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TRANSFORMATIONAL HEALING WITHIN AN INCARCERATED EXILE COMMUNITY

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF HAZELIP SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

**BY
DAVID W. PHIPPS, JR.
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
AUGUST 2023**

This Doctor of Ministry Project, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Hazelip School of Theology of Lipscomb University in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Doctor of Ministry.


TRANSFORMATIONAL HEALING WITHIN AN INCARCERATED EXILE COMMUNITY

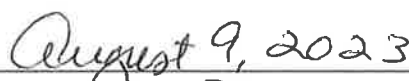
By

David W. Phipps, Jr.

For the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

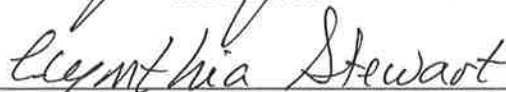

Director of Graduate Program


Date

Doctor of Ministry Project Committee


Dr. Richard Goode


Dr. John York


Dr. Cynthia Stewart

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all those who were in exile with me and encouraged me to work on a doctoral degree. They believed I had something to say and contribute to the communities in exile and those who work with them. To all those who have come out of exile and continued to encourage me as I worked through the doctoral program. To all those who are still in exile, may they come home soon.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

God

Dr. Cynthia Stewart, my trusted friend who told me when I was asked if I would to work on a doctoral program, while I was still in prison, and she gave the simplest advice, just say “yes.”

And my life radically changed.

Dr. Richard Goode who facilitated a contemplative reading community in prison. One he asked him if I would like to work on my dream in a doctoral program, because he believed I had something to say and offer to the community.

Dr. John York who never stopped believing I could finish. When every I said I am going to finish this, he would simply say “I know you well.”

Dr. Kate Watkins who came into prison and did my first informal interview for the doctoral program. She was a great wealth of encouragement once I started the doctoral program.

Faculty of Hazelip School of Theology at Lipscomb University

My sister Connie Motely who was always asking “are you finished yet?” Followed by “you need to do this and finish it.”

My Parents lovingly made sure that when I was ready, there would be way to move forward.

Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry, my coworkers gave me the space I needed to work on my doctoral program.

Thank you all for believing in me, giving me the opportunity to work on my dream. Allowing me to flourish and move into God’s Shalom.

ABSTRACT

This doctor of ministry project is the beginning foundation of a dream that I first started dreaming of while I was in prison. The dream is the development of a community in exile with the understanding that those living in exile have something to offer within the prison walls. Furthermore, those in exile have something to offer when they are released from exile. God, through Jeremiah, tells those living in exile in Babylon that they are to build communities while in exile. Through the building of communities God informs that they are to offer Shalom to each other and to all those outside of the community. This directive is apropos to those living in exile in the land of the incarcerated. I am convinced that God desires those exiled to the land of the incarcerated to build community while in exile and offer Shalom. The first thing that those living in exile will possibly need to learn, to build community, is how to work and help each other to begin a transformative healing journey.

This project explores a possible way to help the exile, as well as teaching the exile how to help each other, to move in transformative healing. The following is the question that this project explores regarding the exile moving into transformative healing: is it possible that spiritual direction techniques, aided by spiritual formation modules (spiritual disciplines) and community fellowship, assist with transformational healing within the incarcerated exile community? The following is the developmental flow of this project. Chapter 1 is a discussion on the purpose of this project and problematics that gave rise to the project and that the project had to overcome. Chapter 2 is a discussion on the correlation between Jeremiah 29 and incarcerated landscape that the incarcerated exile dwells. Chapter 3 is a literary review and theological discussion on the spiritual direction methodology (techniques) I used in this project with those living in exile.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology for teaching spiritual direction methodology (techniques) to those living in incarcerated exile. The final chapter discusses the outcomes that derived from this project, the outcomes that currently continue as development projects, and the outcomes that are laying the foundation for future projects.

CONTENTS

Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgments	v
Abstract.....	vi
Contents	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Context.....	1
Problem.....	3
Purpose	4
Barriers and Limitations	4
Prison and Jail Cooperation	4
COVID-19	5
Assessment Limitations: Fundamental Challenges in Development Spiritual Metrics in Relationship to Transformational Healing.....	5
Conceptual Context for the Development of this Project.....	49
CHAPTER 2: INCARCERATED EXILE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING AND BACKGROUND FOR THE USE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION METHODOLOGY WITH THOSE INCARCERATED	50

The Biblical Understanding of Exile	51
The Incarcerated Exile Landscape	55
A Missional Understanding of Incarcerated Exile Culture.....	56
A Theological Discussion of Exile	61
The Community Exile Framework	65
CHAPTER 3: THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION METHODOLOGY WITH THE INCORPORATION OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE MODULES	70
Spiritual Direction	70
Spiritual Direction Methodology Discussion	74
Identify	75
Conclusion on Maslow Hierarchy of Needs	90
Determine	92
Engage	111
Open.....	121
Embrace	129
Conclusion	131
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY	133
Introduction.....	133
Classroom Modules	133

Module 1 – Introduction	133
Module 2—Spiritual Discipline; Prayer	134
Module 3—Spiritual Discipline: Listening	136
Module 4—Spiritual Discipline: Journaling.....	137
Module 5—Spiritual Discipline: Examen	139
Module 6—Using Jonah to Understand the Process and Effect of Experiences	142
Module 7—Why is Jonah Angry	144
Module 8—The Prodigal Son: Understanding How an Experience Speaks	144
Module 9—A Second Look at Jonah.....	145
Module 10 – Spiritual Discipline Session	146
Module 11—A Third Look at Jonah.....	147
Module 12—How Can We Help Jonah	148
Module 13—Role Playing Jonah.....	149
Module 14—Triads: Live Direction	149
Module 15—Conclusion.....	150
Evaluation	150
Conclusion	152
CHAPTER 5: OUTCOMES	153
Current Outcomes	153
Spiritual Hierarchy Model	153

Transformation Model	154
Incorporating Journaling in Spiritual Direction.....	156
Spiritual Direction Concept of Listening in Mentor Training Program	156
Developing Outcomes	157
Spiritual Hierarchy and Transformation Models	158
Advance Mentor Training.....	158
Spiritual Direction Methodology	159
Conclusion: Further the Work.....	159
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	161
APPENDIX A.....	172
Information and Consent Form.....	172
APPENDIX B.....	178
Questionnaire	178
APPENDIX C.....	181
Appreciative Inquiry	181
APPENDIX D.....	185
Questionnaire Scoring Key.....	185

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Context

The ministerial context in which I work is prison ministry. However, I often think of prison ministry more in a missional context than as an outreach ministry. My informal introduction to prison ministry occurred in February 1992 while incarcerated in Memphis, Tennessee. That month I met a Buddhist monk who challenged me to take some college courses with Liberty University. Through Liberty, I earned both a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree while in prison. In August 1998, I transferred to Riverbend Prison, Nashville, TN. When I arrived at the prison, I met the Chaplain who asked me if I would like to be his assistant. Working for the Chaplain was the beginning of my formal work in prison ministry. I worked in the Chaplain's Office from September 1, 1998, until January 30, 2012, and then from October 1, 2013, until released from prison on October 14, 2015. While working for the Chaplain, my responsibilities included helping to develop and monitor volunteer and religious programs, monitor volunteers in their respective activities, assist in training volunteers, and maintain volunteer training records. Also, I worked with Freedom House Ministry, through the Chaplain's Office, helping with the development and coordination of the Holiday Package program, the TV program which entailed volunteers donating TVs for those incarcerated who were unable to acquire a TV either on their own or through family members, and the Chapel Library programs. Working directly with the Chaplain, I helped to develop, monitor, and coordinate the mentor program. Moreover, occasionally when needed I would counsel other residents. Additionally,

while working in the Chaplain's Office, the Chaplain gave me time and encouraged me to begin thinking and working on the concept of a transitional transformational community in incarcerated exile with the underlying foundation being transformational healing.

On October 14, 2015, I was paroled from prison. After my release, I continued working with Freedom House Ministry specifically with the Holiday Package program and the TV donation program. I also began working with Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry (TPOM) as a volunteer. In January of 2017, I became fully employed with TPOM as the House Manager, responsible for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the transitional house. In October 2020, we (the Board President, Executive Director, Program Director/Director of Operations, and I) saw a need for me to begin functioning more as a Spiritual Director/Chaplain. My official title became Director of Spiritual Development. I began using spiritual direction as my preferred method for pastoral counseling and began formal sessions with those in the transitional house in December 2020.

Along with my work as the Director of Spiritual Development, I am working with Dr. Cynthia Stewart on a mentor certification program to train and prepare mentors to work with individuals from one year before being released from prison until 18 months after release. The mentor program is designed to help with transformation and transitional issues. Dr. Stewart and I are beginning to create spiritual formation modules to be taught in prison and the transition house. The spiritual formation modules will focus on spiritual identity healing, spiritual identity formation, core belief systems, the cognitive functional behaviors that manifest out of a core belief system, and healing of the heart and soul. Additionally, the modules will address community integration along with functioning and participating in the community.

Within this ministerial context, the research project that I am proposing on transformational healing is the foundational research needed to begin research on and development of the Transitional Transformation Community in Exile Project. TPOM wants to integrate the Transitional Transformation Community in Exile Project as part of a larger streamlined transitional project.

Problem

Over the last 25 years, there has been a dramatic increase in prison violence and an increase in recidivism. Over the years I have had numerous discussions regarding an increase in the displaying of dysfunctional behavior related to these increases. Those in prison whom I knew while I was in prison at the time, and those of us who are now released from prison, understand that one of the primary reasons for the dysfunctional behavior is due to residents not experiencing healing of the wounds to their heart and soul. These wounds are acquired before prison, in the commission of their crimes, and continue to be acquired while in prison. We further perceived that a majority of those who were being baptized or making confessions of faith were experiencing relapse within twelve months and that their dysfunctional behaviors seemed worse than before their baptisms or confessions of faith. In our discussion with those individuals who relapsed we discovered that one of the leading factors was a lack of healing from the wounds they had acquired. We also noted an increase in people going to religions outside of Christianity. In our discussion with those individuals who were moving away from Christianity, we discovered that the individuals were searching for the healing of their souls which they could not find within the Christian prison programs. Since being out of prison, I have discovered that there is a high rate of individuals leaving prison with wounds to their souls and hearts. These wounds

eventually manifest as dysfunctional behavior which causes or leads former prison residents back to prison.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to determine, using spiritual direction techniques aided by spiritual formation modules and community fellowship, if transformational healing can occur within the incarcerated exile community.

Barriers and Limitations

Prison and Jail Cooperation

In applying to work on my project in the prison system I started first applying to Trousdale Turner Correctional Facility and South-Central Correctional Facility, both operated by Core-Civic on behalf of the Tennessee Department of Correction. During my conversation with the Chaplains regarding the need for a Letter of Cooperation as required by Lipscomb's IRB, it was discovered that my project would have to go through the Core-Civic IRB. Because Core-Civic operates under the auspices of the Tennessee Department of Correction, I would also have to submit my project with Core-Civic approval to the Tennessee Department of Correction IRB. The project approval process moved back and forth between these two IRBs for a little over two years. Once both IRBs were satisfied then the project was sent by the IRBs to the Wardens of both institutions. The Wardens in turn developed their own committee consisting of the Assistant Warden of Treatment, Assistant Warden of Security, Educational Superintendent, and Chaplain. During this process I had to answer a lot of questions and make additional adjustments to the project to meet the criteria of each prison. This process took almost a year. After the Warden's

approval the project was sent back to both IRBs for their final approval. During this second IRB review COVID-19 closed all the prisons and jails down.

COVID-19

During the process of going through the IRBs with TDOC and Core-Civic COVID-19 quickly shut the prison system down, allowing access to only essential employees. Because COVID-19 closed the prison system for almost three years, 2023 is when the prison system started retraining volunteers to come in a limited fashion. Because of the length of time due to COVID-19 closing the prison system, I would have to start the approval process all over. For the reasons I just mentioned an alternative plan was approved for the development of this project with a detailed proposed project methodology for future implementation. The proposed project implementation will be implemented as part of a future Community in Exile Development Program—as a pilot project training selected residents of a prison (those living in exile) to be peer-mentors. These peer-mentors will then mentor other residents.

Assessment Limitations: Fundamental Challenges in Development Spiritual Metrics in Relationship to Transformational Healing

Currently I work for Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry (TPOM) as Director of Spiritual Development and House Manager. Briefly, my work consists of providing Spiritual Direction, Chaplain/Pastoral care, supervision of the transition house, development of a certified mentor program, development of spiritual/identity formation modules, and development of transformative transitional communities in exile (prison) focusing on transformational healing

and transition preparation.¹ One of the questions that I am trying to answer is how I can measure transformational change, self-reconciliation, and healing of the soul and spirit?² Another way of asking the question is: What is the spiritual impact of transformational healing? This section addresses the problem of developing a spiritual metric to measure the spiritual impact of transformational healing and measure transformational healing.

Measuring the spiritual impact of transformational healing presents particularly difficult constraints and challenges because of the nature of spirituality. In fact, this is one of the reasons why TPOM has felt stymied when considering planning and assessing for spiritual impact and transformational healing. These challenges and constraints that make engaging with discipleship tools and metrics so difficult are of two kinds:

- 1) Inherent challenges to adopting a conventional, systematic method of planning and evaluation because of the nature of spirituality.
- 2) Challenges brought about by organizational type, capacity, culture, and operational location.

To explore each of these fundamental challenges that make spiritual metrics so difficult, I began having conversations about spiritual metrics with a former Prison Chaplain, former prison residents, and volunteers who facilitate faith based cognitive behavior classes. Formatively I began looking at ways of addressing the challenges of developing a spiritual metric due to the nature of spirituality.

Inherent Challenges to Spiritual Metrics Due to the Nature of Spirituality

¹ Transformational healing within a prison environment is also my doctoral research project which is incorporated in the work at TPOM.

² This is also part of my doctoral research.

There are five fundamental challenges to spiritual metrics and planning that are related to the nature of spirituality:

1. The range and scope of the possible kinds of spiritual impact that make it difficult for organizations to define and prioritize them.
2. The kinds of spiritual impact they would like to have are subject to their own cultural and doctrinal biases and many times don't necessarily align with local ones.
3. Because of the scope and complexity of the variables that cause spiritual impact, it is very difficult for organizations to detail a robust theory of change, and to detail a robust understanding of what kinds of activities will bring about the spiritual impact desired.
4. Given all the above, it is very difficult for organizations to come up with a universal set of activities and objectives that will be impactful and relevant across cultures.
5. The spiritual impact measurement process itself is riddled with practical and theological difficulties, including the fact that spiritual growth is not a linear process.

What follows is a description of our exploring each of these.

Problem of Scope and Definition

It is very hard for organizations like TPOM to identify specifically the kind of spiritual impact they want to accomplish because of the range, scope, depth, and complexity of things spiritual. Since Christ is Lord of all, discipleship encompasses an almost innumerable set of areas of life in thought, word, and deed. This means, therefore, that specifying the exact objectives that one would like to see people achieve spiritually means having to choose or define them among multiple worthy ones, or making a list that is a mile long. In short, the definition, choice, and prioritization are very, very difficult and perplexing. It is no wonder that there is significant

ambiguity in Christian circles about what spiritual growth and maturity means, and a general lack of “clarity around desired results” in this field.³

Problem of Cultural, Doctrinal and Theological Bias

In researching the development of spiritual metrics, I found that when spiritual objectives are defined, they tend to be culturally, doctrinally, and theologically biased. One might think that the Bible gives clear and universal guidance on the markers of spiritual maturity, but church, missions, and development history have shown that the interpretation and application of these markers, the prioritization of spiritual objectives, and the conflation of culture and Christian faith traditions with biblical moral mandates has frequently been pernicious. Requiring converts to dress in Western clothes; the types of instruments allowed in worship services; whether or not one can drink wine, dance, or go to movies; whether or not one speaks in tongues and gives other evidences of the Holy Spirit; involvement or not in issues of “social justice”; time and time again what constitutes evidence of spiritual growth and maturity is shaped by culture, doctrine, and theology.⁴ In summary, not only is it hard to choose which aspects of discipleship to focus on,

³ M. Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership: Tapping the Wisdom of the World of the Kingdom of God* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 99.

⁴ For a description of these different faith traditions and how to use them for a comprehensive approach to individual and church spiritual growth, see J. B. Smith and L. Graybeal, *A Spiritual Formation Workbook: Small Group Resources for Nurturing Christian Growth*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper One Publishers, 1999). See also M. Cutting and W. Walsh, “Religiosity Scales: What are We Measuring in Whom?” *Archive for the Psychology of Religions* (2008), 137-153; M. L. Cutting, R. Gebotys, and C. R. Onofrei, “Inclusive Christian Scale: Preliminary Results,” *The Eastbourne Consultation Joint Statement on Discipleship* (Eastbourne, England: International Consultation on Discipleship, 1999); and N. T. Ammerman, “Golden Rule Christianity: Lived Religion in The American Mainstream,” in *Lived Religion in America*, ed. D. Hall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 196-216, who argue that scales measuring religiosity were biased in that they did not use social justice praxis as a manifestation of spiritual growth. See also B. R. E. Wright, “What We Can and Can’t Learn from Willow Creek’s Reveal Study,” *Journal of Youth Ministry* 7.1 (2008): 101-114 for his critique of bias, along other lines, in the “Reveal” Study.

how an organization prioritize and choose a discipleship program with an evaluative tool is subject to bias that may limit its utility in measuring spiritual impact.

Problem of Theory of Change

I found that it is very difficult in the spiritual arena to trace causality, to define the theory of change that ties together whether and how the activities in which we engage bring about the spiritual impact and transformational healing that we are seeking. In other words, if we want to see people grow and heal spiritually in a certain area, then what activities, what strategies, should we implement in order to bring this about, and why do we think that they will in fact bring about the spiritual impact and transformational healing that we seek?⁵ To a certain extent, as seen above, specifying a theory of change is difficult for any kind of process that seeks to change people's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. However, we discovered that the spiritual arena seems to be even more difficult for at least three different reasons. First, it has to do with changes at the core of people's beliefs about truth and morality and practices based on those beliefs, and not just about how to better attain and manage resources which is usually the focus of other theories of change. Second, it is an area where we are more aware of the direct role that God plays, and thereby gives us more pause, or should give us more pause, when we seek to draw up our

⁵ See Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership*, 99-100, or a good exploration of this issue, and the difficulty of determining how inputs lead to outputs in the spiritual area. See also the CCCU Report on Spiritual Formation Council on Christian Colleges and Universities, "CCCU Report on Spiritual Formation," *Findings* (Washington, DC: Center for Bible Engagement, 2011) that identified this very point as a major problem: "Moreover, the mechanisms by which Christian colleges may actually stimulate moral and spiritual development are woefully underspecified" (p. xiv). Also, the plan of action was geared, in effect, to identifying the theory of change as well, and to use metrics towards that goal. "This assessment will be designed to work in concert with that effort but with greater attention to specific efforts to link intentional programming to identifiable impact on how students think, live and act. To evaluate which specific programmatic components most produce specific aspects of spiritual formation. To evaluate what aspects of programs best work together to produce the most significant, identifiable spiritual formation. In short, we want to identify which intentional programmatic mechanisms positively affect which elements of spiritual formation and at what level of success" (p. 17). Bonem, p. 98 also observes that things are hard to measure, so you settle for lower metrics that are less meaningful, so you create strategies that fail to lead you to achieve what you want to.

theories of change to make sure that we are leaving room for the working of the Spirit. Finally, because individuals within cultures and communities are come from, or are at, different positions in life in regards to their relationship with God, with their community, and with other individuals, it can be difficult to develop group spiritual or religious programs that work with groups but try to monitor individual change.⁶ As a result, it is very difficult to draw up a theory of change in the context of working with a group of people that will specify overall objectives and activities that will address the situation of the specific individuals and their own processes of discipleship.⁷

Practical Problems of Measurement

I also discovered that the measurement process itself, given the challenges identified above, is riddled with practical and theoretical difficulties. First, practically speaking, choosing what to measure in terms of spiritual impact and transformational healing can be overwhelming, leading to two different problems beyond just throwing up one's hands and not measuring anything at all. It can lead to a bias to measure something that is more easily counted, something that is more amenable to a "quantitative" approach, as opposed to what might be harder to measure yet more important. Or it can lead to an attempt to measure just about everything and in the process create a huge, unwieldy, time-consuming, and unproductive burden on the organization, its staff, and the people with whom they are working.⁸ Second, one is not quite sure

⁶ I saw this when I was working in prison teaching the New Life Behavior curriculum in a classroom setting. The inherent design of the curriculum begins with the unspoken assumption that everyone is starting basically at the same point in their relationships with God and is basically at the same place in their problems that the curriculum addresses.

⁷ This is not to deny the fact that individuals within cultures may share certain culturally based characteristics or be pressured to act in certain ways that have implications for spiritual deepening and maturity. See, for example, Titus 1.

⁸ See Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership*, 12, for a story about how in one case World Vision International overwhelmed itself to the detriment of its work.

what one is measuring at any one point in time with spiritual metrics. Spiritual growth and healing are not a linear process of ever increasing maturity and depth, but rather a journey on which all individuals and communities experience peaks and valleys.⁹ Moreover, it is more like many different journeys going on at once and feeding into each other since, as examined above, discipleship covers innumerable areas of life as they are brought under the Lordship of Christ. Times of trial and tribulations or even brief instances of difficulties in one area of life and discipleship, therefore, might affect either negatively or positively other areas of life and discipleship in such a way as to render the results of any assessment difficult to understand, especially if the assessment is more quantitative in nature. The challenge, then, is to design a process of spiritual metrics that is workable and whose purpose and limits are clearly defined and recognized.

Problem of Creating Universal Metrics

Because of all the above, I discovered that it is very difficult to come up with a universal set of metrics for spiritual impact or transformational healing that will be relevant and productive across contexts and cultures. Once again, this is a difficulty that is shared with the metrics of any kind of social change process since the nature of the social objectives are so context dependent. This applies even more so, as seen above, to the spiritual side of things. Thus, organizations in trying to aggregate results across cultures and contexts are faced with inherent difficulties in defining similar relevant spiritual objectives in the face of situations and individuals who vary widely in terms of where they are spiritually and who attach different meanings and words to

⁹ See J. Powell, *The Continual Process of Spiritual Formation*, 2013; and, -Wright, *What We Can and Can't Learn From Willow Creek's Reveal Study*, 2008. See also Bonem, *In Pursuit of God and Godly Leadership*, 101-102, for the observation that congregations go through "seasons" that might include seasons of "pruning" to make the congregation stronger in the long-term.

spiritual concepts and categories. In this, I found that there is a temptation to adopt a “blueprint” approach both to the metrics and to the definition of objectives and activities, rather than tailor it to local circumstances, to more easily figure out and report the total impact an organization is having and to apply what works in one prison to another and in the transition houses. But I discovered that this “one size fits all” approach has been shown time and time again to be ineffective at the best, and counterproductive at the worst. The challenge, then, is to plan and evaluate in a way that would give me an overall measurement of spiritual growth, transformational healing, and the content of which is defined by the context.

Conclusion

It should be clear at this point that engaging in spiritual metrics presents a unique set of difficulties for an organization that is committed to systematic methods of planning and evaluation, be they conventional or activities based. Spiritual objectives are very hard to identify, define, and prioritize because of the breadth of the manifestations of spiritual growth and healing and because of the cultural, doctrinal, and theological biases that shape the understanding of them. This difficulty in defining spiritual progress is compounded by a difficulty in tracing what causes and leads to spiritual growth in other words, in detailing the theory of change of spiritual growth, it means that it is hard to know and measure whether what an organization is doing is the best way to achieve the spiritual impact it seeks. Finally, given all of this, it is very difficult for an organization to draw up a set of spiritual metrics that will serve equally well across cultures and different Christian traditions (including different faith traditions) and allow for an aggregation of data that is not unwieldy, that takes into account the fact that people and groups are in very different places in their faith journey in the multiple dimensions of discipleship, and that they all experience peaks and valleys on this journey rather than a steady line of progress.

While these “methodological” difficulties can be daunting, we believe that there are ways of overcoming them, as described below. First, however, it is necessary to review the organizational challenges to using and adapting the tools of discipleship for purposes of spiritual metrics.

The organizational challenges to engaging in spiritual metrics and planning draw heavily on the previously made points. It is in the organizational endeavor, however, that those challenges become concrete. These challenges are affected by the organization, as well as by their capacity, culture, and the places in which they are operating. In what follows, we first looked at some important differences between Christian development organizations and missions’ agencies, on the one hand, and schools and churches on the other, and then consider the challenges of capacity, culture, and operational location.

1. Organizational Type: Differences Between Schools and Churches, and Development and Missions Organizations.¹⁰

When it comes to spiritual metrics, I discovered that there is an important, qualitative difference between Christian schools and churches, on the one hand, and development and mission organizations on the other. Schools and churches are, by their very nature, what one might call “membership organizations.” While there are important differences between (private) schools and churches, they do share key characteristics. These organizations have a very clearly defined set of people, “members,” who have explicitly or implicitly agreed to abide by the authority of those in charge of the organizations, to follow the rules, regulations, and norms established by them, and who “own” the organizations themselves. Conversely, development and

¹⁰ The reason we decided to look at the differences was due to our understanding and realization that in many ways TPOM comes under schools, church, and missional organizations.

mission organizations are what one might call “service” organizations. They are directed and owned by one set of people and reach out to and “serve” another much less well defined and constantly changing constituency who pick and choose when, how, and what to be involved in as far as the activities offered by these organizations.¹¹ There is, therefore, a very different kind of relationship that exists between the development and mission organizations and their “beneficiaries” or “target” groups, and the relationship between the schools and churches and their “members” that is significant for when it comes to planning for and assessing spiritual impact and transformational healing.

I found that this is the easiest to see in churches, for example. The members of a congregation are expecting and demanding that the mission and purpose of the church will be things spiritual, and the pastors, elders and staff of a church have a clear mandate to create activities that will lead to spiritual growth and fulfillment, and to hold the members accountable to doing their part. Christian schools are pretty much the same in this aspect. Their members are expecting and demanding that the mission and purpose of a Christian school be education, an education that is focused both on the “technical” and “spiritual” dimensions, and therefore the administration and the teachers have a clear mandate to ensure that the students are progressing on both dimensions and to hold them accountable in terms of that progress. The difference is that a Christian school, as opposed to a church, has an added dimension of mission that takes it beyond what people see as simply the “spiritual” realm, and this dual mission at times is the source of tension and difficulty because the “technical” or “secular” educational mission has a way of being placed first given the societal pressures and value of that education, leading to a

¹¹ In some cases, this distinction between the “owners” and “those served” has been cut down by processes that included members of the served community on the decision-making boards of the organization. See, for example, D. Bronkema, *The Sao Paulo Process: North-South Donor-Recipient Relationships Power, and Identity among Christian Development NGOs*, 1996. However, this is relatively rare.

drift away from a focus on spiritual growth and assessment. Nevertheless, it is expected that both in a Christian school and in a church, the teachers and pastors will be engaged in directing processes of discipleship, including evangelism, and spiritual growth.

I came to understand that things are a bit different for missions and development organizations. Because they are not owned by the people with whom they work, aspects of their missions, purposes, and goals can often be very different from the reasons for why people participate in their activities. They also have little if any sway in terms of holding people accountable, and that power usually relies on material leverage in the form of resources rather than on organizational norms, rules, and regulations. These organizations tend to be much more limited in what they can do because people will “put up with” a lot less given the difference in relationship, expectations, and mandates that exist. As a result, there is a significant question as to exactly what spiritual impact and transformational impact these organizations, especially development organizations, should strive for.¹² It is not entirely clear that the spiritual objectives of these organizations should be in all cases to mentor and nurture the discipleship and spiritual growth of the people with whom they are working, and to measure their impact in those terms. Rather, even as evangelical Christian organizations hold firm to training their staff and programs to share the gospel appropriately, it may be that a spiritual objective that makes more sense would be to help people become involved in local churches or local spaces of spiritual nurture such as Bible studies or other groups rather than attempting to do the discipleship mentoring themselves, given the constraints of “type.” However, mission organizations are a bit closer to Christian schools and churches in this sense, because as they are also in the business of making

¹² See, for example, H. J. B April, E. Jakobsson, J. Jones, M. Cooper, R. Anders, and S. Pavarno, *How Are We Doing? Measuring the Impact and Performance of BAM Businesses*, 2014, in their exploration of what a spiritual metrics for businesses that are part of the Business as Mission (BAM) movement should be measuring.

disciples and planting churches, even as in many cases they are combining this more and more with social and material outreach.

2. Organizational Capacity, Culture, and Operational Location.

There are four main problems, closely related to each other, those are capacity, culture, and operational location, that tend to come to the fore as organizations, like prison outreach ministries, look to have a spiritual and transformational impact and assess it:

- a. In looking at many prison outreach organizations, like TPOM, I found that many do not have a clearly defined, planned out, and/or implemented activities geared towards a spiritual impact, healing, and transformation, nor do they seemed to have wrestled with their theory of change, even when engaged in conventional planning. I concluded that possibly this is both the consequence and cause of an implicit and/or explicit tension between mission, outreach, evangelism, and discipleship.
- b. Most organizations tend not to have explored or clearly defined the purpose or purposes for engaging in spiritual metrics, which makes it difficult for them to choose and assess which evaluation tools are the most fruitful and productive for their organization. I found that some prison outreach ministries are attempting to explore the uses of engaging in spiritual metrics. These ministries are having difficulties because they still have not clearly defined the purpose of using a spiritual metric except for wanting to monitor transformational healing.
- c. I have found that the staff at TPOM, as with the staff of many religious organizations, have a variety of fears and hesitations around spiritual metrics, including viewing it as theologically suspect and organizationally counterproductive, a low priority in the context of scarce resources,

and as being too complicated and beyond the organization's competency leading to resistance.

d. Re-entry prison outreach ministries, like TPOM, operate within the context of assisting returning citizens (those coming out of incarceration) with their re-entry (moving from a prison environment back into society) with the preparation beginning prior to the returning citizens release from incarceration. Within the prison context there is resistance to in-depth Christianity and spirituality in general. Some of the individuals coming out of prison, because of their prison experience with religion while in prison, are resistant to any form of spirituality including Christianity. Such resistance further complicates the attempt to plan for and measure spiritual impact.¹³

In what follows, I explored each of these.

Lack of Planning for Spiritual Impact and the Tension Between Evangelism and Discipleship.

As stated above, at times organizations, like TPOM, are keen to measure and report on the spiritual impact of their programs without first having carefully examined the details of the planning side of the equation. This is true whether they are adopting a conventional approach to planning, or an activity based one, or a mix of both in some cases. To put it in the form of a set of questions, have Christian development agencies, missions, organizations, schools, and churches clearly defined what the activities are that will have a spiritual impact, and made sure that their staff is trained to implement them with excellence and faithfulness? Have they wrestled with their theories of change and, in the case of those adopting a conventional planning method, have

¹³ Bonem's Chapter Six, 97-116 has an excellent analysis from his perspective of the challenge of spiritual metrics for churches, focusing on the following: defining clear results, measurement seems unspiritual, measures can be misleading, not everyone wants accountability, needed skills and tools may be lacking. Our list is different, and encompasses his viewpoints, as well as some other ones.

they spelled them out clearly along with their objectives and indicators? In the case of those seeking both material and spiritual impact, have they considered how the two are related?

The answer to many, if not most, of these questions, for TPOM is “no.” However, there is one tension at TPOM, similar to other evangelical reentry ministries, which becomes problematic when working with returning citizens,¹⁴ that being the tension between TOPM’s commitment to, and definitions of, discipleship and evangelism in tension with reunification and transformation.¹⁵ This tension has resulted from the fact that the focus of most the evangelical movement’s outreach efforts, at least in rhetoric, has traditionally been on evangelism, on “saving” those who are lost, on getting a person to accept Christ,¹⁶ as opposed to discipleship, to getting people to grow in their spiritual maturity. Traditionally, the metric used to judge “success” has been the number of “hands raised” professing Christ, a process some have criticized as focusing on “making converts” rather than “making disciples.”¹⁷ The paradigm shift has begun at TPOM, as with some other prison outreach ministries, due to the challenges raised by things like the relapse of people in prison after evangelistic campaigns, relapse in transition houses, the level of violence in prison is equivariant between professing Christians and non-

¹⁴ Returning Citizens is a phrase used at TPOM referring to those individual returning from exile/prison.

¹⁵ One of TPOM’s main stated goals is to assist residents returning from prison to become reunited with God, family, and community. Another goal of TPOM is to assist residents to move from an unhealthy life narrative, often accompanied and/or caused by addiction, to a healthy life narrative.

¹⁶ Of course, this was not always the case, as per the history detailed by D. O. Moberg, “The development of social indicators for quality-of-life research.” *Sociological Analysis* 40.1 (1979): 11-26.

¹⁷ M. L. Cutting, R. Gebotys, and C. R. Onofrei, *Inclusive Christian Scale: Preliminary Results. The Eastbourne Consultation Joint Statement on Discipleship* (Eastbourne, England: Paper presented at the International Consultation on Discipleship, 1999); R. J. Krejcir, *The Importance of Discipleship and Growth* (Retrieved from Churchleadership.org website, 2018); D. W Krow and A. Woemmack, *The Complete Discipleship Evangelism 48 Lesson Course* (Colorado Springs: Andrew Wommack Ministries, 2014); Andrew Wommack, “Not just Converts: Evangelism without Discipleships Dispenses Cheap Grace.” *Christianity Today* 43.12 (1999): 28-29; Dallas Willard, “Rethinking Evangelism,” Dallas Willard website, 2001, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.dwillard.org/articles/artview.asp?artID=53>, Andrew Wommack, “Discipleship Versus Evangelism,” Andrew Wommack Ministries website, accessed August 5, 2018, http://www.awmi.net/extra/article/discipleship_evangelism.

Christians and as noted by many in prison who are opposed to Christianity the involvement of Christians in wholesale genocide in Rwanda, and other places, leading to questions of when and whether people professing Christ “truly believe.”¹⁸

Separating evangelism from discipleship¹⁹ makes it harder in at least three ways for TPOM and other development organizations, mission agencies, and to some extent churches and Christian schools to engage in thoughtful and insightful planning and implementation for spiritual impact and transitional healing along with the engagement in spiritual metrics.²⁰ First, the separation makes it harder for TPOM, and other like organizations, to see and to focus on the complementary nature of evangelism and discipleship and how the Spirit uses both word and deed together to witness to Christ. Loving God and loving neighbor, witnessed to by fruit including holiness, kindness, loving speech, and good deeds that exemplify “The Way” (Acts), are powerful tools that the Spirit uses in combination to bring people to Christ. As a result, severing the inherent, mutual, and complementary relationship makes it more difficult to “disciple” and train staff for more effective spiritual impact, to plan and create activities that will have a combined spiritual and social and material impact, to prevent an insidious polarization in the organization or between organizations about the respective importance of evangelism or

¹⁸ I. Block, “Discipleship and evangelism,” *Direction* 14.2 (1985): 76-81; G. C. Hoag, R. S. Rodin and W. K. Willmer, *The Choice: The Christ-Centered Pursuit of Kingdom Outcomes* (Winchester, VA: ECFA Press, 2014).

¹⁹ Here I am suggesting that discipleship should be seen as something distinct rather than understanding it as being part of the larger overall process of Christ’s mandate of evangelism - disciple making.

²⁰ Some of what follows mirrors some of the criticism of the Church Growth Movement, which focused much of its efforts on increasing the numbers attending church many times to the detriment of a focus on discipleship. See J. Myers, “Church Growth God’s Way,” Till He Comes website, accessed September, 8, 2018, <http://www.tillhecomes.org/sermons/miscellaneous/church-growth-gods-way/>. See also J. E. Plueddemann, “Measurable Objectives, No! Vision, Yes!,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 31.2 (1995): 184-187. for a screed against measurable/numerical objectives and a call for a focus on “vision” that gets at the inner qualities of spiritual life.

discipleship, and to be used by the Spirit to bring people to Christ.²¹ Second, separating out evangelism from discipleship hides from view the fact that spiritual impact and change is not a process that occurs just at an isolated, point-in-time individual level when a “decision for Christ” is made. Rather, spiritual change involves wider social and cultural impacts and changes along a never-ending timeline, making context an extremely important factor for consideration. For example, focusing just on “professions for Christ” to the exclusion of other markers of change makes little sense in some contexts, especially those in hostile environments like prisons, and does little to honor those called to minister in those contexts. Those efforts may set the stage for a later abundant harvest by others, having led to what can only be called a spiritual impact or change along other lines, such as decreasing the hostility in the environment such there is higher receptivity to the Gospel message. In short, seeing and understanding a person’s decision for Christ and evangelistic activities geared towards that as part and parcel of a wider process of discipling of that person and the social and cultural structures of which they are a part over time (prison as places of exile), both before and after the decision, opens up a whole new understanding of the possibilities for and nature of spiritual impact and transformational change and healing, which helps organizations to take these into account as they plan, implement, and assess the results of their activities. This approach to “discipling the nations,”²² in fact, has been developed systematically based on what is known as the Engel scale, a scale that ranks the progression of spiritual maturity of people and that has been adapted by a host of mission,

²¹ For this last argument, see J. G. Stackhouse Jr., *What Does it Mean to be Saved? Broadening Evangelical Horizons of Salvation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002). See also T. Suttle, *An Evangelical Social Gospel? Finding God’s Story in the Midst of Extreme* (Portland, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), who argues that our divorcing of evangelism and social work hampers the work of the Spirit in bringing people to Christ.

²² D. L. Miller, *Discipling the Nations: The Power of Truth to Transform Cultures* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2001).

churches, and development organizations, as explored by B. W. Albright in his PhD Doctoral Dissertation.²³

Third, separating out evangelism and discipleship has made it very, very difficult for those interested in integrating evangelism and social action, and in measuring spiritual impact in a holistic way that includes effects on the material, social and psychological aspects of life, to do it well. Since evangelism and its success was defined and measured as a profession of faith, it pressured development organizations, for example, to create a specific strategy for how to present the gospel geared solely towards getting people to make professions of faith rather than to emphasizing the Lordship of Christ overall. It also meant that missions organizations and churches were under pressure to justify their integration of social action in terms of producing converts, leaving little room to explore the relationship and synergy between evangelism, discipleship, good works, and material, social and psychological progress both in terms of planning and assessment. This means prison reentry organizations need to be serious about planning and measuring their spiritual along with their material impact, wrestle with figuring out what the relationship is between the two, and how best to achieve each in the context of the other.²⁴ As with most other causal relationships, this one is particularly difficult to decipher, not only because it is so dependent on the context, but because there seems to be no pattern of relationship, association, and causality that can be established. For example, sociologically speaking, submitting oneself to Christ might lead to an improvement in one's material situation. However, it is also the case that increased riches can bring about a decrease in spirituality and living a Christian life may lead to a decrease in material wealth. The problem is that because

²³ B. W. Albright, *When Business is the Mission: A Study of Faith-Based Social Business in Sub Saharan Africa* (Ph.D. diss., Eastern University, 2014).

²⁴ TPOM is working on developing an assessment spiritual and material impact.

evangelism, spiritual deepening, and material, social, and psychological progress have been separated out from each other, there has been little incentive to research and think through what this means both for theory, theology, and practice. In summary, the tension and separation between evangelism and discipleship has made it hard at times for TPOM, and other like organizations, to establish well thought-through activities and objectives of spiritual impact in conjunction with material impact (e.g., workforce development) that go beyond simply the profession of faith and training their staff to accomplish them. It has prevented organizations from recognizing that spiritual impact can be manifest in myriad different processes of individual and cultural change and setting up evaluation processes to explore what these changes are. The tension has also hampered a focus on defining and measuring how social action connects to, fits with, and reflects spiritual progress and impact. All these consequences of the tension between evangelism and discipleship add to the difficulties identified in the method section, making it a requirement of organizations, like TPOM, seeking to be faithful in bringing about spiritual impact to be diligent in their planning of metrics.

Lack of Clarity of Purposes of Spiritual Impact Evaluation and Measurement.

A major problem I found inhibiting TPOM, and like organizations, from measuring and assessing their spiritual impact well, is their lack of clarity on why they should do so. While many times the organizations, like TPOM, have at least an implicit idea of why measuring spiritual impact is or might be important, often they have not clearly discussed and defined what they want to achieve through spiritual metrics, and have not established goals and objectives for the measurement itself. Why does that lack of clarity make a difference? Because as reviewed above, each of the five potential purposes for which an evaluation is undertaken – improve, or market programs, and explore, prove, and advance impact - calls for a kind of focus and method

to achieve it most effectively. A lack of clarity of purpose, therefore, leads to confusion when trying to figure out what to do on the evaluation side, especially when talking about spiritual metrics. I looked at why that is the case.

In an organizational setting where the evaluation purposes have not been sorted through and prioritized, the discussion on how best to engage in metrics will tend to be a struggle since people will be driven by different purposes depending on their interests, roles, and responsibilities in the institution. As they look for a way to implicitly accomplish them in one fell swoop because of the scarce time and resources available for evaluation, they will run into what are most likely to be insurmountable difficulties. A quantitative approach to evaluation that gives the donors and other stakeholders facts and figures to create excitement about and support for the organization will probably not be of much use for those who want to use the evaluation to understand how and why they can improve their programs, even though it might give some interesting insight into areas to which more attention needs to be paid. Vice-versa, a qualitative approach focused on how and why activities and objectives should be changed to increase the effectiveness of results at times will not be of as much use to those who oversee marketing the organization's programs, even if it does yield some stories that can touch the donors' hearts. And an "empowerment" or "transformative" approach that hands over the evaluation, and even planning, to the people with whom the organization is working in function of their own processes of progress, runs the risk of not providing information that is of much use for the first two purposes. In the absence of enough resources or programmatic commitment to diversify the evaluation process to accomplish all of these at once, and in the absence of an analysis and awareness that these five purposes have, to a certain extent, mutually inhibiting requirements, the result will be conceptual and programmatic confusion. In short, usually some kind of

prioritization needs to be made, and that can only be done if there is clarity around the purposes of the evaluation.

Hesitations Surrounding Appropriateness and Productivity of Spiritual Metrics

Another challenge, I discovered, to organizations like TPOM, entering the practice of measuring spiritual impact is the lack of conviction that this will be an appropriate, useful, or productive engagement. This hesitation comes from at least five main sources: an ambivalence over whether measuring things spiritual is biblically sound; a nagging suspicion that it may be used in inappropriate ways; a fear that if spiritual assessment is undertaken, the results would reflect poorly on the organization and its programs; a fear that the cost of doing this kind of assessment would take away time and other resources from other higher priorities; and a fear that there is a lack of capacity in the organization to do it well. I outlined the four hesitations and one not knowing.

1. Theological Hesitations

The question of the theology of spiritual metrics, of the biblically based appropriateness of measuring spiritual impact, is a deep and serious one. While there is significant theological literature on spiritual self-testing geared towards individual spiritual growth, backed by relevant scripture, there is little to no theology that looks at what this might mean in the context of an organization that is proposing to measure the spiritual condition and growth of others. Given the difficulties of defining spiritual objectives outlined above, especially those related to the doctrinal, theological, and cultural variability of these objectives, it stands to reason that a suspicion of having one party measure another's spiritual growth is a healthy theological suspicion to have, and that significant work in exploring the theological bases of this kind of assessment and evaluation needs to be done.

2. Hesitations over Potential Misuse

This leads to the second spiritually related hesitation about engaging in spiritual metrics, which has to do with the possibility that spiritual metrics might be used to pressure people both inside and outside the organization to adhere to the theology, doctrine, and culture that the organization is promoting and that it might be used to provide cover for action taken against them. One could imagine, for example, how the process of creating and engaging in spiritual metrics might include propagating an explicit or implicit “theological message”²⁵ that imposes theological, doctrinal, and cultural beliefs as a condition for access to resources. It is also conceivable that spiritual metrics might be used as an excuse to get rid of staff for any number of reasons. This potential internal and external “misuse” of spiritual metrics is tricky to assess, however, since there are very legitimate and biblically based reasons for organizations establishing “spiritual” conditionalities both for their staff and partnerships with others. The fact remains, however, that within organizations it is not unusual for people to be suspicious about how spiritual metrics might be used in these ways.

3. Hesitations because of Fear of Results

It has been well documented in the literature that some leaders are simply afraid that an evaluation of spiritual impact might show poor results and lead to a negative reputation and loss of support.²⁶ This fear is understandable, especially considering the planning and evaluation analysis carried out above. If leaders and organizations have not taken steps to define clearly their spiritual activities and train their staff to carry them out well; if they have not, under a

²⁵ See M. B Anderson, *Do No Harm: how Aid can Support Peace or War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999) for her examination of “implicit ethical messages” that served as a basis for this analysis of “implicit theological messages.”

²⁶ Dallas Willard, “How do we assess spiritual growth? A Leadership interview with Dallas Willard.” *Leadership*, 31.2 (2010): 29-39.

conventional approach, clearly defined their objectives and theories of change; and if they have not, under an activities-based approach, previously explored what the range and scope has been of the spiritual impact of their programs; then when the question of spiritual impact is raised it is only natural that there will be a high degree of uncertainty over what the nature and extent of the impact actually has been.

4. Hesitations because of Scarcity of Resources

Another hesitation for engaging in spiritual metrics comes from the resource question. Organizations have so many different objectives and priorities, some that appear to be easier to achieve than others, that spiritual assessment and evaluation, especially given the fact that it seems hard to do well, is seen as something that would take time and money away from those other priorities. As a result, the temptation is to shuffle it off to be considered for another day. In short, evaluation of impact falls victim to a cost benefit analysis, something that happens frequently in organizations considering how to carry out monitoring and evaluation of any kind.²⁷

5. Not Knowing How to Do It Productively and Faithfully

The last organizational challenge that makes it difficult for organizations like TPOM to engage in spiritual metrics is that they feel they just don't know how to go about it even though they would like to. As we have seen, this is understandable, because there are no "do it yourself" manuals for spiritual metrics as there are for other kinds of evaluations. Organizations are, therefore, relegated to starting from scratch, attempting to research and develop their own approaches and methods, or to hiring consultants who will help them in this task. But, as I have seen, because of the complexity of the issues involved, all engaged in this field are still learning

²⁷ See M. Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership*, 104, for how the question of whether it is really worth it comes to the fore in organizations that lack skills and tools.

and devising ways to cope with the challenges that this area faces, and at times get conflicting advice and guidance.²⁸ In short, the process of devising “best practices” for spiritual metrics and their theological underpinnings is still very much a work in progress.

In summary, then, the lack of a strong theological imperative for organizations to engage in spiritual assessment, coupled with suspicions and fears that it might be misused, might give results that damage the reputation of the organization, that it would take precious time and resources away from other priorities and is hard to do well, all combine to give many organizations pause when considering adding spiritual metrics to their list of things to do.

Difficult Operational Locations: Closed or Minority Country Contexts.

Many Christian organizations, like TPOM operate in closed prison contexts, situations where ministering to those incarcerated is regulated by prison policy. In these situations, both the planning for and evaluation of spiritual impact is even more complicated because of the restrictions placed on activities that are geared towards promoting Christianity in one way or another and the kinds of conversations and data-gathering that can take place without putting residents at risk (both from peers and prison administration). Organizations like TPOM have taken different approaches to how they seek a spiritual impact in these difficult contexts. Some prison reentry organizations rely on using their material resources and programs to increase a persuasive presence in order to provide services in a way that witnesses to their faith and opens up opportunities for their staff and volunteers to verbally share the gospel and its implications on an individual level.²⁹ Much of the spiritual impact in these situations has to do with what was

²⁸ M. Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership*, 104.

²⁹ There are a variety of different models for working in close countries, including the “Business as Mission” model, see D. Bronkema and C. M. Brown, “Business as Mission Through the Lens of development.” *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 26.2 (2009): 82-81 accessed August 8, 2018,

described above, where because of the witness of these faithful servants, hostility to Christianity is diminished, friendships are created, prison residents are challenged in their perspectives and assumptions about their own faith and faithfulness and what that means for their actions, and about the truth of God's Love. However, as stated at the beginning of this section, measuring these kinds of changes is particularly difficult, and is a significant reason why most have not even attempted it.

Towards a "Best Practices" Framework for Spiritual Metrics

Prayerfully discerning whether, why, and how to go about engaging in spiritual metrics, I have found to be a daunting task, given all the challenges enumerated above. And, to a certain extent, this is as it should be: assessing the relationship that people have with God and the impact that has on their relationships with themselves, others, and God's creation is not something to be taken lightly. I am convinced, however, that engaging in spiritual metrics is not only feasible, but also enjoyable, exciting, and something that honors God, and that doing so holds the potential for TPOM, and other like organizations, to walk more effectively with their staff and the people with whom they work in facilitating processes of spiritual growth and facilitate transformative healing.

The question before any organization desiring to develop and use spiritual metrics, is how to develop a spiritual metric given the very real challenges, as previously outlined? What follows is a quick overview of the tools that I researched that have been developed for spiritual assessment, and consider their relevance for organizations, like TPOM. Then, I will proceed to trace out what I believe to be the principles and practices that make most sense given the

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0265378809103384>, and one that establishes an "inter-faith" approach see L. Backues, "Interfaith Development Efforts as means to Peace and Witness." *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 26.2 (2009): 67-81 accessed August 8, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0265378809103383>.

challenges, constraints, and promises we have identified in the application of spiritual metrics. It is my hope that these suggested “best”³⁰ principles and practices will provide a starting point for discussion and praxis, and continue to be honed through ongoing discussion, theory building, and practice at any organization like TPOM, and hopefully be able to adequately use them in this project.

Spiritual Assessment Tools

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there is certainly no shortage of spiritual assessment, growth, and management tools and approaches for those interested in what can be called the broad area of “discipleship” that encompasses the concepts of spiritual growth, spiritual development, spiritual formation, spiritual transformation, spiritual fitness, spiritual maturity, spiritual vitality, spiritual disciplines, spiritual mentorship, spiritual directorship, faith development, growth in faith, and faith maturity, among others. However, what do these tools look like, and how do they work? There are at least three ways that these tools can be grouped and summarized. First, the tools have generally been developed with one of three target audiences in mind, even though some of them may target several of the audiences at once: individuals, small groups, or churches. Second, the tools have been developed based on specific “biases” around what is most important in terms of content. On the one hand, tools are comprehensive in trying to get at what seem to be the three basic elements that underpin the definition of discipleship: spiritual knowledge, which includes “beliefs,” practices tied to that knowledge, which include praxis in thought and action, and the emotional dimensions of spirituality. On the other hand, the actual detailed content within these categories varies

³⁰ For a good caution on the attempts to discern and engage in “best practices,” see D. J. Snowden, “Managing for Serendipity: or why we should lay off ‘best practice’.” *KM. ARK Knowledge Management* 6. (2004).

significantly as would be expected from our analysis above of the multiplicity of spiritual indicators. Third, these tools tend to either focus just on assessment, whether it be for compiling information purely for research purposes or for personal or corporate awareness, or they combine the assessment with ways to craft plans for change, ranging from personal spiritual growth plans to church management and strategic planning. In what follows is a quick look at some of these tools that our team considered.

Older Tools

A good place to start is with Sappington and Wilson's³¹ summary of six different tools for measuring spirituality and spiritual maturity ranging from 1967 to 1980, especially their chart on pp. 48-50 that synthesizes the elements and potential uses of the tools. Three out of these six measurement tools – the Religious Orientation Inventory, Spiritual Well-Being, and Spiritual Maturity Index - are primarily for research purposes, while the other three – Christian Life Assessment Scales, Religious Status Interview, and The Spiritual Profile – are designed to use the results for individual spiritual growth and change plans, and most of them consist of somewhere between 20-30 questions with responses given on scales that range from 1 to 4 to 1 to 6. Their points of emphasis and content are significantly different from each other. The Religious Orientation Inventory focuses on the people's motivations and the extent to which they subordinate their personal motives to their religious precepts with an ongoing reflection on both. The Spiritual Well-Being tool is structured into a vertical and a horizontal dimension, measuring the extent to which there is a sense of well-being in one's relationship to God and to what degree

³¹ D. Sappington and F. R. Wilson, "Toward an assessment of spiritual maturity: a critique of measurement tools." *Christian Education Journal* 12.3 (1992): 46-50.

there is a sense of life purpose and satisfaction with everyday life and relationships.³² The Christian Life Assessment Scales build off of the “Fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22-23 to focus on four areas of relationship: toward self, God, others, and to ministry and service. The Religious Status Interview focuses on eight self-conscious faith components: awareness of God, acceptance of God’s grace and love, being repentant and responsible, knowing God’s leadership and direction, involvement in organized religion, experiencing faith, being ethical, and affirming openness in faith to growth. Finally, the Spiritual Profile, created from within the Catholic tradition, also has eight areas of emphasis: regard for order set by God, appreciation of balance between new and old forms of ministry and liturgy, intellectual curiosity and inquiry, desire for personal and emotional contact with God, awareness of own feelings and life regarding God, satisfaction with lives and ministry, self-esteem and work, and variety of ministry functions.

Tools Focused on Individuals

Five other, more recent tools also focus on getting individuals to “self-test” themselves and design plans for their individual spiritual growth, and present additional variety in their points of emphasis and focus. Perhaps the most detailed is the Christian Life Profile Assessment Tool,³³ composed of 120 questions on a six-point scale designed to measure thirty “core competencies” in three categories of “beliefs,” “practices,” and “virtues,” which in turn indicate the quality of relationships with God and others. The core competencies around practices include worship, Bible Study, and giving away time, money, faith, and life, while in virtues include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness/goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, hope, and humility.

³² This tool does not claim, however, to measure spiritual maturity.

³³ R. Frazee, *The Christian Life Profile Assessment Tool Workbook: Discovering the Quality of Your Relationships with God and Other in 30 Key Areas* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).

The workbook also includes an assessment questionnaire of 40 questions on virtues to be filled out by three people who know the individual and based on one's personal scores in the competencies and the scores by the others, a personal plan for spiritual growth is to be created.

A second recently created tool (by Lifeway), the Spiritual Growth Assessment Process,³⁴ has some similarities with the Christian Life Profile Assessment Tool in both structure and content, even though the terminology is different. It consists of five different "Spiritual Disciplines"—Abide in Christ, Live in the Word, Pray in Faith, Fellowship with Believers, Witness to the World, and Minister to Others—with ten questions covering each of the disciplines for a total of 60 questions on a five-point scale. It also has a questionnaire on the disciplines to be filled out by three others who know the person, and directions and guidance for a spiritual growth plan, including suggestions for activities to be taken in each one of the disciplines for growth.

A third tool, the Spiritual Fitness Test (*Spiritual Fitness Self-Test*, 2010), apparently developed by Oak Pointe Church (*Week One Daily Training Tips: Welcome to God's Gym* 2010),³⁵ is a self-test comprised of fifty questions on a six-point scale that measures five areas: knowledge, defined as a grasp of spiritual truths; discipline, defined as the practice of spiritual habits; wisdom, defined as the application of spiritual principles to life; fruit, defined as the spiritual impact one makes on the world; and character, the development of Christ-like attributes.

³⁴ "Spiritual Growth Assessment Process," Lifeway Website, last modified 2006, accessed August 5, 2018, http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcF_PDF_DSC_Spiritual_Growth_Assessment.pdf.

³⁵ "Spiritual Fitness Self-Test, Week One Daily Training Tips: Welcome to God's Gym: Personal/group study," Oak Pointe Website, last modified 2010, accessed August 5, 2018, http://www.oakpointe.org/pdf/sermon-notes/GodsGym/Spiritual_Fitness.pdf. It may be that this drew its inspiration from D. R. Crawford, *Disciples Shape: Twelve Weeks to Spiritual Fitness* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998). For a review of Crawford's work, see R. Yount, "Review of 'Disciple "Shape: twelve weeks to spiritual fitness'," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 42.2 (2000): 109-110.

On page 1 of the *Spiritual Fitness Self-Test*³⁶ the questions ask about very specific knowledge and actions, and the results are geared towards helping “you see what you need to do to beef up your faith.”

A fourth tool, the Christian Character Index, developed by Mike Zigarelli, a professor at Messiah College, was designed both for individual self-examination as well as for churches and Christian schools to estimate “the character strengths and weaknesses of their members / students.”³⁷ Based on the list of the “fruits of the spirit” in Galatians 5, and supplemented by the list in Colossians 3, this tool is designed to assess seven “critical” Christian virtues - joy, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion – and one overall Christian character score, based on the average of the seven, that is labeled as “love.”³⁸ Although the tool is proprietary, a version of the assessment questionnaire is available on the web (“Christian Character Index,”), and consists of thirty-five questions on a nine-point scale.

Finally, one additional proprietary tool is worth mentioning, even though the tool itself was no longer available as of the writing of this paper, called “Monvee,” “a loose translation for the Latin words for ‘one life,’”³⁹ and connected with John Ortberg’s book *The Me I Want to Be*.⁴⁰ This tool consists of twenty-two questions that synthesize an original 720-question version, aiming at identifying three key characteristics of an individual: their spiritual pathway—activist,

³⁶ “Spiritual Fitness Self-Test, Week One Daily Training Tips: Welcome to God’s Gym: Personal/Group Study,” Oak Pointe Website, last modified 2010, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.oakpointe.org/pdf/sermond-notes/GodsGym/Spiritual Fitness.pdf](http://www.oakpointe.org/pdf/sermond-notes/GodsGym/Spiritual%20Fitness.pdf).

³⁷ M. Zigarelli, “Theology, Design, and validity of the Christian Character Index,” page 2, Assess Yourself, accessed August 8, 2018, <http://www.assessyourself.org/design/>.

³⁸ Ibid, 2-3.

³⁹ Eric Parks and Casey Bankord, *Frequency: Discovering Your Unique Connection to God* (Brentwood, TN: Worthy Publishing, 2011), 206.

⁴⁰ John Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God’s Best Version of You* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010) and Parks and Bankord, *Frequency*, 211.

contemplative, creation, intellectual, relational, serving, or worship; their learning style—auditory, classroom, social, verbal, or visual; and their personality—reformer, helper, achiever, individualist, investigator, loyalist, enthusiast, challenger, or peacemaker. Based on the premise that God has created everyone with a unique “frequency,” a unique way of connecting with God in which these three characteristics come into play, and that this frequency is blocked by a variety of factors that are linked to one’s personality, the tool assesses and identifies the personality of the individual taking the test. The results of this test are then used to craft a plan for connecting with God on the individual’s frequency that involves four key areas of action: the mind, time, relationships, and experiences.

Tools Focused on Groups and Churches.

The tools mentioned above were developed to specifically assess and measure levels of spirituality, usually with a focus on helping individuals craft plans to grow in their spiritual maturity. At the same time I found that there is a significant body of spiritual assessment tools that have been developed to be used in groups and churches, particularly by those interested in discipleship, spiritual formation, and church management. It is beyond the scope of this paper to review them in any detail, but some are worth mentioning to give a sense for how the issue has been approached at the level of group involvement type organizations.

On the spiritual formation and discipleship side, I found three particularly interesting tools that stand out. The first is Smith and Graybeal’s *Spiritual Formation Workbook*.⁴¹ As with many other spiritual formation books, it integrates assessment questions with a host of spiritual reflections and disciplines. However, it does so in a way that draws intentionally from what it

⁴¹ J. B Smith and L. Graybeal, *A Spiritual Formation Workbook: Small Group Resources for Nurturing Christian Growth* (San Francisco, CA: Harper One, 1999).

labels as six Christian “traditions” or “movements” in the church: the contemplative (prayer-filled), the holiness (virtues), the Spirit-empowered (charismatic), the compassionate (social justice), word-centered (evangelical), and the sacramental (incarnational). As a result, its approach tends to mitigate the criticisms to which other less-holistic tools are subject, especially those that downplay ethical action inspired by faith.⁴² The second is the *Maturity of a Disciple*⁴³ documents, which define spiritual maturity as being made up of five aspects: biblical literacy, spiritual formation, spiritual disciplines, threshold experiences, and five spiritual senses, the latter being made up of a sense of forgiveness, identity, eternity, wonder, and presence.⁴⁴ These aspects are considered to have “both objective measurable components and subjective more intangible components,” which means, according to the authors, that “we should resist the tendency of desiring a definitive analytical tool to measure maturity “and that measurements are best left for personal evaluation on[sic] the disciple before God and perhaps with the loving help of a spiritual coach or mentor.”⁴⁵ The third set of “tools” are a whole set and series of survey information gathered by the Center for Bible Engagement with the aim of helping “people grow spiritually by learning from them what helps and what gets in the way.”⁴⁶ These surveys target the spiritual landscape of individuals around the globe, their engagement with the Bible, children

⁴² N. T. Ammerman, Golden Rule Christianity, “Lived Religion in the American Mainstream,” in *Lived Religion in America*, edited by D. Hall, 196-216. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997. And M. Cutting and M. Walsh, “Religiosity Scales: What are we measuring in whom?” *Psychology of Religions* 30 (2008): 137-153, accessed August 8, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/15736120X317006>.

⁴³ “Maturity of a Disciple” Authentic Discipleship Website, last modified July 3, 2014, accessed September 4, 2018, <http://www.authenticdiscipleships.org/pdfs/2-spiritualformation/Spiritual%20Maturity/SF%202.1%20Maturity%20of%20a%20Disciple.pdf>.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 2-5.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p 5.

⁴⁶ “Life Transformation Research” Center for Bible Engagement, accessed August 15, 2018, http://www.centerforbibleengagement.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=.

and youth, Christian media, churches, and the issue of pornography,⁴⁷ and the Center has used the information from these surveys to create individual, group, and church curricula and plans for Bible engagement geared towards the “revitalization” of faith and to “strengthen and encourage” people along their unique spiritual journey.”⁴⁸

On the church side, there are also several tools that stand out. While most of them are part and parcel of sets of overall church management books, counsel, and tools, the one that is most directed towards spiritual metrics is the “Reveal” approach that is best summarized in Hawkins and Parkinson’s book *Move: What 1,000 Churches Reveal About Spiritual Growth*⁴⁹ and that is the focus of Parkinson’s chapter in this book. Also, a proprietary tool, the “Reveal” questionnaire helps churches assess how many people in their congregation fall into one of four segments along a spiritual continuum—exploring Christ, growing in Christ, close to Christ, and Christ-centered—each of which have their own characteristics. This assessment is accompanied by a theory that there are four catalysts that move people in their spiritual growth: spiritual beliefs and attitudes, organized church activities, personal spiritual practices, and spiritual activities with others.⁵⁰ Based on all of these, the “Reveal” tool is used to assess each congregation and provide them with a “spiritual vitality index,” that then helps the church to draw up specific plans for improvement.

In terms of other tools and advice directed towards church management, there are three that pay significant attention to spiritual metrics. The first are the materials related to the “Vital

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ G. L. Hawkins and C. Parkinson, *Move: What 1,000 Churches Reveal About Spiritual Growth* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2011).

⁵⁰ Ibid., 107.

Congregations Planning Guide” coming out of the Global Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church that include both goal setting and results-measuring suggestions in the areas of “reach out,” “nurture,” “equip,” and “send.”⁵¹ Another useful work along these lines is Chapter 6 of Reggie McNeal’s *Missional Renaissance* entitled “Changing the Scorecard From Measuring Programs to Helping People Grow”⁵² in which he lists host of measurement indicators in the areas of prayer, personal growth development, leadership, time, finances, facilities, and technology, many of which are directly related to spirituality. Finally, perhaps the best summary chapter along these lines is also Chapter 6 in Mike Bonem’s *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership* entitled “Do You Measure What Matters.”⁵³ While it does not necessarily add a great deal in terms of concrete insight on what should be measured, it has an excellent summary of the nuts and bolts of metrics, reviews concisely the barriers and pitfalls to metrics, and argues convincingly the value of measurement if done in a way that is appropriate for each situation, and with relative modesty: “What matters is not finding the perfect indicator, but settling upon a consistent and intelligent method of assessing your output results, and then tracking your trajectory with rigor. We will never find a perfect indicator for spiritual growth or congregational health, but we can strive for a consistent and intelligent set of metrics.”⁵⁴

⁵¹ “Metrics and Measures for Christian Formation and Discipleship,” General Board of Discipleship, last modified 2011, 7-8, accessed August 15, 2018, http://s3.amazonaws.com/Webite_Properties/how-we-serve/documents/vitalcongregations-metrics-measures-christian-formation-discipleship.pdf.

⁵² Reggie McNeal, “Changing the Scorecard From Measuring Programs to Helping People Grow,” in *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 111-127.

⁵³ Mike Bonem, “Do You Measure What Matters” in *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership*, 97-116.

⁵⁴ Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership*, 109. For a summary of spiritual metrics, labeled “spiritual outcomes,” with a focus on business as mission (BAM) that draws on several different streams of literature, including missions and development, see Albright, *When Business is the Mission*, 38-48.

Towards a Set of Best Practices

What then, might an “intelligent” set of metrics, a “best-practice” approach to spiritual metrics, look like for Christian development agencies, missions’ organizations, schools, churches, and this project? As should be obvious from the above, there is nothing even remotely resembling a “one-size fits all” answer to this question, or an established set or “bank” of indicators that can be marshalled for the multiplicity of missions, purposes, activities, and contexts that characterize the different actors. However, despite the complexity involved, we do believe that there are ways of going about spiritual metrics, certain approaches, principles, and methods, that are both faithful and useful. This last part of this chapter explores what they are, under the label of “best practices.”⁵⁵

Best Practices in Measuring Spiritual Impact

I found it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to engage fruitfully in spiritual metrics if the planning side of the equation has not been factored in. It should also be obvious that it is impossible to prescribe what kind of planning and assessment approach will be the most appropriate for any prison reentry organization since they will be so contextually dependent. However, I found that there are certain principles or best practices that can be identified that will help prison reentry organizations to prayerfully discern how best to go about this in terms of yielding the most fruit. These principles and practices have both to do with planning and evaluating, since one without the other makes little sense. The first three best practices, therefore, focus mostly on planning, while the rest focus more on the assessment side. As will be noticed,

⁵⁵ It is the case that the term “best practices” has come in for some criticism, since it seems to bolster a “professionalism” and an approach that is overly secure and confident in the technical nature of social change. See Snowden, *Managing for Serendipity*, for example. However, these “best practices” are heavily focused on principles and approaches, rather than concrete tools, and emphasize the need for humility and the fact that ultimately, the results are in God’s hands, not ours’.

while there is a heavy emphasis on a qualitative approach, in most cases the suggestion is that having some element of a quantitative approach as well, employing, therefore, a mixed methods strategy, will provide the best results.

1. In “Conventional” Planning Situations, Clearly Define and Prioritize Spiritual Goals and Activities, and Define the Theory of Change.

As I reviewed above, there are different ways to approach the planning exercise. One way, the “conventional” way, is to lay out clearly the spiritual goals one wants to achieve, the activities designed to achieve them, the indicators that will show that they have been achieved, and the way the indicators will be measured. In the case where it is believed possible and fruitful to establish clear spiritual impact goals and indicators, hopefully after a process of deep reflection on the complexities and challenges of doing so outlined above, then these should also be clearly defined, prioritized, and the theory of change that is associated with them, the reasoning behind why the activities will lead to the impact, should also be clearly defined and laid out. An example might be a church, such as one that has used the “Reveal” method, that wants to move people along the spiritual continuum described by “Reveal,” based on the baseline study they have done of their congregation and use spiritual growth activities and the measurements provided by “Reveal” to accomplish this. Another example might be in a situation where there is a particular sin of commission or omission that is prevalent that people feel needs to be tackled, with spiritual impact activities planned with the goal of diminishing people’s participation in that kind of sin, and the spiritual metrics in this case evaluating whether the activities are in fact leading to that kind of impact, and to what degree. A third example might be a situation where an organization does not feel that it has the capacity to provide spiritual mentorship to the people

with whom it is working, and therefore sets as a goal the channeling of people to local churches, Bible studies, or other kinds of spiritually nurturing activities outside the scope of its programs.

2. In “Activities-Based” Planning Situations, Clearly Define and Implement Activities Leading to Spiritual Impact.

Another way is to go with a more “activities-based” plan, in which an activity or a set of activities intentionally geared towards a spiritual impact have been decided on for whatever reason, but the spiritual impact itself is not or cannot be defined beforehand. All organizations should clearly define the activity or set of activities they believe will lead to a spiritual impact and make sure that they are implementing that activity or activities prayerfully, with intentionality, and with the highest level of quality possible. In cases where it is felt that it is difficult, if not impossible, to define and plan out what the impact itself will be, which is likely to be in the majority of situations, it is important for the organization and those involved to reflect on and describe why they believe this to be the case, since it helps open them up to the numerous potential manifestations of impact and it also helps organizational stakeholders to understand the importance of this particular kind of planning approach that leaves outcomes to be discovered. An example might be a mission organization engaged in Bible translation where they feel clearly led to the activity of Bible translation without knowing exactly what the spiritual impact will be. Another example might be of an organization that trains its staff to share the gospel in the work that they do, based on insights and tools developed from the Engel scale that seek to move the person through a spiritual progression based on what their attitude and understanding is of Christianity, such as the Community Health Evangelism (CHE) approach⁵⁶ or the Saline Process

⁵⁶ S. Rowland, *Multiplying Light and Truth through Community Health Evangelism* (Mumbai, India: GLS Publishing, 2001).

efforts,⁵⁷ or that intentionally engages in “good works” in a country in order to bear witness to Christ, and then seeks to measure the impact knowing that it is impossible to establish what it will be beforehand because of the difficulties explored above.

3. Clearly Define and Prioritize the Purposes for the Monitoring and Measurement of Spiritual Impact.

As part of the planning process itself for spiritual impact, organizations like TPOM should clearly define and prioritize the purposes for why they wish to monitor and measure the spiritual impact of the activities in which they are engaged. As explored above in detail, if the purposes of the evaluation are not clear, it will be much more difficult to define appropriate methods and focuses to accomplish those purposes. For this project the primary purpose for conducting spiritual metrics is to explore the extent of the impact and feedback the information to improve the programs, while also seeing to what degree I could use the evaluation to also advance the impact. Although not applicable for this project, many organizations like TPOM could leave the “marketing” and the “proving” function as lesser priorities, but there is no doubt that organization demands may lead the “marketing” function to move up the prioritization latter significantly. Given, however, that the kind of information gathered to fulfill the other purposes can be used for marketing purposes, it may be that relegating the latter to a lesser priority might be more productive overall.

4. Based on the First Three Best Practices, Clearly Plan Out and Implement the Focus and Methods of Spiritual Metrics.

⁵⁷ P. Rushton, “Measurement and the Spiritual,” in *Saline Process: Participant’s Workbook* (Mumbai, India: HIS Global, 2013).

Linked to the previous best practice, organizations like TPOM, as well as myself for this project, should clearly plan out and implement the way they are going to engage in spiritual metrics, guided by the purposes for those metrics that they have defined. What will this look like in terms of options and possibilities for best practices? In what follows, I look at each purpose for spiritual metrics identified above and briefly explore the methods and focuses that might be most appropriate. It is important to point out that planning for spiritual metrics is bound only by one's creativity, and I found there are many ways that I can mix methods and focuses depending on context, situation, and purposes chosen. Because of this, what is put forth below are our general guidelines for the develop of spiritual metrics for this project and for organizations like TPOM. These guidelines are short on specifics. Finally, in all of this, it is always good to keep in mind that a periodic evaluation of the spiritual metrics process itself, an evaluation of the evaluation, can prove to be very useful.

Purpose One: Exploring Spiritual Impact

In situations where there are clearly defined “spiritual” activities to which organizations like TPOM are committed but where the spiritual impact is uncertain (like prison), a main purpose of spiritual metrics should almost certainly be to explore the spiritual impact that results from those activities. That exploration will also almost certainly have to be a qualitative approach, especially at the first stage, based on interviews and storytelling rather than any kind of quantitative survey, since the latter depends on already having identified what the impact is or is likely to be. This kind of qualitative approach will also allow for an exploration of whether, how, and why the activities led to the particular impacts identified, allowing the our organization, and others like ours, to explore the chain of change as well, and can be used also for a randomized controlled trial in order to “prove” that the impacts occurred because of the activities carried out by the

organizations like TPOM, and will even allow for a quantification of results based on that qualitative data.

In a closed system like a prison, since the activities geared towards producing a spiritual impact will most probably focus more on individual relationships and moving people along the Engel scale mentioned above, rather than any overtly “Christian” ones, the plan for spiritual metrics would probably have to be based more on generating conversations at the individual level and intentional observations of individual behavior that explore changes in relationships, knowledge, attitudes, and behavior around things Christian and spirituality as a whole. The results for at the individual level could be aggregated to provide a measurement of overall impact, and both in this context as well as in friendly contexts it will be important that baselines be established for comparative purposes. This kind of assessment would also feed into accomplishing the next purpose of evaluation: improving the impact of the spiritually focused activities.

Purpose Two: Improving Spiritual Impact

Both in “activities-based” planning as well as in a more “conventional” planning approach where the outcomes of the activities are specified, a main purpose of monitoring and evaluation might be to determine the degree to which the impact of those activities might be improved and how to go about doing that. Once again, the method for this kind of measurement and assessment will almost certainly have to be mostly, but not necessarily all, qualitative, ranging from interviews to storytelling, since a quantitative approach will generally not yield an answer to the “why” and “how” questions that are essential to understanding whether the activities were carried out as planned, whether they had the impact desired, and/or how the

impact they did have might be improved.⁵⁸ In this kind of evaluation approach, it will be essential to make sure that staff are held accountable for implementing the spiritual activities with the highest degree of quality, as well as providing spaces for them to give their insights and opinions on how and why the activities might be improved. In fact, an evaluation approach that is designed to facilitate reflection by both staff and those involved in the programs stands the best chance not only in garnering information that will be most useful in improving the activities and their impact, but also in advancing the spiritual progress both inside and outside the organization, which ties in with the next main purpose on which spiritual metrics could focus.

Purpose Three: Advancing Spiritual Impact

One of the main purposes of evaluation can be to advance the goals and objective of the program itself. In other words, simply carrying out an evaluation on spiritual impact can be used to further advance that spiritual impact. As with the previous purpose, the most effective way to accomplish this “transformative” evaluation purpose is probably through a qualitative approach, since interviews and storytelling generally require a degree of reflection by the participants that can have an impact on their spiritual insights and commitments. However, it may be that mixing in elements of a quantitative approach will also help lead participants to identifying patterns and reflect on them that may be missed through a purely qualitative study. It will also be best served by a highly participatory approach, in which the participants are fully engaged in establishing the purpose and methods for carrying out this evaluation.

Purpose Four: Marketing Programs

⁵⁸ G. C. Hoag, R. S. Rodin, and W. K. Willmer, *The Choice: The Christ-Centered Pursuit of Kingdom Outcomes* (Winchester, VA: ECFA Press, 2014), 9-10.

As reviewed above, a main purpose of evaluation can be to gather information to market the programs of our organization and organizations like ours. Often, organizations believe that the most effective information that can be gathered along these lines is quantitative information, which leads them to attempt to establish standardized spiritual impact indicators across cultures and contexts so that they can report standardized numbers for their programs. However, I found that this approach is fraught with difficulties because of the variety and complexity of the spiritual domain, and an approach such as this tends to run the risk of missing more than it finds out. There is no need to repeat here the difficulties associated with quantitative approaches to spiritual metrics and organizations that might want to consider a more qualitative approach to achieve this purpose as well, or at least a mixed method one. It is also beyond the scope of this chapter to explore the ethical considerations in making this a primary focus of evaluation. However, if an organization is bent on gathering quantitative data for donor reports, and especially if it is seeking to do so across cultural contexts, a best practice along these lines would be to employ something along a modified Engle scale.

Purpose Five: “Proving” the Impact of Programs

As stated above, the movement to “prove” that results are being achieved due to the organization’s efforts and not to other contextual factors has put significant pressure on some organizations to do so by engaging in Randomized Control Trials (RCTs). When it comes to the area of spiritual metrics, this purpose also has significant problems both theologically and scientifically. “Proving” that a spiritual impact occurred because of an organization’s efforts carries with it at least a whiff of pride, leaving little if any room for attribution to the role of the Spirit in the changes that occurred. When joined with the scientific limitation that this proof will

not tell the organization what exactly worked and why that can be applied to other cases,⁵⁹ this purpose becomes even more suspect. However, there may be cases when it might be useful to use an approach that compares changes in those who were engaged in the programs and those who were not, an approach that is at the root of RCTs, if the motive for that approach is to discern information that will help accomplish some of the other purposes of evaluation and assessment. In this case, as with the others above, a “mixed methods” approach that combines the quantitative with the qualitative is probably the best way to go about it.

5. Give Special Consideration to Engaging in a Facilitated, Participatory Process of Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation.

For spiritual impact activities, objectives, theory of change, and measurement to be defined and implemented in a way that is more relevant and fruitful in and across cultures and contexts than not, it is generally the case that people who will be engaged in this process of spiritual change and growth should have a major say in their definition. Obviously in closed contexts, like prisons, and some other situations this may be more difficult, but the challenge presented by the literature on participatory development is a crucial one to take into consideration: a facilitated process in which the people themselves are leading the process of planning, implementation, and evaluation stands a much better chance of having greater impact and being more sustainable. In this process, the facilitator can play a key role in enriching the process of planning and evaluation by helping people examine the plethora of ways that people can and do grow spiritually, the kinds of things that others in other cultures have found to be

⁵⁹ P. Auerswald, “Why Randomized Controlled Trials Work in Public Health ... and Not much Else,” The Coming Prosperity Blog, 2011, accessed August 21, 2018, <http://thecomingprosperity.blogspot.com/2011/09/why-randomized-controlled-trials-work.html>. Also see N. Cartwright, *Are RCTS the Gold Standard? Contingency and Dissent in Science Project Technical Report 01/07* (London, UK: Center for Philosophy of Natural and Social Science, 2007).

important in the definitions, and the cultural blind spots that might be operative in the discussion around discipleship. This approach may be challenging from an organizational standpoint for a variety of reasons. Organizations tend to want to standardize and replicate processes across contexts to better manage information and resources. Many times, there is significant pressure from donors who want to see a particular kind of information and indicators and who are operating on timelines that don't quite fit with best practice timelines. And there is always the temptation to want to try to control processes because of risks that are perceived and real. However, as stated above, given that a less-participatory approach to evaluation has generally been the norm, a best practice for spiritual metrics requires at least a serious consideration of a more participatory approach.

6. Start Small, and then Scale Up if Time and Resources Permit.

One of the things that we found true at TPOM is that most frustrations come when the program is already going full steam and then the staff is elected to additional responsibilities for evaluation to be piled on them. We discovered that it is better to start with something small, something very small, than to design large plans and do nothing at all, or to do it poorly. This is the same with spiritual metrics. Generally, once something small is started, it is much easier to then scale it up, than it is to have failed at something big and then try something else. Also, because of the complexity of the field, it will usually not be apparent from the beginning what the best methods might be, and it may take time to identify the right combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

7. Use the Results in a Way that is Ethical, Sensitive, and Loving.

The essence of engaging in spiritual metrics is to gather information that will tell us one or more of four things: the kind of impact that the programs are having; the extent of the impact they are having; whether, how, and why the activities are having the kind of impact desired and what can be done to improve them; and “how well” people are doing in the spiritual realm. Any of this information, but especially information that falls into the latter category, has the potential to be sensitive and to be used in ways that are less than ethical. The best practice in terms of the use of this information should follow relational and theological lines that are in keeping with the best of our obedience to Christ’s commands. At the very least, this means that a discussion of how, and when information is shared, what kind of image it portrays of the people involved, and respect for the confidentiality of the participants, should constantly be on the agenda, with decisions made with these points fully in mind.

Conclusion

Thus far I have researched and reviewed the basic elements of planning and evaluation, how these apply to spiritual metrics and help explain the challenges involved, and the suggestion of best practices is useful for this project and for organizations like TPOM in seeking to implement evaluations of spiritual impact of their programs. Our team has recommended that our ministry seek to provide more detail on the theological and practical implications of what the team has researched and reviewed. I am encourage to explore more deeply these the results of my research and review with a spirit of loving critique, and to become involved in the attempt to continue refining the thoughts, arguments, and practices that this chapter encourages, and develop the spiritual metrics for this project.

Conceptual Context for the Development of this Project

The purpose of this dissertation is to serve as an opening discussion for the use of spiritual direction techniques to be taught to those who are in prison (exiled). The spiritual direction techniques will teach those who are incarcerated (exiled) such that they will be able to work with each other towards transformational healing. Chapter two will discuss the theological concept and beginning groundwork for the development of a community exile, understanding those living in prison are in exile. Chapter three is the literary and theological review of the spiritual direction methodology used in this project. Chapter four outlines the project methodology. Concluding with chapter five discussing the immediate implemented outcomes of this project, ongoing developing outcomes project, and future direction and research as an outgrowth of this project.

CHAPTER 2

INCARCERATED EXILE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING AND BACKGROUND FOR THE USE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION METHODOLOGY WITH THOSE INCARCERATED

The purpose of this chapter is to serve as an opening discussion for the development of a missional understanding regarding the development of an incarcerated exile community in which transformation and healing can take place. The goal of this chapter is to explain to the reader, from a missional understanding, cultural aspects of incarcerated exile. This chapter is an attempt to gain the perspective of the individual living within incarcerated exile rather than from those without who, while perhaps often exposed to the culture, do not feel it in the same way as those who cannot go home at night. The method of this discussion will be in four parts: the first part is a discussion on the biblical understanding of exile. The second part is a verbal portrait of the incarcerated exile landscape. The third part is a missional understanding of the incarcerated exile culture. The fourth part is a theological discussion of exile. The final part is a discussion on building the community exile framework that is needed for transformation and healing. This chapter's aim is to open the discussion on incarcerated exile culture, such that a missional understanding of the culture can be established and leading to the development of a community framework scheme in which transformation and healing can take place.

The Biblical Understanding of Exile⁶⁰

An examination of modern translations reveals, the term “captivity” no longer receives the widespread usage found in the King James Version. Nevertheless, the notion of captivity is still found in the various verbal idioms used to describe this exilic period of Israel’s history. In many ways, the more modern usage of “exile” is more appropriate since the notion of being sent away is more appropriate to usage of “captivity.” The modern usage of “captivity” lends to the idea of being captured, for example a policeman capturing an individual seemingly breaking the law and taking to jail, or a soldier, during war time, being captured by the opposing force and taken to a prison of war camp. Also, “captivity” does not necessarily refer to deportation to a foreign land, so much a part of the experience referred to by the Hebrew cognates related to Hebrew word *gala* (1 Chronicles 5:22; Jeremiah 13:19; 29:1; Ezekiel 12:3; etc.). One cognate is *galut* (2 Kings 25:27; Ezekiel 1:2; Amos 1:6; etc.), which has the same meaning as *gola* and can refer either to exile (Ezekiel 1:2; 12:11) or corporately to those who had been exiled (Jeremiah 29:20, 22). In pre-exilic Old Testament writings *gola* is applied to peoples other than Israel and Judah (cf. Isaiah 20:4; Jeremiah 48:7; etc.), though it most commonly refers to Assyrian or Babylonian deportations. The verb *gala* refers only once to non-Israelite people (Amos 1:5), otherwise alluding to Israel (2 Kings 15:29; 17:11; etc.) or Judah (2 Kings 24:14; Ezra 2:1; etc.).⁶¹ Synonymous in meaning with *gala* is *saba*, “carry off captive” (Ezekiel 6:9), while *sebi*

⁶⁰ The following resources helped with my understanding of Exile. Although I did take anything directly from the resources they do form the back drop via the essence of exile that I came away with: M. Morris “10 Tragic Tales Of Modern People Forced Into Exile,” Listverse.com, accessed January 5, 2017, <http://listverse.com/2015/06/24/10-tragic-tales-of-modern-people-forced-into-exile/>. Parshas Miketz, “Living in Exile,” Torah.org, posted by Rabbi Pinchas Winston December 15, 2009, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://torah.org/torah-portion/perceptions/5770-miketz/>. Christian A. Williams, *Living in Exile: Daily Life and International Relations at SWAPO’s Kongwa Camp* (University of the Western Cape: Center of Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape). Allen P. Ross, “Exile,” in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, Vol. 4, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 595-601.

⁶¹ Allen Ross, “Exile,” 601.

and *sibyat*, both meaning “captivity,” “captives,” are synonymous with *gola* (Deuteronomy 32:42; Ezra 2:1, 35; etc.). In the Septuagint, the Greek words *aichmalotizein* and *metoikizein* with their cognates are used to render *gala* and its cognates.⁶²

Gala is both a plot motif and a character type. The essential ingredient in both cases is a person who has been banished from a native place and is now living or wandering in foreign parts. While we ordinarily link the state of exile with a judgment against someone for wrongdoing, in the Bible this is by no means always the case.

A *gala* story is preceded by a scene of banishment and a subsequent journey, and the Bible contains some memorable examples. The prototype is the expulsion from the Garden (Genesis 3:24), which in a single moment made the entire human race *gala* from its original home. It is impossible to overstate the importance of this banishment, which not only awakens the foundations of human regret and nostalgia but is also the starting point of every subsequent human story—the backdrop to all that is recorded in the Bible.

Other scenes of banishment follow the original one. Cain is banished “from the presence of the Lord” (Genesis 4:16 MEV) as the sentence for having murdered his brother. Jacob’s mother commend him to obey her voice and leave the family and go to her brother Laban due to Jacob’s brother, Esau, anger for cheating him (Genesis 27:41 – 28:5). Moreover, Joseph is sold into slavery in a foreign land (Genesis 37:25-28). Then there “all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.... Thus says the Lord of hosts, whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon” (Jeremiah 1:1b, 4; NASB). Additionally, in virtually all the older biblical literature, life at court was a precarious existence, dependent on the whims of the ruler. The Bible accordingly records instances of people banished

⁶² Allen Ross, “Exile,” 601-602.

from court, including Adonijah (1 Kings 2:26-27), Shimei (1 Kings 2:36-38) and Haman (Esther 7:5-10). To see the larger picture of banishment, we can turn to the Old Testament prophetic books with their vivid pictures of what it will be like for the nation to be conquered and carried away into captivity.⁶³

While banishment is the moment in which a person becomes *gala*, being *gala* is the condition of life that follows. *Gala* encompasses a social role involving fringe status and a psychological state that includes as its salient features a sense of loss or deprivation and a longing to return to (or arrive at) a homeland. Whenever a *gala* person is experiencing punishment for a crime, moreover, the state of the *gala* is accompanied by feelings of guilt and perhaps remorse (as in the book of Lamentations). Even more important for Israelite culture would be the sense of shame that attaches to such a *gala*. Above all, the *gala* is a displaced person. Moses sounds the authentic note when he calls his first son Gershom, “for he said, ‘I have been a sojourner in a foreign land’” (Exodus 2:22 MEV).

Gala in Old Testament is mainly national. The nation that arises from the patriarchs and their sons in Egypt is the first victim of the national *gala* in the Old Testament. The journeying of the nation in the wilderness during the exodus is very much the story of *gala* passing through alien territory, always longing for a promised land. The imagery of *gala* is mainly contained in the prophets’ visions of coming *gala*, but we catch the flavor of what it was like for a nation to live in *gala* in the narratives of Daniel and Esther. What emerges is the picture of a minority group with few rights, always threatened with the imposition of pagan practices from the

⁶³ Allen Ross, “Exile,” 596-598.

surrounding culture, always vulnerable to the superior power of the surrounding political structure, always longing to get back to the homeland.⁶⁴

Individuals, as well as nations, go into *gala*, as such in the story of Ruth. The focus on the biblical story is not about her suffering, rather on the way in which Ruth found acceptance in a foreign culture and religion. It is the happiest story of *gala* in the Biblical record.

For the emotions that accompany *gala*, we can turn to several psalms. Psalms that recall the banishment of the nation by conquering forces included Psalms 74 and 137. The spiritual longing that accompanied *gala* for a person whose religion centered around pilgrimages to worship God in the temple in Jerusalem is captured in Psalms 42 – 43, the song of the disquieted soul.

The imagery of *gala* (Greek: *metoikizein*) reaches its metaphoric climax in Hebrews 11, which portrays people of faith as “stranger and exiles on earth” seeking “a better country, that is, a heavenly one” (Hebrews 11:13, 16 MEV). At the physical level, the state of being *metoikizein* (*gala*) retains its negative qualities in this passage, as we read about people living in tents rather than houses, sharing ill-treatment with the people of God, suffering for Christ, being tortured, and wandering over the desolate parts of the earth. The chapter implies that the state of *metoikizein* is the inevitable lot of all who follow Christ, who was himself an archetypal *metoikizein* / *gala*. A person who in His life had nowhere to lay His head (Matthew 8:20) and who in His death “suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood” (Hebrews 13:12 MEV).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 599.

The Incarcerated Exile Landscape

Those who are incarcerated in a prison or jail are individuals who are *gala*. When an individual is found guilty of a crime, the judge, overseeing the court proceedings, as punishment, will remand the individual to a correctional facility. The remanding is the legal removal (banishment) of an individual, as punishment, from society to a place where the individual lives separated from society, which is a modern-day form of *gala*. In the proceeding paragraphs I will describe what it is like to live in exile in prison.

Imagine a land where children are forbidden, where playgrounds are never built, and where the laughter of little voices is never carried upon the air. Picture, if you will, a horizon of blue sky and cold gray cement in all directions. Punctuated only by an occasional treetop that can never be touched or climbed. Conceive, if you can, a country whose citizens never bear children, yet the census continues to record wild population growth. Consider a society that has banished the use of such diverse items as fresh fruit, chewing gum, sugar, cell phones, and ballpoint pens with clear casings. Listen, if you can, to the muted sounds of birds singing, ducks quacking, cats meowing, and dogs barking, all these sounds do not exist; all you have is the steady hum of the electrical barbwire fence strumming in your ears. Understand, if you can, there are no vehicles of escape, for at night the red light of motion sensors burns brightly.

No Ubers or Lyfts will ever be hailed from these dwellings; vehicles are not permitted. Here there are no bus stops, train stations, or parking garages. There are no automobiles, airplanes, or bicycles. All traffic is pedestrian, but the law prohibits running. Moreover, love is frowned upon. The city has one road leading in; none are leading out. There are no shopping malls, grocery stores, or fast-food restaurants. Banks are unheard of, as are credit unions, employment agencies, or ATMs. Cash is extinct; credit and debit cards are forbidden. All the

apparel worn by the inhabitants of this exiled landscape is identical. Colors are deemed by the system; style is irrelevant. All mail, in or out, is subject to search, seizure, and censure. Big Brother is a reality; every step you take, every place you are in, and every minute of your existence is known and monitored. Moreover, though the dark Orwellian night has fallen, the lights are always on.

Welcome to the exiled dimension of incarceration, a dimension of banishment that I lived in for twenty-five years, a parallel society vaguely mirroring your own. Step out of your society for a moment if you will; your tour guide awaits you. The doors are open, but they will soon shut with a singular clang as you leave your time zone. The culture here is as different as that of any foreign country, but most of the inhabitants speak your language. Welcome to the country of The Incarcerated Exiled.

A Missional Understanding of Incarcerated Exile Culture⁶⁵

The reason I can speak, to some degree, authoritatively on incarcerated exile life and missions is due to my 25 years of incarcerated exile and what I learned and experienced during that time. When I first became incarcerated a religious volunteer Buddhist Monk (a wonderful Tibetan monk, who spoke broken English with a remarkable depth of wisdom) befriended me. This monk challenged me, not to become a Buddhist, but rather go back to my Christian roots to look for the answers to my exilic existence. As part of my journey for answers, the monk

⁶⁵ Although I did not take anything directly from the following resources, they helped me indirectly in forming my thoughts for this section on the discussion the culture aspects of incarcerated exile from a missional perspective. Miroslav Volf, "Conflict, Violence, and Reconciliation," in *Flourishing: Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Richard Wright, *Native Son* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc., 1993). Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2014); Michael Welker, "The Promised Spirit of Justice and Peace," in *God the Spirit*. Translated by John F. Hoffmeyer. (Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press, 1994); John R. Franke, "Intercultural Hermeneutics and the Shape of Missional Theology" in *Reading the Bible Missionally*. edited by Michael W. Goheen. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016).

challenged me to go to college. In fact, the monk helped me to enroll in Liberty University's learning at a distance program of which, with the monk's help, the United States Army financed. My educational endeavors led to the completion of a BS in Religion with a minor in Educational Psychology. The Monk encouraged me to continue. I completed an MA in Religious Education with a double minor in Pastoral Counseling and Educational Psychology. I also have 98 hours on a MDiv with Liberty University. I would have completed the MDiv, but the Warden at that time, with the support of the Department of Corrections, stopped me—the reason being that he found my continuing education to be a conflict of interest with the Department of Corrections. The only thing that I lacked was 6 hours of Homiletics.

While working on my MDiv, I was transferred to another prison. Upon arrival at that prison, I began working as the Chaplain's aide. During my work with the Chaplain as his aid, I was pulled into, with a sense of calling, full-time prison missional work. My missional work continues, postexilic, in my educational endeavors and working full-time for Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. I know that God has, still is, and will continue to guide me along my path for this missional exilic work with the incarcerated exile individuals (both individually and communally) and the postexilic individuals and communities.

Although a large portion of my exposure to Christian missional exile ministry is from my work while incarcerated, that work alone would not have given me the feeling of being called into ministry. Doing time is a feeling. It feels like something, just as living in any reality feels like something. About once a month I still experience dreams of going back to prison—dreams so vivid that I awaken with the feeling of returning to incarcerated exile. I experience afresh the turmoil of emotions connected with the event: the hopelessness, the fear, the separation from my

loved ones, and the awful indomitable enemy of time that stretches out before me like a thick steel chain that can never be broken.

I am convinced that God Himself allows these dreams so I might never forget the feeling of incarceration. God continuously calls me to this missional work. I believe that the dreams, with their attending emotions, are a part of God's design to keep me in touch with the unspoken anguish of an incarcerated exile consciousness. The dreams bring back the reality of how it felt to merely exist in incarcerated exile until every long day that the calendar demanded had been paid in full. Even as I write, I can still sense that awful feeling of helplessness and hopelessness.

Residents of the incarcerated exile are no different from anyone else; they simply live in a different culture. We have all sinned, and no person is the sum of those sins committed. Unfortunately, that is precisely what many people on this side of exile have done with those in incarcerated exile. Since they know nothing else about them, they have reduced the lives of exiled residents to the sum of a few paragraphs in the papers or a few sound bites on the evening news. However, none of us is the sum of the sins we have committed; there is more to us than those sins.

I am not saying that there should not be punishment for a crime or even that the natural consequences of such an action should not fall upon those who commit them. However, I trust that I am writing to those who truly desire to understand the people who live in the lands of incarcerated exile, such that they are better prepared for missional work in the land of the incarcerated exile. Such missionaries should understand that the only real difference between them and the people living in exile is nothing more than a fence line.

Incarcerated exile is another culture, with its code of ethics, morals, and social values. Those living in exile have their own dialect. However, exile is more than just a different

vocabulary; it is an experience filled with different codes of behavior and unwritten laws that define what is acceptable and what is not. Exilic culture is a mindset, a backdrop that swallows up the inhabitants by degrees and conforms them to the twists and weaves of its cold, gray fabric. The change is subtle, prolonged for some, stark and frightening for others. To remain as before is not an option.

I am not saying that individuality and uniqueness are obliterated: far from it. However, I am saying that a life lived in incarcerated exile forces adaptation to a world previously unknown. Each soul, alone in its confrontation with this culture, must find its own way to be safe: must find its own way to survive. Exilic life is a prevailing and paradoxical encounter with loneliness while dwelling in a pillbox crammed with other people.

Along with the paradoxical encounter of emotions, there is the paradoxical encounter of rules and regulations. The Department of Corrections has its formal rules and regulations with its judicial proceedings. Within those formal written codes there are also informal, unwritten codes. A violation of the unwritten codes (whether consciously committed or not) can often result in consequences (more severe than a violation of the written codes) for the person who attempts to live out their lives in the exilic venue.

Although missionaries (religious volunteers) are forgiven by the residents regarding the accidental violation of these unwritten codes, the missionary, once entering the world of the exile, becomes a part of the culture. A good understanding of the exilic world the missionary enters will be of benefit to them. However, the opposite is also true: not understanding the culture can result in an immediate need for damage control. Sometimes the unintended slip can affect the ministry for many months to come, if not sabotage it altogether.

At this point, let me clarify that when I speak of incarcerated exile as being another culture, I am not saying that God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit cannot penetrate it, for God, Christ, and Holy Spirit are already there—even though a missionary may be unfamiliar with the environment itself. The power of the Holy Spirit displayed in the life of the missionary bringing the hope of Christ in the genuine love of God can penetrate even the darkest and hardest places. My point is that a better missional understanding is for the missionary to understand that God already dwells with the people living in the land of incarcerated exile. With the understanding that God is already at work with those in exile can make the missionary who attempts to enter that sphere better equipped to work alongside God and allowing the Holy Spirit to use the missionary in that context.

The apostle Paul said, “I have become all things to all people, that by all means, I might save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22 MEV). When he was in Athens (see Acts 17), Paul drew from his observations of the Athenian culture to find a point of mutual contact with which he could relate the gospel of Christ to the Athenians from their worldview. Jesus himself was constantly drawing illustrations and parables from the culture around him.

In our missional desire to communicate with others, we should emulate Paul and Christ. The story, as best I can remember, of Hudson Taylor is a good example. Taylor was a missionary to China in the 19th century who raised the eyebrows of his mission’s organization hierarchy when he began to dress like the Chinese and even sport a pigtail. Although the home mission frowned on the practice, his popularity with the Chinese began to soar. Why did Taylor do this? Because his goal was not to preach to the missionary organization but to demonstrate the love of God through Christ to the Chinese people.

I am not advocating that missionaries go into prisons and act like the residents or even try to talk like the residents; this is not necessary. We must be ourselves, speaking the hope of God in compassion and loving them with the love of Christ. I am advocating that missionaries should attempt to understand the culture they have entered so they can be better equipped to relate the gospel within the exilic culture. I would also say that the more ignorant a missionary is regarding the culture, the higher the risk that a serious social mistake can be made. This social mistake can occur not only with the residents but with the officers as well, and some social mistakes are irreparable.

My prayer is that as we minister to those who are serving time in exile, we will become aware that these are real people with tangible dreams, that they have actual families that they long to be with and a thread of concrete days that separates them from their families. My reason for writing is that we may be better equipped to move compassionately yet wisely among them as we bring the hope of the Savior to them. Only Jesus can provide the water they thirst for, even if they do not know what that water is.

A Theological Discussion of Exile

Exile is at once the cause and the subject of necessary theological reformulation.⁶⁶ The loss of many legitimizing institutions (the religious center [temple, church, synagogue], the

⁶⁶ Although I did not take anything directly from the following resources, they helped me indirectly in forming my thoughts for this section on the theological discussion of exile. M. Morris, "10 Tragic Tales Of Modern People Forced Into Exile," Listverse.com, accessed January 5, 2017, <http://listverse.com/2015/06/24/10-tragic-tales-of-modern-people-forced-into-exile/>. Parshas Miketz, "Living in Exile," Torah.org, posted by Rabbi Pinchas Winston December 15, 2009, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://torah.org/torah-portion/perceptions/5770-miketz/>. Christian A. Williams *Living in Exile: Daily Life and International Relations at SWAPO's Kongwa Camp* (Capetown, South Africa: University of Western Cape: Center of Humanities Research, 2017). Allen P. Ross, "Exile," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 4, ed. Willem A. Van Gemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 595-601. John R. Franke, "Intercultural Hermeneutics and the Shape of Missional Theology," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, ed. Michael W. Goheen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 86-104; Craig G. Bartholomew, "Theological Interpretation and a Missional Hermeneutic," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, ed. Michael W. Goheen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 68-85; Michael W.

government, the community, the school) and crippling of many others (religious and social cults, societal class structures, etc.) forces the exiles (Israelites and Incarcerated) to ask why, and, more importantly, to contemplate the shape of their future. Thus, it becomes increasingly necessary to include the experience of being exiled itself in the discussion of the future of the exiled, for surely the changes brought about by the experience of exile are inescapable and form some defining lines for the exile (both past and present) which will continue.

The Exilic period, for the Israelites, was a pluralistic age, for the incarcerated it also is a pluralistic phase. A pluralistic time is characterized by variety and diversity, yet also by a common matrix to which all positions and stances may be related. The opposite of pluralism, orthodoxy, is characterized by at least a superficial homogeneity and by a power base that is capable of regulating, controlling, and enforcing one perspective or position for a society. A prerequisite for orthodoxy is a power base capable of molding and controlling public opinion (especially regarding spiritual formation), which in exile does exist. On the other hand, the many responses to being exiled may indicate the existence of a theological matrix capable of making the period of exile (especially incarnated exile) one of pluralistic creativity rather than anarchistic chaos.

The exilic stage produces a variety of responses, each with its spheres of influence and its hopes for the future. As in all pluralistic periods, a great deal of tension and friction exists between many of the exponents of the groups trying to comprehend exilic life. For the incarcerated exiles they too draw on old patterns to aid in interpreting their new exilic life. All of

Goheen and Christopher J. H. Wright, "Mission and Theological Interpretation," in *A Manifesto for Theological Interpretation*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Heath A. Thomas (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 4779-5451, Kindle.

Israel necessarily spoke of a new thing that God was doing, for a special mix of old and newly created a new vision. For those living in incarcerated exile, they too speak of new spiritual things, searching the past spiritual experience incorporating present spiritual experiences of others, and molding from the mix a new spiritual identity to aid in defining who they are in their present environment. However, the newly developed spiritual identity of the person in incarcerated exile often falls apart when they make their exodus, creating a great deal of cognitive stress, spiritual trauma, and identity confusion. Each new vision and identity have its vested interests, closely tied to the realities that the experience of exile creates. For some the exilic period, despite its hardships, provided the hope for a reversal of previous social and spiritual structures. For others, it is a fall from power, and the sooner a restoration of previous status and conditions can be effected, the better.

From my own experiences and observations of incarcerated exile, I have noticed that in the period of exile a fundamental change is made from a community orientation characterized by a corporate focus to one more individualistically orientated. The exilic life is a new and devastating event in a person's history and is responsible for a cognitive—or more appropriately—an identity shift with its resultant theological and spiritual formational changes. On the other hand, it can also be validly stated that the events of the exilic life and the theological/spiritual responses found there are related to a long historical process that began much earlier. For example, the pluralism of the sixth century BCE in Palestine, Babylon, or Egypt was created and informed not only by the fall of Judah and its aftermath but also by the patterns and concepts that had formed and framed the Hebrew mind beginning with the patriarchal period. The same is true for the modern day incarcerated exiled person. Their life is not just formed in a vacuum during the time of exile, but the patterns and schemes from the

previous life going back to their childhood often are the framework within which the new exile spiritual/cognitive identity forms. Ultimately most postexilic individuals (speaking of those exiting incarceration) will have to choose, due to identity/spiritual confusion caused by their exodus, a new theological/spiritual framework as the rationale for their identity and existence, preserving the others as possibly legitimate but dysfunctionally inappropriate.

The primary importance of exile is the effect it has on the individual's and community's theological, spiritual, and identity development. The tension between particularism, so often associated with hierarchical interest and universalism associated with exilic life becomes an important characteristic of the individual and community (exilic and post-exilic). The goal of the community in exile development program, which this project is the foundational base for that program, is the development of the community in such a way that it will assist the individuals living in exile and participating in the community development program with of a religious/spiritual rule of life, and therefore become more focus on inward identity than on outward institutional and communal signs such as religious institutions, social institutions, and physical locations, that their exilic life becomes an important legacy. The focus on the individual on their inward identity and their development of a religious/spiritual rule of life and are features that can continue in the postexilic life. These important developments are seen by exilic and postexilic individuals and communities as ongoing actions of Deity, not human, developments whose roots dwell within the history of God's actions to and for the individual and community. Perhaps this exilic heritage and witness provides the greatest importance of the exilic and postexilic person by its challenge to find God at work with the affirmation that in many ways and places God is indeed to be found.

The Community Exile Framework⁶⁷

Jesus Christ' offering living water to the woman at the well was done in a compassionate but discerning way (John 4:10). Christ understood her cultural setting. Jesus approached her from with her Samaritan worldview, not his Judean setting. Although she had a difficult time understanding what Christ was offering her, she knew she was thirsty.

I am often asked what the best framework is to work within while ministering to those in prison who are thirsty for change. I often reply that for a person in the wilderness to drink they first had to dig a well. However, it takes a community to dig the well, which means that a community must first be developed to dig the well to quench the thirst.

The framework that I am working on to help build those communities in the land of the incarcerated exile (prisons) comes from Jeremiah 29, the letter that Jeremiah wrote to the children of Israel who lived in exile within the boundaries of Babylon. In this letter, God acting as a missionary through Jeremiah outlined the concept of building community in exile and then living in that community. While living in that community, God instructed them missionally on what they were to do: offer shalom and maintain hope in God. This framework is the model for building community with those living in exile within the boundaries of prison.

Jeremiah called for the Israelites to settle into the new society of exile, unpack, and get to work for their benefit and the benefit of the surrounding environs:

⁶⁷ Although I did not take anything directly from the following resources, they helped me indirectly in forming my thoughts for this section on the development of the community exile framework. John R. Franke, "Intercultural Hermeneutics and the Shape of Missional Theology," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, ed. Michael W. Goheen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 86-105; Craig G. Bartholomew, "Theological Interpretation and a Missional Hermeneutic," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, ed. Michael W. Goheen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 68-85; Christopher J. Wright, "Reading the Old Testament Missionally," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, ed. Michael W. Goheen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), chap. 6. David Lyle Jeffrey, "Scripture upon Scripture" in *People of the Book* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 19-70; Michael Welker, "The Promised Spirit of Justice and Peace," in *God the Spirit*, trans. J. F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 108-182.

Thus, says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, to all who have been carried away captive whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and dwell in them; and plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters; so that you may increase there and not diminish. Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace, you will have peace. (Jeremiah 29:4-7 MEV).

God did not want the Israelites pining for the old days. Those days were gone, and God wanted them to move forward where He had planted them. They were not to rebel against the Babylonians but instead were to carry on with life as peaceable citizens by settling down and living out their lives in a way that blessed the community where they had been transplanted. God wants those living in exile to flourish in their exiled setting. God wants them to live to face the future, not mourning the past, and God wants the exiled community to increase in physical and spiritual health even though they live in exile.

Like the exiles Jeremiah wrote to, incarcerated exiles long for the “good old days.” The incarcerated exiles are not only exiled, they are stuck where they are, but they are also stuck in loneliness, in hopelessness, in unhealthy nostalgia, and they are stuck on how they became exiled, and they are stuck on arguing how to get out of exile. Moreover, there are always the Hananiah characters around who offer false hope by telling the exiles that things will get back “to normal” once they are released from exile. Most of those who live in incarcerated exile find themselves stuck waiting for “the good old days” upon their release from exile instead of living and building communities the best they can. Instead of dwelling on the stagnant past they need to build spiritual wells to drink from and make the most of every day by building hope and love into their lives (this a more descriptive way of describing transformational healing).

Those with a missional mindset can help those living in incarcerated exile to build communities by working alongside God as missional mindset individuals like Jeremiah.

Missional mindset individuals facilitate the concept of trusting God's grace to help the exiles build new transformative lives for themselves. Missional mindset individuals help to facilitate, by the work and power of the Holy Spirit, a conceptual paradigm that will assist exiles as the result with the knowledge that they are where they are, that they are not getting out of exile anytime soon, and that God knows they are there. In a similar fashion to Jeremiah, missional mindset individuals ask the exiles the question: does God want them to waste time and energy pining and whining about what they left behind and lost or does God want something better for them? And, possibly asking the exiles: what do you think about the idea that God might want you to build community among yourselves while living in exile? That is what Jeremiah meant by telling the exiles to build houses and live in them, plant gardens and harvest what they produced, and raise families. Missional mindset individuals, in a similar fashion to Jeremiah, ponder with the exiles the idea of trusting God's grace in helping them build new lives where they are.

Missional mindset individuals help the exiles to build communities by helping them understand that God can and will do wonderful things for them while they are in exile. Missional mindset individuals need to facilitate the concept that God's power and care are present with them in exile. God will bless the exiles even in their exiled places and situations. Missional mindset individuals help those living in exile to see and understand that God sends new people into their lives to help them with their healing and developing their transformative lives. Through those new people, God will give the exiles new insights about who they are, and God reveals to the exiles what they can become and how God can help them in their transformation. God can do wonderful things in exiled places. That is what Jeremiah mean when he wrote, "Take wives and beget sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters; so that you may increase there and not diminish"

(Jeremiah 29:6). The message of Jeremiah is to trust God to produce new blossoms even in exiled places. Missional mindset individuals help the exiles to understand that they can one day leave exile if they trust God. God will grow and transform them while they live in exile preparing them for their exodus.

Missional mindset individuals help those living in exile to build communities by helping them to understand what it means to live in God's love while in exile. Jeremiah surely shocked the exiles when he wrote, "Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace, you will have peace" (Jeremiah 29:7 MEV). The word translated as "peace" is the Hebrew word "shalom." "Shalom" means more than the absence of war or a state of truce between disputing people. "Shalom," in its fullest sense, means wholeness, completeness, prosperity, well-being, peace, love, and good health (spiritually and physically). Jeremiah urged the exiles to seek the wholeness, completeness, prosperity, well-being, peace, love, and good health of the conquering Babylonians. In a similar fashion to Jeremiah, missional mindset individuals encourage the incarcerated exiles to seek the same "shalom" for the guards and prison administrators who hold them captive.

Jeremiah delivered the same powerful message that Jesus proclaimed centuries later in the Sermon on the Mount: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44 MEV). Missional mindset individuals help those living in exile to understand that they are still God's people. God's love still has wholeness, completeness, prosperity, and good for those living in incarcerated exile, and for those living around them, including their perceived enemies. That love of God which produces "shalom" for the incarcerated exiles will also bless, through the incarcerated exiles, those around them.

The missional understanding and framework for facilitating community growth among the incarcerated exiles is “shalom.” When God’s “shalom” settles in among the exiled, they will begin to understand that they are not stuck and forgotten in exile, they are planted. “Shalom” will help the incarcerated exiles to understand that they are not stagnating in exile, but they are growing, healing, and transforming. God’s “Shalom,” is the Gospel of Christ, brought by the missionary to the incarcerated exiles. It is through “God’s Shalom,” empowered by the Holy Spirit that the incarcerated exile dwells in the hope that they will leave their place of exile, with something to offer to the world—God’s “Shalom”—no longer being a curse but a blessing. This is the missional framework that I work and dwell within. Shalom.

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION METHODOLOGY WITH THE INCORPORATION OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE MODULES

This chapter is a literary review of spiritual direction in general and a theological discussion of spiritual direction methodology incorporating spiritual discipline modules. This chapter will be in two major sections. The first section is the literary review of spiritual direction. The second section is a literary and theological discussion of spiritual direction methodology. The second section will include the discussion of the integration of spiritual discipline modules as part of the spiritual direction methodology.

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is accompanying another person on his or her spiritual journey. As Sue Pickering indicates in her book *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction*, Spiritual Direction provides an opportunity to become more aware of the Divine's presence in a person's life through conversations that deepen a person's relationship with God, themselves and with others.⁶⁸ Susan Phillips demonstrates throughout her book, *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction*, spiritual direction is assisting another person to explore questions of meaning and purpose—especially in times of transition; and that honors the unique unfolding of a person's life.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Sue Pickering, *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction* (London: Canterbury Press, 2008), 11-13.

⁶⁹ Susan S. Phillips, *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2008)

Thomas Keating, in his book *Spiritual Direction*, explores the idea that spiritual direction explores a deeper relationship with the spiritual aspect of being human. Simply put, spiritual direction helps people tell their sacred stories.⁷⁰ As Henri Nouwen discusses in his book *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith*, the sacred stories are influenced in part by the person's life experience, their personality, and their cultural and religious backgrounds.⁷¹ Describing spiritual direction requires putting words to a process of fostering a transcendent experience that lies beyond all names and yet the experience longs to be articulated and made concrete in everyday living. It is easier to describe what spiritual direction does than what spiritual direction is. Thomas Merton, in his book *Spiritual Direction and Meditation*, states: "The whole purpose of spiritual direction is to penetrate beneath the surface of a man's life, to get behind the façade of conventional gestures and attitudes which he presents to the world, and to bring out his inner spiritual freedom, his inmost truth, which is what we call the likeness of Christ in his soul."⁷² More recently, David Benner, a Christian psychologist and spiritual director, in his book *Sacred Companions*, defines spiritual direction as "increasing awareness of God in the midst of life experiences and facilitating surrender to God."⁷³ Spiritual direction helps people learn how to live-in peace, with compassion, promoting justice, and humbleness with

⁷⁰ Thomas Keating, *Spiritual Direction* (New York: Lantern Books, 2015).

⁷¹ Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith* (New York: Harper Collins Publishing, Inc., 2018), xiii-15.

⁷² Thomas Merton, *Spiritual Direction and Meditation* (Collegeville, MN: Kieffer Press, 2013), 16.

⁷³ David Benner, *Sacred Companions: The Gift of Spiritual Friendship & Direction* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2002), 5.

others and God⁷⁴. As Sue Pickering indicates, the focus of spiritual direction is the exploration of the movement of the Spirit in the life of an individual seeking spiritual direction.⁷⁵

Spiritual direction is not counseling. Father Dominic Anaeto in his book *Spiritual Direction: Principles and Praxis*, explains that counseling focuses on resolving problems with mental health, compulsive behavior, and relational conflict. It is natural for stressors and hurts to surface in spiritual direction, but the focus is less on solving those problems and more on understanding the person's experience of God. A spiritual director should not tell a person what to do, engage in theological debate, or set goals like a like coach might do.⁷⁶

John Chryssavgis, in his book *Soul Mending: The Art of Spiritual Direction*, indicates that spiritual direction is not the same thing as mentoring or discipling in that these relationships usually focus more on moral, educational, and vocational guidance in a particular faith tradition. Although there will be dimensions of spiritual direction in these relationships, a spiritual director is someone who can listen and provide spiritual guidance beyond any personal need to defend or uphold any tradition or religious institution. It is also not the same thing as spiritual friendship in that spiritual friendship is usually a peer relationship that includes some level of mutuality.⁷⁷

Thus far I have described what spiritual direction is what spiritual direction is not. As I pointed out earlier, describing what spiritual direction does is easier the trying to find a simple definition of spiritual direction. In describing what spiritual direction does, the Bible illustrates.

⁷⁴ See, Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Life*, 4-10; and Thomas Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 85-125.

⁷⁵ Pickering, *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction*, 12.

⁷⁶ Father Dominic Anaeto, *Spiritual Direction: Principles and Praxis* (St. Louis, MO: En Rought Books & Media, LLC, 2019), 19-36.

⁷⁷ John Chryssavgis, *Soul Mending: The Art of Spiritual Direction* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2000), 73-109.

In the book of Ruth, the Bible illustrates how spiritual direction assists in a time of grief. In the first chapter of Ruth, Ruth, and Naomi are journeying together to find God in a season of grief (Ruth 1:16-17). In Luke chapter one, the concept of “holy listening” and prayer, as forms of spiritual direction are demonstrated by Elizabeth listening and praying with her cousin Mary while they were both pregnant and formed a special bond (Luke 1:39-45). The Prophet Ananias demonstrated the acts of spiritual direction of hospitality, listening, healing prayer and encouragement to Saul (Paul) who comes to him in a time of need for guidance in his new relationship with God through Christ (Acts 9:10-18). Jesus illustrates the work of spiritual direction through the masterful weaving of listening, questioning, and guidance in his discourse with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:4-42; 7:37-39). These Scriptural examples of hospitality, love, listening, questioning, searching, and dialogue engagement illustrate the broad spectrum of spiritual direction and the work of the spiritual director.

The spiritual director is an individual who is a privileged witness in the spiritual unfolding of another person. Spiritual directors listen carefully to the unfolding of the individual they are working with to help them explore how God is leading them. As Margaret Guenther, in her book *Holy Listening*, indicates the spiritual director practices “holy listening” and “hospitality” rather than direction in the sense of offering guidance, pointing out signpost, and occasionally advice.⁷⁸ Merton states that, “A spiritual director is ... one who helps another to recognize and to follow the inspirations of grace in his life, in order to arrive at the end to which God is leading him.”⁷⁹ In other words, the spiritual director offers the gift of holy listening,

⁷⁸ Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening* (New York: Cowley Publications Book, 1992), 1-40.

⁷⁹ Merton, *Spiritual Direction & Meditation*, 17.

reflecting Jesus' love and empathy for others to help them experience God and follow the Spirit's leading, while providing guidance for the relationships with God.

The real director of the spiritual direction process is not the person hosting the conversation; it is the Holy Spirit.⁸⁰ The human director simply serves as an ambassador to the Spirit of Christ by ministering God's continual friendship (2 Corinthians 5:20). Proverbs 16:9 amplifies that the Holy Spirit/God is the true director: "A man's mind plans his way [as he journeys through life], But the Lord directs his steps and establishes them." (Amplified Bible).

The work of the spiritual director is through hospitality, listening, questioning, listening, responding, using questions such as "How have you been experiencing God's presence?"⁸¹ "What is bothering you?"⁸²

Spiritual Direction Methodology Discussion⁸³

In this section I will discuss the spiritual direction methodology that I will be using in working with those living in exile. The purpose of this methodology is to assist individuals living in exile to move towards becoming self-actualized individuals. Abraham Maslow informs us that a self-actualized individual is one with the desire for self-fulfillment, to realize all of one's potential, to become everything that one can, and to become creative in the full sense of the

⁸⁰ Pickering, *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction*, 12 gives a lengthy explanation that "the real director is God the Holy Spirit."

⁸¹ William A. Barry and William J. Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009) 31-38.

⁸² Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 23-44.

⁸³ The concept of my Spiritual Direction Methodology came from a conference that I attended May 29-31, 2019. The conference was on moral injury and pathways to recovery. At the conference I attended a workshop on the concept thinking theological about moral injury as a spiritual impasse. The presenter was Dr. Rebecca Parker, DMin. Dr. Parker's workshop was an exploration on a pathway of healing from moral injury. It was the workshop that inspired me to think about a methodology for spiritual direction that worked through spiritual impasses like what Dr. Parker was present as way to work through moral injury. The methodology is not the same as Dr. Parker's, but it was her presentation and discussion that inspired me with the idea.

word.⁸⁴ Thomas Merton, in his book *New Seeds of Contemplation*, helps us understand that the concept of the self-actualized individual is closely related to the concept of the “True Self” living in a healthy relationship with God.⁸⁵ Dumitru Staniloae, in his book *Orthodox Spirituality*, indicates that the goal of Orthodox spirituality is the progressive movement of Merton’s idea of the true self, moving away from the false self, living in a healthy relationship with God through Christ; which in essence, as I have discussed earlier in the section Living in Exile, the true self living in, demonstrating, and offering Shalom.⁸⁶

The goal of this form of spiritual direction methodology is to assist those individuals living in exile to work through problematic areas that are preventing them from moving towards a healthy self-actualized true self living in God’s shalom. This form of spiritual direction methodology is a progressive movement from identification of the problem to embracing a new understanding of self in relationship to God living in shalom. For discussion purposes, I will discuss this progressive movement in five stages: identify, determine, engage, open, and embrace.

Identify

In working with those who are in exile and coming out of exile, using spiritual direction, it is helpful to first determine where a person is at in their life journey, and what areas of that life journey does the exiled individual want assistance with. Abraham Maslow, through his work of

⁸⁴ See Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1968); *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Viking, 1970); and, *The Father Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Viking, 1971)

⁸⁵ Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: Directions Publishing Corporation, 2007), 29-36.

⁸⁶ Dumitru Staniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive Manual for the Scholar*, trans. J. Newville and O. Kloos (South Canaan, PA: St. Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary Press, 2003), 21-29.

hierarchical needs, can assist the spiritual director in identifying areas of the life journey that are problematic for the exiled individual. The way Maslow's hierarchical needs help the spiritual director to identify problematic areas is through the framing of questions and informed listening regarding each of hierarchy needs. By understanding each of the hierarchy needs, the spiritual director can frame their questions around each need in such a way that helps to determine, through listening with an informed understanding of hierarchical needs, if there is any problematic that may be impeding or causing an impasse that impedes the exiled individual. Those problematics may prevent the exile individual's transformational movement, from false self to true self, impeded by a need not met; healing, possibly from a traumatic event that impeded the satisfying of a particular need; growth, as in being stunted by a need not met, and/or destabilization of their life through a need not realized in such a way that they developed a low self-esteem. What follows is a descriptive discussion on each of Maslow's hierarchical needs such that the spiritual director will be better informed and able to frame their questions accordingly with informed listening.

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs assumes that basic or lower-level needs must be satisfied or at least relatively satisfied before higher-level needs become motivators. Needs can be arranged hierarchically with each ascending category representing a higher need but one less basic to survival. The hierarchy of needs is also referred to as the "theory of prepotent needs." Lower-level needs have prepotency over higher-level needs, meaning that lower needs must be satisfied for people to strive for higher needs. For example, an artist at work in his studio may be satisfying higher-level needs such as esteem or self-actualization, but eventually he will become hungry and leave his work to find food (a lower-level need). Hunger, then, has prepotency over esteem and self-actualization (Jesus feeding the 5,000).

Physiological Needs

In affluent societies most people satisfy their hunger needs as a matter of course. They usually have enough to eat, so when they say they are hungry they are really speaking of appetites, not hunger. A truly hungry person will not be overly particular about taste, smell, temperature, or texture of the food.

Abraham Maslow said: "It is quite true that man lives by bread alone—when there is no bread."⁸⁷ When people do not have their physiological needs satisfied, they live primarily for those needs and strive constantly to satisfy them. Erich Fromm indicates that starving people become preoccupied with food and are willing to do nearly anything to obtain it.⁸⁸

Physiological needs differ from other needs in at least two important respects.⁸⁹ First, they are the only needs that can be completely satisfied or even overly satisfied. One can get enough to eat so that food completely loses its motivational power. For someone who has just finished a large meal, the thought of more food can even have a nauseating effect. A second characteristic peculiar to physiological needs is their recurring nature. After we have eaten, we will eventually become hungry again; we constantly need to replenish our water supply, and one breath of air must be followed by another. Other-level needs do not constantly recur at a consistent, or rhythmic, rate, however physiological needs continually reappear at somewhat consistent, or rhythmic, rate.

⁸⁷ Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 38.

⁸⁸ Eric Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973); and *On Disobedience and Other Essays* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981).

⁸⁹ The concepts in this paragraph comes from Maslow's, *Motivation and Personality* and, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*; and Eric Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*.

Safety Needs⁹⁰

When our physiological needs are satisfied or relatively well satisfied, then we become motivated by needs for safety, including physical security, stability, dependency, protection, and freedom from such threatening forces as illness, fear, anxiety, danger, and chaos. The need for law, order, and structure are also safety needs.

Safety needs differ from physiological needs in that they cannot be overly satisfied; we can never have too much safety. We can never be completely protected from meteorites, fires, floods, or the dangerous acts of others.

In societies not at war, most healthy adults satisfy their safety needs most of the time, thus making these needs relatively unimportant. Children, however, are more often motivated by safety needs because they live with such threats as darkness, animals, strangers, and punishments from parents. Neurotic adults also feel relatively unsafe because they retain irrational fears from childhood, which cause them to act as if they were afraid of parental punishment. They imagine their physical well-being to be threatened and therefore constrict themselves to the safe and the familiar. They spend far more energy than do healthy people trying to satisfy safety needs, and when they are not successful in their attempts, they suffer from what Maslow called basic anxiety.

For both healthy and unhealthy people, safety needs become activated during emergency situations such as natural disasters, injury, accidents, and war. At least during short periods of

⁹⁰ This section is culmination summary of Abraham Maslow's concepts from the following resources: Abraham Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation: The Biological Rooting of the Value-Life," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 7. 2 (1967): 93-127. Abraham Maslow, *Toward A Psychology of Being and Motivation and Personality* (New York: Viking, 1970). Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*.

immediate danger, higher-level needs – love, esteem, and self-actualization – lose their potency and people become motivated primarily by safety needs.

Belonging Needs⁹¹

In affluent societies most people's physiological and safety needs are fairly well satisfied and do not dominate their lives. Belongingness needs, however, are a different matter. Most of us get caught at this level and strive more or less constantly to be accepted and loved by other people.

After we partially satisfy our physiological and safety needs, we become motivated by belongingness needs, such as the desire for friendship, the wish for a mate and children, the need to belong to a family, a club, a neighborhood, or a nation. Belongingness also include some aspects of sex and human contact, as well as the need to both give and receive love.

Motivation for belongingness is ordinarily strongest when the need is partially denied. People who have never received, or felt, belongingness, who have never been accepted or included, can go for long periods without these things and not panic. They take the absence of belonging for granted and eventually devalue this need. Conversely, people who have had belongingness needs adequately satisfied from early years also will not panic when denied belongingness. These people have confidence that they are accepted by those who are important to them, so if other people reject them, they do not feel devastated.

On the other hand, people who have tasted belongingness only in small doses will be strongly motivated to seek satisfaction of belongingness needs. In other words, people who have

⁹¹ This section is culmination summary of Abraham Maslow concepts.

received only a small amount of belonging have stronger needs for acceptance than do people who have received either a healthy amount of belongingness or none of all.

Children need belongingness to grow psychologically, and their attempts to satisfy this need are usually straightforward and direct. Adults, too, need belongingness, but their attempts to attain it are sometimes cleverly disguised. They often engage in self-defeating behaviors, such as pretending to be aloof from other people or adopting a cynical, cold, and callous manner in their interpersonal relationships. They may give the appearance of self-sufficiency and independence, but they have a strong need to be accepted by other people. Other adults whose belongingness needs remain largely unsatisfied adopt more obvious ways of trying to satisfy them, but they undermine their own success by striving too hard. Their constant supplications for acceptance and affection leave others suspicious, unfriendly, and impenetrable.

If people have had belongingness needs gratified from childhood, they gain a feeling of self-esteem, and they may even become self-actualizing adults who are no longer dependent upon the continual affection and acceptance of other people. As self-actualizing adults, they maintain their feelings of self-esteem even when scorned, rejected, and dismissed by other people. In other words, esteem and self-actualization are no longer dependent upon the satisfaction of belonging needs, that is, they are not functionally autonomous from the lower-level needs that gave them birth.

Esteem Needs⁹²

To the extent that people satisfy their belongingness needs they are free to pursue esteem needs, such as self-respect, confidence, competence, and the esteem of others. Maslow identified

⁹² This summary is based on the same resources of Maslow cited in note 89.

two levels of esteem needs—reputation and self-esteem. Reputation is the perception of the prestige, recognition, or fame people have achieved in the eyes of others, whereas self-esteem is the person's own feelings of worth and confidence. Self-esteem is based on more than reputation or prestige; it reflects as “desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom.”⁹³ In other words, self-esteem is based on real competence and not merely on others' opinions.

Once people meet their esteem needs, they stand on the threshold of self-actualization, the highest need recognized by Maslow.

Self-Actualization⁹⁴

When lower-level needs are satisfied, people proceed more or less automatically to the next level. However, once esteem needs are met, they do not always move to the level of self-actualization. Originally, Maslow assumed that self-actualization needs become potent whenever esteem needs have been met. However, during the 1960s he came to realize that many of the young students at Brandeis and other campuses around the county had all their basic needs met, including reputation and self-esteem, and yet they did not become self-actualized. Why some people step over the threshold from esteem to self-actualization and others do not is a matter of whether they embrace the B-Values.⁹⁵ People who hold in high respect such values as truth,

⁹³ Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 45.

⁹⁴ This summary is based on the Maslow resources cited in note 89.

⁹⁵ Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, held that self-actualizing people are motivated by the “external verities” or what he called B-values. These “Being” values are indicators of psychological health and are opposed to deficiency needs, which motivate non-self-actualizers. B-values are not needs in the same sense as food, shelter, or companionship. They are called “meta-needs,” meaning that they are the ultimate or highest level of needs. Maslow distinguished between ordinary need motivation and the motives of self-actualization people, which he called meta-motivation. Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, 150 defined this form of self-actualization as the “full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, etc.”

beauty, justice, and other B-values become self-actualizing after their esteem needs are met, whereas those who do not embrace these values are frustrated in their self-actualization needs even though they have satisfied each of their other basic needs.

Self-actualization is the desire for self-fulfillment, to realize all of one's potential, to become everything that one can, and to become creative in the full sense of the word. People who have reached the level of self-actualization become fully human, satisfying needs that others merely glimpse or never view at all. They are natural in the same sense that animals and infants are natural; that is, they express their basic human needs and do not allow them to be suppressed by culture.

The five needs comprising this hierarchy are conative needs, which Maslow often referred to as basic needs. However, Maslow also identified other needs, aesthetic and cognitive, which are sometimes preconditions for satisfying basic needs but nevertheless operate on a separate dimension. In addition to these needs are the neurotic needs, which tend to oppose basic needs and block psychological health.

Aesthetic Needs⁹⁶

Unlike conative needs, aesthetic needs are not universal, but at least some people in every culture seem to be motivated by the need for beauty and aesthetically pleasing experiences. Historically, humanity has produced art for art's sake from the days of the cave dweller down to the present time.

People with strong aesthetic needs desire beautiful and orderly surroundings, and, when these needs are not met, they become sick in the same way that they become sick when their

⁹⁶ See footnote 87.

conative needs are frustrated. People prefer beauty to ugliness, and they may even become physically and spiritually ill when forced to live in squalid, disorderly environments.

Because the various needs overlap, we cannot always identify the true bases of a particular need. For example, the needs for order and symmetry may be aesthetic needs, but they might also satisfy the conative need for safety. Then again, they could also satisfy cognitive needs, especially those involving mathematics and numbers.

Cognitive Needs⁹⁷

In addition to conative and aesthetic needs, people also possess a desire to know, to solve mysteries, to understand, and to be curious. These are the cognitive needs and, although they have an interdependence with conative needs, they belong to a different dimension. When cognitive needs are blocked, all other needs are threatened. Knowledge is necessary to satisfy each of the five conative needs. People can gratify their physiological needs by knowing how to secure food; safety needs by knowing how to build a shelter; love needs by knowing how to relate to people; esteem needs by attaining some knowledge and acquiring some level of self-confidence with that knowledge; and they can achieve self-actualization by fully using their cognitive potentials (although self-actualizing people need not have outstanding innate intellectual powers).

When people cannot satisfy their cognitive needs, they become pathological, just as they become sick when their conative and aesthetic needs are thwarted. Ignorance, dishonesty, and secrecy all frustrate the need to know and therefore undermine our psychological health. We become sick, paranoid, and depressed when we are consistently lied to, denied knowledge, or

⁹⁷ Ibid.

deprived of curiosity. Our physical health may suffer when our work does not challenge our intellectual capacities, and we may become skeptical, disillusioned, and cynical when we do not hear the whole truth.

Besides having a synergistic relationship with conative needs, cognitive needs have a separate existence. The need to know is important in itself; and is not always specifically related to the satisfaction of another need. Knowledge brings with it the desire to know more, to theorize, to test hypotheses, or to find out how something works for the satisfaction of knowing.

Neurotic Needs⁹⁸

The satisfaction of conative, aesthetic, and cognitive needs is basic to one's physical and psychological health, and their frustration leads to some level of illness. On the other hand, a fourth category of needs, neurotic needs, results only in stagnation and pathology, whether they are satisfied.

Maslow sees neurotic needs as nonproductive. They perpetuate an unhealthy style of life and have no value in the striving for self-actualization. Neurotic needs are usually reactive; that is, they serve as compensation for unsatisfied basic needs. People who do not satisfy their safety needs, for example, may develop a strong desire to hoard money or property. The hoarding drive is a neurotic need, worthless as a motivator toward health. Then again, when love and belongingness needs are not fulfilled, people may become overly aggressive and hostile toward others. Aggressive and hostile needs are also neurotic and play no positive role in one's movement toward self-actualization.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Neurotic needs are distinguishable from basic needs in that their satisfaction does not foster health. As Maslow said,

Giving a neurotic power seeker all the power, he wants does not make him less neurotic, nor is it possible to satiate his neurotic need for power. However much he is fed he remains hungry (because he's really looking for something else). It makes little difference for ultimate health whether a neurotic need be gratified or frustrated.⁹⁹

Satisfaction of Needs¹⁰⁰

Maslow noted that the more a lower-level need is satisfied, the greater the emergence of the next-level need. For example, if love needs are only slightly satisfied, esteem needs may not be active at all. But if love needs are moderately satisfied, esteem may emerge slightly as a need. If love is mostly satisfied, then esteem may emerge moderately, and so on. Needs, therefore, emerge gradually, and a person may be simultaneously motivated by needs from two or more levels. For example, a self-actualizing person may be the honorary guest at a dinner party given by close friends in a peaceful restaurant. The act of eating gratifies a physiological need, but, at the same time, the guest of honor may be satisfying safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs.

Reversed Order of Needs¹⁰¹

Maslow noted that even though needs are generally satisfied in the same order, occasionally they are reversed. For some people, the drive for creativity (a self-actualization need) may take precedence over safety and physiological needs. An enthusiastic artist may risk

⁹⁹ Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 274.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

safety and health to complete an important work. For years, the late sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski endangered his health and abandoned companionship to work on carving a mountain in the Black Hills into a monument to Chief Crazy Horse.¹⁰²

Reversals, however, as noted by are usually more apparent than real, and some seemingly obvious deviations in the order of needs are not variations at all. For example, the unconscious motivation underlying the behavior would indicate that the needs are not reversed.

Unconscious Motivation¹⁰³

Maslow believed that much of human surface behavior is really an expression of a more basic, often unconscious need. This can be observed at the level of love and belongingness needs, which, Maslow points out, some people try to satisfy by behaviors that are self-defeating yet appear to be motivated by esteem or self-actualization needs. On the surface, these people may disdain social contact and pretend not to care and possessions in an apparent move to satisfy competence and prestige needs. However, they are attempting an indirect approach to get people to like them, albeit an unsuccessful and self-defeating one.

Expressive and Coping Behavior¹⁰⁴

Maslow distinguished between expressive behavior, which is often unmotivated, and coping behavior, which is motivated and aimed at satisfying a need. He defined expressive behavior as that behavior that is often an end in itself and serves no other purpose than to be. It is often unconscious and usually takes place naturally and with little effort. Also, according to

¹⁰² Meet Korczak - Storyteller in Stone : Crazy Horse Memorial@ <https://crazyhorsememorial.org/story/the-history/meet-korczak-storyteller-in-stone/>

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Maslow, expressive behavior is usually unlearned, spontaneous, and determined by forces within the person rather than the environment. It has not goals or aim but is merely the person's mode of expression.

Maslow defined coping behavior as that behavior that is usually conscious, effortful, learned, and determined by the external environment. It involves the individual's attempts to cope with the environment, to secure food and shelter, to make friends, and to receive acceptance, appreciation, and prestige from others. According to Maslow coping behavior serves some aim or goal (although not always conscious or known to the person), and it is always motivated by some deficit need.

Deprivation of Needs¹⁰⁵

Maslow defined expressive behavior as that behavior that is often an end in itself and serves no other purpose than to be. It is often unconscious and usually takes place naturally and with little effort. Also, according to Maslow, expressive behavior is usually unlearned, spontaneous, and determined by forces within the person rather than the environment. It has no goals or aim but is merely the person's mode of expression.

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¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Comparison of High and Lower Needs¹⁰⁶

Important similarities and differences exist between higher-level needs (love, esteem, and self-actualization) and lower-level needs (physiological and safety). According to Maslow higher needs are like lower ones in that they are both innately determined. Maslow believed that love, esteem, and self-actualization are just as biological as physiological and safety needs. And Maslow believed that both were equally cognitive as well.

Maslow pointed out that the differences between higher needs and lower ones are those of degree and not of kind. Maslow argues that the higher-level needs appear later during individual development: lower-level needs must be cared for in infants and children before the higher-level needs become operative.

Additionally, Maslow noted that higher-level needs produce more happiness and more peak experiences (although satisfaction of lower-level needs may produce a degree of pleasure). According to Maslow, the satisfaction of higher-level needs is more subjectively desirable to those people who have experienced both higher and lower-level needs. In other words, a person who has reached the level of self-actualization would have not motivation to return to a lower stage of development.

Jonah Complex¹⁰⁷

Before concluding this discussion on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, I will briefly discuss Maslow's theory of the Jonah Complex. The reason for this discussion is that Maslow's Jonah Complex Theory influenced my use of the book of Jonah in my methodology.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

If Maslow is correct in that the human goal is self-actualization, what prevents people from reaching this level? Growth toward normal healthy personality is blocked by an absence of basic need gratification. According to Maslow if people cannot provide for themselves food and shelter, they cannot reach their full potential for psychological growth. Some people, however, have their physiological and safety needs relatively satisfied, and yet they remain blocked at the level of belongingness needs. They find it difficult to give and receive affection and to develop a sense of belongingness because, as children, they did not experience healthy parental acceptance. Even when people satisfy their belonging needs and gain self-esteem, they do not automatically reach self-actualization.

Maslow believed that one abnormal syndrome that often blocks people's growth toward self-actualization is what he calls the Jonah Complex, or the fear of being one's best. The Jonah Complex, according to Maslow is characterized by attempts to run away from one's destiny just as the biblical Jonah tried to escape from his fate. The Jonah complex represents a fear of success, a fear of being one's best, and a feeling of awesomeness in the presence of beauty and perfection.

Why do people run away from greatness and self-fulfillment? Maslow offered the following rationale. First, the human body is simply not strong enough to endure the ecstasy of fulfillment for any length of time, just as peak experiences and sexual orgasms would be overly taxing if they lasted too long. Therefore, according to Maslow, the intense emotion that accompanies perfection and fulfillment carries with it a shattering sensation such as "this is too much," or "I can't stand it anymore."

A second explanation of the evasion of growth is the necessity of humility. Maslow reasoned that most humans have a private ambition to be great, to write a great novel, to be a

movie star, or become a world-famous scientist, and so on. However, when humans compare themselves to those who have accomplished greatness they are appalled by their own arrogance. As a defense against this grandiosity or “sinful pride,” humans lower their aspirations, feel stupid and humble, and adopt the self-defeating approach of running away from the realization of their full potential. People will allow false humility to stifle creativity, and thus they prevent themselves from becoming self-actualizing.

Conclusion on Maslow Hierarchy of Needs¹⁰⁸

In Maslow’s view, people have a natural tendency to move toward self-actualization, and the basic needs that motivate them are precisely those that ultimately result in healthy growth. According to Maslow human nature is structured in such a happy way that human’s activate needs are exactly what they desire most. For example, children first want food, then protection, love, praise and finally self-fulfillment.

Although Maslow comes across generally optimistic and hopeful, Maslow recognized that people are capable of great evil and destruction. Evil, according to Maslow, stems from the frustration or thwarting of basic needs, not from the essential nature of people. When basic needs are not met, people may steal, cheat, lie, or kill. Although Maslow believed that human perfection is not possible, he insisted that certain individuals are capable of far greater growth and improvement than is generally supposed. Society, too, can be improved although not perfected. Growth, both individually and culturally, is slow and painful, but it seems to be part of human history. Maslow insisted on the ultimate improbability of humans, but he also realized that “most men are doomed to wish for what they do not have.”¹⁰⁹ In other words, although all

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 70.

people have the potential for self-actualization, most will live out their lives struggling for food, safety, or love. Most societies, Maslow believes, emphasize these lower-level needs and base their educational and political system on an invalid concept of humanity.

Maslow believed that behavior of people motivated by physiological and safety needs is determined by outside forces, whereas the behavior of self-actualizing people is motivated by internal forces. Maslow also points out that individuals are shaped by both biology and society, and the two cannot be separated. Inadequate genetic endowment does not condemn a person to an unfulfilled life, just as a poor social environment does not preclude growth. When people achieve self-actualization, they experience a wonderful synergy among the biological, social, and spiritual aspects of their lives. Self-actualizers receive more physical enjoyment from sensuous pleasure; they experience deeper and richer interpersonal relationships; and they receive pleasure from spiritual qualities such as beauty, truth, goodness, justice, and perfection.

In conclusion, Maslow helps the spiritual director who is working with those living in exile and coming out exile identify problematic areas within their life journey. Maslow assists the spiritual director in understanding that problematic areas may be a result of a deprivation of needs. As demonstrated above, Maslow breaks those need areas into two categories, lower-level needs (physiological needs and safety needs) and upper-level needs (psychological, cognitive, spiritual needs). With this understanding that problematic areas may result of a deprivation of needs the spiritual director is able to frame questions around the different levels of needs, listening for any form of deprivation of needs that may be the cause of the impediment of the exiled individual's transformation, growth, healing, and self-esteem. From the framing of questions and informed listening the exiled individual, with the assistance of the spiritual director, may be ready or want to move to the next stage of determined.

Determine

In the first section the spiritual director assists the individual living in exile to identify which of the five hierarchy needs seems to be the most problematic. In this section the spiritual director assists the individual living in exile to determine how the problematic need affects them in such a way that they are unable to move toward self-actualization or towards Shalom in God. Henri Nouwen, in his book *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith*, informs the Spiritual Director that the best way to assist the individual in the determining stage is through empathetic listening.¹¹⁰

Empathy exists when the spiritual director senses the feelings of the individual they are working with and can communicate these perceptions so that the individual knows that another person has entered their world of feelings without prejudice, projection, or evaluation. For Carl Rogers empathy “means temporarily living in the other’s life, moving about in it delicately without making judgments.”¹¹¹ Empathy does not involve interpreting an individual’s meanings or uncovering their unconscious feelings, procedures that would entail a external frame of reference and threat to the individual. In contrast, empathy suggests that the spiritual director sees things from the individual’s point of view and that the individual feels safe and unthreatened.

Margaret Guenther, in her book *Holy Listening*, indicates that the spiritual director does not take empathy for granted; they check the accuracy of their sensing by trying them out on the individual.¹¹² Guenther indicates that the best way to check the accuracy of the spiritual

¹¹⁰ Nouwen, *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith*, xiii-xiv, 3-14.

¹¹¹ Carl R. Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 142.

¹¹² Guenther, *Holy Listening*, 111-112; 142-145.

director's sensing is to ask or state a clarification statement.¹¹³ For example, "You seem to be telling me that you feel a great deal of resentment toward your father." Jean Stairs, in her book *Listening For the Soul*, emphasizes that "simple, open-ended questions or invitations ... can provide significant openings for further, deeper level soul-listening to take place."¹¹⁴ Valid empathic understanding is often followed by an exclamation from the individual along these lines: For example, "Yes, that's it exactly! I really do feel resentful."

Empathic listening is a powerful tool, which, along with genuineness and caring, facilitates personal growth within the individual. What, precisely, is the role of empathy in an individual's wellbeing? How does an Empathic spiritual director help an individual move toward wholeness and transformative wellbeing? Rogers provides a good answer to these questions.

When people are perceptively understood, they find themselves coming in closer touch with a wider range of their experiences. This gives them an expanded referent to which they can turn for guidance in understanding themselves and directing their behavior. If the empathy has been accurate and deep, they may also be able to unblock a flow of experiencing and permit it to run its uninhibited course.¹¹⁵

Empathy should not be confused with sympathy. Empathy is the ability to relate to another person's feelings by imagining oneself in their situation. Empathy involves an identification of sorts and an awareness of one's separateness from the observed. Sympathy is compassion for another person who is facing difficult circumstances or negative feelings. Sympathy suggests that a person feels pity for an individual but does not necessarily fully understand that individual's feelings. Sympathy is not appropriate in a spiritual direction session, because it stems from external evaluation and usually leads to the individual feeling sorry for

¹¹³ Ibid., 150-155.

¹¹⁴ Jean Stairs, *Listening For The Soul* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 21.

¹¹⁵ Rogers, *A Way of Being*, 156.

themselves. Self-pity is a deleterious attitude that weakens the individual's understanding of self and creates disequilibrium within the individual person. Also, empathy does not mean that a spiritual director has the same feelings as the individual. A spiritual director does not feel anger, frustration, confusion, or resentment at the same time as an individual experiences them. Rather, a spiritual director is experiencing the depth of the individual's feeling, while permitting the individual to be a separate person. A spiritual director has an emotional as well as cognitive reaction to the individual's feelings, but the feelings belong to the individual, not the spiritual director.¹¹⁶

A spiritual director does not take ownership of the individual's experiences but is able to convey to the individual the understanding of what it means to be the individual at that moment. As Susan Phillips illustrates throughout her book *Candlelight* empathy is effective because it enables individuals to listen to themselves and, in effect, answer their own questions,¹¹⁷ or as Guenther states, "to hear what they knew all along."¹¹⁸

A key aspect of Empathic listening is that the individual the spiritual director is working with feels heard. As Guenther states, "we all know the pain of not being listened to, of not being heard."¹¹⁹ In my twenty-five years living among the exiled, I often heard the desire of wanting to be heard. One of the main reasons we wanted to be heard, while in exile, was so the outside community knew we existed. As Guenther poignantly points out "not to be heard is not to

¹¹⁶ Guenther, *Holy Listening*. Also compare Carl Rogers, *On Becoming A Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2004).

¹¹⁷ Phillips, *Candlelight*.

¹¹⁸ Gunther, *Holy Listening*, 143.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 142.

exist.”¹²⁰ And as Phillips illustrates throughout her book, what we are wanting heard is our story.¹²¹

While living in exile we did not just want any story heard. We wanted someone to hear in our life story what is holding us back from self-adultization, God’s Shalom.¹²² In other words, what is speaking to the exiled in their story that holds or barriers them from moving into God’s Shalom.

Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ, in his book *God’s Voice Within*, based on Ignatian Spirituality, indicates that what is speaking to the individual is either/or both a true spirit and/or a false spirit.¹²³ Thibodeaux states that the true spirit is “the inner pull toward God’s plan and toward faith, hope, and love.”¹²⁴ Thibodeaux states that “the false spirit equals the devil plus the trauma of tragic circumstances such as cancer or hurricanes, plus destructive experiences and behaviors, plus psychological baggage, plus emotional weakness, and so on. The false spirit is anything that draws me away from God and from God’s loving plan for the world.”¹²⁵ In other words, the false spirit is somehow using the individual’s story to speak to them in such a way that it holds the individual back from self-actualization, living in God’s Shalom. Thus, the spiritual director, through empathic listening, assists the individual in discerning the false spirit.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 143.

¹²¹ Phillips, *Candlelight*.

¹²² Cf. Don Beisswenger, *Locked Up: Letters and Papers of a Prisoner of Conscience* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 2008), 11; Michael Rickenbacker, *Breaking Into Prison* (Nashville, TN: Spirit and Truth Publications, 1993), 62-63; and, Lennie Spitale, *Prison Ministry: Understanding Prison Culture Inside and Out* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Homan Publishers, 2002).

¹²³ Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ., *God’s Voce Within: The Ignatian Way to Discover God’s Will* (Chicago: Loyola Press).

¹²⁴ Ibid., 11.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

The spiritual director now assists the exiled in discovering how the false spirit has ingrained itself in the story, or in the memory thoughts of the individual. Orthodox spirituality assists the spiritual director's understanding of how the false spirit is still speaking through the thoughts of the individual. The work of the false spirit in conjunction with thoughts is described by St. Gregory of Sinai in the book by Anthony Coniaris *Confronting and Controlling Thoughts; According to the Fathers of the Philokalia*: "Distractive thoughts are the promptings of the demons and precursors of the passions, just as such promptings and mental images are also the precursors of particular actions."¹²⁶ Orthodox spirituality informs the spiritual director that the false spirit has formed within the individual a malicious thought—a *logismoi*.

The Greek (plural) word *logismoi* means thoughts and/or images that come to the individual that leads them away from God. Father Stephen Muse in his book *When Hearts Become Flame*, defines *logismoi* as the "provocations or passionate thoughts which enter the mind. Patristic teaching distinguishes simple thoughts from *logismoi* that are inherently charged with a potential magnetic attraction, which appeal to the unpurified desires of the heart ... which in turn block the acceptance of Grace."¹²⁷ Metropolitan of Nafpakots Hierotheos in his book *Orthodox Psychotherapy* takes Muse's definition further by adding the idea of images: "When the Fathers speak of 'thoughts' (*logismoi*), they do not mean simple thoughts, but the images and representations behind which there are always appropriate thoughts. The images with the thoughts are called '*logismoi*'."¹²⁸ Archimandrite Sophrony, in the book *Saint Silouan the*

¹²⁶ Anthony Coniaris, *Confronting and Controlling Thoughts: According to the Fathers of the Philokalia* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing Co., 2004), 839.

¹²⁷ Father Stephen Muse, *When Hearts Become Flame: An Eastern Approach to Pastoral Counseling* (Waymart, PA: Tikhon's Monastery Press, 2015), 299-300.

¹²⁸ Metropolitan of Nafpakots Hierotheos, *Orthodox Psychotherapy: The Science of the Fathers*, trans. E. Williams (Levadia, Greece: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1994), 215.

Athonite, further explains Hierotheos' use of image in defining *logismoi*: "Images in some cases appear to take on visible form, while others are mostly products of the mind. As visible images also generate some thought or other, ascetics label all images 'intrusive thoughts.'" ¹²⁹ Conairis states: "The Fathers of the Philokalia define logismoi as follows: logismoi frequently signifies not thought in the ordinary sense, but thought provoked by the demons, and therefore (the word is) often qualified in translation by the adjective evil or demonic; it can also signify divinely inspired thought". ¹³⁰ From these definitions it can be understood that imagination plays a very important role in the formation of the image in a person. Thus, it can be understood that logismoi are painters of various images and representations in a person's mind, most of them memories of the past. Through the disjoining of memory, the false spirit injects the logismoi with the ulterior aim of moving the individual away from God which blocks an individual's ability for self-adultization.

St. John Climacus, in his book *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, speaks of various stages of how the *logismoi* afflict the individual and how the individual should deal with them. ¹³¹ Kyriacos Markides, a sociologist from the University of Maine explores this understanding in his conversation with Father Maximos ¹³² who was a monk from Mount Athos which is outlined in

¹²⁹ Archimandrite Sophrony, *Saint Silouan the Athonite* (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Publications, 1991), 134.

¹³⁰ Coniaris, *Confronting Controlling Thoughts*, 839.

¹³¹ St. John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Ana Smiljani (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Publications, 1978).

¹³² Father Maximos is now Metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol.

his book, *The Mountain of Silence*.¹³³ Father Maximos identifies five stages in the development of *logismoi*.¹³⁴

According to Father Maximos the first stage of the *logismoi*'s temptation is "the assault stage, when the *logismoi* first attacks our mind."¹³⁵ This is when the *logismoi* comes bringing a temptation. Father Maximos gives an example: "A thought enters our mind in the form of a suggestion urging us, let us say, to steal. It is as if the *logismoi* knocks at the door of our mind and tells us: 'Look at this pile of money. Nobody is looking. Take it.'"¹³⁶ As Hierotheos points out, this situation is natural.¹³⁷ It is impossible for a person to exist who is not challenged by *logismoi*. For example, in my garden the weeds grow naturally alongside my okra, so humans too inevitably encounter the challenge of the *logismoi* everyday life.

The second stage, according to Father Maximos, is the individual willingness to consent to the *logismoi*. "The second stage according to the holy elders is what they call interaction. It implies opening of a dialog, an actual exchange with the *logismoi*. When a *logismoi* urges you, for example, to steal that pile of money, you begin to wonder, 'Should I or should I not? What's going to happen if I steal it? What's going to happen if I don't steal it?'"¹³⁸ Hierotheos points out that if the individual stays away from this interaction with the *logismoi* and deals with it without curiosity, then that individual is spared the consequences.¹³⁹ But if the individual gets involved in

¹³³ Kyriacos Markides, *The Mountain of Silence: A Search for Orthodox Spirituality: An Interview with Father Maximos* (New York: An Image Book published by Doubleday, 2001).

¹³⁴ Ibid., 118-130.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 124.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 124.

¹³⁷ Hierotheos, *Orthodox Psychotherapy*, 215-225.

¹³⁸ Markides, *The Mountain of Silence*, 127.

¹³⁹ Hierotheos, *Orthodox Psychotherapy*, 225-228

a discussion with the malicious *logismoi*, the individual has already opened the door and invited the *logismoi* to dwell within the individual becoming “friends.” And as a “friend” the *logismoi* begins to direct the individual away from God and self-adultization.

Once an individual begins to interact with the *logismoi* and invites it in, that individual will begin to agree with the *logismoi*. It is interesting to note what Rob Reimer says in his book *Soul Care; 7 Transformational Principles for a Health Soul* about coming into agreement with a *logismoi* (he refers to it as a lie): “the power of a lie is in our agreement with it. Whatever we agree with, we give power to . . . if you agree with a lie, its influence will cast a shadow in our life.”¹⁴⁰ Father Maximos says that “the third stage in the progression of a *logismoi* is the stage of consent as we would say. You consent to commit what the *logismoi* urges you to do, in this case, to steal money. You have decided. That’s when guilt and accountability start to emerge. It is the beginning of sin. Jesus was referring to this stage when he proclaimed that if you covet a woman in your mind, you have already committed adultery in your heart. The moment this decision is allowed to take root in your heart, then you are well on the way to committing the act in the other world.”¹⁴¹ The individual is now listening to the *logismoi* as one listens to a good friend or confidant and acts upon their suggestions.

In the fourth stage the individual has surrendered to the *logismoi*. Now the *logismoi* becomes the jailer, holding the individual prisoner to the new habits that have formed in listening to the “advice” of the *logismoi*. Father Maximos explains that “in the event that a person is unable to free himself from the previous stage, then there is defeat. He becomes hostage to the *logismoi*. The moment the person succumbs, the next time around the *logismoi* returns with

¹⁴⁰ Rob Reimer, *Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles of A Healthy Soul* (Franklin, TN: Carpenter’s Son Publishing), 599.

¹⁴¹ Markides, *The Mountain of Silence*, 127-128.

greater force. It is much more difficult to resist then. And so, it is with the next time and the time after that. The holy elders called it the stage of captivity. That's when the person can no longer retreat and proceeds along with this act which now becomes a habit that repeated time and again."¹⁴² This description of Father Maximos' *logismoi* returning with more *logismoi* bring to memory the story Jesus told, recorded in Luke, of the man who cleansed his house of one demon only to have more demons to come back. This illustrates that once you become friends with the *logismoi*, even if you manage to get the *logismoi* to leave for season it will return with strength. Steven Muse alludes to the idea that *logismoi* has created not just a habit, but an addiction.¹⁴³ Even if the individual puts the addiction aside, if the individual isn't constantly vigilant in their sobriety, the addiction comes back. This addiction then becomes an obsession.

The final stage is the entrenchment of *logismoi* through obsession. In this final stage Father Maximos states that "the holy elders identify the end stage in the evolution of a *logismoi* as that of a passion or obsession. The *logismoi* has become an entrenched reality within the consciousness of the person, with the nous. The person becomes captive of obsessive *logismoi*, leading to ongoing destructive acts to oneself and to others, such as in the case of a compulsive gambler."¹⁴⁴ The individual now listens to the *logismoi* injected by the false spirit which informs them that their addiction is helping them. The false spirit now only uses *logismoi* to remind the individual that they are an addict and that is all they will ever be. The individual is now a member of the collective addicts.

¹⁴² Ibid., 128-129.

¹⁴³ Muse, *When Hearts Become Flame*, 260-280.

¹⁴⁴ Markides, *The Mountain of Silence*, 129-130.

Thibodeaux¹⁴⁵ adds to Maximos' conversation on the *logismoi*, indicating that during stages four and five the false spirit can push the individual, using a *logismoi*, into a place of desolation. Thibodeaux's quotation of Saint Ignatius' definition of desolation is pertinent to the conversation.

I call desolation ... darkness of soul, turmoil of spirit, inclination of what is low and earthly, restlessness rising from many disturbances and temptations which lead to want of faith, want of hope, want of love. The soul is wholly slothful, tepid, sad, and separated, as it were, from the Creator and Lord. For just as consolation is the opposite of desolation, so the thoughts that spring from consolation and the opposite of those that spring from desolation.¹⁴⁶

Both Thibodeaux and Ignatius indicate, through the above definition, that when an individual is empty of faith, hope, and love then they have moved away from God, and even losing their sense of God.¹⁴⁷ Paul in First Corinthians 13:1-11 says that the most important things a human can acquire are faith, hope, and love. And when an individual does not have love, they are nothing but a noisy gong. In desolation the gong is so noisy that the individual is unable to hear God much less have a sense of God's presence. Hierotheos states that the "one of the diseases of the heart is ignorance and forgetfulness of God. When it has lost the grace of God, the heart becomes clouded, dark, hidden."¹⁴⁸ Hierotheos indicates that an individual is in desolation when the heart "is hidden, a man is in deep darkness. And a heart which has ignorance is hell. Hell is ignorance, for both are dark; and perdition is forgetfulness, for both involve extinction."¹⁴⁹ Maslow would say that when a person is in desolation, they are in a state of deprivation and unable to move to

¹⁴⁵ Thibodeaux, *God's Voice Within*.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 15. The full quote can be found in the book *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, trans. Anthony Mottola, Ph.D. (New York: Doubleday, 1964).

¹⁴⁷ Thibodeaux, *God's Voice Within*, 15-20; Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 130-132.

¹⁴⁸ Hierotheos, *Orthodox Psychotherapy*, 173.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

self-actualization.¹⁵⁰ Thus, when an individual gives in to the logismoi injected by the false spirit then that individual moves into the darkness of desolation moving away from living God's Shalom, as such, the individual no longer has peace within their soul.¹⁵¹

As Hierotheos indicated, logismoi do not come out of vacuum. *Logismoi* come out of a memory or are attached to a memory of an experience.¹⁵² According to Thibodeaux the false spirit is often active during an experience.¹⁵³ Being active during an experience the false spirit can inject a logismoi during the experience to alter or distort the memory in favor of the false spirit.

Evan Howard, in his book *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality*, gives some clarity on how experiences form.¹⁵⁴ Howard states that "human experiences ordinarily proceed in generally definable stages."¹⁵⁵ Howard in his section "The Process and Stages of Human Experience" outlines 6 progressive stages.¹⁵⁶ Howard's first stage is "Being Aware." Howard states that "the first stage of experiential process is associated with bare consciousness or being aware itself."¹⁵⁷ In this stage Howard is basically asking the question, how aware is the individual of what they bring to the experience. That is, how aware are they of their

¹⁵⁰ Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*.

¹⁵¹ Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, *Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives: The Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica*, trans. Ana Smiljanic (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Publication, 2012), 53-87.

¹⁵² Hierotheos, *Orthodox Psychotherapy*, 215-225.

¹⁵³ Thibodeaux, *God's Voice Within*.

¹⁵⁴ Evan Howard, *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 87-92.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 87-92.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

physiological surroundings and how those surroundings affect them. Secondly how aware is the individual of their own belief system and how that system informs them or directs them to act. Thirdly, how aware is the individual of how their culture, education, and religions effects them and guides them through an experience.

Howard's second stage is *Experiencing*.¹⁵⁸ Howards states that the "second stage is characterized by experiencing. We include in this stage all that is discussed in the psychological literature as stimulus, sensation, perception, and initial memory processing."¹⁵⁹ In this stage Howard is asking the question, is the individual cognizant that an experience is occurring, and what the influences are affecting the experience. First is the individual cognitive physiological stimulus that is affecting their experience. Secondly is the individual cognitive of how their five senses are reacting to their experience (i.e., heart rate, respiration rate, perspiration, etc.). Thirdly, is the individual cognitive of their own perceptions that influence their experience. Lastly, is the individual cognitive of their own memories that are influenced by their experience.

Howard's third stage is *Understanding*. Howard states that "from experiencing, one moves to understanding. Thinking and feeling, in their various types, are to be included in this stage."¹⁶⁰ Howard indicates that in this stage the individual begins to inquire about the experience. In other words, the individual begins to question what is happening in this experience. Howard points out that the individual may inquire about their previous memories, perceptions, and beliefs. Howard also points out that the individual, through the process of inquiry, may ask why this experience is happening. Additionally, Howard indicates that the

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 88-89.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 88.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 89.

individual may or may not inquire about their emotions. Thus, in the stage of understanding, according to Howard, the individual begins to grasp and respond to experience that is involving the individual.

Howard's fourth stage is Judging. Howard states that "at this stage, human experience moves from the question, what is the case? to is it really the case? Wonder, inquiry, hypothesis, and abduction¹⁶¹ are primary in Understanding, whereas verification, demonstration, deduction, and induction that center stage in Judging."¹⁶² Another way to understand this stage of Judging is that this is the time that the individual begins to appraise the situation of the experience. In the stage the individual is asking the question what has changed, and why did it change. Additionally, the individual will ask the question is the experience good or bad. And finally, the individual will appraise the availability of options.

Howard's fifth stage is Deciding/Acting. Howard states that "at this stage there is an investment, an entrustment, of the person in the judgement previously made, either through the formation of a thought, belief, or feeling or in the taking of a concrete action, affecting the confronting environment."¹⁶³ In this stage the individual moves from evaluating (judging) various courses of action in accordance with their knowledge that they brought with them into the experience and their acquired, ongoing, knowledge of the situation occurring in the

¹⁶¹ Howard's use of the word "abduction" is not in the sense of taking captivity, kidnaping. Rather Howard seems to be using the word in the philosophical sense of a form of reasoning. Igor Douven in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* defines "abduction" as follows: "In the philosophical literature, the term 'abduction' is used in two related but different sense. In both senses, the term refers to some form of explanatory reasoning. However, in the historically first sense, it refers to the place of explanatory reasoning in *generating* hypotheses, while in the sense in which it is used most frequently in the modern literature it refers to the place of explanatory reasoning in *justifying* hypotheses. In the latter sense, abduction is also called 'Inference to the Best Explanation.'" Igor Douven, The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Summer 2021 Edition), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/abduction/>.

¹⁶² Howard, *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality*, 90.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

experience. Additionally, the individual will formulate a belief about the situation in the experience.

Howard's sixth stage is Integrating. Howard states that, integration involves both adjustments in worldview and the shaping affective predispositions."¹⁶⁴ Howard points out that the belief that the individual formulated in stage five now becomes integrated into the memory of the individual and is there to provide feedback for the future experience. This integrated belief will begin to educate the individual in accordance with their outward worldview, and their inward view of themselves. Howard points out that this integrated belief may cause a paradigm shift in the individual's belief system and perceptions.

Howard concludes his discussion of the six stages of experience with the following:

Integrations of one kind or another finally cycle back to shape the character of Being Aware itself through interaction with preexisting accumulated knowledge or habits and sociohistorical conditions. Both of what I am Aware and how I may be Aware in the next moment of awareness are shaped by the transformations taking place at the stage of Integrating. The interaction of transformation and reintegration at the last moment of Integrating joins with the preexisting conditions at the first moment of Being Aware to form new possibilities for evaluation and action in the face of the confronting environment.¹⁶⁵

In summary, according to Howard, the operations of human experience tend to arise in distinct stages, creating a sense of process in the flow of human experience. Being Aware provides the room for Experiencing, in turn, stimulates Understanding, which leads to Judging. Judging is embodied in Deciding and Action. Deciding and Action, in turn, feed back into human experience providing a sense of Integrating, which in turn shapes the individual's Being Aware.

As indicated earlier the false spirit needs something to work with to inject a *logismoi*. That something is the human experience. I will demonstrate how the false spirit injects a

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 90-91.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 91.

logismoi during an experience. I will do this by correlating Howard's experience model with the progressive model of the logismoi through an illustration.

The illustration that I will use is the story that Jesus tells of a father and two sons, often referred to as the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). This is the story of a younger son who asks his father for his inheritance (vs.11). The father gives him the inheritance and the younger son goes on a trip to another country and spends all of his money (vs.12). The young man, realizing he is broke, decides to go to work (v.13). His job is to feed pigs (vs.14). While feeding the pigs he realizes that he is hungry enough to eat the pig's food, and that no one was willing to assist him in acquiring his basic needs (vs.16). It is here in vs.16 that I will begin the illustration.

In verse 16 the young man is in a state of deprivation. Maslow would say that the young man's physiological needs and belongings needs are not being met.¹⁶⁶ Thus, the young man is in a deprived stated, being deprived of food (hungry enough to eat the pig's food) and belongingness (no one will help him). It is in this deprived state that the experience begins. In Howard's experience model the first stage is Awareness.¹⁶⁷ Here the young man is aware that he spent all his money that his father gave him, he sought work, the work he is doing is not helping to meet his needs (he is hungry); and no one will help him (he is lonely). Thibodeaux would say that the false spirit is already at work.¹⁶⁸ Thibodeaux would indicate that the false spirit already assisted the young man in moving into a state of desolation. Thibodeaux states that an individual is a state of desolation when they are "empty of faith, hope, and love."¹⁶⁹ In verse 16 the young

¹⁶⁶ Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*.

¹⁶⁷ Howard, *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality*, 87-92.

¹⁶⁸ Thibodeaux, *God's Voice Within*.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

man is empty of love and hope (no one there to help him or give him food—a sense of abandonment) and possibly faith (no one is going to help him). Howard’s second stage is Experiencing. The young man is experiencing hunger and loneliness. This is where the false spirit shows up with a *logismoi*. A *logismoi*, in this scenario, would possibly be in the form of a clarifying question, “are you hungry and lonely” this would be Father Maximos’ first stage of a *logismoi* attack of entering the mind. Howard’s third stage is Understanding. In this stage the young man begins to inquire why he is hungry and lonely. At this point the young man would say yes to the *logismoi* I am hungry and lonely, but why.¹⁷⁰ The *logismoi* could possibly respond, based on the young man’s awareness, with an inquiry, “are you not hungry because you spent all the money your father gave you?” Father Maximos would indicate that the attack of the *logismoi* is beginning to transition from the first stage of interdiction to the second stage of interaction. At this point the young man is moving to Howard’s fourth stage of Judging. In verse 17 the young man is in Howard’s stage of Judging, and it is possible these is the point where the young man begins to interact with the *logismoi*. The *logismoi* method would be to simply continue the inquiry, using the young man’s memory, “does not your father’s servants have food to eat, there not hungry, are they?” The young would interact with the *logismoi* with response of agreement, yes, my father’s servants do not go hungry because they have food to eat. Now the young man is interacting with the *logismoi* (Father Maximos second stage) and ready to move into Howard’s fifth stage of Deciding/Acting, verse 18. At this point the *logismoi* simply ask, “why not go back to your father as a servant and you would have food to eat?” And the *logismoi* would inject, “by the way you know you can’t go back as son because you have offended your father.” The young man responds “yes, I have offended my father. I cannot go back as a son. But I can go back as a

¹⁷⁰ Markides, *The Mountain of Silence*, 115-130.

servant and have food to eat.” In verse 19 we see the young man has consented to the *logismoi*, which is Father Maximos’ third stage of consent, and Howard’s final stage of Integrating; the young man no longer sees himself as son but as a servant. In verse 20, we see the young man is defeated by the *logismoi*, Father Maximos’ fourth stage of defeat, and begins to head back to his father’s house with the understanding that he is now a servant.

This illustration using Luke 15:11-32 demonstrates that the young man leaves his father as a son. Then during a time of deprived desolation interacts with a *logismoi*. The result of this interaction is that the young man has gone from seeing himself as a son to seeing himself as a servant. The false spirit using a *logismoi*, has assisted the young man in moving from seeing and understanding himself as a son, to understanding and seeing himself, in a false sense, as a servant.

Thomas Merton would say that the young man in Luke 15:11-32 has moved from a sense of true self to a sense of false self.¹⁷¹ Merton indicates that the false self is an illusion that lacks authenticity.¹⁷² When the prodigal son moved his understanding of self from being a son of his loving father to a servant of his father, Merton would say that this new self-proclaimed autonomy of the prodigal son as a servant of his father is nothing more than an illusion. Merton states that “my false and private self is the one who wants to exist outside the reach of God’s will and God’s love—outside of reality and outside of life. And such a self cannot help but be an illusion.”¹⁷³ Donald Winnicott adds to the idea that the false self is an illusion in that the false self is a created

¹⁷¹ Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 29-36.

¹⁷² Thomas Merton, *Contemplative Prayer* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), 86.

¹⁷³ Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 34.

as a defensive façade appearing to be real.¹⁷⁴ This defensive façade/illusion, that created the false self, came out of the prodigal son's sense of depravity of food (creating a deep sense of hunger).¹⁷⁵ Out of the sense of deprivation the prodigal son agreed with the logismoi, introduced by the false spirit, and thought of himself as a servant. This false sense of self, as a servant, now controls the prodigal son. Dr. Rob Reimer states that "the power of a lie is in our agreement with it. Whatever we agree with, we give power to."¹⁷⁶ Thus, the false self grows in the power that the prodigal son gives it, and his true self becomes a mere shadowy memory. Richard Rohr indicates that as the false self grows in power it creates an outward façade (or illusion) of happiness and contentment while inside the individual is lonely and miserable, and the true self is forgotten.¹⁷⁷ Thibodeaux indicates that the reason for the inward loneliness and misery is because the individual, through their illusionary false self, dwells in desolation – removed from love, hope, faith, and a sense of God's loving presence.¹⁷⁸ The false self is nothing more than an illusion giving the façade of moving in the right direction (as seen in the prodigal son thinking himself a servant), leaving the individual inwardly to dwell in a wasteland of emptiness devoid of love, hope, and faith because the individual is lured away from the loving presence of God.

In contrast the true self refers to a person's truest nature, who they really are, or that which they are meant to be. For example, the prodigal true self is the son of a loving father. James Finley indicates that the true self is a person's basic and unchangeable identity in God,

¹⁷⁴ Donald Winnicott, *Ego Distortion in Terms of True and False Self. The Maturation Process and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development* (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1960), 140-157.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 38.

¹⁷⁶ Reimer, *Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles of A Healthy Soul*, 599.

¹⁷⁷ Richard Rohr, *Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013), 28-29.

¹⁷⁸ Thibodeaux, *God's Voice Within*, 17-20.

living and freely in the attributes of divine love.¹⁷⁹ Father Maximos illuminates the idea that the true self is that self that is one with God, the self that loves and wills into being at creation, the self that is the image and likeness of God.¹⁸⁰ Rohr sees that God's love is the reality of who a person really is, and apart from that love a person is nothing.¹⁸¹ Winnicott indicates that the true self is the authentic self of being alive having a true sense of self with little to no contradiction between the outward and inward self.¹⁸² The true self then is an expression of a person's oneness with God's Love. The true self is love dwelling in in God's Love living withing the person. This oneness in love with God is the individual's nature of their true self.

For an individual to begin the movement from false self to true self, the true self according to Hugh of Saint-Victor must begin to awaken.¹⁸³ According to Hugh this awaking occurs when the individual begins to understand that they have been living in an illusion and that there is something better—a better peaceful life.¹⁸⁴ Thomas Keating takes this awaking further in that when the individual begins to comprehend that their inner misery, pain, loneliness, and lack of purpose derived from living in the illusory false self and has a desire to begin healing the true self starts to arise.¹⁸⁵ This is what the Spiritual Director is listening for, the desire to heal, the awareness of the illusion, the awaking of the true spirit as a baby awakes, stretching, yawning,

¹⁷⁹ James Finley, *Merton's Palace of Nowhere: A Search for God through Awareness of the True Self* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978), 32-33.

¹⁸⁰ Markides, *Mountain of Silence*, 25-40; 212-231

¹⁸¹ Rohr, *Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self*, 28-29.

¹⁸² Winnicott, *Ego Distortion in Terms of True and False Self. The Maturation Process and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, 140-157.

¹⁸³ Community of St. Mary the Virgin, *Hugh of Saint-Victor: Selected Spiritual Writings*, trans. A Religious of C.S.M.V. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2009), 35.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 157-182.

¹⁸⁵ Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 22-24.

and opening its eyes for first time. At this point of awaking, and not before, is the individual, with whom the Spiritual Director is working, is ready to proceed to engage the work of catharsis or purification of the soul.¹⁸⁶

Engage

At the stage of engagement, the individual the spiritual director is working with will begin to engage in two areas. One area of engagement is focused on the movement from false self to true self. The other area of engagement is engaging resources that will assist the individual to move from false self to true self. This engagement stage can be understood as catharsis or purification of the soul.

Father Maximos explains that catharsis is the work of the individual cleansing their heart and mind of the egotistical passions and addictions (false self).¹⁸⁷ Father Maximos further explains that the heart has become diseased by egotistical passions and addictions.¹⁸⁸ Thomas Keating would agree with Father Maximos in that Keating sees the false self as the disease that has infected the individual: “the disease is the false self”.¹⁸⁹ Thomas Merton indicates that the only way to cleanse oneself of the false self disease is for the false self to die.¹⁹⁰ The Apostle Paul makes it clear that the old self (false self) so that the new self (true self) can flourish: “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, [the false self] which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to

¹⁸⁶ Staniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality*, 69-76; 119-123

¹⁸⁷ Markides, *Mountain of Silence*, 212-224.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 53-68.

¹⁸⁹ Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 23.

¹⁹⁰ Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 29-36.

put on the new self, [the true self] created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24 NASB; cf. Colossians 3:9-10). Gary Moon and David Benner summarize, in their book *Spiritual Direction and The Care of Souls: A Guide to Christ*, the need for the false self removal: “Christian spiritual formation involves awaking from the dream that we are god and remembering our true identity, our ‘beloved-of-God-in-Christ’ identity, and then saying yes to the pain associated with the mortification of our false self. Dethroning the false self is a pillar of spiritual direction.”¹⁹¹ Thus, for the individual to start moving towards true self, false self must be removed—die. As Father Maximos and Thomas Keating indicate, the removal of the false self will not be easy, and as Moon and Benner point out it will be difficult and painful.

Richard Beck sheds some light on why the removal of the false self will be difficult and possibly painful. Beck states that “humans are fearful and survival-driven animals, easily drawn into sinful and selfish practices. Because we are mortal and divine by self-preservation, our survival instincts make us tragically vulnerable to death anxiety—the desire to preserve our own existence above all else and at all costs.”¹⁹² S. Mark Heim supports this idea in that “our mortality becomes a source of anxiety. Futile attempts to defend ourselves from it led us into active sin and strange us from trust in God.”¹⁹³ Mark Lilla adds to idea of mortality anxiety in that is the cause for “war—if not explicit, armed hostilities, then a perpetual state of anxious readiness in preparation for conflict.”¹⁹⁴ In that the false self is mortal, it will not go away easily. As the false self detects that its existence is threatened it will become fearful, paranoid,

¹⁹¹ Gary Moon and David Benner, *Spiritual Direction and The Care of Souls: A Guide to Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2004), 121.

¹⁹² Richard Beck, *The Slavery of Death* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 8

¹⁹³ S. Mark Heim, *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 68.

¹⁹⁴ Mark Lilla, *The Stillborn God* (New York: Knopf, 2007), 82.

suspicious, and combative. Accordingly, the false self will act defensively and aggressively, warning with what every place its survival at risk.

This engagement stage is more than just a catharsis, it is the engagement of a war (struggle) between the false self and the true self. The individual that the spiritual director is working with will need tools to aid them in the continuous struggle between false self and true self, such that the true self can arise, and the false self begin to diminish. At this point the spiritual director will shift from empathetic listener to a facilitating teacher. Margaret Guenther makes it clear that the spiritual director as a facilitating teacher is not about teaching a methodology, rather it is assisting the individual through the discernment and judging process as they engage resources that will assist them in the struggle.¹⁹⁵ As a facilitating teacher the spiritual director will assist, through discernment and judgment, the individual in engaging resources to find and develop the necessary tools for the struggle. For this dissertation, those tools are often referred to as spiritual disciplines.

The spiritual director, at this point, may ask if the individual would like assistance with spiritual disciplines that may help them. The spiritual director, through the discernment process, assists the individual in determining which spiritual discipline would appropriately assist the individual. The spiritual director then, through the judgment process, assists the individual in determining which resources would best assist the individual in a particular spiritual discipline. Once the individual chooses a particular spiritual discipline, and possible resources that would aid in understanding and applying the discipline, the spiritual director may offer to assist the individual in learning the spiritual discipline.

¹⁹⁵ Guenther, *Holy Listening*, 42-44.

The spiritual director should explain to the individual they are working with what spiritual disciplines are and are not. Dallas Willard indicates that spiritual disciplines are habits, practices, and exercises that are designed to develop, grow, and strengthen certain qualities of a person's spirit in conjunction with the Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁶ A good analogy that comes from the Apostle Paul is that spiritual disciplines help to build the "muscles" of a person's character and expand the breadth of a person's inner life. spiritual disciplines structure the "workouts" which train the soul. Richard Foster indicates that some spiritual disciplines are personal, inward exercises that are practiced alone, others require interpersonal relationships and are practiced in community.¹⁹⁷

Bob Benson and Michael Benson, in their book *Disciplines for the Inner Life*, signify that the nature of this strength takes many forms (which are developed to greater and lesser degrees, depending on the particular spiritual discipline practice), but generally include an increase in one's ability to: hear God's voice; hear one's inner voice; detach and become unaffected by the false self; subdue/conquer the passions and gratifications of the false self; dwell in God's inner peace; Allow the true self to become strengthen by the Holy Spirit; move into God's healing presence; endure hardship; forge good habits.¹⁹⁸

If a person starts any kind of physical exercise program, that person enhances their health. The Apostle Paul says that "everyone who competes in the games, exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath" (1 Corinthians 10:9 NASB). People

¹⁹⁶ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), 89-90;137-139;150-154.

¹⁹⁷ Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth; 20th Anniversary Edition* (San Francisco, CA: Haper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1998), 1-11.

¹⁹⁸ Bob Benson and Michael Benson, *Disciplines for the Inner Life* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1985), 137-204; 237-286.

who are most successful in making exercise a habit, who stick with a program and see real results—significant transformations in their physical aptitudes and physique—are those who have a higher purpose beyond simply “better health.” Without this kind of higher purpose—a desire to hit certain PRs, run a particular race, to be alive and healthy for one’s children—the motivation required to complete regular workouts is easily overcome by the entropy and busyness of daily life. Without a more animating aim, physical exercise can seem less important—pointless drudgery that is not worth the time and effort. With a higher purpose, workouts still require effort, but the participant pushes themselves harder, and with more relish, and even joy.

Likewise, doing the spiritual disciplines out of a simple desire to improve the general health of the soul will certainly garner something of the intended effect.¹⁹⁹ But this effect will be much smaller, and the disciplines far harder to stick with, than if they were approached with a higher purpose in mind.²⁰⁰ The Apostle Paul says to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness: for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:7b-8 NASB). The purpose of spiritual discipline is the development of godliness such that the individual can remove the old self and put on the new self (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10). In putting on the new self the individual can move into their identity in God²⁰¹ and move in God’s healing presence.²⁰² Without this purpose, activities that require discipline will assuredly fall victim to those that don’t, like smartphone surfing and Netflix watching.

¹⁹⁹ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 1-11.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

²⁰¹ Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 29-36.

²⁰² Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 23-85.

In his writings, Saint Augustine²⁰³ argues that virtue is essentially rightly ordered love, and that sin, conversely, is disordered love. Thus, if a person says God is the thing they love most in life, but they unnecessarily spend two hours each day surfing and conversing on social media, and barely give five minutes each day to thinking, much less conversing, with God, they might love Instagram more than God. If an individual says they love their family more than their job, but they keep saying yes to unnecessary overtime hours at work, they really love work more than their family. If an individual says they love the ideal of friendship, but they snub a nerdy acquaintance to look cooler in front of their friends, they really love popularity more than friendship. Their loves are out of order.

The purpose of training the soul, of practicing the spiritual disciplines, is to align them aright. Saint Ignatius is famous for writing a book commonly known as *The Spiritual Exercises*. But, as pointed out by James Martin, SJ in *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*,²⁰⁴ Saint Ignatius' original title for his book, *The Spiritual Exercises*, was: *The Spiritual Exercises to Overcome Oneself, and to Order One's Life, Without Reaching a Decision Through Some Disordered Affection*. That is perhaps the best summation of the ultimate purpose of spiritual disciplines.

Once the spiritual director explains what spiritual disciplines are and their uses, the individual is ready, with the assistance of the spiritual director, to explore different disciplines and resources that will assist the individual. As noted earlier, the spiritual director is not teaching any specific spiritual discipline, rather the spiritual director is assisting the individual with the discerning and judgment process of selecting spiritual disciplines and resources that will be

²⁰³ Albert C. Outler, ed. and trans., *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications Inc., 2002).

²⁰⁴ James Martin, SJ, *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 8.

useful. For this project I will be using the following resources for working with individuals in regard to spiritual disciplines: Bob Benson, Sr. and Michael W. Benson's guide book *Disciplines for the Inner Life*; Richard Foster's book *Celebration of Discipline, The Path to Spiritual Growth*; Richard Foster and Kathryn Yanni's workbook *Celebrating the Disciplines: A Journal Workbook to Accompany Celebration of Discipline*; Richard Foster's study guide *Study Guide For Celebration of Discipline*; Adele Calhoun's workbook *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*; Mark Thibodeaux's book *God's Voice Within: The Ignatian Way to Discover God's Will*; Thomas Keating's book *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life*. For this project, I will use the following spiritual disciplines: Prayer, Journaling, Examen, and Meditation. For clarity I will briefly describe each one of the disciplines before moving on to the next stage of Open.

Prayer

Dallas Willard, in his book *The Spirit of Disciplines*, states that "prayer is conversing, communicating with God. When we pray, we talk to God, aloud or within our thoughts."²⁰⁵ Thus, prayer is an interactive conversation with God, a personal communion and dialogue with God. Richard Foster, in his book *Celebration of Discipline* indicates that prayer is listening to God; seeking to grasp what God's will is in any given circumstance.²⁰⁶ In listening and perceiving God's will, the individual is inevitably a participant of change, within themselves and those circumstances and lives for which they pray. Prayer is the meeting place where an individual draws near to God to receive God's grace, to release their burdens and fears, and to be honest

²⁰⁵ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 184.

²⁰⁶ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 38-39.

with God and themselves.²⁰⁷ Prayer should not be limited to structured times but should also become an ongoing dialogue with God as a person encounters God's presence in the context of their daily activities (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:6). Prayer is a process of lifelong learning as a person seeks to approach God with openness, honesty, and trust.

Journaling

According to Adele Calhoun, in her book *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, states that journaling is a way of paying attention to our lives – a way of knitting the vast ball of our experiences into something with shape that attests to the state of our soul.”²⁰⁸ Thus, keeping a spiritual diary heightens their understanding of the unique process of spiritual formation though which God has been taking them. By recording insights, feelings, and the stream of experiences, a person clarifies the progress of their spiritual journey. According to Bob Benson, Sr. and Michael W. Benson, in their book *Disciplines for the Inner Life*, this discipline relates closely to those of prayer, meditation, and study; journaling enhances personal reflection, encourages a person to record perspectives they have received, and serves as another form of prayer.²⁰⁹

Examen

Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day to detect God's presence and discern his direction for the individual. The Examen is an ancient practice that helps an individual see God's hand at work in their experience. Calhoun gives a good description and purpose of examen:

²⁰⁷ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 184-186; Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 31-46.

²⁰⁸ Adele Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2005), 57.

²⁰⁹ Benson and Benson, *Disciplines for the Inner Life*, 110-116.

Throughout the centuries prayerful people have found direction for their lives through the practice of the examen (also known as the “examination of consciousness”). The examen provides a way of noticing where God shows up in our day. It is a practice that attends to what we might otherwise miss in the press of duties and busyness. The questions of the examen open our attention to how God’s internal movement is present in our external comings and goings. They lead us to listen deeply to the data of our lives. These questions help us pay attention to our mental state, our body responses, and our emotional baggage. Our insomnia, nervous stomach, difficult interaction, and headache can all take their place as a possible way of more deeply leaning into God. The examen helps us recognize the things that brings us death and life. Once these things are known, they become part our ongoing interaction with God in prayer.²¹⁰

St. Ignatius thought that the Examen was a gift that came directly from God, and that God wanted it to be shared as widely as possible.²¹¹

Meditation

Meditation is a close relative of the disciplines of prayer, examen, journaling and study.²¹² Meditation is the ability to hear God’s voice.²¹³ Calhoun states that “Christian mediation opens us to the mind of God and to his world and presence in the world.”²¹⁴ Thus, Christian meditation allows for a precious space in time for a meeting between God and the individual. Foster states that “what happens in meditation is that we create the emotional and spiritual space which allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in the heart.”²¹⁵ Therefore, a person can meet with God in ever-growing familiarity and intimacy not because of any special ability, but simply because the

²¹⁰ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 53.

²¹¹ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, 47-48.

²¹² Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 173-174.

²¹³ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 19-20.

²¹⁴ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 173.

²¹⁵ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 20.

individual comes willing to enter a listening silence. On creating meditative space, the Bible states that Isaac “went out to meditate in the field in the evening” (Genesis 24:63, NASB) and that Jesus made a habit of withdrawing to “a lonely place apart” from others (Matthew 14:13, NASB). Meditation is a creation of space, emotionally and spiritually, in a hectic and hurried world, allowing God to meet with the individual as God met Moses, face to face, as a friend.

Study

The discipline of study first demands a humble spirit, recognizing that the chief end is not merely to amass information, but to experience it, learn from it, and be changed by it. Foster states that the purpose of the spiritual discipline of study “is the total transformation of the person ... replacing old destructive habits of thought with new life-giving habits. Nowhere is this purpose more clearly seen than in the discipline of study.”²¹⁶ It is vital to study not only books, but an active involvement in observing and interpreting those things around a person such as nature, relationships, events, and cultural values.²¹⁷ Through the steps of study—repetition, concentration, comprehension, and reflection—a person emerges transformed.

Conclusion

During the work of engagement, the individual that the spiritual director is working with will begin to desire healing. At this point, the spiritual director moved from asking questions, to a deeper form of listening and guiding. Here the spiritual director is more of a guide (not as guide that leads, but as one that points out the markers and signs along the path) than anything else.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 62.

²¹⁷ Benson and Benson, *Disciplines for the Inner Life*, 96-102.

The spiritual director is guiding the individual into openness to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the healing that only can come from God.

Open

The stage of open, is where the individual that the spiritual director is working, begins to open themselves to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and begin to move into the place of God's healing. The stage of Open is a continuation of the stage of Engagement. Thus, the work of engagement continues throughout the stage of Open in partnership with each other. This Open stage is like the Orthodox idea of the Healing of the Heart as well as the stage of Illumination.

The heart of the human is a great mystery; perhaps the greatest mystery of all apart from God Himself. Who can know the heart of another human being? It is difficult enough to know one's own heart. Yet this is the most vital objective of the Spiritual Life. St. Isaac of Syria, in the book *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian* written by Hilarion Alfeyev, often pondered that to know oneself (to know one's heart) is a prerequisite for becoming truly human and thus united to God by grace.²¹⁸ That is because the heart is the meeting place between the spiritual and material worlds. As St. Maximos the Confessor states "If, as Paul says, Christ dwells in our hearts through faith (cf. Eph. 3:17), and all the treasures of wisdom and spiritual knowledge are hidden in Him (cf. Col. 2:3), then all the treasures of wisdom and spiritual knowledge are hidden in our hearts. They are revealed to the heart in proportion to our purification by means of the commandments."²¹⁹ Jesus Christ states, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8, NASB). It is in the heart that heaven meets earth, that God communes with

²¹⁸ Hilarion Alfeyev, *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian* (Collegeville, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2000).

²¹⁹ St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth, *The Philokalia The Complete Text*, Vol. 2, trans., eds. G. Palmer, P. Sherrad, and K. Ware (New York: Faber and Faber, 1979), 109.

humans, and thus the place where people find both God as He truly is and humans find themselves as they truly are.²²⁰

This sounds wonderful and spiritually sound. Yet, for the heart to conceive the Word fully and for the nous to be illumined by grace and reside in the heart in continual prayer, the heart must be purified of the passions and evil inclinations hiding and lurking there. The heart in its fallen condition (even in the baptized) is not only the dwelling place of God's kingdom, but of dark and unclean spaces nurtured by sinful habits and thoughts (cf. Galatians 5:16-26). Jesus confronted this reality in, among other places, the hearts of the scribes. For knowing their hearts Jesus asked, "Why do you think evil in your hearts" (Matthew 9:4 NASB). Furthermore, Jesus illustrates in the parable of the Sower (Luke 8:14-15) that the heart is not merely good soil, but rocky, parched, and thorny soil as well, which inhibits the growth of the seed of God's Word planted in the heart.

In the heart can be found the path of hard-heartedness, lack of empathy for others, pleasure-seeking, superficiality, and boredom, wasting of time and inattentiveness to spiritual things (Galatians 5:16-26). The rocky ground of the heart gives in to despair and fear during temptation and finds no will or strength to fight the evil lurking there, nor the zeal and love to pursue God even amidst suffering. Finally, the thorny areas of the still impure heart squeeze out God's grace by worldly concerns, to-do lists, the pursuit of riches and possessions, distractions, gossip, and various other idols of seeming importance. These hard-hearted passions residing in the heart give birth to evil thoughts and ultimately lead to sinful actions. For a bad tree cannot bear good fruit (Matthew 7:18).

²²⁰ Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 29-36.

As Metropolitan of Nafpaktos Hierotheos points out, it is through God's Grace that the heart can heal.²²¹ Grace does not typically purify and occupy the whole heart without its continual willing cooperation.²²² This is no easy task. The individual must first become attentive, to being to pay attention; to become conscious of the movements of the heart and to begin to discern between what is good and evil.²²³ In essence this is the work I discussed earlier in the section on Engagement which (as I pointed out) is the work of Catharsis or Purification of the Heart. Once this work has begun, and the individual begins to yearn for the healing of their heart, then the work of Hesychius, or inner stillness begins. This inner stillness is where God begins the healing process, providing the heart is willing to be healed.

St. John Klimakos indicates that Hesychasm as a way of life involves the manifestation of silence not only in terms of the mouth, but in terms of the mind and the entire body.²²⁴ Thomas Keating further indicates that Hesychasm (centering/contemplative prayer) encourages the use of the Jesus Prayer in combination with a series of physical and mental techniques to silence the mind and make still the body, while aiming at union with God where the individual experiences the healing presence of God.²²⁵ Put differently, hesychasm is about living, working, and praying in an environment of peace within and without, by controlling the intellect and controlling the body. St. Gregory Palamas states: "For if the hesychast does not enclose his intellect within his body, how can he possess within himself the One who is united with the body and who as its

²²¹ Nafpaktos, *Orthodox Psychotherapy*, 176-202.

²²² *Ibid*, 177-180.

²²³ Thibodeaux, *God's Voice Within*, 9-10.

²²⁴ St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth, *The Phlokalia The Complete Text*, Vol. 4, trans., eds. G. Palmer, P. Sherrad, and K. Ware (New York: Faber and Faber, 1979), 200.

²²⁵ Thomas Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), 20-94.

natural form penetrates all structurally organized matter.”²²⁶ St. John Klimakos further states:

“Stillness, in accordance with its name, is maintained by means of peace and serenity; for God is peace.”²²⁷

More broadly speaking, bodily control during prayer has enormous implications to a person’s spiritual life. St. Gregory of Palamas explains it this way:

This control of the breathing, may indeed, be as a spontaneous consequence of paying attention to the intellect; for the breath is always quietly inhaled and exhaled at moments of intense concentration, especially in the case of those who practice stillness both bodily and mentally. Such people keep the Sabbath in a spiritual fashion and, so far as possible, they rest from all personal activities; they strip their soul’s powers free from every transient, fleeting and compound form of knowledge, from every type of sense-perception and, in general, from every bodily act that is under our sway, and, so far as they can, even, from those not entirely under our sway, such as breathing.²²⁸

The second half of the above quote is particularly important to the concept of silence and stillness as related to Hesychasm (centering/contemplative prayer). In it, St. Gregory is explaining that those who can achieve some level of silence and stillness in their lives tend to be able to keep the Sabbath properly. Here he does not only mean the actual outer observance of the Sunday Liturgy, but also the inner observance of the Sabbath (i.e., interior prayer stills the soul, mind, and body, helping the person to enter into spiritual rest and healing).²²⁹ If the individual can get hold of themselves in this way, then they will find themselves growing closer to God and experiencing God’s healing presence.

²²⁶ St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth, *The Phlokalia: The Complete Text*, Vol. 4, 336.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 278.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life*, 15-20, 82-84, 101-104.

In those who have made progress in stillness all these things come to pass without toil and anxious care, for the necessity they spontaneously follow upon the soul's perfect entry unto itself. However, as St. Gregory Palamas indicates, where beginners are concerned, and that is most of us mortal humans, none of them can be achieved without effort.²³⁰

While an individual may not achieve this state of mind and body very quickly, if the individual shows themselves to be patient, the fruits of their efforts will be known. As St. Gregory Palamas points out, "patient endurance is the fruit of love, for 'love patiently accepts all things' (1 Corinthians 13:7) and teaches us to achieve such endurance by forcing ourselves so that through patience we may attain love, and this is a case in point."²³¹

Thus, through the explicit decision to seek silence and practice stillness (centering prayer and contemplative prayer)—doing so with patience and endurance—the individual will find in themselves a new sense of what love really means. And if the individual grounds all things in that love they will be led to a truer, more loving, and deeper union with God experiencing God's healing presence.

Throughout this discussion I have alluded to the correlation between Hesychasm and the Spiritual Disciplines of Centering Prayer and Contemplative Prayer. Thomas Keating in his book *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life* states that:

Centering Prayer as a practice is an effort to present the traditional practices leading to contemplative prayer in an up-to-date manner using the device of a method because this seems to appeal to people of our time Centering Prayer is thus an attempt to renew the Christian contemplative Tradition by drawing on the insights of the great Christian writers down through the centuries. It also serves as a point of unity between the various Christian denominations since it fosters the

²³⁰ St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth, *The Philokalia: The Complete Text*, Vol. 4, 337.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 338.

experience of the living Christ that gradually builds a bond of unity beyond doctrinal differences.²³²

Centering Prayer is a receptive method of silent prayer that prepares the individual to move into contemplative prayer, in which the individual can experience God's presence within them, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer. Rather, it adds depth of meaning to all prayer and facilitates the movement from more active kinds of prayer into a receptive prayer of resting in God. Centering prayer emphasizes prayer as a personal relationship with God and as a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Christ.

Centering Prayer has a similarity to other forms of meditations like transcendental meditation or Buddhist meditation in that the primary objective is not to reduce stress (although they can) but as a form of detachment. Foster states that "detachment is the final goal of Eastern religion The detachment from the confusion all around us is in order to have a richer attachment to God."²³³ Keating states that "Centering Prayer as a discipline is designed to withdraw our attention from the ordinary flow of our thoughts."²³⁴ As such, the purpose is to detach from all distractions, thoughts, such that the individual can open themselves up to indwelling presence of God.²³⁵ The goal is to spend time with the indwelling presence of God and so is animated by a different desire and uses different techniques from meditation.²³⁶

²³² Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life*, v.

²³³ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 21.

²³⁴ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life*, 32.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

²³⁶ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 207-210.

Centering Prayer begins with finding a simple word or phrase. Calhoun states that “generally, the only words that are spoken in centering prayer are the prayer words that continually bring our drifting attention back to God. The prayer word is a simple word like “Jesus,” “love,” “peace,” “Father,” or a phrase from Scripture that encapsulates the intent of the heart to be with God.”²³⁷ Once the individual has selected their prayer word or phrase, they will need to find a place that they can sit comfortably and with the least amount of distraction as possible. For those who are just beginning Centering Prayer, the prayer time should be 5 minutes working up to 30 minutes. Once seated comfortably, the individual slowly closes their eyes and bring the word or phrase to mind, in so doing the individual begins to open themselves up to the indwelling presence of God who is already present and active within them.

The individual should continue this way until the set time experience. Note, the individual should use a timer, with a gentle sound, to indicate the end of the prayer session. Once the timer sounds, the individual should remain silent with eyes closed and slowly (1 to 2 min.) return from the prayer journey.

During the prayer journey other thoughts or distractions will come to mind. As they do the individual should use the thought of the prayer word or phrase to drive away the distractions. However, the individual should not give in to endlessly contemplating the sound and meaning of the prayer word or phrase. Centering Prayer is not meditation on the word itself. As such, the individual should not get discouraged by the initial inability to focus. Centering Prayer, as with other Spiritual Disciplines, takes time, practice, and patience.

The individual should not try to experience peace, or a spiritual breakthrough or anything else. As Calhoun reminds:

²³⁷ Ibid., 207.

Centering praying may “do” nothing at the moment. You sense no rapture, no mystical bliss. But later, as you move out into the busyness of life, you begin to notice that something has shifted. Your quiet center in Christ holds. Centering prayer trust that being with Jesus brings transformation. The words of Isaac of Stella capture the heart of centering prayer: “May the Son of God who is already found in you, grow in you, so that for you He will become immeasurable, and that in you He will become laughter, exultation, the fullness of joy which no one can take from you.”²³⁸

Once the individual begins to have some mastery of Centering Prayer, they will as Keating indicates move into Contemplative Prayer.²³⁹ Centering Prayer helps the individual to detach from thoughts, such that the mind, as Isaac of Syria says, is a silent Sabbath rest, which is Contemplative Prayer.²⁴⁰ As Keating points out, in Contemplative Prayer the individual does no work, but keeps the mind silent, it is the Spirit of God that is at work.²⁴¹ In the book for Romans, Paul reminds “we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for word” (Romans 8:26b, NASB). Keating clarifies by saying that “in prayer inspired by the Spirit, we let ourselves flow with the lifting movement and drop all reflection. Reflection is an important preliminary to prayer, but it is not prayer. Prayer is not only the offering of interior acts to God: it is the offering of ourselves, of who and what we are.”²⁴² Keating, using Mark 8:34 as a reference, further states that “denial of our inmost self includes detachment from the habitual functioning of our intellect and will This may require letting to not only of ordinary thoughts during prayer, but also of our most devout reflections and

²³⁸ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 208.

²³⁹ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer, and the Christian Contemplative Life*, 7-8.

²⁴⁰ Alfeyev, *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian*, 77-78, 218-229.

²⁴¹ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer, and the Christian Contemplative Life*, 16.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 16.

aspirations.”²⁴³ Calhoun summarizes that “in contemplative prayer we rest in God, depending on him to initiate communion We don’t ask for things, we simply open ourselves to the Trinity, trusting we will be received into restful arms.”²⁴⁴ In the stilling of the mind and detachment of thoughts the individual can experience God (Psalm 46:10), receiving the not only a Sabbath rest but receive the peace as only Christ can give (John 14:27; 16:33) allowing the beginning of the healing of the self from the “disease of the false self.”²⁴⁵

Thomas Keating gives a good summary that illustrates the main thrust of this section, the healing of the disease of the false self:

Contemplative prayer is addressed to the human situation just as it is. It is designed to heal the consequences of the human condition The disease of the human condition as we saw, is the false self, which, when sufficiently frustrated, is ready to trample on the rights and needs of others, as well as on our own true good, in order to ease its own pain or to obtain what it wants Contemplative prayer is the divine remedy for this illness.²⁴⁶

Embrace

Once the individual the spiritual director is working with begins to discover their true self, that individual is ready to start practicing the spiritual discipline of accepting self (the true self). Dr. Meghan Marcum, PsyD discusses the idea of self-acceptance as the ability for the individual to accept their strengths and faults without judgment.²⁴⁷ The spiritual discipline of

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 211.

²⁴⁵ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer, and the Christian Contemplative Life*, 236-237.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 236-237.

²⁴⁷ Dr. Meghan Marcum, PsyD, “Development and Validation of the Self-Acceptance Scale for Persons with Early Blindness: The SAS-EB.” *PLoS One* 9.9 (2014), accessed February 15, 2019, doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0106848.

accepting self (or liking/loving self) allows the individual to begin embracing who they truly are in God with a purpose in life.²⁴⁸

Dr. Curt Thompson, MD, in both of his books *Anatomy of the Soul*²⁴⁹ and *The Soul of Shame*,²⁵⁰ discusses why self-acceptance is important and the negative consequences for an individual who is unable to accept themselves. Thompson, in both of his books, conceptualizes the idea that when an individual accepts themselves, they tend to worry less about what others think. Richard Beck would take this further with the idea that when an individual accepts themselves, they no longer live in fear.²⁵¹ Self-acceptance helps an individual to view situations with more clarity and makes them less likely to take on harsh criticism of themselves. Thus, how an individual feels about themselves can also play an important role in determining their overall well-being. As John Chryssavgis discusses self-acceptance, as in loving and liking oneself, can help instill a sense of well-being and peace, which in turn allows the individual to see themselves as God sees them, and be the person God created them to be. Additionally, this allows the individual to build quality relationships with God and others and ensures personal growth and development—physically, cognitively, and spiritually.²⁵²

On the other hand, Thompson, in both of his books, alludes to the idea that lack of self-acceptance can be harmful to an individual's health and their psychological and spiritual well-

²⁴⁸ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 70-73, 183-185; Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 85-144; Nouwen, *Spiritual Direction*, 29-38, 109-127; Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 29-46.

²⁴⁹ Dr. Curt Thompson, MD, *Anatomy of the Soul: Surprising Connection between Neuroscience and Spiritual Practices that can Transform Your Life and Relationships* (Carole Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2010).

²⁵⁰ Dr. Curt Thompson, MD, *The Soul of Shame: Retelling the Stories We Believe about ourselves* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2015).

²⁵¹ Beck, *The Slavery of Death*.

²⁵² Chryssavgis, *Soul Mending*, 73-100.

being.²⁵³ Supporting Thompson's idea is a 2014 study indicating that having low self-esteem and a negative view of oneself was linked to lower levels of gray matter in parts of the brain that regulate emotions and manage stress.²⁵⁴ Thompson indicates this can increase an individual's risk of emotional disorders and stress-related health conditions.²⁵⁵ Keating would take this one step further and say that this may lead an individual back into false self.²⁵⁶

In summary, self-acceptance helps the individual to move into true self and see themselves as God created them. Self-acceptance indicates the Holy Spirit at work with God's healing presence allowing the individual to feel better about themselves. The individual now has the capacity, in a healthy way, to deal with life's challenges. Without self-acceptance, individuals essentially devalue themselves and this often has a negative impact on all areas of their life, including their work, friends, family, God, health, spirituality, and well-being.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have moved from a general discussion on spiritual direction to a detailed discussion of the Spiritual Direction Methodology that I will use in this project. I discussed the methodology in a linear fashion. However, in practice the Spiritual Direction Methodology should be viewed or understood as a fluid movement. The individual the spiritual director is working with may move back and forth between stages, may skip stages, and when they get to the stage of Embrace the individual may well realize that there is more work to be done and

²⁵³ Thompson, *Anatomy of the Soul*, and *The Soul of Shame*.

²⁵⁴ D. Agroskin, J. Klacki, E. Jonas, "The Self-linking Brain: A VBM Study on the Structural Substrate of Self-Esteem," *PLoS One* 9.1, accessed February 15, 2019, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0086430.

²⁵⁵ Thompson, *Anatomy of the Soul*, and *The Soul of Shame*.

²⁵⁶ Keating, *Spiritual Direction*, 15-45.

move back to one of the other stages to work on the next piece. This is the work of transformational healing, the movement of from the false self to the true self, when a piece is removed another appears that needs work. Dr. Cynthia Stewart, when she is discussing transformation with volunteers, will often use the example of a Matryoshka Doll. As the top of one doll is removed another appears needing to be removed, the process continues until at the very end is the whole tiny doll. Such is the movement of false self to true self, a never-ending removal of the false self and eventually allowing the true self to appear.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter I will outline and discuss the methodology that I developed to explore the use of spiritual direction techniques incorporating spiritual disciplines to assist the individual living in exile (prison) in transformational healing. The method is a form of group spiritual direction in a classroom setting. The purpose of the methodology is to teach a form of spiritual direction that students can use with each other on an individual basis and to continue to use after the conclusion of the project. The classroom methodology instruction is in fifteen modules. The chapter conclusion will be a statement/summation of what I am trying to achieve in using this methodology.

Classroom Modules

Module 1 – Introduction

The purpose of this module is to introduce the project to the students. This module should take one classroom session. First, I will introduce myself and briefly explain the purpose of this project and what I hope to achieve. Second, I will pass out the consent forms and go over those forms. I will ask them to sign the forms if they consent to participating in the project. The consent form can be found in the appendix. If anyone does not consent, I will simply dismiss the individual from the class without question. Third, I will pass out the questionnaire, as found in the appendix. I will ask the students to fill out the questionnaire while in the class. I will collect them as each person is finished. Fourth, I will pass out the inquiry, as found in the appendix. I will ask the students to fill out the inquiry while in the class. I will collect them as each person is

finished. When all the students are finished, I will inform them that the next class session will be on prayer. I will then close with prayer and dismiss the class.

Module 2—Spiritual Discipline; Prayer

This module is on the spiritual discipline of prayer. I will be combining excerpts from Richard Foster's Workbook,²⁵⁷ Adele Calhoun's Workbook,²⁵⁸ and Frederica Mathews-Green book *The Jesus Prayer*.²⁵⁹ I anticipate that this module will take two classroom sessions.

I will first open the class with prayer. Second, I will begin an open, interactive, discussion on the different types of prayer. I will then, continuing the interactive open discussion, move into understanding prayer as form of communication with God: ask the students the question "how does prayer help us to communicate with God, and God with us?" From this discussion I will ask the students two questions: (1) "What are the greatest difficulties to prayers?" (2) "What experience would cause you to have issues (such as anger, mistrust, feelings of betrayal, disappointments, etc.) with God to such an extent that it could affect the way you pray and/or trust God to hear and answer prayer?" At the conclusion of this discussion, I will segue into the third section.

The third section begins with me reading two scriptures: John 15:7 and James 4:3. I will then ask the students the following question: "What can be learned about praying these two scriptures?" This will be an open interactive discussion. I will end this section with a discussion on Richard Foster's quote of Emilie Griffin: "There is a moment between intending to pray and

²⁵⁷ R. Foster and K Yanni, *Celebrating the Disciplines: A Journal Workbook to Accompany Celebration of Discipline* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992).

²⁵⁸ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*.

²⁵⁹ Frederica Mathews-Green, *The Jesus Prayer, The Ancient Desert Prayer that Turns the Heart to God* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2009).

praying that is as dark and silent as any moment in our lives. It is the split second between thinking about prayer and really praying How easy it is, and yet—between us and the possibility of prayer there seems to be a great gulf fixed an abyss of our own making that separates us from God.”²⁶⁰ I will ask the students to think about this quote during the week, I will give them the quote as a handout. We will begin the next class session with this quote.

The fourth section is on breath prayer. I will begin the session with prayer. I will then ask the students for their thoughts on the quote that I gave them last week. For this section I will be following Calhoun’s workbook session on “Breathe Prayer.”²⁶¹ I will begin this section with a statement on breath prayer: “As we naturally breath without thinking so can prayer become natural without forced thinking. This form of prayer is a possible way of following Paul’s idea of praying without ceasing” (c.f., Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2; 1Thessalonians 5:16-18). I will then move into a discussion about how to use a phrase for breath prayer. The first half of the phrase is said while breathing in the second half of the phrase can be spoken during the exhaling of breath. The phrase that I will demonstrate with is the Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of David, have mercy on me a sinner.”²⁶² I will inform the students that this prayer does come from scripture “Son of David, have mercy on me” (Luke 18:39, OSB; c.f., Mark 10:16-48) and “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner” (Luke 18:13, OSB). As a way of instruction will use Calhoun’s quote from *The Way of the Pilgrim*:

take a seat in solitude and silence. Bend your head, close your eyes, and breathe softly, in your imagination, look into your own heart. Let your mind, or rather, your thoughts flow from your head down to your heart and say, while breathing ‘Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.’ Whisper these words gently or say them

²⁶⁰ Foster and Yanni, *Celebrating the Disciplines: A Journal Workbook to Accompany Celebration of Discipline*, 14.

²⁶¹ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 204-206.

²⁶² Mathewes-Green, *The Jesus Prayer*, 33.

in your mind. Discard all other thoughts. Be serene, persevering, and repeat them over and over again.²⁶³

I will demonstrate the Jesus Prayer: breathing in “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of David,” and breathing out “have mercy on me a sinner.” I will then move the class into an interactive discussion with the following question: “How can this short repetitive prayer free a person from linear thoughts and allow them to begin praying in their body, not just in their mind?” The second question for discussion would be: “How can this prayer be a lived breathing rhythm?” I will then introduce some single words and phrases that could be used, as an example. I will then ask the students to practice the breath prayer throughout the week, using the Jesus Prayer, using words that I gave as an example or their own. At a minimum use the breath prayer when you get up in the morning and when you go to bed. I will ask the students to take notes on how they felt after praying. I will also ask them to take note throughout the week of any change in their behavior or attitude as the week progresses. We will discuss their thoughts and findings at the beginning of the next class. I then will close with the students practicing the breath prayer using the Jesus Prayer.

Module 3—Spiritual Discipline: Listening

This module is on listening. In this module I will be using the lament and imprecatory psalms. This module will take three classroom sessions. I will begin each class session, from this point on, with a simple breath prayer and end each class session with the Jesus Prayer as a breath prayer.

I will begin the first class, after prayer, with a discussion on two types of listening: listening to answer a question or gain an advantage and listening to be informed, to learn. After

²⁶³ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 205.

defining the two types of listening I will open the class for interactive discussion on the question: “When talking about listening as ‘hearing someone’ which type are we referring to?” I will then find a segue to inform the students that for the purpose of this class we will focus on listening to be informed. The format for this exercise is as follows: (1) I will read a psalm three time through; (2) I will then ask the question “What did you hear?” (3) I then will ask the question “What did you feel?” I will repeat this format at least three times. This will probably conclude the first day.

On the second day I will continue the listening exercise using psalms, using the same format from day 1, adding the question: “How were you informed?” If time permits, toward the end of the second class, I will add another question: “What impression are you left with?”

On the third day, we will continue the listening exercise using psalms. During this third class I will get them to reflect on what they hear the psalmist saying according to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs: Do you hear the psalmist talk about (1) basic needs; (2) safety needs; (3) belonging needs; (4) affirmation needs; and (5) fulfillment needs. I will provide a brief, not in depth, explanation of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Again, the point of this exercise is to get the students to start listening to be informed, and to be able to say “I hear you” in an affirmative manner.

Module 4—Spiritual Discipline: Journaling

This module is on journaling based on Bob Benson, Sr., and Michael W. Benson’s book *Disciplines for the Inner Life* focusing on the section “Journaling”²⁶⁴ and Calhoun’s workbook section on “Journaling.”²⁶⁵ This module will take two classroom sessions.

²⁶⁴ Benson and Benson, *Disciplines for the Inner Life*, 110-116.

²⁶⁵ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 57-58.

On the first day of this module, after opening with breath prayer, I will begin the discussion on understanding the importance of journaling with the following statement: “Journaling is a way of paying attention to our lives. On the pages of a journal, in the privacy of the journaling moment, a person can take tentative steps into discovering the truth and underlying reason for their feelings, hurts, ideas and struggles. Over time repetitious themes, sins, compulsion, hopes, purpose, and concerns emerge. The individual then can begin to recognize their behavioral problems, cognitive problems, limitations, and desires. During times of transition, travel, loss, joy, illness, and decision making, journaling can provide a way of processing the hopes, fears, longings, angers, and prayers of a person’s heart. The journal can be the place where an individual can have a catharsis,²⁶⁶ such that they don’t let loose on someone in an inappropriate manner. The journal can help an individual discern what is speaking to them or what is influencing them. I will then open the class up for an interactive discussion on the purpose of journaling with the question: “How can journaling help you?” and “how would you use it?” I would then segue into the topic of journaling styles with the with the question “how would you journal?” The possibilities might be poetry, songs, drawing, prose, writing down a poem or quote from a book, clippings from magazines or newspapers, another person, or sacred writings.

At the end of the first class of this module, I would assign them a journaling exercise using the psalms. I will assign them three psalms. I will ask them to read the psalm and then journal their impressions, thoughts, feelings. Then read the psalm again and journal according to the format we used in the listening exercise.

²⁶⁶ Catharsis is often thought of as a cleansing purge of habits, characteristics, addictions, emotions, and even unwanted relationships. Here I am using the term, catharsis, to refer to the process of releasing in their journal, and thereby possibly providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions, feelings, hurts, and mental anguish.

The second class of this module will be dedicated to the discussion the what the students wrote in their journals. I will begin the discussion with the question: “What did you discover?” I would then move to the question: “What were your difficulties?” We will end the discussion with the question: “What did you learn?” I will conclude the discussion with the idea that good journaling entails reviewing the journal. This will lead into the next module on spiritual discipline of examen.

Module 5—Spiritual Discipline: Examen

This module is on using the spiritual discipline of examen in correlation with the spiritual discipline of journaling. For this module I will be drawing directly from my chapter three discussion on “Spiritual Methodology” specifically the sections on “Determine” and “Engage.” This module will take four sessions. The first two sessions will be instructive sessions. The last two sessions will be discussions on the exercises that I assign them. During this module I will ask them at the beginning of the class on this module to get their journals out and take notes, because they will be referring to these notes throughout the remainder of this project.

I will begin the instructive part of this module with the idea that the examen is a practice for discerning the voices and activities of God, true Spirit, and false Spirit within the flow of a given period: day, week, month, year. The examen can help with a deeper understanding of and awareness of the presence of God, true spirit, false spirit, and ourselves (emotions, attitudes, actions, desires, etc.). I will move into a deeper discussion of true spirit and false spirit. I will discuss the concept of the false spirit with the idea that the false spirit is that inner pull away from God’s presence, love, hope and faith (can be understood as the devil, the devil’s evil spirits, just evil spirits, or the enemy of our human nature) which could possibly explain, but not necessarily be the cause of, the trauma of tragic circumstances, destructive experiences and

behaviors, psychological baggage, cognitive weakness (low-self-esteem), etc. Anything that draws a person away from God, God's purpose, love, faith, and hope. I then will move into the discussion of the true spirit with the idea that the true spirit is the Holy Spirit which could possibly explain, but not necessarily be the cause of, life affirming experiences and behaviors, psychological well-being, cognitive strength, etc. Anything that pulls us towards God's purpose, love, faith, and hope. With this discussion on true spirit, I will note Philippians 4:8-9²⁶⁷ as an example. I will then open the class to an interactive discussion on true spirit and false spirit using each of the examples just listed.

At the conclusion of this discussion on true spirit and false spirit, I will go over the questions for Journaling Examen. This will be done in sets. The first set of questions: (1) "For what moment am I most grateful?" (2) "For what moment am I least grateful?" The second set of questions: (1) "What was the most life giving?" (2) "What was the most life thwarting (life taking)?" Third set of questions: (1) "Where is the presence of the Fruit of the Spirit as found in Galatians?" (2) "Where is the absence of the Fruit of the Spirit as found in Galatians?" Fourth set of questions: (1) "When did I have the deepest sense of God's presence?" (2) "When did I have the least sense of God's presence?" Fifth set of questions: (1) "When did I receive the most love, faith, hope, fear, sadness, hurt, hate, pain, rejection, acceptance?" (2) "When did I give the most love, faith, hope, fear, sadness, hurt, hate, pain, rejection, acceptance?" (3) "When did I give the least love, faith, hope, fear, sadness, hurt, hate, pain, rejection, acceptance?" (4) "When did I receive the least love, faith, hope, fear, sadness, hurt, hate, pain, rejection, acceptance?" Sixth set of questions: (1) "When was I frustrated the most?" (2) "When was I disappointed the most?"

²⁶⁷ Philippians 4:8-9 "Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think on these things. Do those things which you have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you (MEV).

Sixth set of questions: (1) “When was I rejected the most?” (2) “When was I accepted the most?”

Seventh set of questions: (1) “When was I loved the most?” (2) “When was I hated the most?”

Eighth set of questions (1) “When was I at peace the most?” (2) “When was I not at peace the most?” I will note to the students that they will not have answers to all these questions, and they should not try to answer all these questions, only the ones that seem pertinent, for example only the ones come to the surface and stand out while reviewing their journal. These are meant only to be a guide to questions for examen—not a hard fast rule. Using Jonah chapter 1 I will give a demonstration to help the students use the questions as a guide and not as a ridged rule.

After these questions will then move into a discussion on consolation and desolation and how it is related to the concept of true spirit and false spirit. I will discuss how consolation and desolation will ebb and flow in our life. Then I will discuss how the idea of true spirit and false spirit moves us into consolation (led by the true spirit) and desolation (led by the false spirit). Then I will conclude how journaling and the examen of the journal can help with discerning the true spirit vs. false spirit and the ebb and flow of desolation and consolation what pulls us into them and what brings us out of them.

The last two sessions of this module will be using the psalms for journaling and examining the journal. I will assign them three psalms. I will ask them to journal the psalms in accordance with the listening format. I will then ask them to examine each of their journal entries of the psalms using the examen questions: however, I will ask them to change the “I” to “the psalmist.” We will have discussion during class time on what they wrote, discovered, and difficulties. In our class discussions I will be asking them to look at their journals for evidence of true spirit and false spirit, and consolation and desolation.

Module 6—Using Jonah to Understand the Process and Effect of Experiences

In this module I will be using Jonah²⁶⁸ to help the students understand the process and effect of experiences. This module will take seven class sessions to work through Jonah. In the first session I will begin with Maslow's Hierarchy of needs model that was introduced in module 3. I will draw from the "Identity" section of the Spiritual Direction Methodology in Chapter 3. To assist in this discussion, I will use Jonah Chapter 1 to demonstrate how Maslow's Hierarchy can be used to determine where Jonah is at regarding basic needs, Safety Needs, Belonging Needs, Affirmation Needs, and Fulfillment Needs: I will ask the students are Jonah's needs fulfilled or deprived, and how does this effect Jonah. This will be an open interactive discussion.

In the second session I will introduce Evan Howard's Experience Model as I discussed in the "Determine" section of the Spiritual Direction Methodology in Chapter 3. Using the character Jonah in Jonah chapter 1 I will demonstrate how Howard's Experience Model works beginning with Being Aware working through Experiencing, Understanding, Judging, Deciding/Acting, and then Integrating. I will ask the students what they hear regarding each of the Experience Model stages. This will be an open interactive discussion.

In the third session, using Jonah chapter 1, I will demonstrate how Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can help us with understanding the first state of the Howards Experience Model. This will be an open interactive discussion.

²⁶⁸ There are two reasons that I am using Jona. First Jona is running from what God has asked Jonah to do. Jonah seemingly runs out of fear and anger (as possibly seen at the end of the book). During my time living in exile, I would often hear individuals, when discussing or studying Jonah, resonate with the idea of running from the very thing that could have helped and thus ended up on prison. With the idea of ending up in prison I have heard folks, while I was in exile, correlate Jonah being in the belly of the whale with being in prison, especially with taking to jail after being arrested. The other reason for using Jonah, is that ending is not necessarily a good ending which for many living in exile resonates with them. But more importantly, for this project Jonah's reasoning for hating Nineveh is not revealed in the story. This allows me to ask the students to put themselves in Jonah's place and ask the question why you would hate someone so bad that you do not want them to receive any help (you don't want God to save them or spare them).

At the end of the third session, I will assign the first exercises for this module. I will ask the students to read Jonah Chapter 1:1-2 and journal using Howard's Experience Model. Then the students are to read Jonah Chapter 1:3-16 and again journal using Howard's Models.

At the beginning of the fourth session, I will ask the students to get out their journals. I will then begin the interactive discussion by asking what they heard, observed, and learned regarding Jonah 1:1-2. Then I will again ask them what they heard, observed, and learned regarding Jonah 1:3-16. At the end of the session, I will assign Jonah 2: 1-10 as their next journaling assignment, again using Howard's Models.

At the beginning of the fifth session, I will ask the students to get out their journals. I will begin the interactive discussion by asking the students to first outline Jonah 2: 1-10 corporately using Howard's Experience model, and if possible, to include any pertinent parts of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model. Then I will ask the students what they heard, observed, and learned regarding Jonah 2:1-10. At the end of the session, I will assign Jonah chapter 3:1-2 and 3:3-10. Again, the students are to journal using Howard's Models.

At the beginning of the sixth session, I will ask the students to get out their journals. I will begin the interactive discussion by asking the students to corporately outline Jonah chapter 3:1-2 and 3:3-10 using Howard's Experience model, if possible, to include any pertinent parts of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model. Then I will ask the students what they heard, observed, and learned regarding Jonah chapter 3:1-2, and 3:3-10. At the end of the session, I will assign Jonah chapter 4:1-4 and 4:5-11. Again, the students are to journal using Howard's Models.

At the beginning of the seventh session, I will ask the students to get out their journals. I will begin the interactive discussion by asking the students to corporately outline Jonah 4:1-4 and 4:5-11 using Howard's Experience model, and if possible, to include any pertinent parts of

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model. Then I will ask the students what they heard, observed, and learned regarding Jonah chapter 4:1-5 and 4:5-11. Using the discussion on Jonah 4:5-11 I will segue to the next model of "Why is Jonah Angry?"

Module 7—Why is Jonah Angry

This module will only take one class session. In this model I will be exploring with the class the question "why is Jonah angry?" I will open the interactive discussion with "what is Jonah angry about?" To keep the discussion moving I will then ask the question "what is Jonah's complaint?" The final discussion question, that I will ask the students, is "why does Jonah want God to destroy Nineveh not save them?" This last question is an intended open-ended question that does not necessarily have a direct answer from the text itself. This open-ended question will allow me to segway into the next model "How an Experience Speaks."

Module 8—The Prodigal Son: Understanding How an Experience Speaks

This module will take three class sessions. In discussing this module there is not a clear or well-defined end of each session and beginning of the next session. I will work through a session and then I will begin the next session where I left off. For this module I will use the parable of the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15:11-32.

I will begin the first session with a discussion on the concepts of true self vs. false self and logismoi. I will be teaching directly from the sections "Determine," "Engage," and "Open" in the Spiritual Direction Methodology in Chapter 3. Once I have finished the discussion on true self vs. false self and logismoi I will begin the discussion on the Prodigal Son, starting in Luke 15:13 where we find the son has spent all his money and now finds himself in a pig pen.

The interactive discussion on the Prodigal Son will begin first with a look at the son in accordance with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Using Maslow's model, I will ask the students is the son experiencing and deprivations that might affect his judgment, emotions, and/or actions. Secondly, we look at the son in accordance with Howard's Experience model outlining the progression of the experience. Third, we will look to see where the false spirit enters the scene and beings the work of the false spirit. (The false spirit begins its work when the son leaves home with all his money.) Fourth, we will look to see where the false spirit interjects the logismoi. Fifth, we will look at the dialogue the son has with the logismoi. Sixth, we will look at how the son is convinced to move from an understanding of true-self to a false-self narrative based on the dialogue with logismoi. This last discussion I will use as a segue back to a second look at Jonah. As the end of the session, I will assign the students the task of looking at the sections in their journals where the journaled about Jonah and to determine where they can see the false spirit and logismoi possibly at work and/or the results of the logismoi, this may require a separate journal entry.

Module 9—A Second Look at Jonah

This module will only take one session. In this module I will ask the students to get their journals out. I will begin the interactive discussion with the question "where do you see the false spirit at work?" This will lead to the next question "do you see the true spirit at work, if so, where?" Then I will ask the third question "where do you see the work of the *logismoi*?" Followed by the question "where do you see the results of the *logismoi* and what are they?" I then ask an open-ended question "what do you think the original dialogue between Jonah and the *logismoi* was; if you were in Jonah's place what would the original dialogue with the *logismoi*

might look like?” This last question is designed to get the student to ponder and reflect on themselves.

Module 10 – Spiritual Discipline Session

In this module we will take a break from the discussion on Jonah and move into the final session on spiritual disciplines of hospitality, meditation, centering prayer, and contemplative prayer. For this module I will be using, directly, the works of Foster and Yanni²⁶⁹; Calhoun²⁷⁰ and Keating.²⁷¹ I will use these materials in one of the following three manners, depending on the what the prison that I am working in will allow. If allowed, my primary manner would be to bring in the books for each student. This will allow me to introduce them to additional resources that they can use in the future. If the prison will not allow me to bring in the books, I then will make copies of the sections that I need and hand them out as handouts. If the prison will not allow me to bring in these handouts, I will then read the material directly, asking the students to take notes in their journals as we work through the exercises in the material. This module will take four sessions.

The first session will be on the spiritual discipline of hospitality. I will go over Calhoun’s chapter on “Hospitality” in her workbook.²⁷² I will then assign the appropriate continuing exercises.

²⁶⁹ Foster and Yanni, *Celebrating the Disciplines: A Journal Workbook to Accompany Celebration of Discipline*.

²⁷⁰ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*.

²⁷¹ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life*.

²⁷² Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 138-140.

In the second session we will discuss their assigned exercise on hospitality. Then we will move into the discussion on Meditation. I will use Forster's "Meditation" chapter.²⁷³ I will then assign the appropriate continuing exercises.

In the third module we will discuss their assigned exercise on meditation. Then we will move into the discussion on Centering Prayer. I will follow Calhoun's "Centering Prayer" chapter²⁷⁴ and use the techniques outlined by Keating.²⁷⁵ I will then assign the appropriate continuing exercises.

In the fourth session we will discuss their assigned exercises on centering prayer. Then we will move into our final discussion on Contemplative Prayer. I will follow Calhoun's "Contemplate Prayer" chapter.²⁷⁶ I will then assign the appropriate continuing exercises.

Module 11—A Third Look at Jonah

In this module we will be exploring the question "how does Jonah speak to us?" This module will take two sessions. In the first session I will explain to the students that the purpose of this module is to begin to understand that when you are working with someone else and listening to their story, it will have an effect on you, and you will need to journal that effect so you can identify it, and to see if there is anything that you need to work on yourself that the other person's story brought to the surface. The reason we do this is so that when we are listening to someone's story, we will not inadvertently interject inappropriate thoughts and comments. We

²⁷³ Foster and Yanni, *Celebrating the Disciplines: A Journal Workbook to Accompany Celebration of Discipline*, 7-11.

²⁷⁴ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 207-210.

²⁷⁵ Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer, and the Christian Contemplative Life*, 118-121.

²⁷⁶ Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 211-213.

will hold those in reserve and deal with them later in our journaling. I will ask the student read through their journals on Jonah, and reread Jonah in conjunction with the spiritual discipline of meditation and journal their answers to the following questions: (1) “What did you feel as you read each section?” (2) “How does the story of Jonah speak to you?” I will demonstrate in the class using Jonah chapter 1.

In the second session we will begin with a discussion on their answers to each of the assigned questions. We will do this one question at a time. Then I will ask the students the following question: “What did you discover and learn?” Then I will ask them to ponder the following question for the next module: “How can you use what you discovered and learned to help Jonah?”

Module 12—How Can We Help Jonah

In this module I explore and ponder with the students the question “how can we help Jonah?” This module will only take one session. I will challenge the students to look at everything that we discussed, and what they have learned beginning with the very first module. We will first look at the question: “how do we approach Jonah?” (2) “how to we introduce ourselves and what will be our lead in question to open a dialogue with Jonah?” (3) “how will we dialogue with Jonah?” Throughout the discussion I will talk and demonstrate the concepts of clarifying statements, clarifying questions, invitational statements, and short questions that will help us to better understand Jonah. At the end of the session, I will assign the students the task of spending time reading Jonah again, but this time to imagine themselves as Jonah, either at the time of the story or bringing it forward to the present day. The idea is to use one’s own experiences to fill in the gaps. They are to journal the journey and practice the spiritual disciplines of meditation, centering prayer, and contemplative prayer.

Module 13—Role Playing Jonah

In module 13, the students will work in groups of three. One individual will be Jonah, one individual will be working with Jonah, and the third person will be the observer. After each session I will ask the observer of each group to report on what they observed, what they heard, and what they felt. I will then ask the person playing Jonah to report on what they felt, where they heard, was there a resolution. I will then ask the individuals attempting to assist Jonah, what they felt, what they heard, and what difficulties did they encounter. I will then rotate the triads so that each person will be Jonah, the observer, and the individual working with Jonah.

This module will take four sessions. Each of the first three sessions will be broken into two sections. The first section will be role playing and the second section will be the discussion of the role playing. The fourth session will be an “after action” discussion on what the students have learned, what were their difficulties, and what were their successes and over all how they felt about role playing. At the end of the fourth session, I will inform the students that they need to think about and journal what they would like, or are comfortable with or feel safe with, someone in the group to help them with - a particular problem, impasse (barrier), goal, etc. I will ask them to mediate on what they want someone to help them with. And to continue using centering prayer and contemplative prayer as they seek direction on what they want someone to help them with. The next module will be live “Direction.”

Module 14—Triads: Live Direction

This module will be “live direction.” This module will take six sessions to complete. At the beginning of the first session, I will break the class into groups of three—triads. We will follow the same rotation plan as in the Jonah role playing module. This time there will be an observer, director, and directee. The even sessions will be for direction. I will ask the triads, if

possible, to have one more session during the week. I will ask them to journal the experience. During the odd sessions I will ask the same questions that I asked in module 13. At the end of the six sessions, I will hand out the final assessments: the same questionnaire and inquiry that I used at the beginning of project. I will ask the students to fill out those assessments and bring them back to the next class.

Module 15—Conclusion

At the beginning of this module, I will ask the students to turn in their assessments. I will then open the class for an interactive discussion beginning with the question: “What have you learned?” I will then move the discussion to the next question: “Has this project/course helped you—if yes, how?” I will then move the discussion to the next question: Has this project/course helped you to connect to any possible spiritual/religious trauma, and possibly begin the healing process?” I will then move the discussion to the next question: “Would this project be a helpful on-going course in prison—if yes, how?” I will then move the discussion to the next question: “What changes would like made to make this a better course?” And the final question is “Would you be interested in going deeper in a two-year project on community development using this model as the basis for that development—if yes, how would this help you?” I will then close by thanking them for their participation in the project.

Evaluation

At the conclusion of the project, I will write individual evaluations and a cumulative project evaluation. The individual evaluations will be based on the questionnaires, inquiries, my class journal notes looking for notes on everyone, and the after actions notes from the last

module. The cumulative project evaluation will be based on the individual evaluations, my project journal notes, and after-action notes from the last module.

To evaluate the individual, I will begin with the questionnaires. I have developed a questionnaire scoring key (found the appendixes). In the questionnaire scoring key I have developed a response key and numerical score as way of standardizing the scoring. Each question then will receive a score based on their response with corresponding numerical score outlined in the response key and score. I have grouped the questions into six categories: God, Life, Present and Future, Self, Others, and Spirituality/Contemplative Practices. Using Mean and Derivation statical methods I will have a sub score and final score for each category. Using this method, I will then compare the first questionnaire taken at the beginning of the project and the last questionnaire taken at the end of the class. I will compare the scores of each category for that individual. I will then write an individual evaluation based on any quantitative shift or no shift in the category scores.

After evaluating the individual questionnaire, I will then compare the first inquiry taken at the beginning of the project and the last inquiry taken at the end of the project. In this evaluation I am looking for a qualitative change in thought between the two inquiries. I will be looking for a change or shift in words and phrases in each response to each of the questions in the inquiry. I will then write a qualitative evaluation based on the observations of thought, word, and phrase shifts or the lack thereof.

After the two separate evaluations, I will then compare the two evaluations. In comparing the two evaluations I will be looking for a difference between the evaluations to see if there is any indication of transformation (shift from false self to true self). Along with transformational shift, I will be looking to see if there is any indication of the beginning or opening to healing.

While comparing the two evaluations I will also look at my project notes on each individual and my after-action notes on the last module noting any comments made by the individual. I will then write an overall individual evaluation based on my comparative review of the two evaluations along with my journal notes from the project and after-action notes. In this evaluation I will look for the answer to the question: “will spiritual direction techniques incorporating spiritual disciplines assist the individual living in exile (prison) in transformational healing?”

After completing the individual evaluation, I will then write an overall class methodology evaluation. I will base this evaluation on the individual evaluations, along with my class project journal and notes I took from the after-action module. In this evaluation I will be looking to answer the question: “Can spiritual direction methodology techniques incorporating spiritual disciplines assist the community in exile in transformational healing and healthy community development?”

Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the classroom methodology for teaching the techniques of spiritual direction methodology. The object is not to certify those living in exile as Spiritual Directors. Although, this project could be the foundation for developing a peer mentor program for those living in exile. The intent is teaching the skills to the exiled such that they can work with each other, helping each other to begin making the transformational movement from False Self to True Self, and along the way begin to experience the healing presence of God. As byproduct of this project community may begin to form where a sense of purpose develops with an understanding that they have something to offer – Shalom.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES

Even though this project has not yet been fully implemented due to the difficulties that arose due to COVID, as I discussed in chapter 1, I am using parts of the project as a Spiritual Director. Furthermore, in this chapter I will discuss the outcomes from developing this project. The first section is the current outcomes from this project that I have learned and are actively implemented at the ministry that I work for, Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. The second section is developing outcomes from this project that are currently being worked on for future use by myself and at TPOM. The third section is the planned development work that I will be engaged in personally and at TPOM.

Current Outcomes

There are 4 major outcomes that are implemented at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. Those outcomes are labeled as: 1. Spiritual Hierarchy Model, 2. Transformation Model, 3. Journaling as part of Spiritual Direction, 4. Basic Mentor/Volunteer Training—specifically the listening section of the Determine section in the Spiritual Direction Methodology in chapter 3. In this section I will briefly describe each of the outcomes and how they are being used.

Spiritual Hierarchy Model

The Spiritual Hierarchy Model comes from the research I did for the Identify section of the Spiritual Direction Methodology that I discussed in chapter 3. This model is based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Model. The Spiritual Hierarchy Model evolved out of conversations between Dr. Cynthia Stewart (Director of Operations for Tennessee Prison

Outreach Ministry) and myself concerning my research using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and how this portion of my research could be used with those coming out of prison and in our mentor program. Dr. Stewart took the information from our discussion and developed a chart. The chart consisted of each of the major areas of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs with an area to input what an individual felt they needed to satisfy that category. Dr. Stewart then developed an area on the chart to input an individual's response to what they thought they needed to fulfill those needs. As we worked with the chart Dr. Stewart developed an area to input an individual's response to what happened when the needs were met and were not met. As we continued working with the chart, I was able, while demonstrating the chart, to refine the input area for response to needs met to record emotions and outcomes, both positive and negative. We are now in the process of copywriting this chart. We are currently teaching the use of the chart in our advanced mentor training program. Additionally, I use the chart as part our initial assessment when an individual resident first comes to our transition house here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. From this assessment I can talk with a resident about the possibility of Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Identity Work. The research on the Identity section, in relationship to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Model, of the Spiritual Direction Methodology in Chapter 3 has been productive.

Transformation Model

The Transformation Model comes out of the research in relation to the development of the Determine and Engagement sections of the Spiritual Direction Methodology in chapter 3. This model development began with the research material on the Orthodox Three-Fold Movement along with Hugh of St. Victor's Four-Fold Movement towards Theosis. In conjunction with those movements, I was researching the Orthodox theological concept of the Disease of the Heart, the theological understanding of the movement away from God. I was also

pondering Thomas Merton's and Thomas Keating's concepts of true self vs. false self. As I was working with this material, I began juxtaposing the two Theosis movements with the Disease of the Heart Model. While looking at these two models, I realized that there was a movement correlation between the two models. I began conversations with Dr. Stewart about the correlations that I was seeing. During our conversations I started working with the two models in correlation to understand the movement toward false self and the movement toward true self. While working with this model, Dr. Stewart and I realized that the movement towards true self and false self was not linear. Dr. Stewart came up with a diagram that we were able to place the correlating juxtaposed concepts and developed a model. We continued working with this model that we began referring to as a Transformation Model. In working with the wording and concepts of the juxtaposed correlation on the diagram we developed a way of understanding the movement towards one end of the model false self with true self dormant and the movement to the opposite end of the model as true self with false self dormant. This model not only demonstrated the movement but showed that the movement was not linear but an ebb and flow of progression towards one end of the model. Dr. Stewart and I are in the process of copywriting the model. Currently we teach the Transformation Model to our senior mentors in one of our advance mentor training sessions to help mentors better understand their mentees' progress. Additionally, I issue the model in my spiritual direction work with at residents. This model helps me to understand where a resident is at in their journey and aids me in identifying or better understanding a resident and the impasses in their journey. This model is very beneficial especially when used in correlation with the Spiritual Hierarchy Model.

Incorporating Journaling in Spiritual Direction

Currently I am incorporating the Spiritual Discipline of Journaling, that I discussed in the Spiritual Direction Methodology in chapter 3 and in the project methodology in chapter 4, in my spiritual direction work with the residents here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. I use journaling as an aid to help the residents identify areas they would like to work in in the spiritual direction session. As we progress, I will often ask the resident what did they discover? As we progress with the session, I will suggest to the resident that they might want to start paying attention to any experience that they might have of the ebb and flow of consolation and desolation and to journal those experiences. I will explain the meaning of consolation and desolation to the resident. Then, through the journaling, I will ask the resident if they see any evidence of the true spirit and false spirit influence. Additionally, I will teach the resident about Examen, as I discussed in the Engagement section of the Spiritual Direction Methodology in chapter 3 and used in the project methodology in chapter 4. I will explain to the resident how the Examen can provide a way for reviewing their journal in such a way that may make the journaling more beneficial. Many of the residents that I work with state that journaling as part of spiritual direction enables them to better discern the movements in their life and areas they need to discuss during the spiritual direction session. Some of the former residents who continue journaling after the spiritual direction session ended find journaling beneficial as they continue to work on themselves.

Spiritual Direction Concept of Listening in Mentor Training Program

In our Basic Mentor Training Program here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry, we incorporated the spiritual direction methodology of listening as I discussed in the Determine section of the Spiritual Direction Methodology in chapter 3. In this training we discussed the

need for the mentor to shift their listening skills from listening to answer a question to listening to be informed. By making this shift in mentor's listening skills, they can listen more deeply and may detect an underlying issue that needs to come to the surface. We also discuss the idea of listening more and speaking less. In speaking less and listening more, allowing for moments of paused silence, the mentor gives space to allow those underlying issues to come naturally to the surface, without the mentee feeling like the issue was forced to the surface. This in turn increases a level of trust and confidence, as well as creating a feeling of safe place for the mentee to open and discuss issues that are troubling them or preventing them from progressing towards their goals. Many of our mentors have commented on how the quality of the mentor sessions improved when they shifted their listening skills as we teach in our Basic Mentor Training Program.

Developing Outcomes

In this section I will discuss the ongoing development of those outcomes derived from this project. First there is the ongoing development of the two models, Spiritual Hierarchy Model and Transformational Model, that I discussed earlier in this chapter. Secondly, the development of this project, to some extent, has become a catalyst in the further development of the advance mentor program here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. Thirdly, the work on the development of this project has encouraged me to further work on my Spiritual Direction Methodology as I discussed in chapter 3. These three areas will be the focus of discussion in this section.

Spiritual Hierarchy and Transformation Models

Dr. Stewart and I are going to continue working on further development of the Spiritual Hierarchy and Transformation Models. Once we finish copywriting these two models, we intend to co-author a book (or two) on the models—their purpose, use, and benefits. Once we have the book(s) written on these models, we intend to work on workbooks on how to use these two models. The workbooks will incorporate the models in our mentor program through advance mentor training modules and possible part of mentor workshops.

Advance Mentor Training

Dr. Stewart and I are in discussion about creating an advance mentor training modules centered on the Spiritual Direction Methodology I outlined and discussed in chapter 3. We are also thinking about the Spiritual Direction Methodology to be part of a mentor workshop. Dr. Stewart and I see the Spiritual Direction Methodology as a valuable tool for mentors in their mentor work. We envision that this methodology, as a tool, will assist mentors in helping their mentees work through impasses and barriers that are preventing them from progressing in the transition and/or healing that is needed as part of their continued transformation. Many mentors have come to us asking for additional tools and methods to help work with their mentees, as their mentees work through impasses. Often the impasses come from some area of their past and prevents them from progressing in the transition, their transformation, and even possibly cause them to go back to old ways that lead them back to prison. Dr. Stewart and I feel that the Spiritual Direction Methodology could be one of those tools are mentors could use.

Spiritual Direction Methodology

I want to continue working on the Spiritual Direction Methodology as I outlined and discussed in chapter 3. I specifically will be looking more deeply on the use of journaling in spiritual direction. In exploring the use of journaling, I will be looking at how it can assist the spiritual director and the directee to monitor the ebb and flow of consolation and desolation. Additionally, I will explore how journaling can assist in determining the influence of the true spirit and false spirit along with seeing where the logismoi is speaking. In conjunction with the influence of the true spirit and false spirit I will explore the use of journaling in monitoring the progression from false self to true self or vice-a-versa. Finally, I will look more deeply into developing the use of the Examen in journaling. Dr. Stewart and I also are looking into how this form of journaling can help mentors with their mentees.

Conclusion: Further the Work

Even though I have not yet fully implemented the project as designed, a lot of beneficial outcomes have already derived from this project. The most beneficial outcome is the working out of my own spiritual direction methodology. I now use this methodology in my own spiritual direction work here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. Another valuable outcome is the incorporation of different parts of this project into our Basic Mentor/Volunteer Training Program here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry, as well as using the Spiritual Direction Methodology Model as a blueprint for our continuing development of Advance Mentor Training Modules. Additionally, we developed two assessment models, Spiritual Hierarchy Model and Transformational Model, which we use here at Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry. Finally, this project is the inspiration for furthering research.

As a future outcome, there are four areas that I want to research: Keating's concept of the false self as a disease in correlation to the Orthodox concept of the Disease of the Heart (the movement away from God and true self); the use of the Spiritual Direction Methodology module in working with individuals where past trauma is an impasse to transformational healing;²⁷⁷ the use of Spiritual Direction Methodology module in resilience building;²⁷⁸ the development of a formational methodology module centered around second Peter 1:5-7;²⁷⁹ a fully developed Community in Exile Development Program, with this project as the base model or beginning module.

²⁷⁷ The types of traumas that I specifically want to look at in relation to working those who in exile and coming of exile are: Moral Injury, Cultural Trauma, Generational Trauma, and Normalized Trauma.

²⁷⁸ The type of resilience that I am looking at is spiritual resilience which deals with the internal belief system that guides values, ethics, social behaviors, and psychological outlook. It is noted in research literature that individuals who have a strong sense of purpose, a feeling of connection to a greater whole, or a feeling of connection to spirituality are more resilient. Studies show that purpose in life is a key factor in helping individuals manage traumatic events and that low spirituality is a leading predictor of low resilience. There is a growing body of evidence that is showing that a spiritual outlook makes humans more resilient to trauma. The literature also shows that possessing a sense of meaning and purpose in life is positively related to quality of life and improved health and functioning. People with greater spirituality partake in healthier behaviors, maintain a more positive world view, are more connected to a community, and feel a greater sense of belonging – all factors that strengthen resilience.

²⁷⁹ The Amplified Bible's Translation is the inspiration for me to use 2 Peter 1:5-7 as a center piece for a formational methodology model: "For this very reason, adding your diligence to the divine promises, employ every effort in exercising your faith to develop virtue (excellence, resolution, Christian energy), and in exercising virtue develop knowledge (intelligence); and in exercising knowledge develop self-control; and in exercising self-control develop steadfastness (patience, endurance), and in exercising steadfastness develop godliness (piety), and in exercising godliness develop brotherly affection, and in exercising brotherly affection develop Christian love (Zondervan 1987).

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APPENDIX A

Information and Consent Form

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating the possibility of transformational healing within a prison environment using spiritual direction techniques, spiritual formation and identity formation instruction, and community fellowship participation. This study is being conducted by David Phipps, a doctoral student in the Hazelip School of Theology at Lipscomb University under the supervision of Dr. Richard Goode and Dr. Cynthia Stewart. A sign up for this study was initiated under the name Community in Exile. By signing up you indicated willingness to come to the initial presentation to determine your desire to participate. Please read this form and have any questions answered before you agree to be in this study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to investigate how spiritual direction techniques, spiritual formation and identity formation instruction, and community participation impacts the transformational healing of those living in incarcerated exile. This information is vitally important to:

Those who are developing and leading spiritual programs or will be training others to do so.

Those who mentor and train mentors to work with people living in communities of incarcerated exile.

Those developing transition programs within prisons.

Those conducting transition programs outside prisons, such as transitional homes.

Those living in communities of exile may experience transformational healing.

Those making their exodus from incarcerated exile.

Approximately 20 to 25 individuals living in communities of incarcerated exile are expected to participate.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire and an appreciative inquiry at the beginning of the program. Every 2 months you will be asked to complete another appreciative inquiry, for a total of 5 inquiries; every 4 months you will be asked to complete another questionnaire, for a total of 3 questionnaires. You will also be asked to turn in weekly class assignments and to complete 4 standard questions that will accompany these assignments.

This study will take 8 months. At the end of the 8-month study, the Community in Exile program may continue in 8-month blocks for another thirty-two months for a total of forty months. There is no expectation that you must continue after the initial 8-month period. You will be given an opportunity at the end of the first 8-month study to continue if you desire.

Risks and Benefits:

This study has minimal risks. You may experience spiritual/psychological discomfort or difficulty. If this occurs please notify David Phipps or Cynthia Stewart and you will be referred to a mental health professional. Please note that should you experience discomfort or difficulty you are free to stop your participation at any point in the study.

The direct benefit to your participation is that you may experience the beginning of transformational healing. Additionally, the information you provide will help equip people in the ministry to develop other programs focusing on transformational healing and reentry for those incarcerated. It will also help in training individuals who desire to minister to those incarcerated and help those incarcerated make transformations and transitions from prison.

Compensation:

There will be a certificate of completion for those who complete the Community in Exile program.

There is no financial compensation given for participating in the study. There is no institutional benefit or advantage (e.g., food, housing, medical care, amenities, living conditions, opportunity for payment) for participation in the study.

Your participation in this study will have no bearing on the Parole Board decisions regarding your eligibility for parole.

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified with you will be disclosed only with your permission: your results will be confidential. In any written reports or publications, you will not be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented.

Research results will be kept in a locked filed cabinet located behind a locked door at the Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry compound. Only David Phipps and his advisors (Dr. Richard Goode and Dr. Cynthia Stewart) will have access to the records during work on this

project. Analysis on the data will be completed by November 30, 2019; after that all original reports and identifying information that can be linked back to you will be destroyed.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You are free to stop participating at any time. Your decision to participate or not will not affect your current or future relations with TDOC, DCSO, TPOM, the Parole Board, or Lipscomb University in any way.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Phipps, Dr. Richard Goode or Dr. Cynthia Stewart at this address:

Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry
136 Rains Ave.
Nashville TN, 37203

You may ask questions now or later. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the research team, you may contact

Dr. Justin Biggs, Chair
Lipscomb University Institutional Review Board
Lipscomb University
One University Park Dr.
Nashville, TN 37202

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

You are deciding whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read the information, listened to the presentation, and your questions have been answered. Even after signing this form, please know that you may withdraw from the study at any time.

I consent to participate in the study, and I do it without coercion.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Warden Designee as Witness

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

Please answer the questions by checking the appropriate box below each question or statement that most closely represents your answer.

Strongly Agree	Applies to me to a large degree or nearly all the time
Agree	Applies to me to a moderate degree or more often than not
Neutral	Applies to me somewhat or about half of the time
Disagree	Applies to me to a slight degree or occasionally
Strongly Disagree	Doesn't apply to me at all, or rarely

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. I believe that there is some real purpose for my life.					
18. I have a hard time loving people.					
19. I know how to engage in meditative practices that help me become aware of the nature of my thoughts.					
20. I believe that God/the Divine loves me.					
21. There is not much that I like about my life.					
22. Emotional pain characterizes my life.					
23. I have no desire to spend time with God/the Divine.					
24. I have a personal, meaningful relationship with God/the Divine.					
25. I feel very fulfilled and satisfied with life.					
26. When I do something wrong I work on forgiving myself.					
27. I have developed a calmness of mind so that I am able to live more consistently in peace.					
28. My relationship with God/the Divine contributes to my sense of well-being.					
29. I believe that the world is basically evil.					
30. Generally, my public and private self are the same.					

31. When do I something wrong, I try to put it right and humbly seek forgiveness from those I have harmed.					
32. I have a difficult time bringing mindfulness to activities in my daily life.					
33. I have a sense of direction about where I am going.					
34. I feel a sense of self-awareness.					
35. I am committed to having good relationships with people, demonstrating love, acceptance, and forgiveness.					
36. I know how to process my difficult or painful emotions to heal and transform them.					
37. I don't get much personal strength and support from God/the Divine.					
38. I don't know where I fit in.					
39. Peace, contentment, and joy characterize my life rather than worry and anxiety.					
40. I avoid strangers, even if they need help.					
41. I have a difficult time confessing anything in my character that does not line up with my spiritual practices and/or beliefs.					
42. I feel good about my future.					
43. I fear loneliness.					
44. I have difficulty receiving correction.					
45. My faith is an important part of my individual identity.					
46. I believe that God/the Divine is impersonal, and not interested in my daily situations.					
47. I feel that I am an outsider looking in.					
48. I easily accept advice.					
49. I desire to be closer to God/the Divine or in union with God.					
50. I am comfortable with who I am.					
51. I have confidence in people.					

52. I have a difficult time living in accordance with my spiritual values.					
53. I get angry at God/the Divine during difficult times.					
54. My self-worth comes from within.					
55. I have a difficult time trusting people.					
56. My faith guides my whole approach to life.					
57. I am trusting.					
58. I forgive individuals who have harmed me.					
59. When I fall short of my spiritual ideas, I feel like I am worthless.					
60. I don't know who I am.					
61. I seek to live in harmony with people.					
62. Improving the human community is an important spiritual goal.					
63. I am sometimes uncertain about the best way to resolve a moral conflict.					
64. I have a difficult time finding a peaceful resolution when I have a conflict with another person.					

APPENDIX C

Appreciative Inquiry

Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. Note that there are no right or wrong answers.

1. Do you have a sense of meaning and purpose in your life?

If yes what gives you this sense of meaning and purpose?

2. What three words would you use to describe yourself?

3. What do you consider the three core values that guide you in your life?

4. How do you typically cope with stressful situations in your life?

5. Do you have peace of mind?

If yes, what helps you obtain it?

If not, what is preventing it?

6. How important are each of the following relationships for you personally:

with God:

with other people:

with yourself:

7. Is your spirituality meaningful to you? If yes, in what ways is it meaningful? If not, what prevents it from being meaningful?

8. Does your spirituality help you deal with guilt and shame?

If yes, how?

9. Does your spirituality help you deal with sorrow and pain?

If yes, how?

10. How do your spiritual or religious beliefs influence the way you think about yourself?

11. How do your spiritual or religious beliefs influence the way you think about others?

12. How do your spiritual or religious beliefs impact the way you make decisions?

13. What do you feel you have lost during your incarceration?

14. What do you feel you have gained during your incarceration?

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire Scoring Key**Response Key and Score**

Strongly Agree	Applies to me to a large degree or nearly all the time	5
Agree	Applies to me to a moderate degree or more often than not	4
Neutral	Applies to me somewhat or about half of the time	3
Disagree	Applies to me to a light degree or occasionally	2
Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	1

God

#	Statement	+	-
1	From day to day, I sense God/the Divine being with me.		
12	When I sin or believe I have done something wrong, I tend to withdraw from God/the Divine.		
16	There are times when I feel God/the Divine has let me down.		
20	I believe that God/the Divine loves me.		
24	I have a personal meaningful relationship with God/the Divine.		
28	My relationship with God/the Divine contributes to my sense of well-being.		
37	I don't get much personal strength and support from God/the Divine.		
46	I believe that God/the Divine is impersonal, and not interested in my daily situations.		
49	I desire to be closer to or in union with God/the Divine.		
53	I get angry at God/the Divine during difficult times.		
	Sub Score		
	Final Score		

Life

#	Statement	+	-
2	I feel very fulfilled and satisfied with life.		
7	I do not have a sense of well-being about the direction my life is headed in.		
17	I believe that there is some real purpose for my life.		
21	There is not much that I like about my life.		
25	I feel very fulfilled and satisfied with life.		
29	I believe that the world is basically evil.		
38	I don't know where I fit in		
	Sub Score		
	Final Score		

Present and Future

#	Statement	+	-
3	I am comfortable with my present situation.		
8	Presently I am overwhelmed when I have personal difficulties and problems.		
33	I have a sense of direction about where I am going.		
42	I feel good about my future.		
	Sub Score		
	Final Score		

Self

#	Statement	+	-
4	I feel a deep sense of peace within myself.		
9	I am kind with myself.		
13	Anxiety characterizes my life.		
22	Emotional pain characterizes my life.		
26	When I do something wrong, I work on forgiving myself.		
30	Generally, my public and private self are the same.		
34	I feel a sense of self-awareness.		
39	Peace, contentment, and joy characterize my life rather than worry and anxiety.		
43	I fear loneliness.		
47	I feel that I am an outsider looking in.		
50	I am comfortable with whom I am.		
54	My self-worth comes from within.		
57	I am trusting.		
60	I don't know who I am.		
63	I am sometimes uncertain about the best way to resolve a moral conflict.		
	Sub Score		
	Final Score		

Others

#	Statement	+	-
5	I try to deal consciously with people.		
10	I have a difficult time being patient with people.		
14	I demonstrate kindness towards people.		
18	I have a hard time loving people.		
31	When I do something wrong, I try to put it right and humbly seek forgiveness from those I have harmed.		
35	I am committed to having good relationships with people, demonstrating love, acceptance, and forgiveness.		
40	I avoid strangers, even if they need help.		
44	I have difficulty receiving correction.		
48	I easily accept advice.		
51	I have confidence in people.		
55	I have a difficult time trusting people.		
58	I forgive individuals who have harmed me.		
61	I seek to live in harmony with people.		
64	I have a difficult time finding a peaceful resolution when I have a conflict with another person.		
	Sub Score		
	Final Score		

Spirituality/Contemplative Practices

#	Statement	+	-
6	I have a difficult time setting time aside for prayer and meditation.		
11	I maintain an attitude of mindfulness throughout the day.		
15	I have a difficult time being mindful throughout the day.		
19	I know how to engage in meditative practices that help me become aware of the nature of my thoughts.		
23	I have no desire to spend time with God/the Divine.		
27	I have developed a calmness of mind so that I am able to live more consistently in peace.		
32	I have a difficult time bringing mindfulness to activities in my daily life.		
36	I know how to recognize and engage in an ongoing process to heal and transform my difficult or painful emotions.		
41	I have a difficult time confessing anything in my character that does not line up with my spiritual practices and/or beliefs.		
45	My faith is an important part of my individual identity.		
52	I have a difficult time living in accordance with my spiritual values.		
56	My faith guides my whole approach to life.		
59	When I fall short of my spiritual ideals, I feel like I am a worthless individual.		
62	Improving the human community is an important spiritual goal.		
	Sub Score		
	Final Score		