

**THE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP IN PENTECOSTAL PASTORAL
COUNSELLING: A QUALITATIVE, INTERDISCIPLINARY
EXPLORATION.**

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STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedure reported in this thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees.

In preparation for the analysis of the data used in this thesis, assistance was given by Sean Crawford and Lorrall Love in the transcribing of the recorded interviews.

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ABSTRACT

This investigation has emerged from the experience gained from my work with local church pastors and their day-to-day ministry. The relationships involved in such pastoral work inevitably reflect the tension between the evangelical commitment inherent in their calling, and the need for objectivity and self-transcendence in their relationship to the suffering other in all the varieties of the human struggle with grief, loss and incapacity.

Such vocational and professional tensions are frequently detrimental to physical, mental and relational well-being of the pastors themselves. Accordingly, this project is shaped by the conviction is that the pastoral ministry in such circumstances would greatly benefit from the kind of research here undertaken in order to make methodically explicit the theological and psychological principles implicit, but too easily overlooked, in pastoral practice. When the awareness of the pastors involved is raised, it can be expected that fewer casualties will result, and that the practice or of pastoral counselling will benefit from a more integrated intentionality and professional transparency

To focus on the therapeutic relationship implicit in the pastoral ministry and explicitly present in the activity of counselling, the interdisciplinary dimensions of our project emerge. The integration of theology, psychology professional practice and pastoral ministry is a continuing challenge. This project, therefore, has sought to identify in the therapeutic relationship factors, issues and questions common to theological and psychological perspectives and allied disciplines. As a result, this thesis has contributed to the development of a interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary language, thus enabling forms of meaningful interdisciplinary dialogue. The basic vocabulary of this language includes terms such as “relationality”, “personhood” and “therapeutic change” as would be expected. But there is a larger vocabulary drawn from newly emerging interest in spirituality and its influence on vocational identity and the therapeutic style—and goal—of ministry.

As a result, this larger vocabulary has helped in the development of what can be termed “a praxis model” of the therapeutic relationship with a capacity to integrate perspective and epistemologies of theology and psychology, the lived-experiences of the participants and the

deep spiritual awareness of participating in the life of the Trinity itself. At such a spiritual depth, the therapeutic relationship becomes not just a vehicle for healing, but the impetus and invitation to true transformational change.

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It has often been said that it takes a village to raise a child. It is equally true that it takes a community to accomplish such a task as this thesis has been. Just as the unique attributes of the villagers, in large or small ways, contribute to the formation of the character and identity of the village child so have many people walked beside me as this research has grown from an idea to the thesis that is presented here. It is with humble appreciation that I acknowledge these companions who have walked with me on this journey.

The very nature of an interdisciplinary study means finding where two separate pathways cross over, a daunting task for the researcher but even more so for the supervisors. My supervisors enabled me to maintain my focus as these paths were explored and helped me recognise the significance of the places where the two came together. I am extremely grateful to Professor Anthony Kelly who had the foresight to see the end from the beginning and was able to continue to keep me focussed when the purpose became clouded by too much information and too many words. The insights gained from his considerable theological understanding proved to be invaluable as my thesis unfolded. Dr Thomas Ryan also provided theological guidance coupled with a sensitivity to the human condition that constantly challenged me to reflect and explore more deeply. Without his patient encouragement, timely resources and frequent emails this project may never have been finished. Dr Denis O'Hara became my friendly and approachable methodology "policeman" whose personal standard of academic excellence led to many rewrites, for which I am now grateful.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THESIS

This thesis emerged out of my experience as a counsellor. It seemed to me that counsellors, if asked questions about the specifically therapeutic character of their relationship with clients, would most likely reply by referring to their experiences of particular counselling theories and techniques, in the language of their counselling training. However, further reflection suggested that counselling is not the only seed bed for transformational change through a therapeutic relationship. Chaplains, social workers, nurses and a myriad of other helpers and carers also participate in a variety of healing relationships in regard to the body, soul or spirit of those who are the object of their concern and dedication.

This research project finds its focus in the specific therapeutic relationship that pastors have with their people, especially in a one-on-one counselling situation. Although most pastors may not be able to give a professionally psychological account of what they do, they regularly engage in intimate relationships with broken humanity, a task for which professional counsellors are trained. They show a willingness to journey with the suffering, putting themselves aside to be available to others in their struggle with grief, loss and incapacity. The stories of these pastors and their daily involvement with others throw light on what we mean by “the therapeutic relationship”.

Rationale

As the coordinator of counselling services in a Christian organisation, I was in a position to observe pastoral counselling relationships in action, both in a large urban church and in smaller local churches in rural areas. I came to see that pastors involved in counselling could

profit greatly from currently available research by professional psychotherapists and theologians who have critically reflected on the profound meaning and value of this kind of pastoral ministry. If unaware of this larger context, an uncritical involvement in pastoral counselling easily results in blurred boundaries, unrealistic expectations from the church, and, sadly, the possibility of burnout and its attendant forms of breakdown in marriage and family life.

As I shall argue, effective counselling practice profits from research into models of human wholeness, therapeutic change and the structure and dynamics of the therapeutic relationship. Further, responsible ministry is supported and continually inspired by a clearly defined theological framework. This research will, therefore, draw on both psychological resources and those from Trinitarian theology and Christian anthropology in the treatment of such themes as “the human person made in the image of God”. Indeed, because best Christian counselling practice aims for growth and wholeness in both client and pastor, it calls for critical integration of theological principles and sound psychological theory.

Even though the place the local church occupies in contemporary, Western society bears little resemblance to the picture of the local church of previous generations, there is still a traditional expectation of pastors to be counsellors to their parishioners in a wide variety of contexts.¹ In twenty-first century Australia this includes marriage, family and relationship problems, emotional issues such as grief and loss and an increasing number of people

¹ Charles Gerkin, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1997); Carrie Doehring, *The Practice of Pastoral Care* (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox, 2006); and Robert Dykstra, *Images of Pastoral Care: Classic Readings* (St Louis, MS: Chalice, 2005) books are among those that illustrate this point well through narratives and vignettes.

suffering from mental illnesses, including undiagnosed conditions.² Although many of today's pastors employ, or refer to, trained people to deal with these situations, the expectation remains for the pastors to "be there" when their parishioners are experiencing physical, emotional or spiritual crisis.³ This leaves pastors in a situation where they may find themselves counselling their parishioners, often without the relevant skills or a critical theological understanding of the ministry they are performing. Realistically, it is impractical to insist that pastors become professional counsellors. Nevertheless, a clarification of the synthesis of theology and psychology that is implicit in pastoral counselling will allow them to assess their own strengths and weaknesses and to understand better when to refer to professionals, and to whom.

The context chosen for this investigation is a representation of the contemporary, Pentecostal church. According to scholars⁴ who have researched such congregations, these parishioners could be expected to be:

- challenging tradition, authority and truth;⁵
- seeking subjective experiences through spiritual direction, spiritual and emotional healing;
- open to the actualisation of the individual's religious, moral, intellectual and psychological development.⁶

² David Switzer, *Pastoral Care Emergencies* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2000), 1.

³ John Meteyard, "Pastoral Care and Counselling in Twenty-first Century Australia: A Rich and Diverse Landscape". *Australian Journal of Pastoral Care and Health* 2, no. 2 (2008):2.

⁴ cf. Sam Hey, "The History of Christian Outreach Centre", Unpublished PhD. thesis, Griffith University (2010).

⁵ Howard Snyder, *Earthcurrents* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995), 218; Len Sperry and Edward Shafranski, *Spiritually Oriented Psychotherapy*, (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2005), 18.

This specific ecclesiastical setting is seen as a rich source of data to investigate how the twenty-first century pastor⁷ engages with the counselling relationship, theologically, spiritually and psychologically.

Research Problem Defined

Although in the past, theology, psychology and spirituality have had an uneasy relationship, the twenty-first century has dawned with the theology/spirituality/psychology integration debate having reached a place of “agreeing to disagree”.⁸ It is acknowledged that there is an important body of literature⁹ where theologians debate the integration question but, apart from cursory mention, it is beyond the scope of this project to engage with this in-depth.

The literature relating to integration that is of most interest to this study has been instigated by Christians who are practicing psychologists, researchers and academics challenged by various tenets within psychology, especially the lack of consideration of spirituality in the defining of

⁶ F. Richards and A. Bergin, *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity* (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2000), 3-4; Christopher Faiver, Elliott Ingersoll, Eugene O'Brian and Christopher McNally, *Explorations in Counseling and Spirituality* (Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 2001), Chap. 2.

⁷ I note at this point that the term “pastor” will be used throughout this thesis as being synonymous with other titles such as “priest”, “minister”, “reverend” or “clergy”. The job description of such a pastor includes, amongst other things, preaching, teaching, administration, pastoral care, spiritual direction and counselling (Gerkin, *An Introduction*, 192).

⁸ This topic will be addressed in more detail further in this thesis. However, mention will be made here that, in 2006, *The Journal of Psychology and Theology* 34, no. 3, devoted this whole issue to the subject of integration. I see this as an indication of wide interest in this subject among psychologists and theologians as well as the advances that have been made over the last 30 years or so.

⁹ This literature includes Victor White’s well known work, *God and the Unconscious* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery, 1953). Articles by David Boardell, “Essence and Ground: Towards the Understanding of Spirituality in Psychotherapy”. *International Journal of Psychotherapy* 3, no.1 (1998): 29-42, and more recently John Dourley, “The Jung-White Dialogue and Why it Couldn’t Work and Won’t Go Away”. *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 52 (2007): 275–295, perhaps indicate that White’s work is still relevant to today’s debate. Susan Muto’s work, “The Unfolding Project: Science, Anthropology, and the Theology of Human and Christian Formation”. *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 4, no.1 (2011): 93-104, has joined this discussion by reflecting on the works of Adrian van Kaam, whose life’s work was exploring integration towards spiritual formation.

human wholeness. Recent literature published by such scholars¹⁰ represents a call to seek the meaningful integration of psychology, theology and spirituality, not by developing a model of integration as was attempted in years gone by, but by all three disciplines finding a place of meaningful dialogue. Successful integration occurs when the worldview of the religion is comprehensive and well developed enough to converse effectively with the science of psychology. However, it must be remembered that pastors in the local church, ministering to their congregations, would rarely access such literature. They would therefore have little or no knowledge of this debate, let alone have “a comprehensive and well-developed” understanding of either the theology or the psychology related to the counselling work they do “among the idiosyncrasies of the local and the personal”.¹¹ Pastoral ministry, in the deepest and ultimate sense, is directed toward “caring for the soul”¹² and the “healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling”¹³ of the members of a given community. Without an “integrated” understanding of the therapeutic relationship, such pastors are ill-equipped to fulfill the task they so willingly commit themselves to do.¹⁴

¹⁰ James Beck and Bruce Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology: A Biblical Anthropology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2005); Al Durck and Thomas Parsons, “Integration Discourse: Modern and Postmodern”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 32, no. 3 (2004); Francis Moran and Anthony Kelly, *In Search of the Soul: Theology and Psychotherapy in Collaboration* (Sydney, NSW: Paulist, 1998); Todd Hall and Steven Porter, “Referential Integration: An Emotional Information Processing Perspective on the Process of Integration”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 32, no. 3 (2004); W. Hathaway, “Expanding Horizons for Christians in Psychology”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 32, no. 3 (2004); James Nelson, “Missed Opportunities in Dialogue Between Psychology and Religion”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 34, no. 3 (2006a); F. L. Shults and Steven Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006).

¹¹ Eugene Peterson, *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 5.

¹² David Benner, *Care of Souls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998).

¹³ William Clebsch and Charles Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective* (Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 1994).

¹⁴ Meteyard, “Pastoral Care”, 2 writes: “And yet this growing uncertainty surrounding the legitimacy of pastoral counselling does not appear to have affected the number of clergy who practice counselling. A full 97% of respondents in one Australian study reported involvement in at least some counselling activity, with the majority (approximately three-quarters) doing between 1 and 5 hours of counselling per week. Presumably one reason for this astonishingly high rate of ongoing clergy involvement in counselling relates to the fact that counselling has historically been considered an integral part of the pastoral role by both clergy and laity. . .”

Another consideration of this study then becomes the well-being of the pastors and their families. Relevant research reveals that, throughout the Western Christian church, the statistics for problems related to pastoral counselling (such as burnout, client dissatisfaction and sexual misconduct by pastors) are not declining significantly, in spite of increased exposure of unprofessional behaviour.¹⁵ As a consequence, traditional practices of pastoral care, including pastoral counselling, have come under scrutiny¹⁶ by regulating bodies such as:

- supervisory bodies related to ethical standards;
- the governing boards of the various church denominations;
- psychological, counselling and pastoral counselling professional associations;
- insurance companies responsible for providing indemnity for the churches.

However, while the research and regulations generated by these concerned bodies must necessarily be translated into effective, efficient and ethical practice by the pastor, there remains the danger that the theological and spiritual aspects of the pastoral counselling encounter are being ignored. It is these deeply personal and communal perspectives of the therapeutic relationship found in all ministry that are in need of more comprehensive exploration. Given the many variables inevitably present—theological, personal, cultural and professional—there is a need to clarify the interface between pastoral ministry and the counselling process. As Meteyard indicates:

¹⁵ Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors in Transition: Why Clergy Leave Local Church Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005); B. Gaede, ed., *When a Congregation is Betrayed: Responding to Clergy Misconduct* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2006), ix, x; Meteyard, “Pastoral Care”, 2, writes: “there is scepticism from without and hesitation from within in claiming the term ‘counselling’ in the face of growing formalisation of counselling as a distinct and regulated profession in its own right”.

¹⁶ Shawn Burn and Julia Busso, “Ambivalent Sexism, Scriptural Literalism and Religiosity”. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 29 (2005): 413; Thomas O’Connor and Elizabeth Meakes, “A Canadian Qualitative Study on Theological Reflection in Pastoral Care and Counseling: Importance to Identity and Conversation Partners”. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health* 10, no. 1 (2007):22; Thomas O’Connor and Elizabeth Meakes, “A Spiritual Caregiver’s Guide”. *The Clergy Journal* (2009):50.

This situation – where clergy without formal counselling qualifications are discouraged from practising counselling while simultaneously the vast majority continue to do so – represents one of the biggest issues facing pastoral care and counselling in Australia today. It also appears unrealistic to expect clergy who are not formally trained to desist from counselling when studies clearly suggest that many parishioners and other community members continue to see counselling as a crucial and desirable ministerial role.¹⁷

Overall, a greater awareness of these issues would enable pastors to be more critically aware of the various dimensions of pastoral counselling, and the implications for them both personally and as pastors. This raised awareness would better position them to achieve positive outcomes.

With this goal of raised awareness and, in accordance with qualitative research methodology, the research questions that inform this study have been designed to be more reflective than information gathering. Although, according to Gordon, “an important aspect of the training of professionals in any discipline is reflection on one’s practice, and the reflexive feeding back into practice of insights gained”,¹⁸ such training has not been a part of the experience of the participants in this study. Therefore, the semi-structured interview questions have been formulated with the understanding that “reflection can be facilitated by questioning and dialogue”.¹⁹

¹⁷ Meteyard, “Pastoral Care”, 2.

¹⁸ Carole Gordon, “Counsellor’s Use of Reflective Space”. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* 4, no. 2 (2004): 44.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 44.

Research Question

The primary question this thesis seeks to understand is:

How does the counselling pastor conceptualise and practice the counselling relationship?

Research Sub-Questions

This conceptualisation is necessarily influenced by the theological worldviews of the pastors. Pentecostal pastors generally come from a variety of religious backgrounds, or even from non-religious up-bringsings. Each will have a unique way of embracing these denominational beliefs and this will influence their understanding of the relationship they have with their people. Hence, secondary questions relating to the pastor's theological understanding are:

What is the pastor's theology of person and human wholeness?

What is the pastor's understanding of the doctrine of God?

What is the pastor's conceptual and phenomenological understanding of spirituality and spiritual growth?

This study is being undertaken in a Pentecostal setting where an openness to experiential spirituality invites questions relating to the pastor's conceptual and phenomenological understanding of spirituality and spiritual growth:

How does the environment of *this particular church* influence the pastoral counselling process?

It is also expected that this setting will provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between the therapeutic relationship the pastors have with their people and the Christian ministry they perform:

How does the pastor's understanding of Christian ministry influence the therapeutic relationship?

The final consideration relates to the pastor's psychological knowledge and understanding:

What is the pastor's understanding of psychological human wholeness?

What is the pastor's understanding of the theory and practice of therapeutic change?

Each of these perspectives of the therapeutic relationship has its own particular significance. It has often been said that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. To discover the validity of this saying for this study, this interdisciplinary investigation aims to explore the conversations between these perspectives.

Definitions

“Interdisciplinary”

The interdisciplinary nature of this research provides the capacity to examine both the theological and psychological aspects of these questions. As the questions illustrate, this study is primarily interested in the relational and spiritual dimensions of the human person in the actual lived experiences of the therapeutic relationship in the pastoral counselling context. However, according to Schneiders, “The term ‘spirituality’, like the term ‘psychology,’ is unavoidably ambiguous, referring to (1) a fundamental dimension of the human being, (2) the lived experience that actualises that dimension and (3) the academic discipline that studies that experience”.²⁰ Hence, as this research progresses and common factors of the two disciplines are sought, these three dimensions will enable both the theological and

²⁰ Sandra Schneiders, “Spirituality in the Academy”. *Theological Studies* 50 (1989): 678.

psychological perspectives to be thoroughly examined. Theology will provide an ordered and systematic understanding of the God-human relationship, while psychology, which generally represents the scientific, quantitative perspective of human behaviour, will add valuable theoretical insight into the phenomenon being studied. It is the interplay between all these aspects of the therapeutic relationship experienced by pastors that will provide new insights into this phenomenon.

Spirituality

Because this study is drawing on theological resources as well as the secular knowledge of psychology, it is also important to note here that there are increasing numbers of Westerners who are claiming to be “spiritual but not religious”.²¹ Therefore, to further clarify the meanings of spirituality, Schneiders’ explanation suits this research purpose well:

the term “spirituality” referring to the lived experience, i.e. the reality which the academic discipline studies rather than the discipline itself, is being used today to denote some experiential reality which characterises not only Christianity but other religions as well and which, in some analogous fashion, can be predicated of nonreligious or even antireligious phenomena such as secular feminism or Marxism. Arriving at a definition of a term used so broadly has proven extremely difficult. It is possible, however, to discern among authors discussing this issue two basic approaches: a dogmatic position supplying a “definition from above” and an anthropological position providing a “definition from below”.²²

²¹ Barbara Newman, “Spiritual but Not (Yet? Ever?) Religious”. *Spiritus* 10 (2010): 282.

²²Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 676.

Schneiders elaborates on the theological dogmatic position by quoting Bernard who sees spirituality as: “the life of the Christian, communicated by the Holy Spirit and governed by divine revelation”.²³ Bernard (in Schneiders) also comments on the anthropological position: “Spirituality could be described as a way of engaging anthropological questions and preoccupations in order to arrive at an ever richer and more authentically human life”.²⁴

Considering what Schneiders indicates in the above quotes, these various dimensions, including “the lived experience” and “the experiential reality” of relationality and spirituality, will be explored with particular focus on the Christian position. Therefore, “interdisciplinary” in this context will seek to move beyond the objectivity of theology and psychology to qualitatively explore the subjective aspects of these disciplines. It is also noted here that, in recent years, counselling has been gaining recognition as a discipline in its own right. Although the scientific discipline of psychology will inform areas of this study, the focus will be on the emerging discipline of counselling.

In the scholarly literature, this bringing together of theology and psychology has been referred to as “integration”. The story of integration spans a number of decades and includes theologians and psychologists from a wide variety of backgrounds and belief systems. The literature also includes the research of those who have a particular purpose for exploring the integration of theology and psychology. It is therefore common, in integration discussions, to find references to “religion”²⁵ and “spirituality” contextualised in particular theological or

²³ Charles-Andre Bernard in Sandra Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 682.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 682.

²⁵ Religion is defined as: “An attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in its formulation and

psychological streams. Keeping in mind the spiritual and relational focus explained above, a brief overview of the theology/psychology journey and its relevance to both the practice of the participants of this study and to the discussion of the therapeutic relationship, will serve to clarify the interdisciplinary position this research has taken.

Theology/Psychology Integration

Although, as will be seen in this brief overview of the history of theology/psychology integration, a definition of integration was not always obvious, Gorsuch's explanation fairly accurately describes at least the intent of the theology/psychology integrationists:

Disciplinary integration is when two or more disciplines are brought to bear on the same issue so that decisions about that issue reflect the contributions of both disciplines. The issue may be about how one discipline carries out its work or may be a problem that more than one discipline work together to solve.²⁶

This concept of “working together” was certainly in the hearts and minds of Carter and Narramore²⁷ when they first published their now classic work in 1979. Since then, much has been written on the integration of psychology and theology.²⁸ Psychologists who are Christians,²⁹ of both Protestant and Catholic persuasions, have struggled to develop models of

elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis, in terms of both its originating experiences and its own continuing responses”. <http://www.darc.org/connelly/religion1.html>

²⁶ Richard Gorsuch, *Integrating Psychology and Spirituality* (West Point, CT: Preager, 2002), 6.

²⁷ John Carter and Bruce Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979).

²⁸ Those who have written on integration include Mark McMinn, *Psychology, Theology and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1996); William Kirwan, *Biblical Concepts of Christian Counselling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984); Stanton Jones and Richard Butman, *Modern Psychotherapies* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991).

²⁹ The graduate school of psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary was the first to offer a PhD degree that was designed to provide graduates who are professionally competent to serve in the vocation of Christian psychotherapy. This degree was first offered in 1974. Rosemead School of Psychology was the second evangelical Protestant program in clinical psychology. In 1980 APA accredited Rosemead's two doctoral programs (PhD and PsyD). Like Fuller's program, Rosemead seeks to train psychologists who have a sensitivity

psychotherapy that will not only be therapeutic for their “non-religious” and “religious” clients alike but will also enable the therapists to be authentic in expressing their own faith. The work of these scholars, mostly trained in the scientific discipline of psychology that was commonly encountered in universities in the nineteen fifties and sixties, challenged the scientific and religious paradigms of both the psychology and the theology of the time. However, they still tended to turn to the scientific methods of psychology to solve their dilemma.

Various models³⁰ were developed that identified the complex components of psychology and theology, but most were instigated by psychologists and therefore couched in the language and epistemology of clinical psychology. This discipline, undergirded with a scientific epistemology that placed great value in objective and measurable observations, found little in common with theological ways of knowing forged over centuries of traditional dialogue and founded on the divine authority of Scripture, including divinely revealed knowledge.³¹ Inevitably, other less philosophical debates began to surface. Christian practitioners from both disciplines voiced concerns as theologians questioned such concepts as “values-free” therapy, while psychologists challenged those in the pastoral counselling ministries to elucidate the methodology of their practice.³² However, with the advent of the new millennium, and the integrationists’ dilemmas still largely unsolved, the concept of

for religious dimensions in life, and who can demonstrate to the church the value of clinical psychology. Len Sperry, “Psychology and Catholicism: An Evolving Relationship”. *Human Development* 32, no. 2 (2011): 3-7, also writes on this subject from the catholic perspective.

³⁰ Examples of these models are Larry Crabb’s, *Basic Principles of Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974) ; William Kirwan’s, *Biblical Concepts* four position models, and Jones and Butman’s, *Modern Psychotherapies* early work on comparing Christian principles to psychological theories.

³¹ Mark McMinn and T. Hall, “Christian Spirituality in a Postmodern Era”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 28, no. 4 (2000):251.

³² S. Park, “An Evolving History and Methodology of Pastoral Theology, Care and Counseling”. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health* 9, no.1 (2006):5-32.

spirituality, and the relationships implied by spiritual engagement, began to appear in the research and writings of psychologists.³³

In parallel to the studies by the “integration” psychologists into the significance of spirituality and relationship in the process of therapeutic change, spirituality as a theological discipline began to appear in the writings of theologians.³⁴ Hence, after a long and arduous journey, theologians and psychologists began to find a “common factor”, a transcendent place for the coming together of the two disciplines that had seemed “utterly incommensurable and incomparable”.³⁵ The increasing body of both theological and psychological literature³⁶ that recognises and values the spirituality of the human person is providing a new hope for those who would see psychology and theology, both including spirituality, informing the practice of Christian therapists and pastors alike, for the benefit of their clients. So, to return to the task of defining the interdisciplinary focus of this thesis, Christians who, either professionally or

³³ cf. Len Sperry, “The Psychologization of Spirituality: A Compelling Case for It Has Yet To Be Made”. *The Journal of Individual Psychology* 64, no. 2 (2008):168-175; Sperry and Shafranske, *Spiritually Oriented*; P. Jankowski, “Postmodern Spirituality: Implications for Promoting Change”. *Counselling and Value* 47 (2002): 69-79; McMinn and Hall, “Christian Spirituality”; B. Zinnbauer, K. Pargament, and A. Scott, “Emerging Meanings of Religiousness and Spirituality: Problems and Prospects”. *Journal of Personality* 67 (1999): 889-919; Wilkie Au, *The Way of the Heart: Towards a Holistic Christian Spirituality* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1990); Joann Wolski-Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996); Pat Collins, *Mind and Spirit: Spirituality and Psychology in Dialogue* (Blackrock, Dublin: Columba Press, 2007). Journals such as *The Way*, *Supplement to the Way*, *Human Development* are significant publications and resources in the spirituality/psychology/theology dialogue that is presently happening ecumenically.

³⁴ cf. Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and Theology* (London, UK: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004) and *A Brief History of Spirituality* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007); Alister McGrath, *Christian Spirituality* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999); Mark McIntosh, *Mystical Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998); Sandra Schneiders, “Theology and Spirituality: Strangers, Rivals or Partners?” *Horizons* 13, no.2 (1986) and “Spirituality in”; Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Monastics* (New York, NY: Oxford, 1993); Michael Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1997); Belden Lane, *Ravished by Beauty: The Surprising Legacy of Reformed Spirituality* (New York, NY: Oxford, 2011); Don Saliers, *Worship Come to its Senses* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996); *A History of Christian Spirituality*. vols. 1, 2, and 3; *The Spirituality of the New Testament and the Fathers*; *The Spirituality of the Middle Ages and Orthodox Spirituality*; and *Protestant and Anglican Spirituality* (Norfolk, UK: Seabury, 1969) edited by Louis Bouyer, Jean Leclercq, and Francois Vandenbroucke (1969) and; *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox) edited by Philip Sheldrake, first published in 1983 and updated in 2005, indicates that scholarly investigation into Christian spirituality was taking place as early as the 1960’s.

³⁵ F. Richardson, “Secularism, Psychology and Hermeneutics”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 34, no. 3 (2006b):285-288.

³⁶As an example, in 1993, the *Christian Spirituality Bulletin* was first published as an ecumenical voice of the emerging theological discipline of spirituality. In 2001, the name was changed to *Spiritus*.

pastorally, engage with the knowledge of the social sciences have developed the dialogue with which to bridge the space between psychology³⁷ and theology.³⁸ Story, phenomenal experience, relationship and community are words that constitute the language of the spirit and this language is now beginning to be learned and used by many whose work leads them to build therapeutic relationships in the fields of both psychology and theology. It is this interdisciplinary language that underpins this study.

Pastoral Counselling

The same interdisciplinary language is also needed when undertaking the difficult task of defining pastoral counselling³⁹ – especially when seeking a definition³⁹ that includes the variety of approaches and contexts where pastoral counselling is practiced. Such a definition is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a “working definition” of pastoral counselling for the purposes of this study is very important. Pastoral counselling is, at this time, emerging as a discipline in its own right.⁴⁰ It is significant for this study to clarify the boundaries that are presently somewhat blurred, namely those between pastoral care, pastoral counselling and

³⁷ Examples of those whose first discipline is psychology and who have written in the language of Christian spirituality are David Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2004); Gerald May, *The Dark Night of the Soul: A Psychiatrist Explores the Connection Between Darkness and Spiritual Growth* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2005); Kenneth Pargament, *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy* (New York, NY: Guilford, 2007); Sperry, “The Psychologization”, 168-175.

³⁸ Examples of those whose first discipline is theology and who have written in the language of spirituality from a protestant perspective are Mark Cartledge, “Practical Theology and Charismatic Spirituality: Dialectics in the Spirit”. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10, no. 2 (2002): 93-109; McIntosh, *Mystical Theology* (1998); McGrath, *Christian Spirituality* (2007) while Tony Kelly, *A New Imagining. Towards an Australian Spirituality* (Melbourne, VIC: Collins Dove, 1990); Sheldrake, *Spirituality and*; Downey, *Understanding Christian*; and Bernard McGinn, “The Venture of Mysticism in the New Millennium”. *New Theology Review* (2008):70-79, write from the Catholic tradition.

³⁹Although Brian Thorne, “The Prophetic Nature of Pastoral Counselling”. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* 29, no.4 (2001): 436, reminds us that the term “pastoral counselling”, in a pluralistic world, can be applied to any religion, this study will be limited to discussing Christian pastoral counselling.

⁴⁰ Scholarly articles are beginning to appear in a variety of journals that explore the parameters of pastoral counselling. cf: Eckhard Frick’s 2010 article entitled “Pastoral and Psychotherapeutic Counseling”. *Christian Bioethics* 16, no.1; Carole Greenwald, Joanne Greer, Kevin Gillespie and Thomas Greer’s 2004 article on “A Study of the Identity of Pastoral Counselors”. *American Journal of Pastoral Counseling* 7, no. 4 and John Foskett’s 2001 article on “Can Pastoral Counselling Recover its Roots in Madness?”. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* 29, no. 4, to mention a few.

“professional” counselling. Therefore, a brief overview of the theological and philosophical roots of pastoral care and counselling, as well as accounts of more contemporary, practical experiences will help to elucidate these distinctions.

The care of the soul has always been the story of the people of God. The metaphor of the shepherd, used by Jesus of Himself,⁴¹ was already familiar to the Jews of Jesus time. The picture of the shepherd, associated with empathy, compassion, guidance and protection of both the flock and the individual sheep, so relevant to a middle-eastern, pastoral society, can be seen in the Old Testament scriptures in story,⁴² poetry⁴³ and prophetic writings.⁴⁴ The roles of the priest are also found in these writings, as one appointed to instruct the people in God’s ways,⁴⁵ present sacrifices for the sins of Israel, be consulted about difficult decisions,⁴⁶ oversee and maintain the faith community in terms of worship and religious practice, and to generally represent the people to God while nurturing their relationship with Him. We also read of the prophets who went to the people on behalf of God. The twofold expectations on the prophets were firstly, to warn of personal, communal or national judgment.⁴⁷ The second expectation on the prophet was to give the promise of restoration and renewal, also a somewhat daunting task in the midst of such catastrophes as war or famine.⁴⁸

However, central to the care of the soul is the covenant. The overarching role of the shepherd, the priest and the prophet was for each, in their own way, to bring the people back to the

⁴¹ John 10:14: “I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own”.

⁴²cf. The story of Jacob – Genesis 30:25-43.

⁴³ Psalm 23.

⁴⁴ Ezekiel 34 castigates the priests, the “shepherds of Israel” for lack of empathy and compassion and for not guiding or protecting the people of Israel.

⁴⁵cf. Deuteronomy 31:9-13.

⁴⁶cf. Ibid., 17:8-11.

⁴⁷cf. Isaiah 38:1; Jeremiah 19.

⁴⁸ cf. Isaiah 61.

knowledge of the covenant that God had instigated with His people. The Old Testament stories of the shepherds, the priests and the prophets continually reiterate the personal relationship of love between God and his people that is mutual, life-giving, healing and transformational.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the roles of prophet, priest and shepherd in order to embody a new covenant through his distinctive identity and mission as the incarnation of the Word of God. This the new covenant⁴⁹ is succinctly revealed in the teaching of the beatitudes⁵⁰ where Jesus expounds the new covenantal grace. It is this love/grace, first revealed in God's interaction with His people in the Old Testament, then demonstrated by Jesus in the Gospels that is foundational to pastoral care.

The Biblical narratives of the events of the day of Pentecost⁵¹ that followed Christ's death and resurrection⁵² reveal not just a time where the followers of Jesus "turned the world upside down"⁵³ but they also contain the records that inspired the continuation of the Gospel message of grace and love lived out by Jesus. For example, Witherup⁵⁴ reminds us that Saint Paul, although always maintaining commitment to the Gospel message he brought as an apostle, was adept at addressing the practical problems of daily life being experienced by his

⁴⁹ Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998),77, writes: "The ultimate fulfilment of the covenant (between God and his people) is in Jesus Christ, whose coming is the eschaton (Hebrews 1:2) and whose life of perfect obedience and self-sacrifice effectively brought deliverance from the captivity of sin, both for Israel and for the rest of the world. Salvation history is the story of God's deliverance within the historical process (although not confined to it)".

⁵⁰ Matthew 5, 6, 7.

⁵¹ Acts 2.

⁵² Luke 24:7.

⁵³ Acts 17:6.

⁵⁴ R. Witherup, "Paul the Pastor: A Good Shepherd Cares for His Flock and Ministers to Them in Pastoral Ways". *The Priest* 12 (2009):12.

communities. “In other words, Paul was a master at blending theology and pastoral practice”. It is relevant here to consider another metaphor applied to the early church that continues to this day - that of a family. Again Witherup, using the example of Saint Paul, reminds us:

Another surprising feature of Paul’s activity as a pastor is his actions toward his communities as a parental figure. In fact, Paul extensively uses the metaphor of a family to describe pastoral ministry in its various facets. For example, he tells the Corinthians they are his children, and he holds himself up as their (spiritual) father (1 Cor 4:15: ‘... I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel’. cf. 1 Cor 4:14; 2 Cor 6:13). Sometimes Paul also recognized that his young communities could be like infants who could only be fed milk (not substantive teachings) until they grew to the point of eating solid food (1 Cor 3:2).⁵⁵

The New Testament narratives tell us similar stories⁵⁶ of others of the early church whose pastoral ministry revealed the “Father” heart of God for fallen humanity. As they nurtured, protected and guided their flock, these early pastoral carers not only developed the community of faith but they also continued the work of the prophets, priests and shepherds of the Old Testament, reminding the people of the covenantal relationship God has for those who hope in his saving power.⁵⁷

These New Testament stories, however, offer a different aspect of God when compared with the writings of the Old Testament. The Epistles of Paul and other disciples of Christ have, along with the Gospel stories of the life and teachings of Jesus, provided an insight into the

⁵⁵ Witherup, “Paul the”, 14.

⁵⁶ cf. Acts 6:1-7.

⁵⁷ Tom Ryan, “Theological Anthropology”. Unpublished notes, Date unknown.

heart of God that goes beyond a code of behaviour and invites a relationship with the God who changes lives and brings transformation. Rohr explains:

When we get to the Risen Jesus, there is nothing to be afraid of in God. His very breath is identified with forgiveness and the Divine *shalom*. If the Risen Jesus is the final revelation of the nature of the heart of God, then suddenly we live in a safe and lovely universe. But it is not that God has changed, or that the Hebrew God is a different God than the God of Jesus, it is that *we* are growing up as we move through the texts and deepen our experience.⁵⁸

It is precisely because the Hebrew God is the same as the incarnate God that both the Old and New Testament writings can contribute to, and enrich, this comprehension of pastoral care that incorporates . . . “an understanding of human existence in relation to God in the light of [Judeo] Christian experience”,⁵⁹ embracing creation, covenant, Christ as realisation of the human being created in the image and likeness of God, the notion of sin, nature/grace, personhood, and salvation.⁶⁰

However, to hold the theological convictions expressed above in the world in which the pastoral carer lives and works today is not without challenges. In the 1960’s, Rogers’⁶¹ Person-Centred Therapy and the philosophy and techniques of the existential/humanistic school of psychology became popular, not only with counsellors and psychotherapists of the time, but also with many of those in pastoral care who found the techniques useful in their

⁵⁸ Richard Rohr, *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality* (Cincinnati, OH: St Anthony Messenger, 2008), 12.

⁵⁹ Roger Haight, *The Experience and Language of Grace* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1979), 9.

⁶⁰ Ryan, “Theological Anthropology”.

⁶¹ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1961).

work.⁶² Other influences seen in Western society around this time were the concepts of self-actualisation purported by Maslow,⁶³ a growing interest in the feminist movement and the rise of individualism. In this period, and perhaps in response to this rising individualism, Hiltner,⁶⁴ who was pioneering the new discipline of pastoral theology, writes that he believed that “the ‘tender and solicitous care’ of the shepherd . . . at times privileges the needs of the one at what increasing numbers of my colleagues fear may be the expense of the larger flock”. This comment sparked a debate that led to Campbell⁶⁵ to write: “. . . in Hiltner the image [of the shepherd] is little more than a cipher which gives a religious appearance to statements about [pastoral] care derived from quite other sources, notably the faith statements of Rogerian counseling theory”. An examination of the tensions between the “faith statements” of those who contribute to the knowledge of pastoral care will serve to further inform this study.

Therefore, to consider the theology of soul care in this contemporary, pluralistic world, it could be surmised that it is the use of theology, broadly understood, that distinguishes care of the soul from other forms of care. Theology brings both the awareness and the needed conceptual resources for engaging with fallen humanity’s struggle with evil and sin and their consequences in ruptured relationships with God, self and others. Theology’s reflection on

⁶² Barbara McClure, “The Social Construction of Emotions: A New Direction in the Pastoral Work of Healing”. *Pastoral Psychology* 59 (2010):800, writes: “The interview material presented here reflects the enormous influence of Carl Rogers on the interviewees’ responses, though his influence is likely to be indirect. To be sure, some of the persons I interviewed may have read Rogers’ *Client-Centered Therapy and On Becoming* (1951, 1961), two texts which have had profound influence on the practice of pastoral care and counseling. More likely, however, the influence has been more subtle, the result of the institutionalization of Rogerian commitments in Clinical Pastoral Education and pastoral counseling training centers, or their own personal experience of being counseled by a pastoral counselor who was herself shaped by Rogerian approaches”.

⁶³ Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York, NY: Viking, 1971).

⁶⁴ Seward Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1958), 19, 68.

⁶⁵ Alastair Campbell, *Rediscovering Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1981), 42.

divine revelation brings to us the Father heart of God from which flows, so freely, redemption through Christ, forgiveness of sin and eternal life. Theology enables the development of a cognitive form of understanding that can lead to, or give support to, a spiritual surrendering to the incomprehensible God of love and grace. Without such theological knowledge, the suffering that is such a big part of being human makes no sense. Theology provides the faith dimension that brings another horizon to understanding and interpreting human experience. It is theology that gives the pastoral carer the tools to hold in tension the paradox of a God of love and mercy and a holy and just God. Pastoral care, therefore, needs to be soundly grounded in theological epistemology, and in church history and its traditions.

Pastoral counselling, to be truly pastoral, embraces the same theological tenets as pastoral care. However, pastoral counsellors also acknowledge the value of the work of theorists who, since the time of Freud, have continued to develop new understandings of the psychology of the human person and innovative techniques for overcoming the psychological problems that have dogged mankind for so long. Although the scientific epistemology of psychology has, in the past, had little respect for theology and religion, and, likewise, theologians and ministers of religion have been suspicious of psychology, psychological practices have quietly filtered into the church. Scientifically-trained psychologists who were also Christian saw value in their empirical knowledge and the techniques of the various schools of psychology.⁶⁶ Through a desire to share this knowledge, they began to write for a Christian audience. Around the 1970's and 1980's these books began to appear on Christian bookshelves. This literature addressed subjects often encountered by the pastor in the course of his responsibilities to his

⁶⁶ Hans Dober in his 2010 article, "What Can the Pastor Learn from Freud? A Historical Perspective on Psychological and Theological Dimensions of Soul Care". *Christian Bioethics* 16, no. 1, elaborates how the teachings associated with psychology are necessary for pastors to maintain a therapeutic relationship with their people and still be authentic to their own beliefs.

congregation. Books, treatment plans and courses with information and strategies for pastors to implement for such traditional pastoral care issues as grief and loss, family tensions, depression and anxiety became popular with those called to ministry.⁶⁷ Although some resisted the advancing of the social sciences into theology's territory, Bible colleges and seminaries⁶⁸ gradually began to integrate relevant aspects of the social sciences into their courses.

It was around this time that the term "counselling" came into use in the church. What was referred to as "prayer counselling"⁶⁹ became popular in various places, with both Catholic and Protestant denominations. It became widely used in Pentecostal churches and was seen as an acceptable form of counselling as the focus was on the Holy Spirit to uncover the unconscious memories and to bring healing. Prayer counselling⁷⁰ employed techniques that closely resembled those used in psychoanalysis, although prayer counsellors would seldom recognise this. Guided imagery or free association,⁷¹ designed to bring unconscious memories into consciousness, was the chief method employed. As the client re-experienced the emotions attached to these memories, prayer would be offered to bring healing to these memories. In the 1980's, this method was adapted by the Christian Outreach Centre (COC) movement, and dubbed "restoration counselling". All pastors were required to have a session of this counselling before they began leading a church. The expectation was, then, that they would use this method for dealing with problems with which their people may present. Although

⁶⁷ These authors include Gary Collins (2007), Larry Crabb (1974), David Benner (1988) and Neil Anderson (2004).

⁶⁸ This began in the United States with Fuller Seminary and Rosemead College.

⁶⁹ This method of ministry was also called "healing of memories", "inner healing" or "prayer ministry".

⁷⁰ The significant authors on this subject were John and Paula Sandford who wrote *The Transformation of the Inner Man* (Houston, TX: Victory) in 1982.

⁷¹ Common techniques of the psychodynamic school of counselling.

this method is not nearly as popular as it was in the latter part of the twentieth century, COC pastors still tend to associate “counselling” with prayer counselling.⁷²

This period was also a time of major societal changes. Post-World War II, Western society now saw life through different eyes to those of their parents, resulting in new and radical philosophies, including constructivism⁷³ and feminism. Although sometimes critical of the church, these ideas ushered in a new awareness that opened the way for pastors, like counsellors, to see value in developing a counselling relationship marked by genuineness, empathy and unconditional positive regard; to recognise the benefit of reprogramming dysfunctional thinking and behaviour patterns; to understand the impact one’s past experiences can have on present functioning; and to examine the nature of the authority and the power held by the church and individual pastors.

Considering all these varied aspects of “the church in action” and counselling theory and practice, the task of defining pastoral counselling is now within our grasp. Although by no means exhaustive, this discussion has identified some of the elements that define pastoral counselling:

- Pastoral counselling recognises the inherent image and likeness of God within each person and endorses the dignity and value that image embodies.
- Pastoral counselling’s purpose is to nurture and nourish the soul, to make sense out of suffering and to provide the encouragement and support that reflect the covenantal relationship God has with humanity.

⁷² This knowledge has been acquired through personal discussion with COC pastors over a number of years.

⁷³ Edward Erwin, “Constructivist Epistemologies and Therapies”. *British Journal of Guidance of Counselling* 27, no. 3 (1999): 353-365.

- Pastoral counselling is firmly grounded in the fertile soil of the Biblical, historical and traditional expressions of holistic soul care that can be traced from Old Testament times. The attributes of the shepherd, the priest and the prophet as described in the scriptures serve as a model for a pastoral counselling ministry.
- Pastoral counselling recognises the value of knowledge gleaned from the social sciences and establishes a meaningful dialogue between the theory and practice of theology and counselling psychology. This includes submission to the ethical codes of practice of the church, government and a related psychological association. It also includes behaviour related to such matters and the qualifications of the pastoral carer, together with issues concerning confidentiality, boundaries and duty of care.
- Pastoral counselling is experiential and contextual, ministering soul care that adapts and is relevant to the people and the environment in which it practices.
- Pastoral counselling embraces a relationship that not only employs the recognised elements to be intentionally therapeutic but also recognises the spiritual dimensions that human persons in relationship experience.

It is this definition that will designate “pastoral counselling” in this thesis.

Research Context

It is the dimension of the therapeutic relationship that seeks to embrace spirituality that influenced the choice of the context for this study. The context chosen is Christian Outreach Centre (COC), which is representative of an approach to Christianity that originated with the Pentecostal revivals of the early twentieth century, and from which the Charismatic movements of the 1970's emerged. These somewhat radical roots continue to support COC although this church has transitioned to become a unique example of a large, local, Australian Pentecostal denomination. The significance of COC being the context of this study lies in the

fact that this church has been in the forefront of the global revivalist movement since the church's inception in 1974. In pursuit of the evangelistic mandate to "make disciples",⁷⁴ a cornerstone of Pentecostalism, COC has founded a mega-church,⁷⁵ hundreds of churches in urban and rural Australia and overseas,⁷⁶ schools,⁷⁷ a tertiary institution⁷⁸ and social justice and community development focussed mission work.⁷⁹ There is a growing body of research⁸⁰ showing that the Pentecostal movement has had considerable influence on the beliefs and practices of Christianity worldwide and it is these beliefs and practices that have led COC to extend its sphere of influence to encompass social and community issues. As it is the relationships epitomising such spiritual, social and community experiences that are of interest to this thesis, the COC context is deemed a rich source of data that will inform this qualitative study. In this chapter, a reflection on the historical and sociological influences that have been instrumental in the shaping of COC as a movement from 1974 until today will provide a better understanding of the value of this context to this study.

⁷⁴ cf. Matthew 28:18-20.

⁷⁵ According to Hey's research, "The History", (Used with permission of the author) Citipointe Christian Outreach Centre, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, with approximately 3,500 people meeting weekly, attracts over 2000 followers and therefore qualifies as a mega-church.

⁷⁶ Presently there are 138 churches under the COC banner in Australia and upward of 500 churches in Europe, the Eastern Block countries, the Middle East, South America as well as Australasia and the South Pacific. Many house churches are also flourishing in third world countries. These figures are from the research of Hey, "The History".

⁷⁷ There are four COC schools operating in Australia.

⁷⁸ Christian Heritage College (CHC) is a tertiary college, operating for over 27 years, and accredited with the TEQSA. CHC offers up to Masters degrees in Schools of Ministry, Social Sciences, Education and Humanities, and Business.

⁷⁹ Most COC churches have missional, community development and social justice projects that work with disadvantaged people in their own communities, overseas and in third world countries.

⁸⁰ Margaret Paloma and John Green, *The Assemblies of God: Godly Love and the Revitalization of American Pentecostalism* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2010), 63, who have done empirical studies in the area of Pentecostalism, write: "Spirit-filled Christianity, unlike Christian fundamentalism and evangelicalism, represents more than a cognitive or doctrinal reaction to modernity. It has proactively developed certain characteristics that taken together make its worldview distinct from other form of Christianity both liberal and conservative. The Pentecostal worldview is experientially centered, with followers in a dynamic, personal relationship with a Deity that is both immanent and transcendent".

The Participants

The participants in this study were chosen, not only for being well-experienced⁸¹ in the spiritual aspects of ministry that are foundational to Pentecostal believing, but also because they could provide rich insights into the phenomena of the pastoral counselling relationship and the wide variety of implications that such a relationship represents. All the participants are pastors and/or pastors' wives⁸² and were, at the time of the interview, leading churches belonging to the COC movement. Hence, a brief examination of the history of these COC churches and the revival movements from which COC, as an Australian Pentecostal/Charismatic⁸³ church has developed, will serve as an overview on which to build this discussion.

The Context Church

The term “revival” is loaded with meaning for those who pursue the Pentecostal experience. Anderson, describing the Welsh revival⁸⁴ which is seen by most as ushering in what is now known as Pentecostalism, articulates what “revival” means to the Pentecostal:

During this revival (the Welsh revival) the Pentecostal presence and power of the Holy Spirit was emphasized, and meetings were hours long, spontaneous,

⁸¹ All but one of the pastors interviewed had more than 10 years experience in the field.

⁸² It is the policy of the COC movement to ordain both husband and wife together. The wife is given the title of “pastor” as well as the husband.

⁸³ Allen Anderson, in his article, “When is a Pentecostal Not a Pentecostal? When She is Responding to Irvin, Lopez Rodriguez and Waldrop”. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16, no.1 (2007):58, claims that, “What is 'Pentecostal' and 'Charismatic' will continue to be a subject of debate for many years to come and this response argues for the intentional ambiguity of the terms”. Other Pentecostal theologians, including Amos Yong, “Natural Laws and Divine Intervention: What Difference Does Being Pentecostal or Charismatic Make?” *Zygon* 43, no. 4 (2008), and Veli-Matti Karkkainen, “Towards a Pneumatology of Religion: A Pentecostal-Charismatic Inquiry”. *International Review of Missions* (2002) would seem to agree as they use the terms together. However, it is not the differences but the commonalities of these two theological streams that is of interest to this study and these terms will be used interchangeably in this paper.

⁸⁴ The Welsh Revival began in 1904 with Evan Roberts preaching confession of sin, obedience to the Holy Spirit and public declaration of faith in Christ. This revival was marked by hundreds of thousands of people witnessing to their lives being transformed through the Holy Spirit, <http://www.welshrevival.com/>

seemingly chaotic and emotional, with “singing in the Spirit”, simultaneous and loud prayer, revelatory visions and prophecy, all emphasising the immediacy of God in the services and in personal experiences.⁸⁵

Hence, when the word “revival” is used in the context of the history of the church, the inference is that the church had been, at least in the eyes of some, lifeless and in need of reviving when a visitation from God inspired and motivated one person or a group of believers to influence major life changes for large numbers of people. These visitations from God were usually marked by signs and wonders, with many people being influenced to repent of their sins and turn to God,⁸⁶ and a strong emphasis on relationship – with God and with others. Often these events marked the birth of a new church movement. It is also relevant here to mention that, according to Hey,⁸⁷ these new movements tended to be open to religious and organisational innovation particularly in their interaction with the wider community. Ever since the Holy Spirit’s visitation on the Day of Pentecost, described in the Book of Acts, Chapter 2, these transformational experiences have been occurring at various times and places

⁸⁵ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 36.

⁸⁶ cf. Acts 5:12; Romans 15:19; 2 Corinthians 12:12. There is also a plethora of literature on the subject of signs and wonder from different perspectives. Paul Alexander’s, *Signs and Wonders: Why Pentecostalism is the World’s Fastest Growing Faith* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2009) addresses the subject from a somewhat scholarly aspect while Geoff Waugh, an Australian, *Flashpoints of Revival* (North Charleston, SC: Booksurge, 2009) tells the stories of signs and wonders from a more narrative view. Teresa Rossi, “A Panel on Salvation: The Catholic Perspective”. *International Review of Mission* 96, nos. 382/383 (2007): 210-220, also explores this subject and her comments have some relevance to the topic being discussed: “According to St Thomas, every *gratia gratis data* (freely given grace) implies three elements: knowing that we are saved (*cognitio*); speaking the good news (*locidio*); operating the wonders (*operatio*). These three elements were understood in a linear sequence, and follow a rather hierarchical model of ecclesiology. The three concepts mentioned by St Thomas are the same concepts we are referring to: “knowing that we are saved” (salvation); “speaking the good news” (mission); “operating wonders” (healing). The three concepts framed in an ecclesiology of *koinonia* can be seen to be in a circular relation, and this thus allows the emergence of a key category, viz. revelation, that has probably been put aside in recent theological reflection but which, instead, could be very enriching”. Although noted here, this will be examined more carefully further in this paper.

⁸⁷ Hey, “The History”.

throughout the world.⁸⁸ It is the records of these times that constitute revival history, contextualised within the discipline of church history.

According to Ellington,⁸⁹ church history is the field where both historians and historiographers seek to examine and analyse the ways in which the Christian church has changed through time. Historians access historical texts that describe past times and events and, through critical analysis, make comparisons with other evidence. They also draw information from other sciences, especially the social sciences, seeking to develop an interpretive narrative of the times and events that satisfies the rigors of scientific enquiry. Historiographers are interested in the methods, sources, interpretations, styles and biases of the historians, thereby seeking not only a narrative of the time but also how this time has been conceptualised by those reporting it. A third aspect of history is the practice encouraged throughout both Old⁹⁰ and New⁹¹ Testaments of remembering. Ellington explains:

Remembering, as opposed to historiography, attempts neither objective detachment nor an exhaustive, balanced telling of the facts. The past is not remembered for its own sake, but is seen as a living narrative that is constantly reaching toward and being integrated with present experiences.⁹²

Ellington here infers, however, that this process of recollection should not be a haphazard exercise but must be supported by the strong, traditional and scriptural framework that ensures that the remembering is done through the lens of faith as defined in Hebrews 11:1.⁹³

⁸⁸ cf. Wales, UK, in 1904; Azusa St, Los Angeles, CA. in 1906.

⁸⁹ S. Ellington, "The Reciprocal Reshaping of History and Experience in the Psalms: Interactions with Pentecostal Testimony". *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16, no.1 (2007):5.

⁹⁰ cf. Deuteronomy 16:3; 32:7; 1 Chronicles 16:15; Psalm 42:4; 105:5; Isaiah 46:9; Zechariah 10:9; Malachi 4:4.

⁹¹ cf. Luke 22:19; John 16:4; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.

⁹² Ellington, "The Reciprocal", 21.

⁹³ Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses] (Hebrews 1:11, AMP).

Just as Joshua courageously marched into the Promised Land by faith with the recollection of God's words ringing in his ears, so each new generation can find a connection with the past that makes sense of the present and gives hope for the future. Lyon⁹⁴ maintains that remembering is intrinsic in the formation of identity, both of the individual and of the community, using Israel and the Jewish practice of remembering as an example. Hence, for a relatively "new" movement such as Pentecostalism, still struggling to find an identity, this "remembering" ushers in a "coming of age"⁹⁵ as remembered experiences and events form the practices and establish the beliefs of the Pentecostal worshipper of today.

Perhaps it is from this remembering perspective that Pentecostals, according to Ellington,⁹⁶ "often begin with the 'abiding astonishment' created by an encounter with God and then move to the biblical text in order to interpret and integrate that encounter with the biblical story". Sounding a caution for this practice, a 1977 group of evangelical academics issued a "Call to Historic Roots and Continuity", saying:

We confess that we have often lost the fullness of our Christian heritage, too readily assuming that the Scripture and the Spirit make us independent of the past. In so doing, we have become theologically shallow, spiritually weak, blind to the work of God in others and married to our cultures. We dare not move beyond the biblical limits of the gospel; but we cannot be fully evangelical without recognizing

⁹⁴ K. Brynolf Lyon, "The Unwelcome Presence: The Practical Moral Intention of Remembering". *Encounter* 48, no.1 (1987):142.

⁹⁵ Chris Armstrong, "The Future Lies in the Past". *Christianity Today* (2008):26.

⁹⁶ Ellington, "The Reciprocal", 29.

our need to learn from other times and movements concerning the whole meaning of that gospel.⁹⁷

In 1977, this caution was, perhaps, warranted and certainly, the pattern of the experience pre-empting the Biblical evidence was the COC story.⁹⁸ It began with Clark Taylor, the movement's founder, having an encounter with God and experiencing a supernatural healing. This resulted in Taylor holding meetings where people gathered for prayer, worship, Bible based preaching and to witness and experience miracles and supernatural healings. Starting with twenty-five people, this group soon swelled as more and more people were drawn to the excitement generated as a consequence of this ministry. Within a few years, this congregation had grown to a thousand or more enthusiasts who flocked to several meetings a week, drawn by this "abiding astonishment". These people came from all walks of life, and it was largely through the telling and the hearing of the stories of what was happening in this West End warehouse⁹⁹ that brought them in. As many of the people in this group came from "unchurched" backgrounds, it was not so much that they had "lost the fullness of their Christian heritage" but more that many of those who made up the congregation of the early days of COC were either disillusioned with the traditional church of the day or simply unaware of their Christian heritage.¹⁰⁰

This was the era when the radical societal changes already mentioned were happening, especially in Western countries and all traditions, including Christianity were being questioned or seen as irrelevant. However, Armstrong's words (above) were, to some extent,

⁹⁷ Armstrong, "The Future", 25.

⁹⁸ The discussion of COC, its history and structure, has been drawn from Hey's "The History", as well as personal knowledge.

⁹⁹ The early headquarters of COC were at West End, Brisbane, Queensland. Also see Hey, "The History".

¹⁰⁰ Armstrong, "The Future", 25.

true and it could be agreed that, in those early days of COC, there was the assumption that “the Scripture and the Spirit make us independent of the past”.¹⁰¹ The new COC converts chose, instead of the established church and the richness of its tradition and theology, to embrace the stories of “Holy Spirit revivals” past and present, of miracles, and of exciting manifestations of the power and the presence of God. This was also the era of audio technology, and later, video recordings and it was through this technology, as well as the Sunday and weekly meetings, that the message was communicated and kept alive. Just as God commanded the people of Israel¹⁰² to “hear,” “tell,” “teach” and “talk” so the people of this COC community valued a “living tradition”¹⁰³ embodied in relationship; they listened; they told; they taught and they talked. It is evident, therefore, that it has been a “living tradition” that has formed a significant part of Pentecostal, and specifically COC, epistemology. The living narratives of people in relationship with God and each other, composed of the integration of the past stories, the Biblical narratives and the here-and-now experience, certainly had appeal.

Another aspect of the Pentecostal phenomena significant to establishing the context of this study is the charismatic leader. From the eighteenth century onwards, the history of Holy Spirit revivals is also the history of the charismatic leaders who facilitated the revivals. Whether learned theologians, local pastors, miners, fishermen, farmers, men or women from

¹⁰¹ Armstrong, “The Future”, 25.

¹⁰² Deuteronomy 6:4-8: ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength”. ⁶ And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates”.

¹⁰³ Simon Chan, “The Church and the Development of Doctrine”. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13, no.1 (2004):67, defines living tradition as “the transmission and development of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the on-going practices of the Church through the power of the Spirit”.

any culture across the globe, those who have been instrumental in ushering in major Holy Spirit revivals have significant common attributes. Although, to many Christians the word “charisma” relates to the spiritual gifts associated with the Holy Spirit, the term “charismatic leader” has a much wider usage. Hey claims:

... cultural and religious awakenings tend to arise in periods of cultural distortion and personal stress, which contribute to a loss of faith in the legitimacy of established norms, and to a questioning of the viability of institutions and the authority of leaders in the church and state.¹⁰⁴

The period after the Second World War was such a time of cultural distortion and personal stress and radical societal attitudes began to emerge in reaction to the disillusionment of the Western world with the institutional systems of authority. Church leaders who emerge in these times will necessarily have a particular charisma that provides the impetus for reform and resounds with those discontented with institutionalised religion. Burbuto agrees that charismatic leaders rise in times of a social crisis and, in this climate, “leaders with extraordinary appeal emerge with a radical vision that provides a solution to the crisis, attracting followers who strongly identify with the leader and believe in the cause”.¹⁰⁵ In such a situation “charisma” refers to the leader's ability to generate great symbolic power with which the followers identify. Followers idealise the leader and develop strong emotional attachments.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Hey, “The History”.

¹⁰⁵John Barbuto, “Taking the Charisma Out of Transformational Leadership”. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 12, no. 3 (1997):690.

¹⁰⁶Deanna Den Hartog, R. House, P. Hanges, S. Ruiz-Quintanilla, and P. Dorfman, “Culture Specific and Cross-Culturally Generalizable Implicit Leadership Theories: Are Attributes of Charismatic/Transformational Leadership Universally Endorsed?”. *Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999):219.

It was the stories of great Christian leaders such as Charles Wesley, the founder of Methodism, that inspired Taylor.¹⁰⁷ As a former farmer and Methodist minister, Taylor was finding it difficult to find the link between the spiritual passion conveyed by the revival stories of another era and the dryness of the spiritual life of the church he was endeavouring to serve. His desire was to experience the healings, miracles and supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit as those described in the Biblical narratives of the Acts of the Apostles and demonstrated anew in the stories of the Welsh revival and Azusa Street.¹⁰⁸ Like his role model, Billy Graham, he also desired to see “souls saved”. Therefore, he left the Methodist church. In 1974, Taylor began the COC meetings mentioned above. The signs, wonders and miracles that were regularly reported fuelled the sense of expectation and excitement that followed Taylor’s ministry and suddenly, he was thrust into the role of charismatic leader, idealised by those whom he led. The initial meetings Taylor held attracted so many of the curious or the seeking that, within a short period of time, the church moved to larger and then larger premises until finally settling on acreage in a south Brisbane suburb. From these dramatic but humble beginnings, Christian Outreach Centre¹⁰⁹ grew to be a worldwide movement, currently with one hundred and sixty churches in Australia - including the “mother church”, Citipointe, officially a “mega-church”¹¹⁰ with three thousand attendees - five hundred churches overseas, schools, a tertiary education facility and many local and overseas mission projects. The participants in this study are from these Australian COC churches and they all share in the belief that spiritual passion is at the core of spiritual health. As many of them have also been involved in the growth of the COC church and the development of the charismatic leader, the question is then posed as to how much this picture

¹⁰⁷ Personal knowledge, and Hey, “The History”.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Hey, “The History”.

has coloured their conceptualisation of their role and therefore the expectations they have of themselves as pastors.

Despite COC's early successes, the period from the mid 1980's to 1990's was a time of turmoil. This decline could be directly attributed to the moral demise of the charismatic leader of COC, Taylor. However, it could be argued that this tumultuous period was also a time of change. When, in 1993, revival, accompanied by signs and wonders broke out again, the church, learning from past experience, developed a more "democratic" hierarchy. The leadership of COC, while striving to maintain the charismatic vision, was very conscious of the implications of such visionary power without a sound structure of accountability. Again many people began to be attracted to the excitement and new growth was experienced.

Although churches such as COC have settled into a more structured organisation with less spontaneity in church services, the pastors still tend to be charismatic figures, though with less emphasis on instant and miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit and a greater reliance on previously shunned organisational structures. However, the Holy Spirit revival phenomena are still fresh in the minds of many who are "first generation COC". There is still a tendency for some, especially those in rural areas as many of the participants in this study are, to "continue to hold on to their earlier revivalist, charismatic beliefs, particularly as they often have few other resources".¹¹¹ This has resulted in high expectations on the pastors to maintain this excitement, causing tension between holding on to the experiential revivalist, charismatic heritage and pursuing innovations that make church more relevant to a contemporary

¹¹¹ Hey, "The History".

community. As this thesis progresses, it is expected that some of the issues that are part of the COC story will be clarified.

Research Design

There are limitations of this study. This research has been deliberately designed to use only one particular Pentecostal church for reasons outlined above, but the focus on this narrow context is also a limitation. It is realised that this rather unique setting will not present a picture that is necessarily indicative of the conceptualisation and practice of pastoral counselling in other church settings. The relatively small number of participants (eleven) and the uneven gender distribution (three males and eight females) could also be seen as a limitation. This being understood, there is now opportunity for further research to build upon the findings of this study. However, given that personal therapy and change are an integral part of this thesis and are also part of the transformative dimension of practical theology, this exploration is primarily aimed at making available to pastors in a particular church-based context, the resources of the solid research into this area of pastoral ministry.

Accordingly, the thesis will investigate a framework in which the various disciplinary areas best interact. This framework will have five distinct parts:

- Firstly, a therapeutic relationship that is representative of the dynamics of relationship within the Trinity and the impact of this relationship on the human person will be examined.
- Secondly, the psychological insights into the therapeutic relationship will be examined.

- Thirdly, common factors that emerge from the theoretical examinations of the therapeutic relationship from theological and psychological perspectives will be discerned.
- Fourthly, the data from the participant interviews will be analysed. From this, these pastors' phenomenological understandings of the therapeutic relationship will emerge.
- The fifth part of the research will discuss the common factors synthesized from the theoretical examinations and the analysis of the data.

It is expected that the findings that emerge from these investigations will address the gaps that now exist in the research and produce a model of the therapeutic relationship relative to the pastoral counselling situation and appropriate for the pastors in this particular setting.

Such an overall theological framework will benefit the pastors by enhancing their professional awareness in such a way as to minimise conflict between different aspects of their ministry, and to offer a more integrated sense of their pastoral counselling in theory and in practice. This framework will also benefit the people who seek pastoral counselling, in that the multi-dimensional levels of their experience, including their religious faith, their spirituality and their personal and community relationships will be properly respected. Raising awareness in the church and community of the nature of pastoral counselling, will give the church governance, the local community and the people of the congregation a more realistic appreciation of what they can expect from pastoral counselling.

Theoretical Framework

In accordance with constructivist epistemology that:

- addresses the processes of interaction among individuals;
- focuses on the specific contexts in which people work and live;
- seeks to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants;
- seeks to interpret the meanings others have about the world.

this research is interested in the pastors lived experience of their interaction with their people. Part of this relationality and experience falls into the categories of tacit knowing and theory in practice, Hence the work of Polanyi¹¹² on tacit knowing, and the related writings of Schön¹¹³ who, along with Argyris,¹¹⁴ have explored “theory in action” and “theory in use” will serve as supports of the theoretical framework of this study.

Another consideration relevant to the methodology is the concept of the Pentecostal church as a “living tradition.” Although the contemporary community of today’s Western world is strongly influenced by postmodernism¹¹⁵ and Pentecostalism, in postmodern fashion, favours a living tradition characterised by the telling of stories¹¹⁶ and the reflecting on experiences¹¹⁷

¹¹² Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

¹¹³ Donald Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1982).

¹¹⁴ Chris Argyris and Donald Schön, *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1974).

¹¹⁵ J. Moreland and William Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 145, explain “Postmodernism is both a historical, chronological notion and a philosophical ideology”. However, as a contextual understanding of these terms is crucial to this study, further in this review, a more detailed discussion as applied to both theology and psychology will be recorded.

¹¹⁶ Snyder, *Earthcurrents*, 277-306, discusses His-story as being the foundation of all stories and Ray Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2001), 10, states that “Before the theologian there was the storyteller”.

rather than on scholarly writings,¹¹⁸ a thorough examination of the strengths and limitations of this approach is warranted. For this reason, the interviews with the participants are an integral part of this investigation as they provide valuable insights into the “living tradition”¹¹⁹ that supports the COC ethos. It will be kept in mind that such a “living tradition’ approach is largely based on the spoken word. This could result in the strategies of argumentation and exposition being different from those based on theological literature, and, therefore arriving at such conclusions as what it means for something to be ‘true’ differently to the way a more scholarly investigation would.¹²⁰ This, as well as the other contextual issues discussed in this section, will be a consideration when analysing the recorded interviews with the participants.

A qualitative methodology, specifically Grounded Theory where constant comparison of the data results in the emergence of a theory, has been deemed as the most suitable to explore the phenomena associated with the pastoral counselling relationship and this will be fully explained in subsequent chapters.

¹¹⁷ Keith Warrington, the first Englishman to receive a PhD in Pentecostal Theology, speaking at the 2009 Pentecostal Charismatic Bible Colleges Conference, declared that Pentecostal Theology is reputedly “researched at the peril of the researcher”. Although he admitted Pentecostal Theology is usually defined in terms of negatives (suspicious of doctrines/ creeds, experiential, spontaneous) he calls Pentecostal Theology a “Theology of Encounter”.

¹¹⁸ John R. Belcher and Steven Hall, “Healing and Psychotherapy: The Pentecostal Tradition”. *Pastoral Psychology* 50, no. 2 (2001): 63-75.

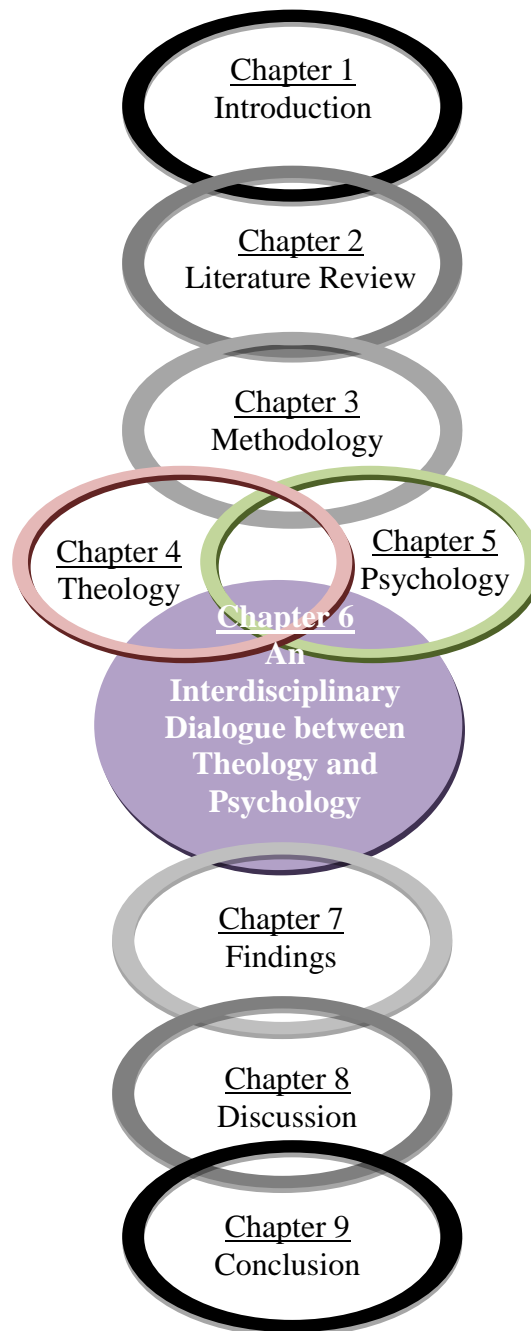
¹¹⁹ Chan, “The Church”, 67, defines living tradition as “the transmission and development of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the on-going practices of the Church through the power of the Spirit”.

¹²⁰ Jerry Camery-Hoggett, “The Word of God from Living Voices: Orality and Literacy in the Pentecostal Tradition”. *Pneuma, The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 27, no. 2 (2005):225.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis will consist of nine chapters as illustrated in Figure 1, below:

Figure 1 - Structure of the Thesis



Chapter 1

This introductory chapter, Chapter 1, has provided a comprehensive overview of the research project. As well as outlining the rationale for the study, introducing the research questions, and explaining the relevant contextual issues, it has been deemed important to clearly define the different aspects of the counselling relationship that form the essence of this research. Equally significant is the research design and the methodology that will be used and the explanation of this occupies a section of this chapter.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 will be the literature review. As will be explained in detail elsewhere in this thesis, owing to the interdisciplinary nature of the study and the phenomenological focus, a structure of sound theory is necessary to ensure an outcome that is rigorous. Hence, the literature forms the foundation of this work while the data analysis adds the phenomenological dimension. However, because of the uniqueness of the structure of this study, extensive theoretical underpinnings of both theology and psychology form an integral part of research. Although the literature review will serve to identify the scholars and writings significant to the research, for the sake of brevity, it will be left to the subsequent chapters for the depth of the connections among the diversity of literature to be revealed.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 comprehensively details the methodological process of this research. As noted previously, this is an interdisciplinary investigation and, as such, will engage with the theory and practice of both theology and psychology. The theory component will be drawn from significant contemporary theological and psychological sources as well as referring to the classical works of both disciplines where appropriate. Through the examination of this

literature, common factors relating to the research topic will be identified enabling a unique dialogue to take place between the two disciplines. Using this dialogue as the theoretical foundation, the practical aspect of the research will be provided by analysing interviews, the participants being pastors of a particular church. Grounded Theory has been chosen as the most appropriate method of data analysis as this methodology not only thoroughly explores the participant's phenomenological understandings but it also works towards developing a theory, in this case, related to the pastoral counselling encounter.

Chapters 4 and 5

Chapters 4 and 5 will examine the theoretical underpinnings of theology (Chapter 4) and psychology (Chapter 5). The focus of the study on the therapeutic relationship experienced by pastors in the pastoral counselling context will dictate the parameters of the theoretical discussions and aspects of this unique relationship common to both disciplines will be identified.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6, as indicated in the diagram above, will synthesise the dialogue between the common factors of theology and psychology identified as relating to the therapeutic relationship experienced in the pastoral counselling context. The outcomes of this dialogue will form the theoretical foundations of the research.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 will report on the findings from the Grounded Theory analysis of the data gathered from the interviews with the participants. The process of the analysis of this data will be

described and illustrated with examples from the transcribed interviews, demonstrating how, in accordance with Grounded Theory methodology, the theory emerges from the data analysis.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8, the discussion chapter, will consider the theoretical synthesis and the findings from the data. From this process a new understanding of how pastors conceptualise and practice the therapeutic relationship will emerge.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9, by way of conclusion presents a *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship as practiced in the pastoral counselling situation and brings the thesis to a conclusion.

Conclusion

Having completed the overview of this thesis, the literature review in the following chapter will begin to establish the theoretical rationale from which, as the thesis unfolds, fresh understandings of the pastor's conceptualisation and practice of the therapeutic relationship will emerge.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, significant literature will be reviewed including the theological and psychological scholarship that forms the foundation of this study. The literature that will be accessed for the theological and spirituality aspects of the study will be drawn from the Scriptures, the rich tradition of several millennia of theological scholarship, including creeds, as well as the more contemporary theologians who have taken the wisdom of past eras and evaluated it in the light of progressive illumination. With the twenty-first century vision of hindsight, reputable theologians of the twenty-first century have taken this ancient wisdom, sifted out the biases and discrepancies that have been illuminated by time, changing worldviews and discoveries from other disciplines such as archaeology and the social sciences and developed new perspectives of such doctrines as Trinity, image of God and Spirituality. Included with these more recent theologians are those of the Pentecostal Movement¹²¹ that emerged in the beginning of the twentieth century. Other contemporary theologians who will be quoted in this thesis are those who, looking at the lessons of history, recognised a “divorce” of theology and spirituality. The writings of these scholars who have sought to “remarry” the two aspects of knowing God will also be relevant to this study.

Hence, the literature that relates to the theological and spiritual perspectives of this study will be extensive and rich in both breadth and depth. The purpose of this study is to fully explore the therapeutic relationships of pastors in the counselling setting and therefore, it has been

¹²¹ A written theology of Pentecostalism has only recently begun to emerge from a Movement that initially rejected all scholarship, including theology, claiming allegiance only to the general revelation of the scriptures and the special revelation of the Holy Spirit, found in the experience of worship and prayer.

deemed more rigorous to draw upon Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostal sources that will specifically inform this topic and will provide a more wholistic picture.

Similarly, the literature on the psychological aspect of this study will also focus not only on the insights that have been developed in more recent times but also on the classical writings of the founding fathers of the discipline. Although nowhere as ancient as the discipline of theology, psychologists have produced theoretical knowledge that has had a significant impact on Western society. As with theology, over recent times, psychology scholars have built upon the early works of the fore-bearers and produced writings that reflect not only sound psychological knowledge but also the understandings of a postmodern, constructivist and pluralistic society.

The task of this thesis is to find the commonalities of these disciplines, specifically to better understand the relationship between a pastor and client that is therapeutic. Hence, the writings of Christians who are psychologists with a desire to authentically represent their spirituality and faith in their work, as well as the relevant work of theologians with an interest in the social sciences will prove of interest to this discussion. Other literature that will be consulted is that pertaining to the methodological approach utilised to accomplish the purpose of this study.

However, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, the interaction among the participants involved questions that encouraged reflection. Hence, the initial literature to be reviewed here is that relating to reflective practice that leads to a deeper understanding of “ways of knowing”.

Reflective Practice and Ways of Knowing

The primary question of this study is interested in how pastors conceptualise the therapeutic relationships they develop with their people, especially in the counselling scenario. However, for the function of such a conceptualisation, it is necessary for the participant to be able to consciously and deliberately reflect on this relationship. Given that most Pentecostal pastors, including the participants in this study, have no training in either the process or the value of reflection on practice, and that the questions posed by this research were designed to foster reflection, literature relating to reflective practice was introduced into this study. The prominent authors in this field are Schön¹²² and Argyris.¹²³ However, Kinsella comments on the extent of Schön's work and how this scholar has been influenced by the philosophers of the time:

Schön frequently invokes the work of two philosophers, Michael Polanyi and Gilbert Ryle, to highlight a mode of reflection that . . . is uniquely distinct from an emphasis on intentional cognitive reflection. This mode of reflection is what I shall call an embodied mode of reflection, in that it arises through the bodily, lived experience of the practitioner and is revealed in action.¹²⁴

In keeping with the concept of reflection, the semi-structured interviews were designed to provide the phenomenological data of this study and lead the participants into a more “embodied mode of reflection”. These conversations will serve to not only encourage reflection, but also to enable these pastors to “hear themselves” as they find words to describe the one-on-one ministry in which they engage in their day-to-day ministry.

¹²² Schön, *The Reflective*.

¹²³ Argyris and Schön, *Theory in*.

¹²⁴ Elizabeth Kinsella, “Embodied Reflection and the Epistemology of Reflective Practice”. *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 41, no. 3 (2007):396.

As mentioned by Kinsella, above, Polanyi¹²⁵ and Ryle have also informed this concept of reflection. The work of Polanyi is of particular interest. According to this scholar, “tacit knowing encapsulates the idea that ‘we can know more than we can tell’; we are the subjects—not the objects—of our own experience”.¹²⁶ He continues by adding that, “this simple proposition has far-reaching implications”,¹²⁷ a premise that also rings true for this study. Hence, discussions, especially those related to the Grounded Theory methodology where the lived experiences of the study participants are examined, will refer to such scholars as Polanyi.

Literature as Methodology

It is therefore appropriate here to address the place of literature as methodology in this research. The literature in a qualitative research study accomplishes several purposes:

- It shares with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported;
- It relates a study to the larger ongoing dialogue in the literature about a topic, filling in gaps and extending prior studies;
- It satisfies the qualitative understanding that the researcher is also a participant in the research and therefore, her interpretation of the relevant literature can be classified as “data”;
- It provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings;

¹²⁵ Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*; Michael Polanyi, “Tacit Knowing: Its Bearing on Some Problems of Philosophy”. *Review of Modern Physics* 34, no. 4 (1962): 601-616.

¹²⁶ Tim Ray, “Rethinking Polanyi’s Concept of Tacit Knowledge: From Personal Knowing to Imagined Institutions”. *Minerva* 47 (2009):76.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

- It provides a theoretical and interpretive framework¹²⁸ for this investigation.¹²⁹

This general summary indicates the value of the literature in qualitative research. However, the various qualitative methodologies tend to focus on specific aspects of this definition. For the purposes of this study, the place of literature in Grounded Theory will be examined.

Literature as Data

Although the Grounded Theory methodology chosen for this study is examined in Chapter 3, it is warranted here to provide some explanation of the place of literature in Grounded Theory methodology, and to clarify the position of the literature in this study. While Creswell¹³⁰ sees the literature in qualitative research enhancing the rigor of the research, Glaser, the originator of Grounded Theory, would strongly disagree:

Beyond establishing that a research situation exists, the grounded theorist must not conduct a review of the literature in the substantive area. This is not because the literature is irrelevant, but because the literature that is relevant has to be discovered just as the theory has.¹³¹

¹²⁸ In support of this point, Gören Goldkuhl, “Adding Theoretical Grounding to Grounded Theory: Toward Multi-Grounded Theory”. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 9, no. 2 (2010):188, writes: “We find the inductive way of working with data a major strength of Grounded Theory, but we also conceive of it as a weakness. We claim that the reluctance in GT to bring in established theories implies a loss of knowledge. In certain stages of the process of theory development, the use of preexisting theories might give inspiration and perhaps also challenge some of the abstractions made. There is a potential to compare and contrast the empirical findings and abstractions with other theories. In a pure inductive abstraction, on the other hand, there is an obvious risk of knowledge isolation. We claim that theory development should aim at knowledge integration and synthesis. This means that extant theories can be used actively, aiming at a knowledge synthesis of such extant theories and new abstractions arrived from the coding of new data”.

¹²⁹ Adapted from John Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), 29, 30.

¹³⁰ The dot points (above) are adapted from Creswell, *Research Design*, 29, 30.

¹³¹ Barney Glaser in Paula Walls, Kader Parahoo and Paul Fleming, “The Role and Place of Knowledge and Literature in Grounded Theory”. *Nurse Researcher* 17, no.4 (2010):12.

However, other scholars also have opinions in this debate. Walls, Parahoo and Fleming understand that those who desire to embark on a research topic do it because of their interest in the topic. These authors wonder if it is possible for the researcher to completely divorce themselves from the literature they have studied and the knowledge that has been gained as a result of both this study and their experiences in the field: “Grounded theory is therefore not 'atheoretical', as is sometimes thought, but requires an understanding of related theory and empirical work to enhance the researchers' theoretical sensitivity and to generate a substantive theory”.¹³² These authors also see Grounded Theory as necessarily being reflexive, that is “concerned with the researcher being aware of how their knowledge and clinical experience can influence data gathering and analysis”.¹³³

. . . the constant comparing in grounded theory of incidents that emerge forces researchers to state their assumptions and their knowledge in a self-interview or memo which become data to compare with other data from the field. This process validates, alters or rejects the researcher's observations and can minimise the potential for bias.¹³⁴

Goldkuhl brings another argument to this discussion. He claims that:

If one ignores existing theory, there is a risk of reinventing the wheel. As researchers we often build new knowledge on existing knowledge. An isolated theory development also means that there is a risk for noncumulative theory development. We believe that it is important to relate the evolving theory to established research during the process of theorizing. Existing theory can be used

¹³² Walls, Parahoo and Fleming, “The Role”, 13.

¹³³ Ibid., 11.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 11.

as a building block that supports the empirical data forming the new emergent theory.¹³⁵

As this study not only incorporates two separate disciplines but also focuses on several particularities of these disciplines, it is vital that the theory that may emerge from this study not be isolated but that it be cumulative, being developed from the existing theoretical knowledge of both theology and psychology.

Hence, this being a unique, interdisciplinary study that extrapolates and integrates the very thoroughly documented knowledge of theology, psychology and spirituality, as well as being attentive to the distinctive understandings that emerge from the participant interviews, a more liberal application of Grounded Theory will be employed in relation to the literature. While an “evolved”¹³⁶ Grounded Theory methodology will be closely followed for the analysis of the data gathered from the participant interviews, it is deemed to be essential to situate this data within the relevant scholarship. The literature, therefore, that will be interrogated in this study is purposely comprehensive. According to the discussion in Chapter 1, the theoretical underpinnings of this study are deemed to be the “structure” that supports and helps to interpret the “experience” that is revealed in the data gleaned from the analysis of the participant interviews.¹³⁷ This multilevel data engagement will strengthen the rigor of this research by providing solid scholarship on which to build the emerging theory.

¹³⁵ Goldkuhl, “Adding Theoretical”, 191.

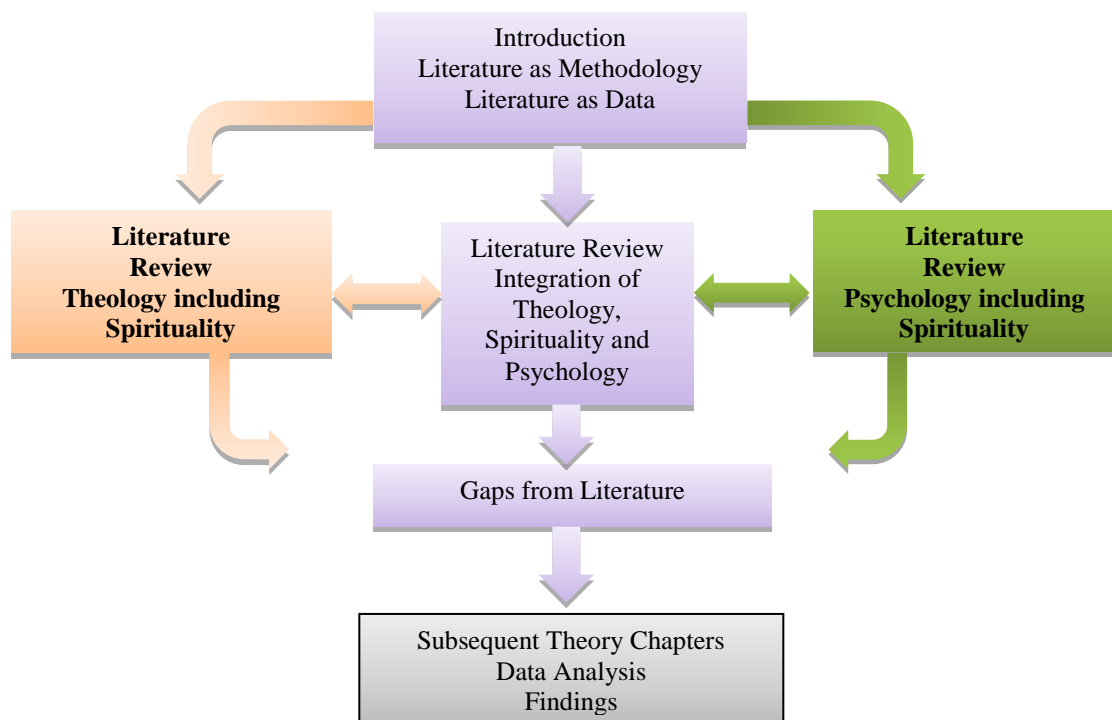
¹³⁶ The concept of an “evolved” Grounded Theory will be fully explained in the following methodology chapter but it is sufficient to explain here that “evolved” Grounded Theory, while still adhering to the original philosophy used by Glaser and Strauss, has been adapted to encompass a more constructivist stance.

¹³⁷ Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 676, defines the dimensions of relationality and spirituality to be utilised in this examination of the therapeutic relationship: (1) a fundamental dimension of the human being, (2) the lived experience that actualises that dimension, and (3) the academic discipline that studies that experience.

The Structure of This Literature Review

Following on from this introduction where the “literature as methodology” has been explained, a review of the theology literature, which will include spirituality from various theological streams, will be discussed. This and the psychological literature, which will also look at the more recent ventures into spirituality, will then interact with the scholarship that discusses the integration of these disciplines. A brief discussion of the gaps that have been revealed from the examination of the literature will then complete this review. As seen from Figure 2 (below) this unique involvement with the theoretical epistemology of theology, psychology and spirituality in relation to the therapeutic relationship will then set the foundation for the subsequent data analysis and findings of this study.

Figure 2 - Literature Review Structure



Theological and Spirituality Literature

The theological and spirituality literature that will be examined as preparation for this thesis will be related to the specific topics that have been deemed relevant to the therapeutic relationship in the pastoral setting. However, despite such experiences as baptism in the Holy Spirit, miracles and divine healing being central to the tenets of belief of the Pentecostal pastors who were interviewed for this study, much of this “theology” is more an oral tradition¹³⁸ than a scholastic one. Hence, although Pentecostals are beginning to produce works that seek to expound a theology of the Holy Spirit,¹³⁹ there is a paucity of literature that specifically relates to the Holy Spirit’s influence on the therapeutic relationship from the Pentecostal perspective. It is therefore deemed important that, rather than a particular stream of theology, various theological persuasions will be examined across a range of streams including Pentecostal, Systematic, Evangelical and Roman Catholic theologies, in keeping with the overarching “also/and” rather than “either/or” dialogical approach taken in this thesis. Nevertheless, this review will here begin with a brief reference to Pastoral/Practical Theology as being relevant to the specific introductory task of defining pastoral counselling and the pastoral care setting.

¹³⁸ Jerry Camery-Hoggett, “The Word”, claims that “theological reflection based on the spoken word is fundamentally different from that based on print, that it deploys different strategies of argumentation and exposition that stem from different understandings of what it means for something to be ‘true,’ and that it therefore leads to different dispositions toward spirituality and ecclesial life.” He then continues: “the Pentecostal tradition is primarily a matter of orality, which is at the basis of some of our deepest and most entrenched difficulties as well as our greatest strengths. Within the Western academy, theological education has been largely a matter of print, and to that extent has been speaking a somewhat different language from that spoken within the Pentecostal churches”.

¹³⁹ Amos Yong, *Who is the Holy Spirit?* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete, 2011); Frank Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit: a Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006); Velli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002b).

Traditionally, Pastoral theology¹⁴⁰ is the theological underpinning of Pastoral care, the diverse ministry of the local pastor in the day-to-day shepherding of his flock. Practical theology was a term that emerged with Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and his disciple C. I. Nitzsch (1787-1868) who took this practical form of theology to the academy. Practical theology at that time was described as “theory of the church’s practice of Christianity. This led to a shift towards the social sciences and the second major emphasis in Practical theology as a theology in the way in which the church functions”.¹⁴¹ It is this relationship with the social sciences and the focus on the way in which the church functions that will make this stream of theology of interest to this study, especially where the synthesis of theology and psychology seeks a definition of pastoral care and pastoral counselling. Hence, although the theology (albeit unreflected upon and undefined) of the participants will be identified as Pentecostal, many aspects of Practical/Pastoral theology will be recognised in the day-to-day activities of these participants as they seek a deeper understanding of the transformational nature of the relationship God has with humanity and address the more practical and ethical aspects of their work. Such pastoral and practical theologians as Anderson;¹⁴² Hiltner;¹⁴³ Osmer;¹⁴⁴ Peterson;¹⁴⁵ and Cartledge¹⁴⁶ will be referred to when appropriate. Some welcome Australian insights will be found in the works of Veling¹⁴⁷ and Pembroke.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ James Woodward and Stephen Pattison, *A Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 2.

¹⁴¹ Anderson, *The Shape*, 24.

¹⁴² Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape*; and *Spiritual Caregiving as a Secular Sacrament: A Practical Theology for Professional Caregivers* (London, UK: Jessica Kingsley, 2003).

¹⁴³ Hiltner, *Preface to*.

¹⁴⁴ Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).

¹⁴⁵ Peterson, *Five Smooth*.

¹⁴⁶ Mark Cartledge, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives* (London, UK: Paternoster, 2007).

¹⁴⁷ Terry Veling, *Practical Theology: "On Earth as It Is in Heaven"* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005).

¹⁴⁸ Neil Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral Practice: Trinitarian Perspectives on Pastoral Care and Practice* (Hants, UK: Ashgate, 2006).

In keeping with the Pentecostal context of this study, a brief overview of the literature that relates to this particular branch of theology is warranted, although the insights of Catholic theologian, Bernard Lonergan, in his classic work, “Method in Theology”, will introduce this topic:

there is a theology *in oratione obliqua* that tells what Paul and John, Augustine and Aquinas, and anyone else had to say about God and the economy of salvation. But there is also a theology *in oration recta* in which the theologian, enlightened by the past, confronts the problems of his own day.¹⁴⁹

It will be said that Pentecostal theology is *in oratione recta*, “direct speech”, seeking to confront the problems of a postmodern, Western society that is in search of truth¹⁵⁰ through experience and what is “most real”. Macchia’s portrayal of Pentecostalism will serve to demonstrate this and will introduce this section of this literature review:

This is a time of ferment for theologians nourished by Pentecostal communities of faith. It’s an exciting time to be writing theology from within these communities of faith that have given us so much. Born from the experientially-rich emphasis on Jesus as the one who imparts the Spirit of life within, the Pentecostals had a gospel that spoke to the deepest needs of folks from a variety of backgrounds, especially from those marginalized by the power brokers of this world. They used terms like “born again”,

¹⁴⁹ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London, UK: Darton Longman and Todd, 1971), 133, is a highly regarded twentieth century Roman Catholic theologian.

¹⁵⁰ For Catherine LaCugna, *God for Us* (Chicago, IL: HarperOne, 1973), 2, 3, “We can make true statements about God – particularly when the assertions are about the triune nature of God – only on the basis of the economy, corroborated by God’s self-revelation in Christ and the Spirit. *Theological* statements are possible not because we have some independent insight into God, or can speak from the standpoint of God, but because God has freely revealed and communicated God’s *self*, God’s personal existence, God’s infinite mystery. Christians believe that God bestows the fullness of divine life in the person of Jesus Christ, and that through the person of Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit we are made intimate partakers of the living God”.

“sanctified”, and “baptized in the Holy Spirit”. They spoke of cleansing and power, of praise and witness. Their spirituality was as physical as it was hidden in the deepest recesses of their souls, for the Spirit of God who heals and empowers will one day raise the dead. There was no dimension of life untouched by the Spirit of Christ and no boundary that the Spirit did not urge them to cross.¹⁵¹

These claims provide an accurate description of the Pentecostal tenets of the movement to which the participants in this study belong. However, because of the contemporary, and somewhat controversial nature of Pentecostal practices, a brief exploration of the literature relevant to the foundational doctrines on which Christianity, including Pentecostalism, is grounded will be necessary. Such foundations begin with the premise that “Christianity is a faith which – among other things – claims certain things to be true: about God, the world and our human species”.¹⁵² Down through the ages, a remarkable unanimity about the content and centrality of the essential doctrines of the Christian faith¹⁵³ has been achieved, and, although cultural changes and adaptations may influence Christian practice, these central beliefs have remained. It will be said that the culture of the twenty-first century, with such paradigm shifts in thinking as brought by postmodernism, has presented a challenge to these creedal beliefs that is unprecedented. The task of the twenty-first century theologian is to translate these creedal beliefs into the language of today while still remaining loyal to the core

¹⁵¹ Frank Macchia, “Pentecostal Theology: A Time of Ferment”. *Pneuma* 31 (2009):1.

¹⁵² Colin Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), ix.

¹⁵³ Stanley Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 14, writes: “As the attempt to articulate in a specific historical-cultural context the unchanging faith commitment of the church to the God revealed in Jesus Christ, the theological task must be carried out with a view in three directions. The three sources or norms for theology are the Biblical message, the theological heritage of the church and the thought forms of the historical-cultural context in which the contemporary people of God seek to speak, live and act”.

beliefs of Christianity,¹⁵⁴ a formidable challenge in a society dominated by such philosophies and societal trends as feminism, ecology, pluralism and individualism.

This study will therefore embrace the premise that “theology is part of a broader human culture and it not only uses the language of that culture however much it may wish to adapt that language but is also exercised by the questions which dominate its time”.¹⁵⁵ Hence, although it is acknowledged that there are many perspectives from which theologians have understood God and that the doctrine of God is a multifaceted study, this review will focus on the relational aspects of the doctrine of God. “All of our theological categories are abstractions without the love of God revealed in Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit”.¹⁵⁶ Lonergan, from the Catholic perspective, also captures this expressed essence of the doctrine of God: “the word of the gospel . . . announces that God has loved us first, has revealed that love in Christ crucified, dead and risen. The word, then, is personal. Love speaks to love and its speech is powerful”.¹⁵⁷ Nowhere is this more obvious than in the communion between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit which will be examined through the literature on the Trinity.

Theological Relationality

Trinitarian doctrine encompasses a variety of important and fascinating scholarly discussions. However, it is far beyond the scope of this study to pursue an in-depth examination of these philosophical debates or, in fact, the historical developments of this doctrine beyond noting

¹⁵⁴ F. LeRon Schults, *Reforming the Doctrine of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 12.

¹⁵⁵ Gunton, *The Christian*, ix.

¹⁵⁶ Macchia, *Baptised in*, 260.

¹⁵⁷ Lonergan, *Method in*, 113.

that, since the Council of Constantinople in 381AD, the various branches of Western Christendom have had a shared understanding as to the nature of the Trinity, summarised here in the proclamation of the Athanasian Creed¹⁵⁸:

The Father is from none, not made nor created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone, not made nor created but begotten. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, not made nor created nor begotten but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less, but all three persons are co-eternal with each other and co-equal. Thus in all things, as has been stated above, both trinity and unity and unity in trinity must be worshipped. So he who desires to be saved should think thus of the Trinity¹⁵⁹.

In the early 1900's, in a reaction to what was perceived as a diversion of the traditional church from Biblical truth, the pioneers of the Pentecostal movement boasted “no creeds, rituals or articles of faith – no creed but Christ or the Bible”.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, most Pentecostals today, although not incorporating the creeds, articles of faith or rituals explicitly into their worship services, would still accept the content, including the doctrine of the Trinity outlined by this creed. Because of this, Pentecostalism is overtly relational and it is the relational aspects of the Trinity, such as found in the writings of the Pentecostal scholars, Yong¹⁶¹ and Macchia,¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ The Athanasian Creed, along with the Nicene Creed, was instigated around 325AD and these creeds have since been the foundation of Western Christian doctrines.

¹⁵⁹ A paragraph of the Athanasian Creed.

¹⁶⁰ Wolfgang Vondey, “Oneness and Trinitarian Pentecostalism: Critical Dialogue on the Ecumenical Creeds”. *One in Christ* 44, no.1 (2010):86.

¹⁶¹ Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002); and *Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012).

¹⁶² Frank Macchia, *The Trinity, Practically Speaking* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2010).

Practical/Pastoral academic Pembroke;¹⁶³ and Catholic theologians Kelly¹⁶⁴ and LaCugna¹⁶⁵ that will offer helpful resources for this study. This literature will provide insights into the concept of “whole”¹⁶⁶ relationships, in particular the therapeutic relationships discussed by the participants. Torrance, writing in 1989, intimates this purpose by declaring:

What we need today is a better understanding of the person not just as an individual but as someone who finds his or her true being-in-communion with God and with others, the counterpart of a Trinitarian doctrine of God.¹⁶⁷

In the ensuing twenty years since Torrance’s writing, although the literature reveals an upsurge of scholastic interest in the doctrine of the Trinity:

Theologians’ continuing struggle with and debate about the formulation of the doctrine (of the Trinity) is but another way of responding to the call of the church to both understand and express the faith revealed in the Bible and tradition for each new generation. This continuing dialogue among various, at times diverse, even contrasting voices is the fertile soil out of which real spiritual fruit grows.¹⁶⁸

Hunt’s work will be examined as she has become one of these voices saying:

Christian spirituality is surely intrinsically Trinitarian, for it ultimately concerns the invitation to each and every one of us, individually and in community, to

¹⁶³ Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral*.

¹⁶⁴ Anthony Kelly, *The Trinity of Love: A Christian Theology of God* (Wilmington, DL: Michael Glazier, 1989).

¹⁶⁵ LaCugna, *The Trinity*, 305, writes: “What matters is that we hold on to the assertion that God is *personal*, and that therefore the proper subject matter of the doctrine of the Trinity is the encounter between divine and human persons in the economy of redemption”.

¹⁶⁶ This concept of human wholeness and the therapeutic relationship will be examined further in this review.

¹⁶⁷ J. B. Torrance, “The Doctrine of the Trinity in our Contemporary Situation”, in *The Forgotten Trinity: Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today*, ed. A.I.C. Heron (London: British Council of Churches, 1989), 15.

¹⁶⁸ Veli-Matti Krakkainen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox, 2007b), xiv.

participate in the very life of the triune God, through communion with the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit who is love.¹⁶⁹

Likewise, Kelly¹⁷⁰ has valuable contributions to make to this discussion, understanding the depth of relationship that translates into a healing presence in the therapeutic relationship. Kelly's work will also open the conversation of the profound mystery of *perichoresis*, the Trinitarian "dance". This is a concept discussed in ancient works such as those by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, more recently by the Liberation Theologian, Boff,¹⁷¹ and even more recently by Edwards¹⁷² and Downey.¹⁷³

Further to this exploration of divine relationality that impacts this discussion of the therapeutic relationship, the literature relevant to specific forms of the relationship humanity has with the Godhead will be examined. The first of these concepts is that of "covenant".

Seen as significant to this study because of the constancy, and therefore the security, of the relationship God has chosen to have with humanity, covenant will be examined from the perspective of the Scriptural evidences and Bible commentaries¹⁷⁴ of the Old Testament,¹⁷⁵ as well as the revelation of the New Covenant¹⁷⁶ introduced with the coming of the Messiah.

¹⁶⁹ Anne Hunt, *Trinity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2005), 183.

¹⁷⁰ Kelly, *The Trinity*.

¹⁷¹ Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society* (Kent, UK: Burns & Oates, 1988).

¹⁷² Denis Edwards, *The God of Evolution: A Trinitarian Theology* (New York, NY: Paulist, 1999).

¹⁷³ Michael Downey, *Altogether Gift: A Trinitarian Spirituality* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000).

¹⁷⁴ BibleGateway, "2 Corinthians, Chapter 3, Verses 12-18", <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/matthew-henry/2Cor.3.12-2Cor.3.18>

¹⁷⁵ BibleStudyTools.com, "Covenant", <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/covenant.html>

¹⁷⁶ BibleGateway, "The Superiority of the New Covenant Ministry (3:7-11)", <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/ivp-nt/Superiority-New-Covenant-397>

From the understanding of covenant, particularly the New Covenant of grace interpreted from the Biblical writings, the motifs of *agape*, the love that is God, then emerges. Although coming from different perspectives, the writings of Nygren¹⁷⁷ and Vacek¹⁷⁸ both agree on the concept of divine “power-to” experienced through the *agape* relationship bestowed on humanity by a loving Father. Yong describes this love as being “the moving power of life that reunites the separated”.¹⁷⁹ When considering the therapeutic capacity of the counselling relationship, this connection between love and power will open the way for profound insights.

Christian spirituality is understood in Chapter 1 as being, in the first order, “a way of engaging anthropological questions and preoccupations in order to arrive at an ever richer and more authentically human life”,¹⁸⁰ and, in the second order as “the life of the Christian, communicated by the Holy Spirit and governed by divine revelation”.¹⁸¹ It is therefore obvious that the exploration of the connection between Christian spirituality and the therapeutic relationship will also have profound implications for this thesis. The previously mentioned Western “divorce” of Christian spirituality and academic theology has, in recent times, come back into the foreground of theological discussion. The confluence of a number of factors, including the advent of postmodernism, which brought with it pluralism, and the concept of the “global village” that has created an unprecedented multicultural society on our doorsteps, has resulted in a significant amount of literature being written on the subject of spirituality, especially in theology and the social sciences. This paradigm shift in worldview

¹⁷⁷ Anders Nygren, “Agape and Eros” in *Eros, Agape, and Philia: Readings in the Philosophy of Love*, ed. Alan Soble (St Paul, MN: Paragon, 1989).

¹⁷⁸ Edward Vacek, *Love, Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1994).

¹⁷⁹ Yong, *Spirit of*, 16.

¹⁸⁰ Charles-Andre Bernard in Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 682.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 682.

has had particular impact on the Western church as the Greek dualism that separated the sacred/spiritual from the religious/theological is being challenged by both Western authors and Christian scholars from other cultures. This scholarly literature often reflects aspects of human and divine relationality that will be of significance to this thesis investigation and the works of such authors as Sheldrake,¹⁸² McIntosh,¹⁸³ Chan,¹⁸⁴ Auman,¹⁸⁵ Au¹⁸⁶ and Schneiders¹⁸⁷ as well as the influence of such journals as *Spiritus* and *Pneuma*, will bring fresh understandings of the spirituality of the human person.

Theological Personhood

By admitting that the subject of theological personhood is an extensive field of study, it is therefore necessary to focus the present task. Hence, at the outset of the examination of theological personhood it will be established that the literature for this topic will be limited to the exploration of human wholeness. Included in this course of investigation, such theological motifs as the Biblical notions of *shalom* and *imago Dei* will be duly explored.

The understanding of the depth of meaning in Hebrew concept of *shalom* illustrates another facet of the human person and the human person in relationship. Going beyond the surface sense of “peace” to deeper meanings of right relationships, harmony and wholeness, the concepts found in Scripture that will be discussed here, with insights from the writings of

¹⁸² Sheldrake, *Spirituality and*.

¹⁸³ McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*.

¹⁸⁴ Chan, *Spiritual Theology*.

¹⁸⁵ Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology* (New York, NY: Continuum, 1980).

¹⁸⁶ Au, *The Way*.

¹⁸⁷ Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 676-697.

such theologians as Shults and Sandage¹⁸⁸ will bring another level of meaning to the therapeutic relationship.

Similarly, fresh understandings of human wholeness will be found in an investigation of the depth of meaning of humanity being created in the image of God. The Scriptural narrative of the creation of humanity and the subsequent fall from grace will be the starting point of understanding the transforming journey from brokenness to wholeness. Turner¹⁸⁹ will provide an exegesis of the Biblical text, drawing on the wisdom of the writings of Bonaventure, and Kelly¹⁹⁰ will offer insight into the nature of the *imago Dei* through his writings.

Although it is noted here that, because of the subjective nature of this work, the corporeal aspects of human wholeness will not be given any more attention beyond cursory mention where necessary, it is acknowledged that the literature on incarnational theology could prove to be very valuable for this study but, given that it is a very broad and complex field, the researcher has chosen not to incorporate this facet of theology into this study. However, in stating this, it is also acknowledged that future research into an incarnational perspective of the therapeutic relationship could further deepen our understanding of this multi-faceted phenomenon.

¹⁸⁸Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality*.

¹⁸⁹ Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹⁹⁰ Kelly, *The Trinity*.

Relationality and the Church

Pentecostal communities of faith are depicted as fellowships of believers bound by experiences¹⁹¹ – the spiritual experiences of impartation of the Spirit of life and the emotional experiences that satisfy deep needs. However, the very nature of Pentecostalism’s emphasis on experience indicates unstructured spontaneity¹⁹² which has resulted, at times, in Pentecostal theologians succumbing to a feeling of inferiority in the face of the more established denominations.¹⁹³ “Pentecostals—although living it—have not written a theology of the church”.¹⁹⁴ Nevertheless, it has been pointed out that the theology of Pentecostalism is contained in the wealth of material to be found in unpublished sermons and writings, local and regional church histories, personal journals, folk and family lore and manuals relating to church organisation. Because it is not generally an academic theology, its ecclesiological import and consequence is not diminished.¹⁹⁵ Perhaps it is because “Pentecostals are much more interested in soteriology than ecclesiology”¹⁹⁶ that there is this lack of written theology but it is also true that the rise of world Pentecostalism has revitalised the whole concept of structures for those who are ‘thinking’ Pentecostals by bringing home the fact that the best structure is the one that works in its local context. All this points to the concept of Pentecostal community being a living tradition, especially when considering the local context which is the

¹⁹¹ Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London, UK: T.T. Clark, 2008), 23, claims that Pentecostals “believe that their experience of God is based on the NT kerygma but without the experience, they would argue that the kerygma is lifeless”.

¹⁹² Veli-Matti Krakkainen, “Spirit, Reconciliation and Healing in the Community: Missiological Insights from Pentecostals”. *International Review of Mission* 94, no. 372 (2005): 50, writes: “As a fairly new spiritual movement, Pentecostalism is still in search of its unique identity and theological “foundations”. There are enormous tasks facing the rapidly growing movement which is in the process of proliferating as ever-new forms of churches and ministries mushroom all over the Latin America scene and beyond. For many Pentecostals, the theological and ethical tasks seem not to be of high importance”.

¹⁹³ A. Hollis Grause, “A Pentecostal Response to Pinnock’s Proposal”. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14, no. 2 (2006):187, and Cheryl Bridges Johns, “The Adolescence of Pentecostalism: In Search of a Legitimate Sectarian Identity”. *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society of Pentecostal Studies* 17 (1995): 4, discuss the concept of Pentecostalism finding its identity.

¹⁹⁴ Terry Cross, “Response to Clark Pinnock’s ‘Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit’”. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14, no. 2 (2006):175; Grause, *A Pentecostal*, 184.

¹⁹⁵ Grause, *A Pentecostal*, 185.

¹⁹⁶ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 132.

setting for this paper.¹⁹⁷ Hence, although not always written down, or written down by academics, this “oral tradition” will also inform this thesis, especially in the reporting of the interaction with the participants.

The Therapeutic Capacity of the Relationship

Although this research will draw on the analysis of the data gathered from the participants to discuss the therapeutic capacity of the pastoral counselling relationship, literature that investigates the therapeutic qualities¹⁹⁸ of the specific relationships being investigated here will also inform the findings. Of particular interest are the writings of Bordin¹⁹⁹ whose insights into the therapeutic relationship have been cited in the discussion of the findings of this research.

Psychological Literature

It is warranted here, at the outset of this review of the psychological literature, to mention that, although both classical and contemporary works will be accessed for this study, Petruska Clarkson’s ground-breaking book, “The Therapeutic Relationship”²⁰⁰ will feature strongly in Chapter 5, where the psychological theory relevant to the therapeutic relationship is being examined, and Chapter 6, in the interdisciplinary-dialogue between theology, psychology and spirituality on this subject. The reasons for this are as follows:

¹⁹⁷Camrey-Hoggatt, “The Word”, 226, writes: “If we who are trained in the literature of theology wish to be true to the gospel we preach, we must learn to affirm the native strengths of the oral community. We must learn to listen to people who will never read our books”, a statement that will be explored further in the context of the case study”.

¹⁹⁸ Literature specific to the therapeutic relationship from both the theological and psychological perspectives includes: Stephen Beaumont, *Pastor, Counsellor and Friend: Exploring Multiple Role Relationships in Pastoral Work*, PhD thesis, University of Queensland (2012); Benner, *Care of Souls*; J. Catty, “‘The Vehicle of Success’: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives on the Therapeutic Alliance in Psychotherapy and Psychiatry”. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice* 77 (2004):255–272; A. Hovarth, “The Therapeutic Relationship: Research and Theory”. *Psychotherapy Research* 15, nos. 1-2 (2005): 3-7.

¹⁹⁹ Bordin, “Theory and”.

²⁰⁰ Petruska Clarkson, *The Therapeutic Relationship*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: Whurr, 2003).

- Clarkson’s examination of the therapeutic relationship represents a very comprehensive overview of the therapeutic relationship in which she has skilfully engaged with all the schools of psychology;
- Although comprehensive, I have identified gaps in Clarkson’s work, particularly in the area of what she calls the transpersonal therapeutic relationship. It is these gaps that are highlighted in the questions being asked, summarised as “What makes the therapeutic relationship therapeutic in the pastoral counselling situation?”
- Clarkson’s framework lends itself to further extrapolation, a task undertaken in Chapter 6.

Psychological Relationality

However, although Clarkson’s work is unique, there is also evidence of renewed interest in what is being labelled as “relationality” in the recent works of scholars from a variety of academic disciplines. As it is not only Clarkson who is questioning the validity of the traditional scientific method of researching this relational phenomena, further examination of this trend is warranted:

In late modernity and postmodernity – particularly in fields of philosophy and theology – a discernible “turn to relationality” has occurred. This shift involves a rejection of classical substance ontology and faculty psychology in favour of relational ontology wherein the person, or self, is said to be constituted *in relationship* with another or others.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Beck and Demarest, *The Human*, 12.

It would seem, therefore, that both theologians and psychotherapists are curious about this “impossible to describe” therapeutic relationship which is spiritual, mysterious and currently inexplicable, but is undeniably healing.

Literature relating to the changing worldviews that have had such a profound influence on the social sciences over the last fifty or so years will also contribute to the knowledge of this thesis. Of particular interest to this study will be the writings of scholars who explore constructivism²⁰² in relation to psychology, especially those that integrate the empathy, acceptance, genuineness, warmth and unconditional positive regard of Rogers²⁰³ with the constructivist resolve to “journey with the client”.²⁰⁴ These have become the “strength-based therapies” such as narrative therapy²⁰⁵ that are increasingly infiltrating the practices of many contemporary therapists. Feminist constructivism²⁰⁶ has raised the awareness of power differentials and will also be investigated.

These understandings of worldviews and use of power are among the factors that are also relevant to an examination of the nature of the space where transforming therapy is able to take place. The various schools of psychology create their therapeutic space in different ways,

²⁰²Kenneth Gergen, *An Invitation to Social Construction*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: Sage, 2009a).

²⁰³ Rogers, *On Becoming*; Carl Rogers “The Concept of the Fully Functioning Person”. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice* 1 (1963): 17–26.

²⁰⁴ Keith Tudor, “Person-Centered Relational Therapy: An Organismic Perspective”. *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies* 9, no. 1 (2010): 52–68.

²⁰⁵Michael Hoyt, *Constructive Therapies 2* (New York, NY: Guilford, 1996); Erwin, “Constructivist Epistemologies”; Jill Freedman and Gene Combs, *Narrative Therapy: The Social Construction of Preferred Realities* (New York, NY: Norton, 1996); Alice Morgan, *What is Narrative Therapy?* (Adelaide, SA: Dulwich Centre, 2000); Michael White and David Epston, *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends* (Adelaide, SA: Dulwich Centre, 1990).

²⁰⁶ Mary Belenky, Blyth Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger, and Jill Tarule, *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1986); Richard Cook and Irene Alexander, eds., *Interweavings* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2008); Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

but it will be seen from the literature that this is both a professional and a relational issue. Authors²⁰⁷ who address both these aspects of the psychological therapeutic space will add to the knowledge of this research.

Spirituality is also a topic relevant to the therapeutic relationship that will be of significant interest to this research. The approach to spirituality from a psychological perspective will be quite different to the theological literature relating to spirituality. Because this thesis is deliberately limited to Christian spirituality, the theological literature on spirituality accessed by this research includes Scripture and both ancient and contemporary theological writings. However, the scientific discipline of psychology has only recently allowed the inclusion of spirituality to be a legitimate component of the human person. Hence, the literature relating to spirituality as being an influence in the therapeutic value of the counselling relationship is still very limited. Sperry, Shafranske²⁰⁸ and May²⁰⁹ are among the few psychotherapists whose writings will be accessed for this topic.

Psychological Personhood

The literature relating to the nature of the human person has also been influenced by psychology's reluctance to acknowledge spirituality. Few of the classical theorists acknowledged the more subjective aspects of the human person, although Maslow²¹⁰ was among those who, in his theory of the development of personal maturity, did include

²⁰⁷ Richard Ponton and Jill Duba, "The *ACA Code of Ethics*: Articulating Counseling's Professional Covenant". *Journal of Counseling and Development* 86 (2009):117-121; Ingeborg Haug, "Boundaries and the Use and Misuse of Power and Authority: Ethical Complexities for Clergy Psychotherapist". *Journal of Counseling and Development* 77 (1999): 114-117.

²⁰⁸ Sperry, "The Psychologization"; Sperry and Shafranske, *Spiritually Oriented*.

²⁰⁹ Gerald May, *Will and Spirit* (New York, NY: Harpercollins, 1982).

²¹⁰ Abraham Maslow, *Religions, Values and Peak Experiences* (Middlesex, UK: Penguin, 1976).

reference to such subjective attributes as religion. However, the majority of the theories of personality that will be discussed from this psychological perspective not only do not value the spiritual aspects of personhood but they also approach personhood from a variety of viewpoints, depending on focus of the theory. To obtain a full picture of how psychology understands the whole person, the literature relating to each of these theoretical aspects²¹¹ of personhood will be explored. Hence the classical theorists,²¹² beginning with Freud and tracing the development of these psychological theories of personhood through the twentieth century, will be mentioned as well as the work of more contemporary scholars.²¹³

It will be mentioned in various places elsewhere in this thesis that the rapidly emerging branch of psychology that is informed by neuroscience is beyond the scope of this research although it is here acknowledged that human wholeness will necessarily incorporate a consciousness of the physical aspects of humanness. Such classical theories as Fritz Perls' Gestalt Therapy²¹⁴ and the more recent Process Oriented²¹⁵ and Mindfulness²¹⁶ therapies

²¹¹ For the purpose of this thesis, psychology has been categorised into four theoretical schools: psychodynamic; behavioural/cognitive behavioural; humanistic; and constructivist.

²¹² Sigmund Freud, *Orientering i Psykoanalysen* [A general introduction to psychoanalysis] (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1976); Carl Jung, *The Undiscovered Self* (New York, NY: Signet, 2006); Erik Erikson, *Dimensions of a New Identity* (New York, NY: Norton, 1974); James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1981); Mary Ainsworth, "Attachments Beyond Infancy". *American Psychologist* 44 (1989): 709-716; John Bowlby, *A Secure Base: Parent-child Attachment and Healthy Human Development* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1988); Maslow, *The Farther*; Rogers, *On Becoming*; Donald Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (Kent, UK: Tavistock/Routledge, 1971); Aaron Beck, *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders* (New York, NY: International University Press, 1976); Albert Ellis, "Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy", in *Which psychotherapy?*, ed. C. Feltham (London, UK: Sage, 1997), 51-67.

²¹³ White and Epston, *Narrative Means*; Jack Balswick, Pamela King, and Kevin Reimer, *The Reciprocating Self* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2005); Frank Devoy, *The Spirituality of Diocesan Priests: Bearers of the Incarnate Face of God* (Canberra ACT: Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. no. 26, 2012), 6; Robert Kegan, *The Evolving Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

²¹⁴ Fritz Perls, Ralph Hefferline, and Paul Goodman, *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality* (Goldsboro, ME: Gestalt Journal Press, 1951).

²¹⁵ Arnold Mindell, *Dreambody: The Body's Role in Revealing the Self* (London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).

²¹⁶ Daniel Siegel, *The Mindful Therapist: A Clinician's Guide to Mindsight and Neural Integration* (New York, NY: Norton, 2010).

remind us of the corporal aspects of human wholeness and will be included in the relevant psychological discussions.

The Integration of Theology, Psychology and Spirituality

Despite the historical debate over the philosophical differences that have separated theology, psychology and spirituality, more recent interactions have revealed areas of agreement within these disciplines that provide a meeting place for dialogue. These common factors have served to provide a language that practitioners from both disciplines can speak,²¹⁷ thereby creating a forum of communication where knowledge can be shared. Within this forum, although there are obvious commonalities that can be identified across the disciplines, there are also unique or specific factors that, when embraced by theology, psychology and spirituality, provide a deeper and more complete picture of the human person and how they relate, function and change. Although there are various ways to view this integrative landscape, the concept of exploring and identifying the common factors and the unique specifics of the therapeutic relationship in theology, psychology and spirituality will be the task of this study. This research therefore:

- explores the ontology and epistemology of the theological, psychological and spiritual teachings and beliefs relating to transformational and therapeutic relationships;
- seeks out commonalities and differences in these teachings and beliefs;
- synthesises these commonalities and differences in an effort to develop an authentic model of the therapeutic relationship experienced in a pastoral counselling encounter.

²¹⁷ John Norcross and Marvin Goldfried, *Handbook of Psychotherapy Integration* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005).

As has been seen in this review, the literature accessed to accomplish this task has been drawn from theology, psychology and spirituality. There is a body of literature²¹⁸ from the previous century that explores a concept of the integration of, initially “religion and psychology” and then “Christianity and psychology” that will also be mentioned. However, with the more recent embracing of spirituality by both theology and psychology, an interdisciplinary dialogical approach²¹⁹ rather than an “integration” of separate disciplines is deemed more authentic. It is therefore suggested that this research, conscious of the gaps in the literature and seeking a deeper understanding of the therapeutic relationship found in pastoral counselling, has gone beyond the traditional scholarship to discover new horizons.

Gaps in the Literature

As a consequence of a study of the literature, gaps or deficits in the current literature have been identified. While it is the comparison between the theory purported by the literature and the highly experiential nature of the phenomenon reported in the interviews that is the task of this study, these gaps are of particular significance for the outcomes of this research. It is worth noting here that the vast majority of literature that will be accessed in this study is from either American or British scholars. Considering that all the participants in this study are Australian, and understanding the uniqueness of the Australian relationship culture, this is deemed one of the very large gaps in the literature. This and the other gaps and deficits

²¹⁸ Carter and Narramore’s, *The Integration*, and Jones and Butman’s, *Modern Psychotherapies*, books were among the early significant works in this area; Larry Crabb, *Basic Principles*, was among the early American psychologists who attempted to integrate Christianity into their practice; Kirwan, *Biblical Concepts*, wrote about integration from an evangelical position; *The Journal of Psychology and Theology* 34, no. 3 in 2006 devoted a whole edition of their journal to a discussion on theology/psychology integration; Donald Entwistle, *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010) has written more recently on this subject.

²¹⁹Julia Grimm et al., “Revisiting the Issue of Influential Sources of the Integration of Psychology and Theology: More Than a Decade Summary”. *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 40, no. 1 (2012):5-15, conducted meta-research on the integration subject and concluded that the inter-dialogical approach to the integration debate held more promise for future studies.

revealed from an examination of the theological, psychological and integrative literature can be articulated primarily as:

- A lack of a clear definition of the pastoral counselling relationship in which pastors engage;

and

- a lack of a clear understanding of what makes this relationship therapeutic;

and secondly as:

- a lack of literature on the spiritual aspect of the human person and how this influences the therapeutic capacity of the pastoral counselling relationship;
- a lack of Australian literature that addresses the unique Australian cultural aspects of what Australian counselling pastors do, specifically the therapeutic relationship they have with their people;
- a lack of Pentecostal (particularly Australian Pentecostal) literature – almost none – in areas of the therapeutic relationship generated in pastoral counselling;
- a lack of literature on the gap between what Pentecostal pastors believe and what they do.

The questions being asked in this study will be looking for insight into these gaps, as well as anticipating a theory of the therapeutic capacity of the therapeutic relationship to emerge from the interaction between the literature and the data generated in the interviews.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A review of research methodology reveals that, in the field of psychology, “the large majority of the studies are framed in the quantitative paradigm”.²²⁰ Despite the increasing acceptance of qualitative research in other areas of social science, the last decade has witnessed slow growth in the publication of qualitative research articles in psychology. Perhaps this is an indicator of psychology’s traditional commitment²²¹ to the scientific paradigm, characterised by the positivism knowledge claims of determination, reductionism, empirical observation and measurement, and theory verification.²²²

Qualitative Research Defined

Although, even in more recent times, scientific epistemology remains deeply embedded and qualitative methodology is still viewed as being “unscientific” or incapable of adequate rigor in some areas of psychology, the constructivist philosophy²²³ that has recently ushered in the “fourth wave”²²⁴ of counselling approaches has also made a way for the increasing use of qualitative research methods. In fact, McLeod and Balamoutsou claim that three of the most

²²⁰ Reinaldo Berríos and Nydia Lucca, “Qualitative Methodology in Counseling Research: Recent Contributions and Challenges for a New Century”. *Journal of Counseling & Development* 84 (2006): 174.

²²¹ William Wundt, *An Introduction to Psychology* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1912), 149, who was the first to perform laboratory experiments in psychology, reflects the traditional attitude: “Many psychologists... thought by turning their attention to their own consciousness to be able to explain what happened when we were thinking. Or they sought to attain the same end by asking another person a question, by means of which certain processes of thought would be excited, and then by questioning the person about the introspection he had made. It is obvious... that nothing can be discovered in such experiments”.

²²² Creswell, *Research Design*, 6.

²²³ Constructivism as a philosophy is an undeniable influence in twenty-first century, postmodern western society. However, Christian philosophers and theologians such as Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 422-425, would argue that some of the beliefs and values characteristic of constructivism, particular those relating to the worldview questions regarding the nature of God and truth, are not consistent with the beliefs and values of Christian theism. This debate will be further developed later in this thesis.

²²⁴ The “Fourth Wave” of counselling approaches is associated with the rise of postmodernism and is representative of the therapies that are grounded in constructivism philosophy including Narrative Therapy and Solution Focussed Therapy. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

significant developments in the late twentieth century in psychotherapy theory and practice are experiential therapy, narrative theory and qualitative research methodology.²²⁵ However, as with the epistemology of constructivism,²²⁶ which advocates understanding, multiple participant meanings, social and historical construction and generation of theory,²²⁷ defining qualitative research is not an easy task. For the purposes of this study, we will note the observations of Mason. She cites these characteristics of qualitative research:

- Grounded in a philosophical position that is broadly “interpretivist” in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted.
- Based on methods of data generation which are both flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced.
- Based on methods of analysis, explanation and argument building which involve understandings of complexity, detail and context. Qualitative research aims to produce rounded and contextual understandings on the basis of rich, nuanced and detailed data. There is more emphasis on “holistic” forms of analysis and explanation.²²⁸

In support of these knowledge claims and in defence of the rigor of qualitative methods, Goldman argues:

These new [qualitative] methods are not for the faint of heart. They demand imagination, courage to face the unknown, flexibility, some creativeness, and a

²²⁵ John McLeod and Sophia Balamoutsou, “A Method of Qualitative Narrative Analysis of Psychotherapy Transcripts”. *Psychologische Beiträge* 43, no. 3 (2001):128.

²²⁶ Michael Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process* (London, UK: Sage, 1998), various, understands that constructivist qualitative research recognises that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting, that they make sense of this world based on the meaning bestowed by culture and that the basic generation of meaning is always social, arising out of interaction with a human community.

²²⁷ Creswell, *Research Design*, 6.

²²⁸ Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: Sage, 2005), 3.

good deal of personal skills in observation, interviewing, and self-examination—
some of the same skills, in fact, required for effective counseling.²²⁹

Qualitative research skills bear resemblance to counselling skills in other ways. Jackson and his colleagues identify both the experience and the perception of the experience as being a key to qualitative inquiry, as it is to the counselling encounter. In grappling with what qualitative research is, we must be ever-conscious that social experience is always happening, unending, and fluid. Perspectives on experience can change from person to person, yet it is perspective that influences social cognition and social behaviour. Perspective influences relationships and interaction patterns.²³⁰ Hence, as well as being aware of the criteria of qualitative research as cited above, the concept of experience and perspective of experience are also significant in considering the methodology to be used in this study.

This Qualitative Study

On these grounds, a qualitative methodology has been chosen as best serving this research agenda. As justification, an explanation of the reasons for this choice will be offered in this section, beginning with the researcher's role in the study. One of the overarching and unique elements of qualitative research, closely related to the concepts of experience and perception of experience, is the reflexive knowing of the researcher. Here it is appropriate to reflect on my own commitment to this study. This project was conceived through my work as a church-based counsellor. Beginning as a volunteer pastoral carer for the large church that was the founding church of the COC Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement, it was here I became aware

²²⁹ L. Goldman, "Moving Counseling Research into the 21st Century". *The Counseling Psychologist* 17 (1989): 83–84.

²³⁰ Ronald Jackson, Darlene Drummond, and Sakile Camara, "What Is Qualitative Research?" *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication* 8, no. 1 (2007): 26, 27.

of the extent of work that is done in the church in helping broken people in a myriad of situations. With no training beyond a desire “to heal the broken-hearted and set the captives free”,²³¹ I was conscious of my lack of skills as I listened to the stories of vulnerable people as they struggled with desperate situations. I therefore made the decision to further my knowledge by enrolling in an undergraduate degree in counselling, which I completed in 1998. From the completion of this degree, I was then employed as a counsellor in the church and saw clients through the church’s counselling department. As the clients with whom I was working were similar to those I had encountered in the pastoral care role, I was able to compare my experience as an untrained volunteer with the position of trained counsellor. I consider this experience as being very significant to this study as the participants in this study and pastors in general²³² also experience this tension between a commitment to counselling as a part of the pastoral care role and lack of training to fulfil such a task. Subsequently, I have completed a master’s degree in counselling, worked as a private counselling practitioner and been employed as a lecturer of counselling and chaplaincy, widening my perceptions of the work of the people helper even further. However, in my work as a church counsellor, among my clients were a number of pastors of smaller, rural churches, referred to me because of burnout or relationship difficulties and it was the plight of these people that continued to raise questions for me. As a Pentecostal Christian of some thirty-five years and from my progressive experiences, firstly as an untrained pastoral carer and then as a professional counsellor, I found a strong empathy with those who daily committed to journeying with people who have a myriad of issues and situations, some of which even seasoned counsellors would consider challenging.

²³¹ Isaiah 61:1.

With this researcher empathy²³³ as such an essential component of this study, qualitative research was the natural choice of methodology as qualitative research²³⁴ acknowledges that: the researcher cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached from the knowledge and evidence they are generating. Instead they should seek to understand their role in that process. Indeed, the very act of asking oneself difficult questions in the research process is the activity of reflexivity.²³⁵

Another aspect of qualitative research satisfied by this study was that it has been formulated around an intellectual puzzle.²³⁶ The puzzle posed for me was that, although the statistics²³⁷ prove that a very high percentage of pastors experience burnout, marriage and family breakdown and suffer the consequences of various aspects of stress related professional misconduct, there are those who do survive to become wise and compassionate pastors and leaders of their spiritual communities. Hence, although I do have empathy for the pastors who, in following their passion to do good, have suffered painful and life-destroying consequences, the resilience of these pastors interested me even more. That these people have

²³³ Although suggestive of an affective attitude, this researcher rather understands this empathetic perspective as representing the ontological position of this research expressed by Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 63, as the understanding that “people’s knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of this social reality”.

²³⁴ The epistemological position of qualitative research allows that a legitimate or meaningful way to generate data on the ontological properties as described above (FN14), “is to talk interactively with people, to ask them questions, to listen to them, to gain access to their accounts and articulations, or to analyse their use of language and construction of discourse”(Ibid., 64).

²³⁵ Ibid., 7.

²³⁶ Ibid., 7.

²³⁷ Stephen Muse, *When Hearts Become Flame* (Rollinsford, NH: Orthodox Research Institute, 2011), 180-181, cites statistics from his research: “Among Protestant evangelical churches, research suggests that more than 1,500 pastors leave their positions in ministry every month.... Conflicts contributing to clergy leaving ministry included lack of support and/or conflict with their denomination officials (26%); conflict with conflicting demands leading to burnout (12%); conflict between church demands and the needs of family and children (11%); conflict with church members (9%)....”. Elsewhere Muse sites a survey done of over 300,000 clergy in Australia where it was noted that, “Nineteen percent of clergy in this study were in the severe range [for burnout], and another 56% identified themselves as being at ‘borderline burnout’. Only 21% indicated burnout was not an issue for them”. Beaumont, *Pastor, Counsellor*, has also written a thesis on the subject of pastor burnout outlining the statistics of this phenomenon.

experienced hard times is factual but that they have also seen positive, transformative consequences of the therapeutic relationship in the lives of those to whom they minister, and in their own lives, is also borne out by this study.

Methodology

In order to understand this puzzle in all its complexities, Grounded Theory has been chosen as the primary qualitative methodology for this investigation. However, before examining Grounded Theory and its specific application to this study, a brief overview of the philosophies of hermeneutics and phenomenology is warranted. The reflexive practices developed from these philosophies, support the reflexive methods of enquiry that undergird this research.

Hermeneutics has generally been associated with Biblical theology and its task is to interpret text²³⁸ through a process that has been likened to a spiral. The spiral takes the reader from the text to the context, from its original meaning to its contextualisation and then to the deeper significance for the present situation.²³⁹ However, Gadamer's work in hermeneutics as applied to the social sciences, focuses on the dialogue of both the interpreter and the text to achieve the goal of such meaningful interpretation. He uses the metaphor of "horizons", seeing two horizons, one being the inner horizon of the subject matter of the text and the other the outer horizon of the historical context of the text.²⁴⁰ If Gadamer's understanding of horizons are seen as the beliefs that make possible the understanding of a sentence, then what he means by the fusion of horizons can be explained thus: Horizons fuse when an individual realizes how

²³⁸ "Text" can be understood as any record of human action.

²³⁹ Grant Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral* (Downers Grove IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 22.

²⁴⁰ David Vessey, "Gadamer and the Fusion of Horizons". *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 17, no.4 (2009):533.

the context of the subject matter can be weighted differently to lead to a different interpretation from the one initially arrived at. . . Our horizons are broadened; we have a new perspective on our old views, and maybe new views as well. This is the meaning of ‘the fusion of horizons’.²⁴¹

Habermas introduces another dimension of interpretation with his sociologically aware hermeneutics, claiming that even ‘language is dominated by social forces and that there is a ‘critique of ideology’ at the heart of hermeneutics’.²⁴² In the process of data analysis in this study, therefore, the cultural and historical meanings of the text, which, in this case were the transcribed interviews with the participants, was merged with my acknowledged preunderstandings and presuppositions. This study also endeavoured to be attentive to and curious about the social context of this study.

There is great diversity in the points of view of thinkers who could be classified under the general rubric *phenomenology*, and the most proper description of this way of approaching philosophy is the phenomenological ‘movement’.²⁴³ As an in-depth discussion of the philosophy of phenomenology is far beyond the scope of this thesis, in this section we will briefly explore the “phenomenological movement” as it relates to the methodology used to find meaning in this research puzzle. Walters writes of the phenomenological method developed by Husserl²⁴⁴ and his explanation will serve to fulfil the purpose of this study.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 534.

²⁴² Osborne, *The Hermeneutical*, 506.

²⁴³ D. Stewart and A. Mickunas, *Exploring Phenomenology: A Guide to the Field and its Literature* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1990) in A. Walters, “The Phenomenological Movement: Implications for Nursing Research”. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 22 (1995):791.

²⁴⁴ Edmund Husserl was the principal founder of phenomenology—and thus one of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century. He has made important contributions to almost all areas of philosophy and

Husserl developed his phenomenological philosophy around the premise of two attitudes, the natural attitude, also labelled “mundane”,²⁴⁵ and the philosophical attitude, sometimes called “transcendent”.

The natural attitude describes the relationship consciousness has to our everyday experiences, and encompasses the basic web of human relationships. The philosophical attitude is the one concerned with basic philosophical questions. Husserl considered that philosophy would survive so long as people questioned the basis of world experience. This meant that the natural attitude needed to be questioned in the attempt to uncover the rational foundations of the world that is the philosophical attitude. Husserl called the change from the natural to the philosophical attitude *phenomenological reduction* which, he argued, included a questioning of one's presuppositions about the world. Phenomenological reduction involves reducing a complex problem into its basic components by eliminating one's prejudices about the world. This process, Husserl contended, results in a focused understanding of the thing or object under investigation.²⁴⁶ Hence, phenomenology, like hermeneutics, is a reflexive method of inquiry and, also like hermeneutics, phenomenological researchers value the importance of language and text.

However, hermeneutics and phenomenology differ in their understanding of meaning. Where hermeneutics uses interpretive methods to discover the nature of meaning for a particular phenomenon, phenomenology seeks the essence or core meaning of the phenomenon through a process of exhaustive descriptions, and the analysis of these descriptions towards the

anticipated central ideas of its neighboring disciplines such as linguistics, sociology and cognitive psychology, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/husserl/>

²⁴⁵ Robert Arp, “Husserl and the Penetrability of the Transcendental and Mundane Spheres”. *Human Studies* 27 (2004): 223.

²⁴⁶ Walters, “The Phenomenological”, 792.

reducing of a complex problem into its basic components. The reflexive task of the phenomenologist, like the hermeneut, is to become aware of her own preunderstandings, prejudices and natural assumptions, to “bracket” these and allow space for the “transcendent” perception. In so doing, the phenomenologist seeks a singular essence or structure of the phenomenon being researched, unlike the hermeneut whose focus is on the text of dialogue which is fluid and open for further interpretation.

This study, therefore, acknowledges the importance of both the hermeneutical and phenomenological principles of:

- The reflexivity of the researcher and her commitment to acknowledging and bracketing preunderstandings, presuppositions and prejudices - the explanation of the context and my commitment to the research has been acknowledged and explained in Chapter 1 and earlier in this chapter.
- The importance of language and text - the literature and the transcribed interviews with the participants are the primary data sources in this study, confirming the value of language and text to this research.
- An explanation of the particular phenomenon of this group of participants in this setting - these texts have provided explanations that seek to have demonstrable wider resonance²⁴⁷ within other Christian counselling communities that struggle with the negative, as well as positive, dimensions of the powerful therapeutic relationship.

While the interpretive and reflexive aspects of hermeneutics have been incorporated into the data analysis process of this study, a phenomenological perspective has also been

²⁴⁷ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 8.

acknowledged. The essence of my purpose was to develop a keener understanding of the unique conceptualisation that pastors have of the therapeutic relationship. This understanding necessarily involved both hermeneutical “fusing of horizons” and the deep engagement with the research data as the natural or mundane was identified and acknowledged. The transcendent “knowing” of this particular therapeutic relationship was then able to emerge.

Grounded Theory

The methodology chosen to accomplish this process was Grounded Theory. Grounded theory entered the research arena through the work of Glaser and Strauss²⁴⁸ in the early sixties at what was seen to be an opportune time. Although qualitative research methods had been used up to these times, a resurgence in commitment to scientific ways of knowing and more sophisticated quantitative research methods saw the number of published qualitative research projects declining around the 1960's.²⁴⁹ In response to this decline, Glaser and Strauss sought a method that would bridge the gap²⁵⁰ between theory and empirical research by developing a formalised framework for generating theory from empirical data. These scholars expound the essence of grounded theory: “Generating theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data in the course of the research”.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Barney Glaser and Absolm Strauss' initial work introducing Grounded Theory was *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (New York, NY: Adeline de Gruyter, 1967).

²⁴⁹ Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis* (London, UK: Sage, 2006), 4.

²⁵⁰ Adeline Cooney, “Choosing Between Glaser and Strauss: An Example”. *Nurse Researcher* 17, no.4 (2010):19, writes: “In 1967, Glaser and Strauss criticised quantitative and qualitative approaches to research, believing that neither tradition had reduced 'the embarrassing gap between theory and empirical research'. In their opinion, there was an overemphasis on verifying theory at the expense of generating theory. Their goal in developing grounded theory was to return attention to the generation of theory”.

²⁵¹ Glaser and Strauss, *The Discovery*, 6.

To this end, “Glaser recommends that the researcher should be aware that the starting point for their research should be an ‘area’ rather than a ‘problem’, eschewing the research question in favour of emergence”.²⁵² Hence, grounded theory methods were concerned with the generating of categories, properties and hypotheses about general phenomena and were seen to be inductive in that theories arise from, or are ‘grounded’ in data. “This is in direct contrast to logical deductive theory which builds on prior assumptions. Glaser and Strauss’s basic position was that generating grounded theory was a way of arriving at theory suited for its supposed uses”.²⁵³

However, as time went on, although Glaser and Strauss went their separate ways, they both continued to develop grounded theory, albeit with different perspectives. Cooney identifies the core conflict between these theorists as being whether verification should be an outcome of grounded theory or not:

Strauss indicated that induction, deduction and verification are 'absolutely essential' whereas Glaser maintained that grounded theory is inductive only. Glaser's approach to data analysis is less structured than Strauss's. Glaser describes two types of coding processes (substantive and theoretical) while Strauss describes three (open, axial and selective).²⁵⁴

Hence, whereas Glaser, whose grounded theory became known as the “traditional” form, claimed that grounded theory simply codes for categories and properties and lets theoretical

²⁵² Charles Buckley and Michael Waring, “The Evolving Nature of Grounded Theory: Experiential Reflections on the Potential of the Method for Analysing Children’s Attitudes Towards Physical Activity”. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 12, no. 4 (2009): 320.

²⁵³ Hsiao-Yu Chen and Jennifer Boore, “Using a Synthesised Technique for Grounded Theory in Nursing Research”. *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 18 (2009): 2252.

²⁵⁴ Cooney, “Choosing Between”, 20.

codes emerge where they may, Strauss,²⁵⁵ in his later work with Corbin, developed a more structured procedure of coding, memoing and analysis which describe the procedures of open, axial and selected coding.²⁵⁶ Strauss and Corbin's form of grounded theory was labelled "evolved grounded theory".

In more recent times, grounded theory has continued to evolve with the changes and fluctuations in worldviews and society. Although the ontology of the classical grounded theorists was that there is a real reality, theorists²⁵⁷ coming from a more constructivist perspective have begun to develop a third form of grounded theory that "creates a sense of reciprocity between participants and the researcher in the construction of meaning and a theory that is grounded in their experiences".²⁵⁸ Likewise, where the epistemology of the classical grounded theorists accepted dualism of subject and object, constructivists consider that there is mutuality between subjects and objects. In fact, the constructivist theorists see grounded theory as being flexible, considering this flexibility "as part of its appeal for interpretive researchers and that the guidelines offered by the original authors can be adopted and adapted by those wishing to use the method with twenty-first century methodological assumptions".²⁵⁹ Charmaz, one of the main proponents of constructivist grounded theory to emerge in more recent times, demonstrates this "adaption" and "adoption" of grounded theory. She seeks meaning in the data by delving below the surface and questioning tacit meanings, values, beliefs and ideologies. She assumes that the interaction between the researcher and the participants "*produces* the data, and therefore the meanings that the

²⁵⁵ Absolm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (London, UK: Sage, 1990).

²⁵⁶ Chen and Boore, "Using a", 2252.

²⁵⁷ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded*.

²⁵⁸ Chen and Boore, "Using a", 2253.

²⁵⁹ Buckley and Waring, "The Evolving", 318.

researcher observes and defines”.²⁶⁰ Clarke explores similar postmodern concepts, beginning “from the assumption that grounded theory/symbolic interactionism constitutes a theory/method package”. Such packages²⁶¹ are framed:

as including a set of epistemological and ontological assumptions along with concrete practices through which a set of practitioners go about their work, including relating to/with one another and the various nonhuman entities involved in the situation. This concept of theory/method package focuses on the integral . . . aspects of ontology, epistemology, and practice as these are co-constitutive.²⁶²

However, whatever type of grounded theory a researcher chooses, for it to be grounded theory, she is still required to address a set of common characteristics:

- **Theoretical Sensitivity**

This is a multi-dimensional concept relating to the researchers capacity to be attuned to the nuances and complexities of the data and to “separate the pertinent from that which isn’t”.²⁶³ Although theoretical sensitivity is a common factor of grounded theory, the different types have different perceptions of this factor. Glaser’s traditional grounded theory is always conscious of not “forcing” the data and would insist that, to legitimately develop theoretical sensitivity, the researcher must “remain sensitive to the data by being able to record events and detect happenings without first having them filtered through and squared with pre-

²⁶⁰ Kathy Charmaz, “Grounded Theory”, in *Rethinking Methods in Psychology*, eds. J. Smith, R. Harré, and L. Langenhove (London: Sage, 1995), 35.

²⁶¹ This theory/method package concept has been considered in choosing this methodology for this study.

²⁶² Adele Clarke, *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory after the Postmodern Turn* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 4.

²⁶³ Strauss and Corbin, *The Basics*, 44.

existing hypotheses and biases”.²⁶⁴ Strauss and Corbin use techniques to enhance researcher sensitivity and, while not as rigid in their interpretation of “forcing the data”, they defend their use of such techniques by claiming that: “*Theorising* is the act of constructing . . . from data an explanatory scheme that systematically integrates various concepts through statements of relationship”.²⁶⁵ Charmaz,²⁶⁶ writing from the perspective of a constructivist grounded theorist, emphasises that the researcher maintains a closeness with the participants by preserving their dialogue throughout the process of analysis.

- **Treatment of the Literature**

The treatment of the literature in the various aspects of grounded theory differs considerably. Whereas Glaser, from the traditional grounded theory perspective, states that “there is a need not to review any of the literature in the substantive area under study . . . for fear of contaminating, constraining, inhibiting, stifling, or impeding the researcher’s analysis of codes emergent from the data”,²⁶⁷ Strauss and Corbin support the interweaving of the literature throughout the process of evolved grounded theory and consider it as another voice contributing to the researcher’s theoretical reconstruction.²⁶⁸ Along with the constructivists, these theorists also include such “nontechnical” literature as reports or internal correspondence as data that may add to the understanding of the context of the participants.

- **Constant Comparative Methods; Coding; Identifying the Core Category; Memoing and Diagramming**

The strategies for the collection of data across the various qualitative methodologies are fairly similar. In this study, semi-structured interviews, a common method of data collection in

²⁶⁴ Barney Glaser, *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory* (Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 1978), 3.

²⁶⁵ Strauss and Corbin, *The Basics*, 25.

²⁶⁶ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded*.

²⁶⁷ Barney Glaser, *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emergence vs. Forcing* (Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 1992), 31.

²⁶⁸ Strauss and Corbin, *The Basics*, 45.

qualitative research, were used. However, the analysis of data varies according to the particular methodology chosen and even then, as explained above for grounded theory methodology, there can be variations within a particular methodology. As grounded theory is the methodology of choice for this study, it is appropriate to note here the unique methods that data is organised in grounded theory. Although, there has been some debate²⁶⁹ about this, it is generally accepted that the methods of data organisation and data analysis that make a qualitative method grounded theory is the constant comparisons, the coding, categorising and identifying the core category, and the memoing and diagramming. Traditional grounded theory simply uses these methods while the evolved model of Strauss and Corbin still uses these strategies but tends to employ a more complex structure to the coding. The constructivists', while still following these methods, bring a perspective that allows for researcher and participant to engage in a more collaborative approach. Whichever view of grounded theory that the researcher favours, it is these core methods that ensure the rigor of the research.

- **The Measure of Rigor**²⁷⁰

According to the claims of proponents of grounded theory:

it is the most rigorous method of providing preliminary or exploratory research in an area in which little is known. It differs from other qualitative research methods in that it not only provides meaning, understanding and description of the phenomenon under study, but is also theory-generating.²⁷¹

²⁶⁹ Chen and Boore, "Using a", 2252, quote Glaser who argued, in response to Strauss and Corbin's coding modifications that "Strauss and Corbin were no longer doing grounded theory and that this was being misconceived and distorted. Glaser referred to Strauss and Corbin's approach as 'full conceptual description' and claimed that it forced the data and theory rather than allowing them to emerge".

²⁷⁰ Jane Mills, Ann Bonner, and Karen Francis, "The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory". *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5, no. 1 (2006):3.

²⁷¹ Chen and Boore, "Using a", 2253.

Although qualitative researchers learn by doing and employ what is seen by some as the “unscientific” methods of insight, intuition and impression, Creswell supports the rigor of qualitative research by applying a spiral model to these methods:

The researcher engages in the process of moving in analytical circles rather than using a fixed, linear approach. One enters with data of texts or images and exits with an account or narrative (or, in the case of grounded theory, a theory). In between, the researcher touches on several facets of analysis and circles around and around.²⁷²

It is the constant comparison of the data and the depth of engagement with the data that not only gives grounded theory research an empirical structure but also reveals contextual and phenomenological aspects of the research problem. It is these insights that are of value to this research and, all being considered, why grounded theory best suits this study.

Summary

After the initial decision to employ grounded theory, and after considering the three aspects of grounded theory examined here, a further choice among these models was required. While deliberating on the research project as a whole, the purpose, the context and the participants, as well as considering the details of the data gathering process and analysis, the “evolved grounded theory” of Strauss and Corbin was the methodology decided upon.²⁷³ Although the research design will elaborate on how the research analysis proceeded, it is noted here that the particular factors considered in the choice to use evolved grounded theory, included:

²⁷²John Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 142.

²⁷³ However, it is acknowledged here that, as author of this thesis, I cannot, or, in fact want to, separate prevailing postmodern and constructivist attitudes from the present use of the original methodology, conceived in the second half of the twentieth century. Juliet Corbin makes similar claims in the latest edition of the book she and Anselm Strauss wrote in 1990.

- the complexity of the questions being asked;
- the constant comparison that would accomplish the task of capturing as much of that complexity as possible;
- the diverse nuances of the experience being researched that could be explored through the axial coding and memoing;
- the interweaving of the literature through the process;
- the reflexivity of the process.

It is in these particular factors that:

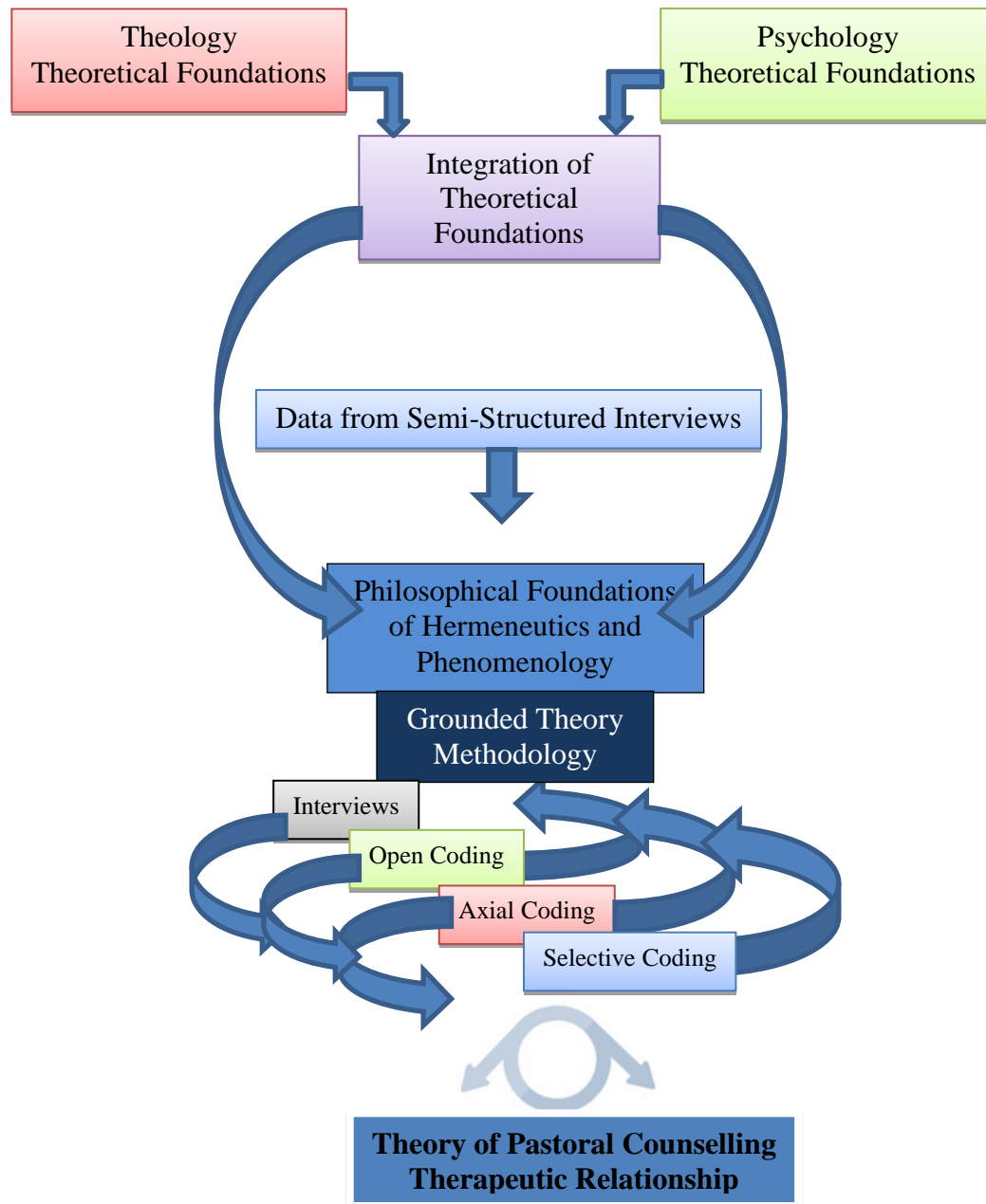
- the influences of hermeneutics, with its interest in the interpretation of text and dialogue;
- phenomenology with an awareness of both the mundane and the transcendent in the generation of the essence of phenomenon

can be observed. However, grounded theory methodology is not an isolated component of this research but an integral part of the overall design of this project.

Research Design

The diagram below (Figure 3) indicates the process of the research design and will be fully explained as this chapter progresses.

Figure 3 - Research Design



Aims of the Study

As a starting point in the description of the research design, the aims of this thesis are outlined in this section.

The primary question being asked is:

- How does the pastor conceptualise and practice the therapeutic relationship?

This question, however, as well as expressing the ontology of this thesis, also contains several unique contextual elements that have influenced the construction of the theoretical and methodological frameworks and in order to present a clear and logical research design, these will be described further here. Firstly, however, the subsequent aims of the study will be outlined.

The secondary aims of this thesis fall into two main categories, theology and psychology. As it is the task of this thesis to fully develop the therapeutic relationship in the pastoral counselling context, it has been deemed necessary to explore both the relative theological elements that influence the therapeutic relationship as well as the psychological findings of this phenomenon. These elements of a healing relationship are seen as being relationality, personhood and the therapeutic capacity of the relationship. By examining both the disciplines of theology and psychology under these topics, the common elements can be identified and a meaningful integration will reveal new insights for a pastoral counselling ministry. Such an integration will not only provide sound theory but will also bring understanding to the practical aspects of pastoral counselling.

Theology

The theological elements will be included in the following questions:

- What is the pastor's theology of person and human wholeness?

Any understanding of how a relationship is therapeutic must necessarily include the various perceptions of what constitutes human wholeness. And any understanding of what constitutes human wholeness, from a theological perspective, necessarily contains specific doctrinal beliefs about God and his interaction with humanity. Hence the next sub-question is:

- What is the pastor's understanding of the doctrines of God?

A vital component of this study is the transcendent and transformational dimensions of the therapeutic relationships. This warrants the question:

- What is the pastor's conceptual and phenomenological understanding of Spirituality and spiritual growth?

The investigation of the therapeutic relationship necessarily leads to a connection with the relevant community. As this is a specific relationship and it is being examined in a specific context, namely a Pentecostal church, the next questions involve ecclesiology, including practical ministry:

- How does the environment of *this particular church* influence the pastoral counselling process?
- How does the pastor's understanding of Christian ministry influence the therapeutic relationship?

Psychology

As described above, the disciplines of theology and psychology are being examined under similar headings and the pastor's understanding of personhood and therefore human wholeness and the process of change is undergirded by an exploration of psychological principles and philosophies relating to these topics:

- What is the pastor's understanding of psychological human wholeness?
- What is the pastor's understanding of the theory and practice of therapeutic change?

Having articulated the aims of this thesis, a brief explanation of the contextual factors and the impact of these on this study follows.

Research Contextual Factors

In keeping with the various philosophies on which this methodology is constructed, in this section we will examine the contextual factors that are of importance in a qualitative approach, particularly the philosophies of hermeneutics and phenomenology that have been incorporated into this research. The first of these unique elements is the church-based context of the therapeutic relationship being studied. This has necessitated a comprehensive chapter on the theological aspects of this specific relationship, and has introduced variables such as spirituality. The second noteworthy aspect of this study is the counselling component. Although the chapter on the psychological perspective of the therapeutic relationship has explored the scholarship of psychological theories, the participants of this study are not familiar with the psychological epistemology and the terminology generally used in an investigation of this sort. As well as developing a research design that will be systematic and fulfil the rigor necessary for such a work, there is also a necessity to retain relevance to the participants who daily engage with hurting people in the local and ordinary places where they live and work. It is therefore seen that the task of this thesis is to produce an integrated theory that is not only firmly grounded on sound theological and psychological scholarship but a theory that also seeks to illuminate the space between these scholarly disciplines and the everyday practice of those who work in the real world with real people.

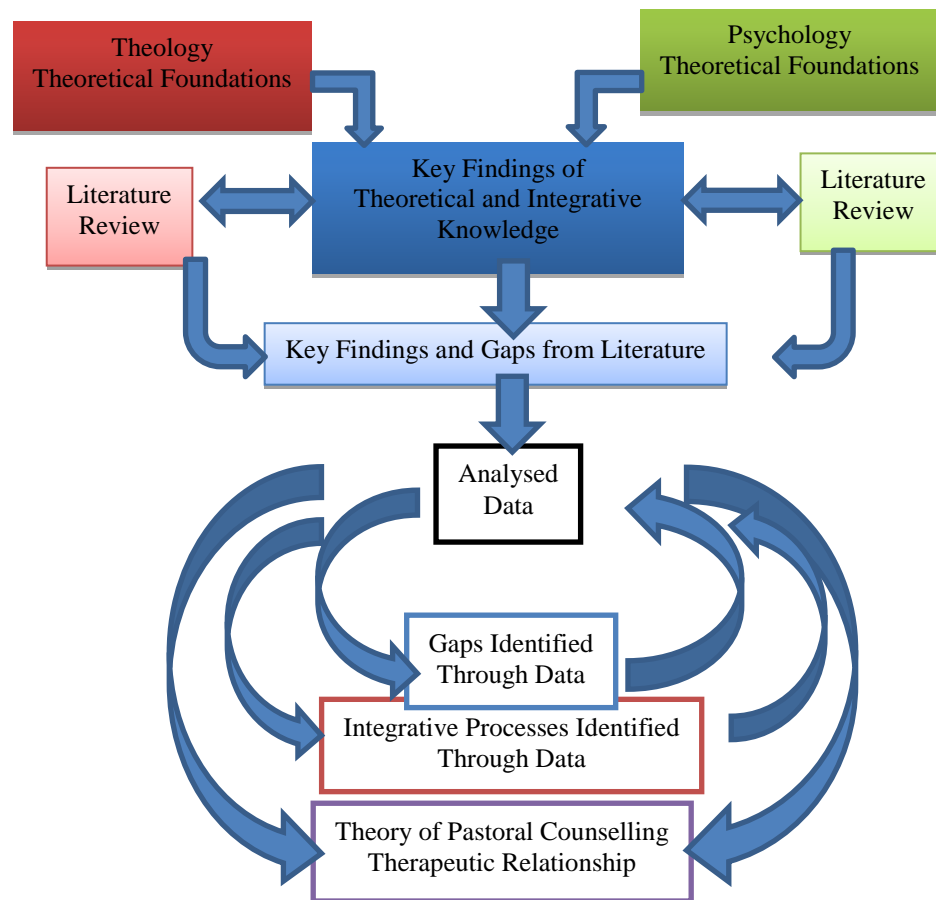
Knowledge Gaps Revealed in the Literature and the Interviews

Consequently, it has been discovered that there is a wealth of research on the therapeutic relationship from a psychological perspective, but that the counselling relationship in the context of theology has not been investigated so specifically. Also, because of the Pentecostal context and the focus on spirituality as a catalyst of transformational change, theological tensions and contradictions have been identified as the participants have narrated their pastoral counselling experiences. As mentioned in the literature review, the theory/practice gap research of Argyris and Schön²⁷⁴ and the work of Polanyi²⁷⁵ in the area of tacit knowing will be utilised to gain insights into the various dimensions of the therapeutic relationship revealed through the data analysis. To accomplish the research task, therefore, the research design contains several discrete components that interact on different levels, and in various dimensions. Figure 4, below indicates these multi-layered interactions:

²⁷⁴ The research Argyris and Schön, *Theory in*, will be included in the chapter that discusses the data analysis.

²⁷⁵ The work of Polanyi, "Tacit Knowing", will be included in the chapter that discusses the data analysis.

Figure 4 – Research Procedure



Having outlined the elements of this research design, I will now turn to the procedure that has been followed in this study beginning with a rationale of how the initial sampling was undertaken and the description and nature of the participants in the study.

Sampling

In its broadest definition, sampling and selection are principles and procedures used to identify, choose, and gain access to relevant data sources from which you will generate data using your chosen methods.²⁷⁶ In this study, the source identified as being able to generate

²⁷⁶ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 120.

data that would best inform the goals of this research were pastors of small to medium churches.²⁷⁷ As qualitative research is concerned with focussing on a particular phenomenon²⁷⁸ rather than comparing a broad range of subject matter, pastors who were in the position where they were personally involved in the emotional, psychological and spiritual welfare of their congregation, and, in some cases of their communities, or at least sectors of their communities, were the specific focus. These pastors did not have counselling departments in their churches and, in most of the cases, did not have ready access to other professional counselling agencies, particularly those who work from a Christian ethos. These pastors, mostly untrained in counselling skills, strategies and techniques, endeavoured to adhere to the denomination's policies that counselling was only to be done by qualified people. However, they often found themselves in the position where they were the only ones to meet with, and talk with distressed people who were seeking help. Hence, these participants were chosen for being on "the coal face" of pastoral counselling. The stories of their participation in counselling relationships and the circumstances surrounding these encounters proved to be, as anticipated, rich and meaningful illustrations of the phenomena being researched.

As well as the sample being from similar church environments, the decision was to select these pastors from one denomination. One of the research questions was asking how spirituality influenced the therapeutic quality of the relationship and, as the Pentecostal church is open to such spiritual concepts, it was considered to be a context where the pastors would have an understanding of spirituality and would also be willing to engage with spirituality in their counselling practice. It was also acknowledged that language is a vital component of

²⁷⁷ These churches ranged in size from 50 – 200 person membership.

²⁷⁸ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 121.

qualitative research and qualitative analysis, so by choosing participants who were not only all speaking a similar theological “language” but that this “language” was also familiar to the researcher, it was expected that subtle nuances would be more easily detected. This reason was also instrumental in the number of participants selected for the study:

Qualitative research is particularly good at constituting arguments about how things work in particular contexts rather than representing a full range of experience. Therefore, decisions about exactly what range to include must be guided by strategic logic . . . rather than a representational one. . . The key issue for qualitative sampling is therefore how to *focus*, strategically and meaningfully, rather than how to represent.²⁷⁹

In order to focus on the research questions and analyse the layers of information obtained from the interviews, eleven participants, including two couples, were seen as an optimum number. Such small numbers of participants are not unusual for qualitative research as the participants were not chosen simply as a means of accessing the data but they were “actually *being the thing*”²⁸⁰ in which I was interested. Therefore, the purpose of the semi-structured interviews that formed the core of the data was to establish a dialogical interaction with Pentecostal pastors in order to give theological depth with a pastoral orientation to the investigation. The analysis of qualitative data is detailed and comprehensive. To have a larger sample would have produced an unmanageable amount of data and a smaller sample would have not have given sufficient data for the depth of analysis to be achieved and could have, therefore, compromised the ability for the research findings to be applied to other contexts.

²⁷⁹ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 136.

²⁸⁰ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 134.

Participants

The participants' details are included in the table, below (Table 1). However, it is worth noting here a few interesting factors that have some bearing on the outcomes of this research. All the participants but one have been in the ministry, some in the same church, for more than five years. The reasons that the one person who had been a pastor for less than this time has since left the ministry could, in conjunction with the other findings of this study, be a very interesting and valuable topic of further research. Another factor of interest but not directly included in the data analysis, is the fact that there was a higher percentage (76%) of females to males. The policy of the COC Movement is that pastors' wives are also given the title of "pastor". This means that most of the pastors' wives in this church are very actively involved in the ministry. As the primary purpose of the Pentecostal movement is preaching the gospel, pastoral care, including pastoral counselling, becomes the "nurturing" aspect of the ministry and, as such, is often the preferred role of the pastor's wife. This will be examined more closely in the data analysis. However, with this group, there was one male who was interviewed alone and two males who were interviewed with their wives. It was deemed as important to include the male voices so as to diminish any gender specific bias that having an all-female sample would incur. The interviews with these males also served to enrich the data as they tended to view the counselling relationship from a different perspective to their female colleagues. Those males who were interviewed with their wives also added to the quality of the data by enabling the researcher to record two perspectives in the same interview.

The other statistic represented by this list of participants is the lack of any counselling training in this group. This fact is one of the undergirding constants that has considerable influence on how the questions posed by this study are answered by the participants.

Table 1 outlines the details of the participants:

Table 1 – Participants Details

Code	Ministry Duration				Church Location	Training	Marital Status	M/F
	1-5	5-10	10-20	20+				
1BA09				X	Rural	Cert 3 Min	M	M
2CA09		X			Coastal rural	Bmin	S	F
3DA09	X				Rural	None	M	F
4EA09				X	Rural	Other tertiary	M	F
5FA09			X		City	Teaching Degree	M	F
6GA09				X	Rural	Other tertiary	M	F
7HA09			X		Rural	Cert 3 Min	M	M
			X		Rural	Cert 3 Min	M	F
8IA09			X		Coastal Rural	Other Tertiary	M	M
			X		Coastal Rural	Teaching Degree	M	F
9JA09			X		Rural	None	M	F

Semi-Structured Interviews

After initial contact with the Australian secretary of the COC Movement²⁸¹ in July/August, 2009, information letters and consent forms were initially sent by email to all Australian COC pastors, inviting them to participate in the research. In this letter, it was proposed that the research interviews would take place at the COC National Conference held in Brisbane from September, 28th to October 2nd, 2009. This was done for logistical reasons because of the geographical spread of the locations where these pastors were stationed. It was deemed to be more practical to approach these pastors at one location rather than trying to arrange appointments for interviews which would have necessitated time consuming and expensive

²⁸¹ An information letter was initially sent to Pastor David MacDonald, the then Australian President of COC. He authorised Pastor Craig Anderson, Australian Secretary (at that time) of COC to be my contact person. Pastor Anderson fully endorsed the project.

travel. Contact with the pastors who attended the conference was then made by myself, which resulted in the recruitment of eleven participants. These participants were issued with a second information letter (identical to the first) to remind them of the project and the terms and conditions of their participation. All agreed to being interviewed, signed consent forms and the interviews were conducted at various times during the five day conference. It is worth noting here that none of the participants had any knowledge of the interview questions before the interviews, and, therefore, the data gathered from these interviews are completely spontaneous. This was deemed to be more useful to this research as, had the participants seen the questions before and had time to reflect on them, the answers may not have contained the richness and depth of the “true” phenomena these pastors experienced in the course of the therapeutic relationships in which they engaged.

Although the participants were all known to the researcher through various previous circumstances, mostly associated with church-related matters, this was not considered in any way detrimental to the research process. In fact, because of the previous egalitarian relationships and the trust that had already been established, the interviews may have been enhanced as to the depth of interaction and the willingness of the participants to interact honestly and authentically. All eleven participants took part in face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, the researcher being the interviewer in each case. This resulted in nine interviews that were transcribed as there were two couples who, because both were involved in counselling in their church, chose to be interviewed together. The interviews were audio recorded and conducted in the office of the counselling department of COC, Brisbane. This arrangement also proved to be conducive to the quality of the interviews as the participants

were in an environment where they were emotionally comfortable and psychologically and spiritually stimulated.²⁸²

Although only one interview (average time 45 minutes) was conducted with each pastor (or couple), this was deemed to produce sufficient data to provide meaningful analysis as well as being logistically manageable. The questions discussed in these interviews were designed to address the theological, psychological and integrative dimensions of this research. The following table (Table 2) shows these questions and the rationale for asking them:

Table 2 – Semi-Structured Interview Questions and Rationale

Question	Rationale
Investigates Primary Q.1: How does the counselling pastor conceptualise and practice the counselling relationship?	
How many hours would you spend in “counselling” per week?	Seeks to glean information as to depth and consistency of “practice” they have had.
On average, how many sessions would you have with each person?	Seeks to glean information as to their attitude and approach to the counselling process.
What do you see is the aim of counselling?	Used as an opening for discussion about their conceptualisation of human wholeness from a psychological perspective.
What do think it means to be whole as a human?	Follows on from previous discussion.
How do you think we become whole?	Follows on from previous discussion.
Theological Component Investigates Primary Q. 2:	
What is the pastor’s theology of person and human wholeness?	
How would God describe human wholeness?	Used as an opening for discussion about their conceptualisation of human wholeness from a

²⁸² These are examples of the bracketing discussed in the previous section of this chapter. By reflecting on this mundane aspect of the interviews, these preunderstandings were able to be bracketed for the data analysis.

	theological perspective.
How do you want your clients to understand God?	Further theological discussion of individuals' theological understandings of God.
How will you know if your clients are growing spiritually?	Seeks to glean understanding of spirituality and spiritual growth.
The Therapeutic Relationship – Psychological Component	
Investigates Primary Q.1:	
How does the counselling pastor conceptualise and practice the counselling relationship?	
How much of your emotional energy goes into your counselling?	Used as an opening for discussion of their understanding of therapeutic relationship.
How do you see yourself when you are in a pastoral counselling situation with your clients?	Follows on from previous discussion.
How is this relationship different from your other pastoral roles?	Bringing in a practical/ecclesiological perspective.
Ecclesiology/Pentecostal Theology	
Investigates Primary Q. 2:	
What is the pastor's theology of person and human wholeness?	
How do you think pastoral counselling as a COC pastor would differ from that of other churches?	Instigating a discussion of a distinctively Pentecostal doctrine.
How do you see pastoral counselling fits in to the doctrine of the Pentecostal church – and in particular, this Pentecostal church?	Further discussion of Pentecostal theology.
What do you think are the distinctions of Pentecostal theology?	How they view "theology" and what kind of presuppositions they have.
Other Christian denominations base their beliefs on church tradition and the Bible. Do you think this is the same for COC?	Explore both the source of presuppositions and how much the phenomenological experience has influenced their belief system.
All our pastoral practice is informed by our beliefs. What are your beliefs that most inform your counselling?	Follows on from previous discussion.
Why do you do counselling?	Follows on from previous discussion.
To the best of your knowledge, what do you, as a pastor who counsels, do differently from a secular counsellor?	Follows on from previous discussion.
Conclusion	
On a scale of 1-10, thinking about all of your pastoral roles, where would you rate	Their perceived needs in relation to their pastoral counselling role.

<p>pastoral counselling?</p> <p>What would you need to happen for this to advance to ...</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>How did you achieve this level?</p>	
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Ethical Considerations

This research has obtained clearance from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Australian Catholic University. This committee had no questions regarding the conducting of the research. In accordance with the guidelines of this committee, all data have been securely kept either in locked filing cabinets in an office approved by the committee or electronically in password protected files on the computer of the researcher. The interviews have been de-identified and assigned a code. The key to this code is securely kept in a separate place. Hard copy data will be shredded and all electronically stored data will be deleted after a period of five years from the completion of this project.

The participants were recruited through an invitation letter which contained explicit information regarding the research, the expectations for the participants, the role and responsibilities of the interviewer and the expected outcome and dissemination of the research. This letter also contained the contact information of local, appropriate professionals should they experience any adverse effects from the interview process. No costs were incurred by the participants in the course of this research, nor were they significantly inconvenienced. A very small gift voucher was given to them after the interview in appreciation of their participation. Written permission to participate in and to record the interviews was obtained from the participants. The transcriptions were done by two

transcribers and two researchers were involved in the data analysis process, all of whom signed confidentiality forms.

Research Procedure – Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundations of this research have been considered as vitally important to the outcome of this research. Chapter 2, the literature review, overviews the literature that has informed this study, while the chapters on the theoretical foundations have sought to critique the literature and develop the current scholarship in response to the unique questions raised by this thesis. As a result of this critique coupled with the analysis of the data, three headings have emerged that have served as a structure whereby the theoretical foundations could be discussed, compared and that integration could be accomplished. These headings were:

- Relationality.
- Personhood.
- The therapeutic capacity of the relationship.

The following is an explanation of how this structure informed the thesis questions.

The theological information was drawn from a wide variety of literature, encompassing Roman Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostal denominations. Hence, rather than adhering to any one of these, foundational truths were sought, often beginning with ancient teachings but not excluding the more contemporary works that had been accepted by all Christians as foundational to their faith. Under the heading of “relationality”, our exploration mainly centred on the theology surrounding the Trinity, particularly a Trinitarian understanding of covenant and power. The topic of “personhood” led us to the teachings of “the image of God” and an exploration of what theologically constituted human wholeness. The therapeutic relationship was understood as having the capacity to incorporate the values and beliefs of

those involved in the relationship and in this section the concept of the life-giving Holy Spirit was introduced into the discussion.

Similarly, rather than focussing on any particular approach or school of psychology, relevant aspects of all were explored within the parameters of the headings of “relationality”, “personhood” and “therapeutic relationship”. Psychological relationality, in relation to creating a safe covenant space and the implications of power in the counselling relationship mirrored the theological findings. The topic of personhood investigated the psychological understandings of human wholeness while the therapeutic relationship considered beliefs and values as well as the human person, human spirituality and the transcendent quality of the therapeutic relationship.

To begin to distil the essences revealed about the human person in a therapeutic relationship, the theories related to integration were called upon. Although two very extensive and multi-faceted topics, this thesis was interested in the scholarly insights into the therapeutic aspects of the therapeutic relationship. The integration investigated was that which enabled the Christian theological understandings of the human person in relationship, and the psychology of the therapeutic relationship to achieve a meaningful synthesis.

As mentioned earlier, our questions unearthed gaps in both the theological and psychological knowledge relating to the therapeutic relationship, especially in areas of the transcendent quality of relationship and spirituality. It was also found that there was a paucity of research around the topic of transformational change through the therapeutic relationship especially in the context of theology/psychology integration. Hence, Chapter 6 is devoted to seeking

theological/psychological synthesis of these elements of the therapeutic relationship, and also serves to develop an appropriate language for meaningful interdisciplinary dialogue.

Research Procedure – Data Analysis

Having situated this process in its theoretical context, the next area for examination is the analysis of the data. According to Mauthner and Doucet:

Data analysis methods are not just neutral techniques. They reflect, and are imbued with, theoretical, epistemological and ontological assumptions – including conceptions of subjects and subjectivities, and understandings of how knowledge is constructed and produced.²⁸³

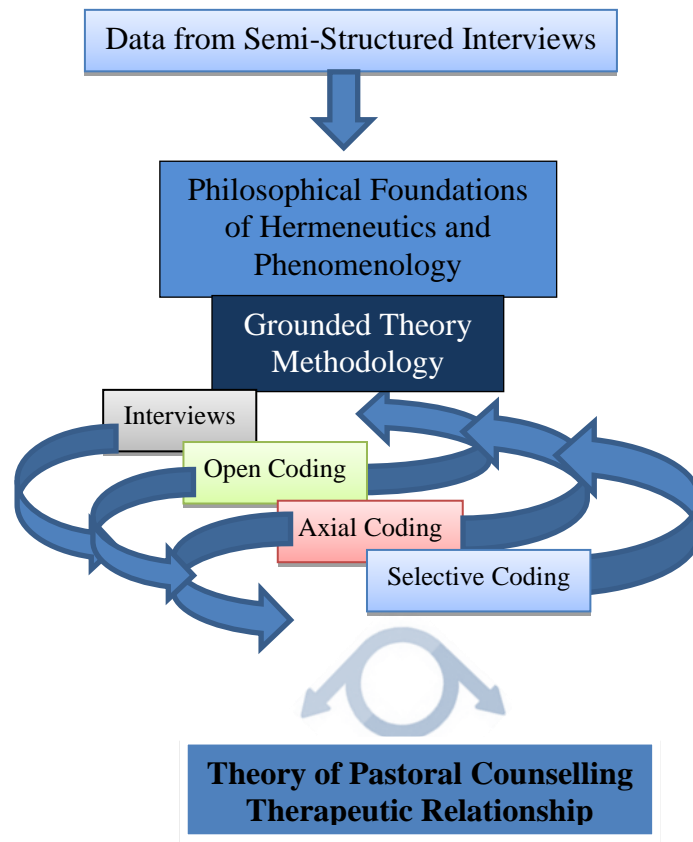
This chapter will proceed with a brief description²⁸⁴ of how this has been accomplished within the parameters of the chosen research methodology of grounded theory, particularly the approach taken by Strauss and Corbin,²⁸⁵ sometimes known as evolved grounded theory. The process is represented in Figure 5, below, keeping in mind that the analysis of the data was a process and, although illustrated here in a somewhat linear format for the sake of clarity for the reader, in reality, the levels of analysis were more interactive.

²⁸³ Natasha Mauthner and Andrea Doucet, “Reflexive Accounts and Accounts of Reflexivity in Qualitative Data Analysis”. *Sociology* 37, no.3 (2003): 413.

²⁸⁴ The details of the analysis of the actual data and findings will be examined in Chapter 7. Here, an overview of the method and process used will be described.

²⁸⁵ This methodology was explained in Strauss and Corbin, *The Basics*.

Figure 5 – Research Procedure - Data Analysis



As mentioned previously, the data to be analysed using the Grounded Theory process was in the form of semi-structured interviews that had been transcribed. In accordance with both hermeneutics and Grounded Theory the dialogue and the text of these transcriptions represented a rich source of valid data. An example of the transcript is represented in Table 3:

Table 3 - Example of a Transcribed Interview²⁸⁶

	Transcript
9/17	<p>B: Most people in that situation I find just want to be heard</p> <p>A: Yeah that's right</p> <p>B: I mean really you are just letting them unpack</p> <p>A: Yeah</p> <p>B: And helping them work out were to go to next and whether you can help them or not you might just refer them then to where they need to go</p>
9/18	<p>A: Yeah, you might be in the process</p> <p>B: Yeah and often times that's all they really want is to um unpack and that's all they need</p>
9/19	<p>A: Mm ok yeah, ok so you're looking for, you're looking for wholeness in people</p> <p>B: Absolutely</p> <p>A: So what do you see as being wholeness? [Laugh]</p>
9/20	<p>B: [Laugh], that's a big question</p> <p>A: That's a huge question, I don't think anyone gets it right but anyway have a go at it</p> <p>B: I don't really know what's normal, would that be me</p> <p>A: [Laugh] nope not me</p> <p>B: Would that be you , um well obviously as a pastor we want to see the full so, so wholeness in every area,</p> <p>A: Yeah</p>
9/21	<p>B: Just you know walking in newness of life and you know, deliverance and healing in body soul and spirit</p> <p>A: Mm yes</p> <p>B: Which I know would be a great thing wouldn't it?</p> <p>A: Yes</p> <p>B: But I know until Jesus comes back I don't think that is really realistic</p> <p>A: No</p> <p>B: But um yeah just to see people walk in victory</p> <p>A: So helping them on that, on that road</p> <p>B: That road yeah</p>

²⁸⁶ Interview 9JA09.

As the researcher, I then immersed myself in the data. This process firstly involved experiencing the interview, which allowed me to observe the richness of both the verbal and non-verbal language. Secondly, I then carefully read and re-read the transcripts to fully engage with surface meanings while still being attentive to the nuances and innuendos. During this line-by-line process, key aspects began to emerge from the dialogue²⁸⁷ in preparation for the open-coding.

Level 1 – Open Coding

With identification of concepts emerging from the raw data, the process referred to here as "open coding" was begun. During the open coding, concepts that described the "how," "when," "where," or "why" of the phenomena being investigated were labelled. This process revealed a large number of concepts.²⁸⁸ This process, from transcript through to the concepts in preparation for the open-coding is illustrated in Table 4, below, again in the same sample used above:

Table 4 – Level 1(a) – Concepts

Item	Transcript	Emerging Aspect of Dialogue	Concepts
3/12	A: Ok, that's good, so leading onto that, what do you think it means to be whole as a human being? B: I guess, not having something that's happened in your past, dogging you or you know keeping you from going forward, I guess that's what it is, and I guess also	(wholeness) Not having something from the past keeping you from going forward Assure them God loves them	Wholeness – being free from past God loves you God has answers Sometimes no

²⁸⁷ These passages were identified by interrogating the data with such questions as: Could this slice of dialogue be used to describe the pastors' phenomenological experience? Could this slice of dialogue be used to develop an explanation of the phenomenon? Could this slice of dialogue be used to illustrate the explanation of the phenomenon? Could such a description or explanation have been developed without this slice of dialogue? Does this slice of dialogue make logical sense when presented on its own? Does this slice of dialogue make the explanation more immediate and grounded for a potential audience? This process will be examined more closely in Chapter 7.

	<p>it's to assure that person that, that maybe they're not the only ones, that God loves them and, and that he can, he can answer their questions and sometimes there is no answer to the question</p> <p>A: Exactly, lots of times</p> <p>B: And</p> <p>A: That's the frustrating thing isn't it?</p> <p>B: And but yeah, maybe, I don't know, just re-affirm God's love and, yeah I guess that's</p>	<p>God has the answer Sometimes there is no answer</p> <p>Re-affirm God's love</p>	<p>answers</p> <p>God loves you</p>
3/13	<p>A: Ok, yeah, so how do you think God would describe human wholeness? What do you think God says is human wholeness?</p> <p>B: Oh, human wholeness</p> <p>A: Yeah</p> <p>B: Human wholeness. Someone that's, I guess relying on God, someone that, needs Him totally.</p> <p>A: Ok</p> <p>B: Someone, human wholeness well it's certainly not in our own selves, we haven't got it, but you know</p> <p>A: That's right</p> <p>B: Only from the God perspective do we get that wholeness</p>	<p>Wholeness is someone relying on, totally needing God</p> <p>Wholeness not in ourselves</p> <p>(wholeness) Only from God</p>	<p>Wholeness – relying on God</p> <p>Wholeness not in ourselves, only from God</p>
3/14	<p>A: Yep, ok that's, that's good, yeah, so, and that's how you want your people to understand God? As somebody who</p> <p>B: Has the answers yeah, and we need Him, cause I guess I think to myself, without Him, you're nothing, I'm nothing, yeah</p>	<p>God has the answers We need him Without Him we are, I am nothing</p>	<p>Wholeness not in ourselves only from God</p>
3/15	<p>A: So it's that relationship with Him</p> <p>B: Right yeah</p>		
3/16	<p>A: That is the key, yeah, ok, so how will you know if your clients are growing spiritually? Like so how will you know if your people</p>	<p>(wholeness seen) by fruit in their lives, what they</p>	<p>Wholeness seen in the way people do life</p>

are B: I guess by the fruit in their life, yeah, by what they're doing how they're, what they're saying, what they're A: Yeah B: How they're acting	are doing, saying How they are acting	
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The table below indicates this process, and shows how the concepts derived from the aspects of the dialogue identified in the line-by-line analysis were categorised to reveal the emerging open-codes. Table 5 demonstrates this progression for all the participants' responses to the questions asked about "wholeness":

Table 5 - Level 1 (b) – Open-coding

Concepts	Open-coding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholeness is Christlikeness. • Wholeness is to be like Jesus. • Wholeness is the internal transformation into the likeness of Christ. • Wholeness only comes from God. • Wholeness is healing in body, soul and spirit. 	Wholeness is the internal transformation into the likeness of Christ.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholeness is being free from past hurts. • Wholeness is being free to embrace new things. • Wholeness is the past dealt with and moving forward. • Wholeness is relying on God totally. • Wholeness is walking in newness of life. • Wholeness is walking in victory. • Wholeness is having value because of God's love. 	Wholeness is relying on God to set us free from the past and move us forward into newness of life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete wholeness unattainable. • Wholeness not possible until Jesus comes back. • Becoming whole is a challenge. 	Becoming whole is a challenge and will not be fully accomplished in this life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholeness can be nurtured. • Wholeness is the aim of the pastor. • Aim of counselling is to set people free, be 	Wholeness of the people is the aim of the pastor who nurtures and counsels them to freedom and healing.

<p>whole and healed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim of counselling to see them set free, change their thinking, facilitate change. • Aim of counselling to see people set free from past hurts. • Aim of counselling to change thinking patterns find healing of the soul. • Aim of counselling is to help people see correctly. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have broken souls. • People need fixing – have needs. • People need help. • The moving ahead of some COC churches has been stunted because of broken people. • Human value is found in God’s love for us. 	<p>People have broken souls and, without healing, will remain stunted.</p>

Level 2 – Axial Coding

The process of axial coding involved scrutinising the open codes and subsuming these into axial codes. As will be examined in detail in Chapter 7, Grounded Theory²⁸⁹ “grounds” the research objectively in the data represented by the actual words and phrases of the transcribed interviews,²⁹⁰ but also recognises the subjective insights gained when engaging with this data.²⁹¹ The reflexivity of the researcher²⁹² is a significant aspect of the data analysis which enables the nuances of the experiences described by the participants to bring an authenticity to the analysis of the phenomenon. Grounded Theory methodology also emphasises that, by considering both the objective and subjective data, the theory is able to emerge without “forcing” the data to comply to an objectively stated hypothesis. This enables the theory resulting from the analysis to reflect the phenomena of the participants as authentically as

²⁸⁹ Andrew Hunter et al., “Navigating the Grounded Theory Terrain. Part 1”. *Nurse Researcher* 18, no. 4 (2011):7.

²⁹⁰ The grounding of the data in the actual words and phrases is indicative of the hermeneutical approach.

²⁹¹ This engaging with the “subjectivity” of the data reflects the phenomenological approach.

²⁹² This researcher reflexivity will be thoroughly examined in Chapter 7.

possible.²⁹³ Therefore, in order to accommodate the nuances and insights that these real stories contained, not only were the codes examined, but the stories of the participants were also considered in order to illustrate more subjectively the topics being discussed.²⁹⁴ In Table 6, the categories relating to the participants’ perceptions of personal “wholeness” are offered as illustration of the axial coding process.

Table 6 – Axial Coding

Open-Codes	Axial Codes
The Participants’ Perceptions of Human Wholeness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pastor desires to see his people pursue wholeness. • Wholeness equates to freedom and healing. • The pastor’s method is nurturing and counselling. • God to set us free from the past. • God moves us forward into newness of life. 	<p><i>The pastor seeks to create an environment where the people can rely on God to do the internal transformational and wholistic healing.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have broken souls. • Peoples’ broken souls need to be healed and grow. • It is a challenge to pursue personal wholeness. • The challenge to pursue wholeness will continue until life’s end. • Spiritual growth happens progressively. 	<p><i>Wholistic growth is a challenge and people with broken souls achieve this growth progressively.</i></p>

²⁹³ Robin Grubs, “Reimagining Grounded Theory: Moving toward an Interpretive Stance” in *The Authority to Imagine: Complicated Conversation*, eds. Noreen Garman and Maria Pantanida (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2006), 87.

²⁹⁴ Evidence of these considerations will be provided further in this chapter.

Level 3 – Selective Coding

The selective coding process involved developing categories that captured both the objective and subjective aspects of the participants responses recorded in the axial coding. Table 7 illustrates this progression resulting in the emergence of five categories.

Table 7 – Level 3 - Selective Coding

Selective Codes				
Conceptual Category 1.	Conceptual Category 2.	Conceptual Category 3.	Conceptual Category 4.	Conceptual Category 5.
Theological/doctrinal convictions relating to the characteristics of an experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons are held by all the pastors.	Human wholeness is obtained by an acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ and the continuing pursuance of relationship with Him.	The “anointing” of the Holy Spirit is the therapeutic power of pastoral counselling praxis.	The therapeutic relationship is understood differently in different pastoral contexts with a tendency towards it being understood as a relationship dependent on the pastor’s personal power and anointing.	The pastors’ balanced sense of self, developed through his/her relationship with God and others, contributes to the pastoral counselling relationship’s capacity for transformational change.
Axial Codes				
<i>i. These pastors’ theology emphasises experiential relationship with a Trinitarian God, understood as knowing God as Father, receiving salvation from Jesus Christ and being Spirit baptised by the Holy Spirit.</i>	<i>i. The primary agenda of the ministry of these pastors is to bring people to personal acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ.</i>	<i>i. The transformational power of a one-on-one therapeutic relationship is a specific form of anointing from God.</i>	<i>i. The pastoral counselling relationships, as practiced by the pastors, varied from hierarchical to highly relational according to the situation and the personality type of the pastor.</i>	<i>i. The very nature of the pastoral counselling relationship means there are varying levels of engagement and these can become emotionally draining if not properly identified and managed.</i>
<i>ii. These pastors’</i>	<i>ii. Counselling</i>	<i>ii. Pastors</i>	<i>ii. Pastors</i>	<i>ii. Pastors</i>

<p><i>theology emphasizes the Biblical premise that the transcendent power of God to guide and transform is available to humanity through personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.</i></p>	<p><i>encourages the engagement with God's work of grace evidenced by Godly character traits, and wholeness.</i></p>	<p><i>recognise their lack of formal counselling training but acknowledge the presence of the power of the Holy Spirit when they counsel.</i></p>	<p><i>recognise their lack of formal counselling training and have developed a variety of creative ways to meet the psychological and emotional needs of their people including referring to others.</i></p>	<p><i>develop resilience and the capacity to contain the therapeutic relationship appropriately through a deepening relationship with God and an understanding of self and the other.</i></p>
<p><i>iii. Choosing to be led by the Holy Spirit, seek intimacy and day-to-day communication with Him means experiencing His love and grace.</i></p>	<p><i>iii. The pastor seeks to create an environment where the people can rely on God to do the internal transformational and wholistic healing.</i></p>		<p><i>iii. Pastors have a strong conviction that the Holy Spirit anoints them with transcendent power and ability to minister to their peoples' needs.</i></p>	<p><i>iv. Experience teaches pastors to rely on God and support people rather than succumbing to the expectations of the congregation.</i></p>
<p><i>iv. A closer connection with God is central to the ministry of these pastors who understand that this loving relationship has the capacity to give value and purpose to the individual enabling them to love and serve others.</i></p>	<p><i>iv. Wholistic growth is a challenge and people with broken souls achieve this growth progressively.</i></p>			
<p><i>v. The conviction that God is good, trustworthy, unconditionally loving and</i></p>				

<i>graceful is essential for a pastor.</i>				
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Level 4 – Generation of Theory

These five categories that emerged from the selective coding process were integrated then into a theory that captured the phenomenon that is the therapeutic relationship in the pastoral counselling context. A detailed explanation of the data analysis process, and the final findings will be found in Chapter 7.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter, as well as clarifying the qualitative research methods utilised to facilitate answers to the research questions of this study, is to reiterate the rationale of this research topic and the place of qualitative methodology. Firstly, comments from Michael Lambert present a “big picture” perspective that relates to the significance of this research topic:

Spiritual change has become a major mental health growth industry. Substantial research literature has emerged documenting the relationship of such phenomena to physical and mental health, but the field of psychotherapy research has hardly touched this potential source of therapeutic effects.²⁹⁵

Secondly, his additional comments serve to summarise the rationale for a qualitative approach:

It seems that traditional experimental and multivariate methodologies have not consistently or adequately addressed the phenomenon of therapeutic change.

²⁹⁵ Michael Lambert, ed., *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change*. 5th ed. (New York, NY: Wiley, 2004), 817.

Numerous writings have been intensely critical of the standard methodologies, but granting agencies, journal editors, and promotions committees still seem to focus primarily on them . . . The growing endorsement of narrative, descriptive, and qualitative approaches represent a rather significant shift in attitude that is likely to become increasingly manifest in the conduct and reporting of inquiries.²⁹⁶

Hence, it would seem that this research not only has potential to address issues that have not been adequately researched before but the research design as illustrated in this chapter also holds the promise of presenting findings that are unique as well as authentic. This being so, as this research has progressed, limitations, some leading to notions for future research have also been encountered. These will be addressed in the thesis conclusion in Chapter 9.

²⁹⁶ Lambert, *Bergin and*, 818.

CHAPTER 4 - THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS - THE THEOLOGY OF THE PERSON AS MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP

Introduction

At the core of this thesis is the concept of persons in mutual relationship. As seen by the literature review in Chapter 2, there are many facets of this subject. A theological perspective on interpersonal relationships draws on specifically theological sources: Biblical; doctrinal; ethical; and spiritual. As will be evident, there is a rich diversity of theological approaches affecting our understanding of God, the relational existence of God, and of the human person in relationship to God and others.

Contemporary trends in theology also seek a deeper understanding of how relationships within the Trinity impact on how we understand creation and the relationships humanity experiences with God, self and each other. Some twenty-first century theologians, interested in “relational theology”,²⁹⁷ have begun to revisit old and explore new Trinitarian doctrines, examining these traditional foundations of the Christian faith in the light of twenty-first century theological epistemology.²⁹⁸ This renewed interest in relationality also gives attention to the anthropological aspects of theology, particularly the concepts of *imago Dei* and *incarnation*. These fresh theological insights serve to enrich our understanding of the specific therapeutic relationships being studied.

²⁹⁷ Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality*, 24, refer to Aristotle’s influence in redirecting theology from “relationality” to “substance” and comment on Kant’s writings as being pivotal in shifting back to this focus on relationality. “This shift should not be understood as a simple linear evolution towards relationality, for already in ancient philosophy – and more explicitly in patristic Christianity – the importance of relationality was emphasized among those who were less reliant on Aristotle. This is why we may speak more properly of a theological *re*-turn to relationality”.

²⁹⁸ Turner, *The Darkness*, 108-9, explores Bonaventure’s writings on the Trinitarian three modes of expression within creation: vestige, image and likeness. More will be said of this as “personhood” and “image of God” are discussed.

Therefore, the theological features of this study will examine various doctrines that pertain to God in relationship and the nature and outcome of these relationships. In response to the theological questions this thesis is asking this section will proceed under the following headings:

- 1 **Theological Relationality** – theological perspectives of relationship;
- 2 **Personhood** – theological perspectives of those involved in the relationship;
- 3 **The Therapeutic Capacity of the Relationship** - the meaning of “therapeutic” from a theological relational perspective.

Theological Relationality

This topic will explore the doctrine of God as foundational for approaching the question:

What is the pastor's understanding of the doctrine of God?

The doctrine of the Trinity, God as relationship, is seen as pivotal in this discussion and will serve as a reference point for this section.

For centuries, in the Jewish monotheistic world, the *Torah*²⁹⁹ had governed how people were to live in right relationship with God and each other but the Prophets foretold of the coming of the Messiah and of the redemption of the people of God. In due time the Messiah came to earth to fulfil the Scriptural promises as the incarnation of the Word. When He stood in the synagogue and proclaimed that:

²⁹⁹ *Torah* means “teaching” or “instruction” and is applied to the Pentateuch, considered to be the instruction of God given to his chosen people and sometimes called the Law of Moses. However, *Torah* has a wider and deeper meaning than “law.” Through the implication of relationship with a living and merciful God as the giver of these instructions, *Torah* is a way to be followed [Adapted from J. Douglas, ed., *The New Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 721].

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me,
 Because the LORD has anointed Me
 To preach good tidings to the poor;
 He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
 To proclaim liberty to the captives,
 And the opening of the prison to those who are bound.³⁰⁰

Jesus reveals in himself a God of mercy and compassion. He was the New ‘Torah’, the new Way³⁰¹ and, more importantly for our purposes, the New Covenant.³⁰² He was proclaiming that the Word³⁰³ had been sent from the Father, by the anointing of the Spirit, to sinful humanity to accomplish reconciliation of the Creator with the created. Although the Jews were expecting the Messiah to bring freedom from external pain, suffering and captivity and, for some, new political and social arrangements, the message Jesus preached offered a transcendent freedom. The liberty, healing and comfort that Jesus preached transcended the obligation to perform to fulfil the Law,³⁰⁴ for although the Law was good and just, it was not sufficient in itself. In fact, for Paul, it would still lead to death.³⁰⁵ The spirituality of the law of the Spirit involved in life in Christ Jesus,³⁰⁶ according to Sheldrake,

does not refer to just one dimension of the Christian life, such as prayer or pursuit of virtue, recollection or ascetic practices. Rather “spirituality” or the spiritual life pertain to the whole of the Christian life, living in and through the Spirit of God,

³⁰⁰ Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:18.

³⁰¹ John 14:6; cf. Isaiah 48:17.

³⁰² Mark 14:24.

³⁰³ John 1:1.

³⁰⁴ Romans 3

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 6:23

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 8:1-3.

the Spirit of Christ. It entails being conformed to the person of Christ, brought into communion with God and others through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.³⁰⁷

It was this life of love and relationship, embodying the capacity to transform humanity's pain and suffering and to bring a liberty of soul that no man can enslave, that Jesus preached.

Even more than this, it was through his accepting the pain and suffering of the cross, that freedom from the ultimate captivity of death was overcome through the resurrection of the Son, by the will of the Father, and the power of the Spirit.

To contemplate the stories of God's interactions within Himself and with humanity, is to see revealed both the immanence and the transcendence of God in these relationships. Transcendent means, "beyond, outside the ordinary range of human experience or understanding, and exceeding or surpassing usual limits especially in excellence"³⁰⁸ while immanence indicates "remaining within, indwelling and inherent".³⁰⁹ The relationship keys contained in this paradox and the implications for the therapeutic relationship that is the subject of this study are the focus of this chapter, beginning with an investigation of the Trinity.

The Trinity

The mystery of the Trinity has long held theologians fascinated. Although the word "Trinity" is found nowhere in the Bible, the Scriptures trace an evolving understanding of a

³⁰⁷ Philip Sheldrake, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 624.

³⁰⁸ Dictionary.com, "Transcendence", <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/transcendence?s=b>

³⁰⁹ Ibid., "Immanent", <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/immanent>

monotheistic God, who is Three Persons in One. Even more mysterious, the Christian Scriptures reveal the interaction of the three Persons who are God in the affairs of each other and of mankind.³¹⁰ Edwards understands the Creator Spirit as “enfolding human beings in grace”.³¹¹ The tragedy is that this grace is rejected. However, this enfolding grace, evident since the moment of creation, continues, displaying justice - but also mercy; righteousness - but also grace; and always continuing in love, a love that, in the fullness of time, became Christ, the Redeemer. The enfolding grace is beautifully expressed in the prayer of Jesus in the Gospel of John, Chapter 17. Following on from the passages where Jesus had been teaching his disciples about the coming Comforter³¹² and the significance of “abiding”,³¹³ this prayer invites the reader into a conversation between the Father and the Son. Not only does this dialogue give insight to the intimacy of the relationship Jesus has with the Father, but it also expresses the longing He has that all would experience the oneness that is represented by the Trinitarian relationship.

As scholars³¹⁴ began to seek understanding of this wonderful Trinitarian relationship, contention arose as to the nature of the relationship, and its significance to the people of God

³¹⁰ Denis Edwards, *The God of Evolution: A Trinitarian Theology* (New York, NY: Paulist, 1999), 108-109, interprets the creation story: “The Spirit is more than a midwife, because the Spirit also mysteriously empowers creation from within. The Spirit works patiently and lovingly in every aspect of nature as the power of the future, enabling creation to bring to birth a future beyond human imagination. This future is ultimately the unimaginable transfiguration of creatures as they participate in the divine Communion in their own specific way”.

³¹¹ Denis Edwards, *The Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 172.

³¹² John 16.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 15.

³¹⁴ Orthodox Trinitarian doctrine was established with the Council of Nicaea (325) and the Council of Constantinople (381). Augustine of Hippo laid the foundation of what became the classical approach to Trinitarian theology and this was refined by Thomas Aquinas. It is only since the mid-twentieth century that contemporary theologians have begun to question the effectiveness of the classical model seeing that, “the mystery is clearly no longer readily effective in the contemporary context, both in our modern search for self and in our culture’s search for God in the midst of our struggle against the enormous power of evil that so manifestly besets us” [Anne Hunt, *What Are They Saying About Trinity?* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1998), 3].

was debated. Over the centuries, although scholars have continued these debates and many Trinitarian doctrines have been formulated, the study of the Trinity has not been a priority for theologians. In fact, for many centuries, Trinitarian theology faded into the background of theological studies. Over the last four or five decades, however, there has been renewed interest in the Trinity. Hunt comments on this:

Even a very brief survey of contemporary Trinitarian theology shows that theologians, from a variety of perspectives, are showing striking creativity and imagination in efforts to render the mystery which lies at the very heart of our Christian faith meaningful and effective for the transformation of culture and society.³¹⁵

Recent writings of scholars and theologians have revealed that there is also renewed interest in Spirituality and theological relationality. So, it would seem that a new day is dawning where the people of God are seeking a deeper understanding of God-as-three-persons-in-relationship. However, Olsen and Hall make a very relevant point when they write:

Yes, they (early theologians) would say, we have discovered that God is more complex than we could have ever imagined left to ourselves. Yes, we affirm that Father, Son and Holy Spirit share the same divine nature, are one God, and yet distinct within that ineffable unity. But the reality we are attempting to comprehend, study, describe, and worship cannot be contained or fully grasped within “the order” of our knowledge.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ Anne Hunt, *Trinity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 1.

³¹⁶ Roger Olsen and Christopher Hall, *The Trinity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 27.

With this understanding, it is recognised that it is far beyond the scope of this study to delve into the history or all the theological treatises relating to the Trinity, so just two such attempts at comprehending the complexities of the Trinity will be discussed. The first will be a brief journey into what Pentecostal theologians are saying about the Trinity, pertinent to this study because of the Pentecostal context of the participants. The specific Trinitarian beliefs, especially the focus on both the incarnational Christ and the interaction of the Holy Spirit with humanity, have significance for the counselling ministry of these pastors. The second will be an exploration that will draw upon the work of several contemporary scholars who have approached the Trinity from relational perspectives. Particularly relevant to this discussion are the implications for the Trinitarian relationship to be reparative and transformational. These aspects are also pertinent to this study as they hold the promise of a deeper comprehension of the therapeutic nature of the relationship being studied.

The theological core of Pentecostal theology has been summarised as being “embedded and anchored in an encounter with Christ, as Christ is being depicted in his manifold role of Justifier, Sanctifier, Baptizer with the Spirit, Healer of the Body, and the Soon Coming King”.³¹⁷ Although this would appear to be a Christ-centred theology, Pentecostal³¹⁸ acknowledgement of the baptism of the Holy Spirit has resulted in unique practices designed to “enable worshippers to imitate what Pentecostals consider the spontaneous movements of

³¹⁷ Dale Coulter, “What Meaneth This? Pentecostals and Theological Inquiry”. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10, no. 1 (2001), 41.

³¹⁸ Early in the history of the Pentecostal movement there was controversy over Trinitarian doctrine resulting in a split in the movement. Those who rejected the Trinitarian doctrine became known as Oneness Pentecostals. Macchia, *Baptised in*, 115, explains: “Trinitarian relations in God were denied because it was assumed among the Oneness that this Trinitarian doctrine confined the incarnation to only a third or a part of God, namely a preincarnate ‘Son.’”.

the Spirit of God”.³¹⁹ Explaining this, Macchia writes of the essential Pentecostal belief of baptism in the Holy Spirit in Trinitarian terms:

The Trinitarian structure of Spirit baptism thus has a two way movement: from the Father through the Son in the Spirit, and then from the Spirit through the Son towards the Father. We thus pray and relate from God, in God and to God (Romans 11:36).³²⁰

Also reflecting on the pneumatological, and hence a relational, perspective of Pentecostalism, Yong writes:

It should be clear that the process of retrieving Trinitarian theology in relational terms is congruent with the revival of pneumatological reflection as well. If, as is being suggested here, relationality, rationality, and dynamic life are constitutive features of pneumatology, it is not surprising to find these categories illuminating for Trinitarian theology . . . In short, the relational logic of pneumatology translates into a relational Trinitarianism.³²¹

Considering that Pentecostalism is a movement grounded in experience, Pentecostal scholars of more recent times who have begun to engage with classical, traditional Trinitarian doctrine have done so in the context of the Pentecostal practice of “encountering God visually, audibly, kinaesthetically, and even physically”.³²² According to Kärkkäinen, the resultant Trinitarian

³¹⁹ Amos Yong, *Spirit – Word – Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 250.

³²⁰ Macchia, *Baptised in*, 117.

³²¹ Yong, *Spirit – Word*, 57.

³²² *Ibid.*, 250.

theology contains “the idea of God as communion”, this author also claiming that, “this indicates simply the Biblical notion of God as love who shares and is related”.³²³

However, it is worth noting here that, although there are Pentecostal theologians³²⁴ who are grappling with Trinitarian doctrine, research³²⁵ has shown that, “theologically they (those involved in the various Pentecostal movements) are Trinitarian, though practically this is less clearly defined”.³²⁶ This is confirmed by Kärkkäinen’s admission that “the most important thing for Pentecostals is not the doctrine *per se*, but the experience of the Trinity”.³²⁷

Whereas the Pentecostals seek experience rather than doctrine, in order to discover the “reality” of the Trinity some contemporary scholars have been developing what Hunt calls “new imaginings”³²⁸ from the classic Trinitarian doctrines. While still cognisant of the experiential aspects of relationship, these theologians have sought to rework the traditional doctrines into more dynamic and relational terms, making this aspect of God “real” to those of today’s societies. One theologian of particular significance here is Kelly whose portrayal of God as unlimited, divine “Be-ing” to divine “Be-ing- in-Love” paints a picture of divine intimacy:

The life of God is not a life of impervious transcendence from the world, but an actual self-transcendence towards the world. To sum up, the divine mystery, as

³²³ Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity*, 386.

³²⁴ cf. Frank Macchia, Keith Warrington, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, and Amos Yong.

³²⁵ Mark Cartledge, “Trinitarian Theology and Spirituality: An Empirical Study of Charismatic Christians”. *Journal of Empirical Theology* 17, no.1 (2008): 76-84.

³²⁶ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 30.

³²⁷ Kärkkäinen, *Toward a*, 103.

³²⁸ Hunt, *Trinity*, 7.

incarnate in Jesus Christ and manifest in the gift of the Spirit, is “Be-ing-in-Love”. As such, it draws believers into its own dynamics.³²⁹

Whereas Kelly speaks of being transformed through divine Love, Downey accentuates a reparative aspect of Trinitarian life. He also discusses this drawing into the very life of God, seeing this as a “drawing in” for “the purpose of drawing us out of ourselves, away from our own self-preoccupation, self-absorption, self-fixation, so as to participate in the divine life”.³³⁰ Such understandings of Trinity can also be represented by the Greek word “*perichoresis*”,³³¹ meaning “going around”; “dance”. The metaphor of “dance” illustrates a truly relational interaction.³³² Hunt claims “the intensely relational notion of *perichoresis* serves as a vital lynchpin, effectively replacing more substantialist notions of the divine unity”.³³³ Trinitarian life, understood from the perspective of *perichoresis*, is represented by mutuality. Just as dancers move in response to each other, being able to anticipate the movement of the other because of the intimacy they have developed, so too is the intimacy of the Father, Son and Spirit expressed as a dynamic “dance”. Unlike any human relationship, the intimacy between Father, Son and Spirit is characterised by the perfect giving and receiving of love. Perhaps the greatest mystery is that, rather than being an exclusive relationship, the intimacy experienced by the Godhead has the wondrous capacity to be inclusive of the Creator’s creation.³³⁴

³²⁹ Kelly, *The Trinity*, 147.

³³⁰ Downey, *Altogether Gift*, 79.

³³¹ *Perichorises*, as a description of the Trinity is defined by Boff, *Trinity and*, 135, thus: “a permanent process of active reciprocity, a clasping of two hands: the Persons interpenetrate one another and this process of communing forms their very nature”.

³³² Edwards, *The God*, 88, writes: “The Spirit is the ecstatic gift of divine communion with creatures, whereby each creature exists, and whereby each creature is caught up with the dynamism of Trinitarian *perichoresis*”.

³³³ Hunt, *Trinity*, 81.

³³⁴ Hunt, *What Are*, 110, quoting Denis Edwards, explains: “As gift of love and of communion, the Spirit, Edwards reiterates, ‘is God’s *ecstasy* directed towards what is God’s *other*, the creature.’”.

The Liberation theologian, Boff, working with the destitute and marginalised of the Creator's creation, asked the question: "In what way is Trinitarian theology good news for the poor in their lived experience?"³³⁵ As an answer to this question, he sees the notion of the all-encompassing love with both power and willingness to transform and restore expressed in *perichoresis*. Another whose theological studies demonstrate a particular facet of society that is relative to this study is Edwards,³³⁶ whose Trinitarian theology encompasses all creation. Edwards' writing of the Creator Spirit may hold some clues to the questions posed by Pentecostal beliefs.

In summary, we again turn to Kelly who sees there are four ways, also identified as vital foundations for this study, in which an exploration of the Trinity is potentially meaningful:

1. It is brought within the range of our knowing in some limited way;
2. It dwells in our consciousness as something supremely significant for our identity;
3. It establishes a community of shared meanings and values;
4. It directs us to change the reality of our world in accord with the conversion of mind and heart it inspires.³³⁷

The Trinitarian model of relationship is at the essence of God's interaction with creation and mankind and the Trinity epitomises community. Thus mankind, created by God and in his image, carries this blueprint into his/her own relationships. Various dimensions of this relationship are pertinent to this study and include:

³³⁵ Boff, *Trinity and*, 9.

³³⁶ Edwards, *The Breath*.

³³⁷ Kelly, *The Trinity*, 19.

- Covenant, the ancient relationship that provides the structure and foundation of the monotheistic religions, including Christianity;
- The “agape” power that is contained in this relationship to restore and transform;
- The spirituality that imbues certain relationship with a transcendence that goes beyond human knowing.

The following will explore these concepts in relation to the questions being asked by this thesis.

Covenant Relationship

Although covenant is not a feature of twenty-first century Western society, it was a very important motif in the Jewish culture that gave us the Scriptures, and is a constant theme throughout the Old Testament while also permeating the New Testament. In the Old Testament, although there are instances where God spoke clearly to particular individuals, the main focus was on God’s relationship with the nation of Israel. The covenantal relationship God had with Israel³³⁸ was made with individuals, but the covenant had the notion of being everlasting, so included in it were provisions for the generations to come.³³⁹

The term "covenant"³⁴⁰ is of Latin origin (*con venire*), meaning a coming together. It presupposes two or more parties come together to make a contract, agreeing on promises, stipulations, privileges, and responsibilities. Covenant also has the connotation of a bond between two parties. The covenant relationship was often celebrated with a meal and the

³³⁸ The Mosaic covenant was a unilateral agreement that structured every aspect of Israel's social, religious, physical and civil existence from the time of Moses until Paul's day, <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/ivp-nt/Superiority-New-Covenant-397>

³³⁹ cf Genesis 17.

³⁴⁰ BibleStudyTools.com, “Covenant”.

slaughtering of an animal that was cut in two. Hence, we “cut” a covenant. There are two types of covenant: one is between parties of equal status which then becomes an agreement that has equal benefits and responsibilities; the other type of covenant is between a king or person of power and a subject or a slave. Such covenants were characterised by the king’s instigation of the covenant conditions that often included his provision of protection and sustenance for the people in exchange for their absolute obedience to him. Unlike the contracts common in today’s Western world, once cut, covenants were absolute, binding and unable to be broken. These types of covenant were common in the Middle East in ancient times, and are still understood as binding for both covenant parties in this culture today.

The covenants God has established with his people are of the latter kind. The story of Abraham encountering God in Genesis Chapter 15 describes the classic Middle Eastern covenant ceremony as the Almighty God cut a covenant with Abraham, promising him descendants that would make him a father of nations, and blessings that he was to pass on to all mankind. It was here that this covenant differed from the usual covenant relationship a king had with his people. Often, earthly kings would make covenants as a means of oppressing the weak for the acquisition of wealth and power; but here was a covenant at whose very heart was love and compassion and the invitation to a right relationship with the King. Although such a right relationship called for a similar response from Abraham as the father of nations, and Moses as “father” of the nation of Israel, this was not to be. God, however, continued to prove His absolute faithfulness to Abraham and his descendants, despite their breaking of their covenantal obligations.

With the incarnation, Christ used His Kingly authority to establish a new covenant. By His death he bore the consequences that humanity had incurred by breaking the covenantal obligations to willingly and lovingly obey God. He then made the way for mankind to be once more reconciled to the Father:

With the advent of Christ came a new covenant, one that is based on a familial, not a legal, relationship to God. We are still commanded not to kill, steal and so on—not because it is our obligation in a covenant relationship, but because it is appropriate behavior for a member of God's family. What is also needed is a change of nature. This too is provided for under the new covenant. With Christ's coming, the Spirit, rather than sin, becomes the controlling principle in the life of the believer. The power that was lacking under the old covenant is now there for us to be the kind of moral people God intended.³⁴¹

The significance of the theology of the covenant to this study lies in the foundation on which our relationship with God can be understood. For the true healing of the human person to be accomplished, the security of absolute trustworthiness is necessary. As there is no human person who embodies such a quality, or has the power to sustain such a covenant, the knowledge of the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God can provide the secure container that represents a therapeutic space.

³⁴¹ BibleGateway, "The Superiority".

“Agape” Power and Relationship

The counselling relationship is a very powerful relationship.³⁴² For a comprehensive understanding of the healing capacities of this relationship, an investigation of the power dynamics contained within it is vital to this study. There is much written on the use (or misuse) of power in counselling literature, especially in the theoretical structures of those therapies that have their roots in the constructivist or feminist philosophies. These perspectives are often critical of the church, judging traditional church hierarchies as exerting patriarchal power to control and oppress the people through fear and domination.³⁴³ The inference from these observations is that God is a punitive God, quick to punish wrongdoing and requiring high standards of obedience from His children rather than a loving relationship. Although not all these claims are valid, this pattern of misuse of power by those with the responsibility to represent God to the people can be seen throughout history.³⁴⁴ Jesus brought severe judgment against the Pharisees and other religious leaders, confronting them on many occasions with their legalistic practices that oppressed the people and presented a distorted picture of the loving authority of God.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Haug, “Boundaries and”, 112, writes: “Psychotherapists have great power to influence those in their care. They hold this power and authority due to their training and professional affiliations and the trust and confidence these inspire in the persons seeking their services. Counselors’ fiduciary responsibilities, documented in professional ethical codes, lies in exercising this power and authority in ways that will first serve clients’ needs and protect clients’ vulnerabilities. In fulfilling these obligations, counselors protect and advance their professional integrity”.

³⁴³ LaCugna, *God for*, 268, in what she sees as a misinterpretation of Trinitarian doctrine, discredits what she has observed as “patriarchal religion” that “perpetuates a convenient arrangement by which men rule over women, just as God rules over the world”. An example of a consequence of this “convenient arrangement”, from a case study by Patricia Liberty, “‘It’s Difficult to Explain’: The Compromise of Moral Agency for Victims of Abuse by Religious Leaders”. *Journal of Religion & Abuse* 3, nos. 3/4 (2001):89, supports La Cugna’s claim: “The inability of a victim to say “no” to her abuser is not a failure of intelligence, moral fiber, personal integrity or faith. Rather it is solely the result of moral agency being compromised by an abusive religious leader who claims to speak for God while co-opting the victim’s needs, energy and concerns into a narrowly defined sexual encounter. As a result of a pastor’s redefining what is right and holy in the context of his own need, a victim is rendered powerless to discern the rightness or wrongness of the behaviour”.

³⁴⁴ Such misuse of power by those who have the responsibility to represent God to the people is addressed in the Scriptures, with prophets such as Ezekiel (Chapter 34) bringing serious charges against the priests of the day on behalf of God.

³⁴⁵ E.g., Matthew 23:14; Denis Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 40, writes: The Gospels present Jesus as rejecting and forbidding the dominating forms of power exercised by

A presupposition of this thesis is that God is all powerful but that He is also good so His power is always used for the good of all creation. This presupposition is grounded in the Biblical premise that God is Love.³⁴⁶ The goodness of God's power is especially significant for us as humans. Gula reminds us that the dark side of power, domination, was epitomised in the dramatic torture and crucifixion of Christ, "but that power has another side to it. Power can also be liberating. It can be the loving influence that releases the goodness in another and allows it to flourish. Love and power are not necessarily opposites".³⁴⁷

Nygren³⁴⁸ recognises this love as *agape*. Although over the years Nygren's position has generated much discussion³⁴⁹ on the relationship of *agape* and *eros* from a Christian perspective, he identifies four aspects of *agape* that faithfully reflect who God is and give insight into the transcendent power that resides in this love:

- *Agape* is spontaneous and unmotivated – in Jesus this love was clearly demonstrated as He refused to be controlled by the value of the objects of His love, freely ministering to the righteous and sinner alike.
- *Agape* is indifferent to value – it is only when all thought of worthiness of the object is abandoned that we can understand what *agape* is.
- *Agape* is creative – *agape* does not recognise value, but creates it. *Agape* loves and imparts value by loving.

tyrants. The only power that Jesus will allow in his community is that of mutual service and mutual love, which finds its most radical expression in the cross and resurrection".

³⁴⁶ 1 John 4:8.

³⁴⁷ Richard Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1996), 65.

³⁴⁸ Nygren, "Agape and".

³⁴⁹ Vacek, *Love, Human*, 159, writes: "Though one can easily challenge many of Nygren's scriptural and historical claims, his book has such clarity and initial persuasiveness that it is an excellent starting point for studying *agape*. His insights are splendid, his mistakes are instructive, and his views are still very much alive".

- *Agape* is the initiator of fellowship with God – not only does *agape* determine the essential and characteristic content of Christian fellowship with God, but in virtue of its creative nature it is also important for initiation of that fellowship.³⁵⁰

Hence, this discussion of *agape* is pertinent as we continue to explore the therapeutic and transformational aspect of the counselling relationship. However, as Vacek points out, this is not the whole picture. Where Nygren would consider the other “loves” of *eros* and *philia* to be more egocentric and therefore having attributes that are diametrically opposed to those of divine *agape*, Vacek claims that:

Though *agape* is usually called *the* distinctively Christian form of love, I shall argue that all three may be Christian. All three may be forms of cooperating with God. Each kind of love, however, creates or contributes to a different kind of relationship with the beloved.³⁵¹

Extrapolating this concept within a Biblical context, Luke 10:27 finds Jesus teaching: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself”. Surely this expresses a willingness for God to cooperate with humanity in all relationships, whether they be self, other or God focused. This verse would seem to describe a love of self that is not only tolerated but commanded by God. In fact, referring again to the counselling relationship, a goal of the counselling process is to empower the client to not only value themselves but also to love themselves, for this is the therapeutic way to restoration of identity and wholeness. The other side of this is that it is an *eros* desire to be whole that brings the client to counselling in the first place.

³⁵⁰ Nygren in Stoble, “Agape and”, 85-89.

³⁵¹ Vacek, *Love, Human*, 158.

Another argument in this discussion is that love is not passive and detached but is dynamic, carrying the energy-charged power of emotion. Hence, as *agape* is love, and, although words such as “respect”, “regard” and “consideration” are used to describe it, the creativity, valuing, and connection implied by *agape* is not a clinical detachment but a relationship where each person in the relationship has an emotional interest in the other. Again we refer to Jesus’ teaching in Luke 10:27, above. Here is an expression of God’s desire for the wholistic person, consisting of emotions, intellect, spirit and relationality to participate in relationship with God, self and others. The process of counselling seeks, through relationship, to empower the client to recognise their value and develop identity. In this consideration of the therapeutic relationship, where the awareness of power is so vital, an understanding of love that has the energy to create value gives a whole new dimension to the healing potential of such a relationship.

Another aspect of the concept of power is found in the New Testament narratives of healings and miracles. These are the stories that Pentecostals love to relate and upon which much of their doctrine is based. But these are also the stories of relationship and community. It is in the New Testament that the Greek words *dunamis*³⁵² and *exousia*,³⁵³ are associated with the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. Peter, in his sermon in Acts 8 links goodness, *dunamis* and healing when he tells of “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God

³⁵² *Dunamis*: often translated as “power” carrying the meaning of miraculous and abundant power. cf. Acts 4:7; Romans 15:19.

³⁵³ *Exousia*: translated as “power” and indicating a competency to bring freedom and exercise authority.cf. Mark 6:7; Acts 8:19.

was with Him”.³⁵⁴ These Greek words connect Spirit and power, and in the next section we will explore spirituality in relation to the therapeutic relationship.

A Spiritual Relationship

Spirituality has been discussed previously in this thesis as having various dimensions.³⁵⁵

Although already noted, in order to situate the spirituality of relationship within the theological foundations of this chapter, a brief review serves as a reminder of the position held in this research:

- Spirituality is understood as a way of engaging anthropological questions and preoccupations in order to arrive at an ever richer and more authentically human life;
- In Christian terms, spirituality is communicated by the Holy Spirit and governed by divine revelation.³⁵⁶

Although this chapter is mainly interested in the second of Schneiders’ definitions, as the Biblical narrative and the theological scholarship are explored, both the authentically human and the divine revelatory aspects of spirituality can be detected.

Of those with whom, according to the scriptures, God spoke directly, it was often declared, that “the Spirit came upon him,” always with a specific impartation of power. We are told that many of the Old Testament patriarchs³⁵⁷ heard clearly from God. Some, like Noah, Abraham, Moses and David maintained a continual dialogue with God throughout their lives.

³⁵⁴ Acts 10:38.

³⁵⁵ The term “spirituality” refers to “(1) a fundamental dimension of the human being, (2) the lived experience that actualises that dimension and (3) the academic discipline that studies that experience”. Schneiders’, “Spirituality in”, 682.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 682.

³⁵⁷ E.g., Noah, Genesis 6; Abram, Genesis 17:3; Moses Exodus 3; David 16:13.

Others, like the Prophets,³⁵⁸ had the Spirit come upon them at times when God wanted to communicate with them for a particular purpose. The prophets of the Old Testament, however, told of a time when the Holy Spirit would reside with the people of God.³⁵⁹ Hence, the incarnation of Christ represented more than the coming of the Messiah and the redemption of humankind. Jesus also promised that, with His ascension, the Holy Spirit would come as Comforter and Guide.³⁶⁰ The Book of Acts describes both these events. The ascension of Jesus back to the Father³⁶¹ is followed by the story of the Pentecostal experience of those praying in the upper room.³⁶² As the story continues, there are descriptions of signs, wonders and miracles happening through the disciples by the power of the Holy Spirit.³⁶³

Although theologians have developed a variety of doctrines around these Biblical passages, Pentecostal theology takes a literal interpretation of these Scriptures. So describes:

Pentecostal spirituality seeks the integration between divinity and humanity, one spirit-mind-body, and harmony between God and humans and among humans who are created in the image of God. This Pentecostal spirituality suggests four processes that engage church members in God's presence: conversion, the baptism of the Spirit, diverse gifts, and harmony. These four steps of Pentecostal spirituality expand the individual dimension of spirituality into the social and transformative dimensions of spirituality.³⁶⁴

³⁵⁸ Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 37: 1.

³⁵⁹ Isaiah 9:11; 61:1-3; Joel 2:28, 29.

³⁶⁰ John 15, 16.

³⁶¹ Acts 1:4-11.

³⁶² Ibid., 2:1.

³⁶³ Ibid., 3.

³⁶⁴ Tae Young So, "Pentecostal Spirituality as Nurturing Vitality for Human Lives". *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18 (2009): 246.

Yong also expresses this understanding, using terms almost reminiscent of Trinitarian *perchoreisis*: “In process terms, the Spirit is the creative field of activity which lures prehending entities toward their divinely appointed reasons for being”.³⁶⁵ Certainly, Pentecostal spirituality could be described as primarily phenomenological, what Warrington calls “theology of encounter”.³⁶⁶ However, although Pentecostal theology is of particular interest to this study, it is not only Pentecostal theology that seeks understanding of spirituality. Over the last few decades, theologians³⁶⁷ from a variety of denominations have also been seeking to comprehend the integration between divinity and humanity. Among these is McGrath who allows that, in today’s world, spirituality has a myriad of meanings, not all of them associated with Christianity. By specifying Christian spirituality he is able to explore the lived Christian experience of “practising the presence of God,” and claiming that “spirituality has to do with our experiencing of God and with the transformation of our consciousness and our lives as outcomes of that experience”.³⁶⁸

From this examination of the processes and experiences of Christian spirituality, the work of Rosato provides additional insights into the nature of the Source of these processes and experiences. This author has discerned four distinct yet complementary Biblical designations of the divine *Pneuma* that further demonstrate the Holy Spirit’s involvement in the “integration between humanity and Divinity”.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁵ Yong, *Spirit – Word*, 90.

³⁶⁶ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*.

³⁶⁷ E.g., Philip Sheldrake, Simon Chan; Mark McIntosh; Jordan Aumann.

³⁶⁸ McGrath, *Christian Spirituality*, 3.

³⁶⁹ So, “Pentecostal Spirituality”, 246.

- Teacher – “Through the gift of faith in the Father and in the Son, the Spirit communicates the absolute truth to Christians insofar as it can be humanly grasped”;
- Unifier – “Christians perfect their interior comprehension of the gospel as they are united to one another by living according to its central norm of charity”;
- Liberator – “The faith and love, by which the Holy Spirit illumines the minds of believers with the light of Christ and fulfils their affections through fellowship with him and each other, are not meant to be ends in themselves; rather, the Spirit intends faith and love to be graced instruments by which believers act in their societies as witnesses to the liberating force of divine justice”;
- Vivifier – “Being a Christian, therefore, entails being introduced by the Holy Spirit into the humiliating death of Jesus so as to be born again by the same divine power which raised Jesus from the dead and transformed him into a ‘life-giving Spirit’”.³⁷⁰

As we bring together these Biblical, theological, experiential and relational elements of spirituality, the path to understanding spirituality leads us back to the *perichoresis* nature of the Trinity and the transforming *agape* power that flows from this relationship. For this study, and its focus on the therapeutic relationship, the concepts of transformation and healing that are encompassed here have particular significance.

³⁷⁰ Philip Rosato, “The Mission of the Spirit within and Beyond the Church”. *The Ecumenical Review* 41 (1989): 389.

Theological Personhood

The questions being explored here are:

- What is the pastor's theology of person and human wholeness?
- What is the pastor's conceptual and phenomenological understanding of Spirituality and spiritual growth?

This section will investigate the theological writings that inform the subject of various aspects of what it means to be human, especially focusing on the doctrines of humanity as made in the image of God.

Although the nature of the human person as a composite being has been debated from the times of the Greek philosophers, the complexities of the monistic versus dualistic versus tripartite perspectives of humanness are not the subject of this thesis. Instead, the focus will be on what constitutes personhood and therefore human wholeness

From the theological perspective, the beginning of humanity's story is found in the Genesis 3 narrative where sin, shame and fear entered into human history and where humanity's relationship with the Creator was ruptured; the future in which the Christian person hopes and places their trust is renewed relationship in eternity with God;³⁷¹ the promises given and the hope shared represent God's response to the deep human needs for being loved and being loveable by reconciliation with the Father through Jesus Christ. The Gospels proclaimed this message³⁷² and the teachings of Jesus³⁷³ revealed the keys whereby fallen humanity would be

³⁷¹ John 3:16.

³⁷² Ibid., 1: 1-14.

³⁷³ Matthew 5; 18:3, 4.

able to enter the Kingdom of God. The death and resurrection of the Saviour marked the time where the salvation of humanity was finally accomplished.³⁷⁴

The ensuing books of the New Testament provide the person who has entered into the salvation provided by God with further instruction for the day-to-day task of living the Christian life.³⁷⁵ These Scriptures, especially the letters of the Apostle Paul, also acknowledge the challenges faced in this day-to-day walk. Considering that this discussion is seeking understanding of both the brokenness of personhood and the human capacity for healing and wholeness, the Epistle to the Romans, looking here at Chapter 8:1-8 where the human person's struggle between the "flesh" and the "spirit" are closely examined, is of particular interest and explained by McMurray thus:

To "mind the things of the flesh"³⁷⁶ is to have the things of the flesh as the absorbing objects of thought, interest, affection, and purpose. And "the mind of the flesh"³⁷⁷ is the dispositional complex, including not simply the activities of reason but also those of feeling and will, patterned after and controlled by the flesh.³⁷⁸

This author then uses the same language to affirm that this total absorption with the things of God becomes the patterning of a person who is "in the Spirit".³⁷⁹ These differentiations are

³⁷⁴ John 19:30.

³⁷⁵ Philippians 3:10.

³⁷⁶ Romans 8:5.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 8:6.

³⁷⁸ John Murray, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965), 284,285.

³⁷⁹ Greek *pneuma* (4151) meaning human spirit; the rational soul, vital principle, mental disposition. [James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Iowa, IO: World Bible Publishers, 1984)].

important when considering that, although humanity is born in sin,³⁸⁰ and although the flesh has the disposition to be drawn into sin, the brokenness we experience is a human condition.³⁸¹ It is the various aspects of this human condition, including its brokenness and propensity to sin, that is one of the prominent subjects of the New Testament writers. Other perspectives of this human condition illuminated in these Scriptures relate to the Good News of redemption and the path of transformation from human brokenness “into the image of Christ”.³⁸²

Such a transformation is not a process of simply acquiring new information or adding to, or changing, behaviour patterns as is sometimes supposed. This transformation is the experience of the Trinitarian presence of God. On one hand, Downey discusses this experience of the Triune God as being the mystery of kenosis:

To speak of the *kenosis* is to speak of the Incarnation of God in Christ. It is nothing more, or less, than the mystery of Christ's identification with the human reality. But with a particular slant, informed by a singular insight. And the insight is that of self-emptying in weakness, brokenness, suffering, a redemptive vulnerability best understood in light of Philippians 2: 5-11 and related passages that contrast human wisdom with the folly of the cross. *Kenosis* is thus the key to *theosis* . . . the process of transformation by grace whereby the human person is raised in union with Christ to live the life of God . . . With *kenosis* as key, the way down is the way up or, we ascend to God via the road of downward mobility, allowing God to embrace us at the lowest rung of the ladder.³⁸³

³⁸⁰ Romans 3:23.

³⁸¹ Isaiah 61:1. Hebrew *shabar* (7665) meaning break down, break off, break in pieces; crush, destroy, hurt, quench and Hebrew *leb* (3820) meaning the heart, feelings, will. (Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive*).

³⁸² 2 Corinthians 3:18.

³⁸³ Michael Downey, “Trinity: Community, Communion, Contemplation”. *ABR* 64, no.2 (2013):139,140.

Shults and Sandage take another slant on the Trinitarian presence:

The Christian experience of this transformative presence is explicitly Trinitarian. The Spirit is present to creatures not as an immense substance but as the welcoming communion that is the life of the *Trinitarian* God. The redemptive experience of “being” in the Spirit is an entering into the perichoretic relationality that constitutes the eternal joy of the fellowship of the Son and the Father.³⁸⁴

It is as the human person becomes enveloped by this divine, dynamic process that transformation of the whole person is able to begin. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of this transformational journey towards wholeness, personhood will continue to be investigated in the next section beginning with the wholeness represented by “*shalom*”.

Shalom

As the concept of “personhood” is further examined, the Hebrew theistic worldview,³⁸⁵ that declares that God alone is the source of peace, for He is “*Yahweh Shalom*”,³⁸⁶ serves to introduce this topic with the reminder that *shalom* reflects the personhood of God. With previous discussions on the relationality of God in mind, it could be seen that although the counselling relationship tends to focus on the wholeness of the individual, “*shalom*” illuminates to us another, more relational level of human wholeness. Often translated as “peace” the Hebrew *shalom* goes beyond the passive picture conjured up by this English word. The English understanding of peace is an absence of civil disturbance or hostilities, or a

³⁸⁴ Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality*, 139.

³⁸⁵ Deuteronomy 4:6.

³⁸⁶ Judges 6:24. The Lord came to sinful humankind, historically first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles, desiring to enter into a relationship with them. He established with them a covenant of peace, which was sealed with his presence (Numbers 6:24-26). Participants were given perfect peace so long as they maintained a right relationship with the Lord (Isaiah 26:3; 2 Thessalonians 3:16); BibleStudyTools.com, “Peace”.

personality free from internal and external strife, but the Biblical concept of *shalom* holds a deeper meaning. Baker's *Evangelical Dictionary*,³⁸⁷ from the Hebrew roots, defines *shalom* as "wholeness of life or body" and as "right relationship or harmony between two parties or people". From this it can be understood that personhood from the perspective of *shalom* is unified and wholistic, inclusive of "body, soul and spirit as highly interactive rather than discrete dimensions".³⁸⁸ This is often established by a covenant, described in scripture as a "covenant of peace"³⁸⁹ that signifies completeness and safety.

Hence, *shalom* also expresses the mission of God. Jesus Christ became the incarnation of "*Yahweh Shalom*". As the prophesied "Prince of Peace",³⁹⁰ Jesus introduced mankind to the Kingdom of God, instilling the hope of reconciliation into a world fractured by broken relationships with God, self and others. As He walked the streets, reaching out to the poor, the sick and the captives, Jesus demonstrated the true meaning of *shalom* as, in His public ministry, people were healed, delivered and set free. However, the Gospels also give us a glimpse of the deeper meaning of *shalom*. For example, in Jesus' encounter with the woman caught in adultery,³⁹¹ the grace and unconditional acceptance that He extended to this outcast not only brought resolution to the immediate situation, but also transforming goodness was released that day.

³⁸⁷ BibleStudyTools.com, "Peace", <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/peace.html?p=2>

³⁸⁸ Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality*, 199.

³⁸⁹ Numbers 25:12-13 ; Isaiah 54:10 ; Ezekiel 34:25-26.

³⁹⁰ Isaiah 9:6, 7.

³⁹¹ John 8.

Shalom is foundational to the therapeutic relationship. If the pastoral counselling ministry is truly the mission of God, it will be a *shalomatic* experience for both the counsellor and the client because it:

- is to be promoted and “discovered” rather than given or taken;
- is to be experienced more than understood;
- is to be accepted as a gift (from God) rather than achieved;
- implies that in finding their (e.g., the client’s) *shalom*, our own *shalom*, and the *shalom* of our world will be enhanced, enriched, enlarged and enjoyed more fully.³⁹²

All this is indicative of the mission of God that is at work in this world, a world that has lost sight of the fact that humanity has been created in the image of God.

Imago Dei

The creation story in the Scriptures, although speaking of a monumental event, treats the creation of all things, and particularly of humanity, as a personal story. The story tells of Adam and Eve as created by God, in His own image and likeness, and distinguished by their freewill, their rational capabilities of knowledge and love, their capacity to be stewards over creation and, most importantly, their capacity for relationship, especially their unique relationship with God. However, as Chapter 3 of Genesis unfolds and sin results in fractured relationships, forcing Adam and Eve to leave the garden, the image and likeness of God are seen in a different light. Humanity experiences pain and suffering and the marring of the image of the Creator within humankind brings an awareness of sin, of relationship that is broken and a deep longing for reconciliation. It is in this state of brokenness that God sets in

³⁹² Johan Roux, “Empowering Destitute People Towards *Shalom*: A Contextual Missiological Study” (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of South Africa, 2007):137 (Used with permission of the author).

motion the plan that will result in the provision of the Way back to relationship and a restoration of the image.

Two aspects noted above are relevant to later discussion of the therapeutic relationship. First, the relational nature of the human person is integral to humankind's created reality. The definitive expression of this is revealed in the person of Jesus – the incarnate Word. Kelly succinctly expresses this when he says:

The Son is the expression of the relational character and self-transcending dynamism of true personhood. As Son, he is the divine expression in history of the transcendent origin and goal of the truly personal; and as the Word, he is God's irrevocable affirmation of the worth of the person.³⁹³

Second, there is the aspect of transforming rationality. Turner explicates this phenomenon of the movement from image to likeness, building on the writings of Bonaventure, by identifying three modes of expression indicated in these Biblical accounts concerning creation: “vestige,” “image” and “likeness”:

The visible ‘external’ creation contains vestiges of the divine, the interior world of the human soul contains images of the divine and, through the work of grace, the images of the divine become likenesses of it which raise the soul ‘above’ itself.³⁹⁴

Turner continues to explain this concept of the *imago Dei* as being a movement from “the way of God”³⁹⁵ to “the truth of God”³⁹⁶ towards a state of rejoicing in the “knowledge of God

³⁹³ Kelly, *The Trinity*, 187.

³⁹⁴ Turner, *The Darkness*, 108-109.

³⁹⁵ Turner, *The Darkness*, 108-109.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 108-109.

and in the reverent fear of his majesty”.³⁹⁷ Building on Turner, the suggestion is that, within creation, the ‘thumbprints’ or vestiges of God can be discerned, as for instance, in its patterns of relationships and interconnections. Within this relational framework, the human person is the image of the divine through rationality, knowledge, love and freedom. From its created, and then fallen reality, the human person, through the gift of grace and through cooperation with that gift and its healing and transforming power, is enabled to grow into the divine ‘likeness’. This has implications for the relational, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the therapeutic relationship. Such an understanding of this transformational progression gives the practice of pastoral counselling enhanced meaning. A further extrapolation of the elements of the *imago Dei* that become progressively transformed on the journey to wholeness includes:

- **Dignity**

Human dignity is constituted by the given-ness of human existence, the capacities inherent in being human—freedom, reason, love and community—and the *telos* of human existence, namely, spiritual union with God and the practical realisation of a peaceful and mutually edifying human coexistence.³⁹⁸

Although such a definition of dignity describes the given-ness and the facts of the human person being the *imago Dei*, Kirchoffer, explaining Pope Benedict XVI’s work, allows that although the lived experience of the person is often more likely to be undignified,

it would appear that there is an aspect of dignity that transcends lived experience, proceeding from the belief that human beings are made in the image of God; there is a

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 108-109.

³⁹⁸ David Kirchoffer, “Benedict XVI, Human Dignity and Absolute Moral Norms”. *New Blackfriars* (2009):587.

fundamental, inalienable, inherent, innate, essential dignity in all human beings regardless of what we may be able to observe.³⁹⁹

The concept of human dignity, especially such a dignity that transcends experience, is seminal to any counselling process but, when considering a therapeutic process that introduces a person to “the Way of God”, it has particular significance.

- **Rationality**

Early theologians from the patristic period as well as such influential theologians as Augustine and Aquinas understood that the image of God as described in the Book of Genesis 1:27 reflected rationality as being the essence of God⁴⁰⁰ in the image of whom mankind was created. The human capacity for rationality, leading to value-based and moral volition, was what separated the human person from the animals of God’s creation.⁴⁰¹ However, more recent theologians have approached the understanding of the image of God in a much more wholistic fashion. As outlined above, Turner understands the image of God as a movement from the way of God, to the truth of God, to the knowledge of God.⁴⁰² Hence, although life is given by God, this is not a passive “givenness”. According to Meyendorff, “the image of God is a challenge and man is called to grow in divine life. Divine life is a gift, but also a task which is to be accomplished by free human effort”.⁴⁰³ This collaborative process has as its goal, being transformed into the likeness of Christ, who is the incarnation of God, ‘the expression of the relational character and self-transcending dynamism of true personhood’.

³⁹⁹ Kirchhoffer, “Benedict XVI”, 590,591.

⁴⁰⁰ F. L. Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 223.

⁴⁰¹ Thomas Aquinas wrote: “The rational aptitude of humans for understanding and loving God consists in the very nature of the human mind” (*SumTh* I.93.4).

⁴⁰² Turner, *The Darkness*, 108-109.

⁴⁰³ John Meyendorff , *Byzantine Theology* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1974), 2.

This transformational process embodies cognitive engagement, affective responsiveness and relational contemplation.

It can be seen, that the pilgrimage to personhood requires vertical collaboration with the divine *perichoresis*,⁴⁰⁴ but is also shaped by active engagement in horizontal relationships.⁴⁰⁵ Included in the New Testament narratives, beginning with Jesus sending his disciples “into all the world to preach the gospel”,⁴⁰⁶ are the stories of the followers of Christ fulfilling the mission of God. Their message was one of reconciliation, a response to the revelation of the wondrous grace and mercy of a loving God whose steadfast agenda is for the good of all mankind. The stories continue with the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost,⁴⁰⁷ telling of the disciples who were empowered to embrace the mission of God by building a culture of faith where relationship with God could flourish. History proves that the communities thus created became the Christian church. Hence, it could be said that true personhood begins with “a search for the divine,” which is “encountered in the experiential reality of human existence, often through the symbols related to spirituality”.⁴⁰⁸ The consequence of such search and encounter is “transformation to serve the work of God through the church for the sake of the

⁴⁰⁴ Downey, *Altogether Gift*, 73, writes of *perichoresis* in terms of both community and being sent: “. . . the term *perichoresis* describes the active, mutual, equal relations between the Father, Son, and Spirit . . . The Father sends his only Son and gifts us with the Spirit in our hearts. Trinity is a way of speaking of a personal God who ex-ists – is out of and toward others in relationship, who communicates, whom we come to know precisely as God for us, with us and in us”.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 92, explains: “The mission of Word and Spirit – expressing, communicating, bringing forth a communion in the one Love – is expressly taken up by the church. As we live with and in this mission, and as we are carried on in the flow of it, the church itself becomes a theophany”.

⁴⁰⁶ Mark 16:15.

⁴⁰⁷ Acts 2.

⁴⁰⁸ Cartledge, *Practical Theology*, 30.

world, so the world may be transformed according to the purposes of God".⁴⁰⁹ Ross Langmead simply explains it thus:

When we ask ourselves what the mission of God is, and in what ways we are called to co-operate with God in it, we find ourselves talking about transformed relationships in several dimensions – between humans and God, between humans and between humans and creation.⁴¹⁰

Given that the heart of this study is to investigate transformational relationships, this connection between personhood and the mission of God as defined here, is very significant.

What Makes the Therapeutic Relationship Therapeutic? – Theological Insights

These questions will be examined from both the individual and the ecclesiastical perspectives:

- How does the pastor's understanding of Christian ministry influence the therapeutic relationship?
- How does the environment of *this particular church* influence the pastoral counselling process?

This chapter has served to develop the theological foundations that will undergird this research as the thesis questions are further investigated through the lens of the discipline of psychology. It is appropriate here to return to the concept of the therapeutic relationship and

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 30.

⁴¹⁰ Ross Langmead, "Transformed Relationships: Reconciliation as the Central Model for Mission". *Mission Studies* 25 (2008):5.

bring together these theological premises to illuminate the theological responses to the questions that surround the specific relationship being researched.

The specific relationship being investigated is the one-on-one pastoral counselling encounter that happens in the course of a pastor's work. This immediately calls to question such psychological issues as the power differential between client and pastor and the nature of the relationship intimacy which will be extensively addressed in following chapters. However, what will be addressed here is the presupposition that a person comes to the pastor with desire to make changes and with the understanding that the counselling will incorporate Biblical and spiritual interventions. As the participants in this study are all from a specific Pentecostal church, it is expected that the Biblical and spiritual interventions will be in accordance with the beliefs and theology of this church. As part of this chapter, the writings of Pentecostal theologians, and the theology from other historical, traditional and contemporary sources, have been examined with a view to identifying common elements and points of diversity. These will provide a comprehensive picture of a relationship that is therapeutic and life-giving.

The deep foundations of this therapeutic relationship have been established by delving into Trinitarian relational theology, particularly the Trinitarian doctrine of *perichoresis*. The pictures of Trinitarian relationship painted by theologians as they highlight the divine *perichoresis* dance,⁴¹¹ the intimacy of “divine Be-ing-in-Love that draws believers into its own dynamics”,⁴¹² and the reparative capacity of the Trinitarian relationship,⁴¹³ promise a

⁴¹¹ Hunt, *Trinity*, 81.

⁴¹² Kelly, *The Trinity*, 174.

⁴¹³ Downey, *Altogether Gift*, 79.

relationship that is not simply therapeutic but is life-giving. It is upon such a foundation that a model of a truly therapeutic relationship can be established.

However, the brief journey into Pentecostal theology revealed that Pentecostals, for the most part, understand God as Trinity, but that most local church pastors have not reflected on the relational nuances of this doctrine to any great extent.⁴¹⁴ From this awareness, and the insights gained from the investigation of relational Trinitarian theology, two areas relevant to the particular pastoral counselling being studied here have been highlighted as being significant. Firstly, an understanding of relational Trinity and all that this encompasses reveals the potential for a transcendent dimension of the therapeutic relationship. This concept will be further examined in the ensuing chapters. Secondly, the pastors involved in this study will be likely to express the therapeutic aspect of the counselling relationship in language relating to the life-giving presence of the Holy Spirit. As the data is analysed, this notion will be observed. Other aspects of the therapeutic relationship will be integrated into these discoveries as this study progresses, beginning here with the concepts of covenant and power. Relationships, particularly counselling relationships where people are extremely vulnerable, require the counsellor to be able to hold a safe space for their clients. Hence, for a relationship to be therapeutic, it must be safe. With human relationships, there is no guarantee that promises will be upheld and power managed constructively. However, the concept of a covenant instigated by God opens a transcendent dimension of safety in relationship. Relationship as modelled by the Trinity encompasses an absolute commitment to covenantal conditions, conditions that, in some ways, may also be relevant to a counselling relationship. In the context of counselling, attention is given to the protection of the other and to the

⁴¹⁴ Krakkainen, *Toward a*, 103.

unconditional love that has the capacity to create value and promote relational healing. These could be understood as the spiritual dimension of relationship. Hence, a therapeutic relationship is a relationship bounded by covenantal conditions that foster safety and where the *agape* that creates personal value for the client can be expressed and received.

When exploring the spiritual dimensions of relationship, we return to the Pentecostals whose theology seeks to understand the integration between divinity and humanity and whose core beliefs centre on experiential encounter with the Holy Spirit. As a phenomenological religion, Pentecostalism understands that encounter with the Spirit of God brings transformation to the one who has such an experience. It is warranted here to note that, although focussed on the experiential, Pentecostalism also embraces a doctrine of the Holy Spirit common across Christianity.⁴¹⁵ It is this Holy Spirit inspired, transformational phenomena that lifts the pastoral counselling relationship to a transcendent place where healing happens.

Conclusion

Having developed a theological structure to support this investigation of the therapeutic relationship, attention is now given to the process of the experience of relationship with God, self and others beginning with the understanding of personhood discussed in this chapter.

Although traditionally, personhood has been the subject of the monistic/dualistic/ tripartite

⁴¹⁵ Rosato, "The Mission", 389,392,394,395, summarises the doctrine of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the Teacher – "Christian knowledge of God depends on the power of the divine Giver who enables the divine Gift, Jesus Christ, to be accepted in such a manner that the divine Giver, the Father, achieve the selfless desire to share with human persons all that the Godhead is and does"; The Holy Spirit as Unifier - "In constantly fostering human solidarity beyond the church, the divine Pneuma does not act against the unified being and unifying mission of Christians, but consolidates their own experience and reawakens their own zeal"; The Holy Spirit as Liberator – "The universal search for economic and political justice stimulates Christians not only to give public witness to their own justification by faith and baptism, but also to point to the being and mission of the Holy Spirit as the source and goal of all ethical ideals, and as their mysterious and fruitful inner force"; The Holy Spirit as Vivifier – "The Spirit, with whose vivifying power Christians already are permanently sealed, is called the "guarantee" of the glory which awaits them (2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5)".

theological debate, the concept that personhood is dynamic and seeking to be whole is a presupposition of this thesis. Hence the theological motifs that best inform this work are those that give insight into the human journey towards wholeness. Although counselling ultimately addresses human wholeness regardless of the nature of the presenting problem, all psychological theories are based on a philosophy of what constitutes the human person as a functional being. These philosophies differ from theory to theory, dependent on various factors including the dominant worldview of the time, the direction of scientific thought of the era and the culture and belief system of the theorist. Hence, psychological theories of human wholeness will differ, resulting in the various approaches having a range of therapy goals. This concept will be extensively examined in the following chapter but here we will address the theological foundations for human wholeness beginning with the Biblical notion of *shalom*.

The concept of *shalom* transcends the theological debate regarding the constitution of the human person. *Shalom* suggests an understanding of wholeness that is a dynamic interaction of body, soul and spirit and a wholeness of life that incorporates a harmony that is reminiscent of *perichoresis*, discussed earlier in relation to Trinitarian doctrine. The Hebrew concept of *shalom* carries with it the notion of a gift flowing from the heart of a loving God that is to be accepted and embraced. *Shalom* is also a wholeness that is discovered in community with God, self and others and is the motivation to partake in the mission of God. Counselling praxis that embraces the ethos of *shalom* has the capacity to be a transformational experience for client and counsellor alike.

Another significant presupposition of this thesis is the theological doctrine of *imago Dei*. This doctrine encompasses the understanding that, by being made in the image of God, humanity firstly, is essentially relational as relationship is what God is. Secondly, the human person is rational, possessing the capacity for knowledge and value-based and moral volition. Wholistic personhood is not a quality to be attained but a dynamic movement through stages of growth and maturity in which the challenge is to accept the invitation to cooperate with the gift of grace offered by God and receive healing and transformation. To understand personhood in the terms of the *imago Dei* shifts the counselling relationship to a dimension where human identity, including dignity, rationality and relationships, can be examined in the illumination of a loving God.

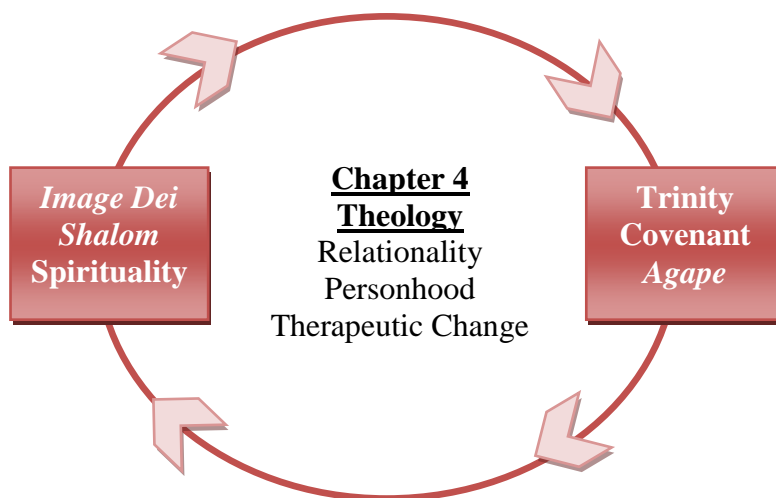
Hence, personhood as made in the image of God and lived in community has the capacity to become . . . in and because of the limitless economy of God.⁴¹⁶ By considering personhood in the light of this theological investigation, keys to what makes the counselling relationship therapeutic have been discovered. In the next chapter, psychological approaches to counselling will be examined as the common factors of what makes the therapeutic relationship therapeutic are investigated.

It is these common factors that will be the means of drawing together the findings of this study to a logical conclusion. Therefore, considering the unique integration of both theology and psychology that is represented in this study, I will seek to summarise this chapter with a diagrammatical representation (Figure 6) of what has been discovered in this theological

⁴¹⁶ Muto, "The Unfolding", 94, sees this "becoming" as "transformation": "From a Christian perspective, the foundational transformation of human life by grace does not represent a destruction but rather a healing and elevation of its created, distinctively human foundations. This transformation enables women and men to attain not only growth in their Christian faith but also their full potential as persons".

exploration of the therapeutic relationship. It will be essential, for a clear and coherent thesis, to establish sound connections between the disciplines being investigated. Headings of relationality, personhood and the therapeutic relationship have emerged from both the literature and the findings of the data. In order to provide for further comparisons and connections, these have been represented with a circle that demonstrates the flow between these elements that creates a therapeutic relationship. As this study progresses this image will continue to be developed as a means of illustrating the interaction of the various parts of this interdisciplinary study.

Figure 6 - Theological Factors of the Therapeutic Relationship



CHAPTER 5 - THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS - THE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP - PSYCHOLOGY

Introduction

With the findings of the previous chapter in mind, and by way of introduction to this chapter that examines the psychological aspects of the therapeutic relationship, the words of Balswick and his colleagues serve as a bridge to connect the theological and the psychological components of this study:

. . . as Christian psychologists we have an advantage. We are not only scientists but also believers in a creation that reflects something of its Creator and Redeemer. We are not limited to the resources of psychology, but can tap into the resources of our theology. Although both these traditions of thought address issues pertaining to maturity and growth as humans, they are not parallel lines of inquiry and do not address questions of human nature on the same level. A Christian theological anthropology provides a worldview in which psychological theory can be critically engaged and shaped. The Bible offers a symbolic world that creates perceptual categories through which we can interpret reality.⁴¹⁷

Although this quote specifically refers to the Christian psychologist, the pastor who engages in pastoral counselling shares this advantage of being able to work with an integrated model that encompasses both theology and psychology. For the purposes of this study, that will include the psychological understandings of relationality and personhood including such Biblical symbols as the *imago Dei* and Trinity as examined in the previous chapter. It is beyond the breadth of this study to explore all aspects of psychological personhood and psychological theories pertaining to the human person in relationship, but this investigation

⁴¹⁷ Balswick, King, and Reimer, *The Reciprocating*, 28.

will address the aspects of these subjects as they inform the questions posed by this study, particularly focussing on the therapeutic qualities of human relationality. It is noteworthy here to remember that not only has psychological research⁴¹⁸ over the past 50 years or so proven that up to 30% of positive client⁴¹⁹ outcomes can be attributed consistently to the relationship that the counsellor forges with the client, but that the quality of that relationship has also been shown to be significant in the counselling process.⁴²⁰ More recently, researchers have identified “transpersonal”⁴²¹ and “transformational” aspects of the counselling relationship. Psychological findings such as this, that have significance to the therapeutic quality of the pastoral counselling relationship, will be addressed in this chapter.

As previously explained, pastors consistently, and yet without formal training, engage in counselling relationships with those who come to them for help. Therefore, an investigation of the basic elements of the therapeutic relationship from psychological perspectives is essential to this study to provide a wholistic picture of this specific relationship. Such psychological perspectives as relevant to this study have been identified under three headings:

⁴¹⁸ R. Halstead et al., “Counselor’s Conceptualizations of Caring in the Counseling Relationship”. *Counseling and Values* 47 (2002): 34, write: “The counselling relationship has been identified as a primary element around which theories of counselling converge”. This statement is supported by, among others, J. Frank, *Persuasion and Healing* (Baltimore, MA: John Hopkins University Press, 1961); M. Goldfried, *Converging Themes in Psychotherapy* (New York, NY: Springer, 1982); Michael Lambert, “Psychotherapy Outcome Research: Implications for Integrative and Eclectic Therapists”, in *Handbook of Psychotherapy Integration*, eds. J. Norcross and M. Goldfried (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1992), 94-129, and Michael Lambert and K. Cattani-Thompson, “Current Findings Regarding the Effectiveness of Counseling: Implications for Practice”. *Journal of Counseling Development* 74 (1996):601-608.

⁴¹⁹ The term “client” connotes the counsellee or the “other” in the counselling relationship. Although it is unlikely that pastors would refer to those they work with in the pastoral counselling situation as “clients”, this word conveys a clear meaning for the reader of this research and is gender neutral. Hence, throughout this thesis, for clarity and convenience, the word “client” will be used.

⁴²⁰ Andrea Rayle, “Mattering to Others: Implications for the Counseling Relationship”. *Journal of Counseling & Development* 84 (2006): 483-48; Hovarth, “The Therapeutic”.

⁴²¹ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*.

- **Psychological Relationality** – psychological perspectives of relationship.
- **Personhood** – psychological perspectives of personhood.
- **The therapeutic capacity of the relationship** – the meaning of “therapeutic” and the nature of a therapeutic relationship from a psychological perspective.

Psychological Relationality

This topic will explore theories of relationship as they will inform the primary question: “How does the counselling pastor conceptualise and practice the counselling relationship?” The theories and psychological insights here are those related to the covenant quality of the therapeutic space, the management of relational power, spirituality as an element of relationship and various models of relationship that are therapeutic.

It could be argued that the approaches to psychology that were developed in the early part of the last century identified the professional counselling relationship in terms of a doctor/patient model, designed to relieve symptoms as well as heighten the patient’s sense of self. While Beck and Demarest acknowledge this, they write of a different direction they see in more recent psychological theory and practice:

Psychologists have long been interested in tracing the roots of this sense of self, especially as it relates to the other. The interpersonal and relational approach to understanding human functioning and psychopathology is the most rapidly evolving theoretical orientation within psychoanalysis in the last decade.⁴²²

⁴²² Beck and Demarest, *The Human*, 352.

Speaking particularly of the psychoanalytical counselling approach, these authors continue by exploring the findings of the Object Relations theorists⁴²³ who, along with Attachment Theorists,⁴²⁴ understand the human person in relationship, especially mother/child relationships and the impact these connections have on later life. Other specifically relational models of counselling that have emerged over the last five decades or so have had their origins in the Behavioural schools. Significant amongst these was Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory,⁴²⁵ which addresses social development and how it unfolds. Family Systems Therapy⁴²⁶ similarly understands the client as being a part of a system of complex relationships, and the therapy as working with these relationships rather than the client in isolation. However, all these methods of therapy followed the medical model of attending to symptoms, diagnosing the dysfunction and then working towards what was perceived to be the functional solution.

More recently, the Narrative Therapists⁴²⁷ have brought a Constructionist⁴²⁸ approach to counselling, still understanding that all humans are a part of a system but seeing that system as being constructed and therefore having the capacity to be deconstructed and then

⁴²³ Mélanie Klein, *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946-1963* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1975) is generally credited with developing this theory. Winnicott, *Playing and*, has also been very influential in this field.

⁴²⁴ Bowlby, *A Secure Base*; and Ainsworth, "Attachments beyond", contributed to our understanding of the human person with their research and writings on attachment. Alan Sroufe, *Emotional Development: The Organization of Emotional Life in the Early Years* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996) has written more recently in this area.

⁴²⁵ Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1976).

⁴²⁶ cf. Irene and Herbert Goldenberg, *Family Therapy: An Overview*. 2nd ed. (Pacific Grove, CA: Brookes/Cole, 1985); Salvatore Minuchin, *Families and Family Therapy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); and Murray Bowen, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* (New York, NY: Aronson, 1978).

⁴²⁷ cf. Jennifer Freeman, David Epston, and Dean Lobovits, *Playful Approaches to Serious Problems: Narrative Therapy with Children and Their Families* (New York, NY, 1997); White and Epston, *Narrative Means*.

⁴²⁸ Gergen, *An Invitation*, 49, writes of Social Constructionism: "unlike any other worldview that I know of, constructionism does not seek to establish the truth of its own premises. It recognises that constructionism is itself socially constructed. Constructionism is not then, a candidate for the truth. Nor is it a belief system. Rather the constructionist dialogues represent invitations to a way of understanding".

reconstructed to achieve desired outcomes. The Constructionist Therapies are strength-based in that they do not work with the client's presenting symptoms or label their family system as "dysfunctional". The narrative therapist seeks to raise the client's awareness of their strengths and the way they have coped in the past with difficult situations. In this process, exceptions are identified rather than patterns, and problems are externalised, creating a separation of client and problem and giving the client permission not "to be the problem".

In considering these various ways of understanding the "why" of what could generally be defined as human suffering, Kenneth Gergen argues that the psychological schools take one of two approaches. These he describes as either the causal explanation where "people can be 'influenced', 'educated', 'rewarded', 'threatened' or 'forced' to change their behaviour", or the assumption of voluntary agency where people are considered to be free to choose to decide between right and wrong and what they want to do in life. However, he then continues:

In developing a relational view of human action, we find that neither of these traditional explanations is satisfactory. Both sustain the tradition of bounded being, and neither recognizes the fundamental significance of co-action in human affairs. In effect, an alternative way of explaining human action is invited, one that places the co-active *confluence* in the centre of concern.⁴²⁹

When considering the findings of the previous chapter, this concept of "confluence" could be extended to include the grace of the *perichoresis* relationship seen in the Trinity that also invites co-action. Hence the following serves to summarise the characteristics of relationality from a psychological perspective with some reference to the points of integration with the

⁴²⁹ Gergen, *An Invitation*, 49.

theological motifs discussed in the previous chapter. This integrative summary, therefore, describes the guiding assumptions of this thesis regarding human relationality:

- multiplicity of influence – the individual is a dynamic unit that interacts with a complex and multilayered environment that includes biological, psychological and behavioural processes. Spirituality would also be included here;
- multiple reciprocal influence – the individual’s functioning and development results from dynamic interaction within and between the multilayers of their environment;
- uniqueness of each individual – each human differs from every other human being genetically as well as the way in which they interact with their multilayered environment. Here we recognise the theology of the *imago Dei* as expressing that uniqueness;
- uniqueness of development – human development displays relative plasticity so there is no single, ideal developmental pathway for any person. For the purposes of this thesis, this uniqueness of an individual’s development encompasses an understanding of the nature of God and the mystery of his interaction with humanity;
- humans as active agents – individuals influence their own development through their own functioning. In the psychological context this may be so, but considering human relationality in terms of being embraced by the *perichoresis* of the Trinity, the human being as an active agent is invited to move into a transcendent dimension;
- created for community – individuals not only strive to establish and maintain coherent intrapersonal organisation so they can function effectively as a unit; they also struggle to establish and maintain coherent person-context patterns of organisation so they can function effectively as a component of their larger contexts.⁴³⁰ This remains true when the spiritual dimension is also considered.

⁴³⁰ Adapted from Balswick, King, and Reimer, *The Reciprocating*, 98.

Following this overview of the psychological theories and philosophies that understand the human person in relationship as a foundation, the focus will now turn to the specifics that will inform this study. It is noted here that, in this investigation of the pastoral counselling relationship, it is expected that the participants in this relationship assume roles. In this case, the roles could be of “pastor”, “client” or “counsellor” depending on the dynamics of, and participants in, the relationship. These roles each carry implications for the outcome of the relationship and are significant to the therapeutic quality of the relationship. There are implicit and explicit expectations of these roles and, as this chapter proceeds, these differences in roles and the consequences of these differences will be accentuated, beginning with the roles implied by different aspects of “covenant”.

Therapeutic Space

In the previous chapter, a section on “covenant” introduced the fact that the concept of “covenant” served to create a safe place for a therapeutic relationship to flourish. In this section, we will revisit this in the context of psychological theory and practice. In their article that discusses the implications of a professional code of ethics as being covenantal because it is “both a statement of counsellor identity and an ethical covenant with society”,⁴³¹ Ponton and Duba explore this notion:

The essential ingredients of a covenant are informed agreement and voluntary consent by equals as a gift or entrustment . . . covenants are by their nature a “moral practice” allowing, as consistent with the covenant relationship, some behaviors and disallowing other behaviors as inconsistent. The covenant promise is made by professionals to society both individually and collectively. Like all covenants (e.g., marriage), that professional promise both grows from and shapes

⁴³¹ Ponton and Duba, “The ACA”, 117.

the identity of those who live the covenantal relationship . . . in the covenant model, the individual in assuming professional identity . . . promises to return the gift he or she has received in being trained for and granted professional status.⁴³²

In this discussion of the therapeutic space, aspects of this statement (above) help to identify ethical or “moral practice” conditions as well as the more subjective boundaries that serve to keep the therapeutic relationship safe for both client and counsellor. In the case of a professional counsellor, the covenant conditions are explicitly outlined in a professional Code of Ethics established by the registering organisation. A counsellor desiring registration must formally agree to abide by these conditions. However, for the pastoral counsellor, the Code of Ethics of the church overseeing the counselling ministry would establish the conditions of the covenant.⁴³³ The explicit conditions of such codes of ethics, important in fostering a therapeutic space, include:

- informed agreement and voluntary consent between equals;
- moral duty of care;
- legal duty of care;
- descriptions of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour.

However, for a covenantal relationship to be truly therapeutic, a deeper level of commitment to the relationship is required. Ponton and Duba have touched on the conditions of this commitment by including in their statement characteristics of the covenantal relationship that go beyond mere “rules”:

- it is a gift or entrustment;

⁴³² Ponton and Duba, “The ACA”, 119.

⁴³³ Although this issue of the ethical responsibilities will be addressed further in this thesis, the comments of Haug, “Boundaries and the Use”, will be noted here: “Some practices common to clergy and considered ethical by most, such as ad hoc home visits, may be viewed as ethically questionable or even unethical for counselors. These discrepancies can create confusion for the clergy therapist. Awareness of the differences of what is deemed professional and ethical in the two professions (counselling and ministry) however, is the first step towards preventing a lapse in ethical conduct and client harm”.

- it is a promise to both individuals and their community;
- it opens space to grow from, and shape, the identity of those who live the covenantal relationship.

And, I would add, it involves both grace and power held in tension.

It is worth noting here, in this discussion of covenant as being a motif that relates to the therapeutic space where counselling happens, that a covenant relationship can be:

- unilateral, where one party holds the balance of power. This is the type of counselling relationship in which, initially, it is the responsibility of the counsellor to set the boundaries to create a safe relationship for the good of the client. From the theological perspective, this can be likened to the covenant God made with Adam and Abraham; one that was neither conditional nor based on mutual agreement;
- bilateral, or a reciprocal relationship. This is where both parties have equal capacity to give and receive from the covenant conditions. This resembles the counselling relationship in that, in most such relationships, goals are set mutually and the process of the counselling is a collaboration between client and counsellor. Theologically, this can also be likened to the covenant God made with Moses where the covenantal conditions were explicitly made.

Hence the counselling relationship, and especially the pastoral counselling relationship being studied here, has elements of both a unilateral and a reciprocal covenant. The counsellor's role here is to deliberately and explicitly integrate these two types of relationship to provide the conditions necessary for the counselling relationship to be therapeutic. The following table (Table 8), which draws upon the above article from

Ponton and Duba,⁴³⁴ will help to clarify the importance of integrating these aspects of covenant into this unique counselling relationship:

Table 8 - Psychological Covenant

Unilateral Covenant is Counsellor Responsibilities.	The Integrated Covenant	Reciprocal Covenant is Both counsellor and client responsibilities.
Moral duty of care.	<p>There are necessary legal and moral conditions to ensure that the client's rights are protected and are intended to keep the client safe.</p> <p>These conditions are designed to minimise the risk of litigation or other harm that could come to the counsellor because of the unique and intimate nature of the counselling relationship.</p> <p>These conditions keep the counsellor accountable.</p> <p>Trust is essential for good therapy to happen. Seeing this giving and receiving of trust as a gift and a privilege enables the counsellor to participate in the relationship with a keen awareness of the power dynamics and the motivation to manage this power, not only for the empowerment of the client towards transformational change but also for the growth of the counsellor and the fostering of community connections.</p> <p>The container for such a safe open space reflects the concept of grace.</p>	<p>Informed agreement and voluntary consent between equals.</p>
Legal duty of care.		
A description of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour.		
Both grace and power held in tension.		
		Gift or entrustment.
		A promise to both the individual client and the community.
		An open space to grow from, and shape the identity of, those who live the covenantal relationship.

⁴³⁴ Ponton and Duba, "The ACA", 119.

In summary, the therapeutic space is a sacred space, “and the therapist has a critical role in making it so. Keeping the sacredness discernible and consistent is our most necessary responsibility. The crucial territory is the relational space, defined and maintained by the covenant between therapist and client. . . .”⁴³⁵ This is achieved by negotiating the multilayered environments of both participants and, without careful and deliberate attention, it can be as destructive as it can be therapeutic. To further understand the creation of this sacred space as a transformational and therapeutic experience, the issue of power will be examined.

Power

The multiplicity of influence, discussed in the previous section, will serve as an introduction to the topic of power. It will be argued that, in a multilayered therapeutic relationship, each layer will express power differently. Scholarship over the last several decades has developed various categories of power,⁴³⁶ including, more recently, the feminist dimensions, considered here to be representative of the theme of this thesis. Although there are several specific feminist theories of power,⁴³⁷ this particular perspective will serve as the basis of our discussion:

. . . a significant strand of feminist theorizing of power starts with the contention that the conception of power as power-over, domination, or control is implicitly masculinist. In order to avoid such masculinist connotations, many feminists from a variety of theoretical backgrounds have argued for a reconceptualization of

⁴³⁵ Brian Grant, *A Theology for Pastoral Psychotherapy: God's Play in Sacred Spaces* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth, 2001), 97.

⁴³⁶ cf. J. French and B. Raven, “The Bases of Social Power”, in *Studies in Social Power*, ed. D Cartwright (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1959). These theorists have developed a model, extensively used in such areas as human resource management and psychology, which identifies 5 bases of power: Coercive/Reward; Legitimate; Expert and Referent.

⁴³⁷ The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-power/> lists: Power as Resource; Power as Domination, including Phenomenological, Radical, Socialist, Intersectional, Poststructural and Analytic Feminist Approaches; and Power as Empowerment.

power as a capacity or ability, specifically, the capacity to empower or transform oneself and others. Thus, these feminists have tended to understand power not as power-over but as power-to.⁴³⁸

To further explore this statement, a return to the various theoretical schools of psychology mentioned earlier is warranted. The therapies devised in the first half of the twentieth century would fit the category of “causal”,⁴³⁹ which, according to Gergen,⁴⁴⁰ would see them employing such techniques as influencing, educating, rewarding, and maybe occasionally threatening or forcing⁴⁴¹ the client towards behaviour change. Although not representative of the entire philosophy of these therapies, certainly some of the techniques as demonstrated by psychological experiments⁴⁴² and interviews⁴⁴³ recorded from that era seem very “power over” to the twenty-first century counsellor.

However, to again return to the multilayered approach to this topic, the worldview of the community and the academy of any era will necessarily dictate how power is managed.⁴⁴⁴ Western culture has dramatically changed in the last century and the current feminist epistemology that in some way influences every aspect of Western life has brought a different dimension to the understanding of relationality and, in the arena of psychology, has

⁴³⁸ *Standford Encyclopedia.*

⁴³⁹ I would class these very generally as the Psychodynamic school, the Behaviourist/Cognitive Behaviourist School and, maybe to a lesser degree when considering the “masculine” power approach, the Humanistic/Existential School.

⁴⁴⁰ Gergen, *An Invitation.*

⁴⁴¹ Most likely, this coercive power would be seen in the justice system with mandated clients.

⁴⁴² Probably among the most noteworthy here are Watson and Rayner’s, “Conditioned Emotional”. “Little Albert” experiment (where Watson traumatised baby Albert to support his hypothesis that fear was conditioned) and “The Milgram Experiment” [Stanley Milgram, “Behavioural Study of Obedience”. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (1963):371-378] where students were instructed to continue to apply increasing levels of electric shocks to a person, even though they were told that it would kill the person.

⁴⁴³cf. YouTube, “Interview with Fritz Perls”, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IKXTLFVZJ> and with “Albert Ellis”, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xFfdshNKYk&feature=relmfu>

⁴⁴⁴ The answers scholars and practitioners give to worldview questions that ask “What is reality?”; “What is a human being?”; “What is right and wrong?” inform the philosophy that underpins these therapies.

highlighted the transforming capacity of “power to” relationship. The constructionist therapies that have become the therapy of choice for many twenty-first century counsellors are highly conscious of the use of power and the “power to” approach governs the techniques of these therapies.⁴⁴⁵ Perhaps it is this dimension of power that is beginning to approach the transcendent *agape* as discussed in the previous chapter, the love/power that creates value and generates transformational change. This is especially significant when we consider that, in many cases, clients will come to counselling feeling powerless or disempowered. Ironically, they often also come with the expectation that the counsellor will “fix them”. It is for this reason that the thoughtful management of power by the counsellor is essential.

Although the theological position explored earlier in this thesis has led to an understanding of a creative, transcendent power that begins with the perfect love of God who is Love and leads, by the very nature of that love, to the creation of value and worth in the objects of that love, Rohr reminds us of humanity’s propensity to a more dominating power:

God has to teach the people that there are alternatives to brute strength. If all you are taught is the art of the hammer, everything in your life is perceived as another nail. Eventually this broader wisdom becomes the virtues of community, patience, forgiveness and frankly, “cleverness”.⁴⁴⁶

Hence, it is significant here to be reminded of the Pentecostal church that is the context of this study and the fact that all the participants are pastors in this church, several of them being men. Some would say that, although Jesus frequently demonstrated “power to”⁴⁴⁷ and admonished the Pharisees for their misuse of power,⁴⁴⁸ the church in general is operating from

⁴⁴⁵ The constructionist therapies are represented by the solution focused group of therapies of which Narrative Therapy, (cf. White and Epston, *Narrative Means*, is probably the best known.

⁴⁴⁶ Rohr, *Things Hidden*, 94.

⁴⁴⁷ cf. John 4:1-42, the story of how Jesus’ *agape* created value and worth in the Samaritan woman at the well; John 8:2-11, a similar story of Jesus empowering a woman.

⁴⁴⁸ cf. Matthew 15:1-9.

what Alexander and Cook call “modern power”, the characteristics of which they see as being:

- a focus on norms and performance;
- pervasive, but subject to culture;
- monitored by the individual and enforced by the individual on self and others;
- implicit;
- everyone feels themselves to be under public scrutiny.⁴⁴⁹

It is not the task of this thesis to argue the validity of this understanding of church or to assess the power structure of the Pentecostal church. It is the task of this research to understand the phenomena of both the personal power and the spiritual power⁴⁵⁰ of the pastors participating in this study, and how they manage this power in the therapeutic relationships they have with their people, given that, according to Pentecostal tradition, spirituality is recognised as power. Therefore, the spiritual aspect of the phenomenon that is the therapeutic relationship also warrants a deeper understanding.

Spirituality

In contrast to the society of the “fathers” of psychology where religion and the supernatural were deemed as “unscientific”,⁴⁵¹ in today’s Western world, the concept of spirituality is becoming increasingly acceptable. According to Sperry and Shafranske:

Spirituality is not something on the fringes of life, nor is it an option that only a few pursue or want to discuss in psychotherapy. Rather, everyone has spirituality,

⁴⁴⁹ Cook and Alexander, *Interweavings*, 76.

⁴⁵⁰ cf. Acts 1:8.

⁴⁵¹ Brant Cortright, “An Integral Approach to Spiritual Emergency”. *Guidance and Counseling* 15, no. 3 (2000):12, writes “Spiritual emergency was once dismissed by the psychiatric and psychotherapeutic establishment as merely a form of mental illness, requiring medication and hospitalization in order to end it as soon as possible. This misdiagnosis and mistreatment aborted an otherwise growthful and life-changing process of psycho-spiritual change”.

and it is either life-giving or destructive, as reflected in our everyday thoughts, feelings and actions. Viewed from this perspective, spirituality and spiritual issues that clients bring to psychotherapy are not marginal to the therapeutic process not primarily the domain of “spiritually sensitive” psychotherapists. Rather they are, or can be, basic therapeutic considerations and the domain of all therapists.⁴⁵²

To further extrapolate these scholars’ observations, Jankowski considers three aspects of spirituality that are a part of the therapeutic process:

- i. The values and beliefs held by all people, often through adherence to some form of religious system, but also through contemplating the meaning of life, the nature of reality and such human experiences as death and dying. This author deems that these are the cognitive aspects of spirituality;
- ii. The metaphysical element that cannot be explained in cognitive or rational terms and involves a distinctly personal experience through the exercising of faith;
- iii. A sense of connectedness or spiritual communion that emerges out of relationship and is greater than the sum of its parts.⁴⁵³

Although from a twenty-first century perspective, the claims of these scholars may not sound radical, in the early twentieth century where psychology had its beginnings, these tenets would have been controversial to say the least. The dualism, in various forms, that has dominated scientific thinking for many centuries sees a separation of the material, including the human body, from the immaterial realm of thought.⁴⁵⁴ Hence, for the majority of

⁴⁵² Sperry and Shafranske, eds. *Spiritually Oriented*, 3, 4.

⁴⁵³ Jankowski, “Postmodern Spirituality”.

⁴⁵⁴ Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, Chap. 11.

scientists⁴⁵⁵ who gave us the theories of psychology that now form the foundation of counselling, the term “spirituality” did not have any useful meaning. In fact, the term spirituality, as it is used today, has been culturally developed over the last fifty years or so. Freud and those who followed in his footsteps did consider “religion” in their work, but Sperry and Shafranske explain that Freud saw:

... those who clung to religious beliefs as immature individuals in need of divine protection against the uncertainties of life. Mature psychoanalysts and analysed people were to live only on the sustenance offered by knowledge of themselves and acceptance of unavoidable frustrations. Their god was to be Logos, “human reason” and not a purported divinity in the sky.⁴⁵⁶

Hence, to evaluate the traditional schools of psychology in the light of spirituality is to introduce a new concept, one which had no place in the original philosophy. In fact, any discussion of spirituality⁴⁵⁷ in the scientific era, up to the first half of the twentieth century, was confined to the church or other religious setting. It is therefore significant to the field of psychology that spirituality has become more widely accepted as being important in the understanding of the human person. It is also of particular interest to this study in that this concept of spirituality is beginning to be seen by many in the counselling field as a component of the therapeutic relationship.

Another consequence of this acknowledgment of spirituality is that not only has the academy of psychology begun to seek more knowledge of the spiritual, but the way has also been

⁴⁵⁵ The obvious exception to this statement is Carl Jung. An example of his work is “Psychology and Religion”. In *Collected Works*. vol 11., 3-105. London, UK: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1940.

⁴⁵⁶ Sperry and Shafranske, *Spiritually Oriented*, 31.

⁴⁵⁷ Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 676, claims that: “Spirituality, despite the fluidity of the term’s usage and the general confusion about its meaning, is a subject that can no longer be politely ignored either in a church that would prefer a less ‘emotional’ approach to faith or in an academy that would guard its intellectual precincts from subjectivism”.

opened for pastors and those who care for the broken-hearted within the church to integrate the knowledge of the human person and human behaviour brought to us by psychology with the spiritual ministry they have always performed. Pentecostal scholar So understands this ministry as “nurturing vitality”.⁴⁵⁸ That Pentecostal spirituality seeks “the integration between divinity and humanity, one spirit-mind-body, and harmony between God and humans and among humans who are created in the image of God”,⁴⁵⁹ accentuates the importance of this investigation. The inclusion of spirituality becomes necessary when a wholistic approach to the counselling encounter is sought. In the next section the various forms of this encounter will be examined.

Forms of the Therapeutic Relationship

The various schools of psychology see the relationship between client and counsellor from different perspectives, but in the majority of these approaches, the relationship is considered pivotal. Whether the counsellor remains the “blank screen” of the psychoanalytic framework of the psychodynamic approaches;⁴⁶⁰ the teacher or coach of the behavioural and cognitive behavioural schools;⁴⁶¹ the listener and empathiser of humanistic counselling;⁴⁶² or the one who “journeys with” the other as is the practice of the constructivist therapist,⁴⁶³ all agree that the relationship holds the key to positive outcomes. In fact, a definition of psychotherapy states that it is:

⁴⁵⁸ So, “Pentecostal Spirituality”, 246.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 246.

⁴⁶⁰ Gerald Corey, *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. 5th ed. (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1996), 113,114.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., 289,290.

⁴⁶² Ibid., 204-207.

⁴⁶³ Hoyt, *Constructive Therapies*, 5.

The . . . systematic use of a relationship between therapist and patient – as opposed to pharmacological or social methods – to produce changes in cognition, feelings and behaviour.⁴⁶⁴

To come to an understanding of the dimensions of this therapeutic relationship, this study will focus on the work of Clarkson.⁴⁶⁵ As explained in Chapter 2, this work is unique in its approach to the therapeutic relationship as Clarkson includes in her model the premise that a healthy psychotherapeutic relationship is where the client/counsellor relationships bear some resemblance to kinship relationships. She continues the kinship metaphor by writing:

... if a psychotherapist can establish a relationship with someone who has lost the capacity for relationship . . . they have been retrieved in their relatedness with others. Thus they can begin to rejoin the family of humankind.⁴⁶⁶

This emphasis on family and the restoration of the broken-hearted to community will be shown to have meaningful parallels with the theological motifs examined in earlier chapters. Clarkson's work is also significant in that the relationship characteristics specific to the various psychological approaches are all encompassed within her five models. Her research has shown that:

From a systematic, integrative perspective, these five relationships in psychotherapy are all valid. Their intentioned and informed use will, of course, depend on differences between individual patients and different phases in the psychotherapy over time. At any one moment in psychotherapy one of these relationships may predominate.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁴ J. Holmes and R. Lindley, *The Values of Psychotherapy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1989), 3.

⁴⁶⁵ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

In the next section Clarkson's work will be examined and evaluated in the pastoral counselling context.

Clarkson's Models of the Therapeutic Relationship

In Clarkson's treatise of five different aspects of the therapeutic relationship she has identified how counsellors conceptualise the therapeutic task in the various stages and processes of the counselling encounter. This thesis will examine these models and seek to develop them further, believing they will provide some enlightenment for the questions being asked here, particularly:

“How does the pastor conceptualise and practice the counselling relationship?”

The insights gained from this examination will form a platform on which to ground psychological understandings of the therapeutic relationship of this research, and from this platform the therapeutic relationship as experienced in the uniqueness of the pastoral counselling encounter will be evaluated. Although Clarkson has used kinship terms to illustrate these different relationship stages, in order to integrate these models of therapeutic relationship with pastoral counselling understandings, theological and Biblical perspectives will be suggested where appropriate.

The Working Alliance

The working alliance, the first of the models to be examined, involves the cooperation between client and counsellor which underpins all effective helping.⁴⁶⁸ Bugental provides a definition of this model of therapeutic relationship when he writes:

⁴⁶⁸ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 8.

The therapeutic alliance is the powerful joining of forces which energizes and supports the long, difficult and frequently painful work of life-changing psychotherapy. The conception of the therapist here is not of a disinterested observer/technician but of a fully alive human companion for the client.⁴⁶⁹

From this it can be deduced that the counsellor and the client in the working alliance are actively involved in the process of identifying goals, establishing bonds and collaborating on tasks. Clarkson's kinship metaphor here is that of "cousins", conveying "kindred loyalties to each other's welfare, so it is possible to have a blend of subjective altruism and an objective capacity which may make that relationship constructive".⁴⁷⁰ Using a theological motif, this relationship can be likened to the Biblical concept of covenantal partners where faith as "subjective altruism" with an "objective capacity" is foundational to covenant, in this instance being a form of working alliance. Drawing from the Scriptural passage in Hebrews 11:1, Duffield and Van Cleave relate faith and the covenantal relationship thus:

Faith is said to be the "substance". The word *substance* comes from a word that literally means "foundation" or that which underlies our hope. *Foundation* speaks of that covenant relationship of mutual love between the Lord and the believer which is our ground of hope.⁴⁷¹

As such, the working alliance, being subjectively altruistic and deliberately developing objective capacity, provides the foundational relationship for the continuing therapeutic work to be accomplished. Although primarily a cognitive process, the working alliance also includes an emotional and volitional bond,⁴⁷² seen in attachment theory terms as an internal

⁴⁶⁹ James Bugental, *The Art of the Psychotherapist* (New York, NY: Norton, 1987), 49.

⁴⁷⁰ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 10.

⁴⁷¹ Guy Duffield and Nathaniel Van Cleave, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology* (Los Angeles, CA: Foursquare, 1987), 221,222.

⁴⁷²Edward Bordin, "Theory and Research on the Therapeutic Working Alliance: New Directions" in *The Working Alliance: Theory, Research, and Practice*, eds. A. Horvath and L. S. Greenberg (New York, NY: Wiley, 1994), 13-37, considers that the three areas of the therapeutic relationship, also relevant to this

secure base⁴⁷³ where a counsellor, who is capable of being responsive and attuned to the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of the client, creates the secure therapeutic space.

It has been indicated earlier in this chapter that such a covenantal relationship incorporates reciprocal aspects of mutual agreement as well as the unilateral dimension, where the counsellor has the added responsibility of the thoughtful management of power and the implicit or explicit expression of expectancy and hope.⁴⁷⁴ However, Paul, writing to the Corinthians, highlights another dimension of this covenantal relationship particularly important to the pastoral counsellor:

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.⁴⁷⁵

The transformative aspect of the new covenant is revealed as Kruse interprets the above Scripture passage:

What is qualitatively better about the new covenant is that it is not a *letter* covenant—that is, an external code—but a *Spirit* covenant—that is, an internal power. A covenant that is *letter* in nature *kills* because it makes external demands without giving the inward power for obedience, while a covenant that is *Spirit* in character *gives life* because it works internally to produce a change of nature. Paul

discussion of the working alliance to be goals, bonds and tasks. This model has been seen as “incorporating both client and therapist as active collaborators and emphasizing the importance of the fit between participants”.

⁴⁷³ Bowlby, *A Secure*, 71.

⁴⁷⁴ This unilateral dimension of the covenantal relationship being discussed here is explained by Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 139: “The one who ‘serves Christ’ participates in the kingdom of God (the Father), which is ‘righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit’ (Romans 14:17, 18). Being present ‘in’ the Spirit of the Trinitarian God opens us up in hope as we are drawn into the eternal intimacy of divine life”.

⁴⁷⁵ 2 Corinthians 3:5, 6.

describes this change of nature elsewhere as a "new self" created "to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:24).⁴⁷⁶

The pastoral counsellor, therefore, by faith,⁴⁷⁷ is able to offer the transformational power of the Holy Spirit to the people. "Christ's new covenant sacrifice brings the blessings of the kingdom (which include the gift of the Spirit) to the church . . . the new covenant in the blood of Jesus is God's greatest gift to humankind."⁴⁷⁸ Hence the working alliance practiced by the Christian pastoral counsellor not only has the covenantal capacity to provide a secure base for the client but also reflects the added depth of the grace and power of the new covenant that works internally to produce a change of nature, a "new self".

The Transferential/Countertransferential Relationship

Clarkson defines transferential/countertransferential relationship of psychoanalytic psychotherapy as "the experience of unconscious wishes and fears transferred onto or into the therapeutic partnership".⁴⁷⁹ Lapworth and Sills provide a more generic definition:

The transference relationship refers to that aspect of the counselling or psychotherapeutic relationship in which the client brings to the therapeutic space his experiences of important past relationships and acts and feels these as if they were happening in the present. In other words, in subtle ways he replays his own history (either the one that really happened or the one hoped for) and transfers past patterns on to the present. The therapist response can be said to be

⁴⁷⁶ Colin Kruse, ed. *IVP New Testament Commentary: 2 Corinthians* (Leicester, UK: IVP Academic, 2008).

⁴⁷⁷ As with covenant, for Duffield and Van Cleave, *Foundations of*, 222,223, the faith that is foundational to covenant has an intellectual element (faith is not blind, we need to know the gospel in order to believe in Christ as our Saviour); an emotional element (we may define the emotional element of faith as the awakening of the soul to its personal needs and to the personal applicability of the redemption provided in Christ – together with an immediate assent to these truths) and a voluntary element (real faith is in the realm of the will. It appropriates. It takes. Faith always has the idea of action in it).

⁴⁷⁸ Larry Hart, *Truth Aflame: Theology for the Church in Revival* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).

⁴⁷⁹ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 67.

countertransference. She may find herself feeling and even acting in the way she is being invited to do or, perhaps, from reaction triggered by her own past.⁴⁸⁰

Although not confined to the counselling situation, transference was “one of the ways found useful in the twentieth century to describe one of the many relationships between the doctor and patient”.⁴⁸¹ Nevertheless, although the literature of this therapeutic process encompasses an astonishing variety of contradictions and ambiguities⁴⁸² most would agree that transference and countertransference in relationship can have either constructive or destructive outcomes. As seen by the above definitions, the strong thoughts, feelings and expectations that are projected on to, or triggered in the counsellor, can produce negative reactions and a disruption of the therapeutic relationship unless the concept of transference/countertransference is brought to the counsellor’s understanding through personal reflection or during professional supervision or mentoring. The majority of pastors would be unlikely to be trained to identify the transference/countertransference feelings and reactions, nor do many pastors, including the participants of this study, have regular professional supervision. Hence pastors without such training or accountability have the potential to unwittingly either experience, or inflict harm on, themselves or others.⁴⁸³

In the professional counselling context, although not necessarily so in pastoral counselling, the actuality of transference, its management, advantages and pitfalls has been widely, if not conclusively, explored. However, “what” is being transferred eludes clear definition.

⁴⁸⁰ Phil Lapworth and Charlotte Sills, *Integration in Counselling and Psychotherapy* (London, UK: Sage, 2010), 115-116.

⁴⁸¹ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 69.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁸³ Hans Dober, “What Can”, summarises this point: “It is quite normal that feelings accompany and influence human encounters. But since transference impedes a person’s ability to adequately take in the reality at hand, such impediments must be controlled. This demand holds especially true for those who bear a professional responsibility for the course of the conversation and thus for pastoral care. The pastor must not only control his own transference but he must also sense the one coming from his partner (client) and must critically respond to both”.

Clarkson offers some explanation by likening this to the kinship relationship between a child and a stepparent or godparent.⁴⁸⁴ This example is justified by the negative transference that is connected with the stepparent image and the positive transference related to the godparent.⁴⁸⁵ In keeping with the strong affect of this metaphor, Sperry and Miller suggest that “in addition to transferring feelings and thoughts, expectations to act in certain ways are also transferred”.⁴⁸⁶ From the theological perspective, the examination of spirituality in Chapter 3 suggests that the concept of spirituality, described by Warrington as “encounter”,⁴⁸⁷ by So as an integration between divinity and humanity;⁴⁸⁸ and by Rohr as “presence”⁴⁸⁹ may also be another dimension of the “what” of the transference/countertransference therapeutic relationship. In the encounter between two human persons, specifically here a pastor and a client, the spiritual dimension of transference has the capacity to facilitate the transformation of consciousness, and of lives, as an outcome of the experience. Rohr, writes of this innate power of the spirituality of presence:

The mystery of presence is *that encounter wherein the self-disclosure of one evokes a deeper life in the other*. There is nothing you need to “think” or understand to be present; it is all about giving and receiving right now, and it is not being done in the mind. It is actually a *transference and sharing of Being*, and will be experienced as grace, gratuity and inner-groundedness (Author’s italics).⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁴ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 12.

⁴⁸⁵ Len Sperry and Lisa Miller, *Spirituality in Clinical Practice: Theory and Practice of Spiritually Oriented Psychotherapy* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 147, acknowledge that “transference can be either positive or negative”. Being a form of the clients old familiar patterns of relating, the possibility for there being both positive and negative aspects of the client’s past relationships is reasonable.

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁴⁸⁷ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 20.

⁴⁸⁸ So, “Pentecostal Spirituality”, 246.

⁴⁸⁹ Rohr, *Things Hidden*, 64.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 64.

This discussion of transference/countertransference relationality therefore acknowledges that the actual dynamics of the transference/countertransference relationship suggest a powerful “presence” of spiritual relationality that can be seen as either positive or negative. However, such an acknowledgement of spirituality as an active element of the counsellor/client relationship, from a psychological perspective,⁴⁹¹ introduces an unquantifiable dynamic that, to date, has been little understood and therefore not generally considered as a valid explanation of this powerful component of the therapeutic relationship. Nevertheless, such a notion is especially significant for this study where the role of the pastor carries expectations that a spiritual relationship with God is also an implicit factor of the counselling relationship.⁴⁹² This phenomenon will be carefully examined in subsequent chapters but here it is sufficient to summarise that, from a purely psychological perspective, the feelings, thoughts and actions associated with transference and countertransference relationships, when identified and managed, may be used as an integral part of the therapeutic process. However, the “mystery” of transference is a facet of the greater mystery of relational spirituality, one of the theological motifs discussed in Chapter 3, and regarded as being vital to the understanding of the therapeutic relationship.

⁴⁹¹ Sperry and Miller, *Spirituality in*, 232-235, explain: “In the past, therapists were trained and were expected to focus principally on the psychological dimension, while leaving the spiritual dimension to clergy, chaplains, and other ministers. The reality is, however, that the psychological and spiritual dimensions overlap considerably. Today, many clients are insisting that therapists deal with both the spiritual and the psychological dimensions. Accordingly, the challenge for therapists today is to become sufficiently conversant with spiritual and religious dynamics to meet client needs and expectations”.

⁴⁹² The fact that these expectations can introduce both positive and negative transferences into the pastor/client relationship depending on the client’s past patterns of relationship with God is here acknowledged and will be discussed more fully in subsequent chapters.

The Developmentally Needed or Reparative⁴⁹³ Relationship

On a more cognitive level, the developmentally-needed, or reparative relationship is defined as being “an intentional provision by the psychotherapist of a corrective, reparative or replenishing relationship or action where the original parenting was deficient, abusive or overprotective”.⁴⁹⁴ However, Clarkson also points out that the difference between counsellors who claim to establish this model of relationship with their clients and those who do not, is the individual counsellor’s philosophy of what constitutes the human person and how they develop. For those who understand human development as being a progression through various stages, this model of therapeutic relationship is important as they work with clients to identify developmental deficits and “stuckness” and employ interventions that seek to “reparent” these clients.

Developmental psychology encompasses a very large field of scholarship, much of which is beyond the scope of this thesis, so it is sufficient here to mention some of the models relative to this particular aspect of the therapeutic relationship. Chief of these would be the psychosocial developmental stages of Erik Erikson.⁴⁹⁵ Erikson, a student of Freud, expanded Freud’s psychosexual stages⁴⁹⁶ of childhood and adolescent development. His eight stage model⁴⁹⁷ begins at birth and identifies the tasks to be resolved as identity is formed. However,

⁴⁹³ It is warranted here to clarify that this aspect of the therapeutic relationship is not associated with “Reparative Therapy”. This somewhat controversial therapy, labelled “pseudoscience” [Andre Grace, “The Charisma and Deception of Reparative Therapies: When Medical Science Beds Religion”. *Journal of Homosexuality* 55, no.4 (2008):545] by the GLBT Movement, seeks the sexual reorientation of those struggling with same-sex attraction. Largely practiced by Christians, this therapy seeks to “refigure sexual identity and forge new positions of performativity”. Jeffery Bennett, “Love Me Gender: Normative Homosexuality and ‘Ex-Gay’ Performativity in Reparative Therapy Narratives”. *Text and Performance Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2003): 331.

⁴⁹⁴ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 113.

⁴⁹⁵ Erik Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle* (New York, NY: Norton, 1980).

⁴⁹⁶ Corey, *Theory and*, 98-106, describes Freud’s stages of psychosexual development as: first year of life – oral stage; ages 1-3 - anal stage; ages 3-6 – phallic stage; ages 6-12 – latency stage; ages 12-18 – genital stage.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 100-101, describes Erikson’s tasks of psychosocial developments as: first year of life – trust v mistrust; ages 1-3 – autonomy v shame and doubt; ages 3-6 – initiative v guilt; ages 6-12 – industry v inferiority; ages 12-

unlike Freud's model, Erikson's model then continues to map adult lifespan tasks. Erikson's work provides us with a comprehensive and useful model as it identifies for the client where developmental stages may have been missed or distorted and opens the way for interventions that can resolve these issues.

Other developmental stage theorists whose work impacts this study are Kohlberg⁴⁹⁸ whose research into the moral development of the human person was expanded to include a more feminist and relational/personalist approach by Gilligan;⁴⁹⁹ Perry, who developed stages of epistemological development,⁵⁰⁰ later adapted by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule,⁵⁰¹ and Fowler's⁵⁰² work in the area of faith development. All these theories are relevant to the concept of attending to the developmental "stuckness" of clients and can also be useful for the counsellor in reflecting upon her own developmental journey and how this journey is impacting the here and now relationships with clients. However, Bingaman suggests that, "as pastoral caregivers, we rely upon, not only psychological and developmental frameworks but also upon theological and biblical frames of reference as we assess a person's situation and make appropriate pastoral care interventions".⁵⁰³

18 – identity v role confusion; ages 18-35 – intimacy v isolation; ages 35-60 – generativity v stagnation; Ages 60+ - integrity v despair.

⁴⁹⁸ Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development*. vol. 1 (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1981).

⁴⁹⁹ Gilligan, *In a*.

⁵⁰⁰ William Perry, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970).

⁵⁰¹ Mary Belenky et al., *Women's Ways*.

⁵⁰² Fowler, *Stages of*.

⁵⁰³ Kirk Bingaman, "The Postmodern Life Cycle and Pastoral Care and Counseling". *Journal of Spirituality and Mental Health* 9, no.1 (2006):92.

The theological framework of this reparative, developmentally-needed relationship, in agreement with Clarkson's metaphor of the "real parent",⁵⁰⁴ directs us to the Biblical concept of the Fatherhood of God.⁵⁰⁵ As a perfect Father, the relationship that he offers his children is multifaceted. The aspect of God seen in this relationship is that of *Yahwah Shalom* who, through the finished work of the cross, invites us into a covenant of peace gained through the healing that touches every aspect of our humanity. It is within the safety of this covenantal space that the reparative, developmentally needed process can be accomplished with the *shalomatic* understanding of discovering completeness and experiencing reconciliation that brings harmony with God, self and others.

The Person-to-Person or Dialogic Relationship

The person-to-person relationship is most often associated with the humanistic/existential school of counselling and is defined as:

...the dialogic relationship or core relationship. It concerns the authentic humanness shared by client and therapist. It has also been referred to as the real dimension of the therapeutic relationship.⁵⁰⁶

For the purposes of this brief overview, we will turn to the work of Rogers⁵⁰⁷ as being representative of the "core relationship", designated here as "person-to-person". Just as recent research has identified the therapeutic relationship as being a significant common factor⁵⁰⁸ across all schools of therapy, so too are Rogers' therapy skills used commonly by most counsellors:

⁵⁰⁴ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 15.

⁵⁰⁵ cf. Matthew 6:8, 9.

⁵⁰⁶ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 15.

⁵⁰⁷ Rogers, *On Becoming*.

⁵⁰⁸ cf. Mark Hubble, Barry Duncan, and Scott Miller, *The Heart and Soul of Change* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2004).

From his (Rogers') subsequent research and evolving thought, he went on to formulate a number of conditions which, he hypothesized, were both necessary and sufficient to effect therapeutic change. Many therapists have taken these as describing necessary (if not sufficient)⁵⁰⁹ qualities of the therapeutic relationship.⁵¹⁰

These necessary (and, according to Rogers, sufficient) conditions of the person-to-person relationship⁵¹¹ are:

- congruence, genuineness and non-possessive warmth;
- unconditional positive regard or acceptance;
- accurate empathetic understanding.⁵¹²

However, what is specific to the person-to-person relationship is that “emotional involvement in the relationship between psychotherapist and patient is that between *person and person* in the existential dilemma where both stand in mutuality to each other”.⁵¹³

It is this “human to human” interaction that makes this a “real” relationship where two people can connect as human beings. Cox’s understanding of the client/counsellor relationship as “relational depth” also highlights this “real” relationship. More than just psychological contact, he defines the relational depth that makes the person-to-person relationship

⁵⁰⁹ Keith Tudor’s article, “Rogers’ Therapeutic Conditions: A Relational Conceptualization”. *Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies* 10, no. 3 (2011):165–180, is representative of those who have questioned that Roger’s core conditions are “sufficient”.

⁵¹⁰ Tudor, “Person-Centered”, 54.

⁵¹¹ Rogers describes this relationship as being “where two persons are in psychological contact, the first, whom we shall term the client, in a state of incongruence, being vulnerable or anxious”. However, Keith Tudor (“Rogers’ Therapeutic”, 175), defines Rogers’ psychological contact as being “a binary phenomenon” which, given the discussions earlier in this chapter regarding the Holy Spirit as the third person in the pastor/client relationship, may or may not hold true for the way pastors conceptualise their relationships with their clients.

⁵¹² Carl Rogers, “The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change”. *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 21, no. 2 (1957):96.

⁵¹³ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 154.

therapeutic as being “a state of profound contact and engagement between two people, in which each person is fully real to the Other and able to understand and value the Other’s experiences at a high level”.⁵¹⁴

The kinship analogy here is that of siblings sharing empathetic understanding from a similar frame of reference. “Although they are different, they are of more or less equal standing and share the ambiguous and ambivalent legacy of existence”.⁵¹⁵ The theological motif for this relationship is also seen to be family related. In Chapter 3 we explored the concept of *agape* as being empathetic, spontaneous and accepting, all of which are certainly characteristics of a healthy sibling relationship as well as a good person-to-person connection. However, in addition to these qualities, *Agape*, who is God, does not rely on the value of the object to freely bestow his love upon it. “*Agape* is creative, it does not recognise value but creates it. *Agape* loves and imparts value by loving”.⁵¹⁶ Hence, the therapeutic potential of the person-to-person relationship resides in the power to create value, particularly in the one who has lost sight of their own value, and to bring healing through love.

The Transpersonal Relationship

“The transpersonal relationship is the timeless facet of the therapeutic relationship which is impossible to describe but refers to the spiritual, mysterious or currently inexplicable dimension of the healing relationship”.⁵¹⁷ From the psychological perspective, before the

⁵¹⁴ Steve Cox, “Relational Depth: Its Relevance to a Contemporary Understanding of Person-Centered Therapy”. *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies* 8, no.3 (2009):210.

⁵¹⁵ Clarkson, *The Therapeuti* , 19.

⁵¹⁶ Nygren, “Agape and”.

⁵¹⁷ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 20.

nineteen nineties, there was little written⁵¹⁸ about this aspect of the therapeutic relationship although some therapists⁵¹⁹ have maintained that it is the transpersonal dynamics of a relationship that is the ultimate factor that makes the difference as to whether the client gets better or not. One of the issues with the transpersonal relationship has been that it is inaccessible to the normal scientific methods of evaluation or experimentation used in psychology although the more recent acceptance of qualitative research methodologies has opened the way for a better understanding of this relational phenomena. The postmodern, more amiable relationship between spirituality and psychology, even more apparent since the time of Clarkson's writings,⁵²⁰ has also been significant. Such works as those of Rowan,⁵²¹ Wilber⁵²² who has written extensively in the area of transpersonal psychology, Cortright⁵²³ and Scotten⁵²⁴ are among those that have raised psychology's awareness of the spiritual, although not specifically the Christian Spiritual, aspects of personhood, and therefore relationship.

Also relevant to this topic of the transpersonal are the works of both theologians and psychology theorists who have sought to understand the capacity of the human person to

⁵¹⁸ J. Rowan, *Breakthroughs and Integration in Psychotherapy* (London, UK: Whurr, 1992); and M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Travelled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1978) are among those who have attempted to address this concept of the transpersonal relationship.

⁵¹⁹ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 21.

⁵²⁰ Clarkson's book, *The Therapeutic Relationship* was first published in 1995.

⁵²¹ John Rowan, "Existentialism and the Transpersonal". *Existential Analysis* 23, no.1 (2012):113, writes: "Transpersonal psychology has been developing since the 1960s, and is now well established, through learned journals like the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* and the *BPS Transpersonal Psychology Review*. It was named by Maslow and Sutich as an alternative to the word 'spirituality', which had become too wide and general and used in a variety of ways, some respectable, some less so".

⁵²² Ken Wilber, *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy* (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2000).

⁵²³ Brant Cortright, *Psychotherapy and Spirit: Theory and Practice in Transpersonal Psychotherapy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).

⁵²⁴ Bruce Scotten, Allen Chinen, and John Battista, eds., *Textbook of Transpersonal Psychiatry and Psychology* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1996).

transcend the “natural” to find a “spiritual” realm. The recent upsurge of interest in the teachings of the mystics⁵²⁵ who chart the human journey of joy and sorrow, comfort and suffering and of letting go of self to find self in God has influenced many who are seeking truth and meaning. Likewise, scholars of psychology⁵²⁶ have recognised that human development encompasses transcendent levels that are beyond measurement. Although this introduces concepts that warrant further research, it is beyond the limits of this study to address this aspect of personhood and relationship apart from this brief mention.

Clarkson’s efforts to explain the unexplainable by comparison with a kinship relationship will, however, be examined here. Her kinship analogy for the transpersonal relationship is the marital couple, characterised by the making of space and fruitfulness.⁵²⁷ These concepts of making space for the other and fruitfulness through relationship union bring us back to the earlier theological explorations of the Trinity, especially the metaphor of the Trinity as *perichoresis*. In this divine dance, the dynamic interaction of the Father, the Word and the Spirit is both spacious and fruitful and desires, as Jesus’ prayer expresses, “that they (believers) may be one just as We are one”.⁵²⁸ The dynamics of the transpersonal relationship represented by the Trinity and revealed in the Gospel of John, Chapters 16 and 17 are explained by Anthony Kelly:

⁵²⁵The writings of such ancient mystics as St John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila have captured the imaginations of many post-Christian spiritual seekers.

⁵²⁶ Such developmental stage theorists as Erik Erikson (psychosocial development), Lawrence Kohlberg (moral development) and James Fowler (spiritual development) all acknowledge an ultimate level of human development that represents a transformation from the natural to a spiritual dimension. More recently, Brant Cortright, “An Integral”, 17, also writes: “With any inner experience, it is difficult to ascertain what is truly going on. When psychology was simply pure psychology, devoid of any spiritual content, the problem was much easier, since everything was seen as a product of the person's own mind. However, when transpersonal psychology opens the Pandora's box of spiritual experience, although it immeasurably enriches our view of the psyche, it also lets in some complex and perplexing epistemological questions”.

⁵²⁷ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 21.

⁵²⁸ John 17:22.

Evidently, the Spirit of Truth is the one who hears and receives what is going on between the Father and the Son in the wholeness of their communication. The Spirit is “of truth” in that he makes this communication open to all believers, and draws them into it.⁵²⁹

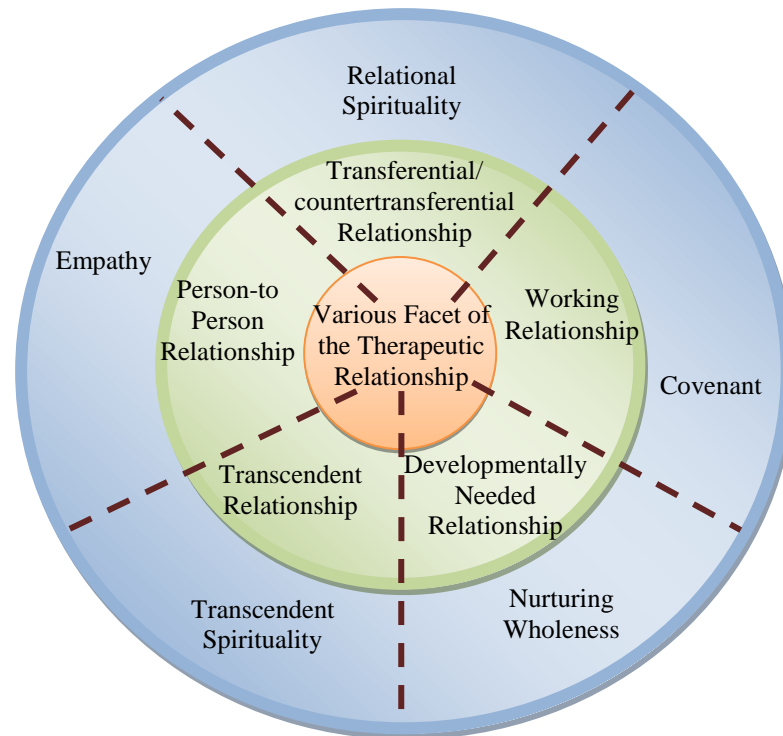
These passages convey the concept of “union”, the notion of which takes the psychological goal of interpersonal “connection” to a transpersonal level. Such is the transpersonal relationship that engenders transformational healing.

Summary

As can be seen in Figure 7, the five interactive relationships that make up the therapeutic encounter each attend to a specific aspect of counselling process that fosters “becoming” and wholeness. This diagram also indicates that there is a transcendent level to each of these relationships that creates space for the relationship participants, both counsellor and client, to experience transformational change. The concepts represented in this diagram will be further explored in subsequent chapters.

⁵²⁹ Anthony Kelly, *The Resurrection Effect: Transforming Christian Life and Thought* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008), 159.

Figure 7 - Various Facets of the Therapeutic Relationship



Personhood

Having considered the relationality of the human person, we now direct attention to the characteristics of personhood, and in particular, what constitutes wholeness for the person. Personhood is dynamic in that the human person progresses through stages of life and is always “becoming”. Counsellors would desire to see this “becoming” as a movement towards wholeness that strengthens identity, brings dignity and enhances personal power. This section will address the thesis sub-question:

“What is the pastor’s understanding of psychological human wholeness?”

In order to understand this question, psychological explanations of wholeness will be explored. All psychological theories have at their core, specific presuppositions that are informed by the prevailing culture and philosophy. These presuppositions can vary quite

radically from theory to theory, depending on a variety of worldview conditions. The type of goals and the style of the interventions employed by the counsellor depend on the presuppositions that are inherent in the theorists and those who practice the theory. Obviously, presuppositions that are strongly informed by a Christian Theist worldview will underpin the view of personhood held by the pastors of this study whereas the theory of some of the schools of counselling are more likely to be grounded in naturalism or humanism and inclined to understand the human person as evolving rather than being created in the image of God.

Entwistle provides a working definition by suggesting that personhood can be understood as a wholistic unity of biological, psychological, and social influences or, to use the term now common in psychology, a “biopsychosocial” being. Contemporary psychology is also acknowledging “an expression of spiritual realities that, while often expressed through biopsychosocial media, are not simply ‘explained away’ by them”.⁵³⁰ However, Western scholarship, grounded on the presuppositions informed by a dualist approach to humanity, is only now coming to reclaim the interconnectedness of the human person, as found in the Hebrew tradition: “Hebrew thought seldom separated the physical and the spiritual but usually considered the human being in entirety. It was the whole human being that was created in the image and according to the likeness of God”.⁵³¹ Although it would be expected that this Hebrew conceptualisation of personhood would also be the Christian theological position, in a theology that has been dominated by Western dualistic thought since the time of the Enlightenment, most Western Christians would still find traces of this dualistic thinking in the presuppositions they hold regarding the nature of the human person.

⁵³⁰ David Entwistle, “A Holistic Psychology of Persons: Implications for Theory and Practice”. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 28, no. 2 (2009): 141.

⁵³¹ Carol Stuhlmueller, ed., *The Collegeville Pastoral Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Collegeville, MA: Liturgical Press, 1996), 459.

Theories of Personality

To clarify the presuppositions about the human person that influence the understanding of twenty-first century society, a brief examination of the most influential psychological schools will seek to reveal the origins of these presuppositions. It is generally accepted that psychological theory can be categorised into four schools:

- The Psychodynamic School – instigated by Sigmund Freud with his Psychoanalysis and subsequently developed by those who adhered to the basic philosophy with which Freud began;
- The Behavioural/Cognitive Behavioural School – originally devised by those who adapted the work of Ivan Pavlov for psychological purposes and then developed it further by integrating the rational capacities of the human person into the therapy process;
- The Humanistic/Existential School – developed out of the work of Abraham Maslow and influenced by the humanistic and existential philosophies that were inspiring the academy of the time;
- The Constructivist School – the most recent of the schools of psychology and sometimes called “The Fourth Wave”. This school has also been inspired by the prevailing philosophy we now generally call Postmodernism and was initially developed by educational psychologists. This era of psychology has seen a radical change in many aspects of the practice of psychology, including what constitutes human wholeness and the process of change.

In accordance with the focus of this thesis, these schools of psychology will be examined, not in the entirety of their history, philosophy and therapeutic techniques but rather in the aspects of each school as relevant to relationality, personhood and therapeutic change.

The Psychodynamic School of Counselling

The philosophy of personhood of psychodynamic counselling is grounded in the academic worldview of the time and the work of Freud, resulting in a view of human nature that:

assumed a mind/body dualism which originated in Platonic thought and which was enshrined in Western thought by Christianity. In this view human forces are in unending process of conflict between mind and body, sex and aggression, id and ego, individual and society.⁵³²

This philosophy also incorporates the understanding that personhood is determined by these human forces and by childhood experiences. It is these unconscious motives and unresolved childhood conflicts that direct present behaviour.

Jung, as a student of Freud, also recognised the Self as encompassing both the conscious and the unconscious. Like Freud, he was intrigued by the drives that create tension in the human psyche and the conflicts that inhibit the quest for wholeness. However, Jung chose a more “spiritual” perspective, coining the terms “persona” and “shadow”.⁵³³ His therapy focussed on the reconciling of the opposing elements of the Self explaining that, “just as the typical neurotic is unconscious of his shadow side, so the normal individual, like the neurotic, sees his shadow in his neighbour or in the man beyond the great divide”. The illustration of the mythical “Hero’s Journey”⁵³⁴ highlights Jung’s premise that the human person is blind to, or at least, reluctant to recognise, the darkness of the shadow side of the personality. To

⁵³² W. Ronald Fairbairn, *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1952), ix.

⁵³³ Jung, *The Undiscovered*, 64.

⁵³⁴ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York, NY: Bollingen Series, Pantheon Books, 1949).

continue the metaphor of the “hero”, when life’s circumstances reveal the shadow; when the choice is made to struggle with and then embrace the shadow, the rewards are great.⁵³⁵

Further development of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory led to the formulation of the psychodynamic theories that represented a move away from personhood as determined by physiological and psychological drives and moved to the consideration of the human person as also relationship seeking. Two aspects of this development are especially interesting to this study. The first was the work done by the Object Relations theorists. Klein,⁵³⁶ Winnicott⁵³⁷ and others, who, in rejection to rigidity of Freud’s psychosexual focus, developed object relations, a therapy that embraced a more maternal perspective. Object relations is an approach to therapy that concentrates on the way a person’s personality is formed in the first few years of life through their interactions with significant others. Specifically, this approach assumes that people internalise and continue to carry with them, images of their earliest relationships. “Objects” such as mother, father, and siblings, are ‘introjected’ within the developing psyche of the young child where they continue to reside as powerful emotions, perceptions, and bodily sensations. Personality is then understood in terms of the relationships between and characteristics of the internalised object representations. Further to this study, Bowlby⁵³⁸, Ainsworth⁵³⁹ and others began to explore the nature of the attachment between an infant and its mother. Attachment theory and the subsequent therapy that arose from this have been significant in the understanding of personhood.

⁵³⁵ David Hartman and Diane Zimberoff, “The Hero’s Journey of Self-Transformation: Models of Higher Development from Mythology”. *Journal of Heart-Centered Therapies* 12, no. 2 (2009):12, 13, write: “We each have another part, however, that holds the hero back, that creates the very hell which must be navigated. The power that part has over us begins in relationship to the environment, our friends and family, our cultural expectations, our life circumstances. At a deeper level, its powers derive from our own inner struggles. . . These are the terrible dragons at the threshold of transformation that stand in our way, our self sabotaging patterns”.

⁵³⁶ Klein, *Envy and*.

⁵³⁷ Winnicott, *Playing and*.

⁵³⁸ Bowlby, *A Secure*.

⁵³⁹ Ainsworth, “Attachments beyond”, 709-716.

The second significant development to emerge from the psychodynamic school of counselling is the work done firstly by Freud and further developed by Erikson and others into the stages of human development. This aspect of the psychological understanding of personhood has also contributed greatly to the theoretical foundations of counselling and is frequently integrated into counselling practice.

Although there are many other aspects of the psychodynamic school of counselling that have enlightened our understanding of personality, the theorists mentioned here are the ones whose work is likely to have influenced the development of the presuppositions of personhood and the human person in relationship held by the participants in this study.

The Behavioural/Cognitive Behavioural School of Counselling

The behavioural school of counselling, like the psychodynamic school, has been instrumental in influencing Western society's understanding of personhood. Although the behavioural school was a reaction to the inner tensions purported by Freudian psychoanalysis, behavioural philosophy still saw human personality as being determined, not by the unconscious drives, but by the environment. The behaviourists were interested in how that environment conditions the behaviour of the human person. Cognitive behaviour therapists, and the social learning theorists, however, further developed the behaviourist way of understanding the human person by agreeing that while people are determined/conditioned by their environment they are also self-determining, having the capacity to change their thinking, make decisions and ask questions, thereby determining their own "here and now" behaviour.

Cognitive behaviour therapy is firmly grounded in a scientific view of human behaviour and therefore adopts a structured and systematic approach to counselling. Hence, the therapeutic relationship between the client and counsellor implements structured and systematic strategies putting the counsellor in the position of teacher or coach, or, in the context of this present study of pastors' relationships, of preacher. It is therefore not illogical to see a similarity of this approach to Biblical teachings such as those in the Epistles.⁵⁴⁰ Passages that exhort the believer to reprogram dysfunctional thinking⁵⁴¹ and adapt behavioural patterns⁵⁴² mirror the directive techniques of cognitive behaviour therapy. However, unlike the Biblical teachings, the goals set by the client and the counsellor in this style of counselling, while still moving the client towards positive behavioural change, neglect other aspects of the human personality, particularly that of spirituality.

The Humanistic/Existential School of Counselling

The existential therapies gained their basic understanding of human personality from existentialism.⁵⁴³ Hence, existential therapy understands that:

The significance of our existence is never fixed once and for all; rather we continually recreate ourselves through our projects. Humans are in a constant state

⁵⁴⁰cf. James 1:21-27.

⁵⁴¹ cf. “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2).

⁵⁴² cf. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, 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 anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you (Philippians 8, 9).

⁵⁴³ Existentialism is a loose philosophical school within Continental philosophy that developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Because existentialism is more of a mood or trend in philosophy rather than an organised and systematic approach to philosophy, it is better understood through its key topics and themes. It is these key themes and philosophies that underpin existential therapy.

of transition, emerging, evolving, and becoming. Being a person implies that we are discovering and making sense of our existence.⁵⁴⁴

Existentialists see the human person as experiencing anxiety and struggling with an awareness of death and non-being. From these experiences, the person develops a capacity for self-awareness, freedom and responsibility, creating identity, searching for meaning, embracing values and setting goals.

Although these existential philosophical beliefs were also embraced by the humanists, they differed in that, where the existentialists saw anxiety as being a catalyst for transformational change, the humanists held that people are trustworthy, resourceful and capable of moving towards self-actualisation. These concepts originated with the work of Maslow.⁵⁴⁵ Rogers,⁵⁴⁶ using this basic philosophy of personhood, took these principles further by maintaining that, if a therapist provided the right environment through congruence, acceptance and caring as unconditional positive regard, accurate empathy and non-possessive warmth the person who is the client would be empowered to make significant positive changes.

The Old Testament, particularly the Wisdom Books, discusses human personality in terms that are reflected in the work of the existential and humanistic theorists. These Scriptures teach of the establishment of an environment where positive growth and change are the result of an existential search for truth and meaning:

The Hebrew sages agree that “the fear of the Lord” is the beginning of wisdom (Job 28:28; Proverbs 1:7; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Spirituality is, in part, a relational process of arousing and soothing anxiety. The fear of the Lord can be an

⁵⁴⁴ Corey, *Theory and*, 172.

⁵⁴⁵ Maslow, *The Farther*.

⁵⁴⁶ Rogers, *On Becoming*.

arousing intensification of existential anxiety and spiritual awakening that can repeatedly catalyze spiritual transformation and the development of wisdom.⁵⁴⁷

The Biblical accounts⁵⁴⁸ of Jesus' demonstrations of *agape* as accurate empathy and unconditional positive regard also support the claim that transformational change does happen in such an empowering environment.

The Constructivist School of Counselling

Although coming from a different perspective, the most recent group of counselling theories collectively referred to as the post-modern constructivist therapies, also see personhood in a positive light. These therapies⁵⁴⁹ have emerged amidst the world-wide philosophical shift that is often referred to as post-modernism.⁵⁵⁰ While modernist thought emphasised rational, logical and objective ways of knowing and understanding our world, post-modernism emphasises subjectivity, experience, and pluralistic spirituality. Some Christians view post-modernism with great suspicion, arguing that it may lead to a loss of any form of objectivity in terms of beliefs and morality.⁵⁵¹ Others see it as a time of great opportunity, in which Christianity can move away from its 'head' and re-engage more personal and experiential

⁵⁴⁷ F. L. Shults and Steven Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 210.

⁵⁴⁸ cf. John 4:5-42 (The woman at the well).

⁵⁴⁹ Several major forms of counselling have developed in the context of the rise in popularity of post-modernism. These include Narrative Therapy, Feminist Therapy and Solution Focused Therapy.

⁵⁵⁰ Many social commentators believe that post-modern thought represents the greatest change in paradigm or world-view that has occurred in the western world since the reformation and enlightenment of four hundred years ago.

⁵⁵¹ cf. David Couchman, "Facing the Challenge of Our Times: Equipping Christians to respond Biblically and Effectively to Postmodernism". *Evangel* 20, no. 2 (2002): 74-78.

forms of spirituality.⁵⁵² Davies sees the promise of a new era of Christianity and likens the postmodern penchant for “story” to the way Jesus preached.⁵⁵³

At its heart, constructivism believes that human beings are deeply storying, meaning-making creatures.⁵⁵⁴ The overwhelmingly common feature of people from all cultures is that they construct individual and corporate narratives to make meaning of their world, their society and their lives. Constructed discourses may vary hugely from culture to culture and individual to individual but one common feature is found in every person - they are continually constructing and reconstructing narratives to make meaning of their lives. It follows, therefore, that the individual self is always contextual. That is, the human person is multi-layered interacting with the environment and other people in different ways at different times.⁵⁵⁵ Thus, the post-modern “self” is both temporary and a partial expression of an infinity of potential “selves”.⁵⁵⁶ Constructivist therapists see the origin of a person’s identity arising not within an individual, but rather in the interactions that occur between people. “We think of a self not as a thing inside an individual, but as a process that occurs in the space between people. Thus identity is not structural (i.e., inherent within a person), but rather socially constructed”.⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵² cf. Terry Cross, “The Divine-Human Encounter: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Experience”. *Pneuma* 31 (2009): 3-34.

⁵⁵³ Andrew Davies, “A New Teaching without Authority: Preaching the Bible in Postmodernity”. *The Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 27, no.2 (2007): 161-171.

⁵⁵⁴ Dan McAdams, “The Problem of Narrative Coherence”. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* 19 (2006): 110-111.

⁵⁵⁵ Gergen, *An Invitation*, 49.

⁵⁵⁶ E. Spinelli, *The Interpreted World: An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology* (London: Sage, 1989), 82.

⁵⁵⁷ Freedman and Combs, *Narrative Therapy*, 36.

Summary

Hence, personhood, as seen through the eyes of the theorists in the above overview, is multifaceted. Each of these approaches to understanding the characteristics of the human person, and therefore, the path to human wholeness, is deemed by the instigator of the theory to be the “right” one.⁵⁵⁸ However, such a diversity of theories can be confusing, resulting in many Christians being suspicious of psychology in general, or critical of a particular approach that does not agree with their theology. This is thoughtfully summed up in Augustine’s writing over a millennium ago:

If those, however, who are called philosophers happen to have said anything that is true, and agreeable to our faith, the Platonists above all, not only should we not be afraid of them, but we should even claim back for our own use what they have said, as from its unjust possessors.⁵⁵⁹

Augustine, hereby, admonishes: “all good and true Christians should understand that truth, wherever they may find it, belongs to their Lord”.⁵⁶⁰ Faith and knowledge, when taken in Augustine’s context, are one and the same – all truth is God’s truth. It would seem that Augustine foresaw the twenty-first century pastors’ dilemmas of seeking a meaningful and workable integration of an unprecedented volume of psychological knowledge on one hand and various theological beliefs and traditions on the other. Augustine’s wise advice to embrace the truth from both the secular and the sacred sources still rings true today.

The truth of personhood, therefore, may be gleaned from a careful integration of the theological knowledge as discussed in Chapter 4 and the various psychological theories as

⁵⁵⁸ Sigmund Freud in particular was well known for his absolute intolerance of anyone who challenged his theory.

⁵⁵⁹ St. Augustine, *Teaching Christianity: De doctrina Christiana*, trans. E. Hill, O.P. (New York, NY: New City Press, 1996), 159 (Original work written between 396-427 C.E.).

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 144.

described above. This task, as discussed in Chapter 1, involves developing a dialogue that bridges the space between psychology,⁵⁶¹ spirituality and theology⁵⁶² that, rather than focussing on differences in beliefs and doctrines, seeks common factors and transcendent qualities to define human wholeness. This integrated understanding of personhood then becomes not only cognisant of the dynamic, always becoming capacity of the human person but also recognises the fragility and vulnerability of humanity and the brokenness that comes from fractured relationships with God, self and others. In various ways and from a diversity of perspectives, the scholarship of theology, spirituality and psychology recognise this brokenness and, in their own ways, understand the wholeness of reconciliation. Hence, just as “otherness is internal to the life of God . . . the human subject is equally multiple. We are particular because we have allowed ourselves to be shaped by different combinations of the influence of others”.⁵⁶³

What Makes the Therapeutic Relationship Therapeutic? Psychological Insights

The thesis sub-question asks:

“What is the pastor’s understanding of the theory and practice of therapeutic change?”

Here we will seek to evaluate the life-giving, responsive, transformational and healing aspects of relationship in the light of the relevant psychological scholarship.

⁵⁶¹ Examples of those whose first discipline is psychology and who have written in the language of Christian spirituality are Benner, *The Gift*; May, *The Dark*; Pargament, *Spiritually Integrated*; Sperry, “The Psychologization”.

⁵⁶² Examples of those whose first discipline is theology and who have written in the language of spirituality from a protestant perspective are Anderson, *The Shape*; Cartledge, “Practical Theology”; McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*; McGrath, *Christian Spirituality*, while Kelly, *The Trinity*; Sheldrake, *Spirituality and*; Downey, *Understanding Christian*; and McGinn, “The Venture”, write from the Catholic tradition.

⁵⁶³ David Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 223.

In this chapter the various approaches to counselling and the perceptions of the counselling relationships held by these different schools are outlined. Despite the diversity, these relationships are intended to be, and most often are, therapeutic, although “how” and “why” these relationships are therapeutic would be different for different counselling practitioners. An appreciation of what “therapeutic” means in this context of pastoral counselling is seen to be of ontological significance to this exploration of the therapeutic relationship and will, therefore, be explored here within the parameters of the pastoral counselling experience.

Broadly defined, “therapeutic” means “healing” or “pertaining to the treating or curing of disease or disorders; curative; rehabilitative; serving to maintain or restore health; having a beneficial effect on one's mental state, especially in serving to relax or calm”.⁵⁶⁴ The concept of a relationship being therapeutic, how it is healing, and how the healing is achieved, necessarily has different connotations for different pastors, counsellors, and indeed clients depending (although not exclusively) on:

- the contextual understanding of the goal of the therapy;
- the beliefs and values that inform both the therapist’s and the client’s understanding of human wholeness.

Tengland comments that “there appear to be as many goals for psychotherapy, and methods to reach them, as there are schools of psychotherapy”.⁵⁶⁵ This being the case, to enable more meaningful comparison, several categories of counselling goals can be identified:

- The ultimate goal of all counselling – this could simply be described as “desired change” and is the common denominator of all counselling approaches.

⁵⁶⁴ Definitions, “Definitions for Therapeutic”, <http://www.definitions.net/definition/therapeutic>

⁵⁶⁵ Per-Anders Tengland, “The Goals of Psychotherapy”. *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies* 8, no. 2 (2009): 127-142.

- The explicit, operative goals⁵⁶⁶ – these are the theoretical goals that reflect the philosophy of the particular counselling approach being employed. Of particular significance here are the tenets relating to human personality, human wholeness, morality and suffering. These goals can differ considerably from one counselling approach to another.⁵⁶⁷
- The counsellor’s goals⁵⁶⁸ – these goals can be explicit but are often implicit or, perhaps more accurately, beyond the counsellor’s present awareness. A vital aspect of counsellors’ training is the awareness of the on-going task of regularly reflecting on their inner selves to “know” the expectations being held for each client. This is one of the tasks of counsellor supervision. However, reflection on their practice is not common in pastors’ training and there are still pastors who do not have professional supervision. Hence for many counselling pastors, their goals for counselling, and therefore their expectations for therapeutic outcomes would not be clearly defined. Another facet of the concept of “therapeutic” for pastors lies in their commitment to an evangelical worldview that requires them to “go and make disciples”.⁵⁶⁹ Such a

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., 127, states that: “There are a variety of operative, often theoretical, goals suggested in the literature. Here are some suggestions: symptom reduction (O’Sullivan, 1996); cognitive change (Beck, 1976); profound philosophical changes (Dryden, 1996); self-actualization (Maslow, 1987; Patterson & Hidore, 1997); personality change (Ellis, 1997); self-knowledge (Freud, 1976); a more authentic or congruent self (Rogers, 1959; Bugental, 1981); acceptance of “the limitations of the human condition” (Van Deurzen-Smith, 1996, p. 179); and flexibility (Dryden, 1996)”.

⁵⁶⁷ It is worth mentioning here that, in a society where health insurers and governments are funding research into effective and efficient evidence-based practice for economic reasons, treatment plans towards specific goals are becoming the norm in many sectors of the industry. This movement towards prescribed goals is gaining momentum, particular in the medical people-helping sectors, and is ushering in a cultural shift that understands the client/counsellor relationship as being more clinical than therapeutic. Catty, “The Vehicle”, discusses this, and makes a distinction between the therapeutic relationship and the therapeutic alliance which she sees as being more clinical.

⁵⁶⁸ TEngland, *The Goals*, 127.

⁵⁶⁹ Rodney Vanderploeg, “*Imago Dei* as Foundational to Psychotherapy: Integration vs Segregation”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 9, no.4 (1981): 300, speaking of those who hold Christian commitment and also counsel, puts the “great commission” dilemma thus: “They may question the value of psychotherapy, since psychotherapy is seen as incapable of bringing someone to Christ. And, they seem to feel that if the Word is not preached or at least mentioned, there can be no conversion – and that, after all, is and should be, the main concern of Christians”.

conviction will influence the pastor to focus on the goal of leading the client into a relationship with God, introducing another dimension of what “therapeutic” means.⁵⁷⁰

This will be discussed more fully in subsequent chapters.

- The client’s goals⁵⁷¹ – clients may come to counselling with an agenda. Often this agenda includes the goal for the counsellor to “fix” their problem. However, once engaged in the therapy, the presenting issue may fade somewhat enabling the goals that will achieve the desired change to emerge.

At each of these levels, there is a specific understanding of what is “normal” and “abnormal” for the client, and therefore what changes need to occur for the client to achieve the “normal” status. At the ultimate and explicit levels this is a philosophical and theoretical understanding of the human person; their physiology; their psychology; and their personality. The goals set at this level could be understood as ontological as they are based on the a priori assumptions dictated by the psychological approaches. At the counsellor and client level, goal setting becomes more contextual. The counsellor’s goals are influenced not only by the ontology of the specific counselling modality being employed, but also by the worldview of her community. Similarly, the client is influenced by the societal norms of his community. At this level, the goals set by the client and counsellor are phenomenological, reflecting the lived experiences of both client and counsellor. It is worth noting here that how a pastor sets these various levels of goals to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the people will depend on:

- an epistemology, what is taken to be true;
- an ontology, what is taken to be real;

⁵⁷⁰ Frick, “Pastoral and”, 31, writes: “Pastoral care defines itself in terms of its goal, for example, to lead a person to God or to the salvation of his soul. Ignatius of Loyola uses the term ‘helping the soul’ (ayudar las animas). He explicitly grounds the goal of his pastoral care in the global purpose of man’s creation: ‘Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul’”.

⁵⁷¹ TEngland, *The Goals*, 127.

- an axiology, what is taken to be of value,

that are strongly influenced by Christian doctrine. Subsequent chapters will discuss the pastor's phenomenological understanding of this aspect of the therapeutic relationship.

As well as considering the various aspects of the goals of counselling, a definition of "therapeutic" will also embody the beliefs and values of those involved in the encounter. The embedded beliefs of what is understood by "wholeness", "health" or "normal" are related to the theoretical approaches described earlier in this chapter, while the client, counsellor and the relative communities individually hold the values. Hence, "therapeutic" cannot be definitively understood, as the perception of healing and wholeness is closely tied to the individuals involved in the therapeutic relationship.

Conclusion

The elusiveness of a clear definition of the therapeutic encounter is not surprising given the complexity of the human person. In fact, it may be more disconcerting, and perhaps somewhat foolish, to attempt to claim that there is such a definition. Because the therapeutic relationship, from the psychological perspective, has been unable to embrace all facets of the multidimensional nature of the relationship, there has necessarily been the development of the various approaches, each of which illuminates a particular perspective. However, that there is an overarching transcendence common to all these approaches to the counselling encounter is being questioned in this thesis. Providing a fitting conclusion and summary to this chapter Tan quips, albeit somewhat playfully:

My own hunch, which I mention with some trepidation, is that the most gifted therapists may have . . . parapsychological abilities . . . They may, in addition

possess something that can only be termed “healing power”. Any researcher who attempts to study such a phenomena risks his reputation as a reliable scientist, so this pursuit can be recommended to only the most intrepid. The rewards, however, may be great.⁵⁷²

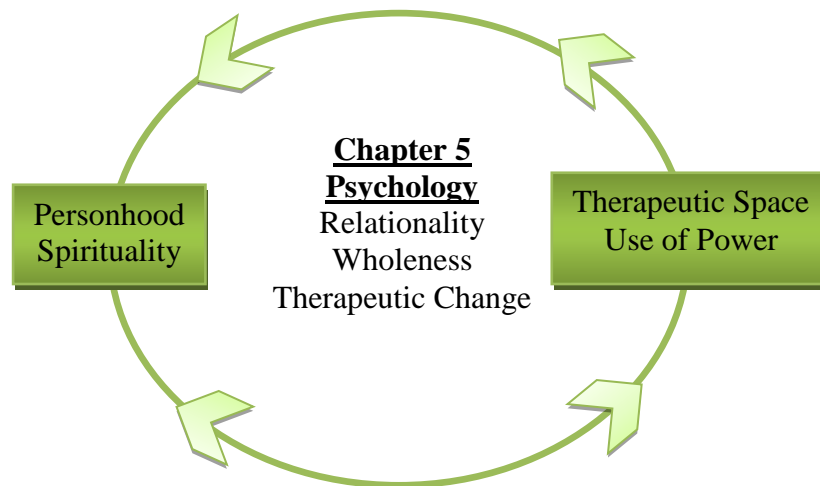
Being an intrepid researcher, I will seek to summarise this chapter, as I did in Chapter 4, with a diagrammatical representation of the psychological perspective discussed (Figure 8). Because of the unique interdisciplinary nature of this study, clear connections between the disciplines being investigated are essential for a coherent thesis. Therefore, as with the previous chapter, the headings of relationality, personhood and the therapeutic relationship, having emerged from the study of the literature and the findings of the data, are here indicated as a flowing interaction of the identified common factors. As well as providing a succinct illustration of the form and purpose of this chapter, this format has been chosen to enable meaningful comparisons and connections as this subject is examined further:

When it works, faith healing has a power far surpassing existing psychotherapy technology. The order of magnitude of this difference is like that between nuclear and more conventional explosives. But we have not yet harnessed nuclear power satisfactorily, and our understanding of faith and religious processes is far more primitive than our knowledge of subatomic particles.⁵⁷³

⁵⁷² Siang Yang Tan, *Lay Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 228.

⁵⁷³ Tan, *Lay Counseling*, 228.

Figure 8 – Psychological Factors of the Therapeutic Relationship



The following chapter will continue this intrepid task as dialogue between the theoretical premises explored in Chapters 4 and 5 is begun.

CHAPTER 6 - THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS –THEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL “INTERDISCIPLINARY DIALOGUE”

Introduction

In Chapter 1 the concept of integration is introduced, and the historical journey of the integration of what began as a religion/psychology debate, later developing into a spirituality/psychology inquiry, has already been outlined. Within this discussion it was established that, although the historical religion/psychology deliberation was foreseeing an “integration”⁵⁷⁴ of the two disciplines as the ultimate outcome, more recently it has been established that a dialogue between these disciplines was more realistic.⁵⁷⁵ It was also noted in this initial discussion that the various dimensions of relationality and spirituality are of particular interest to this study, and Sandra Schneiders’ definitions have served to predict the multilayered nature of this research.⁵⁷⁶ The academic underpinnings of the disciplines of theology and psychology have provided the theoretical and analytical “layer” of relationality and spirituality in the context of the therapeutic relationship, as well as the fundamental dimensions of personhood relevant to this discussion. The lived experiences, as seen in the interviews that make up the data of this study, illuminate the spirituality that actualises these dimensions adding a deeper, transformative layer to the discussion. Hence, this study carefully examines the theoretical foundations from both the theological and psychological

⁵⁷⁴ David Matson and Warren Brown, “Tuning the Faith: The Cornelius Story in Resonance Perspective”. *Perspectives in Religious Studies* (2006):450, describe integration as an “attempt to *integrate* information from sources that seem to disagree”. They continue, “However, the idea of ‘integration’ also has problems. This term seems to connote an attempt to force, through interpretive legerdemain, the discrepant sources to say exactly the same thing so that they can be shown to be compatible. Problems with the “integration” approach is that different sources of relevant information have major differences in presuppositions, epistemologies, and sources of relevant data. Thus, attempts at integration run the risk of doing violence to the epistemological integrity of the various fields of knowledge and inquiry”.

⁵⁷⁵ In the title of this chapter, I have used the term “interdisciplinary dialogue” as this term represents the content of this chapter more accurately than the term “integration”.

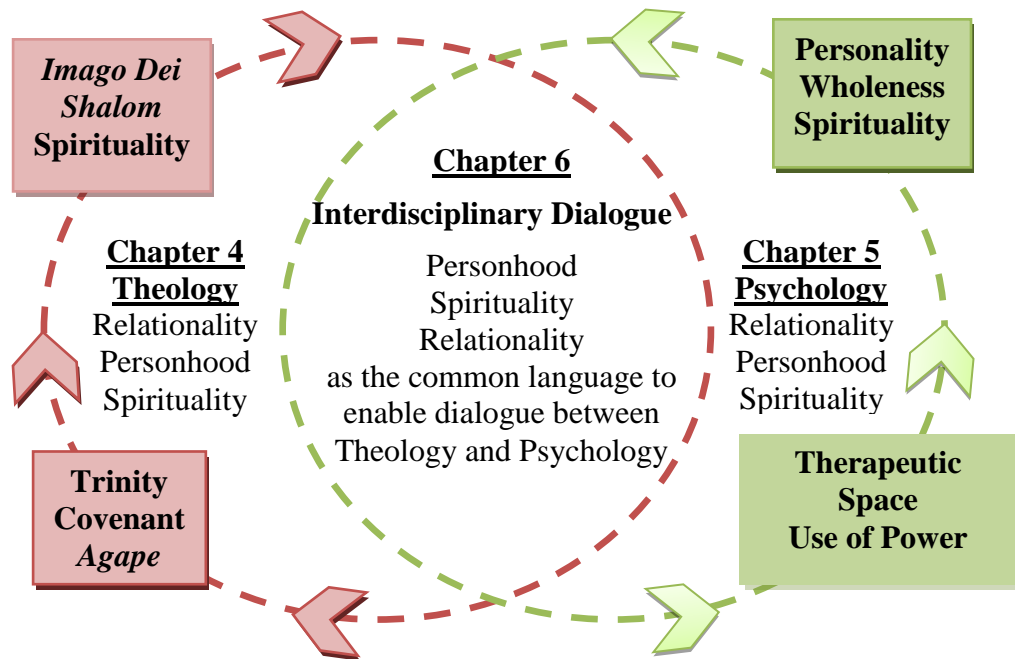
⁵⁷⁶ Schneiders, “Spirituality in”, 678.

perspectives, and then addresses the interplay between these dimensions and the lived experience narrated by the pastors who practice this relationship.

This chapter addresses the academic disciplines explored in Chapters 4 and 5. It seeks to gain insight into the interdisciplinary dialogue between theology and psychology through the examination of the common elements of the therapeutic relationship that have been identified in these previous chapters. However, although it must be acknowledged that these common elements do differ in some of the ontological and epistemological premises on which the various philosophies are constructed, this chapter will argue that there are more similarities than differences and that a more hermeneutical approach⁵⁷⁷ will reveal these. The very concept of interdisciplinary dialogue indicates commonality of language and the common language developed in the previous chapters will be utilised here to support meaningful dialogue. The diagram below (Figure 9) reminds us of the already established theological and psychological commonalities of relationality, personhood and the therapeutic capacity of the relationship and indicates the continuing progression of this interdisciplinary dialogue.

⁵⁷⁷ In Chapter 3, 83, the hermeneutical process is defined as being, “The spiral that takes the reader from the text to the context, from its original meaning to its contextualisation and then to the deeper significance for the present situation”.

Figure 9 - Interdisciplinary Dialogue



Common Factors and Language

In Chapters 4 and 5, the examination of the theology and the psychology associated with the therapeutic relationship revealed factors common to both disciplines. These common factors fall into three categories:

- Relationality
- Personhood
- The therapeutic capacity of the relationship

These factors provide the commonality of language and content to keep this discussion focussed. It is worth noting at the outset that, for “interdisciplinary dialogue” to be meaningful for this research that crosses two academic disciplines and seeks to inform pastors whose first “language” is theological rather than psychological, care must be taken to use terminology that is appropriate to the academic standard of the thesis, the subject matter and

the context. Hence, because of the stated interdisciplinary dialogical format of this chapter, particular attention will be paid to terminology.

Relationality

The relationality component of the therapeutic relationship is, in some areas, comprehensively researched and documented, while other areas are still nebulous and mysterious. From both the psychological and theological perspectives, many different, well-researched and documented therapies, theories⁵⁷⁸ and doctrines⁵⁷⁹ inform the person doing the counselling as to the dynamics of the client/counsellor relationship. However, relationality involves not only the horizontal relationship with the other but also the vertical relationship with God and the interior relationship with self.⁵⁸⁰ Although a cognitive understanding of some relational levels may be possible, it is difficult to accurately measure the subjective or spiritual dimensions that are also an essential component of relationship, hence the inclusion of the “nebulous and mysterious”. However, there is no doubt that, whether counselling happens in a counsellor’s room or a pastor’s office, somehow the empirical and the mysterious come together and transformational change does happen. It is this “coming together” that is being investigated in this chapter.

From the empirical perspective, the material discussed in Chapter 5 provides a theoretical view of counselling relationality. Featuring strongly in this chapter was Clarkson’s five facet model in which she clearly identifies the five relationship aspects that, taken as a whole,

⁵⁷⁸ Corey, *Theory and*, is among the writers who describe and compare theories, including the theories of personality and the nature of the therapeutic relationship, across the breadth of the psychology discipline.

⁵⁷⁹There are many books, both ancient and contemporary that expound doctrine. Just one, Harold Willmington, ed., *Willmington’s Guide to the Bible* (Carol Stream, IL: Tynedale, 1984) is mentioned here as a book that compares and expounds the significant theological doctrines.

⁵⁸⁰ In Chapter 5, 172, the multiplicity of levels of relationship are defined by multiplicity of influence; multiple reciprocal influence; uniqueness of each individual; uniqueness of development of each individual; humans as active agents; and humans created for community.

encapsulate the therapeutic relationship. This model reflects, in part, the intention of this chapter. She has, to my mind, successfully facilitated an “intra-dialogical” discussion of the therapeutic relationship without becoming embroiled in the various philosophical tenets of the psychological schools, while still maintaining the individual integrity of each. Hence, it is Clarkson’s work⁵⁸¹ that has been used as a framework for the first section of this chapter.

Although not all the theological material discussed in this chapter could be referred to as “numinous” or “mysterious,” the theology as discussed in Chapter 4 will serve to bring insights of the spiritual dimension mostly overlooked by psychology. It is envisaged that this discussion will, therefore, present a balanced view of the therapeutic relationship that will not only provide a model of such a relationship but will also introduce the concept of spirituality as an active agent in developing the therapeutic capacity of the therapeutic relationship.

The Working Relationship⁵⁸²

Relationships in any context do not just happen. Relationships are established. In the “people-helping” setting, establishing the relationship is a vital part of the helping process. It is here that desired outcomes are discussed, goals are set and the implicit and explicit boundaries of the relationship are recognised. Psychology research consistently shows that for a relationship to be therapeutic it must not only provide the tools for change but it must also be “a safe place”.⁵⁸³ In previous chapters this been termed “covenant” and defined simply as

⁵⁸¹ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, Clarkson’s terminology, as other psychological jargon used, will be contextually adapted.

⁵⁸² Clarkson’s “Working Alliance”.

⁵⁸³ Helene Laughton-Brown, “Trust in the Therapeutic Relationship: Psychodynamic Contributions to Counselling Psychology Practice”. *Counselling Psychology Review* 25, no. 2 (2010): 6-12, writes: “The working alliance in the early part of therapy is a window of opportunity with trust-building being an important part of the process to allow the client to feel that they can trust the therapist with their confidences and allow emotional expression. Indeed, disclosure can only take place in a relationship of trust”.

an “informed agreement and voluntary consent by equals as a gift or entrustment”.⁵⁸⁴ For a professional counsellor, a safe place is created explicitly with intake forms that clearly define the terms of the relationship, including appropriate appointment times, fees, the duration of the session, the place where the counselling is conducted and the qualifications of the counsellor, as well as such ethical considerations as confidentiality, duty of care and use of power. This constitutes the moral and legal “duty of care” requirements. Nevertheless, there are also the implicit elements of the professional “covenant promise” that “both grows from and shapes the identity of those who live the covenantal relationship”.⁵⁸⁵ This could be likened to the concept of “containment”, generally associated with Object Relations⁵⁸⁶ but often utilised by counsellors of other persuasions. By encompassing the therapeutic space with both explicit and implicit parameters, the counsellor establishes and maintains this graceful space where transformational change can occur.

A pastor’s counselling session may look quite different. The relational safety is often “a given” as, in the majority of cases, the client already has some sort of relationship with the pastor, and, in fact, has come to the session because of that relationship. An explicit intake process, in such a case, is often deemed unnecessary and, therefore elements of time, place, duration and ethics are, more than likely, implicitly understood. However, although the boundaries of a professional counsellor are designed to, and in fact mostly do, keep both client and counsellor physically, emotionally and ethically “safe,” the implicit covenant the pastor has with the client has deeper implications. Such a covenant reflects the New Covenant of the Kingdom of God which is a covenant not only of behaviour, where the

⁵⁸⁴ Ponton and Duba, “*The ACA*”, 117.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁵⁸⁶ David Scharff, ed., *Object Relations Theory and Practice: An Introduction*, 1st ed. (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995).

participants agree to perform in a particular way, but a covenant by way of “the heart”, a covenant of grace:

In Hebrew and Christian Scriptures the ‘heart’ is a symbol of the whole person. Scripture does not use modern psychological terms, with thinking or knowledge in the intellect and love and decision in the will. *Heart* embraces all that. As a symbol for the ‘inside’ of a person ‘it embraces feelings, memories, ideas, plans, decisions’. . . In the global and concrete anthropology of the Bible, the heart is the principle of morality, the centre of one’s freedom, of decisive choices and the place where one enters to be in dialogue with oneself and where one opens oneself or closes oneself to God.⁵⁸⁷

Although most pastors are well aware of, and honour, their ethical duty of care when dealing with their vulnerable parishioners, most would also hold the deeper convictions of their “New Covenant” commitment to their client that comes from a “heart” place as described above.

A synthesis of professional and pastoral perspectives of the working relationship, therefore, provides a picture of a relationship that not only has established goals and interventions, and ethical and moral boundaries, but also understands that, although the relationship provides an environment for healing, neither relationship nor healing can be forced. This aspect of the therapeutic pastoral relationship, therefore embraces a commitment to the containment of both the physical and the emotional environments as well as to the grace of the New Covenant that imbues this working relationship with a transcendent quality.

⁵⁸⁷ X. Léon-Dufour, “Heart”. *Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (London, UK: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988), 228.

Awareness of Self and the Other⁵⁸⁸

As a counselling relationship continues to develop from the initial connection, other relational aspects add to the therapeutic quality. Transference and countertransference are generally understood as specific interventions of psychoanalysis. However, the phenomenon of transference and countertransference is well researched in other therapy contexts⁵⁸⁹ and the effect on the therapeutic relationship is recognised by most counsellors no matter what their preferred *modus operandi*. The research provides the counsellor with the criteria for becoming aware of:

- the signs of transference (what is happening for the other);
- the signs of countertransference (what is happening for the counsellor);
- the interventions for using or managing these reactive feelings in the therapy process.

But what the phenomena of transference, and the subsequent countertransference, actually are remains in the category of “mysterious”. That it:

- is a powerful and frequent component of the majority of therapeutic relationships, in fact of most relationships, is readily accepted;
- generates strong feelings in both counsellor and client is also understood;
- can result in profound transformation when properly managed is also known.

The awareness of self and the other, required for recognising the phenomena psychology calls transference and countertransference, takes a different form in the pastoral counselling context. Although pastors rarely have awareness of, or training in, the psychological interpretation of transference and countertransference, the theologian, in this context, would interpret such relational phenomena in terms of “encounter”⁵⁹⁰ or, in Rohr’s words,⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁸ Clarkson, “Transferential/Countertransferential”.

⁵⁸⁹ cf Judith Schaeffer, *Transference and Countertransference in Non-Analytic Therapy: Double-Edged Swords* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006).

⁵⁹⁰ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 20.

“presence”: “The mystery of presence is *that encounter wherein the self-disclosure of one evokes a deeper life in the other*”. He continues by claiming that such a relational exchange “is actually a *transference and sharing of Being...*”⁵⁹² This depth of relational engagement is not easily explained in the language of cognition and emotion but points to a spirituality that is not readily expressed in words.

This mysterious phenomena involving emotional and spiritual transference from one to another has powerful potential. On one hand, it can be a destructive force. On the other, it has the capacity to be a means of transformation and growth. From these points of view, a perspective of the counselling relationship that:

- is acutely aware of the power of the connection to evoke both positive and negative reactions;
- has the capacity to contain the presence of the other;
- remains conscious of being held in the Presence that is God,

will be a therapeutic space indeed.

A Developmentally-Needed⁵⁹³ Relationship⁵⁹⁴

Another facet of the therapeutic capacity of the counselling relationship addresses the development of the human person. Developmental psychology has provided the “people-helper” with valuable understandings of the human as an ever-changing, dynamic organism.

⁵⁹¹ Rohr, *Things Hidden*, 64.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, 64.

⁵⁹³ As mentioned in Chapter 5, the concept of a “reparative” relationship could have ambiguous connotations if associated with “Reparative Therapy” which, although focussed on identity issues, does so from a very specific homosexual viewpoint. Hence, the word “reparative” will be replaced by “developmentally-needed” which, although a little cumbersome, more accurately conveys the true nature of this particular aspect of the therapeutic relationship.

⁵⁹⁴ Clarkson, “Reparative/Developmentally Needed”.

These developmental stage theories⁵⁹⁵ highlight the importance of what is experienced during the life-span.⁵⁹⁶ They also provide an understanding of the effect that the successful, or unsuccessful, resolution of the various stages has on a person's well-being and capacity for a stable and satisfying life.⁵⁹⁷ Of particular interest to this discussion are the psychosocial stages of development⁵⁹⁸ as these articulate that the elements of a stable identity are trust, autonomy, initiative and industry. Also of interest is the presupposition of these theories that the successful resolution of these elemental tasks of identity formation is largely the responsibility of the parents. As no parent is perfect, there are times in the therapeutic process when the counsellor identifies deficits that can be traced back to childhood. These can be the results of such factors as traumatic environmental situations or events, childhood abuse, neglect or lack of "good enough" parenting. As part of the therapeutic process, the counsellor may employ interventions that are designed to "repair" these deficits, making this particular facet of the therapeutic relationship a therapeutic repairing or re-parenting. Clarkson observes that, for this aspect of therapy, the counsellor adopts the role of a "real parent",⁵⁹⁹ introducing interventions that are both nurturing and corrective.

This parental role is a primary motif of theology encountered in both the Old and the New Testaments. This motif begins in Genesis with the mandate "to be fruitful and multiply",⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁵ These developmental stage theories include Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development [*Dimensions of a New Identity* (New York, NY: Norton, 1974)], further developed by Kegan, *The Evolving*; Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy*; and later, Gilligan, *In a*, who researched moral development and James Fowler's work, *Stages of*, with faith development.

⁵⁹⁶ Balswick, King, and Reimer, *The Reciprocating*, discuss various lifespan developmental theories within the Christian context.

⁵⁹⁷ Devoy, *The Spirituality*, 6, discusses what he calls "synergy of human and spiritual dynamics" represented by an integration of "human, ethical and spiritual realities within a relational, existential, life-giving, liturgical framework", a definition that will continue to be explored in this chapter.

⁵⁹⁸ Erikson, *Dimensions of*.

⁵⁹⁹ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*.

⁶⁰⁰ Genesis 1:28.

and continues with the story of Abraham and the promise from God that he would be a “father of many nations”,⁶⁰¹ that he would be blessed and a blessing.⁶⁰² Significant in this narrative of Abraham, is that God imparted a new identity to Abraham⁶⁰³ by virtue of his obedience to the call of God. As the Old Testament unfolded, this identity was passed down the generations of Abraham and, according to the promise, his descendants became the Hebrew nation. God’s parental love and provision for his people was demonstrated further with the advent of the Law of Moses.⁶⁰⁴ From that time on, God’s chosen people became the oracles⁶⁰⁵ of the Word that revealed the desire of the heart of God to bless his children with Godly identity.⁶⁰⁶ In fact, the last two verses of the Old Testament encapsulate this desire as well as preparing the way for the ultimate reconciliation that would satisfy the Father heart of God. Gordon Dalbey turns to these verses⁶⁰⁷ to explore this concept of reconciliation further:

God’s ultimate saving action in this world is based upon a reconciliation between fathers and their children. This presumes that fathers have been apart from their sons and daughters, and so have lost the essential bonding between generations that allows God to exercise his saving power among us. Because every earthly father is an imperfect human being, he can never meet the profound need we all have for fatherly love.⁶⁰⁸

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 17:4, 5.

⁶⁰² Ibid., 12:2.

⁶⁰³ Ibid., 17:5.

⁶⁰⁴ Various recorded in the Pentateuch.

⁶⁰⁵ Deuteronomy 6:1-3.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 28, beginning at verse 1 introduces the path of blessing God prepared for the generations of those who desire to follow him: “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. ² And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God”.

⁶⁰⁷ Malachi 4:5, 6: “But before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, I will send you the prophet Elijah. He will bring fathers and children together again”.

⁶⁰⁸ Gordon Dalbey, *Healing the Masculine Soul* (Dallas, TE: Word, 1988), 145.

As the New Testament unfolds with the advent of Jesus Christ, the concept of being called into identity by Father God is revealed in the teachings of Jesus, through the New Covenant mandate to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength, and your neighbour as yourself”.⁶⁰⁹ Such a developmentally-needed relationship enables the identity distortions of the fall⁶¹⁰ to be addressed through the reconciliation power of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ:

God’s power is revealed in Christ as a power-in-love, as a relational power. This suggests that the very *nature* of divine power is that it enables others to flourish in all its integrity. Human experience of love, at its best, can offer some hints about the nature of divine love. One who loves authentically does not dominate the other, but has the capacity to make room for the other. Those who love in this way can freely let go of themselves without fear of losing themselves. They can receive others into the space of their own lives and their own hearts. They can allow the other to be themselves, to claim their own integrity and autonomy.⁶¹¹

This identity restoring, relational power makes the space for the human person to embrace the vulnerability that Erikson⁶¹² describes in his sixth stage, that of intimacy.

In psychological terms, the development of the human capacity for intimacy that is the legacy of a stable identity is explained through such theories as Bandura’s “modelling”,⁶¹³ Bowlby’s “attachment”,⁶¹⁴ and Winnicott’s “object relations”.⁶¹⁵ More recently, neuropsychology has

⁶⁰⁹ Luke 10:27.

⁶¹⁰ To describe these in the terms of Erikson’s identity forming stages would be to see these distortions as: a) an inherent mistrust in self, others and God; b) shame that displaces the autonomy of personal control; c) guilt that stifles creative initiative; d) and feelings of inferiority that overwhelm confidence in personal competency.

⁶¹¹ Edwards, *Ecology at*, 40, 41.

⁶¹² Erik Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development. *Dimensions of*.

⁶¹³ Bandura, *Social Learning*.

⁶¹⁴ Bowlby, *A Secure*.

been exploring mirror neurons⁶¹⁶ confirming such psychological theories with scientific research. However, as the human person responds to the invitation to join in the Trinitarian *perichoresis*, the transformation that this scientific investigation seeks to understand is not only accomplished, but a transcendent transformation that is beyond human comprehension becomes the human experience.

The essence of the dialogue between theology, psychology and spirituality around this aspect of the therapeutic relationship speaks of a paradoxical parenting where nurture and correction can safely be administered within an encompassing covenant. It is the combination of a protective, nurturing environment and the parental facilitation of identity growth and the acceptance of responsibility that allows healing and wholeness to transpire. This facilitation of identity growth could also be developed in terms of the Holy Spirit as Teacher, a concept already explored in Chapter 4.⁶¹⁷

The Person-to-Person Relationship

A far less directive relationship is the person-to-person relationship. Most people, if asked to describe counselling, would probably respond with an account of the person-to-person type relationship. As the very essence of the counselling encounter, this facet of the therapeutic relationship that practices acceptance, unconditional positive regard, genuineness and warmth, epitomises authentic human-to-human interaction. The humanistic/existential premise that humans are meaning-making beings, with the creative capacity to self-actualise, underpins

⁶¹⁵ Winnicott, *Playing and*.

⁶¹⁶ cf. Aimee Baird, Ingrid Scheffer, and Sarah Wilson, "Mirror Neuron System Involvement in Empathy: A Critical Look at the Evidence". *Social Neuroscience* 6, no. 4 (2011): 327-335; Paul Shrier and Cahleen Shrier, "Empathy: Mirror Neurons, Pauline Theology, and the Meaning of Care". *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 18, no. 1 (2008): 25-43.

⁶¹⁷ Rosato, in "The Mission", 389, writes: "Through the gift of faith in the Father and in the Son, the Spirit communicates the absolute truth to Christians insofar as it can be humanly grasped".

this relationship. Hence, the person-to-person relationship is therapeutic in that it provides the environment for the client to discover the meaning and motivation to begin the journey to self-actualisation. In Erikson's terminology, the interventions of a person-to-person therapeutic relationship are designed to create the space for the identity-actualising developmental tasks to be embraced.⁶¹⁸

It is also understood from the theological perspective that the formation of identity is possible for the person seeking wholeness. However, rather than this being a task of personal "self-actualisation," the Scriptures present us with the notion that, by responding to the Holy Spirit's invitation,⁶¹⁹ the human person will begin to experience a life of knowing and acting "in the Spirit".⁶²⁰ Shults and Sandage describe this as "becoming": "The becoming that is creaturely being is always and already a gift of the life-giving Spirit, which human persons experience as a gracious call to well-being".⁶²¹

This is reflected in the teachings of such Scriptural passages as 2 Corinthians 3:18⁶²² and Ephesians 3:16-19⁶²³ where the theological terms used to describe the becoming process are "transformation into the likeness of Christ" and "fullness of God". The richness of this

⁶¹⁸ Erikson's, *Identity*, fifth stage of psychosocial development requires the resolution of the tension between "identity" and "role confusion". This is seen to be relevant to this discussion of the therapeutic value of the person-to-person relationship as the formation of identity is a prerequisite of the transparency essential for meaningful relationships with God, self and others.

⁶¹⁹ Romans 8:11.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, 14:17; 1 Peter 4:6.

⁶²¹ F. L. Shults and Steven Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 137.

⁶²² 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord".

⁶²³ Ephesians 3:16-19: "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God".

theological understanding of God's provision for the human person to experience His transforming power highlights again the wonderful environment of the Trinity, and the invitation God extends to broken humanity. This quote from Chapter 4, reminds us that:

The Christian experience of this transformative presence is explicitly Trinitarian. The Spirit is present to creatures not as an immense substance but as a welcoming communion that is the life of the *Trinitarian* God. The redemptive experience of "being" in the Spirit is an entering into the *perichoretic* relationality that constitutes the eternal joy of the fellowship of the Son and the Father. The New Testament call to live "in" the Spirit and be "filled" with the Spirit is intrinsically oriented toward reconciliation with the Father through the Son.⁶²⁴

Hence the common understanding expressed by both psychology and theology is that the transformation of the human person happens as that person is provided with an environment where it is safe for them to be more transparent to themselves in the presence of another, and in the presence of God. However, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, this is not a task without challenges.

In psychological terms, particularly in the work of Jung, each person harbours a "shadow",⁶²⁵ which is best described in the metaphor of "the Hero's Journey",⁶²⁶ introduced in Chapter 5 and revisited here:

We each have another part, however, that holds the hero back, that creates the very hell which must be navigated. The power that part has over us begins in relationship to the environment, our friends and family, our cultural expectations, our life circumstances. At a deeper level, its powers derive from our own inner

⁶²⁴ Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality*, 138,139.

⁶²⁵ Jung, *The Undiscovered*, 64.

⁶²⁶ Campbell, *The Hero*.

struggles . . . These are the terrible dragons at the threshold of transformation that stand in our way, our self-sabotaging patterns.⁶²⁷

Similarly, this challenge can be expressed as the “true self” and the “false self”. Merton contemplates this true self/false self in his reflections:

Our reality, our true self, is hidden in what appears to us to be nothingness. . . we can rise above this unreality and recover our hidden identity. . . Every one of us is shadowed by an illusionary person: a false self... we are not very good at recognizing illusions, least of all the ones we cherish about ourselves”.⁶²⁸

The dichotomy represented by these reflections from a psychologist⁶²⁹ and a theologian⁶³⁰ are not unlike the Biblical understanding of the human struggle between “flesh” and “spirit”, Biblical topics discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.⁶³¹ The human struggles represented by these three perspectives of personhood are expressed as the tension between:

- “shadow” and “illumination”;
- “hiddenness” and “openness”;
- the “disposition to be drawn into sin” and the “disposition to delight in the things of God” .

Beyond the need to avoid or even resolve these tensions, the commonality is found in the transformational power of a heightened awareness that the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in the redeemed person. This Spirit gives life to mortal bodies,⁶³² enabling the

⁶²⁷ Hartman and Zimberoff, “The Hero's”, 12, 13.

⁶²⁸ Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York, NY: New Directions, 1961), xi.

⁶²⁹ cf Carl Jung as mentioned previously.

⁶³⁰ cf Thomas Merton as mentioned previously.

⁶³¹ Romans 8:1-8 is a New Testament passage that explores this tension between “flesh” and “spirit.” A brief examination of these verses is found in Chapter 4.

⁶³² cf Romans 8:11.

human person to rise above the tensions to ultimately find the “hero”, the “reality of the hidden identity” and “the likeness of Christ”.

The person-to-person relationship, through:

- intentional building of trust;
- employing a genuine and accurate empathy;
- and sharing understanding through dialogue,

facilitates a reframing of the whole self in ways that prepare a transformational space through new understandings. For the pastor, this also includes the exercising of *agape* through unconditional valuing of the other and the consciousness of the Holy Spirit as the third person in all person-to-person relationships. Hence, it is this person-to-person relationship that holds a unique power to bestow value and dignity upon a broken human being, thereby empowering them to become more than they are.

A Spiritual Therapeutic Relationship⁶³³

This brings this discussion to the place where Clarkson confesses that her explanations are inadequate.⁶³⁴ It is also a place where, in comparison to the other facets explored here, there is a paucity of research.⁶³⁵ Although the spirituality of the therapeutic relationship from the

⁶³³ Clarkson, “The Transpersonal”.

⁶³⁴ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 20, writes of this dimension of the therapeutic relationship as being “spiritual, mysterious or currently inexplicable”.

⁶³⁵ David Boadella, “Essence and Ground: Towards the Understanding of Spirituality in Psychotherapy”. *International Journal of Psychotherapy* 3, no.1 (1998): 29, reports on one of the few instances of this type of research: Over the past 50 years a remarkable project to study spirituality has been developed by Professor Adrian van Kaam, who “showed the relationship between traditional formative teachings from the world's religious movements, and the insights developed by the human sciences and by transpersonal psychology. He saw the formative spiritual traditions, because they were open to the 'mystery' level of human experience, as able to go deeper than the purely humanistic or purely psychological or even trans-personal. Van Kaam was also stressing the unifying aspects of these formative traditions (Van Kaam, 1983-1995). Van Kaam also studied the conditions under which traditions became deformed, and lost touch with their simple and compassionate origins, and in turn became deformative of others. Awareness of the deformative aspects of deformed religious teachings had been one reason for the rejection and mistrust of the entire religious heritage of mankind by modern 'scientific' reasoning, in spite of the many congruences and confluences between humanistic science and the grounding insights of the spiritual teachings”.

psychological perspective is largely either a mystery or inexplicable,⁶³⁶ as already discussed in conjunction with the other forms of relationship, theological resources provide a promising vantage point from which to more readily explore this phenomena.

One comment found in Clarkson's discussion of her "transpersonal"⁶³⁷ relationship is the suspicion that it is this component of the relationship that "makes the difference as to whether the client gets better or not".⁶³⁸ This recognition speaks of a relationship that is beyond human understanding⁶³⁹ as expressed by Boadella:

The contact with one's own heart, and with this subtle essence, was not a process that could be reached by intellectual means, it lay beyond rationality, and the conscious thought processes of the brain, and was in this sense a 'mystery'. The philosopher Gabriel Marcel set up the polarity between what he called the 'problem' level of experience, and the 'mystery' level which underlay the problem. From this deeper level come the possibilities of healing.⁶⁴⁰

From this examination of the characteristics of the various phases of the therapeutic relationship, the concept of transformational change is a recurring theme. Each one of these relationships has the capacity to facilitate a particular space for the possibility of this deeper

⁶³⁶ Abraham Maslow's work could be seen as an exception here as the Hierarchy of Needs he developed explicitly included "religious sentiment" as an element of human maturity, the ultimate goal of which was self-actualisation. In his books, *The Farther*; and *Towards a Psychology of Being*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Wiley, 1999) he devoted chapters to the "transcendent" aspects of human maturity. Another of his works, *Religions, Values*, explored the place of religion and transcendence in his concept of "peak experiences".

⁶³⁷ Designated as "spiritual" here.

⁶³⁸ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 21.

⁶³⁹ Emma Pierce's thesis, "A Practical Theology of Mental Health: A Critical Conversation Between Theology, Psychology, Pastoral Care and the Voice of the Witness". Unpublished PhD. thesis, Australian Catholic University (2007): 23, is also relevant here. As she investigates mental health from theological and psychological perspectives she claims that "it is the absence of a transcendent divinity which leaves such a void in the creature whose reference point of reality is intrinsically the God, now absented, that much irrationality arises on the human landscape. Mental illness is one irrationality among many".

⁶⁴⁰ Boadella, "Essence and", 29.

level, transformative healing through interventions that encounter the cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions of the person. It is unlikely that, in every counselling session, whether in the pastoral or professional setting, all these therapeutic factors would be present. However, these relationships taken together form a wholistic picture of the transformational process.

Personhood

As a continuation of this examination of the various dynamics and processes of transformational change, the nature of personhood now enters this interdisciplinary conversation. We are reminded that Chapter 4 explored personhood through the epistemology of the Biblical notion of *imago Dei*. However, the psychological perspectives of what it means to be human, examined in Chapter 5, revealed that the schools of psychological thought vary in their philosophy of personality and hence, no one single epistemology of personhood was revealed through these theories. As with the previous discussion of the elements of the therapeutic relationship, an “also/and” rather than an “either/or” approach has been taken in this section.

The theologian’s perception of the human person begins with the Biblical account of humanity being created in the image of God. Within this image are the assumptions of freewill, the rational capacity for knowledge and love, the capability to be stewards over creation and the aptitude for relationship. That the personhood of Adam contained these attributes that were likened to God himself is recorded in the Scriptures,⁶⁴¹ but the Bible also recounts the fall of the first man and woman and tells of how the image of the entire human race was marred.⁶⁴² The theological understanding of personhood, therefore, includes not

⁶⁴¹ cf Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7.

⁶⁴² cf Romans 3:23.

only an acknowledgement of the attributes inherent in being created in God's image, but also the implications of the influences of sin and human "brokenness". The Apostle Paul succinctly expresses this acknowledgement of both the human condition and God's response to that fallenness: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord".⁶⁴³

Hence, the personhood that is embodied in the notion of the *imago Dei* is both a divine gift and a goal; the goal of being transformed into the likeness of Christ who is "the expression of the relational character and self-transcending dynamism of true personhood".⁶⁴⁴ As indicated previously, this transformational process encompasses cognitive engagement with a rational God, affective responsiveness as modelled by the *perichoresis* of the Trinity, and relational contemplation that facilitates the "one-ness" where true transformation is possible.

From the various psychological perspectives, personhood can be seen to incorporate similar cognitive, affective and relational elements. The affective responses of the conscious, preconscious and unconscious dimensions of the human psyche are the domain of the various theorists who practice the psychodynamic therapies, while the behaviourist and cognitive behaviourist theorists have developed therapies that address the ways the human person physically and cognitively engages with their environment. The humanistic and existentialist theorists provide a deeper philosophy of the dynamic human capacity to find meaning and strive for self-actualization. The constructivist therapists complement the picture of personhood by the acknowledgement of the resilience of the human person. These therapists see factors such as community and worldview-story as being significant building blocks from

⁶⁴³ Ibid., 6:23.

⁶⁴⁴ Kelly, *The Trinity*, 147.

which an individual's personality is uniquely constructed. Constructivists tend to be the ones who also allow that spirituality is a significant component of the human person although, as investigated in previous chapters, spirituality is becoming more acceptable in psychological circles in general.

From this brief overview it can be seen that, even without an acknowledgement of the Biblical perspective of personhood and, therefore, without a belief in the fallen condition of the human person, the various psychological philosophies, either implicitly or explicitly, incorporate their particular epistemological understanding of personhood into their praxis. In other words, the very praxis of psychology is designed to be therapeutic whether the ontology of these philosophies recognises the Biblical cause of the human condition or not; thus all these schools of psychological thought, in their recognition of various forms of psychological dysfunction, do agree with theology as to the general “brokenness”⁶⁴⁵ of the human person.

It would seem, therefore, that the concept of human brokenness has significance for both the theological and the psychological perspectives of this discussion. It would seem also that an understanding of human brokenness will provide insight into the nature of human wholeness and therefore how this human wholeness can be nurtured by the therapeutic relationship.

⁶⁴⁵Although far beyond the scope of this thesis to fully explore the theological motifs of “sin” and “brokenness”, it is acknowledged that the theology relating to these topics has significant contribution to make to understanding the human person and the human capacity for transformational change. It is, therefore deemed sufficient here to simply mention such scholars as Neil Ormerod, and his contribution to this subject - *Creation, Grace and Redemption* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2007) and Mark McMinn’s work, *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling: An Integrative Paradigm* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2008) as being representative of aspects of this theology.

Without compromising⁶⁴⁶ either the epistemologies of the various psychological therapies that focus on different facets of personhood, or the extensive theology that presents the Gospel answer to the human condition, it would seem that a unifying common factor emerging from both disciplines is the conviction that the human person, although “broken”, has the capacity to change.

It is this conviction of the human capacity, not just to change, but to change towards wholeness, that is at the core of the therapeutic relationship. This understanding is explicit in the theories of the humanistic psychologists, especially Maslow,⁶⁴⁷ but is ontologically present in all the schools of psychology.⁶⁴⁸ Additionally, the concept of *shalom* not only provides the theological motif for this interdisciplinary dialogical discussion, but also speaks in a language translatable for both the theologian and the psychologist. In Chapter 4, it was shown that the Hebrew word “*shalom*” has a much deeper meaning than the English word “peace” as it is often translated. This examination of *shalom* revealed that it encompasses the concept of peaceful completeness, a “wholeness of life or body”; and that personhood from the *shalomatic* perspective is unified, inclusive of body, soul and spirit as highly interactive rather than discrete dimensions.⁶⁴⁹ Within this discussion of *shalom* other theological motifs of covenant and *agape* were seen to contribute to the wholeness embodied in this Hebrew term. As such, the concept of wholeness being nurtured within a community marked by

⁶⁴⁶ Muto, “The Unfolding”, 95, writes of the “anthropology formation” work of Adrian van Kaam: “the mystery of grace in the concrete personality formation of the Christian can never be overlooked; but neither must one dismiss the relevance of the experiences, empirical data, and research of a theoretical integrative nature provided by the arts and sciences”.

⁶⁴⁷ Maslow, *Towards a*.

⁶⁴⁸ Christan Brugger, “Anthropological Foundations for Clinical Psychology: A Proposal”. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 36, no. 1 (2008):3, writes: “The concept of human nature as an enduring set of capacities and mechanisms capable upon observation and reflection of being understood and facilitated in their proper function is basic to understanding the assumptions upon which clinical psychology rests. Clinical psychology assumes there is sufficient stability in the underlying capacities of human nature to test observations, draw generalized conclusions and reliably predict behavior”.

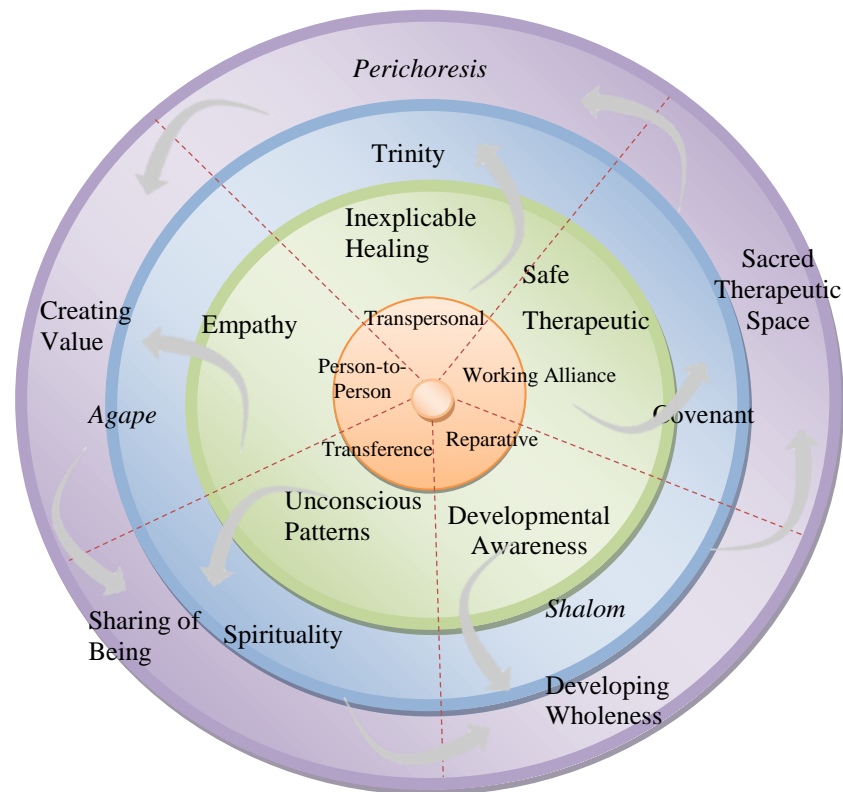
⁶⁴⁹ Shults and Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality*, 199.

covenantal boundaries and the unconditional positive regard, genuineness, warmth and acceptance associated with both *agape* and the counselling relationship, was examined. Hence, the theological and psychological interdisciplinary conversation includes the shared aspects of the nurturing of transformational change.

What Makes the Therapeutic Relationship Therapeutic?

By way of summary of this chapter, the diagram (Figure 10 - below) indicates the multi-level, multi-faceted elements that, combined, make the therapeutic relationship therapeutic. The centre of the circle represents the psychological theory that informs the practice of the relationship. This foundational knowledge is encompassed by the psychological contributions to a safe therapeutic space – where relationship infused with empathy is nurtured, issues can be explored and an environment for change is established. The next circle represents the theological language of the dialogue that provides opportunity for the inner circle elements to move into a transcendent dimension. The outer circle dynamically encompasses all the elements of the relationship. It is this dynamic quality that generates the impetus for lasting change.

Figure 10 - Multilevel Therapeutic Relationships



Therapeutic Capacity of the Relationship

In facilitating the inter-dialogical discussion of this chapter, the therapeutic capacity of the counselling relationship has been shown to be both very complex and very simple. It is complex in that it contains a diversity of theological and psychological elements, all of which are significant to the quality of the encounter; it is simple, in that these elements have been shown to share commonalities of language that can express the significance of the unique attributes each brings to the relationship:

- Dynamic, relational words describe the energy and empowerment that are exchanged as two people engage in this purposeful encounter.
- Rich, encompassing language conveys the impression of *shalomatic* wholeness that is embraced within such a covenantal relationship.

- Deep and resonating exchanges express the transcendence that fosters transformational change through the mystery of *perichoresis* as expressed in Susan Muto's poetic words:

Only the mystery decides the moment and the duration of this undeserved gift of light and darkness, of fullness and emptiness, or of power and powerlessness. We are receivers. One can only accept or refuse the gift—flow with it or resist it.⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁵⁰ Muto, "The Unfolding", 101.

CHAPTER 7 - THE REPORT OF THE RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

Having carefully considered the theoretical aspects of this study, in this, the report of findings chapter, the primary question of this thesis is revisited and the participants themselves provide insight into what is being asked by this study:

How does the counselling pastor conceptualise and practice the therapeutic relationship?

The previous chapters have investigated the theological, psychological and “integrated” aspects of the therapeutic relationship, thereby providing a theoretical framework for this primary question and the sub-questions. These sub-questions have been examined in the light of the literature and here, in this chapter, the participants own experiences have provided valuable insights into the practical outworking of the therapeutic relationship. The sub-questions that ask:

What is the pastor’s theology of person and human wholeness?

What is the pastor's understanding of the doctrine of God?

have revealed that the Pentecostal theology of these participants is more of an oral tradition than a scholarly theology. This was also reflected in the discussions with the participants that resulted from asking about the outcomes of the therapeutic relationships that were such an essential aspect of their ministries:

What is the pastor’s conceptual and phenomenological understanding of spirituality and spiritual growth?

How does the environment of *this particular church* influence the pastoral counselling process?

How does the pastor’s understanding of Christian ministry influence the therapeutic relationship?

The final sub-questions related to the participants' psychological understandings of the therapeutic relationships that were formed in their work as pastors:

What is the pastor's understanding of psychological human wholeness?

What is the pastor's understanding of the theory and practice of therapeutic change?

These questions have been addressed in the semi-structured interviews and, as the participants have shared their understandings and experiences, new insights into the ways the therapeutic relationship is conceptualised by these pastors have emerged. What follows in this chapter is a report of these findings.

However, before embarking on this report on the findings of the analysis process, two of the hermeneutical and phenomenological principles described in Chapter 3 will be briefly revisited in order to maintain the robust nature of this research. These two principles relate to:

- i. The reflexivity of the researcher⁶⁵¹ and the acknowledgement of not only the presuppositions and biases but also the pre-knowledge and understandings that she has brought to this study;⁶⁵²
- ii. The value of language and text and the recognition that, as the data is thoroughly analysed, not only is information about the phenomena revealed but accounts of the transcendent experience also emerge with further attentive examination.

These two points warrant further discussion here as the researcher's theoretical sensitivity⁶⁵³ to both the phenomena being studied and to the pastors who participated in the semi-

⁶⁵¹ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 179, sees that "data is a product of processes of generation and interpretation in which the researcher is inevitably implicated . . . and that data cannot exist in an uninterpreted or literal form . . .".

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, 179, cautions that qualitative researchers "need to develop transparent and systematic mechanisms for arriving at . . . interpretations". Hence this introduction will attempt to make this research process as transparent as possible.

structured interviews are clarified. As explained in previous chapters, the researcher has been acquainted with the church context of the study for some years, not in the position of pastor but from the perspective of coordinating counselling for this particular church movement. It is in the course of this position that the researcher has had interaction with the participants in the form of debriefing type sessions and also as a facilitator of training in pastoral care for their leaders. As already noted, this association has taken the form of a peer relationship, and, over time, trust has been built. However, this being said, because of geographical distance, all these interactions have been arranged for a specific purpose (e.g., conducting a course, meeting at a conference, referring a client to me). Therefore the relationships between the researcher and the participants would not be termed “close relationships”, nor would the concept of “dual relationships”⁶⁵⁴ be an issue as the researcher’s and the participants’ roles are clearly defined in the relevant ethical clearance documentation.

Researcher Reflexivity

However, the researcher’s reflexivity holds a unique place in this study and the presuppositions, biases, pre-knowledge and understanding have become important factors to be considered in the analysis process. One such factor relates to the second point (above) where the significance of language is emphasised. The unique relationship the researcher has with both the participants and the church movement to which they all belong enhances the ability to interpret the nuances and underlying meanings of the interview transcripts while still being aware of the presuppositions that could be imposed on the emergence of the data.

⁶⁵³ Mills, Bonner, and Francis, “The Development”, 4, write: “Theoretical sensitivity is a multidimensional concept that includes the researchers’ level of insight into the research area, how attuned they are to the nuances and complexity of the participant’s words and actions, their ability to reconstruct meaning from the data generated with the participant, and a capacity to ‘separate the pertinent from that which isn’t’”.

⁶⁵⁴ “In the context of research with humans, a dual relationship can exist *when the researcher has another (or several) significant relationship(s) with the research participant other than that which is the subject of the research protocol*”, http://www.health.vic.gov.au/ethics/downloads/dual_relationships.pdf

Methodology

With this researcher's position established, this chapter reports the results and the findings from the data gathered from the semi-structured interviews with specific local church pastors.⁶⁵⁵ It could be argued here that qualitative researchers are "in the business of producing social explanations, or addressing intellectual puzzles".⁶⁵⁶ However, they also understand that there are different types of intellectual puzzle and that for the research to be both relevant and rigorous, the specific intellectual puzzle must be identified and the research methodology must provide a means of organizing, sorting, and analysing the data in ways that are consistent with the form of the intellectual puzzle.⁶⁵⁷ Chapter 3 carefully examines the intellectual puzzle posed by this thesis. As also discussed in Chapter 3, the methodology of Grounded Theory, particularly the form of this methodology termed "evolved Grounded Theory",⁶⁵⁸ has been deemed as the appropriate method for fulfilling this research task. Aspects of Charmaz's work with Constructivist Grounded Theory,⁶⁵⁹ especially in relation to the contextual nuances observed in the dialogue, have also been considered.

Although, according to Grounded Theory methodology, all of the transcribed material is considered data, as the analysis begins, various levels of data analysis emerge. There are a variety of terms employed to denote these levels of analysis according to the particular version of Grounded Theory being implemented and the researcher's interpretation of that

⁶⁵⁵ As explained previously, these pastors were chosen specifically for their years of experience in ministry and therefore their ability to discuss the relationships with their people that they saw as being therapeutic.

⁶⁵⁶ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 174.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 178, suggests that researchers need to be aware of whether the data "provide a way into an argument, or represent or signify it. In other words, to what extent do you need to interpret your data, or read behind or beyond them, in order to produce the materials necessary to construct your explanation". As this chapter develops, these issues will be addressed.

⁶⁵⁸ The term "Evolved Grounded Theory" is used here to define the Grounded Theory work of Anselm Strauss and Juliette Corbin.

⁶⁵⁹ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded*.

version. Hence, it will be established that, for the purposes of this study, the following terms for the levels of analysis will be utilised:

- Level 1 – Open Coding - “fractures the data into concepts and categories”;⁶⁶⁰
- Level 2 – Axial Coding - “puts those data back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its sub-categories”;⁶⁶¹
- Level 3 – Selective or Theoretical Coding - “involves the integration of the categories that have been developed to form the initial theoretical framework”;⁶⁶²
- Level 4 – Grounded Theory - “derived from data and then illustrated by characteristic examples of data”.⁶⁶³

These levels are represented in Figure 11 and will be examined in detail in relation to the semi-structured interview transcripts in this chapter.

The Initial Analysis

Figure 11 – Initial Analysis



“Making arguments is a relational process, and therefore we should have a sense of engagement with others in how we do it”.⁶⁶⁴ In this research, with such a strong focus on relationality, it is fitting that the method for the data gathering process hinged on a relational encounter with the participants followed by extensive engagement with the dialogue of the

⁶⁶⁰ Naresh Pandit, “The Creation of Theory: A Recent Application of the Grounded Theory Method”. *The Qualitative Report* 2, no. 4 (1996), <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR2-4/pandit.html/pandit.html#panditref> accessed 9/12/2012

⁶⁶¹ Strauss and Corbin, *The Basics*, 57.

⁶⁶² Pandit, “The Creation”.

⁶⁶³ Glaser and Strauss, *The Discovery*, 5.

⁶⁶⁴ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 182.

transcripts of those encounters. The transcribed interviews of these relational encounters were examined line by line and there began to emerge from the dialogue aspects that were seen to be integral to, or constitutive of, the research argument, and others that served to illustrate aspects of this argument.⁶⁶⁵ A small sample of the line by line examination of one of the interviews is cited to illustrate how this process was accomplished (Table 9).

Table 9 – Initial Analysis

Item	Transcript	Emerging Aspects of Dialogue
3/12	<p>A: Ok, that's good, so leading onto that, what do you think it means to be whole as a human being?</p> <p>B: I guess, not having something that's happened in your past, dogging you or you know keeping you from going forward, I guess that's what it is, and I guess also it's to assure that person that, that maybe they're not the only one's, that God loves them and, and that he can, he can answer their questions and sometimes there is no answer to the question</p> <p>A: Exactly, lots of times</p> <p>B: And</p> <p>A: That's the frustrating thing isn't it?</p> <p>B: And but yeah, maybe, I don't know, just re-affirm God's love and, yeah I guess that's</p>	<p>(wholeness) Not having something from the past keeping you from going forward Assure them God loves them</p> <p>God has the answer Sometimes there is no answer</p> <p>Re-affirm God's love</p>
3/13	<p>A: Ok, yeah, so how do you think God would describe human wholeness? What do you think God says is human wholeness?</p> <p>B: Oh, human wholeness</p> <p>A: Yeah</p> <p>B: Human wholeness. Someone that's, I guess relying on God, someone that, needs him totally.</p> <p>A: Ok</p> <p>B: Someone, human wholeness well it's certainly not in our own selves, we haven't got it, but you know</p> <p>A: That's right</p> <p>B: Only from the God perspective do we get that wholeness</p>	<p>Wholeness is someone relying on, totally needing God</p> <p>Wholeness not in ourselves</p> <p>(wholeness) Only from God</p>
3/14	<p>A: Yep, ok that's, that's good, yeah, so, and that's how you want your people to understand God? As somebody who</p> <p>B: Has the answers yeah, and we need him, cause I guess I think to myself, without him,</p>	<p>God has the answers We need him Without him we are, I am nothing</p>

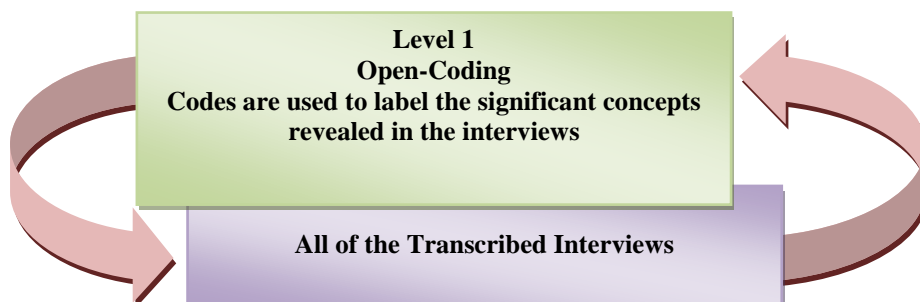
⁶⁶⁵ Ibid., 182.

	you're nothing, I'm nothing, yeah	
3/15	A: So it's that relationship with him B: Right yeah	
3/16	A: That is the key, yeah, ok, so how will you know if your clients are growing spiritually? Like so how will you know if your people are B: I guess by the fruit in their life, yeah, by what they're doing how they're, what they're saying, what they're A: Yeah B: How they're acting	(wholeness seen) by fruit in their lives, what they are doing, saying How they are acting

Level 1 - Open Coding

This small sample illustrates how the line-by-line process began to yield aspects of the dialogue that could be integral or constitutive to the research questions. The open coding then progressed as illustrated by the diagram below (Figure 12):

Figure 12 - Level 1 - Open-Coding



Open coding is achieved by questioning the data – “how, when, where, what, why” – and developing the open codes that indicate the answers to these questions. The open codes so derived are the building blocks of Grounded Theory research. The progression of developing concepts is illustrated below, again using the small section of one of the transcripts used previously. The process from the transcript, to integral or constitutive aspects of the dialogue, to concepts can be seen in Table 10.

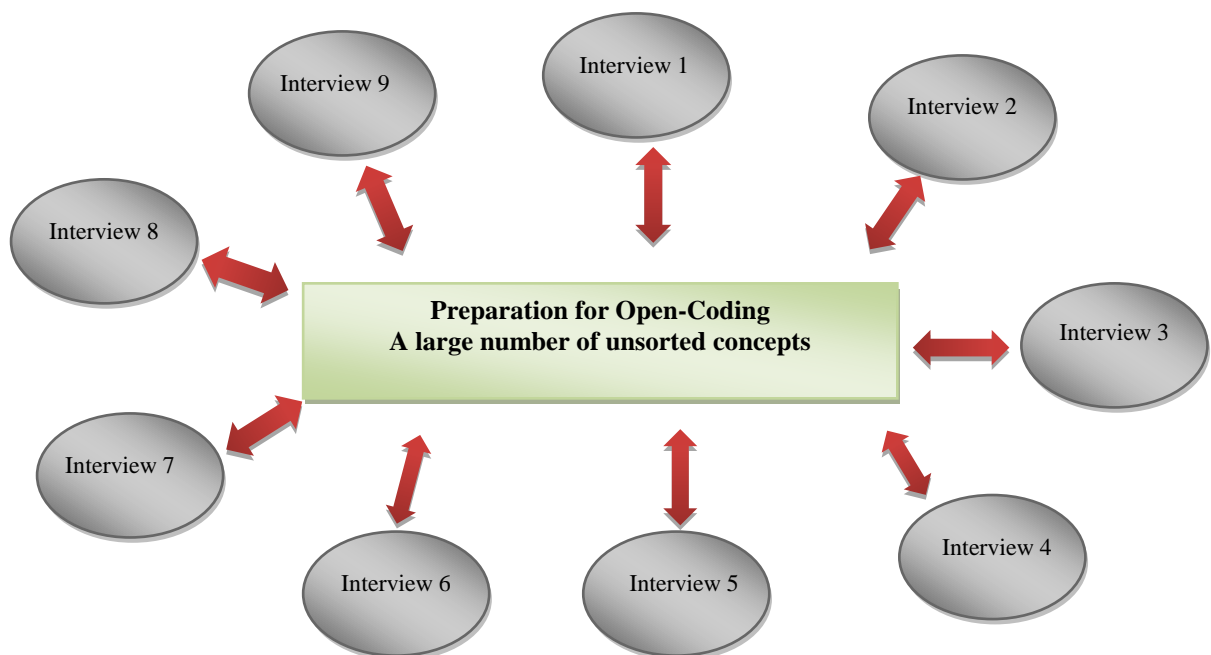
Table 10 – Concepts

Item	Transcript	Emerging Aspect of Dialogue	Concepts
3/12	<p>A: Ok, that's good, so leading onto that, what do you think it means to be whole as a human being?</p> <p>B: I guess, not having something that's happened in your past, dogging you or you know keeping you from going forward, I guess that's what it is, and I guess also it's to assure that person that, that maybe they're not the only one's, that God loves them and, and that he can, he can answer their questions and sometimes there is no answer to the question</p> <p>A: Exactly, lots of times</p> <p>B: And</p> <p>A: That's the frustrating thing isn't it?</p> <p>B: And but yeah, maybe, I don't know, just re-affirm God's love and, yeah I guess that's</p>	<p>(wholeness) Not having something from the past keeping you from going forward</p> <p>Assure them God loves them</p> <p>God has the answer</p> <p>Sometimes there is no answer</p> <p>Re-affirm God's love</p>	<p>Wholeness – being free from past</p> <p>God loves you</p> <p>God has answers</p> <p>Sometimes no answers</p> <p>God loves you</p>
3/13	<p>A: Ok, yeah, so how do you think God would describe human wholeness? What do you think God says is human wholeness?</p> <p>B: Oh, human wholeness</p> <p>A: Yeah</p> <p>B: Human wholeness. Someone that's, I guess relying on God, someone that, needs him totally.</p> <p>A: Ok</p> <p>B: Someone, human wholeness well it's certainly not in our own selves, we haven't got it, but you know</p> <p>A: That's right</p> <p>B: Only from the God perspective do we get that wholeness</p>	<p>Wholeness is someone relying on, totally needing God</p> <p>Wholeness not in ourselves</p> <p>(wholeness) Only from God</p>	<p>Wholeness – relying on God</p> <p>Wholeness not in ourselves, only from God</p>
3/14	<p>A: Yep, ok that's, that's good, yeah, so, and that's how you want your people to understand God? As somebody who</p> <p>B: Has the answers yeah, and we need him, cause I guess I think to myself, without him, you're nothing, I'm nothing, yeah</p>	<p>God has the answers</p> <p>We need him</p> <p>Without him we are, I am nothing</p>	<p>Wholeness not in ourselves only from God</p>
3/15	<p>A: So it's that relationship with him</p> <p>B: Right yeah</p>		
3/16	<p>A: That is the key, yeah, ok, so how will you know if your clients are</p>		<p>Wholeness seen in the way people do life</p>

	<p>growing spiritually? Like so how will you know if your people are</p> <p>B: I guess by the fruit in their life, yeah, by what they're doing how they're, what they're saying, what they're</p> <p>A: Yeah</p> <p>B: How they're acting</p>	<p>(wholeness seen) by fruit in their lives, what they are doing, saying</p> <p>How they are acting</p>	
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This process was applied to all the transcripts of the interviews and the concepts were listed as they emerged. This level of analysis yielded a large number of unsorted concepts (see Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Preparation for Open-Coding



These unsorted concepts began to reveal similarities and differences that emerged from the individual interviews. The table below (Table 11) indicates this process, and shows how the concepts derived from the aspects of the dialogue identified in the line-by-line analysis were categorised into open codes. The illustration below demonstrates this progression for all the participants' responses to the questions asked about "wholeness":

Table 11 – Open Coding

Concepts	Open Codes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling is to make people spiritually, emotionally and physically whole. • Wholeness is to have wisdom to the right choices , be emotionally loving not weird and to be stable. • Wholeness is functioning well, being happy and peaceful, being connected and being a blessing. • The evidence of wholeness is in right choices, faithfulness, character traits and fruit of the Spirit. • God’s perspective of wholeness is knowing who you are, being at peace with yourself, confidence and rest in God, not performing or struggling or being what others want you to be. 	<p>Counselling is to nurture wholeness and is seen in Godly character traits.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholeness is Christlikeness. • Wholeness is to be like Jesus. • Wholeness is the internal transformation into the likeness of Christ. • Wholeness only comes from God. • Wholeness is healing in body, soul and spirit. 	<p>Wholeness is the internal transformation into the likeness of Christ.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholeness is being free from past hurts. • Wholeness is being free to embrace new things. • Wholeness is the past dealt with and moving forward. • Wholeness is relying on God totally. • Wholeness is walking in newness of life. • Wholeness is walking in victory. • Wholeness is having value because of God’s love. 	<p>Wholeness is relying on God to set us free from the past and move us forward into newness of life.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete wholeness unattainable. • Wholeness not possible until Jesus comes back. • Becoming whole is a challenge. 	<p>Becoming whole is a challenge and will not be fully accomplished in this life.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholeness can be nurtured. • Wholeness is the aim of the pastor. • Aim of counselling is to set people free, be whole and healed. • Aim of counselling to see them set free, change their thinking, facilitate change. • Aim of counselling to see people set free from past hurts. • Aim of counselling to change thinking 	<p>Wholeness of the people is the aim of the pastor who nurtures and counsels them to freedom and healing.</p>

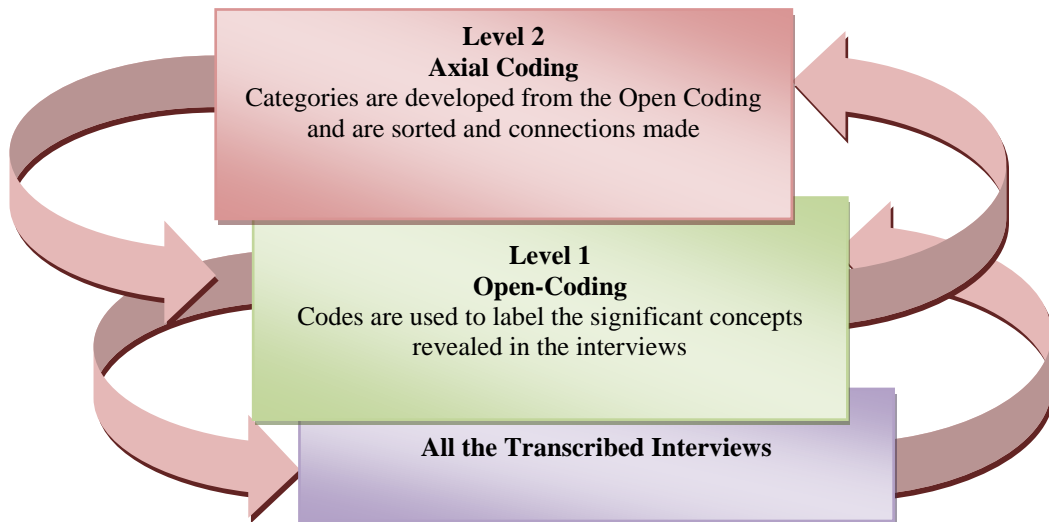
<p>patterns find healing of the soul.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim of counselling is to help people see correctly. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have broken souls. • People need fixing – have needs. • People need help. • The moving ahead of some COC churches has been stunted because of broken people. • Human value is found in God’s love for us. 	<p>People have broken souls and, without healing, will remain stunted.</p>

As seen from the above illustrations, as the open codes emerged, patterns began to emerge that then provided the data for the next level of analysis, the axial coding.

Level 2 – Axial Coding

Axial coding represents the second level of analysis and the progression through the levels is illustrated in the diagram below (Figure 14):

Figure 14 – Axial Coding



It is worth noting here that, as indicated by the arrows, this is not necessarily a strictly linear process although, for the sake of clarity for the reader, this report is following a sequential

pathway. In practice, the interaction between the levels has been much more fluid than predictive.

The process of axial coding involved scrutinising the open codes and subsuming these into axial codes. However, it is warranted here to explain the rationale, as well as the process, of this phase in the data analysis. Although the data analysis of Grounded Theory⁶⁶⁶ “grounds” the research objectively in the data represented by the actual words and phrases of the transcribed interviews,⁶⁶⁷ this methodology also recognises the subjective aspects of engaging with this data.⁶⁶⁸ It is here that the reflexivity of the researcher is a contributing factor in enabling the nuances of the experiences described by the participants to bring an authenticity to the analysis of the phenomenon. Also, in accordance with the Grounded Theory methodology, the engagement with both the objective data and the subjective experiences:

- allows the theory to emerge without the “forcing” that could result from analysing the objective data alone;
- continually reflects on the people and contexts from which the categories have emerged to avoid the separation of the codes and categories from the actual stories⁶⁶⁹ of the real people who had participated in the interviews.

Therefore, in order not to lose the nuances and insights that these real stories contained, not only were the codes examined, but the stories of the participants⁶⁷⁰ were also considered to

⁶⁶⁶ Hunter et al., “Navigating the”, 7, write of the tenets of Grounded Theory that include the “requirement for conceptualisation and theory development. Description is not enough to qualify research as valid GT analysis”. Also, “theories must be ‘grounded’ – that is derived from social reality”.

⁶⁶⁷ The grounding of the data in the actual words and phrases is indicative of the hermeneutical approach.

⁶⁶⁸ This engaging with the “subjectivity” of the data reflects the phenomenological approach.

⁶⁶⁹ Grubs, “Reimagining Grounded”, 87.

⁶⁷⁰ It is worth noting here that, although appropriate ethical clearance was obtained and the participants have given permission for their stories to be used, these stories, as representing the honest disclosures of these pastors, are held as sacred by the researcher. Although the recorded dialogue is considered “data” for the purposes of this

illustrate more subjectively the topics being discussed.⁶⁷¹ Hence, the table that follows (Table 12) illustrates the process of the analysis, as illustrated by the explanations and tables above while also noticing the phenomenological interpretation of the data. In this table, two categories, one relating to the participants' doctrinal convictions and the other to their perceptions of personal "wholeness", are offered as illustration of the axial coding process.

Table 12 – Axial Coding

Open-Codes	Axial Codes
The Participants' Doctrinal Convictions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distinctive Trinitarian doctrines of Pentecostalism are experiential and relational. • Pentecostalism is Holy Spirit led. • Pentecostalism is primarily an oral tradition. 	<p><i>These pastors' theology emphasises experiential relationship with a Trinitarian God, understood as knowing God as Father, receiving salvation from Jesus Christ and being Spirit baptised by the Holy Spirit.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pentecostal experiences give power and life to the believer. • A personal relationship with God, the Holy Spirit can meet human needs. 	<p><i>These pastors' theology emphasises the Biblical premise that the transcendent power of God to guide and transform is available to humanity through personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation is all that is needed for growth and wholeness. • Wholeness is accomplished through Biblical teaching on relationship with God. • Teaching and demonstrating relationship with God resulting in transformational change is the pastor's role. 	<p><i>The primary agenda of the ministry of these pastors is to bring people to personal acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship with God through the application of the word of God is significant in the process of transformational change, specifically by renewing the cognitive processes. • Personal relationships with God and others is the key to right living. • Counselling is about nurturing wholeness. • Wholeness is evidenced in Godly character traits. 	<p><i>Counselling encourages the engagement with God's work of grace evidenced by Godly character traits, and wholeness.</i></p>

research, it is recognised that, at a deeper level, it is personal experience. Hence, any direct quotes from the transcripts have been de-identified and treated with due respect.

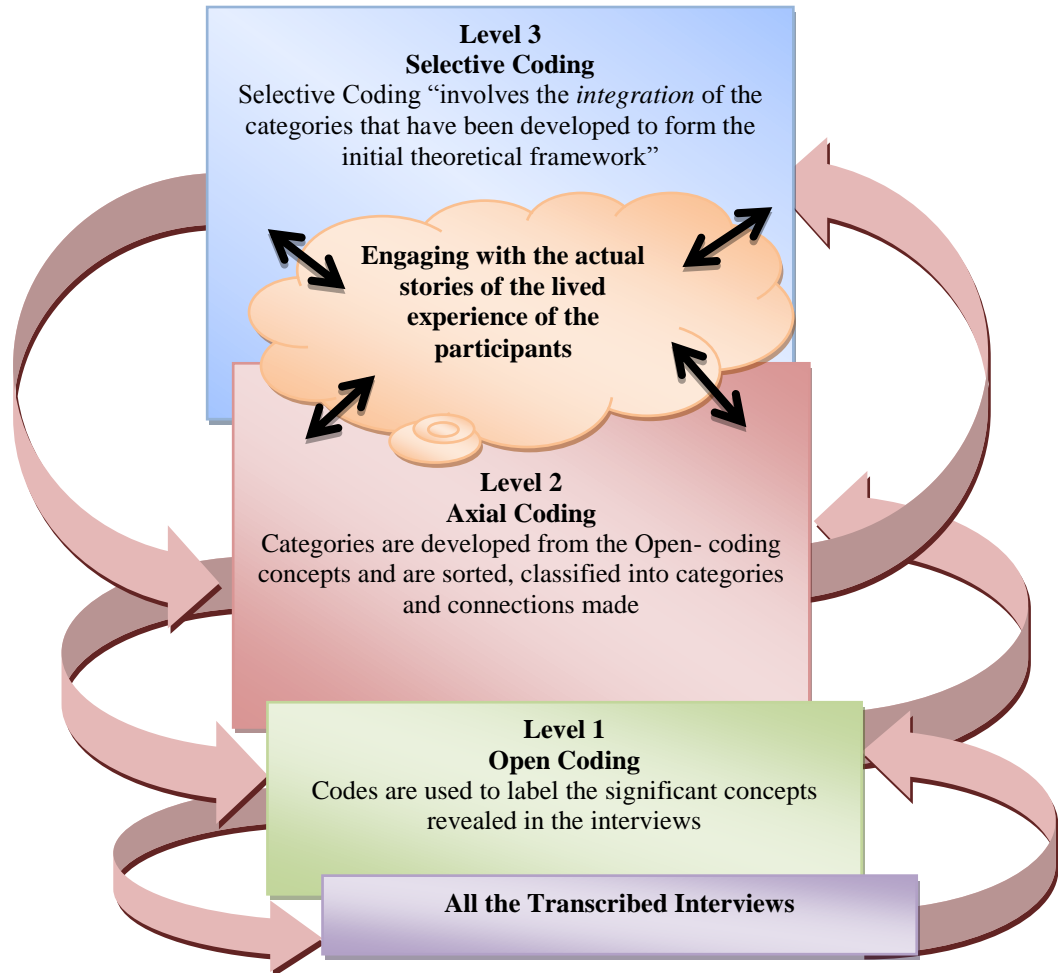
⁶⁷¹ Evidence of these considerations will be provided further in this chapter.

The Participants' Perceptions of Human Wholeness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pastor desires to see his people pursue wholeness. • Wholeness equates to freedom and healing. • The pastor's method is nurturing and counselling. • God to set us free from the past. • God moves us forward into newness of life. 	<p><i>The pastor seeks to create an environment where the people can rely on God to do the internal transformational and wholistic healing.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have broken souls. • Peoples' broken souls need to be healed and grow. • It is a challenge to pursue personal wholeness. • The challenge to pursue wholeness will continue until life's end. • Spiritual growth happens progressively. 	<p><i>Wholistic growth is a challenge and people with broken souls achieve this growth progressively.</i></p>

Level 3 – Selective Coding

The selective coding process involved developing categories that captured both the objective and subjective aspects of the participants responses recorded in the axial coding. The diagram below (Figure 15) illustrates how this process of engaging with both the data and the actual stories led to the formulation of the selective codes.

Figure 15 – Selective Coding



At this level, categories emerged from the axial coding process through the examination and constant comparison of the codes until “saturation” was reached:

Common to all grounded theorists is the knowledge that one ceases the relentless pursuit of data when theoretical saturation is achieved: (1) no new or relevant data are emerging regarding a category, (2) development of the category’s properties

and dimensions can withstand variations in the context of the phenomenon, (3)
the relationships amongst categories are well established.⁶⁷²

The table below (Table 13) tabulates the process from the axial code to the five Conceptual Categories that have emerged from the data analysis.

Table 13 - Selective Coding

Selective Codes				
Conceptual Category 1.	Conceptual Category 2.	Conceptual Category 3.	Conceptual Category 4.	Conceptual Category 5.
Theological/doctrinal convictions relating to the characteristics of an experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons are held by all the pastors.	Human wholeness is obtained by an acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ and the continuing pursuance of relationship with Him.	The “anointing” of the Holy Spirit is the therapeutic power of pastoral counselling praxis.	The therapeutic relationship is understood differently in different pastoral contexts with a tendency towards it being understood as a relationship dependent on the pastor’s personal power and anointing.	The pastors’ balanced sense of self, developed through his/her relationship with God and others, contributes to the pastoral counselling relationship’s capacity for transformational change.
Axial Codes				
<i>i. These pastors’ theology emphasises experiential relationship with a Trinitarian God, understood as knowing God as Father, receiving salvation from Jesus Christ and being Spirit baptised by the</i>	<i>i. The primary agenda of the ministry of these pastors is to bring people to personal acknowledgment of the salvific work of Christ.</i>	<i>i. The transformational power of a one-on-one therapeutic relationship is a specific form of anointing from God.</i>	<i>i. The pastoral counselling relationships, as practiced by the pastors, varied from hierarchical to highly relational according to the situation and the</i>	<i>i. The very nature of the pastoral counselling relationship means there are varying levels of engagement and these can become emotionally draining if</i>

⁶⁷² Judy Boychuk Duchscher and Debra Morgan, “Grounded theory: Reflections on the emergence vs. forcing debate”. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 48, no.6 (2004): 610.

<i>Holy Spirit.</i>			<i>personality type of the pastor.</i>	<i>not properly identified and managed.</i>
<i>ii. These pastors' theology emphasizes the Biblical premise that the transcendent power of God to guide and transform is available to humanity through personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.</i>	<i>ii. Counselling encourages the engagement with God's work of grace evidenced by Godly character traits, and wholeness.</i>	<i>ii. Pastors recognise their lack of formal counselling training but acknowledge the presence of the power of the Holy Spirit when they counsel.</i>	<i>ii. Pastors recognise their lack of formal counselling training and have developed a variety of creative ways to meet the psychological and emotional needs of their people including referring to others.</i>	<i>ii. Pastors develop resilience and the capacity to contain the therapeutic relationship appropriately through a deepening relationship with God and an understanding of self and the other.</i>
<i>iii. Choosing to be led by the Holy Spirit, seek intimacy and day-to-day communication with him means experiencing his love and grace.</i>	<i>iii. The pastor seeks to create an environment where the people can rely on God to do the internal transformational and wholistic healing.</i>		<i>iii. Pastors have a strong conviction that the Holy Spirit anoints them with transcendent power and ability to minister to their peoples' needs.</i>	<i>iii. Experience teaches pastors to rely on God and support people rather than succumbing to the expectations of the congregation.</i>
<i>iv. A closer connection with God is central to the ministry of these pastors who understand that this loving relationship has the capacity to give value and purpose to the individual enabling them to love and serve</i>	<i>iv. Wholistic growth is a challenge and people with broken souls achieve this growth progressively.</i>			

<i>others.</i>				
v. <i>The conviction that God is good, trustworthy, unconditionally loving and graceful is essential for a pastor.</i>				

By way of explanation of the above table, a detailed discussion of the Conceptual Categories identified is warranted here. These categories relate to:

1. the theological/doctrinal convictions that were strongly expressed by all the pastors;
2. the understanding of human wholeness they conveyed;
3. the theological understanding that the “anointing” of the Holy Spirit is the therapeutic power of pastoral counselling praxis;
4. the understanding of the various forms of the therapeutic relationship practiced by these pastors;
5. the impact of the pastors’ own journeys on the therapeutic quality of the relationships they have with their people.

The researcher observed the intensity and depth of these convictions as each pastor discussed the connection between their relationship with God and their counselling ministry. While the transcript analysis resulted in the identification of codes relating to these categories, the researcher was cognisant of the individual contexts, including not only the actual environment of the church represented by these pastors, but also the gender, temperament, experience etc. of the person expressing the beliefs. Hence, the theory that eventually emerged displayed the “validity, reliability, efficiency and sensitivity”⁶⁷³ of Straussian Grounded Theory, as well as

⁶⁷³ Hunter et al., “Navigating the”, 8.

incorporating the Constructivist Grounded Theory tenets of “situating the theory in time, place, culture and context” and “reflexively rendering the researcher’s position”.⁶⁷⁴ This combination was considered to reveal a more accurate reporting of the phenomenon.

Conceptual Category 1

“Theological/doctrinal convictions relating to the characteristics of an experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons are held by all the pastors”.

Keeping in mind that all these pastors belong to a strongly evangelical, Pentecostal movement, the analysis of the interviews has confirmed the tenets of this theological stream, as discussed in Chapter 4. The Biblical assertions of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual gifts bestowed on the believer are the themes that were woven throughout the interviews. A sample of the pastors’ stories illustrating these theological and doctrinal beliefs are told here and serve to uphold this category. These beliefs were expressed in the interviews in a variety of ways.

When discussing ministry with those who seek help Peter⁶⁷⁵ spoke of prayer as being a vehicle for “bringing God into the situation” whereby “they could see, through prayer, that God was there and God loves you, no matter what”.⁶⁷⁶ Joan⁶⁷⁷ and Sue⁶⁷⁸ called this “prayer counselling” and spoke of their reliance on the Holy Spirit for guidance during this process. Joan also emphasised the importance of an internalised picture of Jesus as being significant in

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁶⁷⁵ “Peter” – not the participant’s real name.

⁶⁷⁶ 1BA09 – 1/33.

⁶⁷⁷ “Joan” – not the participant’s real name.

⁶⁷⁸ “Sue” – not the participant’s real name.

the healing process.⁶⁷⁹ Mary⁶⁸⁰ similarly wanted her counselling ministry to encourage her people to “have a personal relationship with God”, her conviction being that this experience would lead to “making the right choices”.⁶⁸¹ She further expressed her belief that the baptism in the Holy Spirit made “all the difference, giving them the power to overcome and to live the life, and to hear from God more clearly, and to sense his presence more”.⁶⁸² Dan and Lisa⁶⁸³ believed that God was so intimately involved with humanity that he “tends to deal with certain things in certain peoples’ lives at a particular point”.⁶⁸⁴ Marg⁶⁸⁵ continued this doctrinal theme and identified the importance of “being transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ - it’s like internal transformation, brings wholeness to our soul and to our inner person.”⁶⁸⁶

Marg and Betty⁶⁸⁷ were among those who shared stories of the personal experiences that shaped their theology - and their ministry. Marg’s personal testimony was that, “It was only as that picture (of God) changed and healing came into my life that I started to see Father God in a different light, a different perspective”,⁶⁸⁸ while Betty shared that, “I think the Holy Spirit has really helped us (her and her pastor-husband). We really depend on his (God’s) Spirit and inspiration and knowledge and the faith that he is with us and guiding us”.⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁷⁹ 9JA09 – 9/41; 3DA09 – 3/24.

⁶⁸⁰ “Mary” - not the participant’s real name.

⁶⁸¹ 2CA09 -2/10.

⁶⁸² 2CA09 – 2/24.

⁶⁸³ “Dan and Lisa” – not these participants’ real names.

⁶⁸⁴ 8IA09 – 8/52.

⁶⁸⁵ “Marg” – not the participant’s real name.

⁶⁸⁶ 4EA09 – 4/8.

⁶⁸⁷ “Betty” – not the participant’s real name.

⁶⁸⁸ 4EA09 - 4/15.

⁶⁸⁹ 5FA09 – 5/31.

In response to the questions relating to their own theological understandings, all the pastors mentioned the various aspects of Pentecostal doctrines that were the foundations of their faith and ministry and all interspersed their discussions with Biblical quotes to illustrate their answers. Some specific incidences were Hilda's⁶⁹⁰ comments that, "It (Pentecostalism) has a lot about movement in the Holy Spirit".⁶⁹¹ John and Jill⁶⁹² used the Scriptures to make their point stating that, "There is a balance in life, in wholeness anyway, because whoever the Son sets free will be free indeed".⁶⁹³ For Peter "it's about teaching people those relationships - it's not you that lives but Christ that lives in you, therefore whatever I do unto the least of His brethren I have done to Christ".⁶⁹⁴

To summarise this category, the key thoughts expressed in these examples are those of:

- i. the experiential nature of the relationship with God that is foundational to a theology that, while not explicitly Trinitarian, understands the three persons of the Trinity to be vitally and experientially involved in the lives of humanity by:
 - bringing healing through the experience of the salvation wrought by the Son;
 - empowerment to change through the power of the Holy Spirit;
 - transformation through the love and grace of the Father;
- ii. the availability of this transcendent power to all believers;
- iii. an ever-deepening awareness of the Divine that comes with commitment to God;

⁶⁹⁰ "Hilda" – not the participant's real name. 6GA09 – 6/77.

⁶⁹¹ 6GA09 – 6/77.

⁶⁹² "John and Jill" - not these participants' real names.

⁶⁹³ 7HA09 – 7/3. "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

⁶⁹⁴ 1BA09 – 1/84. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20: "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me"; Matthew 25:40.

- iv. the value of the individual that can be truly appreciated through an ever-deepening relationship with God;
- v. an unquestioning belief in the goodness of God.

Conceptual Category 2

“Human wholeness is obtained by an acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ and the continuing pursuance of relationship with Him”.

Having established in Conceptual Category 1 that the theological and Biblical tenets of the pastors interviewed for this study are closely aligned with those common to the Pentecostal stream of theology, in Conceptual Category 2, the pastors’ understandings of human wholeness are reported. One of the questions covered in the semi-structured interview related to the pastors’ perceptions of the aim of counselling. The initial response of the majority of the pastors was to express the idea that the eventual purpose of counselling would be to accomplish wholeness. This led to discussions of the nature of human wholeness, a dialogue which suggested, either implicitly or explicitly, a progression from salvation to a balance among body, soul and spirit. It is from this discussion that this Conceptual Category has emerged, as illustrated by the following examples.

Several pastors explicitly expressed their belief that the work accomplished by the cross of Jesus Christ was the beginning or defining point for the journey to human wholeness. It was therefore clear to Mary and Peter that, as local church pastors, evangelism was their primary task.⁶⁹⁵ This doctrinal position was justified by scripture-based arguments that declared that

⁶⁹⁵ 2CA09 – 2/39.

“former things have passed away, so I teach people that their past has been dealt with at the cross”.⁶⁹⁶ Also indicating this evangelistic focus, John and Jill claim that “our vision is to see lives transformed by the power of the cross”.⁶⁹⁷

Although these pastors acknowledged the fundamental need for salvation in the quest for human wholeness, others also saw the brokenness of the human soul and valued the counselling aspect of their ministry, seeing it as helping to foster wholeness through an awareness of God’s grace. Joan was one of these and she described this wholeness as “being at peace with whom you are, and being able to have that confidence and rest in God without having to perform or struggle to be what everyone else wants you to be”.⁶⁹⁸ Similarly, Sue understood human wholeness as “Someone that’s, I guess relying on God. Someone that needs him totally”.⁶⁹⁹ Hilda called this wholeness, “wholistic wholeness”. She continues to explain: “I think he’s (God’s) more coming from the fact of, well, the person is complete in his eyes but then there’re issues that need to be dealt with”.⁷⁰⁰

The pastors also recognised the importance of creating an atmosphere where wholistic growth could happen although they had different ways of doing this. Hilda’s pathway to wholistic growth was to encourage her people to “have a look within themselves, to try and get them to look at what God’s word says, things that they could do to build up their inner man, their inner strength, their relationship with God, and out of that they find the their own answers”.⁷⁰¹

Dan and Lisa provide “a culture in our church of safety and wholeness that they (their people)

⁶⁹⁶ 1BA09 – 1/89. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

⁶⁹⁷ 7HA09 – 7/12.

⁶⁹⁸ 9JA09 – 9/26.

⁶⁹⁹ 3DA09 – 3/13.

⁷⁰⁰ 6GA09 – 6/15.

⁷⁰¹ 6GA09 – 6/25.

can come into, and as God raises things to the surface, you deal with them”.⁷⁰² Dan and Lisa’s comment also indicated that process of healing and wholeness takes time, an understanding shared by Joan who stated that, “as far as I am concerned the only person that can heal is the Holy Spirit. You can’t just say to someone, ‘That’s done now. Just get on with your life’. There’s a process that they need to go through and you just have to walk them through it and just love them through it”.⁷⁰³ Similarly, it was clear that Betty valued caring for the people to whom she ministered: “People have got to know you love them; it’s a really authentic caring to reach a person. They want to know that you really care about their welfare and them, and that takes time”.⁷⁰⁴

The key understandings gained through these examples are those that demonstrate:

- i. The doctrinal belief that influences these pastors to consider salvation centred on the death and resurrection of Christ as the foundation of human wholeness;
- ii. The understanding that the pastor’s role is to encourage the process of wholeness that happens as his people allow the sanctifying grace of God, the Holy Spirit to work in their lives;
- iii. The pastor’s development of an environment where her people can experience relationship with God, resulting in growth and wholeness;
- iv. The acknowledgement that this growth and wholeness takes time.

Conceptual Category 3

“The “anointing” of the Holy Spirit is the therapeutic power of pastoral counselling praxis and relationship”.

⁷⁰² 8IA09 – 8/15.

⁷⁰³ 9JA09 – 9/45, 46.

⁷⁰⁴ 5FA09 – 5/22, 23.

When considering the two former Conceptual Categories, a general consensus of beliefs, and the expression of those beliefs was observed. In this category, the unanimous conviction of the participants that the counselling relationships in which they participate includes the presence and power, or “anointing”, of the Holy Spirit was observed.

Many of the pastors interviewed expressed a lack of formal counselling training and often expressed feelings of inadequacy but all were convinced that God had led them to their ministry and that He continued to enable them. These convictions can be heard as Dan and Lisa talked about “hearing from God and just operating in the discernment (from the Holy Spirit) of the moment”.⁷⁰⁵ This couple also shared that, “you’ve got to be so in tuned with God and have discernment to know the wisdom, to know how to handle their (the client’s) soul, to be Spirit led rather than method led”.⁷⁰⁶ John and Jill expressed their depth of conviction by sharing that “we have the dream in us . . . Jill is the counsellor more so, that’s her passion”.⁷⁰⁷

The concept of “anointing” was discussed by Marg who expressed her counselling ministry as being “a message that I feel I carry about the father heart of God”.⁷⁰⁸ She continues to elaborate on the counselling process by saying that “it’s just a totally different anointing (to other ministry roles), really, and if you don’t counsel for a while I find that you can actually move out of that anointing. You have to intentionally get back into that sort of anointing because counselling is very much listening to people”.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁵ 8IA09 – 8/21.

⁷⁰⁶ 8IA09 - 8/27, 8/88.

⁷⁰⁷ 7HA09 – 7/73.

⁷⁰⁸ 4EA09 – 4/18.

⁷⁰⁹ 4EA09 - 4/35, 36, 37.

The key understandings illustrated by the examples recorded in the transcript are those that demonstrate:

- i. In keeping with the strong doctrinal beliefs discussed in Conceptual Category 1, especially the understanding of a relationship with God that is both experiential and mutual, these pastors see themselves as being “called” by God to the ministry of encouraging transformational change;
- ii. These pastors’ doctrinal beliefs also bring the conviction they are “anointed”, that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is essential for the relationship to be therapeutic.

Conceptual Category 4.

“The therapeutic relationship is understood differently in different pastoral contexts with a tendency towards it being understood as a relationship dependent on the pastor’s personal power and anointing”.

In the previous categories, the similarity of Christian commitment and theological understanding by the participants was noticed as a significant aspect of the data. However, in this category, although all the pastors freely discussed their relationship with the Holy Spirit and the spiritual power gained from His presence, their stories revealed that their individual expressions of personal power, specifically in relationships that were intended to be therapeutic, varied quite considerably. From the researcher’s perspective, this was important in understanding the influence of such factors as context, personality type and locality on the quality and nature of the therapeutic relationship these pastors practised in the course of their ministry.

It is also noted in relation to this category that “counselling” was the term used in the interviews to designate a one-on-one relationship that was deemed to be therapeutic. As well as this term having different meanings,⁷¹⁰ and varying values, for those being interviewed, the concept of only one-on-one relationships having a healing capacity was brought into question. From the perspective of this research, and its endeavour to more fully understand the capacity of certain relationships to be healing, some new insights into this phenomenon have emerged to form this category and are illustrated by the following examples from the transcripts.

The power dimensions of the relational styles observed both in the transcripts, and from the actual interview experiences, ranged from hierarchical to highly relational. The evidence of this range of relational power styles is reported here, beginning with the hierarchical samples. Peter is keenly aware that his personality and style of relationship is seen as “powerful”. “I’m a fairly powerful guy, I’m very opinionated. There’s no ifs, buts or maybes about that...”.⁷¹¹ However, he also adds, “most people say they like the fact that I’m real”.⁷¹² Mary’s concept of relationship power is somewhat more egalitarian but she does not deny that the pastoral role carries a certain amount of “expert” power with it. “I don’t put myself above anybody; I’ve just got a different role than them; ‘let me help you walk part of this journey with you; let me help you make the decisions that perhaps God would have you make’, because some of them have no idea”.⁷¹³

⁷¹⁰ Definitions of “counselling” and “pastoral counselling” are to be found in Chapter 1, where this has been explored in some detail.

⁷¹¹ 1BA09 – 1/34.

⁷¹² 1BA09 – 1/16.

⁷¹³ 2CA09 – 2/16, 17.

Hilda sees her “role as a bit of an advocate, not so much me trying to heal the person or make the person whole but trying to get the most out of that person”.⁷¹⁴ Similarly, Betty describes her role as “just trying to be more of, I guess, an advisor, trying to give them some skills”.⁷¹⁵ Joan, although calling herself “a bit of a mother really, a nurturer”, looks at her power from the congregation’s perspective. “Whether I am preaching, or if I am in a one-on- one, they would probably still look at me in that pastor authority role”.⁷¹⁶ Dan and Lisa understand their position as being “one part of their (the client’s) journey”.⁷¹⁷ At the “highly relational” end of the “use of power” continuum, Marg is comfortable saying, “I know my limitations and I feel good about referring people”.⁷¹⁸

These examples indicate the diversity of the nature of the therapeutic relationships and management of power within these documented encounters, but, as the participants described their day-to-day ministry, a wide variety of insight and creativity was revealed. The following excerpts from the interviews will illustrate this praxis diversity. As discussed in Chapter 1, the official policy of COC, as directed by their legal advisors, is that COC pastors do not counsel⁷¹⁹ and they must inform their clients that they do not counsel but that they do pastoral care. It is this policy to which Sue is referring when she comments, “well I don't counsel. . .”. She then qualifies this by saying, “but you know, I guess if anyone comes to me it's probably God's word that I try and tell them. Yes, actually, now that, now that I say that, I think, when you say counsel ok, I do, I don't think of it as counselling but as a one-on-

⁷¹⁴ 6GA09 – 6/24.

⁷¹⁵ 5FA09 – 5/2.

⁷¹⁶ 9JA09 – 9/38.

⁷¹⁷ 8IA09 – 8/36.

⁷¹⁸ 4EA09 – 4/80.

⁷¹⁹ This policy holds unless the pastor has sufficient formal training to be registered with Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia, or a similar counselling registration authority.

one, to bring people closer to God”.⁷²⁰ Mary also expresses this conceptualisation of the relationship: “You can counsel in varying ways, forms of counselling. As I’m just talking to people I’m counselling without them realising I’m counselling”.⁷²¹

Without calling what she does “counselling”, Joan talks about “discipling, mentoring or coaching”, explaining that these help to “build up that relationship - we just do life together and it’s my discipleship group”. However, this discussion with Joan reveals that there are instances when she is deeply involved with her people: “With the one-to-ones that come in for help, really just mainly a listening ear. Most people in that situation I find just want to be heard, really, you are just letting them unpack, helping them work out where to go to next and whether you can help them or not you might just refer them then to where they need to go”.⁷²²

Similarly, Marg shared that she has discovered a strategy where “currently I am actually seeing a lady for a block of time that will finish - we set a start date and an anticipated end date. I have never been quiet that intentional before but, just in this season, I have been. It’s working really, really well ‘cause it keeps us focused. I find the intention I have for a block of time has been very, very fruitful - I would like to do it again”.⁷²³

Betty and her husband mostly refer their counselling clients to professionals, finding that “it would just be when someone would come and say, ‘Help, I’m stuck!’ that we would have a talk. If it’s not something that you could easily see, or that you could just do this, then I would

⁷²⁰ 3DA09 – 3/1, 2.

⁷²¹ 2CA09 – 2/40.

⁷²² 9JA09 – 9/17, 18, 24.

⁷²³ 4EA09 – 4/2, 3, 4.

say, ‘I think you need to have some help’”.⁷²⁴ Hilda and her husband do pre-marriage counselling but, like Betty, for other issues they quickly assess what is needed. “If it’s something fairly minor we can counsel them but if it’s something major and needs professional help then we just look for a counsellor, preferably a Christian one”.⁷²⁵

John and Jill connect with their people in more proactive ways through pastoral visitation, and training and teaching programs,⁷²⁶ while Dan and Lisa have chosen to employ twenty-first century technology to regularly “sms” their people: “It doesn’t have to be involved, it’s just a form of connection that, personally, for me, is not too demanding but it still lets the person know that they are cared for, and it does eliminate co-dependency. You can send them an encouraging word and it can lift them. If you need to go further you can, in other ways in other communication”.⁷²⁷

Peter, understanding his personality and style claims that, “I’m a man that does most of my counselling from the pulpit . . . in the sense that I teach in such a way to give people the answers as they go along, so I would give Biblical advice . . . more than counselling. I look more at their transformation, like the renewing of the mind and that takes time . . . I don’t see instant things”.⁷²⁸

⁷²⁴ 5FA09 – 5/56.

⁷²⁵ 6GA09 – 6/10, 11.

⁷²⁶ 7HA09 – 7/95.

⁷²⁷ 8IA09 – 8/7, 13.

⁷²⁸ 1BA09 – 1/8, 9.

Hence, the key understandings gained from the transcripts, illustrated by these examples demonstrate that:

- i. the personal power demonstrated by the participants ranged from hierarchal to highly relational;
- ii. personal relationship power is understood, implicitly or explicitly, in a variety of ways;
- iii. due to a lack of formal training and the constraints of the “no counselling” policies of their organisation, pastors have used a diversity of innovative ways in which to provide a therapeutic space for their people.

Conceptual Category 5.

“The pastors’ balanced sense of self, developed through his/her relationship with God and others, contributes to the pastoral counselling relationship’s capacity for transformational change”.

As explained in Chapter 1, in the rationale for this research, I had observed that pastors regularly engage in counselling relationships in the course of their day-to-day ministry. However, I also observed that not only did these pastors lack training in counselling skills but they had very little understanding of the need for self-care. They often suffered because of pressure from their congregations but even more so, from unrealistic expectations they imposed upon themselves. These pastors frequently and willingly engaged in highly complex relationships, often to the detriment of their own physical, emotional and mental health and the well-being of themselves and their families. However, as the participants shared, the dominant discourse of the stories was that of wholistic growth and formation.

This category highlights the nature of the pastors' struggles as well as providing evidence that reports on the creativity and resilience they have employed. Most of the pastors acknowledged that the experience of one-on-one counselling can be emotionally draining, especially when, through inexperience or lack of training, their boundaries are somewhat blurred. This was Betty's⁷²⁹ and Joan's experience as they spoke of the one-on-one counselling relationship being draining, playing on your mind a lot more, and being a greater responsibility than some of the congregational tasks such as preaching.⁷³⁰ Dan and Lisa also distinguished the one-on-one relationship from other pastoral roles and commented that, "You've got to be acutely aware of what hat you are wearing at the time. You do have to be aware of boundaries in the (counselling) relationships. The more a person shares their pain with you - and they may not have shared it with anyone else in the whole world - does establish something and you have to be watchful of how intimate that becomes".⁷³¹ John and Jill were concerned about "sounding cold", but they, along with all the pastors interviewed, had developed a boundary of not accepting responsibility for the behaviour or actions of their clients, adding that "you've got to leave it to God or you get really depressed with them".⁷³² All the pastors interviewed recognised that they were learning from experience to gauge the level of the relationship and set appropriate boundaries. This was variously expressed as now "being far more detached from the emotions of the situation";⁷³³ as now being able to walk away from a session and forget about it;⁷³⁴ as now "not taking it home with you. You do what you can do and it really is up to that person and God".⁷³⁵ Hilda stated that "if it's going to take

⁷²⁹ 9JA09 – 9/13.

⁷³⁰ 5FA09 – 5/28.

⁷³¹ 8AI09 – 8/45, 47.

⁷³² 7IA09 – 7/46, 47.

⁷³³ 4DA09 – 4/26.

⁷³⁴ 4DA09 – 4/28.

⁷³⁵ 5FA09- 5/19.

a lot of emotional energy for me, I tend to think they need extra help that I haven't got what it takes to give them",⁷³⁶ while John and Jill tended to listen to the wisdom of other people in their efforts to manage the intensity of their counselling relationships.⁷³⁷

Despite admitting to counselling, at times, being a draining experience, the data gathered from the interviews indicated that these pastors had developed an enlarged capacity for managing and containing the therapeutic relationship, as indicated by Mary's admission that "I reach the stage that I've gone too far, I'm too tired, I'm hitting the wall". Like her colleagues, she has learned not to do that anymore and has developed "good support people now to help me". She also claims that "the Holy Spirit will show you before (you 'hit the wall'), he'll just keep nudging you, so really it's the Holy Spirit".⁷³⁸ Similarly, Sue has times when she would like to run away but "I go to God for help" to know "what can I do that's helpful to me as well as to them".⁷³⁹ Dan admitted that "it has done my mental health a lot of good realising I can't fix anyone and it doesn't help at all me carrying their burdens - all it does is destroy me. It's been a thousand per cent better for me just re-evaluating or evaluating the way we do things with people the way we minister to people. It's liberating not taking on the responsibility of someone else's pain, but realising you can be a God person in their life to help in bringing them to freedom - it's not your responsibility to get them free".⁷⁴⁰ Both Marg⁷⁴¹ and Joan had

⁷³⁶ 6GA09 – 6/23.

⁷³⁷ 7IA09 – 7/49.

⁷³⁸ 2CA09 – 2/25.

⁷³⁹ 3CA09 – 3/22.

⁷⁴⁰ 8IA09 – 8/40, 41, 42.

⁷⁴¹ 4DA09 – 4/16.

similar stories summed up by Joan's admission that "when we took the church on I felt very inadequate, but I knew I could love these people".⁷⁴²

These pastors have learned, by experience, to recognise the dangers in succumbing to the often unrealistic expectations that are a negative aspect of the pastoring role. Peter discussed how he was able to do this: "I was terribly knocked around. I had to find my way through things like that but I knew God loved me and God cared - when I finally was able to give it all over to God, God brought me out of it".⁷⁴³ "I have got so many, so many things that I do in the church because there's no one else to do it that I can't, I can't spread myself that far",⁷⁴⁴ was Sue's complaint. She continues, "I don't know, I think there's a lot of, a lot of expectation on a pastor's wife, and without him (God), I'm nothing".⁷⁴⁵ Marg shared a similar journey but now has a team of people. She summed up the general sentiments of all those interviewed when she acknowledged that, "In the old days, because there was nobody else in the church who counselled, I had a sort of immaturity, a degree of wanting to see change and sort of driving and pushing. Now I have learned it's only God that can do it and it's really freeing not having to work through the process of having to feel guilty because you were supposed to have all the answers and you don't".⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴² 9JA09 – 9/47.

⁷⁴³ 1BA09 – 1/54.

⁷⁴⁴ 3CA09 – 3/28.

⁷⁴⁵ 3CA09-3/35, 14.

⁷⁴⁶ 4DA09 – 4/29, 71, 81.

The key understandings illustrated by the examples recorded in the transcript are those that demonstrate that:

- i. Being able to identify, manage and contain the levels and complexities of the therapeutic relationships in which they engaged had been an experiential learning process for all the pastors.
- ii. Continual, growing awareness, through practical experience, of their limitations and styles, resulted in these pastors developing relationship skills and approaches that “fit” their context, personality and clientele.
- iii. Continual, growing awareness of the faithfulness of God to meet them in their own struggles resulted in these pastors becoming more effective and less likely to succumb to external pressures as they interact with their people.

With the development of the five categories that have been examined, above, this level of analysis was completed.

Level 4 – Generation of Theory

Having completed Level 3 of the data analysis from which the five categories have emerged, the final level seeks the generation of a theory. This researcher’s experience in this process is aptly described by Henwood and Pidgeon as a “constant interplay between data and conceptualisation” that includes:

the assumption that the relationship between the theory and the data will, at first, be ill-defined; acceptance of the need to be tolerant of, and indeed seek out and explore, ambiguity and uncertainty in this relationship when constructing a category system that is both relevant to the problem and fits data; and the exhortation to researchers to avoid premature closure or fixing of theory whenever

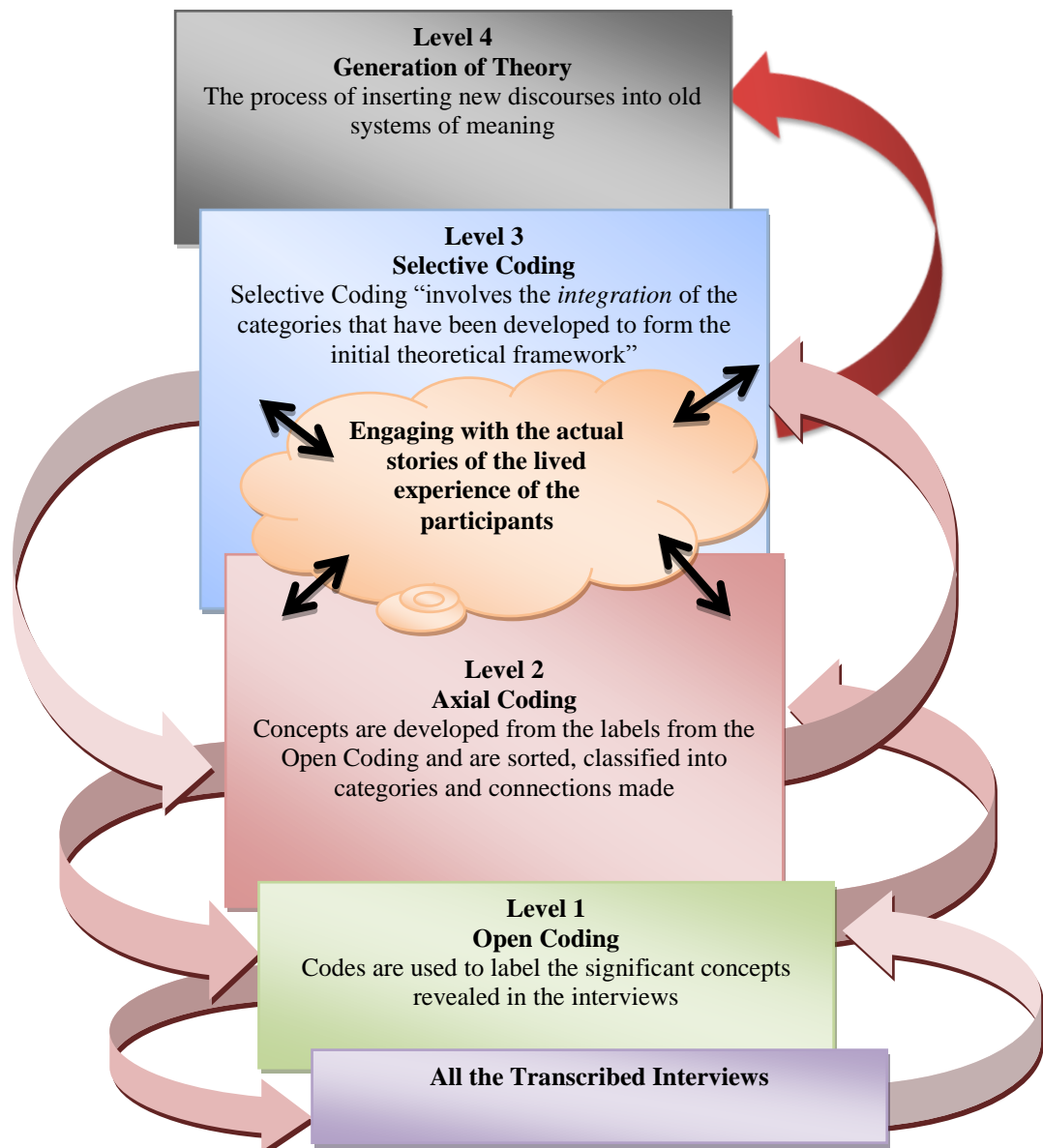
new insights arise. In practice, the researcher at first perceives only unstructured chaos in the data, as if looking through unfocused conceptual lenses. But as analysis proceeds, an order is generated, the lenses become more sharply focused.⁷⁴⁷

The Theory

“The relationship conceptualised by pastors as being therapeutic, although embodying aspects of theological and, to a lesser extent, psychological epistemology is, in essence, a dynamic space where together client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*” (see Figure 16).

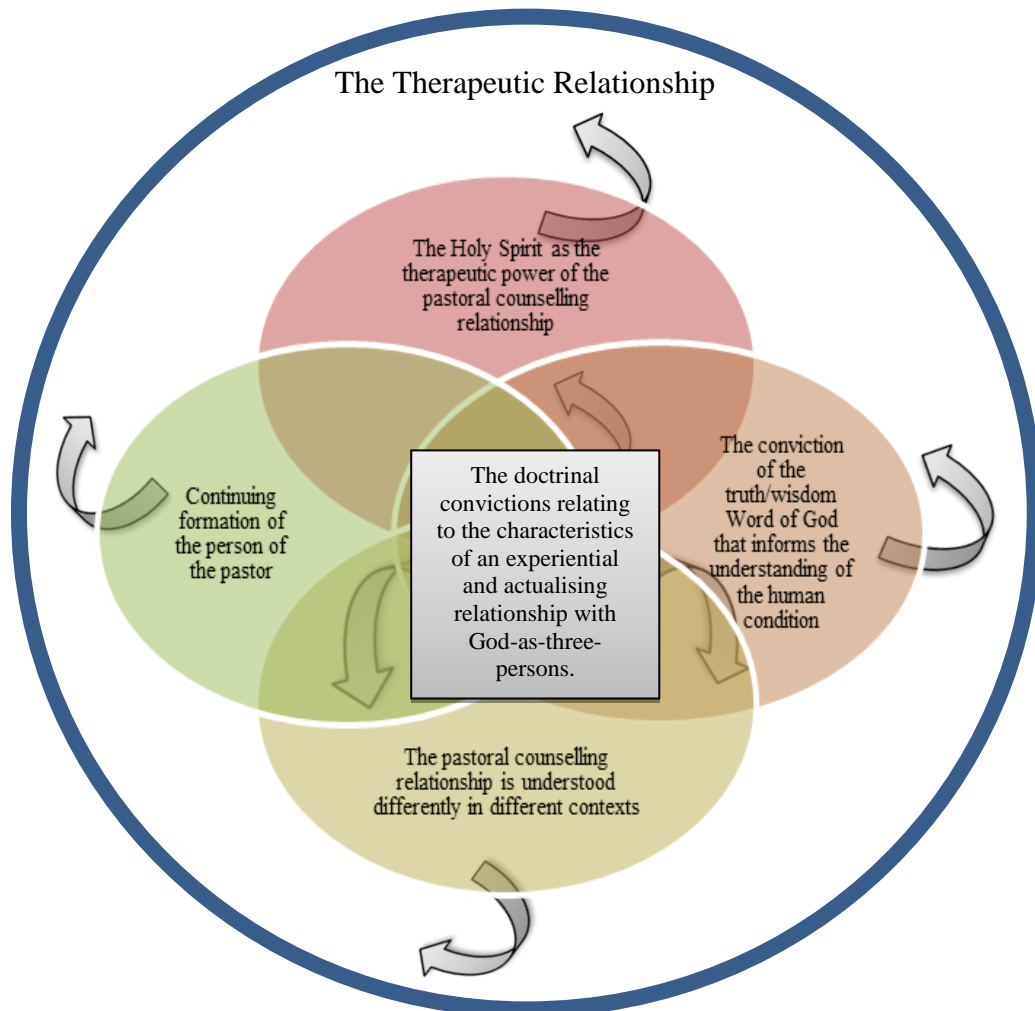
⁷⁴⁷ K. Henwood and N. Pidgeon, “Qualitative Research and Psychological Theorizing”. *British Journal of Psychology* 83 (1992):97-111.

Figure 16 – Generation of Theory



Hence, this theory of the therapeutic relationship presents a combination of essential elements that dynamically interact. These elements are the foundational conviction of the human condition as understood from psychology and the Word of God; the vibrant presence of God, the Holy Spirit, as an active participant in the relationship; the transformed and transforming person of the pastor; and the client who is drawn into the Trinitarian-style “dance”. This is diagrammatically illustrated below in Figure 17:

Figure 17 – The Therapeutic Relationship



This therapeutic relationship as practised by pastors, while not following any particular technique or approach, has rigorous and robust key concepts that make it a very particular therapeutic relationship. These key concepts, as revealed by the data analysis, are undergirded by the doctrinal convictions relating to the characteristics of an experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons. This is seen in the centre of Figure 17 (above) and the arrows indicate the dynamic nature of the interaction between this key

concept and the other factors. The other essential ingredients that make this a unique and vibrant relationship are:

- the Holy Spirit as the therapeutic power of pastoral counselling praxis;
- the conviction of the truth and wisdom of the Word of God, who is Saviour, that informs the understanding of the human condition;
- the continuing formation and transformation of the person of the counselling pastor.

These factors are represented by the diagram as interacting one with the other without being singularly defined. This is to indicate the importance of each of these factors and how they inter-relate.

The final all-embracing circle on the diagram serves to illustrate the inclusive nature of this pastoral, therapeutic relationship and means that this relationship is greater than the sum of its parts.

Hence, this theory purports that a space constructed from these elements interdependently interacting has the potential to encompass a truly therapeutic relationship.

According to Glaser and Strauss, Grounded Theory has only two criteria, namely “that it fits the situation and that it works”.⁷⁴⁸ To these two criteria, Strauss and Corbin added that the theory should be “understandable and general”.⁷⁴⁹ However, for Elliot and Lazenbatt⁷⁵⁰ the

⁷⁴⁸Adeline Cooney, “Rigour and Grounded Theory”. *Nurse Researcher* 18, no. 4 (2010b):18.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid., 18.

focus was on the process of the study, how the study was carried out. In an attempt to satisfy all these scholars, this section will report this research in terms of:

- its practicality;
- the appropriateness for the context;
- its understandability;
- its general application.

The Practicality of the Theory

For theory of relationality to be “practical”, means not only that “it works” but also that it is consistently “do-able” for those who wish to participate in such a relationship. For pastoral counsellors, especially those working in a church setting, the practicality of having a philosophy of relationship that includes the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith would not generally be questioned.

The Appropriateness for the Context

For the same reasons, this theory of the therapeutic relationship is also appropriate for the context as the church and a shared Christian faith is the setting for this research.

The Understandability

Although it is acknowledged that the language used in this thesis belongs to the discipline of theology, and particularly to Pentecostal Christianity, this has been explained earlier in this chapter. It is also acknowledged that, while outside the Christian church setting, this theory of the therapeutic relationship may not be fully understood, it is believed that for the “target audience” this thesis will present a clear picture of the therapeutic relationship.

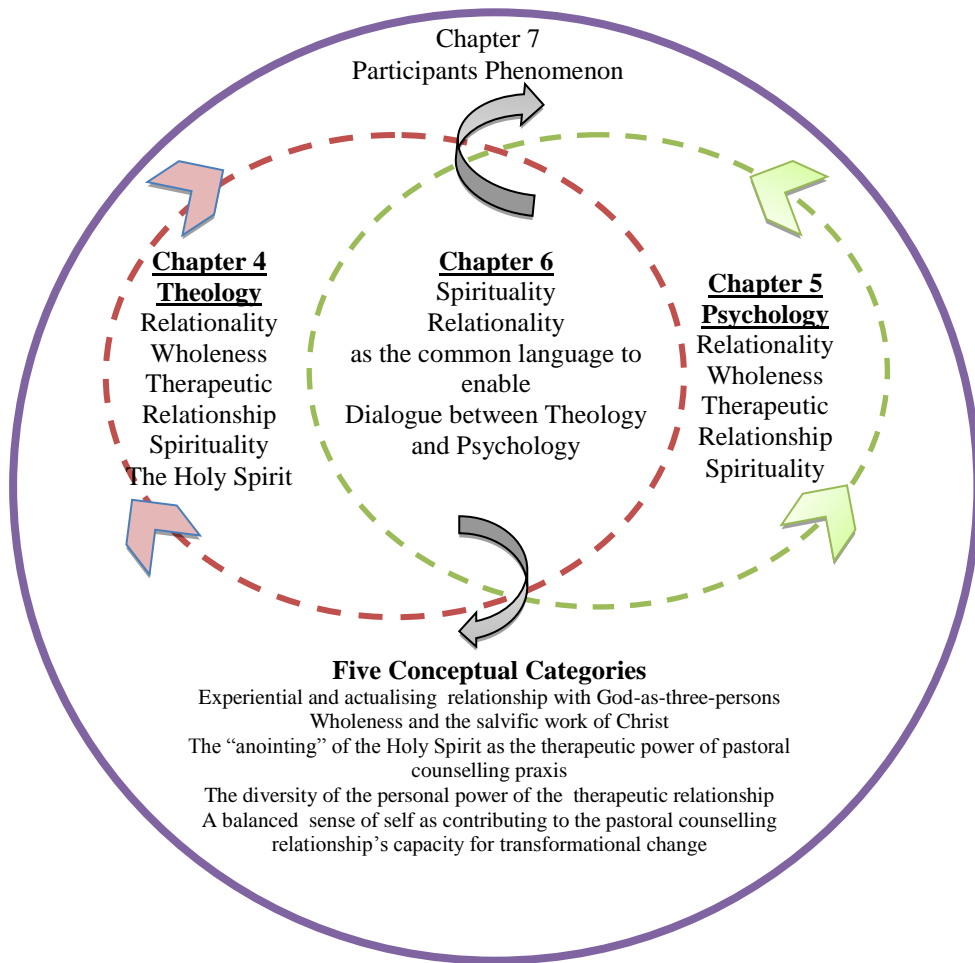
The General Application

As mentioned above, the concepts presented in this study may not be easily transferrable to every context where the therapeutic relationship is a common term and practice. However, the recent acceptance of spirituality as a viable aspect of the human person means that there is considerable tolerance for embracing spirituality, including Divine Spirituality, in areas outside of the church. Hence, the application of this theory could be wider than expected.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a review of the place of this chapter in the overall purpose of this thesis is warranted. This chapter, unlike others, has focussed almost exclusively on the data collected from the participants and the analysis of that data. In the following chapter, a synthesis of the information from each of the chapters, including this one, will be undertaken and a discussion of the findings finalise this research. An illustration of this review is found in the following Figure 18:

Figure 18 – Synthesis of Conceptual Categories



CHAPTER 8 - DISCUSSION

Introduction

In the rationale that prefaced this study the motivators that inspired the thesis topic were explained. It was mentioned that both the researcher's personal experience and the relevant statistics showed that local church pastors suffered a high instance of burnout, which could be attributed to such influences as blurred boundaries and unrealistic expectations from the church. In fact, the interviews with the participants did reveal that, in seeking to create a therapeutic space for the other, these pastors had often experienced self-doubt and struggle but what was significant for this study was that they also told of wholistic, and often profound, personal formation.⁷⁵¹

In addition to this phenomenological aspect of the research puzzle was the conjecture that “counselling practice profits from research into models of human wholeness, therapeutic change and the structure and dynamics of the therapeutic relationship”⁷⁵² and that “responsible ministry is supported and continually inspired by a clearly defined theological framework”.⁷⁵³ Hence, both the lived experiences of the participants and an examination of the relevant theological and psychological elements, form the content of this final discussion of the pastors' conceptualisation of the therapeutic relationship.

⁷⁵¹ Irene Alexander, *A Glimpse of the Kingdom in Academia: Academic Formation as Radical Discipleship* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013), 86, describes “formation” as “the forming of a person for her vocation. It includes a recognition that the person is on an individual journey in which God is already present. It recognises that a person has a vocation, a calling, not just to a career, but to a ministry, in which her gifts are used in the service of others”.

⁷⁵² Chapter 1, 2.

⁷⁵³ Chapter 1, 2.

Research Questions⁷⁵⁴

The Primary Question

The primary question for investigation was:

- How does the pastor conceptualise and practice the counselling relationship?

The response to this question had two aspects, each of which was related to the other. Firstly, “conceptualisation” carries the connotation of the elaboration or explanation of a concept accompanied by a mental formulation. This indicates a practice of reflection for the purpose of reaching a cognitive explanation. As mentioned in earlier chapters, these pastors were not familiar with such a reflective process and the interview questions were deliberately designed to foster a deeper contemplation of their ministry relationships. It is therefore not surprising that, as the participants engaged with the discussion, no single conceptualisation emerged. The various explanations of the therapeutic relationship that were expressed reflected the personal styles and temperaments of the individual pastors and the contexts of their ministries. This then leads into the second aspect of the primary question. The way the participants discussed the nature of the therapeutic relationships in which they engaged was inseparable from their descriptions of their practice of this relationship. These descriptions revealed that, rather than engaging in reflection that leads to a clear and cognitive explanation of the phenomenon that is the therapeutic relationship, these pastors demonstrated a tacit knowing⁷⁵⁵ that informed their practice.

⁷⁵⁴ These questions reflect the ontological position of this research expressed as the appreciation that “people’s knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of this social reality”. They also indicate the axiological perspective of what is taken to be of value in these phenomena. The epistemological position then allows that a legitimate or meaningful way to generate data from such ontological properties “is to talk interactively with people, to ask them questions, to listen to them, to gain access to their accounts and articulations, or to analyse their use of language and construction of discourse”. Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 64.

⁷⁵⁵ Polanyi, “Tacit Knowing”, 601, “There is (1) knowing a thing by attending to it, in the way we attend to an entity as a whole and (2) knowing a thing by relying on our awareness of it for the purpose of attending to an entity to which it contributes. The latter knowledge can be said to be tacit, so far as we cannot tell what the particulars are, on the awareness of which we rely for attending to the entity comprising them”.

Therefore, the answer to the primary question asked by this thesis is that the participants in this study have little conceptualisation of the therapeutic relationship but they were able to describe their practice. As the subsidiary questions are examined these findings will be further elaborated upon.

Subsidiary Questions

The subsidiary questions asked of the participants served to instigate a deeper discussion of pertinent aspects of the primary question. The first of these explored the theological doctrines that relate to the counselling relationship. The particular motifs that shaped these questions were drawn from the theological dialogues around doctrines of God; of the human person; of Spirituality and human spirituality; of the church; and of ministry:

- What is the pastor's theology of person and human wholeness?
- What is the pastor's understanding of the doctrine of God?
- What is the pastor's conceptual and phenomenological understanding of Spirituality and spiritual growth?

As the interview transcript analysis began, it emerged that, in order for these theological thesis questions to be addressed, an understanding of the questions relating to the context chosen for the research, namely:

- How does the environment of *this particular church* influence the pastoral counselling process?
- How does the pastor's understanding of Christian ministry influence the therapeutic relationship?

considerably influenced the participants' understandings of the theology that was foundational to their ministry and to the therapeutic relationships they formed with their people. In the chapter exploring the theological foundations of this study it was proposed that the Pentecostal church could be categorised as a "living" or "oral" tradition.⁷⁵⁶ The interviews confirmed this conjecture as these Pentecostal participants expressed their beliefs and values through narratives rather than in theological terms.

Hence, the answers to these theological questions reveal that the participants have little formal theology that they are able to articulate but that their theology of God and the human person in relationship, reflected in the Grounded Theory⁷⁵⁷ that emerged from the data analysis, is closely linked to their belief in the Holy Spirit as the active agent in the life of the individual believer. These findings will be fully explored further in this chapter.

The questions that prompted the participants to discuss their understanding of psychological tenets were:

- What is the pastor's understanding of psychological human wholeness?
- What is the pastor's understanding of the theory and practice of therapeutic change?

The pastors' answers to these questions revealed that, while the participants had little, if any psychological knowledge, they had considerable tacit knowing that strongly influenced their engagement with their clients. It is these findings that will be foundational to the discussions that follow in this chapter.

⁷⁵⁶ Chapter 1, 42.

⁷⁵⁷ The relationship conceptualised by pastors as being therapeutic, although embodying aspects of theological and, to a lesser extent, psychological epistemology is, in essence, a dynamic, relational space where both client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*.

Reflection on Practice

As indicated by these questions, the thesis structure, including the interviews, focussed on the reflective,⁷⁵⁸ rather than the practice of the pastoral counselling phenomena,⁷⁵⁹ and that this reflection was a new experience for many of the participants. Cross explains this as being common to Pentecostalism:

One significant difficulty with our claim to have encountered God is that we have not done much theological reflection on what our Pentecostal experience means. To be sure, Pentecostal experience commonly means that we are moved to do something in the mission of God and this usually does not mean reflection.⁷⁶⁰

As the interviews progressed and the pastors began to embrace the reflection process, the common themes that emerged were:

- the motivation “to do something in the mission of God”;
- their unique experiences that contributed to this quest.

These reflections of the pastors’ phenomena provided distinctive insight, not only into their ways of developing a therapeutic relationship in their present ministry, but it also served to demonstrate the formation process that had led them to this place. This was then expressed by the theory generated from the Grounded Theory analysis:

⁷⁵⁸ Lonergan, *Method in*, 3, writes: “. . . thought has to be reflection on previous achievement. Such, also, will always remain the one way in which the refinements and subtleties proper to specialized areas will be communicated”. Argyris and Schon, *Theory in*, xix, stress the importance of “what we already know” and of capturing, “in explicit form, the insights, values, and strategies of action that competent practitioners bring to situations they encounter in practice”.

⁷⁵⁹ It is also noted here, that, because the focus of this study was only on the pastors’ experiences of the therapeutic relationship, it is not appropriate here to speculate on the nature or extent of transformational change experienced by the “clients”, this being a separate research topic.

⁷⁶⁰ Cross, “The Divine”, 7.

The relationship conceptualised by pastors as being therapeutic, although embodying aspects of theological and, to a lesser extent, psychological epistemology is, in essence, a dynamic, relational space where together the client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*.

Whether implicitly or explicitly, those who participated in this study demonstrated the belief that the therapeutic relationship holds a Spiritual dimension at its centre. As the data from the interviews was analysed, the bearing of the centrality of the Spiritual on the actual practice of this relationship began to reveal a deeper understanding of the profound possibilities of such a relational encounter.

Epistemological Foundations

For such depth of understanding to be actualised, the epistemological foundations of this research required thorough identification and interpretation. Qualitative research acknowledges that the role of the researcher is to understand every-day or lay interpretations, as well as supplying social science, and in this study theological, elucidations, and to move from these towards an explanation of the phenomenon being investigated.⁷⁶¹

Hence, this chapter will discuss how this research has interacted with:

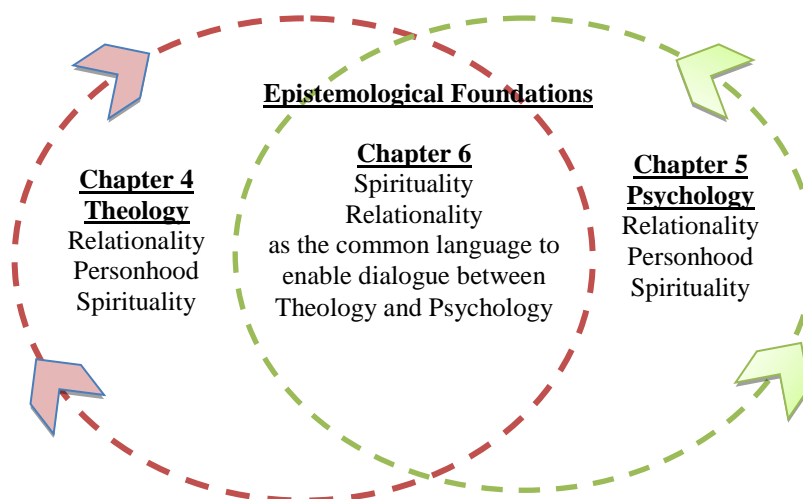
- ancient and more contemporary theology, especially in regard to relationality, personhood and spirituality – informing the theological interpretations;
- classical and contemporary theories of psychology, especially in relation to relationality, personhood and spirituality – informing the social science interpretations;

⁷⁶¹ Mason, *Qualitative Research*, 178.

- the data gleaned from the participant interviews – informing the research of the every-day or lay interpretations.

As indicated by the claims of qualitative methodology above, it was deemed necessary to underpin this thesis with theological and psychological theoretically informed foundations. This has been clearly explained in Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 6 then provided a synthesis that promoted a dialogue between this theological and psychological scholarship. This dialogue became the epistemology⁷⁶² that supported this thesis. Figure 19 below illustrates this aspect of the thesis structure:

Figure 19 – Epistemological Foundations



It is sufficient here to briefly reiterate the argument for this aspect of the thesis structure.

Theological Considerations

A consideration of theology and religious tradition, including Pentecostal doctrines, has resulted in a comprehensive understanding of the theological motifs, identified as relevant to a therapeutic relationship. These motifs, examined in Chapter 4, are:

⁷⁶² Anderson, *Spiritual Caregiving*, 16, calls this particular epistemology “pre-theoretical” based on the assumption that “there is an objective reality called ‘human personhood’ . . . The validity of any pre-theoretical model of human nature is to be judged by how useful and viable the pre-theoretical model is in explaining how the various theoretical models work in dealing with human behaviour”.

- relationality expressed in the covenantal love designated as *agape*,⁷⁶³ a reflection of Trinitarian mutuality;⁷⁶⁴
- personhood founded on the doctrine of the *imago Dei*⁷⁶⁵ and the completeness and wholeness of *shalom*;⁷⁶⁶
- spirituality that understands the human creature as a spiritual being, in relationship with other spiritual human creatures and with God, who is Spirit.⁷⁶⁷

As previously discussed, the pastors in this study were all from the Pentecostal movement, a movement that, at the local church pastor's level, is more of an oral, or at least a non-academic, tradition than one that purports an organised theology.⁷⁶⁸ Hence, most of the participants in this study had no formal theological training. Although these pastors, in the course of the interviews, narrated their understandings of the theological and Biblical sources of their beliefs and practices, it was also considered necessary to examine traditional and contemporary theology in order to focus the study and identify what aspects of this discipline were relevant to the therapeutic relationship. The theological content of this study has also served to provide a "benchmark" against which to evaluate the phenomenological aspects of the study.

⁷⁶³ Chapter 4, 139-143.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁷⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 152-154.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 150-152.

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 143-147.

⁷⁶⁸ Although Kenneth Archer, "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner". *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (2007):307, 308, records that some disagree with the terms "oral" (by favouring testimonies, choruses and prayers over intellectual or critical reflection as the means by which to interpret the gospel), or "non-academic" (that takes the forms of prayers, commentaries, devotional writings and disputations rather than concerned with critical reflection, contextualization or methodological procedure) to describe Pentecostal theology, at the local church level, Pentecostals are still predominantly oral/aural learners. They do theology primarily in narrative forms.

This was deemed necessary as the very nature of any tradition, but especially an oral or non-academic one, is that it becomes vulnerable to misinterpretation as the stories are retold. Although such misinterpretations can be found in all denominations, Yong is particularly discussing Pentecostalism when he claims that “as conducive as the baptism of empowerment has been for Pentecostal missionary and evangelistic success, there have also been problems in how the Pentecostal power has unfolded in the life of the movement”.⁷⁶⁹ As such problems had the potential to influence a conceptualisation of the therapeutic relationship, it was considered important to identify any misinterpretations that may have a bearing on this investigation of this particular relationship. In accordance with this reasoning, the following points of vulnerability are suggested:

- **Traditional Theological and Biblical Practices that are Vulnerable to the Use, and Misuse, of Power and Authority:**

Within the particular church context of this research, the theological and Biblical practices would be categorised as “evangelical”, explained by Morris as deriving from *evangel*, meaning “gospel”:

By definition, an evangelical is someone concerned for the gospel. This means more than he preaches the gospel now and then. It means that for him the gospel of Christ is central. It is, of course, his message and he preaches it constantly. But it is more than a subject for preaching. The gospel is at the centre of his thinking and living.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁹ Yong, *Spirit-Word*, 43.

⁷⁷⁰ Leon Morris, “What Do We Mean by Evangelical?” in John Hitchens, “What it Means to Be Evangelical Today: An Antipodean Perspective. Part 2”. *The Evangelical Quarterly* 76, no. 2 (2004):99.

This concept of evangelism is closely aligned to preaching, an activity seen to be the outworking of “the great commission”⁷⁷¹ where a person with a message is compelled to deliver that message. Relationships generated through preaching and other evangelical pursuits, although often transformational, reflect the agenda of the preacher who seeks to direct the hearer along a specific path. This agenda, the Gospel message of salvation through the Cross of Christ, was clearly stated as the mission of all the pastors interviewed. Although the intent of these pastors was undoubtedly beneficent, the evangelical convictions introduced the authority of a somewhat “parental” voice into the discussions of the nature of the therapeutic relationship.

However, Pembroke describes the particular and unique ministry, that of the care of those who are suffering, as “hospitable” rather than “authoritative” and cautions that this hospitality is not “a subtle invitation to adopt the lifestyle of the host but the gift of a chance for the guest to find his own”⁷⁷²:

If we are to host another and his pain, we must pay attention to him. What stops us from doing this, of course, is our own self-preoccupation. Our minds become so full of our current concerns, random thoughts and action plans that there is no space left to receive the communication of our guest.⁷⁷³

It would appear from these definitions that evangelism and hospitality are at opposite ends of the ministry continuum. In reality, the pastors in this study, and indeed most of those who minister in the local church setting, would be called on to maintain a balance between

⁷⁷¹ Matthew 28:19.

⁷⁷² Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral*, 35.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, 35.

both these roles.⁷⁷⁴ But the concept of balance is always a precarious one. For pastors to consistently hold the space of inviting hospitality for their clients while containing a passion to proclaim “Jesus Christ and Him crucified”⁷⁷⁵ requires a significant depth of awareness of the relational power required for each of these positions.⁷⁷⁶

- **Pentecostal Tenets that Emphasise the Biblical Evidence of the Power Gifts of the Holy Spirit:**

This argument is related to the previous point in that it highlights the implications of practices that arise from deeply held convictions.⁷⁷⁷ For those who were interviewed, and Pentecostals in general, the conviction that undergirds their practice is that the Bible is the Word of God.⁷⁷⁸ As such, from a mostly literal reading unhindered by hermeneutical exegeses, Biblical passages provide these Pentecostals with a rationale for ministry practice, including the engaging with the other in a therapeutic relationship. According to Yong:

Most PC (Pentecostal) Christians expect God’s ongoing intervention in the same manner as divine action was displayed in the lives of the earliest Christians. In their fairly straightforward and literal reading of the New Testament narrative, God healed the sick, cleansed lepers, and raised the

⁷⁷⁴ Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral*, 35, expresses this balance thus: “Pastoral caregivers have been greatly influenced by the Rogerian approach and for some, perhaps many, there is uncertainty about how, on the one hand, to create the empty space in which people may truly be themselves, while, on the other, challenging them to conform their lives more closely to Christ”.

⁷⁷⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:2.

⁷⁷⁶ Although this vulnerability has been explored specifically within the Pentecostal paradigm, similar concerns could be observed across the Christian church as the balance of the power positions represented by traditional held-beliefs and the holding of the hospitable space are identified.

⁷⁷⁷ Yong, *Spirit of*, 41, writes: “In the end, though, many of these emphases on power connect with the Pentecostal commitment to fulfil the Great Commission”.

⁷⁷⁸ Yong, *Spirit-Word*, 263, writes: “The purpose of scripture has always been to witness to the apostolic tradition . . . and its authority lies in the fact that it is only there as an undeniable historical datum, commanding our attention, but it is also here, in our hearts and in our minds, entreating our allegiance”.

dead by the power of the Holy Spirit given on the day of Pentecost—doing all of this in response to the prayers and requests of God’s people. As Jesus taught, “Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you”.⁷⁷⁹

Such Divine spiritual authority and power, described in the Biblical narratives of the early church and accepted by Pentecostals as also being available to believers today, includes the anointing of the Holy Spirit,⁷⁸⁰ prayer and the “laying on of hands”⁷⁸¹ for the purpose of bringing freedom, healing and wholeness to the captive, the broken-hearted and the suffering. However, without the wisdom and discernment that are the evidences of a reflective character, such power and authority can overstep relational boundaries, preventing the depth of trust and connection that is required for true healing to be accomplished. Yong cautions that, “given the fallibility of human beings, discernment will always be provisional. This does not mean that discernment should never occur, only that our discerning should always proceed with allowance for correction”.⁷⁸²

Having now identified discrepancies from a theological perspective, similar considerations from the psychological findings will be explored.

⁷⁷⁹ (Luke 11:9 NRSV); Yong, “Natural Laws”, 963.

⁷⁸⁰ David Garrard, “Leadership versus the Congregation in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement”. *Journal of the European Theological Association* 2 (2009):98, writes: “When Pentecostals use the term (anointing) to describe someone’s preaching or work it is usually in the sense that the individual is clearly blessed of God and that their speaking, their prayer or their work is clearly powerful and efficacious. Yet, often it is used in somewhat of a mystical manner to describe the entire character, life and ministry of an individual who is perceived as being especially used of God in a general as well as in a specific manner”.

⁷⁸¹ Keith Warrington, “Acts and the Healing Narratives: Why?” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14, no. 2 (2006):204, writes of how the practice of laying on of hands “resonates with the Old Testament image of the infusion of God’s power through the hand, indicating an authority to transform without being tainted”.

⁷⁸² Yong, *Spirit-Word*, 226.

Psychological Considerations

On the other hand, a consideration of the psychological elements of the therapeutic relationship also provided points of reference for this discussion. Although the scientific method has, at times, taken scholarship away from the holistic understandings of the human person in relationship with self, God and others, psychological research over the years has also developed theories that have proven to be true and effective for those working in the mental health sectors. Augustine has been credited with saying that “all truth is God’s truth” and the discipline of psychology has certainly provided this research with a sound understanding of:

- the primal human need for relationship as revealed by attachment research and understood from a variety of perspectives by the schools of psychology;
- personhood as demonstrated by extensive research that has developed theories of human affections, behaviour and motivation;
- spirituality that, in the classical psychological traditions, has been labelled “religion” but is increasingly being acknowledged as a transcendence that is a significant aspect of being human and warrants more understanding.

It has already been established that most of the participants in this study have little or no formal training in people helping skills. However, in this postmodern society, “pop” psychology books and internet resources are readily available and Christian bookshops abound with information for pastor’s seeking to enhance their people helping skills. In this way, these pastors have been exposed to various psychological methods and techniques and many of the pastors interviewed indicated that they had, at times, turned to these psychological resources, including referring to professional psychologists, when they needed help with particular clients. Hence, the participants in this study were not entirely unfamiliar with basic psychological “language”. While still considering the Bible to be their preferred

reference book, these people had accepted that the resources found in psychology could be useful, especially when faced with specific mental health issues. However, this cautious acceptance of some aspects of psychological understandings still reflected some of the suspicions of the earlier eras where theology/religion and psychology were considered incompatible, suspicions that are not entirely unfounded. Being a purely scientific discipline, there are claims made by psychology that limit an understanding of the therapeutic relationship as being a holistic connection between client and counsellor. These claims include:

- **An Absence of Appreciation of the Vertical Relationship between Mankind and the Divine:**

Clarkson, in her exploration of the various facets of the therapeutic relationship, identified a “transpersonal” dimension she described as “the timeless facet of the therapeutic relationship which is impossible to describe but refers to the spiritual, mysterious or currently inexplicable dimension of the healing relationship”.⁷⁸³ While spirituality was undefined and superficially explored in comparison to the detailed examination of other relationships investigated in her work, Rowan, among other scholars,⁷⁸⁴ has provided more explicit descriptions of what the “transpersonal” means in the more scholarly arena of psychology:

The transpersonal is the more acceptable name for spirituality, because it makes it clear that while spirituality can take pre-personal (fundamentalist), personal (conventional) and transpersonal forms, the transpersonal has only one meaning. It is clearly transconventional, transrational (in the sense of going beyond formal logic), transintellectual and so forth. Similarly, we do not use the

⁷⁸³ Petruska Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*, 20.

⁷⁸⁴ These scholars also include Wilber, *Integral Psychology*; Cortright, *Psychotherapy*.

word God because, as with spirituality, there can be all sorts of limited or undesirable definitions of God, sometimes leading even to terrorism.⁷⁸⁵

In contrast to a horizontal relationship that seeks connection with God as Trinity, it could be argued that these existential, transpersonal psychologists, who were among those who alerted psychology to the transcendent dimension of the human person, are seeking a spiritual connection through an inward journey towards self-actualisation:

Maslow says (self-actualisation) is a natural process inherent in the very meaning of what it is to be a human being, (and) we occasionally have a peak experience. If we can rise to that occasion and live it and own it, we can get the experience of Being, and let it change our lives. And that experience of transcendence can become a plateau experience, which can, with practice, stay with us. The self we are then talking about is the mystical self, the actualised self.⁷⁸⁶

Through the process of the data analysis, the various participants' interviews revealed that the horizontal relationships these pastors had with their clients could realistically be likened to a working alliance, a person-to-person, developmentally needed or transference engagement, depending on the style and personality of the pastor. It was the conviction of the centrality of the vertical relationship, the connections that both the pastor and the client had with God regardless of the nature of their horizontal relationships, that brought them into disagreement with aspects of the scientific, psychological approaches. These contrasting understandings of

⁷⁸⁵ Rowan, "Existentialism and", 113.

⁷⁸⁶ John Rowan, "The Real Self and Mystical Experiences". *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 23, no.9 (1983): 11. It is noted here that this was Maslow's theory of "self-actualisation" which John Rowan then continued to develop as he elaborated on the inward journey of self-actualisation.

spirituality⁷⁸⁷ and spiritual connection greatly influence the conceptualisation of the therapeutic relationship.

- **The Presupposition that Scientific Enquiry can Explain the Nature of Mankind:**

Closely linked to the different perspectives on the nature of spirituality are the contrasting notions of the nature of personhood brought to this debate by the scientific discipline of psychology and the phenomenology of the participants in this study. While psychology has provided valuable understandings of the human person as a biopsychosocial being, the origins and purpose of humanity have long been the domain of religion. These domains become quite significant when a definition of human wholeness, and a process for achieving it, are sought. Psychological enquiry provides several definitions of personhood, depending on the presuppositions and philosophies of the various approaches. These have been discussed in Chapter 5 but, to summarise here, these psychological explanations of the nature of human personality have been a reflection of the worldview, and the consequential direction taken by the scientific enquiry of the time. Psychodynamic psychology, first researched by Freud during the scientific era marked by the Enlightenment, measured human personality in terms of “normal” or “abnormal”, this being determined by childhood experiences; the modern worldview that birthed behaviourism was also committed to the scientific paradigm where “normal” or “abnormal” behaviour was determined by the conditioning of environment; the advent of existentialism and humanism led therapists to see their clients as having the capacity within themselves to “become”; while therapists who were witness to the rise of

⁷⁸⁷ McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 9, writes: “While no one would want to discount the significance of experiential phenomena in the spiritual life, if these are seen as the defining features then spirituality seems to lose its theological voice. It becomes seen as a particularly powerful expression of human subjectivity. The analysis of spirituality in terms of subjectivity washes out the theological implications of the subject’s transformation – the trace of the divine other vanishes behind one or another aspect of human self-consciousness”.

postmodernism, treated their clients as being people with stories still “under construction”. Each of these psychological approaches to therapy provides a piece of the picture that depicts the nature of personhood. However, while the human spirit was disregarded as a legitimate aspect of the human person, a piece was missing from the picture of the whole human being.

When these scientific explanations of the nature of the human person are then applied to the phenomenon of the therapeutic relationship, this relationship is conceptualised as a horizontal relationship between a therapist and a client. Even when the spiritual is considered, as in the transpersonal psychology discussed earlier in this chapter, it is the inward journey that the therapeutic relationship encourages. The participants in this study brought a different perspective. The interviews demonstrated that their understanding of personhood could not be separated from relationship – with God, self and the other. The analysis of the data revealed a strong conviction that, without the vertical relationship represented by the client’s connection with God, human wholeness was incomplete.

Given the phenomenological nature of this research, it was warranted that any theory or practice that has emerged from either the study of the literature or the data analysis that may have the capacity to negatively influence an understanding of the therapeutic relationship was explored. Having now identified these discrepancies, as this discussion progresses they will be taken into consideration. The next section examines the arena of the therapeutic relationship.

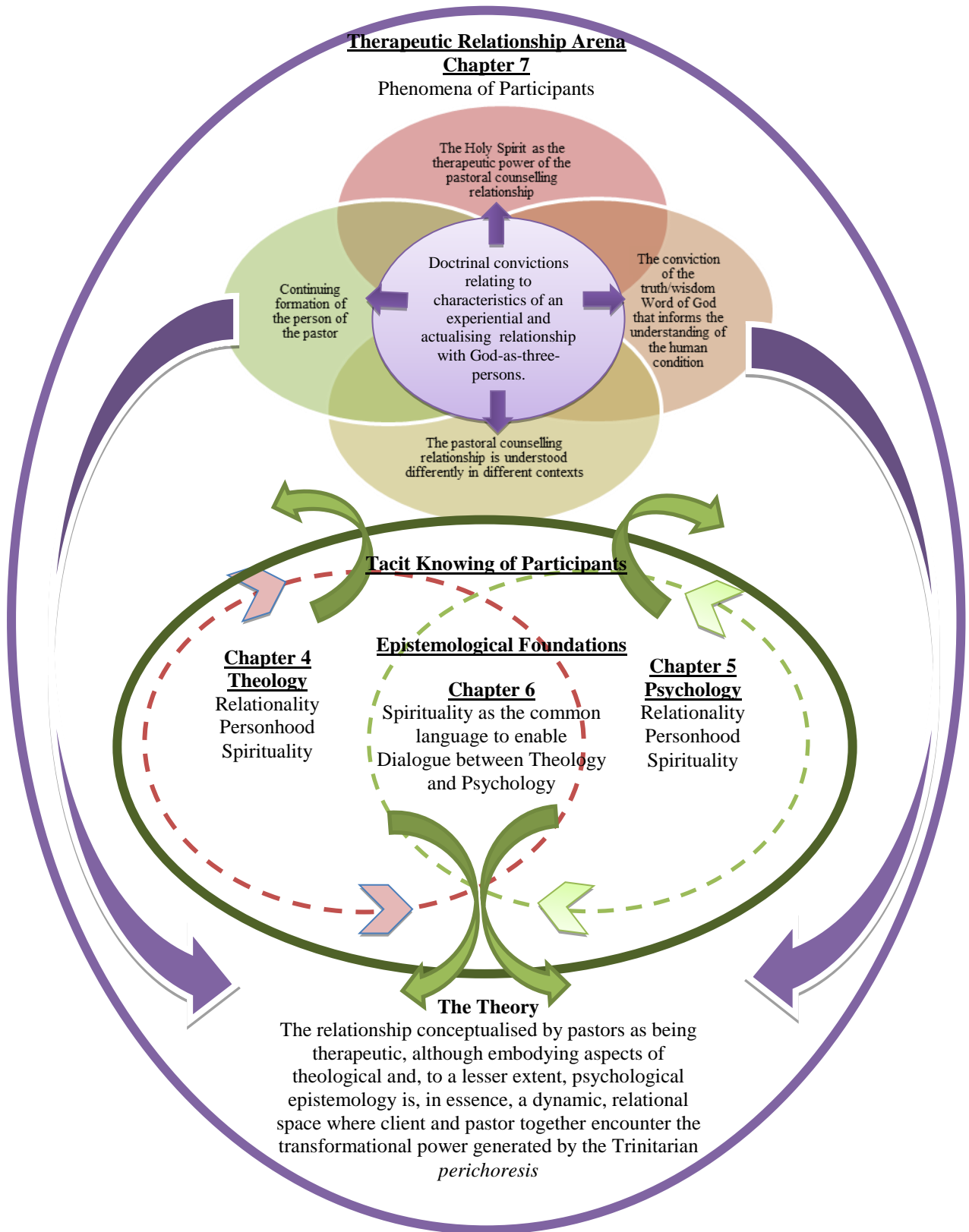
The Therapeutic Relationship Arena

In agreement with Anderson’s comments that, “as academic disciplines, the theological studies of the human person as well as psychological studies by and large begin with abstract,

static and even impersonal concepts”,⁷⁸⁸ this study has included the experiences of “real people” telling stories of their work with other “real people” in order to breathe life into the abstract, static and impersonal academic concepts. These “real people”, being more interested in relationships than scholarship, added their voices to the theology/psychology dialogue with insights that allowed for a deeper understanding of the therapeutic relationship to emerge. This is illustrated in Figure 20 following:

⁷⁸⁸ Anderson, *Spiritual Caregiving*, 12.

Figure 20 – The Therapeutic Relationship Arena



Having examined both the theory and the practical outworking of the therapeutic relationship in the pastoral counselling context, the picture that has emerged is that of a praxis model of this therapeutic relationship. The interviews revealed that the participants were largely in a place described by Schön as being “unaware of the tacit frames they bring to practice and unaware of the need to choose among them”.⁷⁸⁹ He continues, “They (the practitioners) do not attend to the ways in which they construct the reality in which they function; for them, it is simply a given reality”.⁷⁹⁰ Hence, the outcome of this research was not only the generation of a theory of how the participants conceptualise the therapeutic relationship, but, in addition to this, a praxis model of the therapeutic relationship has emerged as the implicit has been made explicit:

By making implicit frames explicit the practitioner becomes aware of alternative ways of framing the reality of practice. The practitioner takes stock of the values and norms to which he or she has given priority and of those that have been left out altogether. Hence, becoming aware of tacit frames creates awareness of more possibilities for action.⁷⁹¹

It is these “possibilities for action” that will now be the focus of this section.

Tacit Knowing

The term “tacit” is described by O’Hara as generally meaning “being hidden whilst at the same time being understood as present”.⁷⁹² He then continues:

⁷⁸⁹ Schön, *The Reflective*, 310.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 310.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 310.

⁷⁹² Denis O’Hara, “Reconciling Technical and Practical Knowledge in Psychotherapy Through Polanyi’s Tacit Knowing”. *Counselling Psychology Review* 27, no. 1 (2012):68.

Ultimately, tacit knowing incorporates three components, the subsidiary particulars, the focal target, and the knower who integrates the former two aspects into a meaningful whole. Polanyi contributes another observation about the nature of tacit knowing by recognising that in attending to a focal target from its subsidiaries, a person relies on that which is already an aspect of the self and thus captures meaning of the external object by *interiorising it*.⁷⁹³

The “focal target” for the participants in this study, as illustrated from the theory generated from the interviews, was the theological convictions that included:

- The therapeutic relationship as being three dimensional incorporating the horizontal relationship of self, the other, and the vertical union with the Divine;
- Personhood and the human condition as being primarily informed by Biblical framework;
- The therapeutic relationship as a dynamic, relational space where together client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*.

The “subsidiary particulars” are described by Polanyi as:

formed from an individual’s wealth of experience, training, and cultural milieu. The result is a depth of knowledge beyond which the individual is fully aware consciously. This knowledge, however, provides the basis for intuiting the possibility of answers to yet unsolved problems. In this structure, the problems themselves are intuited or identified on the basis of subsidiary knowledge or indwelling.⁷⁹⁴

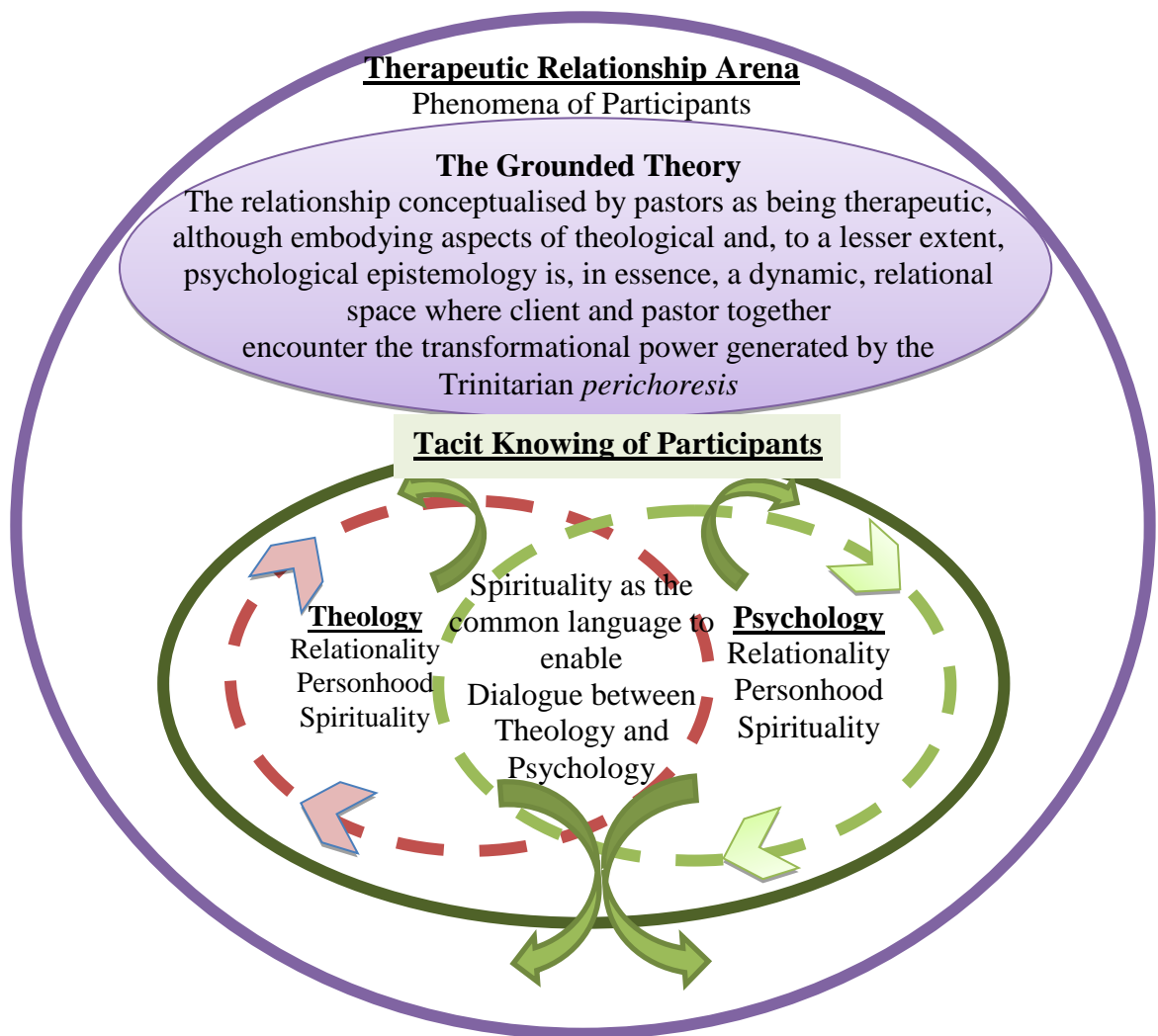
⁷⁹³ Denis O’Hara, “Reconciling Technical”, 68.

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

The advantages of the qualitative methodology employed for this study was that, as the participants shared their experiences, nuances and intuitions, the subsidiary particulars of their knowledge framework were, to varying degrees, explicated. Although the participants, in keeping with the lack of awareness of tacit knowing, saw themselves as being ill-equipped to deal with mental health concerns and spoke of referring some clients to professionals, stories of how these individuals journeyed beside people, supporting them through grief, loss and psychological issues revealed the “practice-based knowledge” discussed by Polkinghorne. He argues that “therapists decisions about what to do and say are informed by, but go beyond, that which is available in their knowledge bases. Therapists' knowledge bases include their own, as well as vicarious, experiences”.⁷⁹⁵ As the participants of this study told their stories and narrated their experiences, the way such “beyond knowledge” was interwoven into their encounters with their people was able to be recognised (see Figure 21).

⁷⁹⁵ Donald Polkinghorne, “Traditional Research and Psychotherapy Practice”. *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 55, no.12 (1999):1429.

Figure 21 – Phenomena of the Participants



Hence, by considering Polkinghorne's⁷⁹⁶ practice-based knowledge and Polanyi's⁷⁹⁷ subsidiary particulars and focal target, it has emerged from the phenomenological aspect of this study that, what these pastors do as they build therapeutic relationships with their clients, is not counselling practice, but counselling *praxis*.

⁷⁹⁶ Polkinghorne, "Traditional Research", 1429.

⁷⁹⁷ Michael Polanyi (with H. Prosch), *Meaning* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 29.

Praxis

Definitions of the term *praxis*, often translated as “practice”, date from the time of Aristotle and vary according to the context in which the term is used. However, scholars of most disciplines insist that, whatever the context, the word *praxis* has significantly greater depth of meaning than “practice” which merely indicates the use of an external means to attain a theoretically defined end.⁷⁹⁸ For the purpose of this study, the definitions of *praxis* that can be applied to this context of the therapeutic relationship are from:

- Archer, who understands *praxis* as dialectically uniting theory, as “knowing”, and practice, as “doing”, into the same activity;⁷⁹⁹
- Tae Young So who discusses “God’s *praxis*” and sees the task of the Christian as empowering people to actualise God’s story in this world.⁸⁰⁰

By considering these aspects of *praxis*, together with Anderson’s definition that adds “a dialectical process of internally related events from which a result dynamically emerges”,⁸⁰¹ the following sections will examine the emergent dynamic that has been the significant discovery of this investigation.

⁷⁹⁸ Anderson, *Spiritual Caregiving*, 18.

⁷⁹⁹ Kenneth Archer, “A Pentecostal”, 303, writes: “Praxis is an epistemological view which unites theory and practice. Actions give rise to and shape beliefs, and beliefs shape and inform activities. Praxis embraces the notion that theory and practice are really inseparable and mutually informing . . . Instead of theory leading to practice, theory becomes, or is seen in, the reflective moment in praxis. Praxis then dialectically unites practice (doing) and theory (knowing) into the same activity”.

⁸⁰⁰ So, “Pentecostal Spirituality”, 260, writes of “God’s praxis”, describing it as “the unity of God’s vision and action. Pentecostal spirituality seeks God’s praxis as harmonizing spiritual vision with action”. He continues by claiming that “Pentecostal spirituality is to empower people to participate in God’s praxis and to actualize God’s story in this world”.

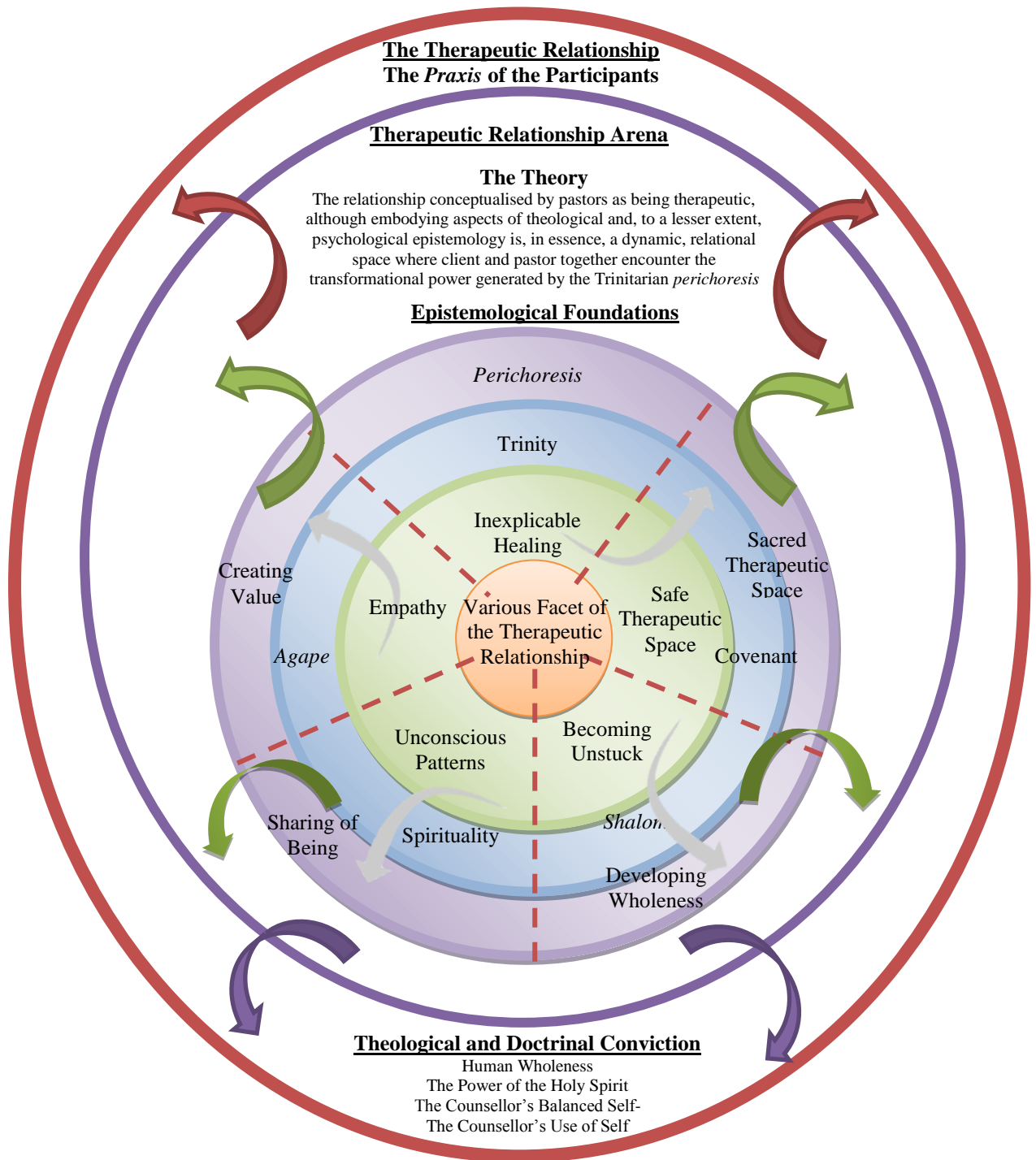
⁸⁰¹ Anderson, *Spiritual Caregiving*, 18.

The Participants' *Praxis* of the Therapeutic Relationship

Having established that the participants of this study employed “tacit knowing” in their encounters with their clients, the next task of this thesis is to make these tacit frames explicit, thereby creating an awareness of more possibilities for action.⁸⁰² In this particular case, the “possibility for action” is the delineation of a *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship for the pastoral counselling context. Firstly, as an initial step towards this model, the participants' *praxis* of the therapeutic relationship is diagrammatically represented below (Figure 22):

⁸⁰² O'Hara, “Reconciling Technical”, 69.

Figure 22 – The Praxis of the Participants



The Inner Circle

The inner circle contains the afore-mentioned epistemological foundations, synthesised from the dialogue between the disciplines of psychology and theology as reported in Chapter 6.

This synthesis was accomplished by using Clarkson's facets of the therapeutic relationship⁸⁰³ as a framework and the diagram developed in Chapter 6 is used here to illustrate this synthesis. The epistemology that has emerged from this synthesis serves as the theoretical "knowing" element. The arrows here indicate "*praxis* as dialectically uniting theory, as 'knowing', and practice, as 'doing', into the same activity".⁸⁰⁴

The Median Circle

The median circle contains the phenomena of the participants, as explained in Chapter 7. The theory⁸⁰⁵ generated from this study synthesised the five conceptual categories, into the final theory. This then satisfied the Grounded Theory methodology. However, given that the key term of Grounded Theory methodology is "emerging" and that great care is taken to avoid forcing the data into a particular theoretical mould, the theory that has emerged from the data analysis of this research has proven to be only part of the picture.

In fact, as the data analysis proceeded, it was discerned that the conceptual categories that were synthesised into the theory also traced the development of these pastors' therapeutic relationships and it was here that the evidence of *praxis* was found as defined by:

- the vertical relationship described by So as "God's *praxis*" of "harmonizing spiritual vision with action"⁸⁰⁶/ The power of the Holy Spirit,⁸⁰⁷

⁸⁰³ Clarkson, *The Therapeutic*.

⁸⁰⁴ Archer, "A Pentecostal Way", 303.

⁸⁰⁵ The relationship conceptualised by pastors as being therapeutic, although embodying aspects of theological and, to a lesser extent, psychological epistemology, is, in essence, a dynamic, relational space where both client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*.

⁸⁰⁶ So, "Pentecostal Spirituality", 260.

⁸⁰⁷ Conceptual category 3 – "The 'anointing' of the Holy Spirit is the therapeutic power of pastoral counselling *praxis*".

- the internal relationship of uniting “knowing” and “doing”⁸⁰⁸/ Theological and doctrinal conviction; Human wholeness;⁸⁰⁹
- the horizontal relationship of communicative interaction oriented towards shared understanding⁸¹⁰/ The counsellor’s balanced self; The counsellor’s use of self.⁸¹¹

The Outer Circle - The Development of the Participants’ *Praxis* of the Therapeutic Relationship

The outer circle completes the picture founded on the inner and median circles and serves to make the tacit knowing as revealed in the generated theory, explicit. This includes the phenomenological discrepancies, identified during the data analysis, that were discussed earlier in this chapter.

Summary

In this discussion of the research findings of this study, the theory and the data has been analysed to comprehensively provide answers for the questions asked by this thesis. Hence, the results reported in this chapter have provided a clear picture of how the participants in this study have conceptualised the therapeutic relationship they have with their clients. However, to also fulfil the objective of this research to provide those who participate in the pastoral counselling relationship with insights and understandings that will enable them to engage in a

⁸⁰⁸ Archer, “A Pentecostal”, 303.

⁸⁰⁹ Conceptual categories 1 – “Theological/doctrinal convictions relating to the characteristics of an experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons are held by all the pastors” and 2 – “Human wholeness is obtained by an acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ and the continuing pursuance of relationship with Him”.

⁸¹⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. 1. *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1984).

⁸¹¹ Conceptual categories 4 – “The therapeutic relationship is understood differently in different pastoral contexts with a tendency towards it being understood as a relationship dependent on the pastor’s personal power and anointing” and 5 – “The pastors’ balanced sense of self, developed through his/her relationship with God and others, contributes to the pastoral counselling relationship’s capacity for transformational change”.

therapeutic relationship that is both transformational and safe for both counsellor and client, the next chapter will seek to articulate the findings described here into a *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship as encountered in the pastoral counselling situation.

CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION

Introduction

In this, the final chapter of this thesis, the *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship that has emerged from this research will be articulated, with suggestions for further investigation. In a study of this breadth and depth, there will be limitations and in this particular research, these limitations have been recognised and will be addressed in the closing sections of this chapter. However, by way of drawing this research to a close, the various elements that have been designated as facets of the therapeutic relationship practiced within the community that is the Christian church, will be synthesised into a comprehensive model. To accomplish this task, a model of the working alliance devised by Bordin, and mentioned in Chapter 5,⁸¹² will be expanded and adapted to this specific situation. In his formulation of this alliance Bordin proposes:

a formulation of a working alliance between the client seeking change and the therapist offering to act as a change agent that incorporated a mutual understanding and agreement about change goals and the necessary tasks to move towards these goals along with the establishment of bonds to maintain the partners work.⁸¹³

Praxis Model

Choosing Bordin's work as the framework for this *praxis* model will fulfil several outcomes for this research:

⁸¹² Chapter 5, 181.

⁸¹³ Edward Bordin, "Theory and Research in the Therapeutic Working Alliance: New Directions" in *The Working Alliance: Theory Research and Practice*, eds., A. Hovarth and L. Greenberg (New York, NY: Wiley, 1994), 13.

- The framework supports a “working alliance”,⁸¹⁴ a concept that fits well into the pastoral situation. Such a concept has the potential to encompass all that is contained in the varied pastoral counselling work of the local church pastor while the term “alliance” speaks of journeying with the real people with whom they do life;
- The roles of “seeking change”, being a “change agent” and the mutual understanding of the goals of the relationship also find an adaptation in the relationships forged in the pastoral setting. The explicit commitment of Christian ministry is to the Biblical mandate to seek wholeness and identity through relationship with God;
- The establishment of both horizontal (with self and the other) and vertical (with God) relational bonds reflects the focus of this research, particularly as Bordin then further suggests that “the power to achieve change was in good part a function of the strength of that alliance”.⁸¹⁵

For the purpose of this model, the central element will be the “bonds” or the therapeutic relationship. The synthesis of the theological and the psychological as reported in Chapter 6 will form the rationale for this element of the model. Both the analysed data of Chapter 7 and material explored in Chapter 6 will provide insights for the “tasks” component, while the “goals” of this *praxis* model will be designated as transformational change, a concept already mentioned in various places in this thesis. Although all these elements are common to most similar conceptualisations of the therapeutic relationship, the distinctiveness of this model

⁸¹⁴ As will be explained, Bordin’s term “working alliance” does not correlate exactly with the same term in Clarkson’s model although there are many similarities.

⁸¹⁵ Bordin, “Theory and”, 13.

will be in the dynamic inter-relatedness of the various elements that reflect the mutual interaction of the Trinity.

The Therapeutic Relationship - “Bonds”

The Person of the Pastor

- **Theological and Doctrinal Convictions**

Pivotal to this *praxis* model of the pastoral engagement in a therapeutic relationship is the theological and doctrinal convictions of the person of the “counsellor”.⁸¹⁶ “Conviction” is the key word in this sentence and, in this context, means not just cognitive assent to particular action or cause but deeply held values that permeate every aspect of the person’s life. Kelly expresses this as “the existential acknowledgement of the reality of God as light, true, pure, righteous and loving”.⁸¹⁷

Hence, at its very essence, a *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship requires a counsellor whose doctrinal and theological convictions are interwoven into her own life story. In the context of this particular research, the participants revealed that the Biblical narrative was their way of grasping, and making sense of, the whole of God’s inspired, authoritative witness. Hence, the depth and breadth of the participants’ convictions rested in both a commitment to the veracity of the Scriptures, particularly the New Testament narratives, and the unwavering faith in the experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons.

⁸¹⁶ In this section the term “counsellor” will be used to represent the cumbersome, but more accurate, “person engaged in the pastoral counselling therapeutic relationship” to simplify the flow of the text.

⁸¹⁷ Anthony Kelly, “God is Love: A Theological-Moral Reading of 1 John”. *Studia Moralia* 37, no.1 (1999):49.

- **The Counsellors Balanced Sense of Self**

During the process of data analysis, one of the key findings was that, over time, the pastors all experienced significant emotional, psychological and spiritual growth as they engaged in therapeutic relationships with a variety of people. This growth can be understood as formation, the deep inner work that is an on-going seeking of an ever-closer relationship with God, and sanctification that is the promise of the Holy Spirit to those who seek to follow Christ and to be “transformed into his image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord”.⁸¹⁸ However, as already mentioned in the discussion of tacit knowing, it was also discerned that these pastors had not taken occasion to reflect upon this growth or, in fact, to appreciate how their enlarged capacity for relationship contributed to their effectiveness in facilitating transformational change through these relationships.

Hence, the counsellor’s own formation and sanctification is the next important aspect of this *praxis* model for engaging in a therapeutic relationship. This process, however, requires the twofold application to:

- “a balanced sense of self, developed through a relationship with God and others”, understood by Yong as “not only enlightenment of the mind but transformation of the heart and redirection of the will by the Spirit in accordance with the example of Jesus”;⁸¹⁹
- a reflective process wherein lies the possibility for change. Schön explains that:

through reflection, he (a practitioner) can surface and criticise the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a

⁸¹⁸ 2 Corinthians 3:18.

⁸¹⁹ Yong, *Spirit-Word*, 238.

specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty and uniqueness which he may allow himself to experience.⁸²⁰

- **The Counsellor’s “Use of Self”**

The final aspect of this *praxis* model for the engagement in a therapeutic relationship relating to the person of counsellor is the concept of “use of self” described by Omylinska-Thurston and James as:

a vital part of the therapeutic relationship. The terms congruence and empathy from within the person-centred approach and counter-transference from within the psychodynamic approach have been used to describe the therapists’ inner experiences during therapy and their use of these with clients”.⁸²¹

These writers indicate, in psychological terms, the core conditions for the use of the counsellor’s “inner experiences” which are generally considered to be a part of an effective therapeutic relationship. However, it was ascertained during the data analysis process that “the therapeutic relationship is understood differently in different pastoral contexts with a tendency towards it being understood as a relationship dependent on the pastor’s personal power and anointing”.⁸²² These findings point towards the necessity of a deeper level of self-understanding where, not only is it necessary for a counsellor to be reflective of her own formation and sanctification, but a conscious awareness of such aspects of personality that relate to personal values and power, ways of knowing and relational styles will all lead to a deeper embracing of the “true self”:

⁸²⁰ Donald Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987), 61.

⁸²¹ Joanna Omylinska-Thurston and Pamela James, “The Therapist’s Use of Self: A Closer Look at the Processes Within Congruence”. *Counselling Psychology Review* 26, no. 3 (2011):20.

⁸²² Attention has been drawn to the necessity for the pastor to have an awareness of Pentecostal tenets that emphasise the Biblical evidence of the power gifts of the Holy Spirit to avoid any misuse of this power that may occur (Chapter 8, 290).

When a person acts in accordance with her value structure she feels in touch with her core self. That is to say, living true to her deepest values leads to a sense of authenticity. A person whose words and actions are congruent with her value structure feels as though she is living out of her true self.⁸²³

Although, as the above authors indicate, psychology generally would agree that authenticity⁸²⁴ maximises the relational, and therefore the therapeutic capacity of the engagement with the other, Merton reminds us of the vertical relationship that is at the core of this investigation when he claims that “the authentic self is the experience of union with God in Christ”.⁸²⁵ Hence, in this *praxis* model, the counsellor’s authentic “use of self” as a core condition of an effective therapeutic relationship does requires the counsellor to engage in honest reflection on every aspect of their personality and practice. It also introduces the concept of the dynamic influence of God as Trinity, who is the One who frees us from “the prison of our own selfhood” and calls us to “enter by love into union with the Life who dwells and sings within the essence of every creature and in the core of our own souls”.⁸²⁶ Such is the capacity of the therapeutic relationship where the horizontal and vertical aspects of the engagement epitomise the concept of “use of self”.

⁸²³ Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral*, 36.

⁸²⁴ Lonergan, *Method in*, 252, explains this as a life-process: “Human authenticity is not some pure quality, some serene freedom from all oversights, all misunderstandings, all mistakes, all sins. Rather it consists in a withdrawal from inauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never a permanent achievement. It is ever precarious, ever to be achieved afresh, ever in great part a matter of uncovering still more oversights, acknowledging still further failures to understand, correcting still more mistakes, repenting more and more deeply hidden sins”.

⁸²⁵ Thomas Merton, *Seeds of Contemplation* (London, UK: Burns and Oates, 1949), 8.

⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

Personhood

- *Imago Dei*

In Chapter 4, where the theological aspects of the therapeutic relationship have been examined, the concept of *imago Dei* as being the heritage of every human being was examined. This examination revealed two significant aspects of personhood as made in the image of God that relate to this study:

- the relational nature of the human person is integral to humankind's created reality,⁸²⁷
- transforming rationality that becomes a movement from the way of God to the truth of God.⁸²⁸

These aspects of personhood contain impressions of both the "here and now" and the "what is to come". Anderson expresses this:

While the image of God as the total self must be acknowledged as fully present from the beginning of the human person, the *content* of this image is only realised through a development process. Self-identity, then, is acquired as the particular form of the image of God resulting from the growth and development of the self in the threefold ecological spheres of physical, social, and spiritual being in the world. The divine image which constitutes humans as created by God can be understood as developmental in nature, though present as an incipient quality of life from the very beginning.⁸²⁹

This developmental nature of the human person is a vital aspect of the *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship being explored as it encompasses:

⁸²⁷ Chapter 4, 148.

⁸²⁸ Chapter 4, 147.

⁸²⁹ Anderson, *Spiritual Caregiving*, 81.

- **Physical Development**

Biopsychic change is the irrevocable lot of every human person. The sciences have been, and continue to be, the domains of the ever increasing knowledge of the subject of the biopsychic constitution of the human person. Aspects of scientific knowledge, particularly as understood by the discipline of psychology, have been explored in Chapter 5. Significant psychological knowledge for this model of the therapeutic relationship include the various understandings held by the four schools of psychology, namely the psychodynamic, the behavioural/cognitive behavioural, humanistic and constructivist, regarding personhood.⁸³⁰ Of particular interest are the developmental theorists who have researched such stages of human development as Erikson's psychosocial stages;⁸³¹ Kohlberg⁸³² and Gilligan's moral stages;⁸³³ Fowler's faith stages⁸³⁴ and; Piaget's sociomotor stages. These theorists and others have clearly demonstrated that the human person is constantly "developing" at a "physical (natural) level".

- **Social Development**

Such movement represented by the concept of "development",⁸³⁵ as seen in the stages mentioned above, is consistently associated with community. As an example, in all of Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, the relationships with significant others are instrumental in how identity and the on-going resolution of the various stages progresses –

⁸³⁰ Chapter 5, 196.

⁸³¹ Ibid., 186.

⁸³² Ibid., 187.

⁸³³ Ibid., 187.

⁸³⁴ Ibid., 187.

⁸³⁵ F. L. Shults and Steven Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 57, write: "This dynamic movement that constitutes the human spirit is dialectical in the sense that both the self-organization of the "I" in relation to itself and the orientation of the "I" to others is already and always mediated by the "not I", that is, by the plurality of existentially relevant others in relation to whom the person finds himself or herself".

towards life-satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In recent times, renewed interest and additional research into Bowlby's attachment theory⁸³⁶ is revealing how secure bonding, especially in the early years, has substantial influence in the formation of a strong identity and the ability to maintain secure relationships in adulthood. This understanding of the vital importance of the social environment to the successful, on-going development of the human person, while extensively addressed in psychology, is also a strong theological principle.

According to Yong, the ontology of human personhood:

consists of the relationship between the individual and the various communities through which the individual is established. These fields of relational activity can be, for the sake of convenience, reduced to three; personal and interpersonal relations; biological and environmental relations emergent from and attending to the human constitution and locatedness as natural creatures; and relationships with God, in whose image it is that human beings are created.⁸³⁷

Whereas the psychological theorists, while providing valuable knowledge of the human being as a social entity, are primarily working in the "natural" realm, Yong here reminds us of another social dimension available to the human person. As a spiritual being, the human person seeks relationship that transcends beyond that to be found in the horizontal, natural plane.

⁸³⁶ Bowlby, *A Secure*.

⁸³⁷ Yong, *Spirit-Word*, 114.

- **Spiritual Development**

The general term “spirituality” has gained wide acceptance over recent years and is defined as “the preferred way of referring to aspects of the devotional practices of a religion, and especially the interior individual experiences of believers”.⁸³⁸ However, McIntosh’s definition of “Christian” spirituality resonates with the essence of the *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship being developed here. He sees spirituality as being:

a discovery of the true “self” precisely in *encountering* the divine and human other - who allow one neither to rest in a reassuring self-image nor to languish in the prison of a false social construction of oneself. The truly life-bestowing other who beckons one into heightened wakefulness can also liberate one from the bitterly oppressive constructions of oneself enforced by dysfunctional families and broken societies. Understood in this sense, spirituality as the transformation and discovery of the self always happens in encounter, it is an activity constantly stirred up and sustained by the other who calls one out of one’s self and into the truth of one’s mission in life, out of provisionality and into the adventure of incarnation.⁸³⁹

It is this transforming spirituality that Pembroke likens to the “dynamic of identity-through-relationship”⁸⁴⁰ that is modelled by the Trinity.

- **Human Wholeness**

In the pursuit of a *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship, this concept of “identity-through-relationship”, suggested above as an attribute of the Trinity, becomes the ontology of

⁸³⁸ McGrath, *Christian Spirituality*, 2.

⁸³⁹ McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 5.

⁸⁴⁰ Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral*, 78.

human wholeness. Without a clear understanding of the nature of human wholeness a therapeutic encounter has no goal. Anderson supports this argument when he claims that:

Theoretical models of therapeutic approaches towards healing often lack a pre-theoretical understanding of the nature of human personhood. As a result, effectiveness of a given strategy of providing care can only be measured by judging therapeutic outcomes in accordance with the built-in limitations of the theoretical model being used.⁸⁴¹

For this Christian, *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship, the pre-theoretical understanding of personhood and human wholeness comes from:

- a “commitment to the veracity of the Scriptures” which teach that “human wholeness is obtained by an acknowledgement of the salvific work of Christ”;⁸⁴²
- “an unwavering faith in the experiential and actualising relationship with God-as-three-persons” ensuring “a continuing pursuance of relationship with Him”.⁸⁴³

Although there is also an acknowledgement of such theological and psychological premises that give a fuller understanding of personhood and human wholeness, the conviction of the salvific work of Christ is the ontological understanding of this model.

The Therapeutic Relationship – “Bonds” - Summary

Such understandings of both the specific attributes of the person of the counsellor as well as the ontological characteristics of what it means to be human, are undoubtedly aspects of the

⁸⁴¹ Anderson, *Spiritual Caregiving*, 14.

⁸⁴² Chapter 7, 253.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, 253.

tacit knowing of the counsellor who enters into a therapeutic relationship with the other. However, the influence of the many secular theorists who conceive of God as a creation of human projections, can be very pervasive. For example, Casement, a respected scholar in psychology and quoted in Beck and Demarest's work, states that "(It is by no means certain whether we are made in the image of God, as Christians proclaim, or whether it is out of our need to believe that we may have created God in our own image".⁸⁴⁴ It is possible, therefore, that the tacit knowing that influences the therapeutic relationship pastors have with their clients may not always reflect what is held by Christians to be true.

For these reasons, the objective of this model is to make the implicit explicit, and to clearly define the "not negotiable" "bonds" necessary for an effective therapeutic encounter.

The Therapeutic Relationship – "Tasks"

As revealed in the theory⁸⁴⁵ generated in this research, this particular therapeutic relationship becomes a dynamic, relational space where together client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*. It is in this encounter that the "tasks" aspect of this *praxis* model, considered here from the particular perspective of the counsellor, begin to reflect the affections of the Trinity that "orient us to God and enable our empathy with others".⁸⁴⁶ These actions are also often implicit and it is warranted here that these be explored.

⁸⁴⁴ Beck and Demarest, *The Human*, 198.

⁸⁴⁵ The relationship conceptualised by pastors as being therapeutic, although embodying aspects of theological and, to a lesser extent, psychological epistemology, is, in essence, a dynamic, relational space where together client and pastor encounter the transformational power generated by the Trinitarian *perichoresis*.

⁸⁴⁶ Yong, *Spirit of*, 80.

- *Agape*

In Chapter 4, *agape* was explored as being a powerful and creative force that does not recognise value but creates it, imparting value by loving.⁸⁴⁷ Hence, *agape* becomes a “task” of the therapeutic relationship as it is not merely:

an emotional feeling (liable to sentimentalization) nor an ontological abstraction (limited to being a speculative idea) but is also a concretely material volition, and relational aspect of creaturely existence. More precisely, *agape* is the creation of the Spirit that graciously urges finite existences toward reunion with their ground of being.⁸⁴⁸

In Chapter 6, an examination of the relationship between this understanding of *agape* and the empathy of the person-centred aspect of the therapeutic relationship revealed the “tasks” common to both these concepts:

Empathy involves more than simply reflecting back elements in an established sense of identity. It actually contributes to the process of identity formation in the client. More specifically, empathy both stimulates personal discovery in the client and creates new possibilities for her sense of self.⁸⁴⁹

- **Covenant**

The concept of “covenant” as an ancient Biblical practice and the “task” performed by God to establish relationship with His chosen people was discussed in Chapter 4.⁸⁵⁰ Here, the significance of the grace of the New Covenant, sealed with the blood of Christ Jesus was also

⁸⁴⁷ Chapter 4, 132-136.

⁸⁴⁸ Yong, *Spirit of*, 16.

⁸⁴⁹ Pembroke, *Renewing Pastoral*, 70.

⁸⁵⁰ Chapter 4, 130-132.

explored. The importance of the “task” of creating a safe space where the work of transformation could be accomplished was included in the examination of the psychological material in Chapter 5,⁸⁵¹ particularly looking at the role of professional codes of conduct and training as creating the capacity for a counsellor to provide a safe place where the psychological well-being of the client could be contained. Chapter 6⁸⁵² provided a synthesis of these covenantal concepts relevant to this *praxis* model. This chapter provided a picture of a relationship that has established goals and interventions, and ethical and moral boundaries that afford containment for both the physical and the emotional environment of the therapeutic relationship, while also embracing a commitment to the grace of the New Covenant that imbues this relationship with a transcendent quality.⁸⁵³

- ***Shalom***

In the discussion in Chapter 6, the concept of *shalom* as being foundational to both the mission of God and the therapeutic relationship was examined. *Shalom* is described by Hart as more than just “peace” but as “fullness, perfection, health, wholeness, fulfilment or completion. We are ‘embedded’ (like in the womb) in God and embraced by God”.⁸⁵⁴ From this description, the inclusion of the creation of an environment conducive to *shalom* as a “task” of this *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship is not surprising.

- **The Power of the Holy Spirit**

Just as human wholeness in this therapeutic relationship *praxis* model is founded on the salvific initiative of Christ and the human response to the finished work of the cross, so too

⁸⁵¹ Chapter 5, 168-171.

⁸⁵² Chapter 6, 217-219.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, 222-226.

⁸⁵⁴ Richard Hart, “*Shalom: Peace at What Cost?*” *The Priest* (2009):20.

the transformational quality of the therapeutic relationship is dependent on the human person's openness to the power of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁵⁵ This concept has been reported in Chapter 7 as being the central theological conviction of the participants of this study. They consistently professed the belief that "life is energized by the Spirit's power: 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses . . .?' (Acts 1:8), and, 'not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord Almighty' (Zechariah 4:6)".⁸⁵⁶

However, "while the language of Spirit and power are at the forefront of Pentecostal self-understanding, not too far beneath the surface is the presence and activity of divine love".⁸⁵⁷ Therefore, in agreement with the discussions in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 regarding the creative power of *agape*, this *praxis* model of a therapeutic relationship that supports transcendent, transformational change is "energized by divine love, and that is because the Spirit of power is the Spirit of Love".⁸⁵⁸ Hence the "tasks" that seek to accomplish the "goals" of this model of the therapeutic relationship reflect the willingness of the person of the counsellor to accept the invitation to join in the Trinitarian *perichoresis*, thereby making a way for the client to also experience this power and love.

The "Goal" of Transformational Change

Loder, cited by Barker, provides a fitting definition of transformational change with which to open this section:

⁸⁵⁵ Yong, *Spirit-Word*, 90, describes the Holy Spirit as being "the creative field of activity which lures prehending entities toward their divinely appointed reasons for being".

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

Transformation "does not merely refer to change in a positive direction. . . . Rather, transformation occurs whenever, within a given frame of reference or experience, hidden orders of coherence and meaning emerge to replace or alter the axioms of a given frame and reorder its elements accordingly". Clearly, transformation is not more of the same, but is a fundamental reconfiguration or resignification of the component parts of a given situation. Transformation always involves a perceptual shift, which is often requisite for the resolution of a conflicted situation. This is true for both psychosocial and existential-spiritual frames of experience.⁸⁵⁹

Although these writers allude to the fact that this definition is true for spiritual frames of experience, there are other aspects highlighted here that are pertinent to this discussion. The concepts of "reconfiguration", "resignification" and "perceptual shift" of which these authors write are given a Christian perspective by Alexander as she consistently links "formation", which she sees as "formation into the likeness of Christ . . . a deep inner work",⁸⁶⁰ and "transformation", as "both a healing process, and catching the vision of the kingdom in a way that changes the heart from one of stone to one of flesh responsive to the Spirit's leading".⁸⁶¹ She explains that the "important dimension of both formation and transformation is the focus on the unique journey of the individual, the drawing out of the person's own inner knowing and inner wisdom".⁸⁶² Pastoral counselling facilitates this journey as the pastor walks this path with his people, whether it means dealing with critical incidents that confront a person with drastic change or the developmental maturity that is part of the journey of life.

⁸⁵⁹ Patrick Barker, "The Relevance of James Loder's Grammar of Transformation for Pastoral Care and Counseling". *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 49, no.2 (1995):160.

⁸⁶⁰ Alexander, *A Glimpse*, 85.

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*, 94.

However, here again, a tension emerges as the “goals” aspect of this model of the therapeutic relationship are examined. In the interviews with the pastors, many told of journeying with the individual as the deep inner work of formation and transformation was accomplished in both their lives. However, as discussed in an earlier section, where “preaching” and “hospitality” were seen to be at opposite ends of the evangelical ministry continuum, the participants also expressed a strong conviction that the underlying goal of the therapeutic relationships they had, whether with their own church people or those of their community was to “make disciples”. From this evangelical stance, a transformational relationship takes the form of the pastor’s agenda rather than being a journey.⁸⁶³ Coming from a Pentecostal/Evangelical Christian worldview, these pastors accept the concept of transformational change in terms of religious conversion as the goal of their ministry. In fact, “leading people to Christ” is their mandate in accordance with their commitment to “the great commission”. However, in practice, many of those interviewed disclosed the fact that they also participated in relationships that fostered the deep inner work where transformation and formation were interwoven.

Therefore, on one hand the goal of transformational change suggests only one “straight and narrow path”⁸⁶⁴ of change being wrought through the personal acceptance of the finished work of the cross of Jesus Christ. Peace describes this path to transformation as being simple and functional:

⁸⁶³ It is here that reflective practice needs to be implemented to identify the misuse of power and authority, discussed above as being one of the vulnerabilities of traditional theological and Biblical practices (Chapter 8, 287-289).

⁸⁶⁴ Steven Sandage and F. L. Shults, “Relational Spirituality and Transformation: A Relational Integration Model”. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 26, no. 3 (2007):264, address this point: “Systems theorists broaden the scope by suggesting that transformation is an ongoing process across the life cycle as human systems (i.e., persons, families, communities) are continually challenged to adapt to their changing ecological contexts. This need for periodic transformation can be confusing in revival-oriented spiritual traditions that emphasize a single (e.g., conversion) or even secondary (e.g., Baptism in the Holy Spirit) transformation”.

Salvation becomes a matter of believing certain doctrines, trusting Jesus for forgiveness, and praying a prayer of commitment. Conversion is an individual experience that can be dated exactly. This view of conversion also provides laypeople with a concrete way by which to be witnesses for Jesus. They simply need to memorize a “plan of salvation” and share it with others. It is all quite well organized, simple, specific, and understandable.⁸⁶⁵

On the other hand is the concept of the progressive journey, where change happens as various paths are explored. Chan claims that “true salvation from the Christian point of view must be Trinitarian. It must partake of the Trinitarian life itself, which can be nothing other than an explicit knowledge of Christ and a conscious personal relationship that progresses toward intimacy and union”.⁸⁶⁶

As discussed before, both these positions are a real part of the praxis of the therapeutic relationship. “They include the relationship between event and process in religious experience and the workings of divine grace, human and divine dimensions of the same, and how both are construed relative to the theological thematic under discussion”.⁸⁶⁷ In the model of the therapeutic relationship being explored here, the goal is to make implicit, tacit knowing explicit. For these pastors, the explicit aspect of their ministry is the commitment to evangelism while the implicit tacit knowing, seen demonstrated in the participants stories, understood that a “scheme of orientation - disorientation - new orientation (is) a way to recognize the depth of human experience”. These stories told of “honest engagement and

⁸⁶⁵ Richard Peace, “Conflicting Understandings of Christian Conversion: A Missiological Challenge”. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 28, no.1 (2004):8.

⁸⁶⁶ Chan, *Spiritual Theology*, 53.

⁸⁶⁷ Ralph Del Colle, “On Becoming a Christian: Commentary on the Fifth Phase Report of the International Catholic/Pentecostal Dialogue”. *One in Christ* 43, no.1 (2009):101.

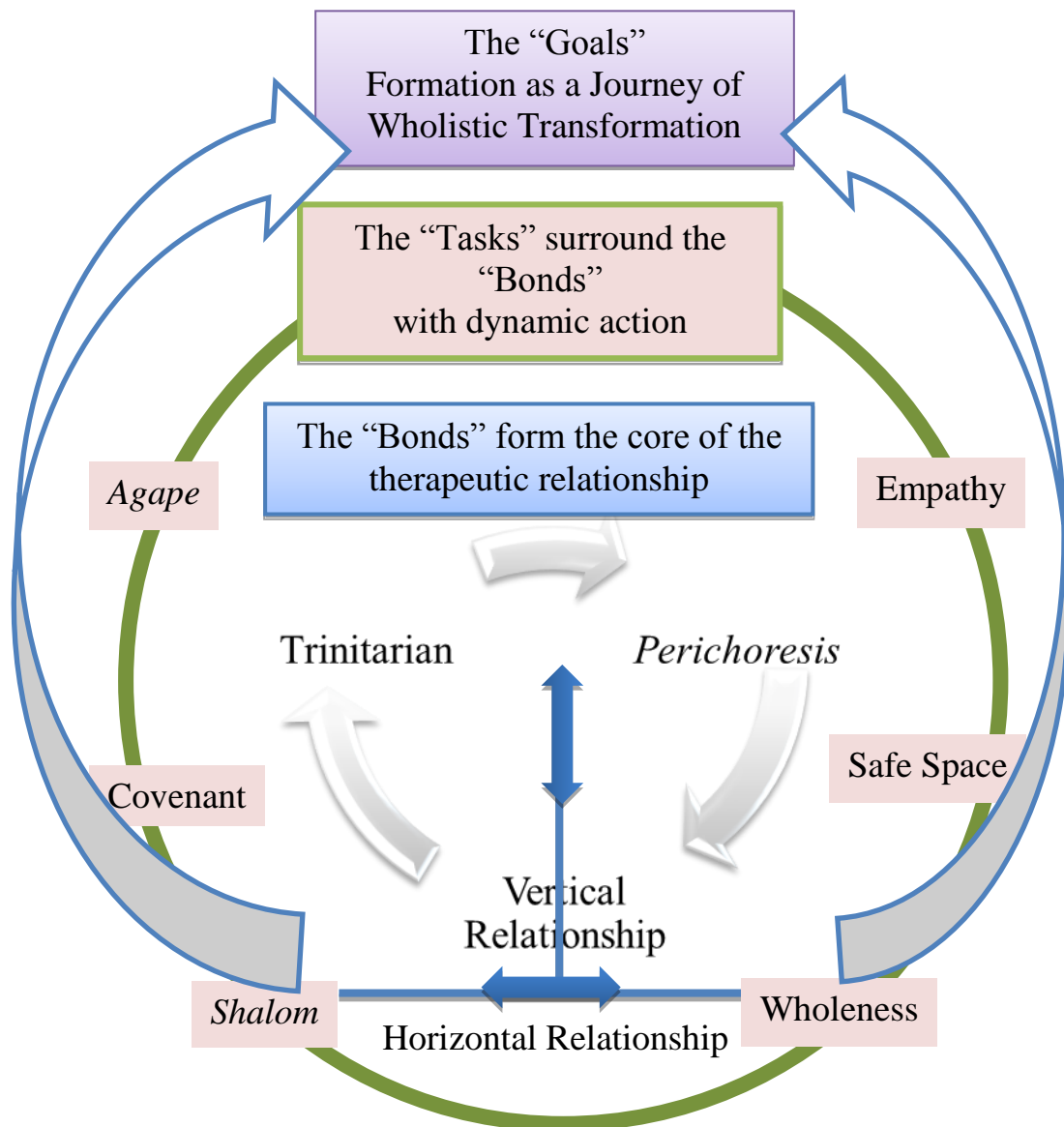
dialogue with God within a covenantal relationship where hurt and pain are acknowledged rather than denied and avoided”.⁸⁶⁸ Hence, for the participants in this study, and perhaps many Pentecostal and evangelical pastors who find themselves in the position of both pastor and counsellor, clarifying the difference between the transforming event of conversion and the transformational process of change would satisfy both aspects of their pastoral ministry.

Praxis Model in Summary

The task of this chapter was to make explicit the implicit and, in so doing, to present this in a form that would provide a delineated *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship suitable for pastors and pastoral counsellors to use in their day-to-day engagement with their people. By synthesising the theology, the psychological theory and the experiences revealed through the interaction with the study participants, such a model has been developed and is diagrammatically represented below (Figure 23):

⁸⁶⁸ Logan Jones, “The Psalms of Lament and the Transformation of Sorrow”. *The Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling* 61, nos. 1-2 (2007):47.

Figure 23 – A Praxis Model of the Therapeutic Relationship



Limitations of this Research

However, while this model has served to synthesise key elements of a therapeutic relationship, every study, particularly one which attempts to bring two disciplines into dialogue, has its limitations. The limitations of this research are mainly contextual in nature. As detailed in previous chapters, the investigation into the understandings of the therapeutic

relationship was deliberately limited to one specific theological stream, namely Pentecostalism, and further, to the pastors from one specific movement, namely COC. Although this was deemed both advantageous and appropriate for the reasons outlined in Chapter 1, it is also a limitation. The therapeutic relationship is practiced in many contexts by a variety of practitioners, including secular, professional and a diversity of pastoral counsellors. Of course, it would have been far beyond the scope of this study to consider all of these. Therefore, it is acknowledged that this limitation to a specific religious culture will provide an understanding of the phenomena which, although authentic for this context, may not be so for other situations.

Having explained this, specific theological limitations could also be seen to be:

- The scholarship relating to Trinitarian theology is vast and spans several millennium. Although literature from both ancient and more contemporary scholars, and from a range of theological streams have been included in this thesis, the scope of this research allowed for but a fraction of this wisdom to be explored;
- The small and specific sample of participants kept bringing the theological content back to the Pentecostal doctrines. This sample has been extensively discussed in previous chapters and, in some places has been acknowledged as an advantage. However, for the resultant *praxis* model of the therapeutic relationship to be more generally acceptable, a larger and more varied sample would be required.

The particular limitations from a psychological perspective have been identified as:

- The lack of reference to neurobiology is a limitation. Over the last decade, unprecedented advances have been made in this field, which, through positivist, scientific investigation, has provided unexpected answers to some of life's more

subjective mysteries, including attachment, emotional connections such as transference, and some areas of spirituality. It is far beyond the scope of this thesis to enter into this vast field, but it is warranted here to suggest that future research into the phenomenon of the therapeutic relationship would be well advised to include knowledge gleaned from this field of science;

- The relatively cursory attention to attachment theory, a psychological understanding that has recently been revisited with considerable interest to the therapeutic relationship is also a limitation. Although these theories are mentioned, more extensive engagement with this scholarship could have resulted in an enhanced understanding of this unique relationship;
- The voice of the client was not factored into this study, nor were client outcomes considered.

Avenues for Future Study

An examination of the limitations of this study also provides suggestions for further research into the topic of the therapeutic relationship. Although, as outlined in the theoretical foundation chapters, there has been considerable research into this phenomenon, it is believed that this study has opened a window, albeit it a narrow one, that has shed light on unique spiritual aspects of this relationship. Research that widens this view to include other theological contexts and a wider sample of participants would have the potential to gain an even greater insight into the spiritual experience of the therapeutic relationship as conceptualised by the pastoral counsellor. It would also be of interest to study how these unique spiritual aspects of the therapeutic relationship are outworked in secular or professional counselling. Another perspective of the spirituality of the therapeutic

relationship that holds promise for future study is that of the relationship from the perspective of the client and client reported outcomes.

Although the author is convinced that a qualitative approach is by far the most effective way to gain a real picture of the relationship that is conducive to healing and wholeness, such qualitative study that focusses specifically on the Trinitarian aspect of the relationship, especially with a larger sample of a different demographic could prove to be very enlightening. Similarly, a study that drew specifically upon the recent advances in the neuropsychological or attachment perspectives of the relationship could also deepen the understanding of the theory and practice of the therapeutic relationship.

The purpose of this study was to make explicit the implicit *praxis* pastoral counselling for the benefit of the local church pastor. Having achieved this, the task that has not been addressed here is how to disseminate these findings to these pastors. The target group of this study, although small and specific, is still representative in many ways of the culture of the Australian local church pastor, the vast majority of whom would rarely read a scholarly journal or have access to the learnings of academics. Therefore, an important topic for future investigation would be how to make scholarly research available and “palatable” to the busy, local church pastor, thereby closing the theory/action gap.

Lastly, during the course of this study, very little relevant literature was found that was able to contribute specifically Australian cultural insights. It is my belief that Australia has a rich and very unique culture that implicitly “flavours” our relationships, including those found in local churches all over the country. Future research into the Australian pastoral counselling

phenomenon would do much to enhance the ministry of those who commit themselves to serve others in this nation of ours.

Conclusion

Having considered both the limitations and the various possibilities for future research this conclusion now returns to the present study, the Pentecostal environment and the transformational relationship being investigated. It has emerged from this research that the therapeutic relationship has many facets and levels of engagement and that an explicit understanding of these has the capacity to deepen the experience for both counsellor and client. It has also been apparent that it is the vertical relationship, where both counsellor and client are poised to be drawn into the Trinitarian *perichoresis*, where wholistic transformation is accomplished.

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