (Scotton, Chinen & Battista, 1996) also gives important guidelines when looking at the concepts of healthy and unhealthy spirituality. This is

most relevant to adolescents because of the stage they are at in their developmental journey:

- ‘True’ (healthy) spirituality assists people to change.
- ‘False’ (unhealthy) spirituality can be either defensive (masochistic and non-assertive) or offensive (a way of manipulating others).
- Masochistic, spiritual defences commonly include:
 - submission to the other, or to authority, rationalised as the practice of loving-kindness and spiritual humility
 - failure to receive or ask for nurturance from another human being
 - rationalised by statements like: ‘God is the true source of all bounty and all that I need’
 - failure to deal with interpersonal and sexual needs, rationalised as ascetic practice
 - failure to deal with biological or interpersonal dimensions of problems such as depression
- The spiritual narcissist presents as evolved or complete, without need of transformation, or as a misunderstood victim who deserves affirmation. (p. 259)

4.9 Spiritual direction/supervision

Spiritual direction is a traditional term in the Christian religion, especially Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism, referring to a formal, one-to-one relationship in which a person receives help and facilitation in the process of spiritual formation, that is, the deepening of one’s relationship with God and related spiritual practices (for

example, prayer, meditation, fasting, charitable attitudes and behaviour) (May cited in Shafransky, 1996, p. 244). This will not be a significant part of this study as it does not relate to young people in their spiritual journey or process of counselling. It does need to be briefly examined as it would be something that counsellors and educational leaders who have a strong spiritual background would use, as it is a form of professional supervision to ensure that issues such as transference, counter transference or the maintaining of a professional relationship, at all times, is addressed.

There is certainly, however, an overlap between the spiritual and psychological/developmental concerns of spiritual direction and counselling/psychotherapy. However, the two also diverge in content, with spiritual direction focussing on explicitly spiritual experiences (for example, prayer and one's sense of God) and counselling/psychotherapy focussing on attitudinal, cognitive and behavioural dynamics. They also differ in intent, with the former concentrating on the deepening relationship with God and experience of divine reality and the latter focussing on healthy, satisfying psychological development and behaviour.

The overlap between spiritual and developmental/psychological concerns and dynamics means that counsellors can benefit clients by understanding and working competently with spiritual/religious issues insofar as these issues are significantly intertwined with the developmental/psychological issues of counselling. However, the differences between these domains also mean that the counsellor can help the client by appreciating the integrity of serious spiritual seekers' spiritual journeys and recognising the complementary role that formal spiritual direction plays for some persons in their full, spiritual-psychosocial development.

Spiritual direction is also known as spiritual guidance, spiritual friendship and spiritual companionship. It is practiced, in various forms, in nearly all spiritual traditions. In the Christian traditions, its roots go back to the third century and, while the practice has evolved since that time in the Catholic tradition, it has vigorously developed in the various Protestant traditions in the past thirty years (Shafranske, 1996). In the Catholic tradition it is now seen as mainstream spiritual practice with modern authors such as Nouwen (2006) and Rholheiser (2006) contributing much, as does (Rorh) 2006 who specialises in male spirituality.

Spiritual direction can be described as the art of spiritual listening carried out in the context of a one-to-one trusting relationship (Sperry, 2001, p. 9). It involves a trained director who guides or is a companion for another person, listening to that person's life story with an ear for the movement of the divine. In the spiritual direction session there is typically a candle, a Bible, or some other non-verbal symbol representing the Holy. Spiritual direction always occurs in the context of prayer. A priority in spiritual direction is placed on discernment (the process whereby a client, through prayer and direction from a supervisor, works out how to handle important issues in their life such as conflict resolution or their future). The relationship between director and directee is one of mutual engagement based on the recognition that both are walking the same spiritual journey. The role of faith in the spiritual dimension and one's relationship to a faith community are central to Christian spiritual direction (Gratton, 1992). In addition, spiritual direction involves spiritual conversion, in that it is attentive to the "dynamics of change through conversion, the radical transformation ... a relational, personal surrender to a personal, living God" (Galindo, 1997, p. 400).

Spiritual direction focuses on the maintenance and development of spiritual health and well-being. Spiritual direction assumes that the person is already whole but has not yet fully embraced this truth for him- or herself. Thus, spiritual direction is not for everyone, since it presumes a moderate degree of psychological health and well-being.

4.10 Integrating spirituality and psychotherapy for adolescent males

As discussed in previous chapters, psychology and counselling have been undergoing rapid change in their relationships with religion and spirituality. Counsellors have increasingly recognised the importance of cultural differences and the need to incorporate spirituality into treatments at any time of the life span, including adolescence. Josephson and Peteet (2004) refer to the growing clinical literature that discusses the development of spirituality and health issues.

An adolescent male's religious and philosophical beliefs influence how he functions morally in several ways. Beliefs about the nature of God and of the moral universe shape a person's commitments to justice, caring, honesty and other values. Philosophical or religious ways of thinking (that is, reliance on authority or reliance on free thought) guide the way people make moral decisions. For example, in choosing a career, some teenagers seek God's will, while others seek the integrity that comes from living consistently with their own highest values and beliefs. Religious traditions both articulate standards of right and wrong and offer options for dealing with moral failure (that is, confession, forgiveness, making amends).

Josephson and Peteet indicate that “the worldviews of religious and nonreligious individuals differ most sharply on the question of ultimate authority” (2004, p. 52).

Secularists will often grant the usefulness of religious belief, if only as a crutch, for a patient who seeks meaning or hope, but they more often see problems with many religions’ insistence on obedience to authority. Atheists value freedom from obedience to an authority outside of the natural universe. For example, Dawkins (2006) says “the idea of a personal God is quite alien to me and seems even naïve” (p.3) and:

An atheist in this sense of philosophical naturalist is somebody who believes there is nothing beyond the natural, physical world, no supernatural creative intelligence lurking behind the observable universe, no soul that outlasts the body and no miracles - except in the sense of natural phenomena that we don’t yet understand. If there is something that appears to lie beyond the natural world as it is now imperfectly understood, we hope eventually to understand it and embrace it within the natural. As ever when we unweave a rainbow, it will not become less wonderful. (p. 5)

There are several reasons why spirituality should be incorporated into the counselling of adolescents, especially at the earliest stage possible. This includes the following seven reasons (Josephson & Peteet, 2004):

1. Religion and spirituality may contribute to the risk of developing a clinical problem, or they may serve as protective factors. The refusal of a rigid, religious family to allow an adolescent to question religious dogma can become a focus of the adolescent’s oppositional behaviour; one could

imagine that the family's reaction to the adolescent's drug use would have a similar effect. On the other hand, a religious family that has provided a structured, nurturing environment with clear explication of moral codes may protect an adolescent from substance abuse (Miller 2003). Careful assessment is necessary to determine whether religion is promoting health or disorder, so that this information can be appropriately integrated into the treatment plan.

2. Religious and spiritual assessment can improve the treatment alliance. All clients desire to be understood and are more likely to follow the recommendations of a clinician whom they perceive to understand them empathically. By the same token, the patient with strong religious or spiritual inclinations may feel rebuffed if a clinician either actively or passively avoids asking about issues that the patient considers so important. This concern may be less central if the patient is irreligious or has a secular outlook, but if a religious or spiritual tradition has been important to the patient or the patient's family, an assessment of this area adds legitimacy to the clinical encounter and likely heightens the patient's confidence in the clinician. When the clinician and patient share a particular worldview or spiritual tradition, this mutual background may facilitate a deeper understanding of the patient's clinical problems and their context.
3. Religious and spiritual assessment can reveal resources within a patient's religious beliefs or religious community that could facilitate treatment. At times, an assessment can lead to the clinician's establishing a natural collaboration with clergy or others in the patient's faith community. This

collaboration can tap sources of support for the patient and may serve as a type of consultation for the clinician by deepening his or her understanding of the religious beliefs and spiritual traditions of the patient.

4. The patient's problem may present within a religious or spiritual context, which needs to be explored.
5. The clinical situation may suggest that existential or moral issues are prominent. Examples include clinical syndromes that may arise when an individual faces a life-threatening illness in him- or herself or in a family member or faces a dilemma with moral dimensions, such as the decision to divorce.
6. Patients may cite religious reasons for their difficulty in accepting psychotherapy, pharmacotherapy, or medical therapies. An in-depth religious and spiritual history that distinguishes religious from other forms of resistance can foster compliance with treatment.
7. Raising children typically involves inculcating values and explicating moral codes. These parental actions help children develop internalised control over impulses and foster development. Managing certain developmental needs of children can be problematic for many parents, particularly when the children are experiencing the onset of adolescent sexuality. As many parental responses have a basis in a religious or spiritual tradition, an assessment of these factors is usually indicated. (pp. 16-17)

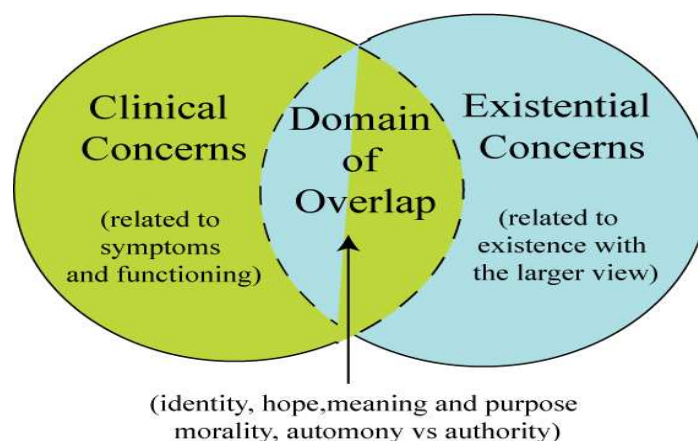
Considering these seven components, it can be seen that the religious and spiritual assessment fits within the psychiatric interview, the cornerstone of the

diagnostic process. Before focusing on the content of the assessment, it is important to note that the manner in which one conducts a religious and spiritual assessment may be as important as the facts that are obtained.

Counsellors should gather basic data on spiritual and religious experience from all young men they work with as this information provides a background for comprehensive care. At the end of the religious or spiritual component of the psychiatric assessment, the counsellor should have an opinion about the importance of religion and spirituality in the client's life and about the relative health or pathology of the young man's beliefs and experiences in this area. The counsellor should also know when it is clinically indicated to gather more detailed religious and spiritual information and how to do so. In addition, the counsellor should be alert to the manner in which his or her own worldview influences the exploration of religious and spiritual issues and the importance they are given in diagnostic formulation. A guide to spiritual assessment that could help this process is shown in Appendix C.

Josephson and Peteet (2004) identify five concerns for the counsellor when integrating spirituality with counselling for adolescent males. These concerns overlap between clinical concerns and concerns related to perceived reality. They are identity, hope, meaning and purpose, morality, and autonomy vs. authority. Their relationship is expressed in the Figure 4.2 (adapted from Josephson & Peteet, 2004, p. 48).

Figure 4.2 Josephson and Peteet's overlapping Domains



This diagram is important to consider in that the five concerns listed by these authors all relate significantly to the concept of spirituality for the adolescent male, most notably identity, meaning and purpose.

4.11 Implications of the Catholic tradition

This information is important when looking at implications for an adolescent male in the Catholic tradition as spiritual history and exposure (upbringing and the values of the family) contain important information about the meaning that religious affiliation brings to the adolescents' experiences. The following implications are essential when looking at integrating spirituality into counselling with adolescent males.

Josephson and Peteet (2004, p. 84) argue that when dealing with an adolescent in a counselling situation, a treatment plan should include the following elements: 1) a faith history of how the patient became Catholic, whether he or she is currently a practicing Catholic, and, if not, why; 2) a sacramental history that includes age at baptism and confirmation and the frequency of penance and Eucharist; 3) a family faith history of the religions of the adolescent male's mother and father; 4) a brief prayer history, including types and frequency of prayer; 5) a history of involvement in parish activities, church ministries, and volunteer programs; 6) a statement regarding personal goals in life, source of greatest happiness and perception of life after death; and 7) a review of areas related to morality in general (a 'moral history').

Taking a moral history will help the clinician ascertain whether the young man could benefit from a spiritual consultation with a priest, pastoral counsellor or spiritual director. Examples of patients who could benefit from a spiritual consultation include Catholic patients with depression and anxiety related to adultery, divorce and remarriage, abortion, pornography, gambling, addiction and domestic violence, or other forms of abusive behaviour. Unlike a priest who asks a person to list sins during confession, a clinician who is taking a moral history will ask questions that are more general, for example, are you struggling with a past or present sense of moral failure or weakness at this time? How does this sense relate to your current conflicts? What aspects of your religion have you found helpful during this time? Have you talked with a priest or spiritual director about such problems in the past? Does this person know of your decision to seek medical attention or psychotherapy? Would you be interested in discussing the moral and religious aspects of your problems with a priest?

When they are ill, Catholics often seek the prayers of their pastor and parish and the request may be publicly announced in the context of a religious service. They can also request that a priest conduct the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. Patients with psychiatric conditions tend to be offered more privacy, as priests regard patient confidentiality as similar to their obligation to keep secret what has been told to them in the confessional. Moral failures are regarded as matters between God and the sinner and if parishioners' prayers are requested, the reason for the request is likely to be worded in general terms.

All schools in the study indicated that the Catholic nature of the school was core to its Mission. Catholic clients may present with inappropriately severe feelings of guilt

about what could be a sin and with doubts about whether their confessions are complete enough for forgiveness from God. Some of these clients have a condition known as scrupulosity, a religious form of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Conversely, counsellors may see a religious variant of sociopathy that is marked by an absence of guilt in the presence of serious moral transgression in a person who professes a religious commitment.

Josephson and Peteet (2004, p. 86) also indicate that many clients present with conflicts that involve discord between Catholic teaching and contemporary Western culture. Frequently seen areas of conflict include self-promotion versus self-denial, feelings versus faith and reason, individual autonomy versus the community good, biological versus spiritual explanations for human problems, truth as relative versus truth as absolute, suffering as meaningless versus suffering as redemptive, and sexuality as recreation versus sexuality as interpersonal spousal communion with the potential for creating human life.

4.12 A spiritual process in counselling for adolescent males

One of the most significant struggles for the adolescent male is to establish his identity, negotiating the competing interests of family, friends, school and media. Addressing spirituality in counselling means using various approaches directed at assisting these young men in exploring meaning and purpose in life. As they express their issues and concerns, counsellors must listen actively to themes and narratives that will facilitate the exploration of their choices. Consideration of the spiritual influences in a young man's life will assist the counsellor in understanding him more fully, in

responding to his issues and providing resources and options compatible with his interest and aptitudes.

Following the assessment, Genia (2000) recommends that the counsellor dialogue with the adolescent male, who has a religious commitment, about whether the client would prefer counselling that is secular or religious in its basis. Genia recommends factors be taken into account, including the type of religious issues the young man has (he may have very specific religious concerns best addressed by a religious counsellor) and the amount of disturbance he has (the more disturbed he is the more open the counsellor needs to be for secular counselling).

If the counsellor determines that the young man's religious issues are best addressed by a religious counsellor, then a referral to a religious counsellor would be appropriate and in the best interests of the client. Such a referral may be based on the counsellor's assessment that an expert in this area would be helpful to the client. This approach would involve the same decision-making process for the counsellor used in making an expert referral about any aspect of his life. Some questions the counsellor may ask him or herself in determining if a referral is necessary are:

- Do I believe I lack the necessary information about the religious or spiritual perspective needed to address this concern?
- When I imagine obtaining the information needed to help my client in this area, do I become overwhelmed with my lack of time to obtain such information or my extensive lack of knowledge in this area?
- Is my client's concern so focused that I cannot respond within my area of competence?

If the counsellor's response to any of these questions is affirmative, a referral to a religious or spiritual expert of the client's view may be appropriate.

Referral to a religious or spiritual expert requires knowledge of the various types of training of religious counsellors or leaders in your area. In addition, while religious counsellors and leaders can have a wide variation of counsellor training, they also range on the continuum of conservative to liberal perspectives of their religion. Therefore, the referring counsellor needs to know who the possible referral sources are, the type and amount of counsellor training they have had and their religious perspective. A counsellor may not be able to have knowledge of all of the religious counsellors or leaders available to clients, but by having a professional network, a counsellor may be able, through contacts with colleagues, mental health professional licensure boards and helping professionals, to make these assessments for an appropriate referral (Miller, 2003, p. 172).

The young man's comfort with secular counselling also needs to be examined. The client may be most comfortable with a religious counsellor and the secular counsellor may then need to make a referral. If this is the core basis of the referral, the counsellor would need to inform the client of possible limitations of the referral (without making damaging statements about the other counsellor, but rather talking about possible realistic limitations with regard to training level of the counsellor) and chart this information in the client's file. For example, a client may decide to work with a religious leader or counsellor but the referring counsellor knows that this religious counsellor has limited training in working on the client's specific mental health problems. In this situation, the counsellor could make the referral at the client's request

but inform the client that while the religious concerns may be addressed, the other mental health concerns may not be addressed as extensively.

Another option may be that the client is open to working with the secular counsellor on the mental health concerns and simply be referred to the religious counsellor for a consult of a few sessions. This type of referral may effectively address both areas of concern.

If the counsellor assesses that his or her professional and personal competence is adequate to address the type of religious issues and the amount of client disturbance and the client is comfortable with secular counselling, the counsellor may begin to explore the client's development of a spiritual identity.

4.13 Respect for the young men's spiritual values

In general, religious clients may be concerned about how the counsellor will react to his or her religious views, particularly that their beliefs will be ignored or seen in a negative light (Yarhouse & Van Orman, 1999). In a Catholic school, such as the ones in the study, beliefs of the young men that supported the faith and values approach of the school would not have been problematic in any way. They would still need to be identified, as Haug (1998) suggests counsellors use language that fits with the client's language and is not offensive. In the study, the religious beliefs of the adolescents would have been problematic if their beliefs were contrary to that of the school (that is, too fundamentalist or theologically different). The counsellor would have to distinguish these from various moral issues that the students may have been confronting, such as

abortion or homosexuality, as these would need to be identified as values and not religious beliefs.

Terminology needs to be carefully selected by the counsellor when discussing spirituality and religion with the counsellor being sensitive to both verbal and non-verbal cues of the client that indicate discomfort. Such sensitivity can provide the opportunity for a respectful dialogue between the counsellor and the client that assures the client that the counsellor will not be imposing spiritual or religious values on them.

Chappelle (2000) describes several ways a counsellor may impose values on a client. First, the counsellor may try to shift the client's spiritual or religious values to be more like the counsellor's values. Second, the counsellor may focus on goals that do not fit with the values of the client.

One approach to avoiding the imposition of values in the process of counselling is for the counsellor to examine how he or she looks at the client's religious or spiritual beliefs. Neusner (1994) describes four ways that individuals may look at other religions. A counsellor may use this framework to understand his or her view of the client's religious or spiritual perspective. The first view is the exclusivist where the believer believes that his or her religion is the only true one. The second is the inclusivist where the believer has more of a relativist view that proposes each person's religious beliefs are true for him or her. The third is the pluralist view where every religion is believed to hold some truth. The fourth, which the author recommends in the reading of the text, is the empathetic interest in other people where each religion can teach us about being humans. Counsellors who can employ the empathetic interest in relation to their clients

can communicate a respect for the religious or spiritual beliefs of the client in the sense of how they assist the individual in living in the world as a human being. Such an attitude can communicate a respect for diversity that Birdsall (2001) describes as a critical aspect of counselling.

4.14 Boundaries of the counsellor's work settings

Chappelle (2000) states that counsellors need to consider the setting in which they work when choosing interventions. The setting's response to incorporation of spirituality or religion in counselling may vary due to the school's or network's policy and expectations of the school and wider communities. These various influences, in combination with one another, may affect the comfort level of the counsellor. They also have potential impact on how publicly or directly the counsellor incorporates the exploration of the spiritual domain in counselling. In such a situation, the counsellor may discuss the spiritual or religious area by using 'safe' terminology with the young man, such as discussing resources for hope and meaning in one's life rather than asking directly about spiritual or religious resources available to the client. The counsellor in this context and approach would be acting in the best interests of the client as well as within the bounds of school.

Chappelle (2000) recommends that prior to incorporating any interventions of a spiritual or religious nature in such settings, the counsellor tells both clients and supervisors about the type and purpose of the intervention in a written document. Richards and Bergin (1997) recommend the counsellor obtain permission from the client and the counsellor's supervisor to use specific, explicit spiritual or religious interventions as a part of counselling. The authors stress that these suggestions are

especially important when working with adolescents. Chappelle (2000) adds that when working with individuals such as adolescents or those mentally challenged, the counsellor needs to involve those individuals' guardians in the consent process sensitively.

Mental health professionals have an ethical commitment to being reasonably aware of current professional information in the area in which they work as well as make a commitment to being competent in interventions employed in therapy. To practice outside your competency may not only hurt your client, but also your integrity as a counsellor (Chappelle, 2000). Therefore, counsellors need to use techniques in which they have been trained and should be careful in using techniques with clients who cannot give consent alone, for example, adolescents (Barnett & Fiorentino, 2000). If the counsellor believes he or she would be working outside of their knowledge and training, they need to obtain consultation to continue such work or make referrals to experts. Johnson, Ridley and Nielsen (2000) suggest that counsellors should be educated, trained and experienced in working with issues of religion as well as willing to obtain consultation to most address these concerns effectively if they plan to integrate religious content in counselling.

4.15 Ethical issues in spirituality

All caring professions are concerned to establish and maintain ethical practice among people within the profession. The integrity and standing of the individual practitioner and the profession generally depend upon this. Communities expect professionals to construct and abide by certain standards of conduct. This would appear on the fact of it to be both reasonable and achievable. However, the achievement of

such expectations and standards is far from simple. The concrete circumstances, within which the professional works, are often complex and the issues multifaceted. Decisions are often between difficult alternatives, none of which completely satisfies the ethical ideals of the profession. Principles of practice are sometimes weighed against each other. Often, of course, ethical practice is not determined by the individual alone but is determined through social and group processes with all their political, hierarchical and interpersonal dynamics and dialectics. The social, cultural and historical circumstances within which professionals work also interact dynamically with the events, dilemmas and the people involved. Sometimes the professional's role and function is not contained within their profession alone and so role conflicts emerge.

All of this suggests that within any particular circumstance or dilemma, what is regarded as ethical is a personal, interpersonal and social construction in which an account is created to give expression to the nature of the situation, the choices available and the moral and rational bases upon which certain decisions occurred and actions taken. A defensible, rational narrative is required that takes into account all the available data at the time of the decision.

The application of ethical codes within real life dilemmas represents the struggle between certain possibilities or outcomes. Principles of ethical decision making, on the other hand, point to the processes involved in making decisions. Here, the focus is on how professionals proceed, what principles of process guide behaviours and what steps are involved in reaching a decision. Corey, Corey and Callahan (1997) enunciate the principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice to describe an ethical decision-making model; the steps they suggest for ethical procedure are:

- Identify the problem or dilemma
- Identify the potential issues involved
- Review the relevant ethical guidelines
- Obtain consultation
- Consider possible and probable courses of action
- Enumerate the consequences of various decisions
- Decide on what appears to be the best course. (pp. 9-10)

What is omitted from such a model, of course, is a sense of the social contextual dynamic out of which ethical practice is sculptured by the participants.

It must also be recognised that counsellors who work within organisational or institutional settings are sometimes in conflict over the issues of informed consent and confidentiality. As paid employees, they are under obligation to the employer to provide services for the benefit of the organisation. Sometimes these duties seem to be in conflict with the responsibilities the counsellor has towards the individual client. Indeed, the question is frequently asked, 'Who is the client?' Is it the organisation, the parents, the family, or the person in front of the counsellor? When reports are made for an organisation, what rights of confidentiality may the individual expect to receive? Under existing legislation, what rights of access exist to files, reports and records? What is the counsellor to do when organisational needs and goals conflict with the needs and goals of the individual client?

Sometimes the issues are more subtle. Counsellors are employed in a wide range of settings. Most organisations develop their own philosophical and ideological

perspectives that define the nature of the service provided and the values that are meant to be represented by people working within them. What represents informed consent in such circumstances? Who is the client when the issues raised in counselling challenge a values position of the organisation, or have implications for the structures and processes of the organisation? What represents confidentiality then?

There is a need to recognise that these issues are perceived, experienced and interpreted within social and cultural contexts, that accounts of what ethical practice is in any given circumstance are constructed by the people involved and in interaction with each other. Once again, narratives are told that depict the situation in a particular way.

Finally, for this section, it must be realised that ethics are not remote or just abstract or philosophical; they are embedded in life as it is lived, in the concreteness of everyday life and practice and in the values that guide our action. They are about people, about what it means to be human and about being human in relationship with others. It has been noted that principles of ethical behaviour are not easy to apply in practice, that ethical behaviour is often constructed in the dynamic of social interactions, in the trading-off of one principle against another and in the tension and immediacy of urgent action. Counsellors, however, may address ethical concerns (Bergin, Payne & Richards, 1996) overall by:

- being aware that there is a fine line between exploring the views of a client and being judgmental toward him or her
- obtaining informed consent to discuss the spiritual and religious realm with clients

- obtaining skill or training to work in this area and be aware of your values and those of the client
- observing clear roles and boundaries between counsellors and religious leaders.

Hawkins and Bullock (1995) summarise common aspects of consent forms as having seven areas. These areas address confidentiality, describe the counsellor, explain financial guidelines for therapy, provide emergency information, describe therapy, provide information on termination, consultation and supervision and state possible referral and treatment options. They state that describing the counsellor, describing the therapy and stating possible referral and treatment options can be especially applied to work with religious clients.

4.16 Conclusion to chapter

This chapter has explored the very close relationship between spirituality and counselling. It has developed the argument that spirituality can be integrated into counselling of young men, especially during the adolescent stage of their lives. This argument has been developed by looking at the psychology of religion and the significant distinctions that are now being made between religion and spirituality and the growing interest in spirituality, as well as looking at how healthy spirituality can be easily used in psychotherapeutic interventions for young men who are open to it and have a sense of their own developing identity. The chapter also addressed issues of dual relationships and issues related to the importance of counsellor-client boundaries, mutual respect and non-client boundaries, mutual respect and non-exploitative behaviour, the importance of supervision and the relevance of personal counselling for counsellors in the development of ethical practice were highlighted.

The literature review would confirm that there is an indisputable strong connection between counselling and spirituality for the adolescent male. This has its foundation in developmental theory and is crucial for the adolescent male when determining identity. The implications of this connection need to be clearly understood by people who are privileged to work with such clientele in assisting them in articulating their identity and assisting them in their spiritual journey.

The next chapter will examine the research methodology used and explain why it was chosen. It will also explore ethical issues in both the quantitative and qualitative research components that were chosen and why the two were combined. It will also look at the issue of insider research, as this was something that was relevant to this study.

Chapter 5

Research Design and Methodology

Critical research can best be understood in the context of the empowerment of the individual. Inquiry that aspires to name the critical must be connected to an attempt to confront the injustice of a particular society or sphere within society. Research thus becomes a transformative endeavour, unembarrassed by the label 'political' and unafraid to consummate a relationship with an emancipatory consciousness. (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 140)

5.1 Introduction to research methodology

This chapter will briefly examine the network of the schools that were used in the study, then justify the selection of a critical research methodology and a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. It will also examine the ethical considerations involved in the research, limitations to the study and issues around validity.

All schools visited for this study were Catholic schools and would indicate that the Catholicity of the school was equal in priority in terms of achievements of the school with other pursuits such as academic, cultural or sporting. Even though they were diverse in terms of geographic location and socioeconomic clientele, they all would indicate that belonging to the universal Catholic Church was a unifying factor for all Catholic schools. The fact that the schools were also Catholic schools in the Edmund

Rice Tradition (Christian Brothers schools) meant that they have even more in common as they shared the Charism of Edmund Rice and were all founded by the same religious congregation. The most observable similarity is the Charter of values shared by all the schools.

Counsellors, principals and male senior students from the following schools were asked to participate:

- country day boys' secondary school – Ignatius Park Townsville
- country boarding boys' secondary school – St Brendan's Yeppoon
- city day boys' secondary school – Gregory Terrace
- city boarding boys' secondary school – Nudgee College
- regional day boys' secondary school – St Patrick's College Shornecliffe

The following map (Figure 5.1) gives the location of each school.

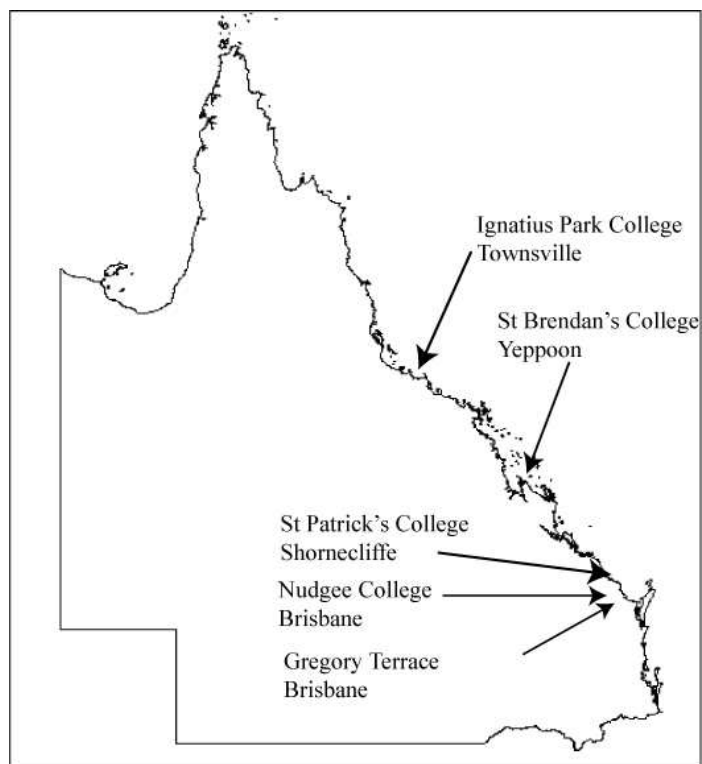


Figure 5.1 Map of Queensland

Of the five schools that were involved in the study, three are located in the city of Brisbane, which is the capital of Queensland and has a population of approximately four million. One school is located in Yeppoon, which is a small country town in Central Queensland just east of Rockhampton, and one school is located in Townsville, a city in the north of the state. A full description of each school follows.

St Brendan's College is located in Yeppoon (Central Queensland) and provides day and boarding school facilities to families all over Queensland but most notably Rockhampton and surrounding properties. It currently has 556 pupils of which 318 are boarders. The students are currently 58 percent Catholic and the school has an Indigenous population of 54. The school's boarding numbers have remained constant despite the drought, which has significantly affected rural Queensland, a major provider of boarders for St Brendan's. It was the last school in the system to have a Christian Brother as principal (in 2003). St Brendan's Mission statement is:

St. Brendan's attempts to foster faith development through the living of gospel values, working to develop right relationships, by acting justly and loving tenderly. The focus of our mission is the formation of youth by working together to develop the whole person and seeking to ensure that each member of the Brendan's Family is known, loved and respected.

The charism of Edmund Rice calls this community to solidarity with the poor and marginalized. We attempt to live out this calling in a special way by providing for isolated and needy students in a stable, caring environment and fostering in them a relationship with God and giving them a sense of hope and

confidence. We endeavour to help the members of our community make a difference, especially through real action to build a just world.

St. Brendan's College aims to fulfil its calling to develop the whole person by adopting a flexible and varied curriculum that is relevant to a changing society. Our aim is to give every opportunity for individuals to develop their gifts in the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and physical dimensions of life. We continually seek to renew our understanding of our roles in teaching and learning to improve ourselves, our children and our students. (St Brendan's College, n.d.)

Ignatius Park College is located in Townsville and provides day school facilities to families in that city. It currently has 775 students of whom 42 are Indigenous. Sixty one percent of the students are Catholic. The school's population has increased significantly over the last ten years and it provides a balance between a selection of academic subjects and subjects that are vocational in orientation. The Ignatius Park College Mission Statement is:

Ignatius Park College is a reflective community that encourages its members to seek truth through the spirit of Edmund Rice by nurturing right relationships and respecting the dignity of each person. In partnership with families and the wider community, we strive to promote a learning community that actively encourages excellence in teaching and learning within an inclusive curriculum framework based on Gospel values. (Ignatius Park College Townsville, 2002)

St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace is located in the centre of Brisbane and provides day school education to families all over Brisbane. It currently has 1226 students and is 99 percent Catholic. It has extensive waiting lists to gain entry into the college in all year levels. The school provides a very academic curriculum and is well known for very good academic results. Its students would come from middle and upper middle socioeconomic groups and has no Indigenous students. The Gregory Terrace Mission Statement is:

We, the students, parents and staff of St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace, form a community centred on the Gospel of Jesus, inspired by the charism of Edmund Rice, and enriched by all those who form 'The Terrace Family.'

In community, we seek excellence in Teaching and Learning, with a commitment to curriculum, renewal and academic challenge. In community, we seek to instil a spirit of service and Catholic values. We seek to recognise the dignity of the person, the nurturing of right relationships and a strong and principled commitment to the poor and marginalised. In community we commit our energies to forming young men of faith and learning who will make a difference. (St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace, 2006)

St Joseph's Nudgee College is located in the northern suburbs of Brisbane and provides day and boarding facilities to international students and students from all over Queensland. It currently has 1320 students of which 287 are boarders. It is 78 percent Catholic and has 33 Indigenous students. It provides a combination of academic and vocational subjects and has a very strong commitment to sport. The Nudgee College Mission Statement is:

We are members of the Nudgee College Family, founded by the Christian Brothers to provide a balanced education for the development of the whole person. Faithful to the dream of Edmund Rice, we hold a special concern to act justly and with compassion, especially towards those most in need. Our College Family is based on a century of Catholic faith, residential care, the service of others, loyalty and friendship.

In Jesus our brother, we are determined in our struggle to uphold, communicate and nurture the values of the Gospel. We work together to create an environment where every person is respected and each student is encouraged to strive in the academic, spiritual, social, personal, cultural, and sporting aspects of life. Our goal is that each member of our family will become for the world, a Sign of Faith: *Signum Fidei*. (St Joseph's College Nudgee, n.d)

St Patrick's College Shorncliffe is located on the northern suburbs of Brisbane and provides day schooling to families on the north side of Brisbane and the Northern Peninsular. It currently has 907 students of whom 71 percent are Catholic. It has 21 Indigenous students. St Patrick's has gone through a stage of considerable expansion, both in its numbers and its facilities, in recent times. It provides both academic and vocational subjects and enjoys very strong local community support. The St Patrick's Mission statement is:

Inspired by the Creator and embracing the vision of Edmund Rice, St Patrick's College commits itself to Christian Education in the Catholic tradition. We seek excellence in teaching and learning and endeavour to nurture the gifts of each

individual in a caring and inclusive community. We look to the future with hope and strive to make a difference. (St Patrick's Shorncliff, n.d.)

All schools that took part in the study are Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition. They were conducted by the Trustees of the Christian Brothers Queensland. There are fourteen in Queensland and the network is system-funded (that is, funded as a group) and receives approximately 52 percent of its income from the Commonwealth government, 22 percent from the state government and the rest from private income, which is mainly made up of fees. The system of schools has both a network Mission statement called The Charter and individual mission statements.

The design of any study begins with the selection of a topic and a research methodology. These initial decisions reflect assumptions about the social world, how science should be conducted, and what constitutes legitimate problems, solutions and criteria of 'proof' (Neuman, 2000). Different approaches to research encompass both theory and method. Critical research methodology was chosen that combines two general approaches quantitative research and qualitative research.

Critical research can be best understood in the empowerment of the individuals. It was chosen because transformative practises in the field of spirituality and Counselling were seen as being important. The transforming of social relations within a school community was evident as was the need for an emancipatory consciousness for people involved in the study. Critical research was appropriate for this study as social change is not always obvious as social reality as many layers. Critical research was able to address issues of potential conflict such as the relationship between spirituality and religion in a confronting yet respectful manner.

Both quantitative and qualitative research use systematic and careful methods to gather high quality data. Two important processes in both are conceptualisation and operationalisation in measurement. Conceptualisation is the process of taking a construct and refining it by giving a conceptual or theoretical definition. A conceptual definition is a definition in abstract theoretical terms.

Quantitative research is an inquiry into an identified problem, based on testing a theory, measured with numbers and analysed using statistical techniques. The goal of quantitative methods is to determine whether the predictive generalisations of a theory hold true.

The measurement process for quantitative research is a straightforward sequence; first conceptualisation then operationalisation followed by applying the operational definition or measuring to collect the data. Quantitative researchers develop several ways to think about rigorously linking abstract ideas to measurement procedures that will produce precise quantitative information about empirical reality (Neuman 2000)

A study based upon a qualitative process of inquiry has the goal of understanding a social or human problem from multiple perspectives. Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and involves a process of building a complex and holistic picture of the phenomenon of interest

Qualitative research analyses data by organising it into categories on the basis of themes concepts or similar features. Both approaches were useful in the collecting of data

The selection of which research approach is appropriate in a given study should be based upon the problem of interest, resources available, the skills and training of the researcher and the audience for the research. Although some research may incorporate both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, in their 'pure' form there are significant differences in the assumptions underlying these approaches, as well as in the data collection and analysis procedures used.

Richards and Bergin (1997) name the limitations of both qualitative and quantitative research that could apply to this study. In terms of qualitative issues, the major limitation is limited generalisability as it is difficult to measure and document outcomes and the amount of change is not quantifiable (p. 223) whilst in terms of quantitative limitations, the main issue is limited external validity and it cannot establish causal relationships (pp. 329-330). When looking at the limitations of both research methodologies, the case to combine them is strengthened.

It is important to be able to identify and understand the research approach underlying any given study because the selection of a research approach influences the questions asked, the methods chosen, the statistical analyses used, the inferences made and the ultimate goal of the research.

When critically reviewing scientific research, the questions asked, and the answers given, will differ depending upon whether the search is quantitative or qualitative.

5.2 Combining qualitative and quantitative research for this study

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) see qualitative research as a process that is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. This is ideal and essential when conducting research with school children. The fact that they are being interviewed in their own school environment adds authenticity to their responses. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. This was evident in the individual interviews and the focus group interviews. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand.

One of the most significant reasons for choosing qualitative research as one of the methodologies for this project is that the word 'qualitative' implies an emphasis on processes and meanings. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints that shape inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Such researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasise the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes.

Quantitative research is also valuable, especially when dealing with discreet data (Patton, 2002). The collection of such data was also important to the study as it provided an opportunity to look at measurable outcomes from within school communities and across the network of schools. Quantitative research uses methods adopted from the physical sciences that are designed to ensure objectivity and reliability. These techniques cover the ways research participants are selected randomly from the study population in an unbiased manner, the standardised questionnaire or intervention they receive and the statistical methods used to test predetermined hypotheses regarding the relationships between specific variables. The researcher is considered external to the actual research and results are expected to be replicable no matter who conducts the research. All of these above-mentioned factors were a part of the research process (Patton, 2002).

One of the strengths of the quantitative paradigm is that its methods produce quantifiable, reliable data that are usually generalisable to some larger population (Neuman, 2000). This is an important consideration as the results of the five schools researched will be able to be applied to the 31 mainstream Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition. This reliability (Patton, 2002) is achieved by:

- stating the research problem in very specific and set terms
- clearly and precisely specifying both the independent and the dependent variables under investigation
- following firmly the original set of research goals, arriving at more objective conclusions, testing hypothesis, determining the issues of causality
- achieving high levels of reliability of gathered data due to controlled observations (the interviews) and surveys

- eliminating or minimising subjectivity of judgment
- allowing for longitudinal measures of subsequent performance of research subjects.

The choice to use qualitative and quantitative research for this project was consistent with the findings of Denzin and Lincoln (1998, p. 516) as the qualitative research in the project was demonstrated by the use of first-person accounts, life histories and biographical and autobiographical materials, whilst quantitative research was evident by the use of surveys and statistical tables. It was apparent in the study that the quantitative research verified the claim of Silverman (2000) that “instrumentation and quantification are simply procedures employed to extend and reinforce certain kinds of data, interpretations and test hypotheses across samples. Both must be kept in their place. One must avoid their premature overly extensive use as a security mechanism.” (p. 220)

5.3 Integrating qualitative and quantitative research on spirituality

A relatively small number of qualitative studies have been carried out on religious and spiritual issues in mental health and psychotherapy, although a growing number of them that have been done in recent years (Chamberlain, Richards & Scharman, 1996; Preece, 1994; Scharman, 1994).

Richards and Bergin (1997, p. 327) indicate that, like the rest of the behavioural sciences, spirituality research has relied on quantitative methods almost exclusively (Slife, Hope & Nebeker, 1996; Worthington, Kurusu, McCulloch & Sandage, 1996). This seems unfortunate because such methods may, to some extent, limit and distort the

understanding of spiritual phenomena (Slife et al., 1996). Quantitative research has provided considerable insight into clients' symptoms and behaviours and therapeutic processes and outcomes but it has not provided much insight into clients' inner, subjective worlds. It could be possible that this is where qualitative strategies will contribute the most to a spiritual strategy and to mainstream psychology and psychotherapy. Such strategies will help researchers better understand clients' inner worlds, or 'lived experience', thereby enabling them to understand and empathise with clients more fully.

Combining qualitative and quantitative research holds considerable promise for helping researchers gain more in-depth and richer insight into clients' religious and spiritual perceptions, experiences, understandings, feelings, beliefs, values, desires and practices and how their spirituality is intertwined with their emotions and behaviour. These strategies also hold promise for yielding considerable insight into the spiritual nature and processes of therapeutic change and healing, as viewed from the perspectives of clients and therapists. Biographical and case study strategies have been used for a long time in psychology and psychotherapy (Smith, 1994) and have considerable potential for providing insight into religious and spiritual development and functioning over the life span and during therapy.

Richards and Bergin (1997, p. 223) indicate that spirituality is now recognised as an authentic area of research as indicated by the fact that various frameworks are now established to ensure that the essence of a spiritual approach is never lost. Quantitative designs on spirituality counselling were used for this study as they are good for addressing causal questions about the relationship between religiosity and therapy

outcomes and processes; good for describing the self-reported religious and spiritual characteristics, beliefs and behaviours of a population; good for exploring associations among religious and mental health variables when experimental manipulation of variables is not possible and they can demonstrate treatment effects and difference between various spiritual therapy approaches and between spiritual and secular approaches (Richards & Bergin, 1997).

When looking at the type of research questions, quantitative questions were good for describing therapists' and clients' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (for example, clients' religious beliefs and practices), understanding the relationship between variables (for example, what is the relationship between religious devoutness and various indicators or mental health) and, in terms of this study, asking the key questions 'Are spiritual treatment approaches effective?' and 'Which spiritual treatments are most effective with what clients and problems?' (Richards & Bergin, 1997, p. 223). This approach was also consistent with the concept of interviewing each student individually.

As stated earlier, quantitative research, especially in the area of this study, can be enhanced significantly by qualitative research. Richards and Bergin (1997, pp. 329-330) also put together a qualitative framework for study of spirituality. The major advantages they quote are that they can provide rich insight into how religious and spiritual beliefs and practices affect human development, emotional functioning and social relationships; can provide rich insight into clients' religious and spiritual issues, the process and course of treatment and the perceived effects of specific spiritual interventions and they can provides rich detailed description and insight into the

religious and spiritual values, beliefs and practices of clients, therapists and therapeutic groups and communities.

In this study, a number of advantages of applying both quantitative and qualitative methods were observed. Quantitative methods ensured high levels of reliability of gathered data. Qualitative methods allowed for obtaining more in-depth information about how the students perceive the importance of spirituality in their lives and how they can be related to a counselling process. The use of different research methods allowed building on the strengths of each method and minimising their weaknesses. The weaknesses of the quantitative method, such as failure to provide information about the context of the situation, inability to control the environment and pre-determined outcomes, were compensated for by interaction with the research participants during interviews, learning about the context and uncovering new research themes.

The weaknesses of the qualitative method, limited generalisability, excessive subjectivity of judgment and high requirements for the experience level of the researcher, were compensated by clearly stating the research problem, crosschecking with the results of the statistical analyses and strong theoretical foundation of the research.

This helped to ensure high reliability of data, understanding the contextual aspects of the research, flexibility and openness of the data collection and a more holistic interpretation of the research problem.

Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 40) put forward a model on how to successfully integrate both research methodologies. This was achieved in the study as qualitative components were used in the early stages, as the researcher did not have a clear idea of what outcomes would be presented. This was done by the qualitative technique used in the early stages of the Delphi techniques when working with the expert panel. This allowed the design of the study to emerge. Quantitative components were then successfully used by way of a survey with students, counsellors and principals to collect data that was more efficient and able to be tested as hypotheses. The qualitative component, as the second part of the research component for each individual (the interview), compensated for any contextual detail that may have been overlooked by the quantitative analysis, although the quantitative component allowed the researcher to remain objectively separated from the subject matter.

5.4 Ethical issues

When looking specifically at ethical issues surrounding the use of qualitative research, Holbrook (1997) states:

In any research endeavour, researchers are expected to employ high standards of academic rigour, and to behave with honesty and integrity. By its very nature, qualitative research is immersed in a messy, chaotic reality of on-the-spot personal interaction, sensitivity and experience. (p. 49)

Rather than the objectivity and distance, which characterise the more positivistic approaches, qualitative research brings with it a greater likelihood that ethical issues, such as those associated with informed consent and confidentiality, will arise. Some difficulties emerge precisely because a high level of rapport, so essential for many

aspects of qualitative research, has been established between investigator and participant. That which is required for the research to be valid can also be the catalyst for a complex array of highly charged interpersonal issues to emerge.

There has been little discussion of the ethics of educational research until comparatively recently. Bibby (1997) indicates that the reasons put forward for this include the fact that educational research more often involves reporting existing conditions rather than aggressively experimental work; failed experiments rarely result in death or disfigurement as might be the case with medical research; and educational harm can usually be reversed, unlike some medical consequences.

It must be realised, however, that broad principles that guide research have been established. Central to these principles are maintenance of high ethical standards and validity and accuracy in the collection and reporting of data. The responsibility of the research community to the public and to itself is acknowledged. This responsibility is particularly important where professional practice or public policy may be defined or modified in the light of research findings.

Another ethical issue, here, is that of insider research. This involved the concept of dual roles. In this situation, the researcher is also a Trustee and Province Leadership Team member for the group of schools involved. The researcher is also an ex-principal of one of the schools and his twin brother is now the principal of that school. Research by Hodkinson (2005) indicates that “the position of insider research may offer significant potential benefits in terms of practical issues such as access and rapport” (p. 146). This was definitely the case in this study.

All of these issues were raised at the schools' *Leadership Forum for Edmund Rice Schools* at it was felt that if clear and concise guidelines were articulated to all involved in the research, so to ensure that the multiple roles were clarified, and that all information gained by research would only be used for the research project, then the quality of the research would not be compromised. These guidelines included details that the recruitment of the participants was the responsibility of the school. Full contact details on the Information Letter for Participants (see Appendix D) were provided including names and numbers of the James Cook University Ethics Committee should any participant or parent have cause to question anything and a statement in the information sheet and Informed Consent forms (see Appendices E (principals and counsellors) and F (students)) that participants may withdraw from the study at any time.

It should also be noted that all consent forms were signed by appropriate people, collected and kept on file and that at no time was there a departure from the approved protocols of the university. Also, in compliance with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans 1999, an annual report on the progress and conduct of the project, including the detailed compliance with approvals granted and any unexpected events or serious adverse effects that may have occurred during the study, was presented. There were no unexpected events or serious adverse effects during the course of this research.

Whilst the insider role was advantageous in terms of negotiating access to students with gatekeepers, it was understood that the two roles are very different and they both need to be treated as such.

Hodkinson (2005) also maintains that in areas that studied youth in respect to identity, the insider research concept could be helpful as “contemporary young people’s identities are dominated by unstable individualised cultural trajectories that cross cut a variety of different groups rather than attaching themselves to any in particular” (p. 133). This situation was obvious in this study as, even though the students being researched had the school in common, in terms of all belonging to one community, the outside influences that went past the school gate were considerable. The advantage of insider research is accentuated in this situation when research is focused upon a distinct and committed group to which all respondents belong.

Also, when looking at issues around insider research, it must be realised that the challenge for the researcher is to sometimes see the “familiar things as strange” (Hodkinson, 2005, p. 145). The fact that I had been out of mainstream school ministry for an extended period of time and was now dealing with issues significantly different from the issues in the study did assist this. Hodkinson also articulates the need for the inside researcher to utilise their personal experience but not be confined by it. Due to my many visits to each school community, I was able to maximise the advantage of sharing with respondents an internalised language and range of experiences without compromising the integrity of the findings.

A possible disadvantage of insider research is the possibility that if the researcher was known by reputation or position to the respondents then they may not feel as if they could speak freely or respond openly. This situation was avoided by using both qualitative and quantitative research techniques and by using individual and group interviews. Confidentiality for the students was maintained for all the students by using a coding system, although this was not the case for principals and counsellors due to the small numbers in each of these categories. Both groups expressed comfort with this situation.

Another possible danger of insider research is over-familiarisation with the researcher leading to respondents not taking the research seriously. I did not know any of the student respondents personally, thus avoiding this situation and I had worked with all the adults successfully in many professional situations prior to this.

Even though the issue of dual role was identified at the commencement of the study, it cannot be ignored in terms of relevance. The main affect of the dual role (researcher and trustee outside of concerns around insider research that have already been addressed) would have been that it led to maximum co-operation from, and access to, school communities. It could also be argued that students were very keen to please and may not have been very honest in their response. This was minimised by the anonymous nature of the survey and the coding system that ensured that people from the school would not be able to find out individual results.

Finally, when looking at the ethics of qualitative research, the use of morality needs to be addressed. Bibby (1997) contends that few researchers have a clear understanding of both research methodology and the moral argument or theory which

should guide decision making processes when confronted with ethical dilemmas. It is important that researchers consider different moral arguments as part of their training and reflect on what is acceptable behaviour before beginning a research career.

Moral theories (Bibby 1997) fall largely into three groups:

- consequential theories which state that what is good or bad can be determined by looking at the consequences of proposed actions
- deontological theories which expound the view that there are some duties which are absolute or obligatory despite the consequences; therefore there can be no justification whatever for deceit to be used – it is always wrong because it fails to respect the individual's right to make up his or her own mind about what should be done. This model strongly supports the rights of individuals or small groups against the interest of the majority or powerful groups
- Aristotelian theories which are similar to deontological theories. No action may be regarded as good if it is opposed to what most people would regard as good and proper. Thus lying, which is contrary to what most people would regard as proper behaviour, is always wrong.

Unfortunately, few guidelines can be universally applicable. There is even debate (Miller, 2003) about whether it is possible to determine fundamental moral principles that should guide behaviour in all circumstances. Nevertheless, prospective researchers need to consider theories such as those briefly outlined, even if it is only to raise awareness of the complex issues which can arise when attempting to interpret individual realities. Codes of ethics can only operate as a guide. There are no real solutions but a great need for researchers to reflect on their work regularly to develop

their understanding of the ethical implications associated with social and educational investigations.

Many researchers have been quick to claim that long-term benefits will arise from the greater understanding that may be derived from research and that this justifies short-term discomfort or anxiety on the part of some participants. Yet, the effects, short or long-term, that research may have on the emotional well-being of participants must always be at the forefront of our consciousness as we struggle to make the day-to-day decisions that guide the qualitative researcher in the field.

The students involved in this study indicated that they enjoyed participating in all areas of the process. Individual interviews were conducted in air-conditioned rooms that were semi-public so that, whilst student responses could not be heard, the interviewer was never in a very private situation with a student. Students were given the option of rescheduling their interview if they felt that another priority existed for them in the school.

The focus groups were always lively and students felt comfortable in putting forward and debating alternate points of view. No students withdrew from the process, even though it was made very clear that they could do so at any stage. Providing lunch for the group on the last day did create a sense of people working together and students were encouraged to talk about the research project with parents, friends and teachers. Feedback during the formal sessions from principals and counsellors indicated how important they saw the project. All principals were very pleased with the way the project was run and could suggest no changes should the project be repeated. This was

in part due to the 'Delphi Technique', which encouraged the participation of the counsellors and principals in establishing the process that would ultimately be used.

It must be realised that, when looking at a study that involves psychotherapeutic research as does this one, then various ethical issues need to be addressed, especially when looking at the design, construction and conducting of research and the involvement of young people below the age of eighteen.

An important issue for this project was informed consent. This can be defined as the participant's assent to being involved in a research study after having received full information about the procedures and their associated risks and benefits (Corey, Corey & Callahan, 1997).

The American Counselling Association (ACA) (1995) provides this guideline on informed consent with research participants:

Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate, without undue inducement to participate, and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy and dignity. The informed consent form used included information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research. (G.1.e.)

Informed consent was important in the study for a variety of reasons; it protected the students autonomy by allowing them to make decisions about matters that directly concerned them, it guaranteed that the participants were exposed to certain risks only if they agreed to them, it decreased the possibility of an adverse public reaction to experimenting with human subjects, and it helped the researcher scrutinise the designs for inherent risks.

An important obligation of practitioners in the various mental-health professions is to maintain the confidentiality of their relationships with their clients. This obligation is not absolute, however, and practitioners must develop a sense of professional ethics for determining when the confidentiality of the relationship should be broken. Confidentiality, privileged communication and privacy are related concepts but there are important distinctions among them. This was relevant to this study as all participants were told that responses would be treated with confidentiality except if the researcher discovered that one of the students was going to be involved in self-harm or the harm of others.

Another important consideration for this project was that 59 out of the 64 participants were under 18 years of age and considered minors. Minors are not always able to give informed consent. On this matter, the guidelines provided by the ACA (1995) are “when persons are legally incapable of giving informed consent, psychologists obtain informed permission from a legally authorised person, if such substitute consent is permitted by law” (p. 6).

The ACA (1995) Code of Ethics guideline suggests including family members in a minor's counselling, if appropriate, "when counselling clients who are minors or individuals who are unable to give voluntary, informed consent, parents or guardians may be included in the counselling process as appropriate. Counsellors act in the best interest of clients and take measures to safe guard confidentiality" (p. 6). As it was done within the context of a secondary school, it was decided that all students would have consent forms signed by a parent. This happened in all but one case when an 18 year old student, who was living independently, signed his own consent form.

For this research project, a consent form was used. It entailed the following:

- a description of who I am and my experience in educational leadership and counselling
- the fact that this project was a part of a PhD from James Cook University
- what was required by the student should they commit themselves to the project
- all the issues around confidentiality
- what the information that was gained from the research would be used for
- advice that the student may withdraw from the project at any time.

All students, counsellors and principals returned the consent form and no one withdrew from the study.

5.5 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study can be grouped into four broad categories; methodological, statistical, administrative and dual role.

There are a number of methodological limitations to this study. These can be categorised as being as a result of qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis or the attempt to combine the two. It should be noted that the sample of schools chosen was considered to be representative of Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition in Queensland and the students selected from each of the schools were considered representative of that particular school

There were a number of statistical limitations to the study. Firstly, correlation analyses cannot be 100 percent accurate in inferring causality. The quantitative results of this study are generalised only to Queensland, thus making interpretations limited for any school outside the state and even more limited to non-Catholic schools anywhere.

Their worth will be assessed by replication and reference to similar studies. (Good, 1992, p. 109) would argue that, in such a study, the conducting of a replication study examining the influence of background would be worthwhile in checking original results. This would be especially relevant for the religious tradition and upbringing of the students involved and any culturally relevant points.

Whilst administrative issues appeared relatively minor, they did exist. The ethical requirements of James Cook University in dealing with students under the age of 18 years were followed meticulously. Timetabling issues were also present which meant that, though a significant majority of the students attended the group focus sessions held each lunchtime, there was not 100 percent attendance at any school. The documented unavailability of two principals at the time the study was conducted in their school was another issue, although it would not influence the results of the study as they were never

involved with the student cohort either in terms of individual interviews or focus groups.

In terms of dual role, dual relationships or multiple relationships often exist in schools and can pose problems for the counsellor and young men. A counsellor may have a number of professional roles (counsellor, expert witness, evaluator) with the young person or a combination of professional and personal roles with him (family, social, friendship, business) that may occur at the same time or follow one another in time (Sonne, 1999). Specifically in the school context, some counsellors may also be sports coaches, teachers or administrators.

Sonne states that multiple relationships cause problems when three dynamics of the counselling relationship are negatively impacted. These three dynamics are the relationship and role expectations of the counsellor and client (for example, the welfare of the client), the emotional relationship between the counsellor and the client and the unequal power in the counselling relationship. Therefore, when the relationships and role expectations are blurred or conflicted, the client can experience emotional struggles or harm or the multiple relationships can result in the counsellor having his or her own needs met because of the unequal power. In terms of the adolescent males in the study, dual relationships could be an issue in terms of the counsellor fulfilling other roles in the school such as teacher, sports coach, choir conductor or a leadership position within the school.

With respect to dual or multiple relationships, Miller (2003) advocates having as few roles as possible with a client. The author recommends a list of questions a

counsellor can ask himself or herself in an attempt to clarify the relationships with the client:

1. What are my different roles with this client?
2. Are these roles in conflict or potentially hurtful to my client?
3. What are the fewest roles I can have with this client?
4. What is the most important role I need to have with my client?
5. Am I trying to have any of my own needs met in this (these) roles with my client?
6. Who else can meet the needs of my client with regard to this (these) roles?
7. Do I need to refer my client to another counsellor?
8. Is collegial consultation necessary to clarify my roles with this client?
9. Am I counselling someone I am too close to personally? (Miller, 2003, p. 175)

Dual or multiple relationships can emerge in a unique fashion with regard to the spiritual or religious arena. First, a counsellor cannot effectively be a client's religious leader and counsellor. This is significant in the school setting, as schools can be hierarchical in nature. If the counsellor was a sports coach, teacher, catechist or school leader then the counselling is limited to spiritual and religious concerns.

Second, Richards and Bergin (1997) also state that dual relationships can occur for the counsellor who does not have a religious position but is involved in the same religious or spiritual community. Here, the dangers include client avoidance of the spiritual community because of what the counsellor knows about the client's life, accidental violation of confidentiality and clients raising concerns about counselling in

the community setting. The authors state that if a counsellor does provide counselling in this context, the counsellor should consult with a supervisor or colleague as to whether this action is in the best interests of the client (having consultation on an ongoing basis until the counselling is terminated) and set up boundaries that are explained to the young man.

If a counsellor is open to a particular spiritual or religious perspective, naturally the counsellor may have more of a knowledge base on the perspective regarding information or contacts that can be given to a client. If a counsellor is neutral toward a spiritual or religious perspective, the issue may be more of a practical one of taking the time or energy to find out information or contacts to assist the young man. However, if a counsellor has personally or professionally obtained information about a spiritual or religious perspective that runs counter to the counsellor's values, the counsellor needs to carefully sort out biases against this perspective because of their potential negative impact on his welfare.

Negative biases may play themselves out directly or indirectly in counselling sessions. Directly, a counsellor may make derogatory comments about a client's religious leader. Chappelle (2000) states that undermining a client's religious leader in general is unethical. In addition, the author points out that if a counsellor makes such statements to clients, clients may be hurt by what the counsellor says because they respect their religious leaders. Being a Christian Brother, I may have been seen as a religious leader.

Indirectly, these biases against a religion or religious leader may also emerge. In an indirect fashion of underestimating the impact of religious leaders on clients' lives, counsellors may not consider networking with religious leaders for the welfare of their clients or may be biased against such networking. However, a component of professional responsibility involves consultation and referrals to others, which includes religious leaders (Yarhouse & Van Orman, 1999). Counsellors who have relationships with spiritual leaders may be able to enhance the welfare of their clients by turning to these leaders for support, consultation and referral purposes (Barnett & Fiorentino, 2000). Such networking may increase knowledge of, and access to, community resources that can be helpful to the client.

The issue of the dual role was not an issue for the students as they would not have been aware of my role on the Province Leadership Team and the duties contained therein. The issue of the dual role was dealt with by the principals and counsellors during the early stages of the Delphi Process. Here it was ensured that my role, and the way I conducted the process, was consistent with being a researcher only.

5.6 Validity of the research project

Whilst validity is an issue for both qualitative and quantitative research, it becomes more prominent in quantitative research due to its nature (Silverman, 1993).

Validity relates to the theoretical aspects of the measurement process and how these aspects connect with the empirical data. It refers to the extent to which an empirical indicant measures what it purports to measure (Zellar, 1988). For quantitative research, internal validity refers to the extent to which the observed effect be attributed

to the treatment or independent variable of interest, rather than to extraneous sources, so that comparisons can be produced that are free from bias (Glass & Stanley, 1970).

External validity is the extent to which the results of the research are generally applicable to other situations (Dorman, 2001).

Both types of validity are needed in good research design. Validity in quantitative research depends on careful instrument construction to ensure that the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Yeo, 2002). The three step approach that saw five principals and six counsellors involved in the construction of the instrument ensured validity. Internal validity can be improved by having extensive control of variables (Yeo, 2002.) This was achieved by working closely with the principals who did have an opportunity to get together and discuss the project as a group at a schools leadership forum meeting. The counsellors also did this at their network meeting. These two meetings and the input of the researcher ensured a consistent approach at all schools. Although an internally valid research project may or may not be externally valid, research that lacks internal validity cannot be externally valid. Consequently, the assurance of internal validity was of major importance for this study.

Campbell and Stanley (1963) and Keeves (1998) have identified a number of threats to the internal validity of research projects that, in any way, use quantitative data. They include history; maturation; statistical regression; testing; selection, maturation and interaction; differential selection; instrumentation; subject attrition. The only one of these that may have been issue was differential selection.

Differential selection refers to the question of whether the process of selecting the subject has influenced the findings (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). This may occur when pre-formed groups are used and those groups were different before the study began. This could result in groups responding differently to a truly representative group, thus reducing internal validity.

In this study, the selection of schools and students was governed by two factors. First, the ethics of conducting any research requires that the participants are willing to be involved in the research project. That is, all the participants surveyed were volunteers. Second, it was considered important that the sample of schools chosen be a representative cross-section of various Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition. As far as possible, a cross section of school types was achieved through random selection. This was achieved by presenting the project to the Edmund Rice Schools Leadership Forum (February, 2005) and asking the group to provide feedback. To be fully representational, country and city schools were selected, as were boarding and day schools and a cross-section of socioeconomic groups.

Although the participants were volunteers and their selection was dependent upon satisfying certain criteria, great care was taken to ensure that the sample was representative of the population to diminish any threats to the internal validity of the study. This was achieved by discussing the list of potential participants with the counsellor in each school. Each school was able to provide students from vastly different backgrounds that included school leaders and students who were perceived as having behavioural problems as well as Catholic and non-Catholic students and students

from various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and a variety of home situations, such as single parent families.

Instrumentation refers to the unreliability or lack of consistency in the measuring instruments used (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). If instruments are unreliable or poorly developed, there is the potential to introduce serious errors into the study.

This issue in the study was addressed in the following way. First, the following of the Delphi Technique ensured a consistent and proven method to develop the instrument and the administration of the instrument was carried out by the researcher.

Second, consistent instructions were given to all participants at the time of administering the instrument. These instructions are listed on the research instrument (see Appendix G). Third, students were informed that the results were confidential to the researcher. Fourth, students were told that there were no right or wrong answers. Although instrumentation has the potential to adversely affect the internal validity of the study, sufficient guidelines and attention were given to the design, validation and administration of the instrument in the present study in order to diminish any impact on the internal validity of the study.

Subject attrition refers to the possible loss of participants during the course of the study (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). This may result in misrepresented results that are due to extraneous variables other than those of the study. In the present study, as the student questionnaires were answered over a short period, there was no serious threat to subject attrition. A possible threat to attrition was that some students, due to language

difficulties or academic difficulties, might have vocabulary difficulties and become fatigued during the administration of the instrument. This threat was reduced by ensuring that items used simple vocabulary, with language appropriate to secondary school students. The instrument was kept to a reasonable length (30 minute interview and six page document that had a variety of activities) to reduce the threat of subject attrition and to diminish any threat to the internal validity of the study.

External validity refers to the general application of the results to the population at large (Dorman, 2001). In order to ensure that the external validity of a study is maintained, it is important that both the samples and the conditions under which the study is carried out are representative of the populations and situations to which the results are to apply. There are a number of factors that threaten the external validity of a study and so limit the degree to which generalisations can be made from the particular study to other populations or settings. Such threats include lack of representativeness of available and target populations; failure to define independent variables explicitly; Hawthorne effect; inadequate operationalising of dependent variables; pre-test sensitisation (Dorman, 2001). Any of these points that were relevant to the study were addressed in the previous writings on ethics and validity.

Finally, where subjects participate in a number of tests or questionnaires as part of a study there is the risk that they may become sensitised to the questions and so alter their responses (Nisandchik & Marchak, 1969). This would adversely affect the results and, in turn, the external validity of the study. In the present study, the instrument was administered on only one occasion to each student and so pre-test sensitisation was not considered a possible threat to the external validity of the study.

This chapter has outlined the research methodology and justified the combination of qualitative and quantitative research within the context of a critical social science approach. It has examined the limitations of the study and explored issues around ethical considerations and validity. The next chapter will look specifically at how the research instrument was developed, considering the theoretical framework articulated in this chapter. It will also analyse the data collected from the research project and begin to identify emerging themes.

Chapter 6

Undertaking the Research

Our schools exist to challenge popular beliefs and dominant cultural values , to ask difficult questions, to look at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast and the stranger. In doing so, we will give hope to those who presently have little hope. (Pinto P 2001 p. 7)

6.1 First research method: the Delphi Technique

This chapter will explore the Delphi Technique that was chosen as one of the research methodologies. It was chosen as it was a practical and empowering research methodology that could clarify the research questions for the schools and students involved. The chapter will discuss how it was applied to a school situation and discuss issues relevant to the cohort that was involved from the five different schools. The Delphi Technique, through the use of the expert panel that consisted of the researcher, counsellors and principals, was able to create a research instrument that was relevant and engaging for the young men involved. Whilst doing this, it was able to be a transformative process in the lives of the participants as they were able to articulate their responses in a safe and supportive environment and be exposed to the views of others in this same environment.

An advantage of the Delphi Technique is that it involved practitioners who were actively dealing with the student participants and the subject matter being studied to be

involved in the development of the research instrument. In the study, counsellors and principals all contributed to the survey (quantitative research) and to the interview questions, focus groups questions (qualitative research) and the process for combining the two.

The Delphi Technique is named after the Greek oracle at Delphi. It is a set of procedures for eliciting and refining the opinions of a group, usually a panel of experts. It provides an effective structured group communication process, allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem and reach a consensus (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

The Delphi Technique stems from USA defence research in the early 1950s. The technique was developed by Olaf Helmer and Norman Dalkey in 1953 at the Rand Corporation. The objective of the original study was to obtain a reliable consensus from a group of experts. The Delphi Technique became a fundamental tool in the area of technological forecasting, especially where trend extrapolation was inadequate. Further, in management science and operations research, Delphi facilitated the incorporation of subjective information directly into evaluation models dealing with complex social problems (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

Linstone and Turoff (1975) provide a comprehensive list of situations for the application of Delphi:

- The problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgements on a collective basis.

- The individuals need to contribute to the examination of a broad complex problem and may represent diverse backgrounds with respect to experience or expertise.
- More individuals are needed than can effectively interact in a face-to-face exchange.
- Time and cost make frequent group meetings unfeasible.
- The efficiency of face-to-face meetings can be increased by a supplemental group communication process.
- Disagreements among individuals are so severe or politically unpalatable that the communication process must be refereed or anonymous.
- The heterogeneity of the participants must be preserved to assure validity of the results (i.e. avoidance of domination by quantity or by strength of personality. (p. 197)

Whilst the genesis of the Delphi Technique was in the need to overcome the shortcomings of individual and group judgement for planning purposes, three standard forms of the technique are now recognised (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). These are the:

1. Conventional Delphi. This approach applies the technique to forecasting and estimating unknown parameters and is based upon Delphi as it was originally conceived.
2. Policy Delphi. This approach uses Delphi to expose the range of positions advocated by the group.
3. Decision Delphi. This approach applies Delphi as a resolution mechanism to reach decisions on complex or contested subjects.

Whilst many variations of the technique have been tried, there is a common broad procedural outline. It has certain basic features; structured questioning, iteration, controlled feedback and anonymity of responses. The broad procedure for Delphi is outlined below in four stages.

Firstly, the subject of the study is circulated to the participants in an unstructured manner to enable them to comment on the subject. This material and the participants' responses are then synthesised by the monitoring team (one or more people). Linstone and Turoff (1975) note that this initial stage has often been circumvented by the exploration of the subject by the monitoring team, with the monitoring team then directly framing questions for the participants. Secondly, a questionnaire is prepared and applied to ascertain the opinions of the panellists on the matters identified and to begin to elicit points of convergence and divergence. Thirdly, the questionnaires are distributed repeatedly, for usually between two and ten rounds. For each round, information from the previous round is included to provide feedback to the participants. This may include textual and statistical material, the group's response and an individual's own response. Participants are asked to reconsider their response and to justify their response if it is radically different to that of the group. This process is repeated until consensus or certain stability is reached. Finally, an evaluation occurs when all previously gathered information has been analysed.

From a starting point of widely differing points of view, Delphi moves towards consensus by a series of communications. Delphi is the joint judgement of experts. Each individual studies the problem and communicates their perceived result or outcome. The

group then considers these opinions in such a way that revision, retraction and refinement are possible.

Delphi methodology allows this process on the basis that there is unlikely to be any “single best way” (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 18). In non-exact situations, such as future prediction, precise formulation and exact calculation are unrealistic and unlikely to be helpful. Further, it is expected that by allowing each individual to make his or her particular contribution independent of the remainder, a more focused opinion will be produced. The resulting collection of different opinions, while it might concern those who prefer more exact data, provides a better view of those inexact human ‘hopes, dreams and plans’ which make up the future. It is these “collected realities that constitute the data on which the Delphi then operates” (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 21).

It is the process of information gathering and uninhibited feedback that distinguishes Delphi from ordinary polling. With individuals able to alter and refine their own views, on the basis of collective group views, there is greater reliability as individuals provide more of their genuine material and less of that material often ‘manufactured’ to suit a specific clientele or situation. Due to the wide base of input, the Delphi process tends to generate statements that are better accepted than those derived through direct forms of interaction.

Anonymity within the process of reality collecting avoids any “bandwagon effect” (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 34), minimising interpersonal dynamics. As in the case of the free exchange of views, anonymity helps avoid undesirable psychological

effects such as peer group pressure or over-domineering behaviour by one person and, thus, allows a more valid set of outcomes.

Consensus forms a crucial link in the Delphi methodology. Delphi is an iterative methodology which seeks to develop consensus on the subject among a panel of persons considered expert on the subject. In the early years of the methodologies existence, studies by the Rand Corporation were carried out as part of a validation program. Factual questions having identifiable qualitative answers were asked. “With reiteration, the answers were shown to become more accurate, and the diversity of answers narrowed into greater consensus.” (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 37) This empirical study clearly demonstrated the validity of a developed consensus reached by means of the Delphi.

The success and validity of the Delphi process is very much dependant on concepts of ‘common reality’ so it becomes important to ensure that any study using this approach seeks to identify these realities. Part of the process then becomes concerned with seeking reality views, exploring agendas and gestalts, identifying latent options and issues, explaining and extracting from the collected views and, from this collected data, generating a common or consensus ‘reality’.

It remains clear that from consensus of expert opinion, the movement from a broad spectrum of opinion towards a preferred option does produce valid outcomes. Empirical studies have shown this (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). For the purposes of exploring future human activity, the approach of wide input, thence convergence to a ‘most likely’ outcome, suggests Delphi to be an ideal methodology.

An exploration with these goals in mind, which considers the collected 'realities' of a group of individuals, each with considerable knowledge of their field, is by a process of consensus, most likely to yield results that, though not reproducible, will be reliable. Upon these results, then, can be built some assumptions of the future. Within the Delphi process too, is an element of group identity. In the case of most Delphi processes, this identity is more with the topic than with other individuals in the group. Keeping an element of anonymity directs panel attention to the topic and avoids the bandwagon effect. It is important to note that issue of a dual relationship was addressed in this study. The researcher, as well as conducting the study, was also a trustee for all the schools involved. This was declared to all involved and it was not considered a problem as students were not involved in the Delphi process and principals and counsellors used a system of self-addressed envelopes to anonymously reply to all correspondence. This group, as opposed to the students, could not be guaranteed anonymity during the actual research process due to the coding system used (a situation with which they were comfortable). This is covered in more depth when looking at issues around insider research in the next section.

6.1.1 Instrument development using the Delphi method

Using the Delphi Technique involved developing an expert panel of people with expertise in the field. This group, by way of a multi-step process, developed the research instrument and process that was specific to the individuals and the situation. The expert panel determined the quality of the instrument that lead to viability of the responses. This gave the results of the study credibility with a wider audience. The selection of the expert panel, clearly critical to the success of the Delphi Technique, required access to counsellors and principals within and beyond the schools being

researched. The participation of these individuals was sought through the association of counsellors in Christian Brothers schools (this is a group of counsellors from all Christian Brothers schools in Queensland that meets regularly for support) and the Queensland Christian Brothers Schools Leadership Forums, a similar meeting for principals.

Each principal and counsellor identified as a potential participant received a letter inviting them to participate in this project (see Appendix H – Introductory Letter). The invitation to participate described the objective, methodology and the commitment sought from the participants. Each individual was then contacted by telephone to confirm his or her involvement. The option was given to delegate the task to associates or nominate others to be invited instead of them. All principals and counsellors who were asked to be involved accepted the invitation and no one nominated others. A panel of eleven eventually participated in the process.

During all Delphi interactions, the panellists were remote to, and independent from, each other. All communication was via the facilitator and correspondence and questionnaires were sent via mail. Responses were returned by mail using the return addressed, postage paid, envelopes provided. All correspondence to the participants was on formal stationary.

After all ethics requirements (see Appendix I) were attended to, an introductory letter was sent to the schools that had agreed to be involved. This letter clearly stated the nature and context of the research project, the targeted group and all stakeholders who

would be involved. A return sheet was included that formalised the permission of the school to be involved in the project.

After receiving the permission sheets back from each school, a second letter was sent to all principals and counsellors who were involved in the process. This letter (see Appendix J) clearly stated the three distinct time frames of the process, the formulation of the research instrument, the interviews of principals, counsellors and students and the analysing of data and follow interviews if required. It also included the first response sheet for the Delphi Technique that asked for principals and counsellors to articulate what was necessary, from their point of view, to cover if reliable data was to be received and what process should be used that would be student-friendly yet evocative of good responses. It also asked the group to brainstorm what key issues and concepts needed to be included to make it authentic, relevant and achievable for the targeted group (Year 12 male students).

From round one, responses were summarised and anonymously shared with all participants. The results of this first round were used to produce the first draft of the research instrument.

In rounds two and three, participants responded by revising, adding commentary or by giving further arguments in support of their earlier responses. This led to further refining of the instrument which led to the development of a pilot research instrument; Counselling and Spirituality Project (see Appendix K).

The letter in round three also indicated the organisational requirements for each visit. At the initial meeting of the expert panel, the following were the key considerations put forward for the research instrument and, just as importantly, the process for the implementation of the instrument:

- It needed to come across as a balanced document that would allow for a wide range of views to be expressed in an atmosphere that had no expectations for correct or appropriate answers.
- All responses needed to be valued and no form of judgement would be evident.
- It was important that the instrument not be seen in any way as being dogmatic or pushing a political message, that is, supporting the left or right wing views of church.
- Evoke and promote meaningful level of discussions for each individual and the school group as a whole.
- Provide a safe environment where issues could be discussed in a full and frank manner whilst always being respectful of the individual and his beliefs.
- A chance for the young men to express their views and be open to the views of others as forums such as the one provided by this process were unfortunately rare.
- The instrument had to use language that would have a cognitive capacity that would be challenging for the young men without being too difficult to understand the concepts involved.

As result of this meeting, the first draft of the instrument was developed.

The process started with an open question, ‘what should be questions that should be included in the study?’ The individual responses from each member of the expert

panel were then collected and collated. There was widespread approval of the draft document although some changes were suggested. The responses from the expert panel examined issues around language such as, would students understand language that may be a little too advanced for them or too much like jargon, clichés or too ‘Churchy’ (words like chalice, statues and vestments were removed). Significant changes were made also to the format of the material to make it more user friendly. This included adding numbers to the boxes of the survey to assist with result collection and provide a stronger framework for some of the students who were responding. Changes were also made by introducing a variety of techniques into the qualitative material such as a combination of open-ended questions and scales so as not to make the survey monotonous and cater for wide styles of communication and learning techniques of the students. Moreover, some concepts such as ‘incarnation’ were removed as it was felt that the respondents would not have the necessary experience or knowledge to respond.

Another significant discussion at this stage was the organisation of the days. A key consideration was minimising the disruption to the school day, as the young men were close to final exams, whilst not cutting short an opportunity for each of them to contribute individually and as a focus group. The group agreed unanimously on the school organisation format and counsellors agreed to organise the participants and chase up all permission slips.

Analysis of the responses to the second and third rounds led to a consensus. The primary determinant of this consensus was total agreement of all members of the panel on the suitability of the research instrument to achieve the stated goals of the project and

its suitability for its clientele. This stage signalled the end of the Delphi study process as the research instrument was finalised.

The process that led to the development of the instrument, whilst lengthy (three separate mail-outs with each one awaiting a reply from all members), was exhaustive in ensuring that the final instrument reflected a thorough approach to the previously mentioned research questions. The active involvement of the expert panel also ensured that the individual needs of the particular school and the interviewees (adolescent male boys) were respected. This was done by ensuring a structured but flexible approach to the interview and the simplification of some language and concepts. It is interesting to note that all members of the expert panel responded to all stages of the process. This significantly added to the authenticity of the process.

Once the research document was finalised, it was posted, with a permission form, to the counsellors with a request to distribute both to the students. The counsellors and principals were also required to fill in permission forms provided. The students were then asked to bring both to the school on the days that the research took place, which were two consecutive days.

On the first day of the process, a 45 minute interview was conducted with each individual student. During this interview they were requested to complete the research instrument and bring their permission form to the interview. All students fulfilled both requests. It was important for the students to realise that their individual responses would be totally confidential and they were only recognised by a title such as IPC 1 (for the first Ignatius Park student) and IPC 2 or SBC 1 for St Brendan's, and so on.

On the second day a focus group interview and interviews with the counsellor and the principal were conducted. Table 6.1 shows the timetable followed for each school visit.

6.1.2 Applying the results of the Delphi Technique.

A school visit was organised with each school over a two-day period. Each selected student, principal and counsellor was given a 50 minute time slot where they completed the research instrument individually in the presence of the researcher. This was done so that they could ask clarifying questions if needs be. It was made clear to all respondents that the only questions that would be answered would be ones that would clarify either the organisation of the interview or the process. This was done so that there would be no influence exerted on the respondents by the researcher. Whilst this may not be necessary for an adult group, it was considered important for a school-aged respondent. As the interviewer was alone with a student, all system and school based child protection policies and procedures, such as conducting the interview in a public place that had a constant range of people passing by in a room with an open door and providing senior staff with a full interview timetable so that people knew who were being interviewed, was followed.

Table 6.1 Students by college and dates of visits

Location	Number of Students	Date of Visit
Ignatius Park College, Townsville	12	11-12 August 2005
St Brendan's College, Yeppoon	15	7-8 May 2005
Nudgee College Brisbane	12	4-5 August 2005
Gregory Terrace, Brisbane	12	21-22 August 2005
St Patrick's College Shorncliffe	13	14-15 August 2005
Total	64	

A focus group meeting was held as the last activity in each school. This included all students and the counsellor but not the principal. This was universally supported, as it was felt the students would be more natural in their responses with just the counsellor and the researcher. This was held during lunchtime after all the individual interviews were finished on the last day. From the school's point of view, this was important as it minimised disruption of classes for the students.

During the course of the first school research project, the instrument was modified slightly due to the feedback that was coming from the early respondents. These modifications (see Appendix L) were used at the first school research program and all subsequent other schools. The changes came as a result of universal feedback, from all counsellors and students and principals, that it would improve both the content and structure of the process. Whilst this did indicate that the expert panel did not think of everything that could emerge, it did demonstrate the flexibility of the process. The change was fully supported at all other schools. Added questions for the young men included:

- What do you think of spirituality for year 12 boys?
- Is it important, if so why?
- What would be the key components of spirituality for a year 12 boy?
- Do you think a counsellor is essential in the school context?
- Do you see any link between spirituality and counselling?
- What more could the school do in terms of counselling and spirituality?

Extra interview questions for counsellors included:

- What did you think of the survey? i.e. did it connect with them?
- Do you think spirituality is important for teenage boys? Do you think teenage boys respond to a counsellor?
- What more could be done to integrate counselling and spirituality?

Questions for the Focus Group included:

- The principal has asked for a group of Year 12 students to do a presentation at Speech Night on each of the following aspects of life at the college; academic, sporting, social, cultural and spiritual. You have been asked to do the spiritual. What do you say?
- If you could change your RE class in Term 4, what would you like to see happen in areas of religion or spirituality?
- If a counsellor integrated spirituality into a counselling process, how would you react?
- One of the members of your class comes out and says he is gay. How would he finish Year 12 at the school?
- Is this a spiritual issue, a religious issue or neither?

- How would it affect your relationship with the boy?

6.2 Second Research Method Interviews.

Over two days in each of the five schools between twelve and fifteen students were interviewed and at least one counsellor and the principal of each school. The counsellor took responsibility for organising the day at the school level. The counsellors were asked to include students who would and would not be currently using the services of a counsellor as well as representing a wide range of students from those in leadership positions to those who would be perceived as being on the margins of the school. Indigenous students and students from different ethnic backgrounds were chosen and any student who wanted to be a part of the project was allowed to do so. The two boarding schools ensured a balance between boarding and day students.

Being senior students, all were aged in the range of sixteen and half to just over eighteen (see Table 6.2). This obviously meant that they were adolescents, something significant for this study and, in terms of Erickson's stages, they would have been experiencing conflicting experiences around identity and role confusion. In terms of Loevinger, they presented at either the self-protective or conformist level; in terms of Maslow they would have been stage three and, in terms of Fowler, they all demonstrated behaviour consistent with stage three or four.

Table 6.2 Students by age

Age	Number of Students
Less than 16.0 years	0
16.0 – 16.6 years	0
16.6 – 17.0 years	18
17.0 – 17.6 years	28
17.6 – 18.0years	13
over 18 years	5
Total	64

Counsellors were asked to provide students from religious backgrounds that reflected their school community. Whilst the majority were nominally Catholic (see Table 6.3), the interview process established that a very small proportion attended weekly Mass.

Table 6.3 Students by religion

Religion	Number of Students
Catholic	47
Christian but not Catholic	5
Non-Christian	0
No Religion	12
Total	64

Sixty three of the 64 students returned the consent form signed by parents. The only student who did not was aged over 18 years and was living independently. This form was countersigned by the principal. All principals and counsellors signed and returned consent forms. This was a very important consideration in terms of the ethical requirements for research in a school situation or a situation that involved minors.

Being Catholic schools, all principals were Catholic (a requirement of Edmund Rice Education) and, in this particular situation, all very active in their faith. All principals were male and quite animated by the topic of male spirituality. They reflected an age range from 38 years to 61 years. Age did not appear to be a factor with the principal respondents, although the fact that they were all active in their faith was reflected significantly in the depth and length of their responses.

Of the six counsellors, four were male and 2 were female. The female responses to issues around concepts of male spirituality were consistent with their male counterparts. The age range of counsellors was 31 years to 56 years and, as with principals, age did not seem to be an issue in terms of responses differing according to the age factor. Table 6.4 provides a summary of information on the adult participants.

Table 6.4 Information on adult participants

Group	Religion	Age	Gender
Counsellor (6)	Catholic (6)	30-35 years (1)	Male (4)
		45-55 years (5)	Female (2)
Principal (5)	Catholic (5)	35-40 years (1)	Male (5)
		40-45 years (2)	
		45-50 years (1)	
		Over 60 years (1)	

It is also interesting to note that one of the principals is an ex-seminarian, another an ex-Marist Brother, one has a brother a Catholic priest and another a brother as a Christian Brother. Of the counsellors, one is a Christian Brother on leave from the congregation, one is married to an ex-Sister of Mercy and two are ex-Christian Brothers. This could indicate that they were disillusioned with the institutional Church themselves although none of their comments in any way demonstrated resentment or anger. Indeed, they insisted that the answer to the questions around adolescent male spirituality would best be answered in terms of working within the Church rather than attempting to create an alternate church at the school level.

The number of respondents chosen reflected the need to provide ‘sufficiency’ of information without enduring a ‘saturation’ of information (Seidman, 1998, pp. 47-48).

To demonstrate consistency in the research findings across all schools, a response from each school was included, where possible, and the identification codes demonstrate that a large number of students were included in the findings. Students

were told that their responses would be confidential but due to the small number of adult responses and the specific nature of their roles, this confidentiality was not guaranteed for adults.

The only question that any students indicated that they did not understand was question 17 of the survey, ‘Spirituality needs to be rescued from the shackles of religion’ with over 60 percent of the students indicating by no response or a response that they were confused. Table 6.5 contains a summary of the research interviews conducted.

Table 6.5 Summary of research interviews

School	Date (2005)	Students Surveyed	Principals Interviewed	Counsellors Interviewed.	Focus Group	Total
St Brendan’s	7-8 July	15	1	1	1	18
St Patrick’s	14-15 July	13	1	1	1	16
Gregory Terrace	21-22 July	12	1	2	1	16
Nudgee	4-5 August	12	1	1	1	15
Ignatius Park	11-12 August	12	1	1	1	15
Total Participants		64	5	6	5	80

This chapter has explored the research mechanism called the Delphi Technique and established why it was appropriate for this study. The technique is easy to apply to the unique situations that were provided by the constraints of working with principals and counsellors in a school context. It is also a research methodology that allowed a number of experts to give feedback to the researcher to come to consensus on what issues were important.

The next chapter will look at the data and begin to analyse it by identifying the key areas from which conclusions will be drawn

Chapter 7

Spirituality and Adolescent Males:

What does the research say?

Increasingly, I find myself in sympathy with the spiritual seekers who claim that formal religion, with all its trappings, and power games is proving to be a major obstacle to spiritual growth and development. Religion sets limitations, and lures the seeker into dealing with issues which seem to belong to the perpetuation of the system rather than growth of the person. The system in turn, instead of empowering the person to engage with the world in a transformative way, inhibits, and often directly militates against, the task of transformative justice. (O'Murchu, 1997, p. 31)

7.1 Research data results: introduction

This chapter will look at the analysis of the data and track how themes developed. The qualitative data was recorded on a recording device and then transcribed into full scripts of the interviews. When analysing the qualitative data, the computer program ATLAS/ti (Muhr, 1997) was used. Its main function was to analyse the data and search for emerging themes from the raw data. It did this by identifying key words or phrases used by the respondents. It then categorised them into groups according to any theme that was emerging. For the sake of contrast, the data provided

by the adults was looked at twice, once as a part of the whole sample and once just as a sample of adult contributions only.

The findings of the research project were consistent with the literature review in that both demonstrated the importance of developmental psychology in the development of identity for the adolescent male. Also consistent was the very strong link between spirituality and counselling and the growing debate between the importance of spirituality and religion. One inconsistency occurred when all the students interviewed did not agree with Schneiders (2003) opinion on the two working in partnership to form identity.

Initially the program identified the following themes as being prevalent in responses (numbers in parenthesis demonstrate frequency):

- counselling (25)
- counselling and spirituality (14)
- religion negative (25)
- religion positive (4)
- environment (12)
- spirituality general (73)
- relations (12)
- social justice (10).

When analysing the above responses, five distinct ideas emerged. These were strongly linked to the research questions. These ideas came from both the qualitative and quantitative data. These ideas eventually could be identified as themes. These five

ideas appeared randomly throughout the survey instrument and, when collated, provided useful information to interpret.

The five ideas or questions were:

1. The relationship between the young man's need or desire for spirituality and his capacity to reach his potential in a holistic way and achieve his sense of identity.
2. The difference between religion and spirituality and the affect this has on their spiritual journey.
3. The role of the Church in terms of relevance and authority in the spiritual journey of the young men.
4. The role non-traditional church elements play in the spiritual journey of the young men.
5. The role of counsellors in their lives and the connection with spirituality.

7.2 Spirituality and identity

At this stage, it may be helpful to articulate the emerging differences in understanding of spirituality between the young people in the study and the adults. The adults (counsellors and principals) saw spirituality in terms of an innate quality of human life and existence, something we are born with and seek articulation in human living. It is essentially a gift, one we are personally responsible for its nurturing.

The young men in the study, understandably, had a more simplistic understanding of spirituality, seeing it as way to get to know yourself, provide guidelines on how to treat others and handle relationships and begin to try to understand the existence of any transcendental force. This was demonstrated by the fact that 70

percent of students said that ‘unto your own self be true is more a spiritual statement than a religious one.’ In addition, only 24 percent of students disagreed that spirituality could provide meaning in their life rather religion. Both groups appeared to share the view that there are both conscious and subconscious factors involved in spiritual growth and that spirituality cannot be absent in human life but it can be misguided or misplaced. The biggest area of difference in the interpretations of the young men was found in their understanding of spirituality as being essentially self centred (for my own self) or others centred. This will be explored in the findings.

Another key learning that emerged was the fact that counsellors and principals agreed with the idea that all the young men in the study were, by nature, spiritual or at least open to spirituality in terms of counselling. It could also be argued that all human beings have valid urges towards the spiritual. These can be expressed as a search for wholeness through deepening individual, social and transcendental awareness. It was also obvious that the counsellors understood fully that the transpersonal context, referred to previously in terms of therapy, shapes how the young men are viewed.

Table 7.1 explores the relevance of spirituality to the life of the young man and how important it is for them. Clearly, spirituality was seen as being relevant with 74 percent of the student responses indicating that the survey was relevant for them. Also significant were the responses from all three groups in terms of how important it is to develop spiritually, as 100 percent of adults surveyed and 84 percent of students responded positively to this question. A very similar pattern of response was recorded for the questions that asked about spirituality becoming more important and spirituality as being important now.

Table 7.1 Spirituality and potential

<i>The relationship between the young man's need or desire for spirituality and his capacity to reach his potential in a holistic way and achieve his sense of identity.</i>									
Questions	Students (n=64)			Counsellors (n=6)			Principals (n=5)		
	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No
3) Spirituality is more than being Religious	89	5	6	100	0	0	100	0	0
8) Spirituality is important to me	88	9	3	100	0	0	100	0	0
27) Spirituality is becoming more important for people my age whilst religion is becoming less important	73	17	10	100	0	0	100	0	0
30) It is important for me to develop spiritually	84	7	9	100	0	0	100	0	0
32) God is not dead, people are just having different experiences of God	72	22	6	83	17	0	60	20	20
55) My image and view of God is constantly changing	61	11	28	66	17	17	100	0	0
56) Some youth see spirituality as being more important than material possessions.	34	28	38	66	17	17	100	0	0
58) It is important for me that this school teaches values	88	5	7	100	0	0	80	20	0
60) This survey is irrelevant to me.	12	14	74	66	17	17	60	20	20

The information clearly suggests that young men in the survey see the need for spirituality for them to reach their potential as people. It is becoming more important for them and they are now spending more time considering issues of a spiritual nature.

There is a very large degree of agreement among students, counsellors and principals to these ideas.

When looking at the role of spirituality in the lives of adolescent males, it is important to understand how important they themselves perceive the relevance. During the 64 student interviews, only one student suggested that spirituality was not important. 73 percent of students indicated that God is not dead; people are just having different experiences of God, whilst only 38 percent of students interviewed disagreed that youth see spirituality as being more important than material things. Some student responses that demonstrated the importance of spirituality include the following.

In the following quotes, the first two letters refer to the school (for example, IP refers to Ignatius Park College Townsville), the next letter identifies the respondent as either a student (S), a counsellor(C) or principal (P) and the last two numbers refer to individual students. The following abbreviations were used in interviews:

- IP—Ignatius Park College Townsville
- SP—St Patrick’s College Shorncliffe
- GT—St Joseph’s College Gregory Terrace
- SB—St Brendan’s College Yeppoon
- NC—St Joseph’s Nudgee College.
- C—Counsellor
- S—Student
- P—Principal.
- FG—Focus Group

The following six quotes were typical of respondents and support the notion that spirituality is seen as being integral to holistic development and the reaching of one’s

potential. They also demonstrate that all the respondents did not have a shared understanding of what spirituality is:

Spirituality shapes your life by living with the values decent humans should have. (IPS07)

A spiritual experience that I have had would be the death of my Nan. To see her struggle with her health for so many years and eventually die, I realised that maybe she was going to a better place. It made me look at my life and realise that I have it good and made me realise not to waste the opportunities I am given. (SPS09)

These quotes demonstrate a focus on spirituality as being other centred whilst the next quotes see spirituality as being more self-centred:

Life should be lived spiritually – thus being lived truthfully by simply being true to one's self. I believe that I make a conscious effort every day to be true and spiritual. (SBS06)

I believe my whole life has been a spiritual experience. I try to do the right thing most of the time. Spirituality for me is about finding a sense of enlightenment and happiness within you. I feel this when I am with my close relatives and with the people I love. I had a family reunion in New Zealand around two years ago and found it spiritually lifting because I was discovering my family roots and in doing so finding things out about myself. (SBS15)

Yes, important to be a spiritual person, it's definitely an asset to your lifestyle.

(SPS13)

An indigenous perspective was provided by an indigenous student. His understanding is obviously linked strongly to his culture and goes beyond individual and others to the concept of relationship with land:

My spiritual experience is my land, my old people, ancestors, family and friends. (SBS10)

The information from students, counsellors and principals would support Tacey's (1998, 2000) claim that there is a renewed interest in spirituality, especially from young people. This concept of spirituality, however, is not the traditional one that would have been supported by the institutional church body that has governed the schools. No mention of church was made in the initial responses on spirituality indicating a significant shift in emphasis from the past. The young people did comment on the role of church in terms of their own spirituality when asked and this will be analysed later in the chapter.

A key theme that emerged from the research was that spirituality was seen as being important to reach your potential and that could only be achieved through holistic development, that it was a journey, not an end point to be achieved. This was another example whereby the young men's responses would have varied from traditional models of spirituality, as past models would have empathised the goal of spirituality as being salvation of the soul or entry to Heaven (Catholic Church of Rome, 1997).

Even when making the distinction between self centred or other centred spirituality as articulated by the responses, it became obvious that the capacity to relate is not merely a psychological, social or culturally determined behaviour pattern, it also embodies deep spiritual tendencies that can outgrow certain cultural limitations that young men encounter. Development of these young men cannot be truly holistic if it ignores the spiritual dimension. Counsellors and principals interviewed especially emphasised the importance of spirituality in the holistic development of adolescent boys with 100 percent of them indicating that ‘spirituality is becoming more important for people their age whilst religion is becoming less important’ and ‘it is important for young men to develop spiritually’ (see Table 7.1). An interview with a principal supports this:

Yes, I do think it’s important and it goes back to what is the core essence of spirituality. Spirituality is ultimately, if we believe in incarnation, a journey to authentic humanity and understanding what it is to be fully human and fully alive and understanding that it’s in our full expression of humanity that we come as close as we can to the divinity, if you like. For Year 12 boys, obviously a crucial time of their lives, they’re in a process of determining their own identity, they’re influenced by lots of models of what it is to be a man, to be a human being, quite a plethora of role models that they’re influenced by and part of a school’s commitment to spirituality is to allow kids the time and the space to journey into exploring their life, their experience, their relationships and those things like role models and the like, to ultimately become an authentic human being. I suppose, it’s critical with that age group in particular, the fact that they haven’t got a set-in-concrete identity, it’s up for grabs if you like, they’re

defining it as they go and creating so an environment where you can actually nurture authentic journeying in spirituality is crucial. (SBP01)

Whilst the following counsellor response indicates a self-centred understanding of spirituality for adolescent males, it does highlight the idea that the young men need to feel a part of the process of establishing their own identity and spiritual journey. This understanding of the concept of the spiritual journey highlights the fact that not all journeys are the same and that lived experience is central to the journey rather than outside influences such as Church Doctrine or institutional rules. Once again, this would be different to a traditional understanding of spirituality that would have strongly suggested that if you follow a set formula you would be considered a spiritual person:

My experience has been, if they feel that you have come to impose a spirituality or a value system on them, then they'll switch off straight away and it really is something which comes out of their own experience and if you like their own determination as to what has been authentic for them in that life experience. So, I think for me, the key component is setting up situations where they can tell their story, to share their own journey, to share their own life experiences and their feelings and their hurts and tragedies and their success and to then come to terms with what's been real in those experiences and what's been make believe, what's authentic and where does it take them, where does it want to take them in life. (SBC01)

Schneiders' (2003 p 32) addressed the current tension between "religion" and "spirituality" by suggesting that the conflictual or contradictory relation between the two results from a faulty understanding of both and that, properly understood, religious

traditions are the normal and healthiest context for genuine spiritualities. This has been validated by the responses of the young men whose experiences of Religion and church are often negative. This then colours their interpretation of church.

Schneider's proposes three models for the relationship between Religion and Spirituality. Firstly that Religion and Spirituality are separate entities with no necessary connection. Secondly, Religion and Spirituality are conflicting realities related to each in inverse proportions. This means that the more religious one is the less spiritual and visa versa. Finally some see religion and spirituality as two dimensions of a single enterprise, which like body and spirit are often in tension but are essential to each other and constitute together a single reality. In other words the two are partners in the search for God. Schneiders' accepts the thirds position as most real. Once again the responses above especially from counselors and Principals would validate this approach. Although student responses would agree to connection between spirituality and religion as being strong they would be quick to identify the link between spirituality and identity but not religion and identity

The quantitative data from the students supported this view point. 84 percent indicated that it was very important for them to develop spiritually whilst 73 percent indicated that spirituality is becoming more important for people of their age.

7.3 The difference between religion and spirituality

Understanding definitions that made distinctions between key concepts was an issue for some of the young men in the study. Whilst their understanding of spirituality varied, they did have a common understanding of 'religion' and 'church'. Religion was

understood to be the formal and communal approach to some issues that may have been traditionally spiritual and was linked to an institutional religion ('I am Catholic or Anglican') whilst church was seen to be the human attempt to organise religion. ('I am a member of the Catholic Church') and the local response of the individual to the institutionalised religion ('I go to church on Sunday')

Table 7.2 clearly indicates that the young men in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, although seeing that links may occur, do see spirituality and religion as being distinct. Sixty-seven percent of the young men indicated people are looking for spiritual renewal away from churches and a majority of all groups that responded said that 'spirituality is important for my identity not religion'. It was interesting to note the large affirmative response to the statement 'I am a spiritual person but not very religious' by all groups of respondents.

Table 7.2 Difference between spirituality and religion

Questions	Students (n=64)			Counsellors (n=6)			Principals (n=5)		
	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No
15) It is more important to be spiritual than it is to be religious.	63	31	6	100	0	0	100	0	0
16) You do not have to be a religious person to be a spiritual person	84	6	6	100	0	0	100	0	0
23) Spirituality can provide meaning in my life not religion	40	36	24	83	0	17	100	0	0
26) People do not respect religion as much as they used to	88	9	2	100	0	0	100	0	0
33) I don't need religion to experience something spiritually	72	16	12	100	0	0	100	0	0
38) 'Unto your own self you must be true' is more a spiritual statement than a religious one	70	11	19	100	0	0	100	0	0
42) Religion is essential in becoming a spiritual person	23	19	58	0	17	83	0	0	100
44) People are looking for spiritual renewal away from churches	67	27	6	100	0	0	80	20	0
45) I am a spiritual person but not very religious	50	20	30	100	0	0	100	0	0
46) Spirituality is important for my identity not religion	50	20	30	100	0	0	100	0	0
47) Spirituality is alive but religion is dead	45	20	35	66	17	17	100	0	0

It was obvious that all groups saw a clear distinction between religion and spirituality. Spirituality was seen as being much more important than religion and something that had a positive dimension in the lives of young men whereas religion was seen as becoming more and more irrelevant. This is significant for leadership in

Catholic schools in that it indicates that the only experience of Church or religion for many students will be the school, as young people no longer see spirituality as the sole domain of institutional churches or established religions. This supported the research by Tacey (2000) and O'Murchu (1997) in terms of the need to distinguish between spirituality and religion, noting that the revival is in areas of spirituality and not in areas of religion or institutional church. This is evidenced by the following quote from a student:

Spirituality to me does not so much place an important emphasis on religion but instead in methods or experiences, either one off or continued, that help me grow and develop positive moral values and beliefs, some of which may be similar to those taught implicitly in bible teachings. (IPS02)

Once again, whilst demonstrating an initial sense of being self-centred, this response does speak of an obligation to have positive morals that would indicate some sort of commitment to something beyond himself. Religion is not central to this idea and could even be neutral. This is contradictory to the following two quotes that indicate that religion could be negative to the spiritual journey, albeit from a self-centred perspective.

Definitely, spirituality is more important. We need to back off religion. Guys my age are thinking about wanting to be the person they can be, spirituality will help. (NCS01)

Spirituality is very important not devotion to the church. Spirituality needs to be sensitive to people's feelings, understand what you believe in and what your feelings about what spirituality are. (GTS06)

The following messages compare religion to spirituality with religion being seen as a negative thing because it takes away from the individual his sense of his own journey. Once again, it is a self-centred response with no indication of any obligation to community. The obligation to community is only explored by the young men when it comes to the concept of social justice:

People are not in the by the book religion any more but still searching for spirituality. (IPS11)

A spiritual time for me is riding my horse back home along the escarpment rather than something in the chapel. It's very important. Don't respond to people ramming religion down to me. (SBS07)

I'd say no because young boys like us aren't generally interested in straight down the line religion, we're more trying to figure out who we are with our own beliefs. (IPS10)

The following responses attempt to articulate why young men are turning their backs on institutionalised religion. To them it meets none of their needs and being self-centred in much of their spiritual journey, they see no need to spend time and energy in something that will not assist them:

Spirituality is definitely a big part of my life. I take time out on it, I reflect on it.

People are important in spirituality and how you have been treated. Religion does not have the same significance for me. Religion is more of a chore.

(NCS10)

Something I can feel negative about religion because it seems so demanding and primitive. Being heavily involved in a religion means that a large part of your life has to be changed. Church can seem very boring at times and does not appeal to the younger generation. (IPS11)

These qualitative results were supported by the fact that 63 percent of students interviewed said that spirituality is more than being religious and only 6 percent disagreed with the statement that it is more important to be spiritual than religious. Also only 24 percent of the students disagreed that spirituality can provide meaning in their life not religion and 73 percent of the students surveyed said that spirituality is becoming more important for people their age while religion is becoming less important. Seventy five percent or more of all respondents indicated that ‘I don’t need religion to experience something spiritually’ and ‘I am more likely to have a spiritual experience in a beautiful place than in a church’.

7.4 The relevance and authority of the church in the spiritual journey of the young man

As can be seen from the previous analysis, young men do not automatically mention church when discussing their spiritual journey. They do, however, have some very strong opinions on this issue, when asked, with 72 percent of them indicating that

‘God is not dead, people are just having different experiences of God’ and 92 percent disagreeing with the statement ‘Spirituality is just for weirdos and extremists’.

Table 7.3 The role of the church in the spiritual journey

Questions	Students (n=64)			Counsellors (n=6)			Principals (n=5)		
	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No
4) The Catholic church is in touch with young people	23	27	50	0	0	100	20	0	80
5) The rituals of the Catholic church (Mass) are meaningful for me	55	22	23	17	17	66	40	0	60
6) If I had a problem I would speak to a priest before I would speak to a counsellor	9	16	75	0	0	100	0	0	100
7) The Church is into power and control too much	11	33	56	50	34	16	40	40	20
11) I do not need the church’s help in forming my relationships	63	17	20	84	16	0	60	20	20
12) I listen to the church when it talks about moral issues such as contraception and pre-marital sex.	23	30	47	0	0	100	0	0	100
39) I have painful memories about religion or a religious institution. (School or parish)	5	11	84	16	34	50	0	40	60
51) Spirituality is for weirdos and extremists	2	6	92	0	0	100	0	0	100
57) The Pope’s death affected me	33	27	40	50	16	34	40	40	20
59) The schools R E program is important to me.	41	22	37	100	0	0	100	0	0

The results in Table 7.3 show that the Church's role in the spiritual journey of young men is diminishing. Even in all Catholic schools, 70 percent of students, 84 percent of counsellors and 80 percent of principals said that whether or not a person is Catholic is not important and the majority of people surveyed (50 percent of students, 100 percent of counsellors and 80 percent of principals) responded negatively when asked if the Catholic Church is in touch with young people. Also, all groups responded positively to the three statements that indicated religion was negative in its response to religious talk and how religion responds to issues around emotional problems and sex. It was interesting to note, however, that 92 percent of the young men disagreed with the statement, 'Religion is just for the old and insecure', which could possibly indicate that they have not turned their backs completely on religion and institutional church.

Clearly, the young men in this study do not turn to the Church or Church authorities, such as priests, for advice on how to live their lives. Whilst they see spirituality as important, their distinction between it and religion means that the role of the Church in their lives is clearly decreasing.

The following response goes one step further and questions whether or not the Church is true to what it says and even hints that it may be hypocritical. This is an important consideration for young men in these schools who may have had questions around their sexual identity. Whilst the church says it accepts all people, the young men in their focus groups did bring up an issue around 'the church's teaching on gays':

I realised, as I grew older that a lot of people were hurt by the church or discriminated against because of church ideas. It made me question the idea that the church accepted all people. (IPS06)

Whilst not being as emphatic about the negative influence of church in the spiritual journey, all of the principals and counsellors interviewed indicated that spirituality was more important than being religious or going to church and that spirituality was important to them and that it was important for young people to develop spirituality. The attitude towards spirituality from these significant adults in the schools was summarised by the following quotes, which demonstrate that spirituality is viewed as holistic and relevant whilst religion or church is not.

The greater majority of them [religion and church not meeting spiritual needs], I probably wouldn't be so rash as to say that it is not meeting any of them but certainly I would have a sense and that I think that is proven every Sunday when I look around the church that you might see one or two of them, out of a population of say one hundred you see one or two of them in church. You know I definitely think that the mainstream Catholic Church is missing the majority of our grade twelve boys. (SBC01)

I think it is important because it, the youth today I believe need to have things that they can focus on, need to have issues that they can develop relationships or guidance. Traditional methods in terms of family, in terms of church, I don't believe are necessarily as relevant or as strong as they were in the past and so, as a result, other issues are important, other factors are important contributing and

helping students. That's why I think it's important, why I think spirituality for a Year 12 student, I think its many things, it is a mechanism by which they can develop relationships with peers, parents, people, their understanding of themselves. There are probably aspects of developing a relationship with their God too; I think that would be down the list in terms of how they see the importance of spirituality. (SPP01)

7.5 Religion and the spiritual journey

Table 7.4 The role of religion in the spiritual journey

Questions	Students (n=64)			Counsellors (n=6)			Principals (n=5)		
	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No
1) Religious symbols are important to me	64	16	20	50	34	16	60	20	20
2) Whether a person is a Catholic or an Anglican or a Buddhist is important to me	19	11	70	16	0	84	0	20	80
13) Religion helps me to make sense of my world today.	52	34	14	34	16	50	20	20	60
14) I believe that the Bible is an exact telling of the truth (not a story)	23	19	58	0	0	100	0	0	100
18) Religious talk can be empty	42	22	36	100	0	0	0	80	20
19) Religion can be used to avoid emotional problems	44	22	34	50	34	16	40	20	20
20) Religion can be obsessed with issues about sex	41	23	36	84	16	0	60	20	20
28) Religion provides me with hope	59	23	18	34	34	34	20	20	60

Questions	Students (n=64)			Counsellors (n=6)			Principals (n=5)		
	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No
29) I rely on religion to inform me before I make important life decisions	25	19	56	0	0	100	0	20	80
34) Religious traditions are important to me	64	11	25	17	17	66	20	20	60
35) Religion is mostly about institutional authority (telling you what to do)	16	20	64	66	0	34	80	20	0
36) I am more influenced by secular society, e.g. (media) than I am by religious tradition	56	23	21	100	0	0	100	0	0
40) I need religion to save my soul	9	16	75	0	16	84	0	40	60
41) It is possible to be a 'religion- less' Christian	54	19	27	66	0	34	40	20	40
43) Religion has caused too many wars now and in the past	56	19	25	100	0	0	80	20	0
48) Religion provides stability in my life	45	20	35	0	16	84	0	40	60
50) Spirituality is needed more than religion for a sense of 'connectedness'	47	22	31	84	0	16	100	0	0
52) Religion is just for the old and insecure	2	6	92	34	16	50	40	20	40
54) Religion is incapable of change	20	16	64	66	17	17	20	40	40

The fact the vast majority of all groups of respondents indicated that 'Spirituality is needed more than religion for a sense of connectedness' demonstrates that young men and counsellors and principals in Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice

Tradition are less in favour of institutional religion in preference for a more open and inclusive concept of spirituality. This is also reflected by the fact that the majority of respondents indicated that religion was incapable of change and that religion is responsible for causing too many wars (less than 20 percent of all people disagreed with this statement). They, as did the previous generations who attended such schools, are looking for spiritual identity but will be influenced more strongly by outside influences than the previous generation whose spiritual search would have been confined to parish, family and religious education at school.

This was one area where, even though adults and students did generally agree, the students responses demonstrated a much simpler understanding of spirituality as opposed to the obviously more experienced and educated adults who were more discerning in their questions and responses. These adults would have had a better understanding of the rich traditions and story of traditional church as one of the principals is an ex-seminarian, another is an ex-Marist Brother, one has a brother a Catholic priest and another a Brother as a Christian Brother. Of the counsellors, one is a Christian Brother on leave from the congregation, one is married to an ex-Sister of Mercy and two are ex-Christian Brothers. This could indicate that they were disillusioned with the institutional church themselves although none of their comments in any way demonstrated resentment or anger. Indeed, they insisted that the answer to the questions around adolescent male spirituality would best be answered in terms of working within the church rather than attempting to create an alternate church at the school level.

7.6 Emerging themes in spirituality

It is obvious that even though the role of the Church is diminishing and distinctions between church and spirituality are being made, young men in this study are still searching for something spiritually. The traditional entry points established by the church that assisted the young man's spiritual journey of Parish, family and religious instruction at schools are being replaced by concepts around the environment, social justice and a broader network of relationships.

Table 7.5 Emerging themes in spirituality

Questions	Students (n=64)			Counsellors (n=6)			Principals (n=5)		
	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No	% Yes	% No Opinion	% No
9) The environment is a spiritual issue with which I can connect	53	32	15	100	0	0	40	60	0
10) Social Justice is a spiritual issue with which I can connect	80	17	3	100	0	0	80	20	0
22) The plight of our planet is a concern of mine	75	16	9	100	0	0	100	0	0
25) Jesus is a justice figure	63	20	17	100	0	0	60	20	20

Table 7.5 is most significant as it begins to articulate the emerging themes of adolescent male spirituality that may be replacing the more traditional stance. Clearly, the environment and social justice are spiritual issues with which young men can feel some spiritual connection. Interviews strongly identified the third element of connection

as being 'relationships' although it is interesting to note that this is more significant for counsellors than principals.

7.7 Spirituality, counselling adolescents and relationships

Social support and relationships were central to all respondents in terms of spirituality. Whilst it can be understood that a justified sense of spirituality can exist within the confines of isolation, such as enclaustrated orders or desert experiences, for young men a connection to others is key to their spiritual development. An interesting feature is that even though relationship is key to spirituality, young men find little role for the institutional church in assisting them with their relationships with only 20 percent indicating that they needed support from the church to help form relationships whilst only 23 percent indicated that they would listen to the church when it talks about moral issues such as contraception and pre-marital sex. When asked the question 'What is the key role for spirituality for you?', two students responded:

Relationships around you. How you act around others develops your spirituality and what you believe. (IPS12)

Especially yes, at the same gender school. Issues around opposite sex, etc, need to be looked at. Friends can change, spirituality can help this. (NCS02)

It was interesting to note that whilst many spoke about opposite sex relationships, one young man did speak confidentially about his issue around being gay or not and that he felt that whilst some people (a counsellor) at his same sex school were supportive, Church and religion would definitely not be. This demonstrated that the

young men in the study did see a strong connection between sex and relationships, one of their key elements of spirituality, although their understanding of relationships and sex went beyond the Church's understanding that sex should only be considered as a part of marriage.

Some key components would be, I guess, offering opportunities for boys to take time back from their schedule and from the traditional aspects of their school, particularly a school like ours, and promote an opportunity for them to look at themselves and look at their relationships and look at how their life has unfolded so far, I guess what they want, how their life in the future, so that would be one component. (SPP01)

Relationships obviously can be very complex and I think that relationships development, particularly relationships with self, is a critical component of spirituality. (NCP01)

Family is key to spirituality. Spirituality is about making choices about relationships, how your spirit connects with another spirit. Relationships yes, social justice yes, environment yes. (NCS12)

When asked what he would spend most of his time on in counselling, NCC01 responded:

It would be relationships, so what's going on with the girlfriend and the second one would be dealing with mum and dad. So, they would be the key ones, the key personal issues. (NCC01)

All counsellors and principals established a very strong and powerful link between the role of relationships in the spirituality of the individual Year 12 boy and the role of the counsellor in terms of right relationships. All principals said it was imperative that counsellors and leaders in school have an understanding of the mission of the school and the role of spirituality and that counsellors were central to this understanding.

The following quotes demonstrate the strong and powerful link between spirituality and relationship and the central role played by the counsellor:

It's essential. Essential in the sense that if we're starting with life experience, relationship's the key. You can't live a life without being in a relationship. It begins with relationship with parents or guardians and through to developing friendships and then to that stage of life where those relationships are extending out to if you like, more intimate relationships. But I think in the process of developing an understanding of relationships in spirituality, I look at St Brendan's and I see that some of the relationships that, some of the things about St Brendan's in relationships are very positive. It's wonderful and it's earthy and it's real and if you tap into that, you've got a rich starting point for a growth experience for kids. (SBP01)

When asked by the researcher ‘Do I hear you say that a counsellor is essential in this process of spirituality and right relationships?’, principals responded as follows:

I’ve had a kid in my office wanting to share something of their story and handling that, okay, we can try to do it on best intentions and gut feelings but at some point, there are times when you need to say I need to check my thinking against someone with some, if you like, background and understanding and professional qualifications. I think that probably one of the greatest and richest assets of having counsellors in this environment. The other thing we’re left with is counsellors that have an understanding of the mission of the college, if you like, and it’s not simply narrowly defined as counsellor in the traditional model, it’s counselling very much in line with the values of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition and I think that’s where the great benefit is in this place.
(SBP01)

This response articulates the need for counsellors in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition who understand the need to integrate spirituality with counselling and be supportive of the values of the school. It also represents the need for counsellors to be qualified. The following quote also supports this view:

I think the role of a counsellor is to aid the development of right relationships. We often talk about, that’s been part of an Edmund Rice statement and I suppose it’s a cultural characteristic that’s implicit in the charter. The role of the counsellor is developing those right relationships and I think most issues for kids are around that whole area of relationships, the falling out of relationships, not

even establishing relationships and I think that's the role of a counsellor.

(NCP01)

Student responses that summarised this link between counselling, right relationships and spirituality are:

When a close family member has been very ill and how the family was able to pull together and strengthen my relationships with them and the person who was sick. (GTS02SP)

In Year 7 a dear friend of mine died of cancer. For me this occurrence was a spiritual one in that during the mourning process I was able to bond more closely with my other friends. (NCS10)

Definitely, yes. Counsellors can help problems. We can do something about the problem before it becomes bigger. (IPS08)

Only 9 percent of the young men interviewed indicated they would see a priest before a counsellor (Table 7.3) if they had problems with relationships and over 90 percent said that it is essential to have a counsellor in the school (Table 7.6). One hundred percent of the students interviewed indicated that the counsellor was accepted in their school. Only 11 percent said that they would never go to a counsellor. The top three reasons the Year 12 boys gave for seeing a counsellor were about relationships, with well over 50 percent of the respondents saying that family problems, bullying and girlfriends/relationships issues the most quoted reason for seeing a counsellor (Table 7.7).

In terms of relationships with students in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, the role of teachers, counsellors and leaders has changed significantly. As mentioned earlier, the work of Fowler (1981, 1984) was a significant development in how mainstream churches attempted to understand faith development and the differences between faith and spirituality. It was revolutionary in that it challenged church leaders and educationalists to reappraise the simplistic linear approach radically where it was assumed that faith was handed on from one generation to another, and that the enculturation of faith was dependant on the grace of God and that young people, in particular, could not contribute much to the process. Sectarian institutions, such as Catholic schools, were central to what critics would call ‘an indoctrinating process’ (O’Murchu, 2000.)

The Christian educational systems of the past used formal religious education classes to inculcate a sense of belonging and identity as early as possible in the young person, hoping for a formal and lasting commitment by the time adolescence was reached and the young people left school. Fowler was the first to demonstrate the danger and futility of this approach.

The young men in the study reflect Fowler’s thoughts in their genuine responses to the questions on spirituality. They indicate that spirituality at any time of life is a complex issue that requires a trusting and supportive environment that encourages relationship and questioning. For the young men in the study, they must negotiate the complex issues of spirituality whilst also coming to grips with demands of adolescence. True faith is about doubt negotiated, not about doubt avoided (O’Murchu, 1997, p. 9). The old approach of religious instruction, which had the early stages of Kohlberg moral

theory (punishment and guilt) as its premise, is now completely obsolete in terms of spiritual journey. The new spiritual agenda requires a new set of investigative process as there is no clearly delineated stages for young men. Instead of being locked into stages and learning about spirituality, they desire spiritual experiences that they can interpret and the assistance of key adults in their interpretation.

7.8 Spirituality, counselling adolescents and social justice

At this stage, an understanding of social justice would be important. In terms of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, it is a call to action so as to identify what is unjust, challenge the structures that cause the injustice and provide sustainable change so as to allow all people to live out the Gospel message ‘to live life to the full’.

It can be expressed in terms of SAAA: SOLIDARITY—Being at one with the poor and the marginalised; AWARENESS—Knowing enough about people and their journey so as to know how to help; ADVOCACY—Doing something to support people in their desire for change; and ACTION—Meaningfully and successfully bringing about change.

The following messages of social justice, as reflected in the Charter, are consistent with the students’ approach to social justice. One of the eleven cultural characteristics is ‘Being Just’ and indicates that ‘Justice is Integral to the vision of the kingdom’. The approach to Justice calls for a hands-on approach as indicated further in the Charter:

- A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition acts justly. This is reflected consistently in its structures and processes.

- The curriculum and activities of the school enable students to experience and value a critical awareness of social justice issues.
- The school provides opportunities for each member to be active in identifying and alleviating forms of injustice in and beyond the school community.
- Networks of solidarity, within and beyond the school, are encouraged in the seeking of justice for all within the community.

Another cultural characteristic of the Charter that helps to explain the concept of social justice that is embraced by the young men in the survey is ‘At the Margins: Edmund Rice, following Jesus, sought out the Marginalised’. It is explained as follows:

- A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition stands in solidarity with those who are powerless and marginalised.
- As a practical expression of this solidarity, the school strives to provide access to those who otherwise would not seek enrolment.
- The school will not preclude the enrolment of a Catholic student on the basis of financial inability.
- The school programs are designed to empower all members, especially the marginalised, to participate with dignity and confidence.

The following is a student response that validates this. FG refers to A focus group (FG) was a meeting of all students and counsellors at the conclusion of the individual interviews. One of the members of the focus group said:

The major part of our spiritual part of our school would be a commitment to social justice. We see that as very important in our school. (IPFG12)

This statement is reflected both in the survey research and in the individual responses. As only 3 percent of students indicated that social justice was not a spiritual issue with which he could connect (Table 7.5), they would indicate a more traditional approach to spirituality would be helpful for them, whilst 34 percent of students indicated that material possessions were more important than spirituality (Table 7.1). No principal or counsellor disagreed that social justice was an issue that needed to be addressed when looking at issues of spirituality for the boys, as expressed in the following quotes:

Certainly ... ah ... home, like you can tell kids who come out of a strong social justice centre at home by even just the way they talk, the way they occasionally ... here we have boys express those socially just principles just in the way they deal with other people by preventing bullying preventing ... ah ... they want to get involved in the collections for the sick and the poor and some kids want to sponsor overseas kids and they come with that sense of how to do this but they're even exploring their own about what this means to them and certainly the more opportunity that they are given and that the environment values that they take it on. (SBC01)

From my knowledge of the boys here, I think social justice, the key component of spirituality is actually getting to know self through others. That to me is critical and to get a sense of self by mixing with others so social justice certainly provides that capacity for people to walk in others' shoes and I think you move the students in terms of their view of social justice, in terms of justice as opposed to charity and that's what we try to work on here, that to me is critical.

So, social justice takes them out of their comfort zone, allows them to see other people and we had a kid the other day was talking about the fact that he talked to this fellow he normally wouldn't speak to and this fellow was about 24-25 and they had a very common experience in the sense up to Grade 12. His words were, so what I see in him now is me because he was like me. He just took, something happened to him, that's all and so it's that capacity. (NCP01)

By saying 'getting to know himself through others' the Nudgee principal taps into the existing definition of spirituality as articulated for this research. It also highlights the idea that not the entire spiritual journey for young men is joyous, something agreed to by students when they shared their spiritual moments of grief. A student shares his thoughts on this:

It would be because in terms of the whole issue about what's the world about and how they fit into that, knowing, knowing the issues about themselves and also knowing about the fact that there are people who they need to support in different ways, it is important and I see, I must say, I see social justice and relationship as very much intertwined there. The environment is there too, but social justice and relationship I would see the boys would see it as important. (GTS05)

An important element to come out of the research was the importance for some structured program of service learning. All five schools were involved in such programs that included a social justice immersion trip to South Africa and various outreaches to homeless poor and marginalised and the elderly.

The South Africa Australia Alive program is a modern example of an approach that young men in Catholic schools in The Edmund Rice Tradition found relevant to their spiritual journey as it contained the following components:

- Eco Spirituality by way of a visit to Krueger National Park where spirituality was integrated with the environment.
- Social Justice as per the Charter was expressed with a very demanding Edmund Rice Camp challenging the young men to give all their time and energy for one week to young HIV aids orphans who were living in refugee centres.
- Sound psychological debriefing process allowed them to maximise the advantage of the experiences by looking closely at how significant experiences affected their image of themselves, their relationships with others and their relationship with their God.

As one counsellor said:

One of the most amazing things I see on retreats is at the end of the night when you say, hey, everyone can go to bed or you can just stay here in this place, that more than half of the boys in our groups that go on retreats will stay in a sacred space and just stare at candles without any conversation. Like that to me is really indicative of what's going on because that's the time when they're thinking, really taking in that part of, I don't know, I guess internalising that there's issues that go with it. So it's about that it builds, that it's not just one off. (GTC02)

These programs provide an avenue for each of the young men to express their spirituality which was connected through social justice as individuals and then share it with peers.

Programs such as the above were highly valued by principals, counsellors and students with all focus groups mentioning that they were proud of what their school was achieving in the area of social justice and that these programs were essential if the school was going to be a socially just one. The connection to spirituality for all concerned was automatic:

You bring people on board who can run with all that stuff so the social justice stuff is probably, in the kids' minds, if you were to ask them, they would, it would be the top of their list in terms of what happened around here, they'd say Milperra, they'd say street retreats, they'd talk about that stuff. And it does, and particularly in a school like this, we're a fairly affluent society. In day-to-day, the kids are not exposed to what it means to come from a low socio-economic background; they don't understand what it means to really want. That's a gross generalisation, we do have kids who really do get that but as a general rule, I suppose, we don't, we don't and we need to, the kids need to understand that we are privileged, we need to understand what that means. So, I think, in terms of social justice programs, it's almost more important in a place like this. (GTC01)

It was apparent in the study that respondents have a concept of social justice based on their own experience. A typical comment from a focus group was:

I think I'd probably, I'd go over the social justice side of the school, the big brekkies, the St Vinnies and all the different things we run here. I'd touch on the retreats, the immersion units that are optional, compulsory, now I think, and I'd say how important it is in the development of kids, how Terrace does offer them, not just the academic side but also the spiritual side, that we can grow, kids know who we are and more about ourselves. I'd really point out about how important it is though. I'd make a pretty big point of that. (GTFG)

In recent times, distinguishing between Justice and Charity has become a significant issue for a wide range of people including theologians, church and school leaders and people who do attend regular church services or values based schools, if for no other reason than to understand the political ramifications of a social justice stance. Justice and charity are both rooted in the social dimensions of the Gospels. Both reflect the same Gospel mandates. The Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount and such parables as the Last Judgment, the Good Samaritan, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, these and dozens of comparable passages inspire acts of justice and charity.

Both can be powerful Christian responses to human need. The dividing line between them is often blurred and, in reality, many a response is a dynamic blend of justice and charity. For descriptive purposes, however, some people find it useful to see charity in terms of giving direct aid and justice in terms of correcting structures.

I use the following story and explanation as quoted in the Principal's Section of the *Ignatius Park College Annual 2002*. It helps clarify the difference between justice

and charity and why the call to social justice is more challenging than the call for a charitable response:

Once there was a believing, religious community that was situated beyond a bend in a large river. Children playing by the river noticed three bodies floating by: one was dead, another was injured and a third was a starving and very sick child. The members of the community respectfully buried the body, put the injured in hospital and gave the child to the foster care of loving parents. Each day, more bodies floated down the river and the community of religious believers meticulously cared for each of them. The community developed elaborate systems of pastoral care, some even gave up their jobs to attend full time to these unfortunate victims. The community felt a healthy pride in its generosity and gained much praise from neighbouring communities, yet no one thought to go up the river to see why the bodies were floating down each day.

This story demonstrates the difference between charity and addressing social justice and inequality issues, about getting out of our comfort zones and asking the hard and dangerous question – ‘Why is this atrocity happening?’ Anyone seeking justice must become upset enough to dislocate from the community and go up the river to discover why there are homeless, injured and dead bodies. The one who has true understanding of social justice is the one who is prepared to look at the system – the economic, social, political, religious dimensions that advantages some and disadvantages others. New insights must change our hearts towards confronting social justice issues such as poverty, inequality, war, racism, sexism and the lack of concern for ecology. We must ask the difficulty

question, 'What is it that causes injustice', and what is it that challenges our complicity in an inequitable social order. (Ignatius Park College, Townsville School Annual, 2002, p. 7)

The young men in this study expressed a desire to participate in a spiritual journey that will lead to self-discovery and the reaching of his own potential as a loving and relational person. They also appeared to be searching for practical ways to express this spiritual journey and ensure that it was not egocentric and inward looking. One of the great challenges for the young men in this study was the development of a framework that could articulate an appropriate response that could lead to appropriate action that came from this sense of needing to be a socially just person whose actions are based on a personal spirituality. As one principal said:

Opportunities for reflection are something that young people really value and giving them the opportunity to do that, they really, more than respect it, they take it on board and do that quite well. Something to do with being, spirituality, something to do with being part of making the world a better place is something that young people are. (SPP01)

Authors such as Ranson (2002), Tacey (1997, 1998, 2000) and O'Murchu (1997, 2000) all agree with the research findings in terms of a key question 'why are so many young people committed to spirituality and the practical expression of it by way of social justice? The young men in this study, I believe, are making a strong stand against a mainstream secular culture that has materialism as its cornerstone. Economic and philosophical rationalism have not been able to take the place of the inward spiritual journey. Young people's spirituality is a living counter cultural stance against

secularism and consumerism. Even when offered powerful conflicting forces such as technology, drugs and egocentric entertainment, young men in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition saw the embarking on the spiritual journey to find out who they are and how they will relate in an ever changing and complex world a priority.

So, how can this strong need of the young people be met? The schools in the study attempted to meet the needs of the young men by developing social justice programs. These programs would have impacted significantly on the young people's responses. It is important to unpack these programs so as to try and understand from where some of the 'spiritually counter culture stance' is coming

7.9 Spirituality, counselling adolescents and the environment

No living thing exists independently. Each organism depends on and provides for other organisms as part of an ecosystem. The environment itself is not a static reality, but a vibrant system that sustains varied life forms and at the same time is in relationship to them. They are shaped by it, but they in turn alter it and give it a distinctive character. The relationship that exists among these living things and their environment is one of interdependence. (Hamma, 1999, p. 123)

Hamma (1999) goes on to say that human beings are not the centre of an ecological interdependent system. Neither are they observers of many such systems. They are within these systems and in relationship as interdependent beings connected to the greater ecosystems of place, region and that of the earth.

This core message of Hamma's (1999) was explored in the research with students agreeing with it, even if their understanding of it was simplistic and their examples more of a reflection of their own physical experiences rather than a deep understanding of all the issues contained within:

As I am a surfer being in touch with Mother Nature and the environment is very important to me. Whilst sitting out in the ocean and taking it all in, the waves, the sunshine and the beauty of our earth. Every time I surf I feel spiritually in touch with environment and myself. (SPS10)

Environment is who we are as people. The environment reflects us, I feel passionate about this environment and relationships. (IP09)

Only 15 percent of the students surveyed indicated that they disagreed with the statement 'The environment is a spiritual issue with which I can connect' and only 9 percent disagreed with the statement 'The plight of our planet is a concern of mine' (Table 7.5).

Comments from counsellors and students showed that the environment is an issue that cannot be ignored when looking at spirituality of Year 12 boys:

More boys would connect with environment than they would with institutional, dogmatic church. So more kids would have special experiences on a surf board, or catching a wave or body surfing or skiing or looking at a sunset than they would being in a church. (GTC02)

Being home, on horseback enjoying the view along the escarpment rather than being in chapel. Top guard of the Young Endeavour race full wind and waves.
(SBS07)

The contrast of spiritual experiences outside the realms of chapels and churches was obvious in the research. The following response indicates the depth of some responses looking at the role of environment in spirituality.

A few holidays ago, my father and myself scaled Mt Barney. The walk was really long and I'd never done anything like it before. It was probably the most time I'd spent with dad in a long time – we had been previously growing apart. When we reached the top and had lunch – looking at the view of the gorge – this was a fully spiritual moment for me. It made me feel so grateful for the father I had and our love and bond for each other had never been so close before.
(STS05)

On a holiday I climbed a mountain near the harbour to its highest point. The experience of looking out over the sea was a spiritual one. (SBS02)

When asked why it was a spiritual experience, student SBS02 responded that it was because he felt the presence of God, something he does not feel when, as a boarder, he is made to go to church each Sunday. This supported the importance to the openness of a transcendental force as being a part of the definition of spirituality. This key component is also supported by the principal of the same school:

The environment, if the environment is critical and I think it's something that is probably on the up and up and I believe that there are many kids that can begin to relate to the environment and I think that certainly within this context, our focus on the environment and on particularly coming through, in terms of God's plan for the environment and the desecration of the environment and then our role in terms of, sorry, the role of young men, kids, sorry, in recognising that they do have a responsibility for the environment in terms of God's plan. And I think that to me is a key component. (SBP01)

Paul Collins (1995) sums up the responses of the students when discussing the environment and their spirituality by saying:

The beauty of nature and wilderness has become vitally important for the spirituality of many people. It is increasingly in the cathedral of the environment that our contemporaries are rediscovering a way into the realm of the transcendent; they are discovering the sacred presence that stands behind the natural world.... There is only one non-negotiable, and that is that we have only one world – this one – and it is here and nowhere else that we will find God. If we destroy the world, we destroy not only ourselves but the important symbol of God that we have. (p. 3)

The search for spirituality is alive for young people and the environment is a key part of that connection. Collin's image of the 'Cathedral of the Environment' resonates with the young people as it makes a connection to the Sacred by using the religious term 'Cathedral' yet allows the young people to interpret their own spirituality according to their own experience in Nature. Whereas church and parish used to be an intersection of

spirituality, this intersection will now more likely occur through the environment. The vast majority of student respondents indicated that spirituality is alive but religion is dead and that spirituality is more important for their identity than religion. Of the young men surveyed, 54 percent said that it was possible to be a 'religion less Christian' whilst only 23 percent said the religion was essential to becoming a spiritual person (Table 7.4). The following quotes from some of the young men expressed their relationship with their God in terms of spirituality and the environment, rather than more formalised religion:

There is something or someone looking out for you, an external power or an external feeling. Spirituality is to work out how God can make this happen. Environment has a strong spirituality emphasis. I feel God the most in nature. (SPS13)

I think more trips into the environment would be helpful because lots of people see God through the environment and through Mother Nature and stuff like that so I think a lot more trips down the beach and just trips into the environment would help a lot because we've got it there so we might as well use it. (SBS02)

As well as being consistent with the student understanding of spirituality I make a further link to religion, implying that religion has some obligation to the environment. (IPS11)

In terms of spirituality, more trips in the religions lessons in the environment. A different feeling in the environment, the connection with God comes to me in the environment. (IPS11)

To be yourself. Not to be who you are not, not who you want to be and you have to work out that you can be who you are not what others want you to be and try and make you be that. Without the environment, we do not live, we die. Go the greenies. To be spiritual, you need to connect with close friends. (SPS07)

Educational leaders of the future cannot ignore the emerging role of the environment in terms of young people's spirituality. The future of the planet is a huge concern for young people.

Dualisms of any nature are becoming irrelevant. Only 19 percent of students, 16 percent of counsellors and 0 percent of principals indicated it was not important to them whether a person was a Catholic or not (Table 7.4). Spiritual dualisms such as Heaven and Earth or the need to be saved or damned are also irrelevant with only 9 percent of students, 0 percent of counsellors and 0 percent of principals indicating that they do need religion to save their soul (Table 7.4).

Dualisms significantly compromise the spiritual journey of young people who are now looking for unity, with each other and with the planet. Dualistic and divisive language needs to be replaced with language that speaks of story, interdependence, belonging and negotiation.

7.10 Counselling: a part of the spiritual journey

The young men in the study made it very clear that counselling was essential to their life's journey and that it should be integrated to what is important in their lives. They want to be empowered to be an active part of the process and if spirituality is

important in their lives, then counselling can be linked to it. This is consistent with their definition of spirituality as the young men indicated that spirituality could assist in connecting with others and create a sense of belonging. It was also felt that spirituality was an important instrument for self-discovery and sometimes life's circumstances (death, divorce and break down of relationships) meant that you cannot or should not deal with things by your self

Students' responses to the question of what the role of counsellors is in their lives and whether there was any connection with spirituality are shown in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6 Counselling as a part of spirituality

Student Responses
It is essential to have a counsellor in a school (92%) or it is a luxury (8%)
The counsellor is accepted at school (100%) or no one would ever go to a counsellor (-)
I would go to a counsellor if necessary (89%) or I would never go to a counsellor (11%)
I would go to a counsellor that I would trust (79%) or I would go to any counsellor (21%)
I would want to see results (29%) or I would want to feel good (71%)
I would work individually with the counsellor (87%) or I would rather work in a group (13%)
I would rather a counsellor that accepted me (96%) or just told me what to do (4%)
I would expect the counsellor to work with me (96%) or I do all the work (4%)
I would expect that the counsellor would judge me (43%) or not Judge me as a person (57%)
I would expect change if I saw a counsellor (58%) or change would not be important (42%)
I think goals would be important (82%) or just go with the flow (18%)
Motivation from the counsellor is important (80%) or I would be self- motivated (20%)
Non-verbal communication would be important (50%) or all verbal communication (50%)
I would expect my case to be unique (73%) or a set approach would be used (27%)
I would want to be involved in the process (98%) or I would just sit back and watch (2%)

Students interviewed had a strong sense that a counsellor is needed in an all boys' school with 92 percent of them indicating that it is essential to have a counsellor. One hundred percent of the students said that the counsellor in the school community was accepted with 89 percent saying they would go to a counsellor if necessary. The most common reasons given for seeing a counsellor were family problems, bullying and relationship issues (see Table 7.7).

Table 7.7 Issues for counselling

Issue	Number of Responses
1. Family problems	42
2. Bullying	37
3. Girlfriends/relationships	35
4. Drug/alcohol related problems	20
5. Career Guidance	20
6. Depression/self esteem problems	14
7. Life's daily stresses	12
8. School work and homework	12
Problems and overall pressure of work	
9. Alienation/friendship groups	11
10. Social problems/peer pressure	9
11. General guidance/someone to listen	8
12. Death or illness of family member or friend	7
13. Sexuality	7
14. Divorce of parents	4
15. Bad school marks	3
16. Abuse – physical or sexual	3
17. Smoking	2
18. Problems with teacher(s)	2
19. Attitude problems	1
20. Too many commitments	1
21. Problems in the workplace	1

The following are some student responses that reflect the importance of a counsellor:

Yes, when you have issues in your life you have to talk to someone. Those who don't have good family or mates need a counsellor. You have to accept things and take responsibility for your own life. (SPS07)

Yes, people have issues. Often times you can't talk to your mates, you need professional help. (GTS10)

This a most significant response in that it demonstrates that young males who have a strong connection with mates recognise the need for more professional support at various times in their lives.

Another response, as expressed by the following quotes, is the need for the provision of a safe psychological space for young men to express their feelings, something important in their search identity.

Yes, being an all boys' school some people can't express feelings and emotions. Bullying is an issue a counsellor can help with, someone a person can go to, it's because it's not seen as dobbing because a counsellor can't tell and will deal with it discreetly but will listen and help people to deal with the situation and relate to the situation. (IPS03)

You just want a counsellor who takes you as yourself and treats you as a unique person. (SBFG07)

Yes, especially in forms. This boy spoke about an issue where a boy had a dream. He thought that as a result of the dream, he may be homosexual, some of his mates were setting him up with online people, he didn't know how to handle it. It was important that this guy was able to see a counsellor. (NCS06)

Understandably, principals and counsellors saw the need for counsellors in an all boys' school. Counselling was very much seen as being integrated into the response for boys' needs based on a sound understanding of developmental theory (Erickson, Kohlberg and Fowler most noticeably) with cognitive behavioural therapy being the psychotherapeutic intervention of choice:

I suppose there would be two things that I'd be keen on. One would be having someone who could take on more of a role of doing more of the ongoing therapy which can be quite intense and take up a lot of time for some situations. I do have someone that I do a bit of referral to outside the school, well, a few people but one in particular, so it works well in that when someone's not doing so well and having family hiccups and things like that, to be able to spend a lot of time helping that family to get together. It's difficult for me to be getting involved with those things as well as the day to day stuff at school and so something's got to miss out and sometimes I'm spending a lot of time with the families and the kids at school don't get to see me and they get frustrated. So, if I could have another person who could be on call and who was respected by the kids and had

some sort of, who was respected in the school process, to sort of go into those situations and help monitor progress as the need was there for the families. CBT therapist would be really, really great. (SPC01)

For general behaviour stuff I know that the theory is that you use a lot of cognitive behaviour and I mean it works. (SBC01)

All counsellors and principals were very quick to identify a strong link between counselling and spirituality. Both were seen as holistic concepts that have a particular relevance in schools that professed a strong values base. The links between the two were made more relevant by developmental theory as both counselling and spirituality were seen as ways of becoming a better person and dealing with issues in a mature and sensitive way:

I think that if the answers to the issues can be linked to where the individual is in terms of his spiritual growth and the challenges can be linked to stages of growth and the kid can be shown that really what the kid is going through in terms of relationship issues, this is really a part of your developing who you are and these challenges are fairly natural, what happens in difficult times and the counsellor can do that, then it would certainly allow the kids to understand that this is not something unusual. (NCP01)

Here, the St Brendan's principal makes a strong link to counselling being based on the developmental domains that were discussed previously:

I've been sort of conscious of the fact I can recognise that very different stages of developing and there's a whole lot of theoretical models that I think are useful to try to, to come from a counsellor perspective and a psychologist's perspective which are useful for also tapping into and understanding spirituality and its growth. So to dismiss that, particularly with a resource sitting there like that, you're mad. (SBP01)

The following counsellor was very strong on using spirituality in times of grief as it provided scaffolding with which the young man was familiar to help him handle the situation himself, rather than rely solely on others in difficult times:

Going back to the grief stuff I use a lot of spirituality stuff there because you actually, it's one of those things where you don't have any clear explanation, you can't fix the problem, no amount of therapy can bring back the loved one and all that sort of stuff. So you have got to try and put things in a frame, things in a broad well using very spiritualistic things, you tap into their sense of what they believe. (SBC01)

A very strong connection was drawn, especially by counsellors and principals but also by some students, on a particular quality that a counsellor must have in terms of spirituality. It is summed up in this response:

I'd like to answer that question [is there a connection between spirituality and counselling?] by saying that being a counsellor in a Catholic boys' school requires a certain sort of a person and I think to do that, you need to really have

a bit of a spiritual sense as opposed to a counsellor in a hospital or Centrelink or somewhere like there. I think that you're dealing with boys who are building their characters, building their personality, building their spirituality so you're dealing with the whole person over a growing period of time so I think that it's important to incorporate the two otherwise you're missing out on a whole fabric of working with the student and I think acknowledging the spiritual side of things and I often find myself saying on a spiritual level, you know, what do you think about this or that sort of thing and each time, surprisingly, I do get an answer. I don't know why I'm surprised but, and I think people underestimate teenage boys and the depth in which they think about these issues, and I think that we can contribute more in terms of spirituality for boys at high school.

(IPC01)

A principal said that integrating spirituality with counselling was essential because:

If you look at spirituality as being authentically the quest to be authentically human, I think ultimately authentic human beings are ultimately good together, what connects us and makes us real is far more important than what divides us. I suppose conceptually we've looked at it, when we look at pure authentic human experience, it's connected ultimately in the boundaries of human life, birth, death, love, passion, art, beauty. It's the things that connect all human beings. Yet, the artificial constructs of race, gender, religion, politics, the things that we've traditionally used as a wall to divide us and I suppose created inequity in

our world, they're not real, they're not actually authentic of human conditioning.

(SBP01)

This was a student's response when asked about the role of spirituality and counselling:

Really relevant. You can bottle things up and be people that you are not. People who try to fit in where they are not needed. You can see glimpses of who you really are. Spirituality helps you to discover who you are and be who you are, that is very important. (IPS04)

A specific way that counselling and spirituality could be combined was articulated by a principal who said:

Yeah, I do and I think it's probably again a little unique, like, the counsellor is directly involved in those retreat programs either debriefing kids, working with kids, facilitating part of the program or debriefing staff on all of that and I think when you get into those areas that we've got into, I think there's a strong link in all those. And sometimes what can come up in those things are some things that can surprise kids and can surprise the adults so, they're instrumental in all of that and managing some of that, I think. [The principal here is referring to religious retreat programs and other social justice initiatives such as breakfast programs for the homeless and immersion programs whereby counsellors have direct contact with the mainstream school population.]

(GTP01)

Another counsellor had a strong view on the integration:

I think they walk hand in hand. Spirituality for me is about how a person sees themselves and connected to, as part of their world, part of society, relationships with people, relationship with their God, so, all the really important things in life. So when people come to counselling, it's often when some aspect in there is out of whack, so it could be something to do with relationships with other people, it can be about self worth, which is out of whack and so that's why they come to see me so the true meaning of the word spirituality to me is about the spirit and about how happy they are in this world in relation to themselves and other people and their God. When things are going well there and things are balanced, no-one needs a counsellor. It's only when things get a bit skewed, they come my way so it's pretty important. (SPC01)

It is obvious that the transpersonal paradigm mentioned earlier (Josephson & Peteet, 2004) pushes the boundaries of any distinction between psychology and spirituality. Until the advent of transpersonal theory, a sharp distinction did exist in some people's minds. It became obvious from the response of the counsellors and the articulated needs of the students themselves, that transpersonal psychology is in the unique position of being able to offer a psychological approach to human experience that is integrative and fully inclusive of spirituality. The strong message that I believe the young men are saying in their responses is that their identity, as opposed to their surface or false identity, is spiritual in nature. Any counselling technique that does not consider those in a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition will be incomplete and fragmentary.

7.11 Conclusion to chapter

This chapter has analysed both the quantitative and qualitative results of the study. The five key themes that emerged from five significant ideas were thoroughly explored. It was obvious that even though the role of the Church is diminishing and distinctions between church and spirituality are being made, young men in this study were still searching for something spiritual. The traditional entry points established by the Church that assisted the young man's spiritual journey of Parish, family and religious instruction at schools are being replaced by concepts around the environment, social justice and a broader network of relationships. It should be noted, however, that a most compelling argument against this increasing trend of separating religion from spirituality is put forward by Ranson (2002) who argues strongly for their complete integration.

In the main, when young people talked about living an ethical lifestyle where the prompting question was about religion, they did not elaborate on the actual value content of that lifestyle, frequently assuming that it was well known. At that stage in the interview, that question was not probed too deeply, as there were plenty of other opportunities in the interview to discover the nature of these values. Hence, in the analysis of the religious responses, the focus was principally on how young people described their relationship with God and with the Church.

The real issue here for Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition is the linking in with the rich and diverse traditions and story of formal religion whilst developing a model of church that is relevant and meeting the needs of the young men who are so obviously open to being taken on a spiritual journey that will assist with self

discovery. As previously noted, historically, many people experienced religion through the Parish or religious denomination school within the context of a society that supported the mainstream practise of religion. Now young people's search for spirituality tells them that their interpretation is just as valid as that of Church. This has meant that, in the eyes of young people, religion and spirituality have become one of the great dualisms and this dualism has lead some young people to the conclusion that 'I am spiritual not religious'.

Leadership in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition will need to understand that things that may appear, initially, as opposites may appear in tension but this tension can lead to unity, thus avoiding the dualism of spirituality and religion. A mature, integrated and holistic framework is achieved when spirituality and religion connect. When they split, they become an entity in themselves and each half becomes a characteristic of itself. This means that when spirituality does not connect it is not deepened or grounded and when religion does not connect we can act without being awake or enlivened – then religion can become rigid and dogmatic.

Ranson would indicate that those who just want spirituality without religious tradition will miss the opportunity for rich interpretation and those who just want religion without spirituality will be dogmatic, defensive and closed to new interpretations. We need to keep the two together in an organic growing holistic cycle (Ranson, 2002, pp. 19-22).

Ranson (2002) has spent a lot of time interpreting and deconstructing this issue. It could be argued that this was done to respond to the growing number of authors (O'Murchu, 1997, 2000; Tacey, 1997, 1998, 2000) who are comfortable with young people who see that it is appropriate to develop a spirituality that is divorced from

religion. Increasingly, this is also the view of young men in Edmund Rice schools. If teachers, principals and counsellors are going to be genuinely relevant to the spiritual journey of these young men then they must be cognisant of this significant cultural shift.

The next, and final, chapter of the study will briefly summarise the thesis, make recommendations for leadership of Edmund Rice schools and look at some of the implications of the recommendations.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Introduction to Conclusion

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, remembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was from the beginning;
At the source of the longest waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree
Not know, because not looked for
But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
Between two waves of the sea.
Quick now, here, now, always –
A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
When the tongues of flame are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.
(Eliot, 1963, pp. 222-223)*

My interpretation of this poem is that, at a personal level, we are on a journey of becoming who we are, and we can never say, 'this is it. I have arrived'. This is especially true for the adolescent young men mentioned in 'One Friday Afternoon' in

Chapter 1, who continue to negotiate strong and competing forces to establish their identity. What is clear is that they are open to significant adults in their lives being co-investigators, people who they trust, respect and go to for guidance when they need some assistance with the more difficult questions or situations that life will present to them. This study is about these young men and their journey and the finding of the most appropriate way to assist them in this journey of identity discovery. This is done within a context they all share, that is, the context of a faith base to education as provided by Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition. It is also clear that the above quote is applicable for the co-investigators or counsellors; those adults who are privileged to be invited to be a part of the adolescents' journey to self discovery

It is interesting to note the effect of the recently completed World Youth Day on the ongoing spiritual journey of the young. Whilst it has been heralded a success, significant questions now exist about the follow-up that is required. Much anecdotal research indicates that schools, unintentionally, now provide alternate church for the young. This, combined with young people leaving mainstream religions, such as the Catholic Church, for more dynamic Pentecostal groups, such as Hillsong, poses far-reaching questions for those people who work with the young in areas of spirituality.

Integral to this search for identity for these young men is spirituality and they fully understand that, for the journey to be authentic, it will need to be challenging. In 2002, Peter Nichol森, an ex-priest working for the Christian Brothers, spoke to a group of young people about their lives. This quote from Nicholson, voicing the reply of a young person, is an excellent introduction to the conclusion of the study:

On a cold Sunday morning in a bush setting south of Perth I listened to a group of young adults talking with great honesty and intensity about their lives. They spoke about their dreams, their hopes and their search for how best to live as human beings. They talked in a way that me or my contemporaries could never have done. I asked how the Congregation of the Christian Brothers and the Edmund Rice network might help them. Amongst the replies, not the first, were the words:

All of us need to be taken beyond our comfort zone.

That is where we find human growth and human authenticity.

That is where we find love, justice and community.

That is where we find hope for ourselves and our world.

That is where we find our God. (Nicholson, 2003, p. 1).

Nicholson added this statement supporting the need for a study like the one conducted:

There are issues relating to the young people themselves. It is no secret that the vast majority of young adults find institutional religion, at the very least, somewhat irrelevant to their lives. Understandably, few organisations within the Australian Catholic Church are pursuing this ministry seriously and there are very real questions about how to proceed. What have young people to say to us, who seek to minister with them, about their needs and their perspectives? Can we develop better ways of working with them? What does formation mean in

this context and how might we go about it? What part might the Edmund Rice network play in their search for meaning? (Nicholson, 2003, p. 4)

This research project is a most significant piece of research for a wide audience range as it takes a solid look at one particular group, adolescent males, within the context of church, society and schools in transition. Within the context of Catholic schools, especially Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, a number of realities have been identified as indicative of this transition. These include a growing cynicism towards institutional religion; the disappearance of signs, symbols and the unique practices of formal religion that have been so influential on previous generations; a decline in worshipping of all age groups and an Australian society that is now more pluralistic and secular than ever before. These have been contributing factors that have led to a shift in the way the terms spirituality and religion have been used.

This has affected adolescent males in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition in that traditional entry points to religion (and therefore according to many in the past, spirituality) of Parish, religion in schools taught by priests, and family no longer exist. This does not mean that our young men are not interested in embarking on a spiritual journey that will assist them in the development of their identity. It does mean that their entry points to such a journey have changed. These entry points are now relationships (including family and peers) social justice and the environment. Leaders, counsellors and teachers in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition must now embed these new entry points into the religious dimension of the school. By doing this, schools will move towards processes and practices that are based on respect for human diversity whilst always remembering the rich traditions and stories of the past.

Another unfortunate dichotomy that has traditionally existed in schools has been one that has separated educational critical theory and the theory and practice of social work and counselling. This especially existed in the minds of some teachers who would not see the value of psychotherapeutic intervention as it detracted from key tasks of teaching and learning. It is hoped that this research has articulated the indisputable link between spirituality and counselling that exists within an educational context and applied this link to Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition in such a way that, for the welfare, care and holistic development of the young men in these schools, it cannot be ignored.

8.1.1 Addressing the research questions

The first research question was ‘To what extent is spirituality important for adolescent male students?’ Authentic spirituality and sound psychology each lead a person to a deep sense of freedom and happiness. Both challenge all to loosen the chains that bind, to love and bring life and to move in the world in a way that promotes dignity and opportunity. When we are living well psychologically, we have a healthy sense of self that overflows into our relationships and our work.

Our ability to live contented and effective lives will be based on the psychological and spiritual experience of a knowledge of ourselves that is honest and yet evokes optimism, our capacity to give and accept love, our contribution to our world and a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves.

A key aspect of psychological health is how our good sense of self and others influences how we move in the world, in our work and our community. We are able to

find meaning in our lives, our sense of purpose and the honour and integrity that each of us brings to whatever role we play. From a psychological perspective, the way we see things and what we do with our lives can lead to either happiness and freedom or it can bind us and tear down hope.

As some of the young men in the study found, life is unpredictable and, from time to time, it can deal a terrible blow. In psychological terms, this will stress our usual ability to be psychologically resilient. Cortright (1997, p. 158) referred to this as a spiritual emergency. Everyone is vulnerable to stress in greater or lesser degrees and it is impossible to live in the twenty-first century and not be subject to events that threaten our sense of self, our relationships or our ability to move in the world in an intentional and positive way. Such stresses for the young men in this study could be a loss of a job, the end of a relationship and fear about leaving school or the death of someone close. The young men in the study clearly articulated that processes like the Rite of Passage assisted greatly the transition to post-school life and that a counsellor and the concept of drawing on their own spirituality helped them considerably at times when they faced the separation of parents or the death of someone close, such as a grandparent.

One of the research questions asked, 'How can counsellors integrate a behavioural intervention appropriate to adolescent males such as cognitive behaviour therapy into their understanding of spirituality'. Sometimes pressure from the process of establishing the identity and personality of the adolescent male will lead to the development of psychological problems. Our ability to deal with stress in a resilient way will be determined by how our personality has formed since childhood. Some characteristics will be resources for us and others will be impediments. For example, an

ability to turn to friends for support rather than withdraw in times of crisis would assist us in dealing with the crisis in a resilient fashion. However, if reliance on others were to the detriment of one's own sense of competence, then over-reliance on others would be maladaptive.

From a psychological perspective, personality deficits will be slow to change but we can learn new, more adaptive ways of dealing with life. From a spiritual perspective, these traits blind us spiritually and we need to be open to transformation in our lives over time. Spiritual direction and strong and enduring spiritual friendships will facilitate our openness to psychological development.

As discussed earlier, we are now living in a point of history where people are deeply spiritual (our sense of being caretakers of our earth or part of a worldwide community) and yet, as demonstrated by the young men in the study, most may not express their spirituality with membership in a religion. As much as the psychological and the spiritual can complement each other, then our individual and collective potential will work for all to reach their potential.

8.2 Summary of study

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study. It describes the research problem and articulates research questions that will assist in the inquiry. It also provides a look at fundamental concepts for the study.

Chapter 2 looks at the concept of developmental theory and the works of some developmental theorists that will be explored. It also looks at work on the stages of

spiritual development and an introduction on how counselling can effectively use developmental theory.

Chapter 3 explored the key therapeutic framework, cognitive behaviour therapy, thus looking at research questions four to seven ‘How can spirituality be integrated into the psychotherapeutic interventions for adolescent males?’ ‘How can counsellors integrate a behavioural intervention appropriate to adolescent males such as cognitive behaviour therapy into their understanding of spirituality?’ ‘What competencies and professional techniques do counsellors need to deal with adolescent males to allow them to integrate spirituality into their work in values and faith based schools?’ ‘What are the ethical issues around integrating spirituality with conventional counselling techniques?’

Cognitive behavioural therapy is most appropriate for adolescents as it is a structured, short-term, present-oriented psychotherapy directed at solving current problems by modifying biased thinking and behaviour. It can also be adapted to different challenges facing different levels of development. Cognitive behaviour therapy also incorporates emotional and social/interpersonal domains, employs structured and manual based procedures and emphasises performance-based intervention, making it an ideal focus for any study of spiritual or professional supervision.

Chapter 4 looked at research question two, ‘What is the difference between religion and spirituality, and how are these relevant to today’s young men?’ by examining the debate occurring within many churches about any possible distinctions between religion and spirituality and the significant impact that this debate will have on young men.

Chapter 5 examines more detailed background information on the schools that participated in the study. It then looks at integrating spirituality with psychotherapy for adolescent males. It does this by focussing on transpersonal theory and the significance of the adolescent worldview. It explores the therapeutic implications of the worldview and how spirituality can be integrated into the assessment and treatment of teenage males. The other key component of this chapter is its dealing with ethical issues around spirituality and counselling and issues that need to be addressed for an effective and ethical response to psychotherapeutic issues. It addresses research questions two, three, four and five.

Chapter 6 contains the research design and methodology. It looks at both qualitative and quantitative research and the argument to combine them. Ethical issues of research in general and both research types are addressed. This chapter gives the details of the research project. It shows how the Delphi Technique was used to develop the research instrument and how the school communities participated in the study.

Chapter 7 provides a detailed analysis of the data and starts to draw important conclusions for the study. The key areas, of social justice, relationships and the environment, in this study are seen as important to the respondents the close link between counselling, and spirituality is established.

Chapter 8 draws the study together by providing a summary and looking at the insights and implications of the study. It provides findings for school principals, counsellors, teachers and network leaders in the area of counselling and spirituality for adolescent males.

The study found that young people spoke of four main tasks in the world of spirituality; clarifying their relationship with God, their relationship with the institutional dimension of religion (Church), their relationships with others and developing a lifestyle guided by values. These dimensions could be interpreted as representing traditional dimensions of religious experience – the mystical, as a relationship with a mysterious and all-powerful deity; the interpersonal, as an experience of shared vision in a community of believers, the Church; the social, where beliefs enlighten the way one should deal ethically with others, both inside and outside the community, and have a universal validity for the organisation of society.

These three tasks were undifferentiated in the thinking of the interviewees and were significant in the discussion on the difference between religion and spirituality. Belief in God was seen as a basic factor in being spiritual but not religious. However, this might have little or no consequences for a relationship with the Church, which, for most, was seen as optional. Frequently, there was no explicit mention of a connection between lifestyle and religious beliefs, although there was an underlying assumption that they were good people, trying their best. For others, belief in God provided support and inspiration in living a good life. The different concepts were sometimes held in contrast, as if one had to choose between them on an either/or rather than a both/and basis. For instance, living a good life was seen as more important than either belief in God or a commitment to the Church. For others, however, being religious required some commitment beyond a personal belief in God. Membership of the Church or leading a good life provided that commitment.

One roadblock in the development of adolescent spirituality is the fact that idealistic thinking often leads to criticism. This was tied in too many responses looking at the research questions on integrating spirituality into the psychotherapeutic interventions for adolescent males and the difference between religion and spirituality. Due to their predisposition to idealism, adolescents can easily suffer disillusion with, and disappointment in, organised religion. Yet no organisation, spiritual or otherwise, can adequately fulfil every ideal of every person. Disappointed and disillusioned young people can be fiercely critical of everyone and everything that they once held sacred. Their own difficulty in living up to their self-expectations further contributes to their disillusionment. They may begin to think that life, as they feel it should be lived within a religious context, is quite impossible, and, therefore, their only recourse is to abandon organised religion.

Adolescents tend to be more emotional than cognitive or intellectual in their interplay with the abstract. They remember feelings more readily than facts. Concerning their spiritual or religious beliefs, they know exactly how they feel about their last religious service even when they cannot remember what was said or the lesson to be learned. A young person's unpleasant feelings at religious events may exert more influence than the content of the service when it comes to whether or not he or she is drawn to a religious way of life.

The young people, counsellors and principals in the study agreed on the need to integrate spirituality with sound psychological development – spirituality was about becoming a better person, counsellors were people who were trained to help you also

achieve this, especially in the times of crisis. This makes it easy for young people to make the link.

Interviews with counsellors and principals found that it was very frustrating to see people assisting young people in personal or spiritual growth who had no psychotherapeutic knowledge or spiritual formation. Less frightening was the concept that counsellors in an Edmund Rice school would not embrace the spiritual dimension of personal growth. At the very practical level, the key areas of social justice, the environment and relationships were central to an adolescent's understanding of spirituality and the expression of it. These aspects would give them the experiences and language to grow personally and develop and share their spirituality.

8.3 Insights from the study

Any genuine Christian ministry, but particularly a ministry of education or formation which of its nature touches into the sacred area of personal growth and the search for meaning, must have as an important start-point the individual's life, personality and world.

There is an intensity about young males today in their search for identity as adults in today's world. On the surface they can seem brash, confident and sophisticated but underneath there is seriousness, fragility and aloneness. They know that the self is not built overnight, and never without some pain, and they know that there are many connections between spirituality and psychological health, but these connections will not be brought together by the institutional church. They are also more vulnerable to the

issue of suicide and the avoiding of issues by using drugs and alcohol yet are still searching spiritually. Young people also now understand that there is no standardised image of the authentic person and no sure way of getting there. They desperately want to be their authentic selves but against what does one measure authenticity? To measure oneself against any standard is regarded as tantamount to sacrificing one's individuality and hence one's authenticity. It is seen as a great travesty to impose one person's standards on another. However, this quest for the self often comes at the price of aloneness.

In the main, the young adults of the Edmund Rice schools are intolerant of doctrinal and religious language and consider it has little relevance for active Christianity or their own search for connectedness to a community. The third research question is significant, here, as there was no doubt though that there is a search for suitable language, for suitable symbolic expression and for connectedness to a community within which these issues of meaning can be explored without guilt or compulsion. Along with this is a recognition that the authentic Edmund Rice ethos has a spiritual dimension at its heart and has, as one of its main goals, the holistic health of the individual including the psychological well-being of each student.

The theologian Sandra Schneiders (1986) details three key features of post-modernism that are very relevant in the study of young people's spirituality. Firstly, it involves the loss of a unified way of seeing things and a consequent feeling of rootlessness and insignificance in the cosmic scheme of things. In the pre-modern scheme, the human being had a clear place in the world under God. In the modern view,

the human being was the centre of the world, the measure of all things. However, in the post-modern there is constant questioning rather than one clear view.

Secondly, post-modernism suggests that there are no real foundational principles upon which to base life, that one way of seeing things is as valid as any other. All is relative. Thirdly, and as a consequence of the above, there is an intolerance of meta-narratives, that is, of overarching stories that act as a key for understanding our individual stories and within which our individual stories are somehow taken up and joined. It is the meta-narrative that is the basis of community, of common beliefs or ideals and of celebration. For Christianity, obviously, the key meta-narrative is the story of Jesus of Nazareth and of the whole history of salvation. When applied in its fullness, this feature lays waste to the very possibility of a common interpretation of religious experience, thus to shared faith or the existence of a faith community (Schneiders, 1986).

Schneiders proposes a position, termed constructive post-modern, that acknowledges that there is validity in both the modern and the post-modern and which takes a critical stance towards each. This affirms that modernity made important advances in regard to such things as the recognition of human dignity, the inalienable human rights of each person, the equality of all regardless of race, colour or gender, freedom of conscience and speech, the right to participate in decisions that affect one, and so much more. Constructive post-moderns take these values from modernity but also have a corresponding critical stance to post-modernity. They recognise the validity of aspects of the critique of pre-modern religion but believe that some foundational structure is necessary for religion, for genuine and enduring spirituality, indeed, for

human community. They approach critically the meta-narrative (of Christianity) and the terms in which it has been couched, particularly the way it has been absolutised but they see the need for a meta-narrative to liberate us from hopeless nihilism.

It is interesting to approach the conversations with young people through the prism of the above insights. The research verifies the reality of post-modernism in their lives, not so much as an intentional philosophy but as a pervasive mood. The feeling of rootlessness and searching, the horizon of hopelessness or lack of meaning, the resistance to institutions, the hesitancy to adopt generalised moral positions, the difficulty with religious language and the meta-narrative of Catholicism can lead to the articulated emphasis on ecology, social justice and relationships, the openness to a variety of spiritualities; these are all manifestations of the influence of post-modernist culture.

There is also the highly personalist attitude to life – the emphasis on personal relationships, the value of individual freedom; these tend to be the heritage of the modern culture. The powerful and pervasive influence of these aspects of culture in the lives of young people should not be surprising. Church authorities and educational bodies and counsellors may be disappointed at elements of the picture and ask why the young do not reflect the traditional characteristics of ‘good Catholics’ rather than mirror the stance of so many of their peers.

The answer is simple but radical in its implications; namely, that the learning program of people’s lives is predominantly shaped by the culture which they live and breathe constantly. It is now a hidden but powerful curriculum that is there from the

beginning of life but which becomes increasingly formative as young people leave school and home to make their own path in the broader society. It follows, that unless home, school and church take account of the agenda set by the culture, their efforts are likely to be impotent and irrelevant. This is different from the past where, even with attempts to make Christianity cultural in Australia by bishops who, for a period of over one hundred years, attempted to indoctrinate the Australian public with Irish Catholicism, Christianity was never as culturally dominant as it is in places such as Italy or the Philippines. Society did, however, support overt Christian practices such as attendance at church and Sunday being a day of rest. This means that spirituality for the adolescent male can, outside of the school and family, exist and express itself within a counter cultural context or a cultural vacuum.

It is also important to note that the young people interviewed in this study were expected to be in Fowler's third stage – synthetic-conventional. A key characteristic of stage three is the recognition of multiple worlds or frames of reference. As they learn to live in multiple worlds, young people try to synthesise information and values from each of them to form a basis for their own identity. They tend to structure their world in interpersonal terms. For example, 'differences in outlook' are described as 'different types of people'. Authority is found in traditional roles or in the consensus of a valued face-to-face group.

Finally, a comment on the culture of schools (and just as importantly the need to be counter cultural) is needed. Taking account of the culture means taking up a post-modernist constructive stance. This means that a key aim will be to assist young adults to take a critical posture towards the culture; it means providing the context for

experiences that will assist them to understand it, to make judgments and to freely embrace life choices which are authentically human, life-giving and Gospel oriented. It means assisting them to exercise judgment and control over where their lives will be in tune with the culture and where they will be counter-cultural. This is a holistic process that involves all dimension of the human personality. It is a process which invites them not simply to reproduce Christianity of the past but to forge it in the current context, not for the institutional reason of keeping the organisation going but for the purpose of being fully alive.

8.4 Conclusions from the study

Teenagers have a powerful psychological need to belong – a longing that, for adolescents with a developing faith, can be channelled into a church or a specific religious denomination. Although all sorts of demands compete for teenagers' time, most youth respect a call of commitment to a group. Being held accountable by a group of caring peers and adults is, in fact, exactly what many teens are looking for in their daily lives. A structure that affords an outlet for spiritual longing only adds to their desire to be part of something that really matters. The 'belonging' that a church or religious group can provide represents stability to an adolescent struggling with feelings of 'fitting in'. These are not always the loftiest reasons for membership but they are real and should be nurtured.

The study found that there is a strong link between spirituality and counselling and that this is recognised by counsellors and school leaders. Pastoral programs, curriculum development and in-service programs all identify how this link can be recognised and enhanced. It was also found that spirituality and an understanding of

sound psychotherapeutic practices, especially in relation to the developing adolescent, are integral to the processes of staff recruitment, induction and formation. Counsellors indicated strongly that the leadership of each school should continue to resource, and in some cases increase, counselling services and work actively towards complete integration of counsellors into all aspects of schooling.

In the lives of adolescents, the search for meaning and purpose can take many detours, with many burning questions being asked such as, ‘does my life have a purpose?’, ‘is there life after death?’, ‘is there a God?’ and ‘why was I born?’ Such questions must have an opportunity for expression if teenagers are to believe in themselves. Counsellors, in collaboration with educators, must also help create a safe, non-threatening environment where adolescents can explore these existential questions. However, counsellors and teachers may be uncomfortable dealing with these types of questions and may need additional training in order to facilitate these types of discussions.

To assist counsellors in their demanding role, especially in a faith or values based school, all counsellors should receive formation in spirituality and develop a network for themselves, which will assist them in the role. They should also receive professional supervision and/or spiritual direction, especially relevant to the spiritual needs of adolescents, and work with leadership of the school and system level to develop a network of outsourced resources that can assist in the integration of spirituality into psychotherapy.

Modernity has done damage to the opportunity and capacity for wonder, silence and contemplation and any resurgence of spirituality is best understood in the light of this suppression. Somehow, the Church, too, despite its rhetoric, has become an ally of modernity in this regard, allowing much of its rich mystical tradition to be neglected. However, what is promoted within post-modernism as spirituality is not necessarily of the Gospel and not necessarily productive of human growth. It is possible that the search for the transcendent may lead simply to narcissistic self-serving.

It is therefore necessary that a challenging and integrated approach towards spirituality be developed as a whole school program. Key components of challenge and growth, as expressed by discernment and commitment, need to be integrated into this whole school approach to spirituality so that students and staff do not see spiritual and personal growth as either optional or a soft option.

This whole school approach needs to be open to a multi-faith perspective and have both a rigor that would be academic in context and challenging in terms of process and personal response. To achieve this, practices of the institutional church need to be scrutinised in accordance with modern and positive psychological development principles and that a spirit of enquiry within the context of an approach to multi-faith exploration and ecumenism be developed.

Young people today are searching for spirituality as a central component to wholeness. This spirituality will lead to an acceptance of self that celebrates and accepts challenges of the past whilst living in the present and being open to the possibilities of the future. As adults, privileged to be a part of their spiritual journey, teachers and

counsellors need to ensure that they use language that is invitational, promise oriented and allowing for imagination; not language that is deficit language or language that is judgemental, dualistic or divisive.

Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition have an obligation to teach religious education. This obligation can either help or hinder the spiritual development of the young male. It is important that all schools' religious education programs, retreat programs and liturgical celebrations reflect a holistic concept of spirituality and be firmly based on sound psychological principles. It is also essential that time for reflection be provided to older students and that staff be available to assist (by way of personal supervision) students after these times. This could be done by including meditation and quiet times for reflection into religious education programs and retreats with an emphasis on reflective processes.

Adolescents are searching for key areas to express their search for truth and identity and a holistic spirituality that will lead to psychological growth. Traditional entry points to religion and spirituality have been family, parish and the religious education program of the Catholic school. This study has identified that these entry points have been replaced with three key areas that students have identified as being integral, not only to their personal and spiritual development but essential to the expression of their spirituality. These three key areas are social justice, environment and relationships. An adolescent's spiritual journey and personal growth must be grounded by life-giving experiences and deliberate actions by educational leaders that challenge him or her to spiritual growth and maturity. This will take time and commitment from all concerned.

School leaders and counsellors need to understand the powerful role that social justice, the environment and relationships play in the spirituality of young people and provide for this in all areas of planning. This will mean an understanding that, whilst Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition will never become an alternate church, they will be the most relevant experience of church for the young people in their care. It is essential that even though they will be sometimes addressed individually, the three key elements should always be seen as integrated parts of an adolescent's spirituality.

To achieve this, each school needs to prioritise environmental sustainability in both its programs and its practices and that this becomes integrated across all curriculum areas to assist in the development of a holistic and relevant spirituality. This will require a shift in paradigm so that each school will provide opportunity for individual and communal responses to local and global issues.

The research clearly demonstrates that the schools in the study attempted to meet the needs of the young men by developing social justice programs. These programs would have significantly influenced the young people's responses. It is important to unpack these programs to try and understand from where some of the 'spiritually counter culture stance' is coming. It is central to the mission of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition that schools explore and commit to meaningful ways in which social justice can become a relevant and meaningful expression of an adolescent's spirituality. This could include a commitment to social justice immersion programs, community services projects and a commitment to the poor and marginalised within their own school.

Previously, the research problem and research questions have been discussed in the light of issues around spirituality and counselling, especially within the context of males within a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition. The findings just quoted are specific to the research findings and are, hopefully, practical ones that can be implemented and measured.

The following sections detail implications for key stakeholders in how to manage the implementation of such recommendations. It must be noted strongly, however, that even though the implications are broken down into four key groups, integration and partnership among all is essential if cultural change is to follow. There has been no attempt to include all the findings of this research paper into the following synthesis but rather an emphasis is placed on results that can lead to specific and measurable interventions.

8.5 Implications for network leaders and principals in Edmund Rice schools

On 1 October 2007, the Edmund Rice Education Australia was formed. Its role, through a council, a board and executive and regional support offices, is to provide leadership and governance for forty schools that have a collective enrolment of over 32,000 children. Network leaders refer to these people. The schools in this study that were formerly known as Christian Brothers schools are now all a part of the new network.

The challenge for network leaders in Edmund Rice Schools is to develop processes and procedures that will evaluate key components of identity within each school and assist schools to articulate key responses in this area. Renewal and review processes should have identity issues as being central to the process rather than educational resources or administrative issues. The spirituality of young men is at the core of the Mission of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition. Network leaders, by operating at the big picture level can play an essential role in this mission. The identity component of Edmund Rice Education needs to be implemented in all Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition to assist in the implementation of the findings of this research project.

As the leader of an Edmund Rice school, the principal is responsible for establishing the culture of the school and environment and ensuring that the values base, as articulated by network leaders and the community, is adhered to. He or she is also responsible for providing leadership in the key area of spiritual formation and faith sharing, curriculum development and the nurturing of right relationships.

At a practical level, each Edmund Rice school is challenged to prepare students to live in an increasingly globalised world and to be active, participating citizens who contribute to shaping a better future. It operates from two assumptions – that people and communities are becoming increasingly interdependent and that, as a global community, it is possible to shape the world for the better.

Principals can achieve this by broad picture leadership that offers all the school community an approach which takes into account the whole of human society and the

environments in which people live; an emphasis on the future, the dynamic nature of human society and each person's capacity to choose and shape preferred futures; and an opportunity to explore important themes such as change, interdependence, identity and diversity, rights and responsibilities, peace building, poverty and wealth, sustainability and global justice.

Finally, the principal and network leaders need to understand that values based education, that encapsulates the values of this study, is transformative. It does not simply aim to impart knowledge and skills but to promote positive values, such as a commitment to opposing poverty and injustice, affirming human rights and cultural diversity, seeking a peaceful and just world and working towards environmental sustainability. Education aims to develop, in teachers and students alike, an open-mindedness to new thinking about the world and a predisposition to active participation as a member of the global community building a shared future.

8.6 Implications for counsellors in Edmund Rice schools

The research in this study and the recommendations that have resulted, if followed, will have some implications for counsellors in Edmund Rice schools. Primarily, it has been established that the counsellor's role is to facilitate the young man's work in ways that respect his values, personal resources and capacity for self-determination:

The instructional challenge is to balance respect for religious diversity with a sense of spirituality that evokes an appreciation of common, life-enhancing themes, without allowing religious dogma to become a rationalisation for

unethical and dehumanising behaviour (for example, subordination of women, repression of gays and lesbians, promotion of anti-scientific beliefs. (Burke, Hackey, Hudson, Miranti, Watts & Epp, 1999, p. 253)

To be aware of some of the dangers of integrating spirituality in counselling, each counsellor should be prepared to complete this self-assessment questionnaire (adapted from Fukuyama & Sevig, 1997):

- Are you aware of a spiritual dimension in your life? If so, how would you describe this?
- What are some of your earliest childhood memories of religion, of God or a transcendent power, of the sacred or holy (such as beauty or mystery?).
- Who influenced your beliefs about religion and religious values, and how did they influence you? Do you know people who are spiritual? What qualities embody your concept of spirituality?
- How have your religious beliefs and spiritual experiences changed as you have moved through life stages, such as adolescence, young adulthood, midlife and elder years?
- Were there other turning points on your journey, such as peak experiences, crises and transitions that influenced your religious beliefs or spiritual growth? Where and when did they occur? Where are you now in relation to all this?
- To what extent did spirituality play a part in your decision to become a counsellor?
- In what sense does spirituality or a spiritual dimension impact on how you are with clients or what happens in the counselling room?

- Can you think of an image or metaphor to represent how you see yourself as a counsellor?

Kelly (1995) indicates that counsellors express their spirituality by their way of being with the client and the skills they use. This was supported by the counsellors in the study. There is a sense in which any competent and sensitive counsellor might provide a space where clients feel able to talk about spiritual issues even if that counsellor has no particular interest in spirituality him/herself. However, a counsellor with similar levels of skills, knowledge and sensitivity, who also has a developed spiritual awareness or consciousness, might bring something extra to the encounter. To respond to the spiritual dimension of someone's life, it helps if the counsellor understands the concept of a spiritual journey (Cortright, 1997, pp. 114, 238).

This same concept can be expressed from a Jungian perspective; "only when the therapist remains in touch with his (or her) own suffering and needs, and therefore with his (or her) humanness and limitations, can he (or she) avoid the dangers of inflation, and can others be spared from having a messianic attitude foisted upon them" (Sanford, 1977, p. 114).

Obviously, counsellors do not have the right to impose their views on the young in their schools. Nor should they be seduced into addressing spiritual or transpersonal issues when the adolescent male obviously needs to address other immediate issues.

Whilst it has been argued strongly in this study that counsellors should embrace the concept of spirituality when dealing with adolescent males in an Edmund Rice

school, it should be done within the context of the following professional development guidelines. These guidelines reflect the desire of students to have access to counsellors who support the mission of their school and are professionally competent and open to the spiritual dimension of both the counsellors and the young man's journey.

To be successful in assisting the adolescent males' journey the counsellor in an Edmund Rice school must be able to describe ethical guidelines relevant to the incorporation of a spiritual dimension into counselling theory and practice and describe and reflect on their own spiritual journey in such a way that the risk of consciously or unconsciously imposing their own values on clients is reduced. They must also be able to recognise how their emerging beliefs have been shaped by social and cultural context and have the capability to discuss the ways spiritual traditions and myths attempt to move beyond the personal, local story to universal, archetypal levels. It is also important for them to recognise and critically evaluate spiritual assumptions in the theories and models informing counselling practice, describe key concepts in developmental approaches relating to growth in meaning and spirituality/faith and apply these to their own and their clients' life narratives and describe and use a variety of therapeutic approaches to enhance healthy spirituality in their clients.

The research would also indicate that counsellors in Edmund Rice schools should be able to apply developmental and systemic concepts to assessing the impact of clients' spirituality on their overall functioning and describe and create a counselling space where the spiritual dimension of clients' stories can emerge. They should also be able to critically discuss key concepts in the assessment of spiritual dimensions of their clients' lives, conceptualise clients' spiritual issues within personal, developmental,

social and cultural contexts and assess spiritual wellness models as tools for assessment and treatment. Finally, they should be able to describe the assessment issues involved in the phenomenon of spiritual emergency and recognise their own limits in terms of training and experience in the use of certain approaches.

Mackewn (1997) summarises the implications for counsellors using spirituality well:

We approach the transpersonal not by trying to transcend the human state but by becoming as fully human as possible by becoming the people we have the potential to become, by confronting and exploring our limits, by struggling to get in touch with what is central to our existence and by hallowing the sacred in everyday life. (1997, p. 152)

8.7 Implications for teachers in Edmund Rice schools

Interacting social justice, the environment and relationship education within the context of spiritual development into educational practice presents challenges and opportunities for teachers at all levels. Implementing values and cultural characteristics in education involves embracing change in the way we think about teaching, how we organise our work and how we interact with students. It also entails being an advocate for global perspectives in the curriculum and within the school community. Working within different curriculum environments and with different types of school organisation requires adapting ideas and resources and inventing new ones. However, these challenges also represent a myriad of opportunities to energise and enliven the school curriculum across many learning areas.

Experience of spirituality and values based education demonstrates that content and practice are inextricably linked. The experiences and conditions of the classroom environment, and the school community generally, will profoundly influence the values and attitudes that students embrace and apply in the wider world. In other words, how we teach will have as much affect on student outcomes as what we teach.

The Global Perspectives Project 2002 (Rogers & Watters, 2002) identified the following key areas that teachers could develop in their students. These would be integral if holistic values based learning that embraces the spiritual dimension is to occur. Each individual teacher must nurture, encourage and support their students so that they can become one who is aware of the wider world, shares a sense of community and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen, respects and values diversity, is willing to act to create a future where the rights of all people, social justice and sustainability are more secure and is willing to take responsibility for their actions.

To achieve this, the teacher needs to develop an education framework; a framework that would encapsulate the research in this project and be able to complement the findings. The Global Perspectives Project 2002 (Rogers & Watters, 2002) would suggest that any such framework should include the following priorities:

- The relationships between humans, living things and the natural environment, and the imperative of sustainability and a sense of personal responsibility to act in environmentally responsible ways.
- Caring and compassionate concern for others both in one's immediate relationships and in the local, national and global community.

- A commitment to upholding the rights and dignity of all people, a concern for justice and equality.
- The ability to identify unfairness and opportunities for action to redress it.
- Empathy for others, the ability to see connections between one's own lifestyle and actions and the consequences for others and for the environment.

Finally, teachers who wish to implement the research findings of this project can ensure that each lesson begins with some spiritual thought or reflection and provides opportunity and space for meditation and ensure posters in the room reflect the message that is consistent with the values of the school. They can also invite guests of different spiritual backgrounds to speak with students, ensure that the classroom setup promotes interaction and communication and provide students with opportunities to take part in decision making and to learn processes of negotiation and consensus building. Above all, students need to feel free to express themselves in a controlled, safe and accountable environment and be encouraged to think critically.

8.8 Conclusion

The challenge for Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition is to be true to their articulated mission as expressed in the Charter and the Charism of Edmund Rice. To achieve this, the temptation of quick fix solutions and tokenism, when it comes to the increasingly complex issue of the spirituality of the young people in the schools, needs to be avoided. Quality research and appropriate strategic planning are the keys to ensure that these schools can be relevant in all areas of a values and faith based educational mission in the twenty first century. In this sense, spirituality will involve the

search for a sense of life, purpose and meaning within the context of connectedness to self, others and some universal ideals.

This study adds weight to the argument that Churches need to redefine their approach to young people's spirituality. If the Catholic Church is going to be a meaningful spiritual agent in the lives of the young men in this study, then it must realise that it is now perceived as being a moralistic, clericalised and hierarchical organisation that dictates moral guidelines and provides sacramental experiences, employing symbols and rituals, many of which have outlived their symbolic usefulness. If the church does not take heed of the messages of the young people then it will risk rebellion from its young people; worse than that, it will risk being totally ignored. In terms of Church then, the school will become the only experience of church that some young people will experience .

Perhaps the last offering should belong to a modern psychotherapist who speaks passionately about the research in this area. This, when combined with the quote at the start of this chapter from a traditional poet who is just as passionate about the values articulated in this research project, will provide a good conclusion:

Psychological and spiritual development are composed of multiple, complex developmental pathways that sometimes intermingle, interpenetrate and overlap, while at other times remain discrete and more obviously separate. Sometimes growth is psychological, sometimes growth is spiritual and at other times both are occurring together. (Cortright, 1997, p. 234)

[Psychotherapy that includes a spiritual dimension] has a large enough container to assimilate all the rest of psychology into it and to see the theories and facts of psychological life through a spiritual lens, a lens that brings new worlds into view. The inner riches of psyche and spirit are before us. Surely we are but at the threshold of discovering all that we can be. (Cortright, 1997, p. 243)

This will allow the young men in Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition to rediscover afresh what it means to inhabit a planet and a universe alive with the power of spirit, a mode of being and becoming which we can only encounter and appreciate by reappropriating our spiritual identity. To do that we will need to divest ourselves of so much we have taken for granted, considered to be unquestioned and insuperable, including a great deal of irrelevant (and irreverent) baggage that belongs to the age of formal religion (O'Murchu, 1997, p. 50). The young men in this study have already begun this journey.

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Appendix A

Mission Statement for all Schools: The Charter

Edmund Rice Education

Australia



The Charter

***A PROCLAMATION OF AN AUTHENTIC
EXPRESSION OF EDMUND RICE
EDUCATION
AS APPLIED TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN
THE EDMUND RICE TRADITION***

*One of a series of core documents prepared by
The National Planning Committee for Schools Governance
Christian Brothers Australia*

***Continuing the charism of Edmund Rice as schools ministry in
Church mission***

PROCLAMATION

THE CALL TO RENEWAL

EDUCATING THE MINDS AND HEARTS OF THE YOUNG

The Christian Brothers' international Congregation Chapter of 2002, held in Rome, recognised that a call to educate the minds and hearts of the young is at the "Heart of Being Brother". In its deliberations the Chapter "acknowledged the immense contribution of the last 200 years that Brothers and their colleagues have made to the liberating education of the young".

It is timely that this Chapter directs us to identify the distinctive cultural characteristics of Catholic schools that are in the Edmund Rice tradition and to develop a network of those involved in the transmission and development of the Edmund Rice charism through our schools. These distinctive cultural characteristics underpin the Charter, which aims to express the Edmund Rice tradition as an educational vision for Australian schools owned and operated by the Christian Brothers in the 21st century.

We, the Leaders of the four Australian Provinces, proclaim this Charter to enable schools to authenticate their endeavour in this tradition. The formulation of the Charter has been the result of consultation and collaboration by the Christian Brothers and their co-workers in the schools throughout Australia. Embraced by each school, the Charter aims to inspire school communities to foster energetically the vision of a charismatic leader, Blessed Edmund Rice, in the Spirit of Christ and the educational mission of the Catholic Church.

As a living document the Charter will continue to evolve through review and reflection as the demands of our changing times are read and interpreted in the light of the unchanging Gospel.

Given our imprimatur and proclaimed in Perth Western Australia this 12th day of March 2004.

Br Kevin Ryan cfc
Quinn cfc

Province Leader
Holy Spirit Province
Province
WA & SA

Br Peter Dowling cfc

Province Leader
St Patrick's Province
Vic & Tas

Br Laurie Needham cfc

Province Leader
St Mary's Province
NSW & ACT

Br Luke

Province Leader
St Francis Xavier
Qld & NT

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	IN THE EDMUND RICE TRADITION
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SECTION ONE

JESUS CHRIST

At the heart of the Christian Gospel is Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God. Christ reveals the Spirit and face of the Father and the authentic form of our humanity. He is the touchstone against which we measure the quality of every aspect of our lives. He is the cornerstone who shapes and directs our Christian living.

Jesus is the embodiment of the love and forgiveness of God acting in the power of the Spirit in every age. In His words and deeds, in His life, death and resurrection, Jesus calls men and women to follow Him. He saw in each individual a human person made in the image and likeness of God. Jesus had a vision of what people could be and gave His very life as a gift that this might be achieved.

Great Christians, in living union with Christ, have shared His vision through the ages. Their intimacy with God gives them a new way of looking at the world. Their eyes have opened to the beauty, value and dignity of every human person. Such a person was Blessed Edmund Rice.

SECTION TWO

BLESSED EDMUND RICE

Life

Edmund was born in Callan, County Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1762. As a young man, he came to the bustling city port of Waterford and worked in his uncle's business. He was talented and energetic and became a very wealthy man. In 1785 he fell in love and married Mary Elliot. His happiness was shattered by the tragic death of his wife just four years later. Mary died in childbirth, and Edmund was left with a handicapped daughter, also named Mary. This shattering experience was the turning point in his life. Edmund spent more and more time in prayer and in helping and empowering great numbers of people in Waterford who suffered poverty and injustice. In 1802 he set up a free school for poor young boys. Having provided for his daughter, Mary, he left his comfortable home and lived above the school he had recently founded.

Influenced by the work of Nano Nagle, the founder of the Presentation Sisters, he gathered around him a group of men. These he formed into a community of religious brothers dedicated to "raising up the poor".

Charism - The Gift of Edmund Rice to Church and Society

Throughout the ages, various ways of proclaiming the gospel and witnessing to the Kingdom have emerged within the Church.

Every era can boast followers of Jesus who, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, turn their individual gifts and personality to the service of God's Kingdom in their world, sometimes with remarkable ingenuity and in ways totally attuned to the historical situation.

Although their ministry has its beginnings in their own individual gifts and abilities that are given the name of charism, the ministry is always carried out on behalf of the Christian community in response to a call of God. The unique gifts of the founders of religious congregations bring about God's reign in a special manner.

Often charism becomes officially recognised and built into the structure of the Church's mission, regulated by canon law and with clear accountabilities. Such was the case with Blessed Edmund Rice and the Congregation of Christian Brothers that he founded. Through Edmund's meditation on the Gospel, he became more keenly aware of the oppressive social and political realities of his day. He recognised that the education system discriminated against the poor. In the unschooled and undisciplined boys of Waterford, he found images of God.

Deeply aware of the Father's providential presence in his life, Edmund was moved by the Holy Spirit to open his whole heart to Christ present and appealing to him in the poor.

With his sense of the God-given dignity of the poor, he saw education as a means by which to recognise and promote this dignity, through liberation for personal and communal empowerment.

Legacy

Edmund is honoured as the founder of both the Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers. For more than two centuries, many have been and continue to be attracted by his vision and generosity. The mission continues today on all five continents through the ministry of Christian Brothers and laity called to serve in this vocation of Catholic Education.

The Christian Brothers came to Australia — first of all, to Sydney — in 1843, at the invitation of Archbishop Polding, but left in 1848. They arrived in Melbourne in 1868 at the invitation of Bishop Goold (correct spelling? Full name?). Within thirty-five years, the remarkable Brother Patrick Ambrose Treacy had responded to invitations from various Bishops to establish schools in the Dioceses of Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide, Dunedin and Perth. The task of the Brothers in Australia, as mandated by the Bishops, was the evangelisation of the mainly poor, mainly Irish, Catholic families of the colonies.

The gift to Australian Catholic education since 1868 has been profound. The ministry of the Christian Brothers and their co-workers is active in all States and Territories of Australia and continues to be expressed in multiple forms. At the beginning of the 21st century in Australia, there is a continuing need for Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition to reflect on their purpose and role. This is borne out by the complexity of the modern world and the challenges confronting young people in their search for meaning. All members of these schools are called by way of their vocation to be committed to reflect deeply on engrained practices and issues relevant to spirituality. They are called to provide education that is transformational and liberating within the reign of God for the world. These imperatives for Edmund Rice Education are consistent with and supportive of the educational philosophy articulated in the 2000 Adelaide Declaration – Goals for Schooling for a Future Australia. Critical to the success of the school is its consciousness of and interaction with the contexts in which it operates. These include the cultural and social context within which the school exists, the Church whose mission it embraces, the philosophy it espouses, and the classrooms within which its core service is provided.

SECTION THREE

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Education involves the collaborative facilitation of development within life.

The vision for Catholic education is the facilitation of development based on the Christian life, expressed within the Catholic Tradition. Catholic Education is a ministry centred on Christ's vision for humanity, focused on authentic human growth and given expression through principles of faith tradition, quality service and developmental excellence. It embraces a great tradition, covers the whole of life, is evidenced primarily in schools and is administered authentically. The outcomes of Catholic Education are seen holistically in people, relationships, communities, processes and structures.

The identity of the Catholic school at its deepest philosophical level is the identity of the Catholic Church. Hence the distinctiveness of Catholic Education is linked to the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism.

It is these same characteristics that are reflected in the whole curriculum of the Catholic school, defined as the totality of the learning experiences embraced by the school. The distinctiveness of Catholic education rests in its religious dimension, in which learners are supported as they grow within a faith tradition that offers a perspective of what it means to be authentically human.

SECTION FOUR

EDUCATION IN THE EDMUND RICE TRADITION

Edmund Rice Education exists as part of the evangelising mission of the universal Catholic Church.

Each Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition shares in the mission and communion of its local Church.

These schools give emphasis to liberation through the empowering service of education, for the sake of the kingdom and the promise of abundant life for all. They are built on the cornerstone of Christ, the Tradition of the Church in Education, the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice and the continuing power of the Spirit.

These foundations find expression in learning communities with the following Cultural Characteristics.

SECTION FIVE

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AT THE HEART OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN THE EDMUND RICE TRADITION

Schools conducted in the Edmund Rice tradition offer a distinctive Catholic educational philosophy. Vision and Mission Statements give expression to the distinctiveness of the educational ministry as it serves the mission of the Church in today's world. This Charter seeks to articulate the cultural characteristics of the Edmund Rice educational tradition for Australia in the 21st century.

There is no single component of the vision, mission and practice of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition that determines its distinctiveness. The vision and mission have their heart in the mission and ministry of Jesus, the Catholic Church and the charism of Edmund. In this context there is a need to look at the sum total of the Gospel message, the Tradition of the Church and the unique response made by Blessed Edmund to the movement of God's Spirit. The formulation of this Charter, describing the cultural characteristics of a Catholic school authentic to the Edmund Rice tradition, embraces this holistic approach.

The following cultural characteristics emerged from extensive consultation and research. They are proclaimed as an authentic expression of the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice, expressed in dynamic and adaptive learning communities. The integration of these cultural characteristics, and much more, reflects the mission of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

HOLISTIC EDUCATION

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OCCURS THROUGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition provides a curriculum attentive to the needs of each person.
2. Each person's need is best served by teaching and learning experiences that are relevant, authentic, dynamic and creative.
3. Religious education, faith development experiences and service learning are fundamental components of a holistic curriculum.
4. Programmes offered include a balance and integration of teaching and learning experiences that promote the development of the whole person
5. All members of the school are encouraged to work to the best of their abilities, to realise their potential and to strive for individual excellence.
6. The school provides a sound learning culture that enables students to experience success within a safe and healthy environment.

SPIRITUALITY

EACH PERSON'S STORY IS UNIQUE AND SACRED.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition nurtures and encourages the spirituality of each person.
2. Growth in spirituality and connection to Church are significant factors that shape religious education and faith development practices.
3. The life-journey of each person is enhanced by a personal understanding of and relationship with Jesus Christ.
4. Through reflection, prayer, the Eucharist and other Sacraments, liturgy, symbols, sacred stories and other rituals, the school celebrates the richness and diversity of its community, and develops the spiritual life of each person within it.
5. The school respects spirituality authentically lived by those who come from a range of other religious traditions.

FAITH IN ACTION

EACH PERSON IS CALLED TO RESPOND OUT OF A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition lives and grows as a faith-sharing community by fostering a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
2. The school proclaims and lives the Gospel so as to enable the transformation of each person into the likeness of Jesus Christ.
3. The school is an integral part of the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church.
4. The school adopts a prophetic stance in the light of Gospel values.
5. In communion with other Church ministries and the community, the school continues the saving action of God in the world.

COMMUNITY

A SCHOOL FORMS A DISTINCTIVE COMMUNITY.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition is characterised by the quality of its personal relationships.
2. The school celebrates as a eucharistic community, responsive to the gift and journey of each person.
3. The school develops a culture of good relationships, which evidence respect, community, hospitality, nurture, humour, care and justice.
4. The school fosters enduring, lifelong relationships with former students and their families.
5. The school acknowledges the primary role of parents or guardians in the growth and development of the child and provides opportunity for their participation in the life of the school.
6. The school recognises its many connections with families, other school communities and Church, civic and global communities.
7. Recognising traditional ownership and heritage, and with a commitment to reconciliation, the school welcomes indigenous persons into its community.

PASTORAL CARE

THE DIGNITY OF EACH PERSON AS A CHILD OF GOD IS AT THE HEART OF PASTORAL CARE.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition acknowledges the dignity of all its members, each formed in the image of God.
2. The school conducts all aspects of school life in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of each student and to the common good.
3. In the allocation of resources, a priority is given to the provision of services for students with special needs.
4. The school's pastoral care program is designed to empower each student to embrace the fullness of life within a variety of pastoral care experiences.

SERVICE OF OTHERS

SERVICE OF OTHERS IS INTEGRAL TO BEING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition promotes service of others, by way of significant learning experiences, as basic to fulfilling a Christian life.
2. The school expects each member to be active in the service of others and provides opportunities for this service in both local and global communities.
3. Students and staff are involved in programs in which they interact and work with the disadvantaged, understanding service as the movement from charity to justice.
4. Leadership in schools is based on a Gospel model of service centred in communion with others.
5. Staff recognise that their principal vocation is to serve students and families.

BEING JUST

JUSTICE IS INTEGRAL TO THE VISION OF THE KINGDOM.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition acts justly. This is reflected consistently in its structures and processes.
2. The curriculum and activities of the school enable students to experience and value a critical awareness of social justice issues.
3. The school provides opportunities for each member to be active in identifying and alleviating forms of injustice in and beyond the school community.
4. Networks of solidarity, within and beyond the school, are encouraged in the seeking of justice for all within the community.

AT THE MARGINS

EDMUND RICE, FOLLOWING JESUS, SOUGHT OUT THE MARGINALISED.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition stands in solidarity with those who are powerless and marginalised.
2. As a practical expression of this solidarity, the school strives to provide access to those who otherwise would not seek enrolment.
3. The school will not preclude the enrolment of a Catholic student on the basis of financial inability.
4. The school programs are designed to empower all members, especially the marginalised, to participate with dignity and confidence.

COMPASSION

COMPASSION IS CENTRAL TO THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS AND TO THE SPIRITUALITY OF EDMUND.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition fosters in its members the mind and heart of Edmund, who acted with compassion.
2. Students at risk are provided with special assistance.
3. The school models the Gospel's values of forgiveness and reconciliation by the manner in which conflict is resolved.

STEWARDSHIP

GOD’S GIFTS ARE TO BE SHARED JUSTLY AND USED WISELY, AS EXEMPLIFIED BY EDMUND.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition acknowledges the traditional relationship of indigenous peoples with the land.
2. The school demonstrates respect for the environment, through its practices and teachings.
3. The school manages and uses its resources equitably in the best interests of its current and future community, always conscious of the wider community in which it is situated.
4. The school is sensitive to the economic situation of each of its families.
5. The school looks beyond itself in contributing, according to its means, to the overall growth and development of Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition.
6. The school acknowledges the service and contribution of the Christian Brothers to Edmund Rice Education in Australia.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE LEADS TO PERSONAL AND COMMUNAL GROWTH.

1. A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition actively encourages all its members — teachers, staff and students — to reflect on the contemporary world in the light of the Gospel.
2. For its members, the school provides formation opportunities in the spirit of Christ, the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice, their own sacred story and their call to mission.
3. Effective reflection within the school community promotes the transformation that enables individual and community growth.
4. Personal and communal discipline is achieved within an ordered and safe environment that enables each person and group to accept responsibility and be accountable for their actions.

SECTION SIX

APPLICATION OF THE CHARTER

The formulation of this Charter was the result of extensive consultation with communities of the thirty- seven Christian Brothers' schools in Australia and other people associated with their mission. The consultation revealed a unity of mission, significant cultural similarities and great diversity in the application of the mission in these schools. Each strives to authentically interpret the mission of Jesus and charism of Blessed Edmund in their educational community. Thus, the concrete expression of any single cultural characteristic may vary according to the context and tradition of each school.

Exemplars of the current practices that are considered congruent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition are continuing to be gathered for the renewal process that is integral to the implementation of the Charter in schools.

The renewal process will be used by schools to reflect regularly upon their current performance, celebrate achievements, recognise developmental needs and re-commit to the spirit of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition. The Charter is the norm by which each school measures its mission, performance and priorities. With the Charter as a framework for renewal, the governing body of Edmund Rice Education will accredit each school's authenticity as a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

Appendix B

The Identity Component of Edmund Rice Education: Foundations, Formation, The Charter and Renewal

Foundations: This refers to the clarification of what underpins mission, ministry and communion within and beyond Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition.

Formation: This refers to the invitation to participate in meaningful experiences and processes which enhance personal growth in spirituality, mission and ministry. There are four Domains of Formation Development

1. Growth In Community. This challenges Edmund Rice schools to:

- Be places of welcome, inclusiveness, and sharing
- Recognize and affirm their interconnection with the global community and created world
- Understand the gospel and Edmund's living out of it as the basis of their identity and mission

2. Conversion Through Story. This challenges Edmund Rice schools to:

- Employ sacred texts to discern and inform their mission
- Foster an awareness of the ongoing story of Edmund Rice and its implications for their particular context

3. Practice Of Interiority. This challenges Edmund Rice schools to:

- Value the interior life of the Spirit.
- Demonstrate a practical commitment to reflective practice

4. Engagement In Service. This challenges Edmund Rice schools to:

- Implement and support initiatives that foster right relationships with the earth community
- Learn from the dislocation and challenges that come from contact with the poor and marginalised.

The Charter

The Charter seeks to articulate the cultural characteristics of the Edmund Rice educational tradition for Australia in the 21st century. (See Appendix 1) It is the mission statement for all Edmund Rice schools and articulates the Core values of such schools.

There is no single component of the vision, mission and practice of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition that determines its distinctiveness. All of the following cultural characteristics of the Charter integrate with each other to give a distinctive sense of identity

Holistic Education	Being Just
At the Margins	Compassion
Stewardship	Reflective Practice
Spirituality	Faith in Action
Community	Pastoral Care
Service of Others	

Renewal

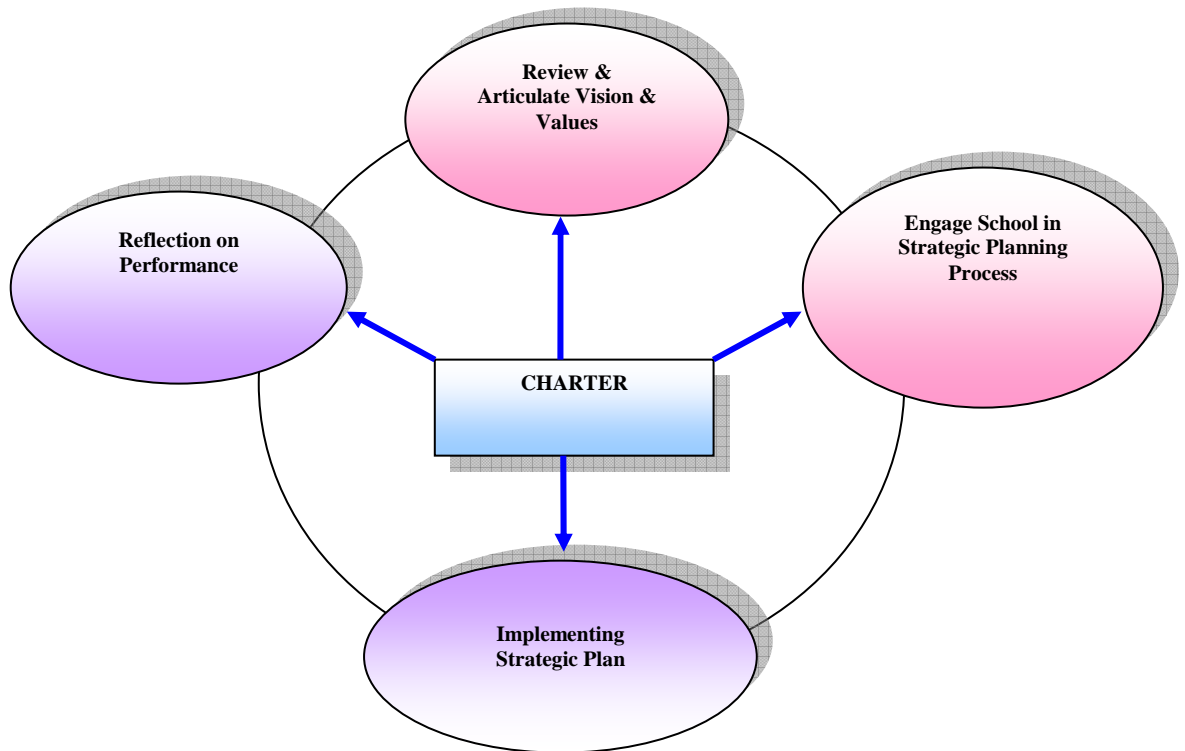
School Renewal recognises the interdependence of the Edmund Rice Schools with each other and their Governing Authority. Together the schools form reflective learning communities that share beliefs, values, directions and resources.

Renewal is a cyclic process by which a school is critically reflective of its current practices in the light of its core values. It can achieve this by:

- a measured faithfulness to the core Vision and Mission of the organisation.
- a commitment to these core elements of identity through formation
- an authentic integration of the Charter in the life of the school
- an appropriate management plan for the provision of quality school renewal
- a structured Strategic Planning process
- an integrated approach to planning and reporting
- a comprehensive Annual Report

The most essential of these components for network leaders is Renewal as it is through this policy and its implementation that they will ensure that values based approach and the values desired will be implemented. An example of a renewal process that would serve such needs is as follows:

Renewal in Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition.



Leaders of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition will need to prioritise the key components of identity as articulated above if cultural change is to occur in the individual schools. Prioritising and the provision of resources both personnel and material will be essential if system level change is to be achieved. System level change will then need to be managed effectively to ensure change at a school level.

Appendix C

Guide to Spiritual Assessment

Josephson and Peteet 2004 p. 26 and 27

Developmental history

1. Describe your first religious experience or belief.
2. Do you have childhood religious memories?
3. Describe your religious education or training.
4. Describe your parents' religious or spiritual beliefs and practices.
5. Did they behave in a manner consistent with their expressed beliefs?
6. Are your beliefs similar to those of your parents? Do they differ? In what way?
7. Were any other people important to your religious experiences? Who?
8. Did you have any religious experiences you felt were traumatic?
9. Did you have an experience where you changed your religious or spiritual views (e.g., a conversion)?
10. Do you desire to develop spiritually? In what way?

II. Community

1. Do you participate in church or synagogue life now?
2. Have you changed churches (religions, synagogues) as an adult? Why?
3. What is the most meaningful support you have received from a spiritual community?
4. Do you try to get others to join your religious community?

III. God

1. Do you believe in the existence of a God? What led you to this belief?
2. Do you not believe in the existence of God? What led you to this belief?

3. Describe God's characteristics
4. How does belief in God affect your personal experience?
5. Is God a person to you, a force, or an idea?
6. How do you experience God? Does God speak to you? Have you had special experiences with God?

IV. Belief

1. What is your single and most important religious belief?
2. Which of your religious beliefs do you doubt the most?
3. What religious beliefs do you doubt the least?
4. Are you troubled by evil or suffering in the world? What causes it?
5. For you, what is a life with purpose?

V. Rituals and practices

1. What does prayer mean to you?
2. If you pray, what do you pray for?
3. How often do you pray? Do you pray alone or with others?
4. Do you engage in other private religious practices, such as rituals or study of scriptures? How often?
5. How often do you attend spiritual or religious services?

VI. Spiritual Experience

1. Have you had experiences that you would describe as spiritual?
2. Did these experiences change the direction of your life?
3. Have you told others about these experiences?
4. How important is spiritual experience to your daily life?

Appendix D

Information Letter to Participants

INFORMATION PAGE FOR COUSSELLING RESEACH PROJECT

Who is doing it? My Name is Br Paul Conn. I am a member of the Province Leadership Team for the Christian Brothers in Queensland. I have 15 years experience as a school principal, educational leader and Counsellor in a school Context.

Why am I doing it? I am currently doing a PhD from James Cook University. It is my intention to provide an academic piece of work that will assist Counsellors and College Principals in understanding the spiritual and counselling needs of teenage boys.

What will be required?

DETAILS OF CONSENT: The project will require an individual interview for approximately half of one hour and an interview with you as a member of a focus group. This focus group will consist of other senior students from your school and a school counsellor. A follow up interview may be requested. No names addresses or other identifying information will be recorded so your responses will not be able to be traced to you. Your individual responses will be strictly confidential although confidentiality within focus groups cannot be guaranteed. The information gained will be used as apart of a PhD report on issues involving counselling and Spirituality in Christian Brothers schools. Students may withdraw from the project at any stage.

My contact details:

Br Paul Conn
P.O Box 923
Indooroopilly 4068
Phone 07 33272252
Fax 07 33272244
E mail paul.conn@ericeqld.org.au

Any questions or concerns re the Ehics of this project can be directed to;
Tina Langford
Ethics Administrator, Research Office
James Cook University
Townsville 4811
Ph 07 4781 4342 Fax 07 4781 5521 E mail Tina.Langford@jcu.edu.au

Appendix E

Consent form: Principals and Counsellors

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Counsellors and Principals)

PRINCIPAL

Br Paul Conn

INVESTIGATOR

PROJECT TITLE:

Counselling and Spirituality in Christian Brothers Schools

SCHOOL

Social work and Community Welfare

CONTACT DETAILS

Dr Anthony McMahon

DETAILS OF CONSENT: The project will require an individual interview for approximately half of one hour and an interview with you as a member of a focus group. This focus group will consist of other senior students from your school and a school counsellor. A follow up interview may be requested. No names addresses or other identifying information will be recorded so your responses will not be able to be traced to you. Your individual responses will be strictly confidential although confidentiality within focus groups cannot be guaranteed. The information gained will be used as apart of a PhD report on issues involving counselling and Spirituality in Christian Brothers schools.

CONSENT		
<p>The aims of this study have been clearly explained to me and I understand what is wanted of me. I know that taking part in this study is voluntary and I am aware that I can stop taking part in it at any time and may refuse to answer any questions.</p> <p>I understand that any information I give will be kept strictly confidential and that no names will be used to identify me with this study without my approval. I understand that confidentiality in focus groups cannot be guaranteed</p>		
<p>Name: <i>(printed)</i></p>		
<table border="1"><tr><td>Signature:</td><td>Date:</td></tr></table>	Signature:	Date:
Signature:	Date:	

Appendix F

Consent Form: Students

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Students)

PRINCIPAL *Br Paul Conn*

INVESTIGATOR

PROJECT TITLE: *Counselling and Spirituality in Christian Brothers Schools*

SCHOOL *Social work and Community Welfare*

CONTACT DETAILS

Dr Anthony McMahon

DETAILS OF CONSENT: The project will require an individual interview for approximately half of one hour and an interview with you as a member of a focus group. This focus group will consist of other senior students from your school and a school counsellor. A follow up interview may be requested. No names addresses or other identifying information will be recorded so your responses will not be able to be traced to you. Your individual responses will be strictly confidential although confidentiality within focus groups cannot be guaranteed. The information gained will be used as apart of a PhD report on issues involving counselling and Spirituality in Christian Brothers schools.

CONSENT

The aims of this study have been clearly explained to me and I understand what is wanted of me. I know that taking part in this study is voluntary and I am aware that I can stop taking part in it at any time and may refuse to answer any questions.

I understand that any information I give will be kept strictly confidential and that no names will be used to identify me with this study without my approval. I understand that confidentiality in focus groups cannot be guaranteed

Name: *(printed)*

Signature: Student
Parent / Guardian

Date:

Appendix G

Final Research Instrument

Counselling and Spirituality Project Research Instrument 2005

Br Paul Conn

Schools Involved:

Ignatius Park College, Townsville.
St Brendan's College, Yeppoon.
St Joseph's Nudgee, College.
St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace.
St Patrick's College, Shorncliffe.

This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers, your opinion is what is wanted. All information provided is confidential.

CODE NAME: _____

AGE: _____ Years _____ Months

COLLEGE: _____

YEAR LEVEL: _____

RELIGION: _____

DATE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEY

(All instructions are in green)

Please answer the following survey by **placing a circle around the number in the column** that best describes your response to each individual statement.

Key for Survey Response:

STRONGLY AGREE:	(SA)	4
AGREE:	(A)	3
NO OPINION:	(NO)	2
DISAGREE:	(D)	1
STRONGLY DISAGREE:	(SD)	0

Spirituality Part 2

1.) Describe an experience, if any, that you have had that you would say was a "spiritual experience"

Mark this scale: Was the experience negative or positive for me ?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Very NegativeNeutral.....Very Positive

2.) Describe an experience that you have had with Religion or Church.

Mark this scale: Was the experience negative or positive for me ?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Very NegativeNeutral.....Very Positive

Counselling Part 1

In the following sentences please choose one statement per line by ticking the first part or second part according to what you believe is most important for you.

It is essential to have a counsellor in a school () or it is a luxury ()
The counsellor is accepted at school () or no one would ever go to a counsellor ()
I would go to a counsellor if necessary () or I would never go to a counsellor ()

If you said that you would be open to going to a counsellor please continue.

I would go to a counsellor that I would trust () or I would go to any counsellor ()
I would want to see results () or I would want to feel good ()
I would work individually with the counsellor () or I would rather work in a group() I would rather a counsellor that accepted me() or just told me what to do ()
I would expect the counsellor to work with me()or I do all the work ()
I would expect that the counsellor would judge me () or not Judge me as a person ()
I would expect change if I saw a counsellor () or change would not be important ()
I think goals would be important () or just go with the flow ()
Motivation from the counsellor is important () or I would be self motivated ()
Non verbal communication would be important () or all verbal communication ()
I would expect my case to be unique() or a set approach would be used ()
I would want to be involved in the process () or I would just sit back and watch ()

Counselling Part 2

Please fill out the following:

Issues that someone my age may go to a counsellor over are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Thankyou

Appendix H

Introductory Letter

18/01/05

Mr Daryl Hanly
Principal
St Joseph's Nudgee College
PO Box 130
Virginia 4014

Dear Daryl,

I am writing this letter to explain the nature and context of a project upon which I will be embarking in 2005. It specifically involves counselling and spirituality of teenage students and I would like to invite Ignatius Park to be involved. If you choose to accept the invitation then it would be appropriate for me to work through a liaison person of your choice (possibly within the counselling department due to the nature of the project). There would be no problem if for any reason you chose for the school not to be involved

The work on this project will be the research component for a PhD from James Cook University. It will therefore require that strict ethical guidelines be followed. I will take full responsibility for this part of the project. This will include permission forms and statements regarding privacy issues and intellectual property.

The aim of the project is to provide support for counsellors in Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition especially looking at the topic of integrating a modern understanding of the spiritual dimension of life with sound psychotherapeutic (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) practice. The end result will hopefully be relevant and practical guidelines that will assist counsellors in their daily work, especially with older students. Five schools will be invited to be involved in the student sample although it would be hoped that all ten schools could participate in some way. The five schools invited to be involved will be:

- Ignatius Park Townsville
- St Brendan's Yeppoon
- St Joseph's Gregory Terrace
- St Joseph's Nudgee College
- St Patrick's College Shorncliffe

The project will involve a qualitative research method called the Delphi technique. This technique requires the establishment of an expert panel that is competent in the field of inquiry (in this case counselling and psychotherapy) The panel ensures that the research instruments are of a satisfactory academic standard and appropriate for the people participating in the study and the context involved

The practical details will include ten individual interviews with selected senior students (suggestion would be senior leaders) and one group interview with these students as a whole group.

As a lead up to this section of the project I have done research specifically looking at areas integrating Spirituality with counselling and would be very happy to share this with any one who is interested

Included in this letter is a letter of recommendation and authorisation from Dr Bill Sultmann, executive Director of ERED

Could you please return the attached sheet to me before Tuesday February 1st.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this request

Br Paul Conn
Province Leadership Team
paul.conn@ericeqld.org.au
Ph 33272252 / 0419303497
Fax 33272244

Name _____

School _____

I am happy for _____

College to be involved with the counselling and spirituality project.

The contact person will be

I would not like _____

College to be involved in the project

Signed

Principal

Appendix I

Letter of Authorisation

23rd April, 2004

Ms Tina Langford
Ethics Department
PhD Research
James Cook University
Townsville 4811

Dear Ms Langford

I write in relation to Brother Paul Conn's PhD studies which he is currently undertaking. As part of these studies, Paul has requested permission to interview Principals, School Counsellors and students in a selection of Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition. I give permission for Paul to conduct this research at the following schools:

St Joseph's College – Gregory Terrace – Brisbane
St Joseph's Nudgee College – Boondall
St Edmund's College – Ipswich
St Brendan's College – Yeppoon
Ignatius Park College, Townsville

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information in regard to this matter.

Yours sincerely

Dr William F. Sultmann
Executive Director, Edmund Rice Education

Ethics Final Approval

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY Townsville Qld 4811 Australia Tina Langford, Ethics Administrator, Research Office. Ph: 07 4781 4342; Fax: 07 4781 5521

ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE Human Ethics Sub-Committee APPROVAL FOR RESEARCH OR TEACHING INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS					
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR		Br Paul Conn			
CO- INVESTIGATOR		Associate Professor Tony McMahon, Dr Susan Gair			
SCHOOL		Social Work & Community Welfare			
PROJECT TITLE		Enhancement of the clinical and spiritual supervision of adolescent boys by school counsellors in Queensland Christian Brothers Schools			
APPROVAL DATE	9 Mar 2005	EXPIRY DATE	31 Dec 2006	CATEGORY	1
This project has been allocated Ethics Approval Number with the following conditions :				H	1981
<p>1. All subsequent records and correspondence relating to this project must refer to this number.</p> <p>2. That there is NO departure from the approved protocols unless prior approval has been sought from the Human Ethics Sub-Committee.</p> <p>3. The Principal Investigator must advise the responsible Ethics Monitor appointed by the Ethics Review Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ periodically of the progress of the project; ◆ when the project is completed, suspended or prematurely terminated for any reason; ◆ if serious or adverse effects on participants occur; and if any ◆ unforeseen events occur that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. <p>4. In compliance with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) “<i>National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans</i>” (1999), it is MANDATORY that you provide an annual report on the progress and conduct of your project. This report must detail compliance with approvals granted and any unexpected events or serious adverse effects that may have occurred during the study.</p>					
NAME OF RESPONSIBLE MONITOR			Albanus, Suzanne		
EMAIL ADDRESS:			suzanne.albanus@jcu.edu.au		
ASSESSED AT MEETING APPROVED			Date: 23 Feb 2005 Date: 9 Mar 2005		
[forwarded by email without signature] Tina Langford Ethics Administrator Research Office Tina.Langford@jcu.edu.au			Date: 10 March 2005		

Appendix J

Delphi Process: Letters One to Three

Letter One

14/03/05

Mr Daryl Hanly
St Joseph's Nudgee College
PO Box 130
Virginia 4014

Dear Daryl,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the counselling and spirituality project. All ethical clearances have been finalised and all stakeholders have been invited to be a part of the process and have been informed of the aims of the project.

The project will contain three distinct time frames:

1. Formulation of the research instrument (March / May 2005).
2. Interviews of students, counsellors and Principals (July / Aug 2005).
3. Analysing of data and follow up interviews if required (Term 4 2005).

The following lists more details for each step.

Step 1 - Formulation of the research instrument

The project will involve the development of a qualitative research instrument based on the Delphi Technique. This is an open invitation for you to be actively involved in the formation of this survey instrument. This will involve a three stage process to refine the instrument so that it is clear, meets the goals of the project and is user friendly. A full explanation of the process and the first input for this section is attached to this letter. This will be the last request for the principal. It is hoped that counsellors will be involved in this and the following stages of the project.

Step 2 - Interview of Students, Counsellors and Principals

This process will involve the individual interviewing of between ten and fifteen senior student leaders, at least one College Counsellor and the College Principal. It would also involve a group interview for the senior students. Each interview would go for between thirty and forty minutes. Permission forms will be sent prior to the interviews. It would be appreciated greatly if the counsellor could assist this process by:

- Identifying ten to fifteen senior students.
- Briefly explaining the project to them.
- Handing out the permission forms and finalised surveys and arranging for them to be at the college on the days of the interviews.
- Organising a suitable venue for the interviews and the timetable for the day.

The following dates and times have been allocated. Please contact me as soon as possible if this does not suit your College.

Thursday and Friday 7/8 July – St Brendan’s College
Thursday and Friday 14/15 July – St Patrick’s College
Thursday and Friday 21/22 July – St Joseph’s College, Gregory Terrace
Thursday and Friday 4/5 August – St Joseph’s Nudgee College
Thursday and Friday 11/12 August– Ignatius Park College

Step 3 – analysing of data and follow up interviews if required

This would be done from Brisbane with requests for follow up being made only if required.

Please find enclosed a document that seeks your assistance with the initial stages of the formation of the research instrument. It would be greatly appreciated if this could be returned by Friday 8th April.

Once again many thanks for your participation in this project. I do hope it will provide meaningful assistance in your counselling of older students.

Yours Sincerely

Br Paul Conn cfc
Province Leadership Team

Cc Mark Sayer and Martin Wiseman **COUNSELLING AND SPIRITUALITY
PROJECT**

PROCESS

- Attached please find “Response One” form requesting input on essential components for a survey to senior students concerning Religion and Spirituality. (This will be section one of the Delphi technique and will be sent to Principals and counsellors).
- I will compile the results.
- I will draft a copy of a research instrument and send it to the counsellors for their comment.
- I will redraft this document taking into consideration the feedback. (Section two Delphi technique).
- This process will be repeated. (Section three of the Delphi technique).
- Once the research document is finalised, I will post it with a permission form to the counsellors and ask them to distribute both to the students.
- The counsellors and Principal will also be requested to fill in permission forms provided.
- The students will bring both to the school on the days that I will visit the school.
- I will visit the school for two consecutive days.
- On the first day I will conduct 30 minute interviews with each individual student.
- They will need to bring the completed research instrument and permission form to the interview.
- It is important for the students to realise that their individual responses will be totally confidential and they will only be recognised by a title such as IPC 1 (for the first Ignatius Park student) and IPC 2 or SBC 1 for St Brendan’s etc.
- On the second day I will have a group interview and then interview the counsellor and then the Principal.

Br Paul Conn

Counselling and Spirituality Research Project

Response One

Return Date:

Name:.....**Position:**.....

School:.....

- Please use stamped self addressed envelope provided
- The Four key elements need not be prioritised

Section A

My comments on the suggested process of interviews.

I would like to see the following added to the process

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

I don't think that the following would work or it should be deleted from the process

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Section B

My ideas for the Research Instrument

The key components of a survey to senior students re spirituality and counselling are:

1.

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Thank you for assistance with this project.

Letter Two

27/04/05

Dear

Many thanks for your help and support for the counselling and spirituality project thus far. From the collected responses from step one, I have compiled a proposed survey instrument for use with principals, counsellors and senior students. I would be most grateful if you could read it and answer the brief questions on the attached sheet and return to me by Friday May 13th.

In terms of executing the survey, I would conduct a half hour individual interview with each of 10 –15 senior students as well as the counsellor (s) and principal. I would lead the students through the interview. This means that the students will not see the survey before the interview. This will hopefully avoid confusion and anxiety from the students. I would also conduct a group interview with all the senior students together and one counsellor if they were available

During the two days I will be available from 8.00am until 4.00pm for the interviews. A suggestion to minimise the disruption to school would be to put the group interview on during lunch of the second day and utilise morning teas, before and after school timeslots and the other lunch break for the allocation of senior student interview times where possible.

It would be very helpful if counsellors could start to identify possible senior student who could be involved in the process. I am very aware that I will be interviewing a number of unchurched respondents. In assessing the survey I would ask that you be very critical, especially in terms of this and the academic level of the survey.

After I receive responses from this round, I will send out the adjusted version for final approval. I will then bring these to your school when I come for the research visit in term 3. At the very beginning of term three I will send out the required consent forms. It would be greatly appreciated if these could be given to all concerned (students, counsellors and principals) immediately so that I could collect them during my visit.

Once again thanks for your time and help and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely

Br Paul Conn
PLT

Response Sheet Round 2.

Spirituality and counselling Project.

Date Due: Friday May 13th

Name: _____

College: _____

1. Comments re lay out and length of survey.
2. Comments on the suitability of survey for senior students.
3. Comments on implementation plan for the survey
4. Comments on “ Spirituality Part One” the following survey questions are unsuitable.
5. Comments “spirituality Part Two”
6. Comments “ Counselling Part One ”
7. Comments “ Counselling Part Two”

Thankyou

Letter Three

18/05/05

Dear

Once again many thanks for your response to the draft survey for the spirituality and counselling project. They contributed to some significant and meaningful changes in the instrument. The good news is that this is the last stage of this part of the process and the last time that a response is requested.

The purpose of this letter is twofold. Firstly to provide you with the updated copy of the research instrument and ask that you sign off on it being appropriate to give senior students in the school. It would be most helpful to the process if both Principal and counsellor could do this. Secondly I would like to give details to the counsellors so that consent forms and a timetable can be organised for my visit next term.

Please find enclosed the amended version of the research instrument. If you are comfortable in it being used, **please sign the response sheet and return it to me in the self addressed stamped envelope by Friday June 10th** The final instrument used with the students will be more professionally produced than this copy.

Enclosed in the envelope addressed to the counsellors will be the necessary consent forms. One will be for the principal, one for each counsellor involved and for each student involved. It is my understanding that in a boarding school the principal may sign the form on behalf of the parent but I will leave this to the discretion of the principal.

Could the counsellor please hold onto these forms until a couple of days before my arrival and then distribute them. Students should be asked to return them on the day of my visit. It would be a great help if counsellors could start to identify the twelve year twelve students (preferably student leaders) that would be involved. They would need no preparation before the interview. An interview room would be needed for the individual interviews and a larger room for the group meeting

Below is my timetable for the school visits and on the following pages, a possible structure for the days. I am very aware of the need to minimise disruption to school so thus the inclusion of time slots at lunch time and before and after school. More slots have been included than are needed to give as much flexibility as possible to the day.

Once again I would like to sincerely thank you for your personal support and the support of the school in this project. If you have any questions or concerns re the process please don't hesitate to get in touch with me

Yours sincerely
Br Paul Conn
PLT

Timetable ;

Thursday July 7 and Friday July 8 St Brendan's Yeppoon.
Thursday July 14 and Friday July 15 St Patricks Shorncliffe.
Thursday July 21 and Friday July 22 Gregory Terrace.
Thursday August 4 and Friday Aug 5 Nudgee College
Thursday August 11 and Friday Aug 12 Ignatius Park.

Structure for Days

Twelve students, the principal and counsellor (s) will need to be allocated a time.
Individual interviews can be before or after the group interview

Thursday:

Time Student Place

Time	Student	Place
Before School		
Period 1		
Period 2		
Period 3		
Period 4		
Lunch		
Period 5		
Period 6		
Period 7		
After School		

Friday

Time

Student

Place

Before School		
Period 1		
Period 2		
Period 3		
Period 4		
Lunch	Group student meeting	
Period 5		
Period 6		
Period 7		
After School		

Response Sheet

**Please return in the self addressed stamped envelope before
Friday June 10th**

Name:

School:

Position:

I have read the research instrument for the “ Counselling and
Spirituality” project and in my opinion it is suitable to be used by
year twelve students at this school

Signed _____

Thankyou

Appendix K

Counselling and Spirituality Project

Research Instrument 2005 Draft 1.

Br Paul Conn

Schools Involved:

Ignatius Park College, Townsville.
St Brendan's College, Yeppoon.
St Joseph's Nudgee, College.
St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace.
St Patrick's College, Shorncliffe.

CODE NAME: _____

AGE: _____ Years _____ Months

COLLEGE: _____

YEAR LEVEL: _____

RELIGION: _____

DATE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEY

(All instructions are in green)

Please answer the following survey by placing a tick in the column that best describes your response to each individual statement.

Key for Survey Response:

STRONGLY AGREE: (SA)

AGREE: (A)

NO OPINION: (NO)

DISAGREE: (D)

STRONGLY DISAGREE: (SD)

Spirituality Part 2

1.) Describe an experience, if any, that you have had that you would say was a “spiritual experience”

Mark this scale: Was the experience negative or positive for me ?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Very NegativeNeutral.....Very Positive

2.) Describe an experience that you have had with Religion or Church.

Mark this scale: Was the experience negative or positive for me ?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Very NegativeNeutral.....Very Positive

In the following statements please tick the first part or second part according to what you believe.

It is essential to have a counsellor in a school () or it is a luxury ()

The counsellor is accepted at school or () no one would ever go to a counsellor ()

I would go to a counsellor if necessary () or I would never go to a counsellor ()

If you said that you would be open to going to a counsellor Please continue.

I would go to a counsellor that I would trust () or I would go to any counsellor ()

I would want to see results () or I would want to feel good ()

I would work individually with the counsellor () or I would rather work in a group() I

would rather a counsellor that accepted me() or just told me what to do ()

I would expect the counsellor to work with me()or I do all the work ()

I would expect that the counsellor would judge me () or not Judge me as a person ()

I would expect change if I saw a counsellor () or change would not be important ()

I think goals would be important () or just go with the flow ()

Motivation from the counsellor is important () or I would be self motivated ()

Non verbal communication would be important () or all verbal communication ()

I would expect my case to be unique() or a set approach would be used ()

I would want to be involved in the process () or I would just sit back and watch ()

Counselling Part 2

Please fill out the following:

Issues that someone my age may go to a counsellor over are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Thankyou

Appendix L

Extra Questions for Principals, Counsellors, Students and Focus Group

Counselling and Spirituality Project. Extra interview questions. Principals.

Tape Ref:

School: _____

- 1. What do you think of spirituality for year 12 boys. Is it important, if so why?**

- 2. What would be the key components of spirituality for a year 12 boy?**

Social

Justice:

Environment:

Relationships:

- 3. Do you think a counsellor is essential in the school context?**

- 4. Do you see any link between spirituality and counselling?**

5. What more could the school do in terms of counselling and spirituality?

Counselling and Spirituality Project

Extra interview questions.

Counsellors.

Tape Ref:

School: _____

1. What did you think of the survey? i.e. did it connect with them?

2. Do you think spirituality is important for teenage boys?

3. Do you think a teenage boy responds to a counsellor ?

4. What more could be done to integrate counselling and spirituality

Counselling and Spirituality Project

Extra interview questions.

Students.

Tape Ref:

School: _____

1. What did you think of the survey?

2. Do you think spirituality is important for teenage boys?

3. Do you think a teenage boy responds to a counsellor?

4. What more could the school do in either the area of counselling or spirituality?

**Counselling and Spirituality Project:
Questions: Focus Group.
Students**

Tape Ref:

School: _____

Present: _____

1.) The principal has asked for a group of year 12 students to do a presentation at Speech night on each of the following aspects of life at the college: academic, sporting, social, cultural and spiritual. You have been asked to do the spiritual. What do you say.

2.) If you could change your RE class in term 4, what would you like to see happen in areas of religion or spirituality?

3.) If a counsellor integrated spirituality into a counselling process, how would you react?

4.) One of the members of your class comes out and says he is gay. How would he finish year 12 at the school? Is this a spiritual issue, a religious issue or neither? How would it affect your relationship with the boy?
