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Tyndale University College & Seminary

An Integrated Approach to Spiritual Direction:
Converging Spirituality, Creativity, and Cognitive
Theories through the Expressive Arts as a Model for
Christian Spiritual Formation

A Research Portfolio
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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by

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ABSTRACT

Christian spiritual direction today builds on both an ancient and an emerging practice. There remains both in the old and the new, a theological assumption that the “spiritual life and the practice of spiritual direction assume that God acts in the world and can be experienced in the world” (Barry 1992, 12). I focus here on the beneficial integration of creativity within Christian spiritual direction as one way to experience God. I present a complementary model that promotes the adjunct use of the expressive arts (music, visual, literary, and movement arts) within the practice of spiritual direction. I include biblical, cognitive, and theoretical orientations to support creativity as an enhancement to spiritual formation. A qualitative research study involved the active participation of spiritual directors in an expressive arts workshop, and the field application of the tools taught. I posit spiritual formation as a holistic process involving the body, the mind, and the soul and that true transformation occurs where these three distinct areas converge. This model also has application for spiritual clinical care practitioners, and ecumenical spiritual direction. This expressive art inter-modal approach illustrates how God weaves, and connects our ordinary everyday circumstances together with the seemingly dissonant pieces of our lives to spiritually transform, and direct us towards our Kingdom of God purpose.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the next generation of my family. Especially to my grandchildren Pierce and Halle who bracketed my studies by being born in the first and the last year of my doctorate. In addition, to my grandnephew Efraim who chose the date of my doctoral hearing to make his appearance. May you all grasp wholeheartedly a love for family past and present. Embrace life. Be curious. Chase knowledge through both education and imagination, develop a personal passion for God, and boldly follow the pursuit of your unique destinies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Lastly, I give honour to my ancestors whose tenacity and vision cut down trees of persecution and cleared brambles called limitations to forge a path for all of us who would follow. Each generation by example set lofty expectations that asks the next in line to reach for more. I thank the forerunners for this gift.

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For “In Him we live and move and have our being”
as even your own poets have said, “For we are
indeed his offspring”

—Acts 17:28

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of figures.....	xv
List of tables	xvi
List of poems	xvii
SECTION I: DIVINE ALEATORIA: THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY	1
CHAPTER 1: Spiritual Formation, Spiritual Direction, and the Expressive Arts: An Introduction.....	2
Spiritual Formation and the Vocation of Spiritual Direction	9
The Expressive Arts.....	12
Theopoetics: A Theological and Theoretical Orientation	18
Cognition and the Therapeutic Arts.....	21
The <i>Aleatoric</i> in Spiritual Formation.....	23
CHAPTER 2: Divine Aleatoria: Time and Chance Happens to Them All: A Spiritual Autobiography	26
Dubious Foundations.....	30
The London Years	34
A Gift.....	35
Finding Out the Colour of My Skin	38
Teachers Can Be Life Savers and Then Again . . .	40
The Incidental Accidental Years	44
Incidents	44
Accidents	49
Our Histories, Our Sacred Stories	54
Learning through the Soles of Your Feet	54
The Roots of Influence	58
The France to Jamaica to Cuba Link.....	62
France to Jamaica	62
Jamaica to Cuba.....	65
The Stream of Life Years	67
On the Way To	67
Love a Chameleon.....	69
The Love of Dance: A Constant.....	77
The Penultimate Years.....	81
The Call	83
The Pastor Years.....	85
Conclusion.....	87

SECTION II: DIVINE CONVERGENCE: A MODEL OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION	90
CHAPTER 3: An Integrated Approach to Spiritual Direction and the Expressive Arts	91
Restoring an Ancient Practice to a Modern World	92
Dance/Sacred Movement: An Unclaimed Remnant	96
Worship Dance: Unravelling	99
Myths, Assumptions and Stereotypes	101
The Profane and Dance	101
Self-Expression and Ecstatic Dance	103
Popular Music and Dance	104
Performance and Dance	105
Embracing the Somatic: The Practice of Physical Faith	106
Sacred Movement	108
Sacred Movement: A Gift from God	110
Sacred Movement and Body Image	112
Sacred Movement and Inner Healing	113
Personal and Anecdotal Responses	114
Integrating the Expressive Arts and Spiritual Direction	116
Evidence-Based Use of the Arts in Therapeutic Practice	120
Modes and Methods of the Expressive Arts	121
Art /Mark Making	124
Contemplative Photography	125
Ephemera	125
Wordless Journaling	126
Prayer Collage	126
Literary Arts	127
Prayer	127
Poetry or Prose	127
Fibre and Craft Arts	128
Preparatory Considerations for Spiritual Directors	128
Visual Arts and the Imagination	129
Silence, Breath and Finding Centre	130
SECTION III: DIVINE CALL: THE ROLE OF EXPRESSIVE ARTS IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION: AN ACTION-RESEARCH PROJECT	133
CHAPTER 4: Engaging Spiritual Directors in an Experiential Workshop Study: Designing, Facilitating and Evaluating a Teaching Module to Develop Competencies in the Use of the Expressive Arts within Spiritual Direction	134
Research Design	135
The Possible Role of the Expressive Arts in Spiritual Direction	135

Research Challenge	138
Research Response	139
Supervision, Permission, and Access	142
Context	144
Sources and Models	147
A Model of Spiritual Formation	148
Creativity as a Gift from God	149
Spiritual Direction a Vocational Call	149
Literary Resources and Cases	150
Curriculum Development	151
Creativity and Imagination	152
Psychology, Psychotherapeutic, and Arts Therapies	154
Spiritual Direction and the Arts	154
Methodology and Methods	156
Participant Recruitment Methods	157
Research Part 1: On-line Survey	158
Research Parts 2, 3, and 4: Workshop, Post Workshop and Field Report Evaluations	158
Data Collection Methods	160
Study Design Methods	164
Data, Methods and Coding Rationale	167
The Time Frame of the Research	169
Ethics in Ministry Based Research	170
Findings, Interpretation and Outcomes	172
Research Part 1	173
Questions 1-3: Demographics	174
Question 4: How Long Have You Been a Spiritual Director?	175
Question 5: What Type of Training in the Expressive Arts Would Be of Benefit to You?	175
Question 6: Are You Familiar with the Use of the Term “The Expressive Arts”?	176
Question 7: In What Particular Area of Spiritual Direction Do You Find the Use of the Creative Effective?	177
Question 8: What Types of Experience Do You Have with the Expressive Arts?	178
Question 9: Do You Currently Use the Expressive Arts Within Your Practice?	179
The Expressive Arts Workshop and Field Reports	180
The Expressive Arts Workshop and Workshop Evaluation	180
Post Workshop Field Use Reports	183
Research Summary Reports	189
Interpretations	198
Workshop Evaluation	199
Workshop Reports	200

Workshop Limitations	201
Outcomes	205
Replicability, Receptivity and Effectiveness.....	208
Future Improvements.....	209
Future Implications	210
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	215
The Clarifying Space of Spiritual Direction.....	217
Kingdom Purpose and Spiritual Formation.....	219
Practicing the Expressive Arts with Caution.....	220
Inroads to the Expressive Arts and Spiritual Direction	223
Implications for Spiritual Direction.....	223
Implications for Clinical Soul Care Practitioners.....	225
Implications for Ecumenical, Multi-faith and Secular communities.....	225
Future Research and Practice.....	227
Final Considerations	229
APPENDICES	231
APPENDIX A: Supervision Approval	232
APPENDIX B: Permission to access Practicum Participants.....	233
APPENDIX C: TASD Invitation Letter	234
APPENDIX D: Permission and Booking for Alumni Hall, Tyndale Seminary.....	235
APPENDIX E: Holman Insurance Policy Coverage.....	236
APPENDIX F: Participant Invitation Letter.....	237
APPENDIX G: Phases and Timetable.....	243
APPENDIX H: Parts 2 to 4: Participants Consents.....	245
APPENDIX I: Part 1: Typeform® On-line Questionnaire.....	247
APPENDIX J: Part 3: Workshop Evaluation Form.....	248
APPENDIX K: Part 4: Post Workshop Data Collection	251
APPENDIX L: Workshop Samples.....	252
APPENDIX M: Living in the Stream Manual.....	253
APPENDIX N: Doubt Poem Permission.....	296
APPENDIX O: Part 4: Post Workshop Field Instructions	297
APPENDIX P: Part 3 Workshop: Curriculum timeline	298
REFERENCES	301

List of figures

Figure 1. Integrative model of spiritual formation.....	5
Figure 2. The relational link between the therapeutic and expressive arts	117
Figure 3. Comparison of areas of immediate need	176
Figure 4. A comparison of familiarity with the expressive arts between spiritual directors and spiritual director practicum students.....	177
Figure 5. A comparison by group type (SD vs SDP) showing areas of effectiveness in using the creative arts.....	178
Figure 6. An overview of the current experience with creative modes	179
Figure 7. A look at who is using the arts in practice now	180
Figure 8. The initial response of the directee to the expressive arts	184
Figure 9. Usage of expressive arts modules.....	185
Figure 10. Usage of integration methods applied	186
Figure 11. Integration patterns for Blackout Poetry	187
Figure 12. Integration patterns for Gospel Contemplation Rosebush Narrative.....	188
Figure 13. Integration patterns for Group Spiritual Direction–Community Garden.....	188
Figure 14. Integration patterns for Sacred Movement	189

List of tables

Table 1. Key terms and definitions	14
Table 2. Expressive arts modules and integration methods	17
Table 3 Biblical words for dance/movement	98
Table 4. Expressive arts: Disciplines and qualities.....	123
Table 5. Supervision, permissions and access	144
Table 6. Data sources.....	161
Table 7. Data count responses	161
Table 8. Spiritual director and directee pseudonym identifier.....	162
Table 9. Post workshop engagement with the expressive arts and spiritual direction: Field application reports received	163
Table 10. Modules and integration methods/exercises	165
Table 11. Questionnaire Part 1, Questions 1-3	174
Table 12. Respondents evaluation of workshop content.....	181
Table 13. Respondents evaluation of workshop design.....	181
Table 14. Participants evaluation of instructor	182
Table 15. Participants evaluation of accomplished objectives	182
Table 16. Data coding: Key speakers, definitions and examples.....	190
Table 17. Data coding: Self efficacy definition and examples	193
Table 18. Data coding: Pedagogical code, definitions and examples	194
Table 19. Data coding: Spiritual director code, definitions and examples	195
Table 20. Data coding: Recognizing God code definitions and examples	197
Table 21. Yes–The expressive arts do enhance spiritual direction	207

List of poems

Poem 1 JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU	29
Poem 2. ITALY TO FRANCE	31
Poem 3. HUGUENOT BLOOD	33
Poem 4 KALEIDOSCOPE	38
Poem 5. ITALIAN ROYAL COURT TO FRANCE.....	40
Poem 6. THE EDICT OF NANTES, STAY, AND GO	44
Poem 7 OVERLAP CINQUAIN	49
Poem 8. HUGUENOT LEAVEN	51
Poem 9. GOD IS AS GOD DOES	54
Poem 10. THE CIPHER	62
Poem 11. A CULTIVATORS COCKTAIL.....	64
Poem 12. REMEMBERING WELL.....	67
Poem 13. DATES ELUDE ME A Narrative Poem	68
Poem 14. I LOVE YOU AND SORRY	73
Poem 15. A REPOSITORY	76
Poem 16. A MONTH OF SUNDAYS	83
Poem 17. STRUGGLE ECHOES	87
Poem 18 GUIDANCE	18
Poem 19 DOUBT.....	19

All poems were previously unpublished and created by Ouida Russea-Pihulyk 2016 with the exception of “Doubt” by Nick Burns ©2010, www.poetry.org, 2014, which is used with author’s permission, and “Guidance” an unpublished poem described by Rick Wilkes (2013) as “from the heart of Jean Rhodes with influences by other unknown authors.” <https://www.thrivingnow.com/guidance-god-you-and-idance>.

SECTION I:
DIVINE ALEATORIA:
THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

CHAPTER 1:
SPIRITUAL FORMATION, SPIRITUAL
DIRECTION, AND THE EXPRESSIVE ARTS:
AN INTRODUCTION

I asked God to take it away. It had become far too loud to live with. For as long as I can remember, even anonymous faces were a wide-open book to me. Without words, I could hear stories in faces. I sensed struggle and pain in the bodies of people passing by. I felt, without obvious clues when a soul was at peace, and when it filled with joy. I sat in awe of the holy mystery of intuitively sensing others. It was uncanny. Public places became an unending cacophony of sacred tales that flooded my being, and enveloped me. Strangers would start conversations without introduction, speaking directly from the melody of their lives, sharing unabashedly. This was a daily struggle. This facility to hear the souls of others taxed me. I became overwhelmed. I ever so politely went to God and said, “Thank you, but no thank you, this burden is too much for me.” I ran, much like Jonah, away from Nineveh (Jonah 1:3 ESV).

God is always purposeful. I would later recognize the “it” to be the infilling of a gift. I had received an overabundance of empathy. A heart shaped to experience the moods and yearnings of others. This gift carried – a knowing – the

capacity to recognize, and share without judgement, or critique the condition of another's soul. The gift showed no ecumenical or multi-faith preference, it was impartial. Overtime, I learned to notice the promptings of the Holy Spirit more acutely. The volume of spiritual chatter also became more manageable.

The anonymous faces continue in my repertoire. The Holy Spirit nudges me when I am in the company of a stranger who is swollen with the struggle of their story. This time then becomes a sacred place – an invitation – where two strangers can connect. They delight to hear the voice of truth – God – in their lives. Unknowingly, I had sought for a release from my vocation. Instead, God through my life, circumstances, people, and places conspired to hone and assemble the parts together for a kingdom purpose, a purpose that values attending to the souls of others.

The gift found a home in spiritual direction. Spiritual direction became a container, a safe place to receive stories while being an integral part of the story that God writes in the lives of others. What you will hear throughout the entirety of this project is the story of me, at home in my call. I am grateful that God does not always answer misguided prayers, as the gift remains.

I arrive at this place now, through an eclectic set of credentials, and experiences. The integrative, complementary approach that I practice began early with recognition of an inherent passion for all things created, and creative. My story includes undergraduate studies in the Fine Arts, with a specialized honours degree as a dance major. Later, postgraduate seminary education in spiritual

formation was instrumental in supporting my concurrent roles as a pastor and certified spiritual director. I am a certified expressive arts practitioner. I carry the professional designation of RP, Registered Psychotherapist, and hold additional certification as a dance therapist. I self-describe and identify, as an integrative spiritual director. Integrative, represents my holistic leanings, a concern for the whole person – body, mind, and spirit – as it references the inner healing, and ongoing spiritual formation of directees. Over a thirty-year period, my creative passion together with my education and experience has culminated in my philosophy of soul care applied and tested here.

I have framed this project around my gifting's, passion's and life's work. It takes shape around three overarching but interconnected topics: 1) spirituality, 2) cognitive theories, and 3) creativity (see Figure 1). These three areas form the foundation of the premise examined, the beneficial role of the creative arts to spiritual formation. These broad domains narrow in this conversation, to specifically address, the application of the expressive arts (integrating music, visual, literary and movement arts) to the practice of spiritual direction.

I offer a comprehensive, informative study on the biblical, theoretical, and experiential results of applying the expressive arts to the practice of spiritual direction. I examined this topic, gathered data by engaging spiritual directors in surveys, an experiential workshop, and received their comments on the post application of using the creative arts within their practices. To support the model of spiritual formation proposed (Figure 1) I present this project in three

interrelated parts: Section I, *Divine Aleatoria*, includes an introduction of the field and an orientation within it and then my spiritual autobiography, “*Divine Aleatoria: Time and Chance Happens to Them All.*” In Section II, *Divine Convergence*, I develop a model of spiritual formation around the expressive arts and spiritual direction (see Appendix M for the manual). Section III, *Divine call* is an action research project engaging spiritual directors in a spiritual formation study, “*Designing, Facilitating, and Evaluating a Teaching Module to Develop Competencies in the Use of the Expressive Arts.*” A conclusion to the portfolio follows.

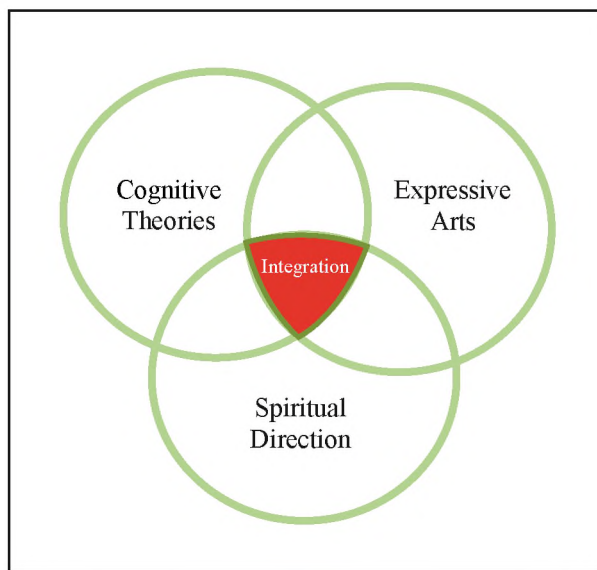


Figure 1. Integrative model of spiritual formation

This introduction seeks to orient the topic foundationally. I outline key points, descriptors, current terms, and usage as they relate to the scope of Christian spiritual formation as it intersects with the domains of spiritual

direction, cognitive theories, and creativity. I believe that this project's topic will be of interest to all those who are engaged in the practice of tending to the souls of others.

I began my project with the premise that creativity is innate and common to all (Runco 2004; Cameron 2007); it further offers, that the realm of creativity, is imbued with a transcendent quality that through, guided uncovering can be enacted as a conduit for the voice of God (Schaeffer 1974; L'Engle 2001; Paintner and Beckman 2010). I then underscore this idea of a common creativity with a secondary hypothesis, which argues for the integration of each of these foci: the body (somatic), the mind (cognitive), and the spirit (formative), to be rightly converged into the practice of soul care. The investigations and results of this study will show a connection between our holistic balance and our holiness. Michael Bauer (2013) in *Arts Ministry: Nurturing the Creative Life of God's People* identifies that, "holistic living is a key element in the continued progress of the faithful towards the fullness of life in the kingdom" (Bauer 2013, 95-96). Soul care practitioners (Cameron 2007; Calhoun 2005), and Christian counsellors (Tan 1996, 2008; Anderson et al 2000) agree concerning the necessity of holistic interconnectedness as a requirement for true spiritual growth. David Benner (2011) affirms that:

Spirituality that enhances life always involves our whole person – body, emotions, sexuality, consciousness, the unconscious, longings and desires, thoughts, the senses and imaginations . . . only a lived holistic spirituality can be transformational, integrative, and capable of helping us become fully alive and deeply human. (Benner 2011, 21)

Thirdly, from the initial premise – creativity as a conduit for the voice of God, and the secondary hypothesis – the integration of body, mind, and spirit, I move to a pedagogical conversation – the necessity to teach the integrated approach, within spiritual direction programs. This holistic, expressive arts practitioner approach, proposes that spiritual directors be trained to both understand the cognitive theories that serve the expressive arts, and experientially as practitioners of this adjunct model.

Both topical historical and recent literature on spiritual direction together with current practices show a leaning towards this proposed change. As early as thirty years ago Nemeck and Coombs (1985) advocated by opening the discussion for change:

In addition to competency in ascetical-mystical theology, a working knowledge of the basic principles of psychology is important. This enables the director to recognize when to refer . . . also in taking a more holistic approach to the directee's needs, especially in the area of emotional turbulence . . . it helps to identify latent difficulties in communicating . . . which obstruct the listening process. (Nemeck and Coombs 1985, 160)

These early directors felt that adherence to current teaching models of spiritual direction, at that time were no longer adequate for the psychological, social, and cultural climate of their day. I recognized this as the impetus for my research and the relevance of this theory for today.

Many notable authors and practitioners have pushed for this merger not only in spiritual direction: (Payne 1995; Calhoun 2005; Paintner and Beckman 2010) but also other care practices. Conversely, we read that the established therapeutic arts practitioners are broadening their scope to include the spirituality

of their clients in their treatment equation. This thinking is prominent in the fields of, dance therapy (Hanna 2006), and in art therapy (Malchiodi 2005; Knill and Levine 2005; Sperry and Shafranske 2005). The field of Christian counsellors also add their voice to these conversations (Tan 1996, 2000; Anderson et al 2000; McMinn 2007) through clinical theories, and practices they recognize the value and necessity of a more integrated approach.

These authors are all proponents of the belief, that spiritual transformation, cognitive theories, and our innate creativity can be symbiotic, when used intentionally and appropriately. They engage the body, mind, and spirit towards healing and growth in ways that are unique to this combination. This holistic philosophy of care is becoming widespread. The clinical fields of gerontology, palliative care (Rego and Nunes 2016; Sulmasy 2002) psychology (Dietrich 2004), psychotherapeutic care and social workers have begun to design treatments of care in consultation with the integrated intake assessment criterion known as BPSS – The Biopsychosocial-Spiritual model. (George Engel (1977) first established the BPS- biopsychosocial model and Sulmasy (2002) further expanded the model to include the spiritual assessor – BPSS). This model charts the biological, psychological, social-cultural and now the spiritual status of each client. The intention to capture all aspects of the client’s state of health, mind, wellness, and spirituality to better serve and attend to the whole person.

I see the BPSS initiative of particular interest to spiritual directors or Christian counsellors, who may consider the option of practicing in clinical

settings. The adoption of the BPSS model has not only affected treatment plans and patient care but it has redeveloped the position of the hospital chaplain. The chaplaincy role was once a singular domain concerned with the spirituality of patients, particularly during serious life-threatening illness or palliative/hospice care. This role now expands to cover the integrated approach proposed by my project. A recent review of job descriptions in some of the major Toronto hospitals (see <http://www.sickkids.ca>; <http://www.uhn.ca>; <http://www.tegh.on.ca> (last accessed February 2018) show these positions to have grown both in the title and in educational qualifiers.

The chaplain becomes a spiritual health care practitioner. The term practitioner requires that the applicant be versed in psychotherapeutic or expressive arts practices. The educational qualifications have expanded to include 1) A Master's degree in Spiritual Care and Theology, together with 2) A Specialist Certification with the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC) and 3) Applicants must now hold registration with CRPO - the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (see <http://www.Sunnybrook.ca> (last accessed February 2018)). These recent changes support the theory presented here and the need for changes in the scope of spiritual direction.

Spiritual Formation and the Vocation of Spiritual Direction

Christian spiritual formation has a growth cycle that involves movement from one state of being to another. The intention always points towards a Christ-

like maturity. This maturity “concerns the shaping of our life after the pattern of Jesus Christ. It is a process that takes place in the inner person, whereby our character is reshaped by the Spirit” (Demarest 2003, 36). The vocation of spiritual direction acknowledges God as the author of our transformation enacted through the redemptive work of Christ on the cross (Colossians 1:20-22) and the ongoing indwelling of the Holy Spirit at work in us. This Holy Spirit process of spiritual reshaping is a gift of the cross (1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:9). The spiritual director trusts the Holy Spirit as central to their vocation working both in them and in their directee.

Spiritual direction is relational and personal. Barry and Connelly in *The Practice of Spiritual Direction* discuss the need for an emphasis on purposeful dialogue. This dialogue can then become the “help given by one believer to another that enables the latter to pay attention to God’s personal communication . . . to respond to this God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship” (Barry and Connolly 1992, 8).

The ministry of spiritual direction is comprised of a historical foundation and an emerging resurgence (Ruffing 2000; Barry and Connolly, 2009). This juxtaposition of the old and the new provides a myriad of choices across formation models for spiritual directors. The onus remains with the director, and all those charged with tending to the formation of others to be prudent in the sifting for – the best fit – a compatible model or methods. I suggest a model of formation should not be static. The practitioner’s approach should not be limited

to a single type or style. David Benner (1988) reminds us to keep the intention of the model at the forefront as “regardless of the particular theory of spiritual development, Christian soul care has usually sought to move people to spiritual maturity by aiding their progress through stages of the spiritual life” (Benner 1988, 20-21). In choosing approaches, methods or other spiritual direction tools, the final goal ought to be towards spiritual progress.

Spiritual direction is the art of noticing. Noticing encompasses both the director and the directee walking, and growing in the ability to notice the voice of God in every place, and space even in the hidden corners of their lives. This discipline of noticing is both an art and a Holy Spirit fueled gift to be developed, honed, and nurtured, not only in the spiritual life of the spiritual director but in the practice of every believer. The spiritual director assists directees to nurture their attentiveness to God, viewpoints change for the better as they learn to become “a contemplative in action, finding God . . . in all things” (Barry 1992, 39). The increased attention to God in all things also requires increased discernment, and what Ruffing (2000) calls reflection: “the spiritual direction conversation itself is historically a powerful ascetical tool precisely because it requires ongoing consciousness and reflection” (Ruffing 2000, 44). We notice God, we discern God, and we reflect on what God has said.

Spiritual direction is a ministry, a divine vocation, as “God gifts one human being with the grace to assist another in achieving a greater voluntary cooperation with God’s own transforming activity within that other . . . a

transforming union” (Nemeck and Coombs 1985, 22). Spiritual direction is a tri-relational dialogue between the director, the directee and, the Holy Spirit because of this the “sessions are Holy Ground, privileged times when both director and directee can experience God” (Barry 1992, 40). In my experience directees attend, and seek direction for not one but for many reasons. These include encouragement in its broadest sense, seeking a sacred roadmap, and confirmation of next steps. They look for meaning in suffering, and ways to navigate loss. Overall, there is a desire to deepen their spiritual relationships, and to discern their kingdom of God purpose in the assurance that God is evident in their lives.

The Expressive Arts

Art, artistry, art making and the creative arts are terms that appear interchangeable. When introducing the expressive arts this can cause misunderstandings as the role of the expressive arts does not follow the usual artistic definitions. The expressive arts are not about visual appeal or artful creations but the process of engaging with the expressive arts is a practice with a distinct difference. Single art therapies, general artmaking and the appreciation of artistry differ from the multi-modal expressive arts method. The expressive arts always refer to integrating within the session two or more artistic modalities – music, literary, visual, or movement. Christine Valters Paintner explains: “the expressive arts developed as a way to integrate the various art modalities and to honour each one as a unique language of the soul. Working with the arts in an

interdisciplinary and connected way offers deeper insight than when used in isolation from each other” (Paintner 2016, xix).

Creative artists, while holding mixed beliefs in the term spirituality (Malchiodi 2005, 2007; Cameron 2007, Calhoun 2005; Hanna 2006; Brand and Chaplin 2007) all affirm the unity between spirituality and creativity. Vinita Wright (2005) offers a first-hand account of this unified experience from the perspective of Christian spirituality:

The creative process is a spiritual one, and when we receive it as such, it deepens our gifts and edifies us in general . . . If I truly open my eyes and express in words what I have seen, then I will have participated in a spiritual act. I receive the vision from beyond myself, and I express it through who I am. This is God at work. It may be divinity at its finest . . . [T]he whole point of the incarnation was that we understand finally and with clarity who we really are – made in God’s image. (Wright 2005, 12)

The Christian perspective of spirituality presented in this model accepts creativity as a conduit, a channel that can open a directee to receive from God.

The project will also address some cautions when applying creativity to sessions. The primary caution is to try to remove all focus from the aesthetic value or the appeal of the work. Through a guided uncovering, without director interpretation what takes precedence is the directee’s revealed conversation with God. The spiritual director emphasizes that the “purpose of the creative exploration is not to create something beautiful but to engage in the experience as a prayer and an opportunity to witness the unfolding of the creative act” (Paintner 2016, xix). The process not the product becomes the hallmark of including the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction. This is known as the

aesthetic response (see Table 1 for a more complete definition). This response is when the directee uncovers for themselves meaning in the created art work. Table 1 below lists the common definitions and explanations germane to the expressive arts and spiritual direction that will be referred to throughout this project.

Table 1. Key terms and definitions

Aesthetic Response or Aesthetic Experience with the Expressive arts	“the attendance of the individual to his or her own personal process of making art and to giving the art product personal meaning – that is, finding a story, description or meaning for the art” (Malchiodi, 2007,6)
Art or Arts	The term arts a broad-based term used to describe all kinds of artistic renderings. The term arts also used in the therapeutic field to encompass all forms and types of creative therapies
Body, Somatic or Embodied Prayer	Embodied prayer is a distinct spiritual practice, incorporating gestures, and movements as an accompaniment to prayer. Can be practised individually or corporately
Directee(s)	The directee is the person(s) with whom the spiritual director engages with in the practice of spiritual direction
Expressive Therapies	“The expressive therapies are defined . . . as the use of art, music dance/movement, drama, poetry/creative writing, play, and sand-tray within the context of psychotherapy, counselling, rehabilitation, or health care. Several of the expressive therapies are also considered creative arts therapies – specifically art, music, dance/movement, drama, and poetry/creative writing according to the National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations (2004).” (Malchiodi, 2005, 2)

Expressive, Intermodal or Creative Arts	“Involves using two or more expressive therapies to foster awareness, encourage emotional growth, and enhance relationships with others. Intermodal therapy distinguishes itself from its closely allied disciplines of art, music, dance/movement, and drama therapy by being grounded in the interrelatedness of the arts” (Malchiodi 2005, 3)
Facilitator/ Practitioner	Expressive arts personnel not necessarily registered as a psychotherapist commonly assign the term expressive arts “facilitator” or “practitioner” as their designation
Liminality/Sacred space	“ . . . allow ourselves to be drawn into sacred space, into liminality. All transformation takes place there. The threshold (limen, Latin) where we are betwixt and between the familiar and the completely unknown” (Rohr 1999, 155)
Pedestrian Movement	The term pedestrian movement signifies movements not based on classical technique or a particular dance style. Pedestrian movements are everyday bodily actions that can be executed without dance training such as walking, turning, running, also included are any simple arm, leg, and head gestures
Sacred Movement	Sacred movement is an embodied response to the voice of God within. Guided by the practitioner’s direction, framed by the engagement of Holy texts, and enlivened by an individual’s prayerful intentional bodily actions
Soul Care Practitioner	Soul care an ecumenical term used to include all practitioners who accompany others on their spiritual journey
Spiritual Director (SD)	A spiritual director is engaged in the vocation of attending to the nurturing of spirituality in others most often within the ministries of soul care and spiritual formation

Spiritual Director Practitioner (SDP)	Spiritual director practicum students enroll in a 1-year 2-semester internship program. They learn to engage with directees under supervision from the course professor and spiritual direction supervisors. Those engaged in this research study were completing semester 2
Spiritual Formation	“Spiritual formation is a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others” (Mulholland, 2000, 12)
Theopoetic Orientation	A theopoetic orientation is “(1) an emphasis, style and positive concern for the intersection of religious reflection and spirituality with the imagination, aesthetics, and the arts, especially as (2) it takes shape in ways that grow community, (3) focuses on material change, and (4) affirms the importance of embodiment” (www.artsreligionculture.org accessed April 2018)

I developed the curriculum for the expressive arts exercises to scaffold onto current and historically accepted spiritual direction practices. These include *Lectio Divina*, *Visio Divina*, holy listening, silence and solitude, gospel contemplation, and the use of music in a spiritual direction session. The inclusion of the expressive arts within a session are unique in that they combine two or more artistic modalities, for example poetry with music or art making with a visual image prompt. This integration method distinguishes the practice from the single therapeutic arts.

I designed the workshop curriculum to encourage this integration by teaching six expressive arts modalities and four integration accompaniments in order for the practitioner to familiarize themselves with creating combinations. During the workshop, I engaged the participants in experiencing the following six

expressive arts modalities: blackout poetry, Soularium™ photo cards, the rosebush narrative, sacred story-memoir, community garden and sacred movement. These modalities connect together in combination with one or more of the four complementary creative methods listed as A. sacred texts, scripture, prayer, B. music, C. literary: poetry, prose or storytelling and D. art making.

Table 2. Expressive arts modules and integration methods

Existing Spiritual Direction Practices									
<i>Lectio Divina</i>	<i>Visio Divina</i>	<i>Gospel Contemplation</i>	Spiritual Auto-biography	Group Spiritual Direction	Body Prayer				
Corresponding Expressive Art Modules						Integration methods			
1	2	3	4	5	6	A	B	C	D
Lectio Dei	Visio Dei	Vocem Dei	Sacred Story	Community Garden	Sacred Movement	Scripture	Music	Literary	Art-Making
Instructional Arts Medium									
Blackout Poetry	Photo Cards	Rosebush Narrative	Antique Photos	Art paper & Water-colour paints	Movement Instruction sheet	√	√	√	√
Expressive Arts Modules (Choose one from 1-6)						(choose one or more)			

Art making, although a broad term sits within the expressive arts to describe the intentional choice of the practitioner to include the complementary use of art materials as a directed invitation within the session (Paintner, 2016). I fully explain each of these six expressive arts and the corresponding integration components in the training resource manual (Appendix M). The research will

show that in layering the new onto the old, converging familiar disciplines with the expressive arts facilitated ease of training and the receptivity of the directees.

Theopoetics: A Theological and Theoretical Orientation

I put forward for consideration that the integration of the expressive arts and spiritual direction can find theological and theoretical orientation in the practical theology of *theopoetics* (see definition Table 1). Theopoetics combines the Greek words *Theo* – God and *Poiesis* – to make create or to form. While the word poetic may steer the definition towards creating an artistic response to theology in poetic form only *poiesis* covers the making, creating and forming through and with all creative, artistic expressions via the imagination. Miller (1987) takes what may appear to be a newer method of practical theology and anchors it: “Historically, *theopoiesis* was used by a number of early Christian writers (Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Clement of Alexandria) as a term that means “deification”, making God or making divine” (Miller 1987, 3).

Wilder (2001) in *Theopoetic: Theology and the Religious Imagination*, provides us with the foundational discourse. He developed the orientation of the *theopoetic* theology from a lecture he first heard by Stanley Hopper in 1976 (Wilder 2001, iv). Wilder explains that although this term has waxed and waned in popularity, application and meaning over the years it remains a valuable and valid discipline of Christian theology. *Theopoetics* does not replace other

theological interpretations but becomes an adjunct way to receive and apply the *logos* of God. The association of Arts Religion and Culture emphasizes that a “theopoetic orientation . . . validates art, experience and the body as a source of religious reflection and is concerned with the emotional and “pre-rational” impact as well as the concrete consequences of religious reflection” (www.artsreligionculture.org accessed April 2018).

This marries well to the integration and convergence of the expressive arts and the practice of spiritual direction as my research presents here within this project. Therapeutic expressive arts author Levine (1997) also orients the psychotherapeutic use of creativity within the understanding of *poiesis*. In his book of the same name, he argues for a move towards a more poetic psychology. Levine (1997) while also firmly planting the practice in ancient roots reminds practitioners that:

In turning to the arts for healing, we are re-discovering an ancient tradition. In early societies and indigenous cultures, all healing takes place through ceremonial means. Music, dance, song, story-telling, mask making the creation of visual imagery . . . are all components of a communal process in which suffering is given form. (Levine 1997, 10)

The arts, creativity, and the imagination when used appropriately can become valid containers and tools to express and restore our well-being.

Germane to the use of the expressive arts is the requisite infusion of spiritual director selected, sacred writings, holy texts and, scriptures, these ground every exercise. Although, essential to support the session, I emphasize in the workshop that what “scriptures give us is not a theology of the arts, but a biblical

framework within which the arts, like all other human activity, can be evaluated and understood” (Brand and Chaplin 2007, 39).

A theopoetic orientation embraces that all scripture is God breathed and suitable for teaching (2Timothy 3:16), while also allowing that the words of God are the voice of God; and that voice is powerful (Psalm 29). The use of scripture within spiritual direction sessions leans less on a systematic, historical or first listener interpretation and more towards a living real time application of the word of God. This requires in the moment of encountering God within the session we trust that the transcendent, inspired gift of the *logos* can speak to our everyday circumstances. Not only generally but also in a case-specific and appropriately timed way, as the book of Proverbs suggests an apt answer is a joy, and a word in season, how good it is (Proverbs 15:23). This necessitates an in the moment suspension of a more academic theological interpretation allowing for the “acceptance of cognitive uncertainty regarding the Divine” (Keefe Perry 2014, 111). This project uses the term “the voice of God”, to refer to a divine response between God and the directee. This can occur pre, peri, or post session. This study recognizes this prompt as an individualized experience. In so doing, it does not enter into a discussion that supports or precludes the ability to hear the audible voice of God.

The literary review of the project as I discuss in chapter 4 reveals a small but distinct body of authors that support the integration of the expressive arts and spiritual direction. There is theoretical consensus among spiritual directors using

creativity, expressive and therapeutic arts practitioners that art heals (McNiff, 2004) and art transforms (Malchiodi, 2007). When we explore alternative vehicles of formation like the arts, it is to “help us make space for an encounter with God while also creating a safe container in which to experiment, and explore new possibilities” (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 19). Paintner and Beckman (2010) as spiritual directors ground their use of the expressive arts in the awareness that:

Our body knowledge, intuitive wisdom, and emotions are expressed through symbol and shape, poetry, and color, and movement and music and are honored as valid ways of knowing in and of themselves. Rational analysis is not required to validate the insights gained. (Paintner and Beckman, 2010, xx)

The “knowing” and the “insights gained,” are established and presented in session by the directee, who reveal what the process of conversing with God uncovered for them. This sacred space of uncovering the unknown is foundational to the expressive arts and spiritual direction. Richard Rohr (2003) calls the point at which you move from the unknown to the known the *liminal* space, *liminal* is the Latin word for threshold. In Jeremiah 3:3, the invitation is seeking the unknown by calling out and God will answer, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. The intent of the expressive arts within the session brings the directee to this threshold of uncovering the unknown.

Cognition and the Therapeutic Arts

I adopted two main theories from the psychotherapeutic principles that undergird this model of spiritual formation: 1) Metacognition, and 2) Cognitive behavioural theories. The key elements include thinking, reasoning,

understanding, and remembering. Mark McMinn (2007) describes “metacognition as the ability to think about thinking – to understand and control one’s thought processes” (McMinn 2007, 36). One, biblical version of metacognition, comes out of the Corinthian story. In 2 Corinthians 10:5, Paul, offers to the Church a solution, for retaining right thinking in the practice of stopping erroneous thoughts; they were urged to “destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.”

Secondly, most cognitive behavioural therapies, agree that our thoughts, speak to our emotions, our feelings then determine our behaviours (Tan 1996, 2000; Anderson et al 2000). The ability to redirect negative thinking lies at the base of the therapeutic approach. These practices rely on evidence-based theories that maintain the brain has the ability to correct distortions in, negative thinking (Tan 1996, 2000; Anderson et al 2000; McMinn 2007). Biblically, this aligns with the Romans 12:2-4 transformation promise, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” This study, affirms the connection we have as psycho-spiritual beings, for this reason, “any theory on creativity must be consistent and integrated with the contemporary understanding of brain function” (Pfenninger and Shubik 2001, 217).

The therapeutic arts cover the span of the creative arts of which these are the most prevalent: music therapy, dance therapy, art therapy, visual arts therapy, biblio-therapy, poetry therapy, drama therapy, and clown and children’s sand tray

therapy. All the creative therapies, lead their treatment plans through their specific arts focus, to achieve the work of therapeutic healing. These single therapies differ from the expressive arts, in that they operate similarly to a psychotherapist's schema, they assess, diagnose, design, and execute treatment plans. There are no clinical diagnosis or treatment plans within the practice of the expressive arts and spiritual direction. I acknowledge the inclusion of the cognitive strategies as essential to our theoretical knowledge, but recognize and affirm that:

all true Christian counselling needs to be done in the Spirit, by the Spirit's power, truth and love, under the lordship of Christ, and to the glory of God. Training and competence in counselling or therapy skills are still needed but such skills are used in dependence on the Holy Spirit. (Benner 1999, 569)

I understand the many theories proposed within this research for some spiritual directors will be a steep learning curve as “artistic knowing is different from intellectual knowing, engaging us symbolically and in embodied ways, stretching us beyond the limits of the rational, linear thinking, upon which we tend to rely” (Paintner 2010, xx). However, the use of the creative can override our linear thinking as it acts a bridge that links, the Holy Spirit, our intentions, and our concrete and abstract thinking (Benner, 1998; Tan 1996, 2000; Paintner and Beckman, 2010). This is the truth of the expressive arts.

The *Aleatoric* in Spiritual Formation

I move next in this project to my sacred story. Entitled *Divine Aleatoria: Time and Chance Happens to Them All*. I chose the Latin word *Aleatoria*, as it

describes the movement of God in my life, in my own spiritual formation, and in nurturing my vocational call. The word *Aleatoria* translates to describe things that occur in a seemingly random, disconnected way – by chance. The word Divine, paired with *Aleatoria* draws from the promise in Romans 8:28 that affirms God’s *aleatoric* hand, as “we know, that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose”. I created the spiritual autobiography as an auto-ethnographic narrative. I use storytelling, prose and poetry to recount a past I never knew. I intermingle history with my reality through various formative events of my life. I am intentional in the literary style and the emphasis placed on my historical past. I pay homage to my beginnings those ancestors who guided by time and chance shaped their choices, decisions, sufferings and mixed circumstances to play an immense role in my God story.

There is an eclecticism to my path. I have often felt as haphazard in focus. Time has revealed that seemingly, diametrically opposed careers, and studies were, and are, not only connected but also sublimely interconnected to reveal not a career but a singular call, a unique vocation. This vocation has birthed the core of my research inquiry. A belief in the inherent power of creativity to be a conduit for the voice of God. I journey through this premise gathering momentum to support the transformative influence of directed and intentional expressive arts practices. In my project, I placed these tools in the hands of spiritual directors and results confirm creativity affects our spiritual formation favorably. The significance of the *aleatoric* is that it concludes fortuitously. The result is that ad

hoc, people, places, things, events, and circumstances, eventually intersect, and converge for a good cause.

CHAPTER 2:
DIVINE ALEATORIA:
TIME AND CHANCE HAPPENS
TO THEM ALL:
A SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAHY

Again, I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favour to those with knowledge, but time, and chance happens to them all.

—Ecclesiastes 9:11.

God pens the story of our lives with indelible ink. An original gilded edge manuscript, written before time, which is at once both the first, and only edition. Our stories reflect the recognition of a masterful storyteller. Stories, graced with the uncanny ability to combine a compendium of histories, people, places, and circumstances. Our sacred stories are deftly created to have us remain separate, but symbiotically inter woven with others, and inter-dependent on God. The results are a glorious interweaving of purpose and plan. Together, we forge an integrated community that remains integral to the overarching sacred story that belongs to the Kingdom of God.

The wise writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us; our changes are not by our own strength, provision, favour, or knowledge, but by an elusive combination of “divine time and divine chance”- an embedded mystery. May I posit, that these two crucial yet mysterious ingredients are the interjectors in our lives – the hewn stones – the very tools used by God to shape and transform us. God’s mystery is nestled betwixt and between time and chance in my story, and in your story. This is *Divine Aleatoria*.

Imagining the process, I romanticize. What does our book look like in the hands of the Creator? I conjure up images of vintage pages made of papyrus or other ancient mediums. Reams of written matter, filled with a combination of antique cursive script, ornamental capitals, illustrations, and artistic flourishes. Distinctly framed paragraphs, some pristine, others altered. Chock full of the everyday, the oh-so very important. Penciled in the margins are significant notes, reflections that can only be observed, and or critiqued through hindsight, but remain intrinsically germane to the plot. Addendums, reflect game changing moments transformed by the never-ending battle that ensues between our free will, and God’s promise. Can we – do we – override destiny?

Punctuation denotes change. Places to take a breath come to a full stop, decision, and continue. There are segues, seamlessly leading to T-junctions, roundabouts, and crossroads that appear confusing but somehow feel perfectly right. There are conundrums, especially when the story line appears random, haphazard and clearly out of place. There are incidents, and accidents. There are

always teachable moments. Visibly sprinkled throughout are laughter and tears. There are defining moments, places where your heart skips in delight then misses a beat in fear. You reach out in the dark, welcoming the light the pen provides as it interjects on to your page. There is comfort in knowing that the pen never leaves the page. Nothing is ever crossed out.

God's mystery hides in the ordinary. Juxtaposition, incongruence, quizzical eyebrow lifts, and the unlikely are all hallmarks for recognizing the Divine in our story. Here, I walk through pieces of my life and visit places in my past, but more intriguing are the visits I make to those who preceded me. The uncanny sameness, found in the ancestral vault is grounding. We are the sum total of all our parts – our collective histories. You nor I can escape the un-changeable, our birth date, birthplace, parentage, family, or our social circumstances. These are purposeful, divinely so. The indelible ink runs through us all. I am never alone, but stand on the choices of the generations of those who travelled before me. The opportunity to choose becomes the power in choice. What choices did our ancestors make, that continue to ripple through our story today?

I recognize that people do not exist in a vacuum, but we bump up against all that goes before us leaving a residual fragrance. The fragrance of the essential personalized lifelines, of generations past course through our veins. Historical lifelines make up our core, our preferences, aversions, inklings, dislikes, and longings – all written in the ink of the Divine. A remarkable hue, set apart by a depth, a richness of colour and historically permanent, survivable. Natural DNA

Poem 1

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

*Maternal mortality worn as a dirty skin
An un-washable cloak
Who will raise me?
Teach me to love myself-others
The progenitor of autobiography
Cheekily usurping St. Augustine's title
A soup of haphazard confessions
A detailed first
Paranoia, Mistrust
Neglected

Raised without borders

Mother-less, Brother-less, Father-less
Constantly yearning for the salve
The balm that would assuage
Formed by the wiles of she benefactors
Under the guise of conversion

Petted and fêted
A knick-knack
Bosoms milk-less beyond nurture
Parallel multiplicity
Master of all trades
Never enough

Parasitically dependant
The striving remained
Staking claim to fame
Hume, Kant et al
Partial agreement

Je ne suis pas fou
Voltaire scoffed
Ironic bedmates in death
Bridling and riding the avant-garde
A beast to be tamed, curtailed
Posthumous recognition
Reconciliation
A citizen of Geneva buried in France
Angst-Finally heard*

forms the body but Divine DNA informs the spirit. If I yearn for God, did I inherit an implanted seed of holy boldness? Could there be a penchant for faith?

Dubious Foundations

The portraits that line the halls of the Russea (Dad) and Lewis (Mum) families – from which I hail – reveal good people. A healthy bunch of cads, ne'er do wells, philanderers and womanizers, all who believed they were godly folk, yet they were living paradoxes. Buoyed, by a strong moral compass yet tottering quite haplessly between the seemingly hypocritical tight ropes of – do what I say and not what I do. There are those who bravely pushed through the barriers of social injustice. They knocked on the doors of change, and walked through the walls built up by religious persecution. This group bears no distinction from the other, as they are all one in the same.

In their fight for faith, there is neither a great martyr nor a sniveling coward, but those who are best described as principled stalwarts. All, bravely standing to attention, demanding an accounting with the thrust of perseverance favoured as a nobler outcome than death for a cause. A gift emerges, scribbled loudly across the family blueprint, recording an ability to know when to run towards God and away from the dark side of humanity. I sense the movement that permeates my story, a restlessness that is always crying out and seeking for the better. My ancestors all exhibit an innate sense of God. A call to social justice, and a belief that the good in humanity is the God in humanity and because of this truth – all will be well.

Poem 2.

ITALY TO FRANCE

Didier Rousseau
A purveyor of Protestant incunabula
The progenitor of ephemera
The seed planter of words

Didier Rousseau
A distributor of images
The lover of printed matter
The key to free thinking

Didier Rousseau
A retailer – hawking luxurious gifts
The right to a personal opinion
The wisdom of the day reshuffled

Didier Rousseau
A servant of God
The disguise – a wine merchant
The boisterous braggart
Evangelizing

Didier Rousseau
Family?

Although this journey encapsulates a diverse history, and an equally wide geography, France, Geneva, Jamaica, Cuba, England, America, and Canada. It embraces only one religious flavour, Protestant. All while dancing to the rhythm of a single beat, creativity. Creativity is a given in the family tree regardless of form. Artistry runs deep. Vertically and horizontally, they expressed their talents in every way. This bears witness in the roots of the family tree. Both Protestantism and creativity have formed the constancy of our foundation.

Historically, the family struggle begins with France opening their front door to usher the Huguenots out. It follows the many atrocities born from religious persecutions; enforced migration; the enslavement of a people; and the ethos shaping, pervasive long arm of Colonialism. It brushes the cheek of communism, pre-emptively rushes through the back door of the Cuban revolution. Sandwiched between are two world wars.

A change of geographic location constantly spurred on by the internal prompts of many external shoves. A crisis of conscience, a call to new mission, and a sense of social injustice wrapped up in the hand of God. Their stories, reflect a people with an urgent quest for settlement yet never at ease. Back dropped against a skin that – although qualified to – breathes no hint of bitterness. The angst re-directed, via a wanton embracing of others. They were bestowed grace. A survival gene emerged. They reveled in pouring out free-flowing hospitality. Their behaviour belies that they were once, chased, persecuted, and enslaved. I am the remnant of a people without a name, who held on to God with one hand and a defiant hope in humanity with the other.

Poem 3.

HUGUENOT BLOOD

*Parlez-vous Français?
One drop
French accented
Defining
Shaping, tracing
Hidden – not an inkling
Impermeable membrane
Transforming defiance
Permanent
Huguenot Blood
Spilled, shed, distorted
Wasted
Rendered extinct-mais non!
Revived*

For a people, who are unabashedly Protestant, as far back as the 15th century – nary has a rosary been found among them – they are delightfully ecumenical. As time would show, when and where, other flavours interjected they danced in synergetic companionship. A mulligatawny soup filled with Anglican, Santeria, Pocomania, and a hybrid of Pentecostal and Baptist faiths. There is an ability to sift from each spiritual pool. They would discard what is flagrantly opposing, and marry the remainder. The result becomes an ingrained belief in God. Not hindered, nor encumbered by constraints or rigid protocols there is a freedom to express the profound – simply. What do you believe? There is only one God. Who sent his Son, to save us, who was born of the Virgin Mary who died, rose again on the third day, and will return – Welcome! One's individual expression of this foundational truth accepted readily as a personal choice. What

follows is an intentional hodgepodge of my sacred story, the expression of God's indelible ink in my life.

The London Years

The London years – the genesis years – were filled with history, geography, palate shaping, architectural admiration, and the emergence of the idea that acceptance in all its broadest forms would always require a fight. London, England is my birthplace. When I speak of going, back home images of North West London flood my memory. There is the unforgettable smell of the Tube, a pungent mix of rubber, steel, fuel, people, and history. The squeal of the rolling stock, the way your ears pop from the sheer depth of riding the Bakerloo line. Vestiges, of post war Britain forever sear my mind. There are bunkers, and underground air-raid shelters. There are homes, that boast indoor airing cupboards, and pantries but outdoor loos. Big black galvanized pipes, stuck to the outside of terrace homes evidence that indoor plumbing had long remained an afterthought. Huge gardens replete with fruit trees. Cairnfield Ave (our second home) had both pear, and apple trees and fruit laden bushes: blackberry, raspberry, strawberries, herbs, and root vegetables. Room to skip in the front yard, play hopscotch, ride a bike, and streams of back alleyways that generated a thousand and one ways to foster a child's imagination during the summer holidays.

My eyes recorded no modern buildings. London, gave legs to my love for interior design and all things antique. Those beautiful historic churches beckoned

me, one on every corner, and an equally prestigious bank or post office on the other. Grand architecture, marble hallways, crown mouldings, and protective grotesque gargoyles perched ominously on the corner of most buildings. There were hundred-year-old school buildings, still standing – survivors of the war – strong sturdy all brick buildings, draughty and stale, but quaintly comforting. Beckford Junior School was one of those, it sat in the Swiss Cottage area in the Borough of Camden. I arrived in anticipation on my first day no jitters or apprehensions.

Who can forget their first day of school? Dad walked me to school. That was a huge moment; if Dad did something with you, it was always significant. I loved walking with Dad. Dad was ex British Royal Air Force. He talked military, and walked military, aided by his insistence that the cobbler put a ¼-inch metal tip on the heel of his shoes. It was musical like a tap dancer, a rhythmic march. Dad would bop not walk. I could hear his familiar step from a mile away. Mum would tell everyone, that each evening like clockwork I would stop play in the backyard. I would run straight through the house to swing on the front gate, and wait. I did this instinctively. An internal prompt provoked me to sense Dad's presence. I did not need to wait for the sound of those heels echoing from the top of the street eventually Dad, would round the corner and come in to view.

A Gift

At the time, I did not know it but this would become a pattern. Each time I started a new school Dad would always be the one to take me on the first day. I

was never sure why, it seemed out of place that Mum was not given the role. Nonetheless, Dad obliged. So, there we both were. There was a discussion. It seemed important, for Dad to explain to the teacher that at four years of age I could already read. Hearing this, she simply smiled and nodded. No, he stressed not at a four-year-old level she can read. If Dad had known the term hyper-lexical or any other word for a spontaneous ability to read he would have thrown it straight into the area between me and the neatly coiffed blond woman. I looked at them both, wondering why this was so necessary. The blond woman seemed to want to get him out of the class quickly. I took in the room, a floor to ceiling stone fireplace, a rocking chair, books, books, and more books. There were children sitting in a circle on a large red tapestry rug – waiting. I thought how organized the space was, I knew I would love it there. In my head I was saying Dad please leave, you can tell her about the reading later. What was the big deal?

Well, I knew why it was a big deal; the family had made it a big deal. Most four-year-olds are not that astute, and neither was I, but for the past year I had been the dog and pony show at family gatherings. “Pick a page any page” Mum or Dad would say “ask her to read it I dare you.” They would and I read. As I read, there would be shock, squeals of laughter all mixed in with naysayers and conspiracy theorists. Cousin Norval, the family skeptic, insisted that they had pre-rehearsed me. “Pick your own book even your own page test her yourself!” Dad would say. Dad that sly fox knew full well that Norval was a grown man who could not read; it would be years before I came to that realization.

Dad and I had stumbled upon this gifting quite innocently. One day as I sat playing on the floor of the front living room Dad was reading the Sunday paper. Mum and Dad were both ardent readers. Gracing their bed on a Sunday morning there was always a minimum of two or three newspapers – The Sunday People and the News of the World – along with that lovely pink hued *Financial Times*. They would sit propped up with the papers strewn all over the bed covers. They read for what seemed like hours. As I sat on the floor, I read the headline aloud and simply asked Dad a question about it. He dropped the paper in astonishment and asked me to continue to read random pieces. I did. Mum would call my newfound ability the first of my gifts from God.

Finding Out the Colour of My Skin

Poem 4

KALEIDOSCOPE

*If you listen to the colour of my skin
You will hear very little
It speaks so very quietly*

*If you look at the colour of my skin
You will see very little
Skin is obvious and coy
Choosing to show only the parenthesis of a life*

*What can you possibly uncover?
In one dismissive glance
One stereotypical assumption – what gumption!*

*Ask me who I am
Discover the kaleidoscope*

The Britain of 1968 taught me many things. That particular year brought with it the impetus that spurred young people of colour to learn a new fear. It rekindled the stirring of a just settled heart in the older folk. The idea of uprooting yet again, the thought of fleeing had never sat too far back in their minds. Suitcases lived just above the dark looming wardrobes in plain sight in every home, yearning, as if they were always at the ready. Enoch Powell said it “Go home”. The conservative MP for South West Wolverhampton opened the floodgates with his commonly known Rivers of Blood Speech delivered on April 20, 1968. Go home.

Random strangers, known and pretend friends called me a wog, a coon, a darkie, coloured, black, and afro-hyphenated to list just a few. Resilience sets in.

You knuckle down, and live your life building up an exterior shell to block the barbs. Mostly, because you hear the voice of your Dad telling you over, and over again, that you have every right to be in the country. “Do not worry, because, they cannot send someone home who is already home”. Mum, Dad, and the entire local black community talked openly of Enoch. Through the media, and the current growing tide of skinheads and bovver boys we could sense we had entered into a season of uneasiness. Wantonness tends to grow in uncertainty. It percolates, lying opportunistically in wait. Fear of the unknown always sits at the ready anticipating a cause to release pent up frustrations. The name-calling and derision grew wings. It was palpable. The issue loomed larger than what I could understand. The word home grew new meaning for me; it no longer felt like a place of family safety. What did it mean to send the wog’s home? London was my home I was born just down the street.

Skin colour is not instantly self-defining. Children at very early stages of maturation grow up learning and discovering, gender, age, obvious familial features that aunts are so wont to point out. Back then, there were no rhymes that sang, “Here’s your finger, here’s your toes, and your nose and here’s your black, brown or yellow skin”. The colour of your skin, in all its colonial politically charged glory, is not an immediate truth, but one that emerges over time for all people of colour in many different ways. Usually, it comes as a shock, a rude awakening but there is always a defining childhood moment when they first recognize they are different and exactly what that entails; being black in

accordance with societal terms. At thirteen years of age, Enoch Powell taught me the colour of my skin.

The children of the diaspora had to get an education. However, through the economies of our scales I learned the value of education would be – an unequal equalizer. In order to be equal, your achievements had to be over and above the norm. Perhaps, this pressure steered me away from attending university right after high school. I bolted for the working world under the guise of needing a gap year I said no to university and yes to finding a job. It would be eighteen years before I made it back.

Teachers Can Be Life Savers and Then Again . . .

Poem 5.

ITALIAN ROYAL COURT TO FRANCE

Isaac Rousseau
Teacher of the Arts
Refined
Genteel
Dancing master
Hobnobbed
Friend of the Court
Violin virtuoso

I was a social, happy-go-lucky student. Unassuming, I carried no distinction, not the class clown, not the smartest, not the most talented, and certainly not the fastest at track. I was studious enough to get good grades, athletic enough to participate in sports, and socially accepted enough to be chosen as a Prefect by my peers. I participated in many extra-curricular clubs. I played the

violin in the high school orchestra. I have decided that this was a miracle of God because there is no remnant of musical ability or know how left in me, from that season in my twelve-year-old life. Even today, how I accomplished playing the violin remains elusive. I did find my artistic niche when I began ballet classes at age eight a decision that would have a lifelong impact.

In all my years of primary, junior and secondary schools, I can honestly say there has only been one bad teacher. Not bad in the sense that they were unable to teach, convey, prepare a lesson, but just bad for the sake of being able to wield the power in their hands to devise, plot and scheme in achieving maltreatment towards their students. Mr. Smith taught physics, a tall be-speckled man who walked with a limp. Daily, he wore the same brown tweed jacket with leather elbow pads – this never changed. For reasons unknown to me or possibly even to himself, he began to wage a war with me as his primary target.

This was a traumatic year. Mr. Smith, who saw fit to give me an “E” in physics. Just to clarify, this was not an “E” for excellent, but the grade that sits just before an “F” for failure. There it was on my report card shining like a beacon against a backdrop of A’s and B’s. That lone “E” glared conspicuously by its intention. I cared not why this had happened because based on my test results and exams it made no sense. I cared a lot about how I would explain the glaring blot on my report card to Mum and Dad. After a brief question and answer session Dad opted to visit the school on the evening of parent teacher interviews. This in and of itself may be seemingly harmless, but the last time Dad went to school it

ended with Dad grabbing the cane and threatening the teacher with the very cane he had used on my older sister.

Margaret (my sister) received her caning for not knowing which direction the trade winds blew in the Caribbean. Mr. Reeves with all the pompous assumption he could muster demanded to know the answer. Surely, the Negro girl should know all about the West Indies. Dad took great delight in the counter argument “she does not have any more insider knowledge than any of your other students, she has never been to the West Indies, actually, the furthest west she has been is to Honeypot Lane the North West London hospital she was born in”. Corporal punishment was still an available option for teachers in our schools. A good whack on the open hands or the back of the legs a viable deterrent, they thought. However, I always believed it had the adverse effect, often making the boys rowdier and the girls less assertive.

As I thought, Mr. Smith and Dad were a nasty combination. The Headmistress became involved, all the tests scores verified, and the grade changed to comply. This was my first encounter with evil in its purest form. Mr. Smith was not done. A few weeks later, he drummed up some alleged infraction. It was raining at lunchtime that meant the entire school was inside sitting in the gym. Across the floor strode Mr. Smith yelling, “you are forbidden to go on the trip with us”. This trip was not a day excursion, but a weeklong European boat trip that the fifth forms had been fundraising, and planning for the entire year. I cried the whole afternoon. Following lunch was a double class of needlework, and

as I inserted a zip in to my garment. I flooded the sewing machine and the skirt with tears. I was so distraught. I could not get the words out to explain, but my friends told the teacher. She immediately left for the office. I knew it was Mr. Smith's retaliation for having to change the grade. I did not get the chance to explain to the needlework teacher that it would not be worth it.

At home, Mum simply asked, "would Mr. Smith have been a teacher chaperone for the trip?" I said yes, she said, "well its best you stay home, if you had gone he might have thrown you off the boat!" We never talked of Mr. Smith again. Very soon after, he left our school. I moved on to the sixth form, and completed my A levels. I sealed Mr. Smith's vendetta within me as a forever mystery. Evil was real, a stubbornly defiant culprit, functioning outside of rhyme or reason. Evil when asked, defiantly refuses to provide an explanation. The lesson, evil could and would simply presents itself, unannounced, occurring at its own will, taking on any form it wants to. Mum the spiritual beacon of the family said, "Every disappointment is for a good, only God knows why he did not want you to go on that trip". Well, I thought, God sure took a long, painful way to prevent it.

The Incidental Accidental Years

Poem 6.

THE EDICT OF NANTES, STAY, AND GO

Stay
Running towards never away
Death to the non-conformist
Dear Lord save me from well-meaning zealots
Go

Stay
On pain of being sent to the gallows
Pack what's on your back
The Edict of Nantes reversed
Wait, just
Go

Geneva – place of refuge
Stay

Incidents

Braintcroft Junior School was an interesting place for me. I began there at age five. We moved from the Swiss Cottage area to Neasden in North West, London. I enjoyed school, making friends, even the bizarre combination of yellow and green uniforms. I would later recognize that my staunch British school life fed my yet to be recognized overwhelming need for organization. I had a natural pulse for craving order. Sometimes, we would queue by gender – boy, girl, boy, girl. Then the following term alphabetically. The brilliance of this was not lost on me, what an innovative way to teach youngsters the alphabet and simultaneously to learn each other's last name. It took great pains and much work for me to herd

the boys into their spots. No one asked me to take on this role but by kindergarten, Miss Bossy Boots had arrived.

We lined up for three things: entering class in the morning, exiting for fire drills or hungrily anticipating food. I thought food would help to keep everyone standing straight, and directly behind the person in front. Hot, tasty, soul satisfying, government mandated school lunches this should have been an easy incentive to calm rowdiness. Lunch was always scrumptious, replete with sticky toffee pudding, cornflakes treacle pie and chocolate cake and custard. Authentic Christmas pudding was a rare treat that came with poetic sixpences hidden amongst steamed currants, and dates. You took a bite with the hope of finding the money. Many coins were accidentally swallowed. School deserts, were an everyday hit. I found Miss Desert lover.

Playing in the schoolyard during summer was a no-no. They locked the school to all students. The inability for me to follow this single rule, and not succumb to the wiles of youth and peer pressure would result in initiating the top five of my most embarrassing lifetime moments. Someone began yelling. All the kids who were older, taller, and faster my sister included, ran full steam ahead. Younger, shorter, and slower, I straggled behind. They climbed the huge double iron gates and leapt off, landing on the other side. They continued at top speed running down the street. The others would not outdo me. Fearing the wrath of the situation, I managed to scale the gate just ahead of the long reach of the custodian.

When I launched in to my landing my underwear unceremoniously betrayed me. I dangled on the gate hooked only by the back elastic of my blue cotton knickers. It could have been worse. I screamed. The others ran back. Fearing the worst, they screamed too, but unsure as to what exactly had taken place. “Get down, they yelled, Hurry! I can’t, I’m stuck.” Time stood still for me everything became more acute. From this vantage point perched on the top of the gate. I noticed every car that drove by. Every net curtain that parted as folks peered out to see what the raucous was. I wondered what this scene looked like to passers-by. I was mortified.

The school custodian had a quaint house situated right on the school grounds. How the memory of this important fact escaped us in the midst of planning this subterfuge is explained only by the single focus that play creates. There he stood – drawn away from his day. Positioned on the other side of the gate he was unable to rescue me. He fumbled for his keys to unlock the gate. It felt like an eternity. We were not at all afraid of the custodian – usually. We ran because we were where we should not have been. We were doing what we should not have been doing. We had walked on his beautiful Redgra™ – the school’s artificial sports turf. He had previously painstakingly raked the entire field into neat rows, beautiful, untouched, and pristine crop circles. Who could resist walking those circles; it became a labyrinth of chatter, and giggles until we heard that shout.

The custodian was an anomaly, a white Jamaican. As children, we all found this fact hilarious. The lilt of patois from the lips of a Caucasian struck us as highly amusing. This time there was no lilt. He chided me in full patois, rightfully anticipating that I would better understand the severity of the infraction. That lilt reminded me that he was only the first half of the problem. Mum would be the second. Perhaps, she would not find out. That would not be the case, as torn underwear in the laundry basket would always require an explanation. Why did I not throw them out? This would have to be a story that was plausible; none seemed to fit, except the truth. The story became a family gem, recounted *ad nauseam* at gatherings; eventually I, too, could laugh at it all.

Eleven was the year filled with incidents and accidents. It would prove to be a year of rapid maturity, a year of awareness. A time when you realize who you are in terms of the world, you occupy. It was also the year of the dreaded eleven-plus exam. Miss Fairy – not a pseudonym – as the name conjures up, was a wish-granter. A fine boned, waif of a woman, dark blond hair with strong facial features. Miss Fairy was a teacher of the best kind, intelligent, creative, caring, and compassionate – an encourager. She took no nonsense, yet was fair, and if she had favourites, she hid that fact well. Miss Fairy was a gift from God. She would become my fairy godmother.

The eleven-plus exam, a standardized test in all schools was a determining factor. All students in primary school annually sat this exam. This test sought to recognize future abilities and then placed you in the appropriate high school

stream. We knew this test as a sifter enormous in scope. It effectively capped your educational potential. Before we even had a taste for the future, the results of this exam would be an enforced life-changer. Academic results qualified you for entrance in to university, college or a technical trade school. My first choice would be Preston Manor Grammar School, and second would be John Kelly Secondary School. Trade and College focused schools were off the radar for my parents. Miss Fairy worked for an entire year to prepare us. She had an amazing plan that included many unconventional methods. She instituted a maxim that I use to this day. For an entire year, we could not say the words “I can’t do it”. This I found profound, a fast of words, how impactful.

I would visit the Principal’s office twice that year. These incidents were not for in-class disobedience or some playground infraction but at the invitation of Miss Fairy. Mr. Philpott’s office seemed large and dreary it felt less like a head master’s office and more like a doctor’s. Even today, I can recall the feel of that moment; everything became magnified, the leather chair and an overbearing larger than life desk. Miss Fairy took me the first time hoping to get me de-streamed and moved a level up based on coursework test results. The second time, I think was to reinforce the first. I had written a rendition of the biblical story of Joseph and his multi-coloured coat. He read the story and asked me one question – “did you really write this”? I replied yes.

Did anything change from Miss Fairy’s attempt to get me in to a higher stream? No. I could tell Miss Fairy was not amused, she assumed it was a

foregone conclusion. She apologized. The subtleties of what had transpired were not lost on me. Realization grew quickly through that incident. God has a way of turning bad things into good things. I found Miss Fairy's efforts towards me more of an encouragement than the disappointment in Mr. Philpot's reluctance to be a pioneer and be the first to place a coloured girl in the higher form room.

Even at eleven, I knew an injustice had occurred. I wore myself out asking God why. The next morning, like every day the crates were delivered to the classroom filled with mini bottles of milk. As, I scanned the crates for my lone bottle of orange juice I recognised a conspicuous, cruel irony, a visible metaphor of my difference amongst all that homogenised milk – lactose intolerance singled me out. I learned something more about people that year. I understood less about God. I wondered why God would tempt us with the taste of things but would never allow us to swallow.

Accidents

Poem 7

OVERLAP CINQUAIN

*Overlap
Collide Cascade
Tears Troubles Turmoil
Frenetic Kinetic Gasping Issues*

The accident occurred late one night. Dad was driving back home on a Sunday, and fell asleep at the wheel. He began an argument with a tree on Angel Road of all the perfectly named places, and the tree won. A concussion

hospitalized Dad. He also had contusions to the head that resulted in a visible scar which forever after graced his forehead. It was a time made more devastating, because at the same time, Mum happened to be recuperating post-surgery in another hospital. So, there we were on that fateful morning when the Police came to the door to advise us of Dad's accident – three temporary orphans.

The constable had called Aunt Ida, Dad's sister. We were not sure how he got her contact. Possibly, Dad was able to provide this before he went in for surgery. She would let us know, in her brash and uncensored way that Dad had not only fallen asleep, but he was drunk. Ida was a maelstrom of personality. Fast-talking, Spanish speaking, talented in needlecrafts and adept at doing our hair for weddings – ringlets and up do's being her specialty. Her full-time career was as a nurse, but as is wont, everyone in the family wore multi-layers of skills and talents. I have no recollection of family members who did not also have a side job or hobby that both earned them an extra living and satisfied their creative side. Uncle Victor was an electrician, and a baker. Uncle Wendell was a baker, and a tailor. Uncle CB was a real estate maverick, entrepreneur, drycleaner and a tailor. Dad was not only a jack-of-all-trades but also master of all of them – a trait that would become one of my yardsticks, when I began to seriously notice and assess boys.

Poem 8.

HUGUENOT LEAVEN

*Centuries of persecution stings
Acidic etching
Crevices, deep gaping wounds
France cut off their noses to spite their faces
Cause and effect*

*No foreknowledge that cutting
Would result in artisan culling
Talent runs down the drain*

*Lace-makers, Silk makers, Artists
Tanners, Silversmiths and, Glass blowers
Watchmakers
Creativity the fabric of humanity
Can you erase a skill?*

*Huguenot leaven
A little yeast
Scattered seeds
Huguenot birds and bees
Flit to all corners of the globe*

*Can you erase a people?
Can you erase a belief in God?*

The idea of being simultaneously industrious, and following your passion was not only enmeshed in the family ethos but also anticipated. This was different. It was not simply working at two or more jobs to make ends meet, a familiar necessity of the new immigrant's pursuit. This was engagement in artistic endeavours as if they were a necessary driving impulse. Creative expression was a lifeline, integral to the beating of their hearts. One's need to follow artistic pastimes quelled only through self-imposed limitations. No one in our family,

community, or culture looked askance at the idea that you could order a beautifully decorated three-tiered wedding cake from a certified working electrician. That was the way it was. Creativity was an unhindered free spirit. The ability to naturally express and pursue your particular breadth of creative abilities layered on to my sensibilities as a universal. I believed this to be the norm in every family. I was convinced that everyone carried a unique creative aptitude.

Late for school that morning Miss Fairy queried why. Tardiness on my part was highly unusual. She paled when I told her the situation. I had not realized the severity of my predicament; I had simply absorbed the events with childlike elasticity. Miss Fairy announced it to the whole class and asked them to be especially caring towards me. I was touched. I learned about leaning on the support of others in times of need. I learned that there could be genuine goodness in others and from others. She was truly a Godsend.

Was cousin Conroy a cousin or not? As a child the family lineage was difficult to determine as relatives and long-time family friends merged. As children, we respectfully had to refer to our elders with the moniker Aunt or Uncle preceding their first or surname regardless of bloodlines. Cousin Conroy would provide me with my first encounter with tragedy, death by accident. He was eighteen years old, one of many brothers. We frequently visited each other's homes. Mum and Dad often dropped in to see the boys and Conroy's parents. Dad, among other things was a self-taught youth counsellor. He would encourage everyone's children. He pushed them to stay in school, offering advice on a career

path, even helping with math homework. Dad exhibited an innate ability to converse with youngsters. One question always started those conversations “What is your passion?” He had an eye for the potential in the young, even though this often overrode the ideas of the parents.

Nurturing the potential in the youth seemed to be a foreign concept to the highly principled West Indian – get a job, any job – culture. The tendency, to regard children as those who followed, obeyed, and helped to shore up the family finances. Very often, parental respect also meant a diminishing of the child’s own wants and desires. However, the parents, all of them, listened to Dad; he carried the unwritten moniker of being the community wisdom carrier. Dad was different, a maverick in child rearing. He talked to the youth, asked questions, and genuinely weighed their opinions. He steered, encouraged, and spoke life-changing words into their lives. He was ahead of his time in being gender neutral in this pursuit. Everyone needs education and to fulfil their destiny. In this role, he was a natural. This was ironic, as daily he struggled with his own internal demons.

We were visiting, sitting in their living room. The doorbell rang Conroy’s friends came by that evening, a group of guys nudging, cajoling asking Conroy to join them. It was eight, early evening. “Let’s go out for a drive around town Piccadilly Circus is always hopping.” No, he said, “I’m already in pyjamas, staying home, I’m down for the night”. They convincingly persuaded him to get dressed and leave with them. Conroy would be the only one of the five occupants

in the car who died that night – a tragic single-car accident. A difficult life lesson, Mum said “don’t let anyone change God’s path for you, listen to that inner voice”. To this day cousin Conroy is a reminder that putting on my pyjamas means I am not leaving.

Our Histories, Our Sacred Stories

Poem 9.

GOD IS AS GOD DOES

*Lock me in a monastery
Talk to me
I will tell you that God is
And I will show you that God does
No more no less
Confound me with your rhetoric
I will be as wise as a fox and gentle as a dove
Parry and spar
Your thoughts and mine entwine
There is no yield
You believe
I believe
God is as God does*

Learning through the Soles of Your Feet

I am always at a loss, and fight for the words to explain, or answer the question “When did God first become real to you?” The truth is I have no recollection of a time when God was not real. As long as I have known myself, I have always had a relationship with God. I cannot recall in vivid dramatic detail a profound awakening. There was no huge event. I cannot offer a grave trauma that spurred me to seek a remedy via a higher power. The child that I was knew to

speak with God. I did not do so in a, gentle Jesus meek and mild look upon this little child way, but to ask questions knowing I would somehow receive an answer. Questions provoked my mind. As an eight-year-old, staring out of my parent's bedroom window looking up at the vastness of blue sky I asked, "God why did you make this world, with all these people and all these things – what is this all for?" More intriguing than posing the question was that I knew I could anticipate an answer. I must have learned this through the soles of my feet because, how could I have known that I could speak to a God that could, and would actually answer?

Willesden Green Baptist was our church. Church attendance was a parental mandate. It was as if we – the children – needed to journey through a religious rite of passage. Whatever the motivation, our travelling from Neasden to Willesden every Sunday morning remained clouded, and felt both highly unusual and abnormal as neither Mum nor Dad ever attended with us. We never asked why. It was a given, accepted as the norm. Mum would occasionally visit at special times, baptisms, Christmas song service, and maybe a few evening services. The Baptist influence was hers; she was the daughter of a Baptist preacher. Wilmoth Lewis was the founder of the Mount Zion Baptist Church. A limestone-washed building perched high up on a hill overlooking the Rio Nuevo on the border between the Parishes of St. Mary, and St. Andrew in Jamaica.

I knew from the tales she would tell us, that Mum did not attend church now as much as she would have as a young girl. A self-taught organist she

provided weekly accompaniment in her Dad's services as he led the congregation in traditional *Sankey's* (a Jamaican word for hymns, irrespective of whether the author was Ira David Sankey [1840-1908]). Church attendance or lack thereof did not seem to have a bearing on Mum's spirituality. She was a faithful believer, a Christian of the most practical sort. Mum applied Jesus without restraint to every corner of her life. Mum was a devout Bible reader and fully seasoned in spiritual gifting.

Mum lived attuned to the Holy Spirit, who held pride of place in the world she could then so easily decipher. Mum had spiritual clarity the ability to see, hear, discern, and understand the voice of God. As a child, Mum to me was uncanny; she knew things before they happened. "I had a dream," she would say or I sense that this or that is about to happen – accurate, detailed, and always verifiable accounts. On meeting people, she would filter them through an unseen sifter and say to us children or to Dad afterwards – "my spirit did not take to them". That would prove sufficient as a litmus test. Dad knew how far to allow the person, or couple to become a part of our lives. We knew what friends to disinvite to our homes. It always proved true. Eventually, or immediately there would arise some failing or mishap that Mum could very easily have said I told you so – but the confirmation was sufficient, and we all knew credit belonged solely to the Holy Spirit, and that spoke volumes.

Mum spoke like Jesus did. She colourfully used parables, quizzical replies that asked more questions than provided answers. Both Mum and Dad were

lovers of words, and turns of phrases. There were old wives' tales, proverbs, intuition, and common-sense sayings for every one of life's scenarios. Mum, would often search for the phrase or axiom in English, or Patois and then realized the words sat in her mother tongue – her first language – scripture. She astutely sprinkled the word of God in and around her sentences. A honed craft of interspersed wisdom, yet never too salty, always succinct in its practical, principled application.

As a child, I loved church without understanding a thing that was being said. Each Sunday morning, I would fix my eyes on the vase of fresh flowers that sat on the altar table behind the minister. The beauty of the floral arrangement captured me. It was as if the flowers were telling me more about God than the words that were so difficult to understand. There was a new and freshly arranged bunch every Sunday. Now why would God, take the time to create so many different colours, shapes and fragrances for us to just sit and enjoy. What was the purpose of flowers? The flowers pulled at me. I would later learn that the feelings the flowers evoked in me were an aesthetic response. Later, it would then be time for us children to go to the front for prayer before we went to our class. Maybe God told the minister, or maybe he saw where my eyes were fixed each Sunday, but he reached for that vase of flowers and asked if I would like them. “Yes please, I am going to take them home to my Mum,” I said. He gave those flowers to me – and only me – every Sunday for all the years I attended. For this reason, I

decided church was a good place, a generous place; after all, there were fresh flowers for Mum and me— every Sunday.

In my early teens, I arrived at what Mum called womanhood in church. Quietly, without fanfare, or noticing anything was at all wrong, the cycles that would later fertilize life began. My second most embarrassing moment, somehow seemed spiritual, ethereal, I felt closer to God – bridal – a sharing of our own intimate secret. “Why now, at church of all places”? I thought this must somehow be significant. I remember thinking – God has so many different ways to speak and endear us to his home.

The Roots of Influence

The British Commonwealth would provide an influx of post-war destiny seekers. They came in droves, mostly by boat to the shores of England. This was a voyage of three weeks or more, but not a deterrent. The boat carried varied layers of life, people from all walks, and lands. Mum travelled by boat to England from Jamaica. For some act of kindness, as a gift, Mum received an intricate hand painted Oriental Tea set from a kindly old Asian gentleman. Mum, as she thought, travelled alone. Mum was carrying an unannounced surprise, as she would later describe it. The marriage had taken place in Jamaica on December 26, 1950, a Boxing Day wedding. They had danced up a storm – jive, jitterbug, and the mashed potato. Their first child would be born almost nine months to the day in September of the following year. They named the unannounced surprise Margaret Josephine.

Mum, as a newcomer to post war Britain discovered the weather, the unheated homes, and the way of life harsh. Food remained rationed. She told us, of a once a week allowance of a partial portion of meat – a beef bone that she used to make soup. Eggs and cheese were all in slim supply. As a lactating mother, she was in a privileged group that received a double ration of milk. However, you would think the scarcity of food was her primary concern. Amongst her chief complaints was the lack of hosiery. The war had taken every bit of available nylon for parachutes. The women of Britain became resourceful. Necessity would indeed become the mother of invention. A black eyebrow pencil would suffice. A line drawn neatly up the back of the leg mimicked the seam of the finest denier of silk stocking. After all, as Mum taught us through this story “one must always strive to be a lady even under adverse circumstances.” This too was a carryover lesson.

Dad had graduated, with a City and Guilds certificate in Electrical and Electronic engineering from the University of Wales located in the city of Cardiff. His education came via a gift of war. He belonged to the all Negro RAF (Royal Air Force) Corps of the Air and Sea Rescue Division. We would peruse his wartime photos and listen to endless stories of his accomplishments. It became our game, to mercilessly tease Dad and diminish his tales by jokingly suggesting that all he did in the war was peel potatoes for the mess hall! Dad, we would say perhaps all the heroic accounts were just tall tales. It was what we called a running joke-it was funny every time.

The photos jarred my young heart. Dad's duties involved being lowered by the aircraft directly on to the shores of battle. He carried orders to cut and collect the nametags of the British fallen, the purpose, to catalogue wartime casualties. There was one cardinal rule – do not touch the Germans. He could not resist. He cut a swastika emblem from the jacket of a deceased German ground soldier, and retrieved a bullet casing. He hid both from the squadron leader. The photos and the stories somewhat troubled me. The British and those they conscripted to fight alongside I understood to be all on the same side. Yet, each and every photo of Dad's troops showed only groups of black men. The reality of separation by colour lines between fighting comrades – segregated troops – always struck me as a flagrant oxymoron. I learned, this was a sad reality.

Death may have no sting, but looking daily at the faces of death definitely stings. When the memories came like a flood, the images and the horrors became too real, Dad would find solace in the bottle. He self-medicated, consciously endeavouring to become the best kind of alcoholic there was – functional. He held a job, raised us, bought houses, and was a beacon to many. Our young minds did not fully understand the root of Dad's Saturday night drunkenness. His antics never menacing at those times, to us children, he was simply absolutely, hilariously funny.

As a child, I fell in love with that ornate Tea Set, even after finding out I would never be able to drink tea from it – lead paint. Mum always used it just for tchotchke, more stuff for me to dust. For years, I jokingly begged for a

bequeathed transfer pre-her demise. *Ouida mek u no wahn wait fe me ded before you tek me tings, gwaan wid it* (Why can't you wait for me to die to give it to you, OK have it). I continue to cherish from my parents only two keepsake items. Tucked away in a special place, is an Oriental tea set and a small tobacco tin tied with a black shoelace containing a German swastika and a bullet casing. These are memorabilia, *objets d'art* that tell not only a story but the prelude to the story and I treasure the power of that truth.

The France to Jamaica to Cuba Link

Poem 10.

THE CIPHER

*Set afloat
Again, again and again
Swaddled, nameless faces
Un deux trois quatre cinq
et plus
Peas in a pod
Secretly Coded*

*Monsieur Rousseau reviendrez-vous?
.Je ne sais pas?
Construed logic a guide
Education trumps love*

*Baroness De Werens
Besotted by Oedipus loins
Convicted
Probed for the Cipher
Faint of heart sent the valet to reclaim
Asking the Convent for a brooch or a blanquette*

*I would not yield
Silly busy body
Why would I disrupt the settled?
What clue can a foundling carry?*

*The cipher – botanically deciphered
Harkens the past and beckons the future
The cipher
Hiding in plain sight
Embedded in a name
The Russea children were never claimed*

France to Jamaica

Monsieur Martin Russea would be our seven times great-grandfather – a French Huguenot escapee. My younger brother is his namesake. He received the

honour of that name by being the only boy amongst all the children to be born in our generation. Martin the Huguenot washed out of France via The Edict of Fontainebleau. Family lore recounts and genealogical research verifies the tale. The plan, Martin was on his way to one of the French Caribbean Islands. Unfortunately, or fortunately Monsieur Martin would become so violently ill that he could go no further. The kindly Captain of the Sloop made a detour to the ship's course and put him and his brother John, both off at Jamaica. This would be a major tide turner. Not only for the Huguenot Russea brothers but also for us all, this instrument of *aleatoric* fate orchestrated via illness proved both to be the Divine chance and the Divine time that began our family tree.

Jamaican and Moravian missionaries provided the ill Huguenot safe refuge and generous hospitality. They nursed Monsieur Martin back to health. Recovered, he immediately determined that Jamaica, and all it had to offer had so impressed him that he made the Island his forever home. Martin never ventured on to the French West Indies. In fact, other Russea family members followed from France and Geneva, talented and creative artisans and watchmakers. The Russea folks bought land and owned properties. They enmeshed themselves in the country, the culture and enamoured by the women they raised families. Families with and without registered records. Two, three or more branches, emerged from the same root, products of a time long past. The French Huguenot blood intermingled. Evidence, became visually apparent through the nuance of shading.

Skin tone, throughout the family revealed an artistic palette of colour. How long does it take a people to change from white to black and back?

Poem 11.

A CULTIVATORS COCKTAIL

White
Dutiful insemination
Black
Shake – Mulatto

White Black Mulatto
One week's extra wage
Stir – Quadroon

White Black Mulatto Quadroon
Cultivate cotton, sugar and babies
Shake – Octaroon

Why buy when you can breed?
English, Scottish, Irish – French blood
Bantu, Ewu, West coast Negroes – Gold blood

Shake Stir Shake
Pierce the sides
It all runs red
Rojo, Rouge, Russea
White to black and back again

A cultivator's cocktail . . .

Monsieur Martin Russea has on record, his living will and testament dated 1749. This document speaks volumes in a single directive “I leave £5,400 to build a school for the Jamaicans, both black slaves and poor whites. A people who showed me, a stranger, much hospitality.” The Martin Rusea (adopted spelling) High School in the Parish of Hanover, is the fifth oldest school in Jamaica, and

still stands today in offering instructions from Kindergarten to pre-College (<http://luceatown.info/ruseas> accessed August 2015).

Jamaica to Cuba

Grandfather, Ephraim Alexander Russea, a man I have never met by photo or in person is the closest character to a James Bond secret service agent that we have in the family tree. Dad's Dad was a WW1 military man. Ephraim was the product of a British military's physical, mental, and social experiment.

Conscripted in 1918 by the British into the newly formed RAF he was one of a small contingent of coloured men gathered from a few of the Islands of the West Indies. Enlisted, and trained as an elite regiment, skilled, physically superior, and multi-lingual. That experiment, would determine whether training West Indians to be fighting soldiers was possible. This select group of men succeeded.

This single tour of duty, as an addition to his resume would be the catalyst that took Ephraim and his wife Hannah to Havana, Cuba in the mid 20's. Post WW1, his stint in the RAF gained him a commission to the British Embassy as a Protocol Officer. His civil service career included acting as a chauffeur bodyguard to the British Ambassador. Cuba would become his home. He gave birth to, and raised all five children there: Frank, Robert (Dad), Mavis, Ida, and Victor. There were successional christenings for all the children, Dad, and his siblings in the Cathedral de San Cristobal, Havana. A Cathedral built in 1748, by the Jesuits but never inhabited by them. It remains, the oldest church still standing in the city plaza of Habana Viejo today.

Ephraim's career position, would also act as the cover, under which they made their escape from the looming sound of *el revolucion*. Although, it would not materialize in its entirety for another decade, the stirrings of the unease had begun. Eventually, they too would have to flee the cusp of discontent that fueled the Cuban Revolution. This would necessitate a move for Ephraim, his wife and his now grown family. For Dad, Cuba was his birthplace, all he had known, the place had indelibly imprinted on him.

Dad, spoke often about the heyday of the Havana of his formative years. Latin jazz musicians, stylized zoot suits, fishtailed American classic cars and a city that shimmied to a rhythm of a continuous fiesta. It was no wonder that years later his first car in London was a Vauxhall Cresta a blue and chrome baby boasting the lines of a past fondly remembered. Ephraim and his Russea family moved away from Cuba. Due to granddad's military service, and his position in the embassy they were able to procure British passports with the status BPP – British protected person. The Russea chapter turned back to Jamaica, then to England, to once again, begin again.

The Stream of Life Years

Poem 12.

REMEMBERING WELL

*I prefer to remember
Like I prefer to live
In the stream*

*Flowing
Gushing
Cascading*

*Waterfalls and boulders
Stops and turns
Curves and churns*

*Around and over
Meandering
Purposefully*

On the way to

On the Way To

There are years, seasons that coagulate that seem to morph into one. The dramatic, the earth shattering or joyous life changing moments are an ever-flowing river of events. There was my first marriage, the birth of my first son, a second son, the death of my father, the death of my mother, and my divorce. How could the amalgamation of twenty-five years of life be partially – dateless? At times these memories, feel like I am safe in a boat, enjoying an idyllic scenery, idly afloat, trailing fingers in the water. Other times, there are tumultuous waves and rocks to ride and circumvent. Life threatening cliff edges appear. These memories are a single-season, a mixed blessings chapter of my life.

The mind can be self-protective, self-healing. It has helped me to recall the moments through the gift of always seeking the answer to the question. How did God intervene, show up? Recollection for me, has never been a chronological exercise. Yet, every cell of my being recalls. My mind knows me well. If I stored dates, I would roll up to them every year in trepidation, a need to stop, acknowledge, and relive the memory. I have come to understand life is never dates, days on a calendar, but a real and felt experience. Grief and overwhelming loss, has taught me to remember in vignettes. Dad died in December. All his relatives have – a family curiosity. December is a time when we hold our breath and wait until New Year’s Day to exhale. Mum died nine months later in September of the following year. They were both in their sixties, far too young. Dad died from complications of a stroke, a pulmonary embolism, and Mum died from lung cancer. What I felt, saw, tasted was real. I cannot tell you the date but I will tell you of a season.

Poem 13.

DATES ELUDE ME

A Narrative Poem

Dates elude me. The chronology of time somehow passes through my internal clock without registering. If you ask what year Mum died or Dad, sorry try as I might I could not roll those dates off my tongue. It has been a while now. Is that too general Perhaps a tad cold, does it bear the ring of a daughter detached, an unhappy childhood, or maybe family estrangement? Each one of those would be a lie. My Father would be happy to interject at this time one of his famous sayings “Did you break anything by jumping to that conclusion” peals of laughter would

follow. Laughter, our cornerstone, the remedy, the solace and the encourager to the family – my family.

Dates elude me. Yet I can remember every nuance of that hospital room especially the way the sunlight streamed through the window as Mum's ragged breathing marked time. We sat there for the past week, brother and sisters spelling turns between us. After that call, "you better come to the hospital right away Mum has taken a turn for the worse." My brother in laws voice steady and sure, but sprinkled with enough urgency that I drove from the top of town straight to the bottom, parked and entered without even knowing how. It was way past midnight.

Dates elude me. In comes a dishevelled, crumpled man. "Is he wearing a white doctor's jacket? It is hard to tell, as the pallor of his skin, is an abject rejection to the boldness of the sun that enveloped the room. I recall the furrow of his brow, his deadpan gaze – did you even acknowledge us? My mind screams they sent you, I have never seen you before. Not in the past week or in the six weeks, that they told us it would take this day to come. Are you the yes, she is dead, Doctor? You place the stethoscope to listen for a heartbeat already long gone. You are uncomfortable. I sense the hesitation sitting in the silence of the room. You ponder, if I declare too quickly they may reject my conclusion, too long and the unknowing is unbearable. You do not speak you simply raise your head and acquiesce to the question hanging in the sun.

Dates elude me. Do you want me to read something? Elegance personified neatly coifed blonde curls white Anglican satin prayer stole reaching for a Baha'i book and reading. Yes, reading. How ecumenically polite, who called you? There are words piercing my mind. I cannot hear or understand death's silence my head is spinning. I roll along the wall my whole body painting the room with grief. Please read from the Bible I hear myself say

I am in need of a word from the Lord.

Love a Chameleon

I can recall the most profound realization I took away from my first crush was not the boy or the circumstances but that I had discovered the heart's capacity to love. At fourteen years of age, I understood love only in terms of family, immediate and extended. It was what bound us. It was a given, a solid enduring comfort. My youth had somehow restrained love to within the finite arena of

family. I was astounded that you could love with the same latitude non-family members – strangers. What a gift, I proclaimed as I scribbled his name against mine to see how wonderful they would look together. Mrs. Ouida Vidal screamed out from random pieces of paper and across the pages of every one of my schoolbooks.

I entangled myself in the heady feeling of not thinking about anything else but him. It was exhilarating, a feeling of excitement, and promise rolled into one. I would see his name in the most unlikely places. There it sat blazoned across a tin of milk idly sitting in the pantry. Does that say Nestlé's or Dorian? No, it said Nestlé's my eyes filled up with the chemical mix of dopamine, and romance. This was that universal malady of first flush love-itis. Dorian was the brother of a girlfriend of mine. Unbeknownst to me at the time this precursor would become my pattern. I let no one into my circle unless I had some connection. It was my version of built in background checks. Perhaps, this was God's way of whittling down suitors, or the untoward. Sorry, do not know you or anyone in your family . . . Bye! Dorian would not be the man I married. Simply a school girl crush. All the scribbling of names together and the days of dreaming of love, marriage and a baby carriage would not materialize.

I threw myself into completing high school. My interests in boys would take a back seat. Until, years later a new kind of evil showed up. I learned the nature of abusive love. Evil disguised itself by combining just the right quantities of charm and bad boy, a formula for destruction. I had forgotten my pre-requisites

for dating. Cade was a stranger. Cade was a physical abuser. As I would later learn, he exhibited all the classic signs, alienation, control, and possessive attention wrapped up in the guise of love. The breadth of his true nature would only rear its head when I tried to break off the relationship. “If I can’t be with you then no one will be with you”. It was a textbook set-up. He declared he would kill me. I am not sure how a young mind snaps to become fixated on murder.

To speak about the first time, he tried to kill me strongly suggests that there were other times. This time, he dragged me towards Lake Ontario at the bottom of the Beach’s area. I was geographically very close to home less than five minutes that could have been five hours in this situation. I decided this had to be the last time. I saw a police car coming towards us, and found the courage in my seventeen-year-old heart to make wild gestures to get them to stop. They did, they took me home and asked if I wanted to press charges. That sounded too complicated. It probably would have been the better idea, as getting out of the quagmire of this relationship would take the better part of another year. Before the term stalker was in common usage, I lived the experience. There he would be, outside of school, outside of work outside of my friend’s homes wherever I went I had to be vigilant, constantly looking behind me. On more than one occasion, my colleagues and friends would notice him and warn me. I would often have to call Dad to meet me after work we would then go home together for my protection.

The last straw of his murderous attempts took place on the Toronto subway system. I have blotted out much of this era of my life, so I cannot recall

the details of how he managed to connect with me that day. There we were on the train travelling eastbound together. He insisted we get off at a stop long before my stop, Broadview Avenue Station. He berated, argued, slapped, and punched me around. It was rush hour. The trains and the platforms were packed. No one stopped. No one asked a question. No one seemed concerned. How long this lasted, who knew. It felt like an eternity. So many trains went by. He insisted that the time had come he would push me in front of the next train. I believed him. I could see no way out. I would die that day. I have no recollection of how I got away. I did, and I have never heard from or ever seen him again.

In the book of Jeremiah 29 verse 10 it speaks of God's process of taking the remnant, the chosen back to the place that they were once held captive. It is a reminder of God's restorative promises. God took me back to the place of my captivity and restored my path. Broadview subway station was a significant place of captivity for me, and Broadview Church that sits on Broadview Avenue, would be the place my call to ministry would emerge. What the enemy meant for harm would indeed turn to God's good. The significance of this truth has never been lost on me.

Poem 14.

I LOVE YOU AND SORRY

*An anomaly
Harboured like saffron
Scant distribution
Rarely voiced
Three little words, four*

*Eschewing
Unintentional hypocrisy
Found on the wings of the floating I love you
Or the repent less sorry . . . wasteful
Flippantly tossed in the air
Thrown aimlessly directionless
Catch them
Remember to quietly ask
Are you banter or truth?*

*A scripted line
Strains with the philosophical provocation
“Love means never having to say you are sorry”
Blows re-shape my core
Giving birth to my ethos*

*I would never see love the same way again
And yet, I am ferociously in love with love
But not the mistreatment of the words*

. . . love or sorry

The fallout of first love and the fallout of abusive love would take their place in shaping me. I withdrew from hope. Change came, an opportunity to love again showed up two years later. I met the younger brother of my sister's girlfriend. I learned the nature of quiet endearing love from, my first husband, the father of my sons. Once again, I returned to the tried and true formula, I had not

veered too far off the path of knowing someone who knew him. He was a qualified stranger. I may not have known him but I knew the family. I was skittish. Burnt by the horror of what people can do to people. It was time; after all, I had become a recluse of sorts. Not venturing out or socializing. Always, willingly content to babysit for whoever asked. Many evenings, and Saturday nights would be spent sitting on the couch with Mum watching her never ending round of TV shows and any mystery detective show you could name.

Unknowingly, during this time I had been picking up relationship cues. I learned how to disagree well, how to fight with love. Mum, although louder in nature than Dad was quietly introspective. Mum, had a larger than life personality you knew she was on her way before she arrived. Her signature voice and laugh would arrive minutes before she did. She would always say trust me not to tell lies, "I am too loud to be a liar". Mum was the life of the party loved by all. Mum and Dad were a comedy team of the best sort always poking fun at each other. Their banter, rife with friendly sarcasm wrapped up in dry British wit. They never argued without laughing.

Mum would be rip roaring mad at Dad, and continue to forcefully state her point all the while making supper, and then lovingly placing it in front of him, and we would all sit and eat. There would be no sign of malice, or lingering anger. Mum, had the uncanny ability to pass through anger on her way to necessary peace. She never stopped long enough to hold on to derision or bear a grudge, always the consummate caregiver and nurturer. As a young child, when these

disagreements would start I would casually continue playing. I had security in knowing it would never get volatile, no one would swear, threaten to leave or begin to throw things. One or the other would make a joke they would both start laughing and on we would go. This became a skill that I attempted to emulate, but could never quite nuance correctly. The slamming of doors and yelling were never a part of their skit but these sometimes felt just right when you have been scarred by abusive love.

Their relationship prowess extended to others. Mum and Dad were natural social workers. They settled marital disputes, taught the ways of life, and took in all who needed a home. New immigrants from the islands would often arrive at the door, bearing a slip of paper with only our address and Dad's name. This alone would suffice. We would shuffle to accommodate them. Many came. Everyone stayed. They did not leave until they felt acclimatized, settled, started work, and branched out on their own. These were lessons in love, that can cover disagreements, and that can encompass those in need.

Poem 15.

A REPOSITORY

*A dastardly deed you say
To give a child away
Blamed the Catholic Church
Who had a limited view from their perch*

*Refused to let my Theresa wed
A comely wench to bed you say
Yet we lived as man and wife*

*Nay you say
Impossible without conversion
Four more times I would transact
Deposit*

*Les Enfants Trouve
A repository of discards
De rigueur
Bastards framed by common law
Offspring of dalliances*

*Unsavoury savoury entanglements
Legitimized by foundling homes
Aristocratic illegitimacy – a ward of chancery*

I am in awe of the miracle of life – God’s creation – babies. I cherish babies. All babies, anyone’s baby. I had two boys, who were born eighteen months apart in 1980 and in 1982. Unconditional heartstrings formed. There was always an urge to adopt hidden in the back of my mind. There was no gestation. It was always a part of me. I wondered if perhaps, somewhere in our antique past, we were descendants of foundlings. Dad nicknamed both Margaret, and I – her more so – Florence Nightingale as we were always nursing others back to health

and looking out for lost sheep. Why, he could not see that this was also their mantle, and we had simply inherited the gift of loving our neighbour as we loved ourselves. Manifested across the family, was an offer to take in every child, to steer, teach, and guide. God is masterful at restoration and offering second chances. Subsequently, in my life there was another marriage (Marshall), and the adoption of two beautiful girls.

The Love of Dance: A Constant

I have a dancer's heart movement is intrinsic for me. The love of classical dance came in to my life through the back door. I do not recall, pining for a pink tutu or ever giving ballet a second thought. Surprisingly, social dance was not taboo in our matriarchal Baptist leaning home. In fact, dance was *de rigueur* on a Saturday evening. There would be many friends, and family that dropped by and at a certain point in the evening we rolled up the rug and all would begin to dance. Everyone danced the young, the old, the capable, and incapable. The appreciation of music, and movement was a culturally acceptable social phenomenon.

Dad fashioned himself as a DJ. He designed, built a double turntable deck. He painted a large blue speaker box, complete with red and yellow flames that darted around the centre hole of the speaker with the words "Ball of Fire" emblazoned in a half moon across the top. Right there in our front parlour the old folk would cut a rug dancing to an eclectic range of music from *Jamaican ska*,

(the 1950's precursor to reggae) *quadrille*, and *mento* (eighteenth century French baroque court dances) to Elvis Presley and everything in between.

Mum and Dad claimed to hold dance championship titles including the jitterbug and the jive. We never disputed this because we all learned to jive as soon as we could walk. Dad would put my feet on his and hold my arms as he jived us around. Later, he taught me how to master the holds and the turns, by dancing with a broom or the door handle. I would push and pull the door as if it was a willing partner. I have studied dance in many forms, and styles and have yet to witness this very effective technique taught by anyone. Dad was suave, and a real product of the fifties, under his electrical engineer persona he fancied himself a triple threat. A dancer like Fred Astaire, a Hollywood actor like Humphrey Bogart, and a singer like Nat King Cole. If time and chance had conspired differently, he would have been an entertainer.

I fell in love with ballet. My eighth year was the year of Linda Osmond. Linda a friend from Junior School much taller than me as everyone else was in comparison. I suffered with the nickname little weed because of my lack of height, and a delightful British children's show called *Bill & Ben and the Flower Pot Men*. Between the two pots stood little weed, a dandelion flower. Many took the pronunciation of my name and shortened it to Weed. Linda did not think this was as amusing as the others did. Linda was a forceful personality. I trailed around after her and joined in whatever hair-brained scheme she would think of. It was a weird relationship of control and concession. Linda controlled and I

conceded. I recall her being intriguing, a very interesting person. She seemed worldly, not in a sordid way, but as if, she had lived her whole life already. She knew stuff, all kinds of stuff. Linda was not like any of my other friends, and did not fit a mold. Every word and claim she would offer enchanted me.

Then came the day she decided we would run away and join the circus. I agreed. She hatched the plan. We would meet at her house in the wee hours of the morning and leave with the gypsy carnival workers. The carnies lived most of the year within a ten-minute walk of both of our homes. Their residence consisted of delightfully carved and painted caravans parked in an enclosed area just for them, right on Tanfield Avenue. I anxiously anticipated it would be very scary to travel along the road at night but something in me agreed to go. I said not a word to anyone at home that night, and packed my suitcase with all that would be necessary. I jumbled together random items of clothing, an Enid Blyton book, and a toiletries bag. The toiletries would be my undoing.

I woke up at six am to the shouts of Mum preparing for work, and unable to find the soap or the toothpaste. I heard Margaret say sleepily “they are in Ouida’s suitcase.” “Why?” Mum asked. Because, I replied I was running away to join the circus last night, but I guess I slept through. Mum was nonplussed, “the next time you decide to run away perhaps you could make plans to buy and take your own soap!” No one mentioned this little escapade again; I never had a stern talking from Dad. I imagine they knew better than me it was a childish whim. I could not fathom the influence that Linda had on me. I was not that

impressionable and yet I had allowed myself to succumb to this ridiculous scheme. I remember thinking, funny how God can and does block our self-inflicted foolishness.

The beauty of hindsight revealed to me, that God had a plan for Linda Osmond's ability to influence me. Linda asked me to visit her ballet school. I went on a sunny Saturday, sat, and watched a class. I begged my parents to sign me up and they agreed. Although there were conditions, I would not be relieved of my Saturday morning chores, sweeping the stairs or doing the laundry. I began ballet class and never looked back. I attended class three times a week. I completed my Royal Academy of Dance, ballet exams, received certificates signed by Dame Margot Fonteyn. I performed in every annual recital. Surprisingly, although Linda had originally asked me to visit her in class, she never returned to the dance school. After that day her influence on me took a back seat, we became distant friends.

Linda was a significant contributor to a turn in the road that would forever resonate throughout my life story. God had intentions for her powers of persuasion; the enemy had tried to sidetrack the plans. I never ran away to join the gypsy caravan, but I did go to ballet class and have never left. Later, I was able to parlay those early ballet exams into the pre-requisites for my York BFA degree in dance. Linda with her gift of persuasion God placed in my life to direct me to uncovering my lifelong passion.

The Penultimate Years

The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.

Proverbs 16:1, 9

Mum used to say, man plans, and God smiles. The wheels of middle age rolled across the threshold of the big five-oh. I began to think about, those carefree grey-haired folks skipping on the beach in the freedom fifty-five commercials. A plan began to form as I asked myself would I do this job – financial management – to retirement. I determined that I would need to leave the corporate world. This was a decision that had slowly crept in. There was an inner knowing. I sensed, there was not only a career change ahead, but the next move would be a culmination of all that I was.

This type of decision requires true knowledge of self, and takes authentic inner work. Dig deep, I thought. The goal would be, to look towards an idea of work that did not feel like work. The best fit would be a transferable career, one that could be used anywhere, and followed along the lines of my natural passions and tendencies. I loved real estate. I ordered the course books and sat the first exam. I changed my mind and did not continue. Next, I considered interior design, home staging, another of my other artistic loves. I also ordered those textbooks and sat the first exam. Again, this did not feel quite right. I planned and God smiled.

Wandering through this decision process, the limitations posed by my encroaching years began to feel like a hindrance. Who thinks about starting a completely new career post mid-life? Hiding deep in the crevices of the secret pockets of my vanity there is this fact, I loathe aging. This is not a new phenomenon, born from the galloping years. I have always been this way. I feel constrained by the chronometer of life. Not because, I have not enjoyed a packed life, but because I still have so much more to do. I asked God to answer the question what will I do? It has always intrigued me that God not only ignores our deep crevices and secret pockets but also deftly rummages and runs right through them.

Poem 16.

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

*You called?
Inhale exhale
God's apothecary
Spiritually dispensed
Kingdom proclaimed*

*In service for the lord
Moses
Unqualified
Ezekiel
Hip tied, turn, Hip tied
Paul
Captured*

*Breathe in breathe out servants
Every pore, corpuscle, thought
Eternal, vertical arguments
Lassoed vision*

*Notably invisible
The call is never silent
Yet audible to the owl
Loud, pervasive, permanent*

*A moment by moment vocation
A month of Sunday's
Years of Sabbath
A lifetime of answers*

The Call

Talking to God seemed like an everyday normal ho-hum thing to do. I have always, since childhood, conversed with God. I do not remember anyone suggesting this or directing me in the how to, but there I was moment by moment, day in and day out chatting with God. Troubled times, and good times I engaged

in a running commentary with a God. A God who I knew heard considered and was readily waiting to converse with me. I spoke to God in my heart, and in my prayers. I carried on, an ongoing conversation through the stream of my life. God has always answered me. I receive authentic answers to my queries through the Word, people, and nature. The variety of ways are endless. The voice is always specific. I have heard clear auditory words from God. Not on one but on two occasions. Both of these moments were in reference to my call, my role in ministry.

The first time was a directive to take the job as church treasurer. I drove alone in my car on the way to church that morning. I heard the phrase – You will become treasurer of the church. It was visceral, and loud, I turned to see where the voice had come from. I was not afraid, just curious. To which I replied, “But the treasurer has been there for over twenty-five years and has never changed: how will I take that job?” At the end of service that Sunday morning, the treasurer resigned. The senior pastor asked me to step in temporarily.

The second time was to usher me to Seminary to complete postgraduate, and graduate work. I prayed for the answers. “How will all that I am, all that I want to be, all my background, passions, wants, and desires-coalesce? I challenge you Lord to put this all together and show me how I can be all that I desire Only you Lord can bring me to a place that will embody me.” The answer would be that I needed to enter in to a season of additional education. A Father’s voice,

reminiscent of my own father's voice offered this preparatory step, complete your Seminary education, and all will become clear.

The Pastor Years

I believe that God writes our résumés. There are no disjointed fragments. There is a method to the seemingly patchwork quilt of jobs, likes, dislikes, passions and desires that form who we are. Ministry is never or should never be a self-directed career choice. It is a vocation, a decision to serve under a call from God. We do not single handily decide this, but as the book of Colossians quite clearly explains ministers of God are a prescription dispensed by God as an antidote to show the world the hidden mystery.

I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (Colossians 1:25-29)

Lodged somewhere between the surreal and the sublime was the realization that this was becoming tangible, palpable. Reality sets in, becoming a train without a driver. My husband Marshall and I both hurtled along at breakneck speed moving towards an unknown destination. He attempted to apply the brakes – “whoa I have not heard from God or at the very least I will need to see a burning bush!” Our Pastor smiled, or was that a smirk? Nonetheless, no type or amount of resistance would ameliorate the inevitable. Pastor had determined he

would retire and we would take the helm as co-Pastors. There would be no going back.

To say, that I had never entertained the idea, or had an inkling that I would become an ordained minister of God would be the proverbial understatement. I can recall an innate sense to teach, to design, or to dance, but to pastor would be the most far-fetched of careers in the grand scheme of things. This was God's idea not mine. The book of Jonah tells us of Jonah's encounter with his God given call, and his futile attempts to try to outrun his vocational stewardship. Jonah becomes our blueprint for not bothering to try to outrun God's call on your life. Yet, run we do. Marshall and I, found ourselves relatively deep in the belly of the fish. I like Jonah realized the futility and stepped in to my Kingdom of God purpose. Marshall followed shortly thereafter. We both became ordained ministers of God.

Conclusion

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

Poem 17.

STRUGGLE ECHOES

*Echoes
Deceiving
Elusive Uncanny
Source unknown
Reverberate
The echo of struggle mimics
Where is the origin of the pain?*

*The heart has many caves
Echoing the pain of struggle
Is it coming from here or there?
Does it really matter?*

*Struggle echoes
Again I say
Get out
Like their forefathers
Ordered out
Dragged out
Sold away*

*Generations echo
Genes echo
I echo*

God has indeed set eternity in my heart. My call, my vocation, my history, and my sacred story bind me to the God purpose in my life. A divine convergence begins to emerge. All that makes me who I am, all the experiences,

circumstances, and people I have met, hated and loved. All the places I visited emotionally and geographically. The hurting, devastating moments that I thought could only be dross find purpose and turn to silver. There is coalescence. A crystal-clear awakening, a moment where I see that it has indeed all come together for some common good. I arrived at the clarity of knowing this is my sweet spot.

I arrive through aeons, generations, people, and life. The French philosopher and theologian Bernard de Chartres (1080 – 1130) penned these words “we are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they, things at a greater distance”. (<http://www.oxfordreference.com> accessed Feb 2018). I paid homage to my beginnings and those ancestors who climbed on each other’s shoulders so that they could see me so far in the distance. Shaping me through their choices, decisions, sufferings and mixed circumstances. Infusing me with a penchant for God, and a love of all things creative. Family lore, points to an illustrious lineage. I uncover, discover myself in the faces, and voices of these ancients. My love of education spearheaded by Monsieur Martin Russea, the French Huguenot who in running away from persecution ran towards his Kingdom of God purpose. All played an immense role shaping me spiritually in my God story.

There is the realization that my craving for God is consistent within the gene pool. Our branches do not fall too far from the tree that first roots us. Perhaps to consider that a yearning for God carries through family lines would

afore time – and even now in certain circles – amount to heresy. Entertaining this idea of an actual spiritual DNA does not undermine the place of the Holy Spirit in the role of drawing all to God. It is merely to suggest that, God plants a pre-disposition for all things Kingdom within creation, and there is an ever-present pull on those strings. The decision whether to heed the call always remains with the called and not the caller. I have uncovered glaring similarities in the stories of the ancient fore-bearers, folks that had no physical impact on my nurturing, and yet my genes no matter how far flung, do not lie. As the journey continues to unfold, I recognize that the ink of *divine aleatoria* runs through us all.

SECTION II:
DIVINE CONVERGENCE:
A MODEL OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

CHAPTER 3:
AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AND THE
EXPRESSIVE ARTS

As a model for Christian spiritual formation, the integration of the expressive arts and spiritual direction embraces the holistic scope of body, mind, and spirit in attending to the formation of others. In chapter 1, I introduced the theological, theoretical, and cognitive theories used to support the use of creativity as a means of formation. The entire model fosters the integration of 1) spiritual direction, 2) cognitive theories and 3) the expressive arts (see Figure 1). Foundationally it remains grounded in what Benner (1998) calls a model of “psycho-spiritual unity” that suggests, “We should not expect God to bypass normal mechanisms of functioning when relating to us. All psychological structures and mechanisms also have a spiritual basis” (Benner 1998, 116). This model will walk those in the ministry of Christian soul care through the comprehensive understanding and the application of the expressive arts to the practice of spiritual direction.

The creative within this model places emphasis on the inter-modal use of music, visual, literary and movement genres of the arts. The manual: *Living in the*

Stream (Appendix M) complements this model as a training resource. This chapter will take a more in depth look at the individual expressive art modules. In my experience, and supported by the results of my research as outlined more fully in chapter 4 the one expressive art modality that is difficult to incorporate or gain wider acceptance when teaching the expressive arts to practitioners is the role of movement within our spiritual practices. For this reason, I undertake here an extensive examination of physical faith including biblical examples of movement, worship dance and sacred movement. The role of the somatic, the movement of the body will be discussed in greater depth including stereotypes, critiques and arguments against Christian spirituality and movement. This in-depth clarification of physical faith is included to affirm the value of using sacred movement as a viable expressive arts modality in spiritual direction.

Restoring an Ancient Practice to a Modern World

The stories of humanity reflect the integrated and vital use of the arts historically and cross culturally. There is an inherent artistic resolve in the examination of early, architecture, clay pots, and textiles. A comfortable marriage exists between the utilitarian and the aesthetic reflecting an artisan's beauty. Archeologists and cultural anthropologists have discovered that early crafters did not simply make a vessel for eating or wove fabric for wearing. There was much more. Items often contained distinct markings or drawings and embellishments that pointed to an artistic intent. The artistic flair was as purposeful as the items

use. We see the scope of creativity across all layers of early societies was not limited to objects. Wolterstorff (1980) surmises that, “we know of no people which have done without music and fiction and poetry and role-playing and sculpture and visual depiction.” (Wolterstorff 1980, 4). The creative realm is broad, pervasive, universal, and biblical.

The book of Exodus, introduces us to the importance of creativity and the necessity of skilled artisans. In order to rebuild the sanctuary artistry was essential but lacking. The solution warranted a divine impartation on the re-builders of the sanctuary as a gift from the spirit of God who:

filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs to work in gold and silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood. For work in every skilled craft, and he has inspired him to teach . . . He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple, and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of workman or skilled designer. (Exodus 35:31-35)

For soul care practitioners today, this verse has significance – creativity is a gift from God. The Spirit of God delivered to specific artisan’s skill sets via the conduit of the Spirit of God. The gifts did not arrive alone they were also accompanied by wisdom, understanding and knowledge. There is the realization that the latter accompaniments remain twinned to artistic gifts. The one does not function well without the other. Creative artisans ought to keep in mind this expectation of responsibility and accountability as they walk in their gifting. The enablement comes from God the gift giver while the burden of care resides with

the gift receiver. All artists and spiritual practitioners seeking to use creativity should remain aware of this rich reality.

Artisans creating and expressing beauty remains an important facet of the Kingdom of God. Music, poetry and many literary devices are a common thread throughout the word of God. The hymnody of the word is resplendent in the bounty of psalms. Less obvious but telling is the recurrent theme of the Bible instructing the writing and recording of words. This would appear incongruous in light of the early cultures' lack of literacy skills within the main populace. Yet we can extrapolate from the scriptures that it was a necessary task. Jeremiah 30:2 states "this is what the Lord God of Israel, says: Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you." Habakkuk 2: 2 shows how the prophet journaled God's promises. "Write down the vision and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it" the writing of the vision recorded for the encouragement of others. In Proverbs 7:3b "Write them on the tablet of your heart." The active participation of the written word offers encouragement to both the writer and the reader.

Words have the power to touch, stir, and evoke memories a book, poetry, or prose can affect the reader and the writer of the words. The memorial stones in journals and created writings become reminders of not only the good in life but also the ability to overcome. Cepero (2008) in *Journaling as a Spiritual Practice* agrees and suggests to "Let your journal be a place of returning, of clarification and finally of the grace of discovering that God is indeed compassionate and

loving” (Cepero 2008, 23-24). Journaling prophets served as reminders of God’s restorative balm. Words can heal. Writing words can heal.

In the book of Exodus, we see Moses, Miriam, and the children of Israel converse with God through music, song and dance. “Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing” (Exodus 15:20). What a beautiful divine conversation. This composite of music, and dance reflected a spontaneous response of gratitude to the voice of God in their lives. We have seen here the arts as a gift from the spirit of God, a necessary attribute to the building of the temple and as an expression of gratitude from the dancing feet of Miriam.

There are biblical examples for the ability of creativity to restore, to effect change, to provide inner healing and at its very minimum increase the volume of the voice of God in a life. We know that Jesus “used creativity by way of metaphor, imagery, illustrative dialogue and the Word of God to teach and spiritually transform” (Benner 1988, 21). David’s harp provides a telling example of the power of music in spiritual warfare “whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would take up his lyre and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him” (1 Samuel 16:23). Music effectively eradicated the effects of Saul’s tormentor.

Jesus was also a master of the literary arts and cognizant of the imaginative nature contained in words. Can we deny the deftly succinct use of

imagery and metaphor that Jesus as a mentor generously provides? Benner (1988) agrees that:

In the history of the care of the souls, Jesus Christ occupies a unique place. His primary method of soul care was dialogue . . . his frequently indirect and even paradoxical methods of teaching, such as his use of parables, indicated that he was looking not simply for cognitive assent to his teaching but for total reorientation of life. (Benner 1988, 21)

Through his prolific and creative use of words, Jesus opened and enlarged the understanding of truths to those first hearers. Imaginations were piqued as Jesus visually painted pictures in the mind of the listeners. Many still ponder the meaning of the retribution unleashed by simply bending down and drawing in the sand (John 8:8) this was found to have the power to not only alter perspectives but to scatter many.

Dance/Sacred Movement: An Unclaimed Remnant

I have established that movement combined with the sacred was a dynamic and vibrant part of the biblical era including the numerous words (see Table 3) to describe the physicality of faith within the Jewish tradition. This well-established lexicon emphasizes that movement was integral not only to everyday life, but utilized liturgically within the culture. Our modern-day error has been to affirm worship dance by seeking out the evidence of the word dance in the Bible. A more enduring answer would be to question – why did they dance. On what occasions did they use the language of movement to convey, express, frame, or underline a specific liturgical event? These answers help to restore the distortions.

As spiritual directors will engage with directees who hold various beliefs with regards to movement or use of the body together with the sacred. To introduce movement/dance as an expressive art necessitates the spiritual director recognize the biblical role of moving and the many ways movement was experienced historically amongst the early Christians. To anticipate and overcome negative ideas associated with movement/dance Clark (2009) suggests removing the inference, that movement/dance was just a popular cultural norm – a vestige of pagan rituals by rightly pointing out “there are more references in the Bible commanding us to move than there are commanding us to clap our hands! Handclapping is more widely accepted in church circles than is dancing” (Clark 2009, 46).

As Clark (2009) suggests many accept movement as a remnant of both Jewish and early Christian societies but do not see its place in Christian spirituality today. By reclaiming God’s original intent, we can restore the link between movement and the sacred, and provide a theological framework for restoration in all areas of the use of physical faith including our spiritual formation practices.

Table 3 Biblical words for dance/movement

Hebrew Usage	Strong's	Interpretation	Bible Reference
Chiyl	2342	Twist, circular motion	Judges 21:21
Machowl	4232	A round dance	Psalm 30:11, Jeremiah 31:4
Mechowlah	4246	A company of dancers	Judges 11:34, Exodus 15:20
Dalag	1801	Leap or spring	Song of Solomon 2:8, Exodus 15:20
Chagag	2287	Move in a circle, march in a sacred possession, celebrate a festival	Psalm 42:4 Zechariah 14:18
Karar	3769	to dance or whirl	2Samuel 6:14
Raqad	7540	stamp, jump, leap, skip	1Chronicles 15:29 Ecclesiastes 3:4
Pazaz	6339	spring, leap	2Samuel 6:16
Pacach	1523	hop, skip, to dance	1Kings 18:26
Giyl/Guwl	1523	spin around under the influence of emotion usually rejoice	1 Chronicles 16:31, Psalm 9:14
Alats	5970	jump for joy, rejoice, triumph	Proverbs 28:12 Psalm 68:3
Greek usage	Strong's	Interpretation	Bible Reference
Orcheomai	3738	to dance	Matthew 11:17
Choros	5525	A round dance	Luke 15:25
Agalliao	21	jump for joy/rejoice greatly	Matthew 5:12
Skirtao	4640	jump for joy	Luke 1:41 Luke 6:23
Kineo	2795	move, excite, set in motion	Acts 17:28

Source: Adapted from www.bonasdancesite.homestead.com. Permission is given for non-profit use for Christian teaching. You may reproduce the notes, provided you cite the source by including the authors name Bona Gerrie, and the website www.worshipdance.org (Accessed August 2018)

There are many meanings for the word dance in relation to worship. I recognize that dance as a word has both positive and negative conations in the vernacular of both the secular and non-secular worlds. For purposes of clarity, I use the word dance in this discussion as a composite word for the body engaged

in deliberate, choreographed, or improvised motion. To mitigate the risk of confusion the *Living in the Stream* manual (Appendix M) uses the term sacred movement in lieu of dance to distinguish between bodily actions created in response to God within the spiritual direction sessions. Sacred movement is a directed and intentional tool of the expressive arts. It encompasses all somatic movement inspired by the sacred within. This term does not affirm, confirm, or adhere to a pre-set dance style or technique.

Worship Dance: Unravelled

I define worship dance as a prepared sermon choreographed in concert with the inspired leading of the Holy Spirit. The dance ought to combine creatively the voice of breath, movement, and stillness. The focus of worship dance is to teach, edify, and encourage the dancers, the worshippers while honouring, and glorifying God's imminent and transcendent story. In offering a concrete description of the genre, we begin with a key element – preparation. Spiritually, physically and emotionally the creative practitioners must walk in relationship with God for their ongoing formation.

A preacher – hopefully – does not enter the pulpit to deliver a sermon ill prepared neither should a choreographer who is also charged with developing a sermon a discourse for others. The Holy Spirit, a Christian's comforter, teacher and guide shapes the process. Inspiration must be from the Spirit. As the artistic gifts are divinely given, the anointing should be tangible. There remains a plan

and a purpose for all artistry- inclusive of sacred movement. There is a co-mission in the building of the sanctuary, a working together from a kingdom of God directive.

There is little consensus on what constitutes worship dance and the restoration of dance remains piecemeal in church today (Stevenson 1998; Clark 2009; Paintner and Beckman 2010). In the context of worship, the word dance sits interchangeably alongside many other descriptive forms:

- Worship Dance
- Liturgical Dance
- Altar Dance teams
- Sacred Dance
- Praise Dance
- Dance Ministry
- Flag and Ribbon Dancing

I believe that the absence of a codified nomenclature has given rise to common misinterpretations of these words. The challenge can be in blanketing any bodily movement during worship under the umbrella of dance as expressions of worship, hence, worship dance. Body Prayer as an example of physical faith is often included within the genre of worship dance. Although, accompanying gestures to prayer are technically not dance they do signify acts of adoration and worship towards God. Hess (2012) in *The Life of the Body* confirms that, “body postures also offer ways to express ourselves to the Holy Trinity” (Hess 2012, 48). In my experience, ironically, both critics and proponents can and do hold many erroneous views concerning movement in worship. The resultant effect is that the universal acceptance of dance within the Liturgy remains elusive.

Myths, Assumptions and Stereotypes

The use of rhythmically moving the body in response to music is innate within the human condition. Both the right and left “locomotion centers of the brain are paired” (Langers, Sanders and Tipps 1980, 1). Because of this, movement becomes intrinsically utilized within the scope of learning we recognize that “movement is the only thing that unites all brain levels by integrating the right and left hemispheres . . . for this reason, most children and (older kinaesthetic learners) must move to learn” (Langers, Sanders and Tipps 1980, 1). The result is that for the human experience movement connects to our ability to receive and assimilate information. It would not be a leap to infer this principle can also be applied to learning spiritual things. A discussion of the four main areas of concern is necessary to unwrap these assumptions and stereotypes: the profane and dance; self-expression and dance; popular music and dance; performance and dance.

The Profane and Dance

The most pervasive myth is that dance is not from God. Stevenson (1998) outlines this underlying fear “as dance functioned and flourished in the camp of the enemy over the years, the Church believed without dispute that it was where it belonged” (Stevenson 1998, 31). If dance is the enemies’ handiwork then the argument follows that, all movement will profane the sacred. The totality of evil brings all the ensuing ramifications to the art form. Additionally, the underlying concern for those troubled by movement is the fear of the human body exhibiting

sensuality. Offering biblical support for this stance, some in agreement point out the incident in Matthew 14:6 the description of the seductive dance of Herodias' daughter for the head of John the Baptist. However, we ought not to be misguided and overlook a crucial point: intent. Herodias' daughter was not acting in the role of a worship dancer or dancing in praise of God. Seduction was the primary motivator. There is common agreement that the human body, or any use of the sensual in and of itself becomes an obstacle for many when the premise or anticipated result of dance is intentionally seductive. This is neither the intent nor the purpose of a prayerful dance offering to God.

Over the years, I have observed this critique of dance resolves itself in a variety of ways, most often; churches exclude it from their practices. Worship dance groups may select and deselect movement to minimize the impact of the dancer's body on the viewer. Costuming, choreography and partner work - duets – often are altered detrimentally to reduce the appearance of evil. Francis Schaeffer (1974) believes that “the Lordship of Christ over the whole life means that there are no platonic areas in Christianity, no dichotomy or hierarchy between the body and the soul. God made the body as well as the soul and redemption is for the whole man” (Schaeffer 1974, 7). Overcoming the assumption that dance is evil will require challenging doctrinal opposition. Foundational truths are difficult to alter from a bottom up perspective an individual may encounter difficulties. Restoration of this mistruth will require a wider brush.

Self-Expression and Ecstatic Dance

There are many motivations for movement in worship. Within a congregation there may be individuals moving in response to the music in worship, this is an expression of their personal devotion. This may include the use of tambourines, flags, and ribbons. Depending on the church, many accommodate dance at the altar, in the aisles or the back of the church. An individual's personal expression during worship is not by definition worship dance. Jensen (2001) confirms that, "even while the work of the artist may have a profound devotional aspect, the arts of worship are congregational and public, not private and individualistic" (Jensen 2001, 367). The key distinction is that worship dance is by design a ministry to and for others. These expressions are individual, a personal moment not a congregational worship encounter.

For some, the idea of a loss of control, or moving into an ecstatic trance becomes a concern and often a fear for those watching (Stevenson 1998). There are religious sects that welcome the ecstatic in worship they consider their movements a precursor to an entrance, a way to attain a spiritual high. The United Society of Believers, a Protestant religious group, more easily recognized by their other name - The Shakers - engage in ecstatic, fully participatory worship that encompassed shaking movements and set dances in prayer (Burns 2017). We see commercial examples of this within the Islamic sect of the Whirling Dervishes of Turkey. The Dervishes practice a form of movement – spinning continuously – as part of a formal ceremony known as *Sema*. Participants do attain a state of

religious ecstasy; although they claim the goal is primarily to be “revolving in harmony with nature” (www.whirling_dervishes.org (accessed August 2018)). Lesser known is the Jamaican religious sect – Pocomania (translation a little madness). The Pocomania church is syncretistic – a mixture of West African and Protestant religions – well known for practicing a circular tramping dance form that takes them into a spiritual trance (www.encyclopedia.com (accessed August 2018)). As is evident through these examples bodily movement given the right set of parameters can alter human consciousness, ecstatic dance is a welcomed possibility under these and other circumstances but this is not the intent of sacred movement within spiritual direction.

Popular Music and Dance

The modes of creativity in the arts vary. Influences abound. Particular to dance is the marriage of music to movement. Music together with dance and the modernization of worship music, and the influence of popular secular music pose inherent problems. Musical accompaniment choices for choreography require spiritual discernment against the strong urge to be current and relative to the populace. This is not to suggest that contemporary worship songs and or secular music are mutually exclusive to worship dance.

Unique to Canada is the cultural hyphenation of members of the congregations. To stifle the rich cultural diversity and demand a strictly western centric worship model is to make the error of early missionaries – ignoring the culture of the participants. Michael Hawn (2005) tells us this is not within our

abilities “stepping outside our culture of origin is impossible. Few people learn to function equally well in two cultural worlds . . . Those who do are members of co-cultures within a normative societal context” (Hawn 2005, 101-102). Those who seek to introduce dance to their church communities should remain cognizant of this fact that Toronto, Ontario as in many other communities remains home to many adherents of a bi-cultural sensibility.

Let us not negate the irony of popular music. Both contemporary worship and secular music are hybrids of diverse cultural influences. The ethnomusicologists concur with Hawn, that when the rhythms are dissected we uncover that “western styles have always been modified and enriched by local musical traditions . . . popular global music especially from Africa and Latin America has begun to influence music in the west” (Hawn 2005, 101

Performance and Dance

The negative connotation – or popular misuse of the word performance – screams entertainment. Therein lies the fear: will worship dance serve only to entertain the congregation. This is a core truth for all the arts and Jensen (2001) appropriately serves up the delineation:

Art may empower, move to action, stimulate piety, arouse pity or even righteous anger. However, art that degrades, dehumanizes manipulates, or harms is false and even blasphemous. Art that serves only its own ends, or is aimed only at profit, is essentially idolatrous. (Jensen 2001, 366)

The profit can also be the currency of entertaining by eliciting emotions.

Choreography for entertainment and not from the full pathos of the God story is

false. The hope so aptly put by Marva Dawn (1999) in *A Royal Waste of Time* for all who are involved is that “restoration of worship does not fall prey to consumerist glamour . . . this will require great skill and fidelity ushering in millions of small acts and restraints” (Dawn 1999,102).

I believe our current world of instant gratification boasts a craving for the immediate. We no longer participate in a climate of savouring. Sacred movement allows us to stop and savour God through our bodies, an expression of physical faith slowing us down enough to connect in ways the rush of our lives does not allow for. We battle an abundance of choice through the rampant consumerism accessible at the touch of our fingertips. Wyman (1989) recognized that an inability to ponder or slowly reflect would eventually become detrimental to the arts including dance he noted that:

a popular assumption that art . . . should be instantly digestible and leave the consumer feeling comfortable like some form of aesthetic cocoa [becomes]the last great arts battle of the century . . . the battle between the defenders of excellence and the forces of populism. (Wyman 1989, 217)

As social dancing increases in popularity and the entertainment media continue to feed us mega doses of “aesthetic cocoa” worshippers must stay diligent. The most tried and true remedy is a heart set apart for God.

Embracing the Somatic: The Practice of Physical Faith

Spiritual direction should be concerned with the somatic, as the body is a container, a communicator that reflects our lives. As Van der Kolk (2014) affirms, the body keeps score. This succinct phrase grounds the idea that our physical

being – our bodies – not only bears witness to our moment-to-moment reality but also cannot avoid the role of being our truth container. Rothschild’s (2000) premise outlined in *The Body Remembers* is that “trauma is a psychophysical experience even when the traumatic event causes no direct bodily harm . . . traumatic events exact a toll on the body as well as the mind” (Rothschild 2000, 5). Acute bodily impact, physical trauma has a somatic memory. A lesser-known fact is that every day non-physical stressors also deposit into our truth container – the body.

Ironically, while the sophistication of the memory receptors in the brain actively sifts and sorts experiences the body does not make this distinction. The body perceives all life’s events, outside of the status quo as stressors including those that “result from desired, positive experiences” (Rothschild 2000, 7). Agreeing that the body holds all trauma and stress indiscriminately, I propose a remedial answer could lay in the experience of physical faith. One way, engage the body to heal the mind and to restore the spirit. I suggest the embrace of the somatic as the built-in mechanism to ameliorate unwanted stressors from the body.

Christianity and other religions have always included forms of obeisance – gestures of the body that reference expressions of reverential deference (DeLeon 2009; Morris 2011; Owens 2015). The bible speaks of whole bodily worship movements such as bowing, kneeling, swaying, and laying prostrate,

Christians have always lived a faith of the body, for the body and in the body. Involving our body in worship, service, and prayer is more than empty ritual

or mundane necessity. Engaging the body in acts of being present with God . . . opens us up to God in new ways. (Pagitt and Prill 2005, 3)

Our natural inclinations to move in prayer too often remain suppressed by the constraints of re-written doctrine and or fears of the body's role in sensuality.

However, historically, across faiths the:

notion of the human body being involved in prayer is not a new one. It is an ancient practice that is well documented throughout the Bible. Christianity has always been a faith of the body . . . soul and body physical faith is an integrated faith, honouring both. (Pagitt and Prill 2005, 1-2)

The body reacting physically in response to worship is innate. Some suppress natural inclinations by the constraints of rewritten doctrine. Body prayer becomes a great resource for adaptation as it works in one to one, or group spiritual direction as well as church community. I have attended and participated in many workshops that use body prayer as a form of centering. St. Patrick's Breastplate, a Celtic prayer combining music and set gestures becomes a beautifully inspiring reminder of Christ with us. Let us challenge ourselves not to reduce or negate the body's desire for expression towards God by suppressing physical faith.

Sacred Movement

The word movement invokes a myriad of definitions, pre-suppositions, and misnomer's especially within Christian interpretations. However, here, the words: movement, embodied healing, physical faith, and somatic prayers are referred to interchangeably. These terms encompass any bodily action created and inspired in appreciation of the sacred within. Sacred movement within the practice

of soul care refers to the intentional use of movement as directed by the practitioner, in concert with the Holy Spirit, prepared music, and sacred texts.

Sacred movement is not a dance class. Sacred movement – prayer – is a bodily conversation with God. Notwithstanding, there are pre-determined gestures available for incorporation such as body prayers within a sacred movement session. Ensuring, these remain both directed as an inclusion by the practitioner and always scripted by the participant. These sessions allow for “movement which integrates posture and gesture, it triggers an associated conscious thought process . . . a particular movement enables a particular type of action, it requires the conscious brain to match it with a particular type of thinking” (Payne 1992, 225). You cannot move in a directed way and experience un-directed thinking. This integration of movement and thought realigns our thoughts through the process of metacognition as described in chapter 1 by Mark McMinn (2007) “metacognition as the ability to think about thinking – to understand and control one’s thought processes” (McMinn 2007, 36). The redirection of thoughts brings a fresh perspective and healing to the mind, the body, and the spirit collectively.

There are parallels between the practices of dance therapy and the use of sacred movement in spiritual direction. Proponents of dance therapy and sacred movement practitioners agree that:

there is a relationship between motion and emotion and that by exploring a more varied vocabulary of movement people experience the possibility of becoming more securely balanced . . . through movement each person’s inner world becomes tangible . . . the dance movement therapists create a holding environment in which such feelings can be safely expressed and communicated. (Payne 2006,4)

Similarities continue between the therapeutic use of dance and sacred movement. The key distinction in direction we do not apply a diagnostic element to the movements. Conversely, the practice of sacred movement puts the emphasis on the process as experienced by the participant. Seeking to uncover and discover for themselves the voice of God. I offer that, sacred movement within the context described in this study, engages as a voice of prayer, (Clark 2009, Stevenson 1998) and as a conversational conduit to transport our stressors and promote inner healing (Rothschild 2000, Van de Volk 2014).

Sacred Movement:
A Gift from God

As I surveyed the role of sacred movement and its impact on inner healing I uncovered that movement is a universal human experience. Every culture and age have both a social, and or religious component that embraces movement. The why of movement for purposes other than locomotion has stymied and surprised scientists (Zentner and Eerola 2010). There remains no bonafide scientific analysis as to why the brain as observed universally in babies, responds to music with bodily actions. All babies dance. The human condition innately moves the body in response to music. The answer to this human propensity must sit elsewhere. The Zentner and Eerola (2010) scientific study: *Rhythmic Engagement with Music in Infancy* included 120 children aged from 5 to 24 months. This study debunked the notion that movement in infancy occurring outside of locomotion

(learning to walk) shows up solely when prompted by a social construct (dance play).

The idea that parents prompt babies to dance became their starting point. To uncover this these scientists researched the concept of *entrainment* – the ability to move in response, synchronicity to music. They did so with Mothers holding the child on their laps facing away from the parent. In addition, the Mother wore headsets and could not hear the music only the babies heard the music and they responded by moving rhythmically. The researchers were “surprised that the current behaviours occurred in the absence of any kind of social cues, calling attention to psychological and neurobiological factors . . . [additionally] rhythmic engagement . . . was positively related to displays of positive affect” (Zentner and Eerola 2010, 5771). Not only did the babies move but also did so smiling happily.

Languis, Sanders and Tipps (1980) in *The Brain and Learning* offer a further movement attribute when they outline that the right and left “locomotion centers of the brain are paired [together]” (Languis et. al 1980, 1) because of this, movement also becomes intrinsically involved within the scope of learning. “Movement is the only thing that unites all brain levels and integrates the right and left hemispheres . . . for this reason, most children and (older kinaesthetic learners) must move to learn” (Languis et. al 1980, 1). The result is that for the human experience movement is a significant component in our ability to receive and assimilate information.

Winton-Henry (2009) further suggests that non-verbal conversation resonates deeper than words as:

even our fear wants to dance. Watch a person in pain. They rock . . . At times, the movement of the sacred is so interior we feel it only in hidden places within. Yet our body wisdom sometimes longs to reach beyond our ordinary self to reunite with Mystery. (Winton-Henry 2009, 17-18)

Hence, science has confirmed that we move innately, we move to learn, we move to receive positive affect, we move to say what words cannot express, and, we move to assuage fear, pain, and anguish. It would appear that Christianity for good reasons historically employed movement in its many forms. The restorative aspect of sacred movement appears to be holistic and divinely hardwired into our psyche as a God given gift with an immense latitude for much more than inner healing.

Sacred Movement and Body Image

Often the religious restrictions imposed on the mind can not only alter our body image but also create a reluctance to move the body. In some denominations, moving even with the intention to praise or engage in conversation with the things of God remains inappropriate. How we relate to our bodies can also be a hurdle to embracing our truth. Faulty thinking, about body image when perceived as a negative, can impede our restoration. Owens (2015) in *Embracing the Body: finding God in our Flesh and Bones* provides the delineation between body schema and body image. Clarifying this Owens (2015) writes “. . . body schema is the term scientists and doctors use to define our

physical sense of ourselves . . . body image involves all the narratives we believe about our bodies based on the cultures and stories we are surrounded with” (Owens 2015,13). When working with sacred movement this knowledge is integral to achieving positive outcomes. I have found that a negative body image can be an impediment and hinder a participant’s effort to move or to engage physically. Body image or the perception of whom we are as defined by self, others, or our faulty circumstances provides an eroding landscape, a slippery slope that may be difficult for the spiritual director to build on when seeking to include sacred movement in sessions.

Sacred Movement and Inner Healing

There is growing evidence in support of sacred movement “in some instances, direct somatic interventions, when used as adjuncts to existing trauma therapies can be powerful in combating the effects” (Rothschild 2000, 5). There is both a discerning caution and healthy optimism as:

Nobody can “treat” . . . any horrendous event . . . what happened cannot be undone. But what can be dealt with are the imprints of the trauma on body, mind and soul . . . the challenge of recovery is to re-establish ownership of your body and your mind – of yourself. (Van der Kolk 2014, 203)

We see then, that for some situations the answer is a resounding yes. For others it may require an integrated approach or, other methods. An interesting facet of therapy chanced upon by Francine Shapiro (1987) and explained by Van de Kolk (2014) outlines that therapists continue to post favourable responses to the use of EMDR (eye movement de-sensitizing and reprocessing) a procedure to help

people revisit their traumatic past without becoming re-traumatized (Van de Kolk 2014, 250-251). Here we see that even a minimal amount of movement as exhibited by the eye can assist the mind to re-direct itself.

Personal and Anecdotal Responses

As a spiritual director, I have found that my use of sacred movement in practice has elicited positive results. While my research project provided minimal data from the sacred movement module, in my experiences directees after one session report a greater sense of freedom, the idea that a weight had shifted. Many benefited simply in the permission given to move their bodies. Just, the idea that it is permissible to move removes a multitude of barriers. Others while in the process have re-lived hurts and found a new voice. They find a correctly filed place for their pain. One directee advised that after the death of her Father she could not pray or continue with her daily spiritual discipline. Devotions became a dark place for her. The only method that she could reach out to God with was to engage in body prayer. I understand this will not be for everyone. Yet we remain mindful that the “body is never separate from our spiritual practice – or from anything we do or say. The body is never purely physical . . . Soul speaks moment by moment, through flesh (Morris 2011, 57).

I have journeyed through this discussion touching on: biblical support, surveying the views of psychology, body physiology and, evidence-based science. It is paramount to acknowledge that in soul, pastoral care, and or spiritual direction- specifically inner healing – the inclusion or exclusion of a method,

discipline, or technique must always be a Holy Spirit provocation. Payne advises, “We learn to bless in the power of the Spirit and to collaborate with the Spirit to do the works of Christ” (Payne 1995, 76).

Somatic prayer, sacred movement is never frivolous. If the somatic causes us to hear affirmations or, confirmations and encouragement from the voice of God then it will be like the Psalmist sings in Chapter 16 verse 24 “Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.” Movement in inner healing must be both an intentional and directed practice. Practitioners should always create and encourage a safe holding place for the participant with the utmost care, to encourage and support their inner healing.

I offer here an illustration from my experience with sacred movement in the workshop. A participant began well by simply walking in a circle. At some point, I noticed they were unable to move and they stopped. The only movement remaining was the raising of one arm repeatedly slightly to the side above waist height and then it would flop back like a rag doll. I employed a technique (which I teach in the workshop) called mirroring in dance therapy (Young 2017) and witnessing in spiritual direction (Paintner and Beckman 2010).

I stand in front of the participant and without touching, I first emulate - mirror - the participant’s movements by following them. Then gradually I begin to change the shape of that movement and the participant without verbal instructions the directee mirrors and follows my actions. Acting as a mirror is a process that provides non-verbal empathy, this witnessing together allows for

sharing a connection in the same time and space through movement. Empathy validates the emotional experience that encourages inner healing (Young 2017, Paintner and Beckman 2010). The participant recounted later that the negative words of others – parents, church members regarding using the body for worship had somehow caused the frozen state in that moment. The mirrored movements were able to take that block and move past it by giving an understanding of what was causing the block and freeing the body to continue to move. Sacred movement when used correctly can indeed act as a bridge that aids in spiritual transformation and subsequently support inner healing.

Integrating the Expressive Arts and Spiritual Direction

In this section, I expand further the catalogue of expressive arts modalities and speak to how spiritual direction applies and integrates these practices. I include a brief discussion on the evidence-based use of the arts, a more in depth look at categorical distinctions of the arts disciplines, expressive arts methods and I touch on the preparatory role of the spiritual director when engaged in applying these creative tools. As previously indicated the expressive arts link relationally to the single solution-based arts therapies as I have outlined below (Figure 2). This diagram shows the interrelation of the therapeutic, expressive and inter-modal application of the expressive arts to spiritual direction. I regard the relationship as beneficial as it provides positive support to the integrative model of spiritual formation I present in chapter one (Figure 1). Paintner and Beckman (2010)

agrees that “the field of expressive arts, a therapeutic discipline whose intermodal and process-oriented approach offers special gifts to the ministry of spiritual direction and formation” (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 14).

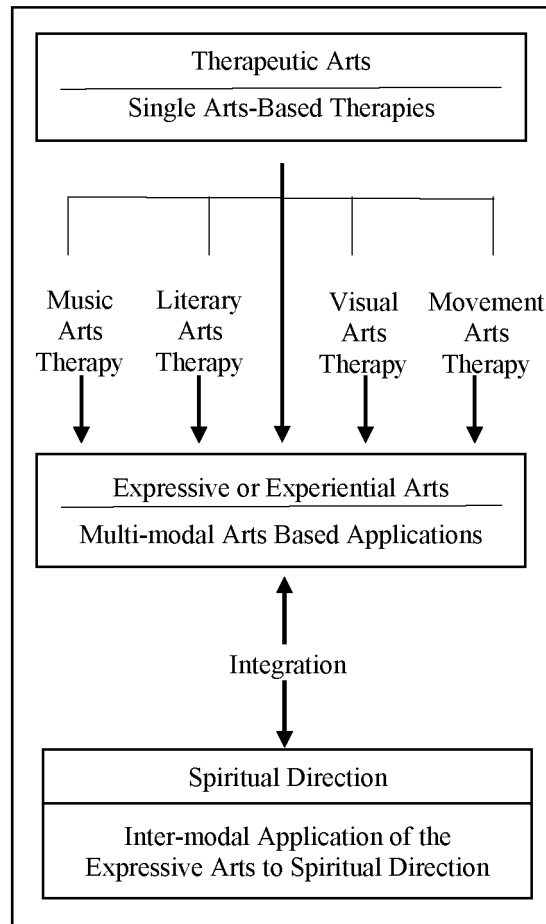


Figure 2. The relational link between the therapeutic and expressive arts

The term expressive art is a newer appreciation even within the therapeutic arts. The distinction is marked from the single solution-based therapies by the term multi-modal. This approach leans towards introducing more than one different art experience within the session (McNiff 2004; Malchiodi

2007; Kossak 2015). The terms multi-modal and inter-modal are interchangeable within the therapeutic arts. However, inter-modal is the preferred term for those engaged in spiritual direction as it more clearly grounds the intentionality of the integrated use of the arts versus using or offering the directee a choice from the multiple modalities. Each application of the arts in the session is “developed as a way to integrate the various art modalities and to honour each one as a unique language of the soul” (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 15). The expressive arts are also referred to as the experiential arts (Knill, Levine, and Levine 2005) the term experiential rightly, places the emphasis on the participants experience and involvement in the creation process above the finished the product.

In *Expressive Therapies* (Malchiodi 2007) defines the “expressive therapies as the use of art, music dance/movement, drama, poetry/creative writing, play, and sand tray within the context of psychotherapy, counseling, rehabilitation, or health care” (Malchiodi 2007, 2). I largely refer to research and supporting theories from the therapeutic arts for the corroboration of the application of the expressive arts to spiritual direction. Throughout my project, I use quotes, supporting theories and creative practices from the arenas of expressive therapies, single mode art therapies and experiential art therapies.

Throughout my experience and within this research, I have found the practices to be comparable. Among the single therapeutic arts, the rationale for the positive role of the creative and the use of the imagination remain compatible (Levine 1997, Levine 2010). There is a notable distinction between using the

creative arts within the therapeutic arts sessions and spiritual direction. For therapeutic use the creative exercises are intentionally included to provide both diagnostic and remedial support to the therapist's work (McNiff 2004; Malchiodi 2007; Kossak 2015). Within spiritual direction the creative exercises stir the imagination, this supplements the process of our being open for the move of the Holy Spirit acting as a conduit for God to bring the directee through the liminal space of the unknown to the known (Rohr 2003, Paintner and Beckman 2010).

This project has stressed that we all carry the innate gift of creativity. Both therapeutic arts and spiritual direction expressive arts practitioners also agree to merge the truth of our inherent creativity to the idea that within all modes of the arts lays a restorative, redemptive quality. A quality that has the ability to heal, recover holistic balance and spiritually transform (McNiff 2004; Paintner and Beckman 2010). The engagement in the expressive arts acts as a conduit for the Holy Spirit by affirming the:

power of the arts to convey a felt experience of mystery is profound . . . if God is creator and we are made in God's image or Imago Dei then we are in essence creators . . . artists . . . when we open ourselves to the expression of creativity, we also open to the movement of the Divine within us. (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 13)

Within the expressive arts as practiced generally and used throughout this project the "expression of creativity" is customarily unique to the author, and original in expression. Whatever the directee creates within the session becomes an - authentic expression - a part of the maker's sacred story. However, finished work can also include copied representations or mixed media from existing sources but,

the impetus and intent of the created piece is always a revised one. I reinforce this focus on the individuality of the expressions of creativity throughout my project. During the workshop, the participants chose from a variety of art-making materials not only a blank canvas. For example, they may use newspapers, books, or magazines to curate for their creative work and the emphasis remains on the process and not the product regardless of whether the creation began new or as a found or reclaimed object.

Evidence-Based Use of the Arts in Therapeutic Practice

When using the expressive arts, the assumption the practitioner seeks to convey is that all art has the ability to stir. There is a catalogue of evidence-based proof pointing to the restorative qualities of the use of the arts in psychotherapy (Knill et al, 2005; Dhimi et al, 2014; Loman, 2005) and a spiritual direction source (Paintner and Beckman 2010). There will always be a human reaction to art – a choice made – be it positive or negative even neutrality is a choice born from a response. Many of the artistic modes discussed have been in therapeutic use in various forms for many years. Spiritual practitioners can modify most if not all of the therapeutic tools to suit their requirements. Stephen Levine (1992) has long married the notion of the expressive arts together with therapy. Levine (1992) confirms, “Art has the capacity to heal, even in extreme situations people will create” (Levine 1992, 3).

Although there is in recent years much traction in the use of the expressive arts in spiritual formation, for the most part as stated spiritual direction borrows efficacy evidence from the arena of cognitive theories and therapeutic arts studies. This does not negate or diminish their use; on the contrary, it provides support. We recognize the similarities and outcomes within the use of the therapeutic arts and spiritually formative practices do indeed share many commonalities. Christian spiritual direction will require specific ongoing research to reduce the necessity to co-opt support for the arts. I embarked on the action research project presented in the following chapter 4 to provide Christian centric attention to the claim that the expressive arts favourably affects spiritual formation when used by spiritual directors as a complementary tool. As spiritual directors, we honor our vocational stewardship when we address the underserved areas of our practice in terms of contributing to training, literature and research.

Modes and Methods of the Expressive Arts

The manual *Living in the Stream* (Appendix M) explains the in-session process of each of the six modalities and the four expressive arts integration choices that were taught in the workshop. The manual provides descriptions, instructions, scripture, poetry, and images for how I integrated the modes and methods the choice of the expressive arts for that particular day. (Appendix L) provides an overview sampler of some of the images and the blackout poetry used during the workshop. While practitioners can follow the exercises exactly as outlined in the manual, it is with the understanding that these are examples only,

as the inclusion of a particular type of expressive art is not formulaic.

Additionally, I look to ensure that a seamless flow occurs between modalities, this inter-modal shift is important for session continuity.

Here, I include an example to show the integrated flow of the expressive arts using Soularium™ cards within the session. I begin with prayer then I place in front of the directee three pre-selected (prepared with prayerful consideration before the session) images from the Soularium™ pack. The intentional directive is to focus on these images until one or more of the cards prompts a response within them. To achieve this the directee meditates on the images, concurrently I proceed with reading a *Lectio Divina* scripture three times. The next step is to invite the directee to stay in the metaphor of what is taking place within and for them to express the uncovering conversation as they feel led to through the choice of a literary or art-making response. Here, we have used one visual expressive art – Soularium™ cards, one integrated method- Scripture and I then introduce a literary device- story, prose or poetry or an art-making expression to bring the conversation between the directee and God to life. Alternatively, the final expression could be somatic or picked from another form of visual arts. The session concludes with the discussion of what took place, how the invisible became visible for them, and what God revealed in what Richard Rohr (2003) calls the liminal space.

I have modified below (Table 4) the Knill, Levine, and Levine (2005) categorical distinctions in the arts chart. This outlines the expressive arts main

Table 4. Expressive arts: Disciplines and qualities

Categories		Possibilities of Distinctions			
Disciplines and styles	Frame	Source-material	Basic qualities	Tools	Shaping
Dance / Movement	Studio or stage Time and space three-dimensional	Space and movement	Space shaped Effort and shape movement distinctions	The participants body, music	Instructions, different kinds of pedestrian movement patterns
Literary art	Lyric, epic, drama, story—telling, poem	Language, letters, words	Colloquial, metaphoric, reflective, symbolic, concrete, gibberish, etc.	Voice, pencil, pen, crayons, paper, ephemera, etc.	Free writing, Creative writing prompts, Speaking, singing, collecting words, etc.
Visual arts Painting	Canvas, paper, cardboard, plywood etc.; Size	Watercolor, acrylic, crayons, oil, sticks, finger paint, charcoal, etc.	Colors, shapes, textures, lines, etc.	Brushes, knives, rollers, fingers, etc.; Large, small, soft, hard, pointed, etc.	Move as directed, non-prescribed pedestrian movement; Free abstract concrete, geometric
Music Concrete or action music	Shaped within a space of silence and given length of time	Musical instruments or sounding objects Vocalizations	Sounds shaped Quality of noise, timbre, pitch, volume, length, rhythm, etc.	Hands, mallets, bows, Heavy, light, long, short, etc.	Scoring in time and ensemble structure, metrical, a metrical, etc.

Source: Chart adapted from Knill, Levine and Levine, 2005. “Categorical distinctions in the arts disciplines”, Table 2. *Principles and Practice of Expressive Arts Therapy*, 101 used with permission from Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd licence reference number 7789 dated September 27 2018.

categories, qualities, frame, tools and materials that I used within the Part 3 workshop section of my research. Further explanations of the modes and methods follow.

Art /Mark Making

In the expressive arts, the term art/mark making covers exercises that involve the use of mark making materials (art-making materials). I have begun like other expressive arts practitioners to favour this change in name. Mark making deemphasizes an implied artistic skill or aptitude level with art. Using the term mark making also minimizes the emphasis on the art created as a product. Mark making can include both the use of wet or dry mediums including crayons, coloured or charcoal pencils, watercolour, and acrylic paints. The practitioner provides corresponding art paper if the directee is not using their own journal. There are few pre-set mark-making exercises; I use two in this research, the Rosebush Narrative, and the Community Garden (see Appendix M).

The spiritual director initiates the prompt or invitation to use these materials but the content of the created piece flows out of the directee's response from their session. In my experience and this research bears out the acceptance of the use of these materials (see chapter 4). I have found the introduction of mark making supplies to do as well in both one to one and group spiritual direction. For example, the research project results (chapter 4) showed favourable acceptance for both the community garden (group) module that used watercolour paints and

the rosebush narrative (individual) that used the participants own choice of mark making materials.

Contemplative Photography

While *visio divina* can source from a bank of existing imagery for use in prayer. Contemplative photography relates to the participants taking their own photographs. Directors can assign as homework or ongoing journal work. The spiritual director asks the directee to prayerfully set aside time to allow God to direct the focus, subject and frame a moment. The directee has the option to keep the images for their own journal collection. They can also bring the photo(s) back in for a follow up session to discuss the process, including what prompted them to capture, and choose that particular image, and what response they heard from God. During the session, the spiritual director continues to explore by staying in the metaphor that the directee has presented through the photograph.

Ephemera

Ephemera can relate to the temporary quality inherent within the nature of the exercises and practices. Ephemera also refers to paper, found objects, and the bric-a-brac used in collage making. To introduce an ephemera-based exercise the practitioners can collect images from a variety of sources. Possibilities include photocopied images, magazine clippings, re-purposed greeting cards, and old photographs. Facilitators should create a bank of images, verses, and texts for in-session use. Collage making from ephemeral materials has proved a useful, quick and readily available way to engage creatively that also allays fears of an inability

to draw. Directors offer the exercise to the directee as an invitation to creatively respond to the voice of God within the session.

Two other uses for ephemeral materials are wordless journaling and prayer collage:

Wordless Journaling

Although the expressive arts use the term wordless journaling this is a misnomer as text can be included by drawing from the clippings or added from poetry, sayings, quotes or Bible verses. However, the emphasis leans more towards visual images than text. This exercise encourages journaling with ephemera with minimal inclusions of the directees own writings in order to render a visual image journal versus a written journal. Directors can suggest this for in session or as a way to keep an ongoing journal for those who do not want to write a journal. I use these with good results in one to one, group spiritual direction, and workshops.

Prayer Collage

I have introduced the making of a prayer collage as one of the first invitations to create. I have done so with both a new directee and others who I have seen for a longer time. The invitation is to collect images, text and bric-a-brac as they choose from a large selection laid out for them. Then on supplied card or poster stock, they glue the gathered images to construct a prayer board. The size can vary based time allotted for completion or directees choice. Participants keep the boards and use for daily devotions as a prayer prompt.

Literary Arts

Creative writing is important within the expressive arts modules. Words are an essential component to God's language. The Bible contains written words and we can respond likewise with our writings. Pat Schneider (2013) in *How the Light Gets In* tells us that “. . . to open a door in one's mind, whether writing in prayer or in writing as prayer is to invite an experience of the deep” (2013, 16). There are a myriad of ways to begin to write. We can create in session or assign homework that directees return for inclusion in a subsequent session. The main literary methods used in session are in the writing of prayers, poetry/prose/laments/odes and or journaling. Additionally, longer literary frames are encouraged for exercises such as story, sacred memoir and dramatic narratives.

Prayer

To create written prayers, or write the thoughts you encounter in prayer can be healing. I suggest that the unscripted prayer that rises up in daily devotionals directees stop to record them. Alternatively, I suggest writing a prayer as you enter into contemplative devotions to meditate on. The directees can bring prayers to session that they have written and these can be included in the inter-modal experience.

Poetry or Prose

Many self-declare an inability to write poetry. The spiritual director can initiate with the use of a poetry frame (Haiku, Cinquain, or odes) the manual (Appendix M) provides poems and instructions for writing prompts plus

suggestions to generate ideas. For example, I can suggest to the directee to write: a six-word poem about God or offer the word “If” and invite from them five lines that begin with the word “If”. I introduced the spiritual directors to Blackout poetry in the workshop. For an example see the manual (Appendix M). This is a method of purposefully blacking out words from a given text (e.g. newspaper, printed scripture, text or a novel) to create a new poem/prose from the remaining words. This has proved a helpful way to introduce creative writing for those who feel they are unable to write poetry.

Fibre and Craft Arts

Included in this section are the handcrafts: sculpting, knitting, crochet, sewing, and embroidery. I design these for group spiritual direction or workshops. Often, I combine a workshop with a therapeutic art practitioner, or fibre craft artist who is skilled in one of these modalities. I adapt the program to fit the scope of spiritual direction; it becomes both a Godly encounter and the gaining of a new artistic skill.

Preparatory Considerations for Spiritual Directors

Practitioners will decide with the leading of the Holy Spirit the choice of the creative art modes for each session from their repertoire. This decision-making includes the consideration of practicalities such as time and location. A standard spiritual direction session is an hour in length. When I am including an expressive art exercise, I need to decide whether that choice can fit within the

hour or alternatively book a longer session with the directee. It would not be beneficial to introduce a modality that requires a great deal of selecting, cutting, wet art making materials or fibre crafts in a place with no running water, work tables or floors that could be damaged by the activity.

The uniqueness of both creativity and individuals does not allow us to formulate a type of artistic/creative application that will produce a specific or desired outcome. This remains individualized. Some directees are more responsive to visual images; others gravitate to tactile art-making, while some prefer to engage in poetry, prose or somatic expressions. Practitioners are encouraged to design a portfolio of exercises for their toolbox that are suitable for both one to one and group spiritual direction. This will necessitate gathering materials, selections of music, images, writings, and art supplies that are particular to their clientele. In my experience this gathering of materials and designing of exercises remains ongoing.

Visual Arts and the Imagination

Images through the imagination can evoke an emotional response. In the expressive arts and spiritual direction, there is an emphasis on the visual. In spiritual direction there is use of *visio divina*, viewing the sacred through an image together with *lectio divina* – a divine reading. It can also include the spiritual director introducing praying with icons, images and physically viewing sacred architecture. Hedberg (2000) cautions that the mind through the creative, especially visual images can be affected both positively and negatively. There is a

risk that that the image may invoke a reaction, a response that triggers the directee internally. Because of this, spiritual directors should be aware of the:

need to be prepared for occasional emotional eruptions . . . since pictorial material is a quick acting catalyst for accessing our deepest interior caverns, it can also energize memories or trauma that may inhabit those caverns. (Hedberg 2000, 158)

Spiritual directors are to maintain their usual protocol in these instances. If there are issues above the role of a director or are outside of the scope of the director's expertise and the directee asks for therapeutic help the director should offer a referral as is deemed necessary.

Silence, Breath and Finding Centre

All sessions and execution of methods within the expressive arts and spiritual direction require we engage at the beginning with finding centre - a place to shake off what is not required in order to prepare ourselves to grasp the next steps. This can include engaging in mindful breath awareness and prayer. Throughout the session the spiritual director should be cognizant to leave copious amounts of space for silence taking note to "invite some quiet in which the directee prepares to receive the gifts of the imagination" (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 29). This is the place and space for spiritual hospitality, room for the Holy Spirit to speak to the directee.

To summarize, the practitioner looking for choice have a wide variety of creative modules available. Each of these genres provides opportunities for the spiritual director to design many different types of expressive arts modules. There

are also preferences and tendencies in what artistic modality we favour as we all have “multiple ways of knowing within our very being which include: the intuitive, visual, poetic, kinesthetic and musical” (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 15). It is important for practitioners to mix their repertoire and offer more than one type of the same artistic expression along with different creative exercises in sessions. The spiritual director should engage in the expressive arts as part of their contemplative disciplines, continue education and training as an ongoing benefit to their practice and their spiritual well-being (Knill, Levine, Levine 2005).

The expressive arts should favour exercises that are “low skill with high sensitivity” (Knill, Levine and Levine 2005, 99). This model agrees, as it does not seek to complicate or make sessions cumbersome or to intimidate directees by requiring high artistic skill levels. As shown here and supported by the results in the following chapter (chapter 4) there are many simple, easily applied creative exercises that when introduced within the session are capable of carrying the level of high sensitivity to act as a conduit for the Holy Spirit.

As discussed, here in chapter three the expressive arts are emerging in every modality. Expressions follow the broad categories of music, visual art, dance, and the literary arts. I have looked at the restoration of the ancient practices to a modern world, extensively surveyed the role of physical faith including debunking myths, assumptions and stereotypes. I have made a case to embrace the somatic through the practice of a physical faith. I have supported this model of spiritual formation with relational links between existing therapeutic arts and

catalogued the variety of modes and methods used within the expressive arts and spiritual direction. Chapter four discusses the recruitment, training workshop and the experiential use of the expressive arts exercises as spiritual directors engaged in applying this model in the field.

SECTION III:
DIVINE CALL:
THE ROLE OF EXPRESSIVE ARTS IN
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION:
AN ACTION-RESEARCH PROJECT

CHAPTER 4:
ENGAGING SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS IN AN
EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP STUDY:
DESIGNING, FACILITATING AND
EVALUATING A TEACHING MODULE TO
DEVELOP COMPETENCIES IN THE USE OF
THE EXPRESSIVE ARTS WITHIN
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

The genesis of this research inquiry stems from my experiences as a spiritual director that determined that the language of spiritual direction could include more than words. I recognized through various in-session experiences that by applying my creative knowledge I could implement various art-based tools that were effective in opening dialogue and facilitating the work of spiritual direction. Spiritual directing is a divine call that explores the divine call within the directees own lives. This action research project explores the role of the expressive arts in spiritual direction:

Research Design

Three primary aims steered this research: 1) Can the role of the expressive arts yield a positive impact on spiritual formation? 2) How can spiritual directors be helped to adopt expressive arts in their spiritual direction? and 3) How effective was the teaching module that was developed?

The predominant method of inquiry used was the participatory action research model. I collected data from four sources: 1) an on-line survey, 2) the participants engagement in a single case expressive arts workshop, 3) an in-situ questionnaire, and 4) the results of the post workshop field application of the methods taught.

This chapter reports on the development of a curriculum, its implementation and evaluation, and the findings from this project of integrating the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction.

The Possible Role of the Expressive Arts in Spiritual Direction

Within the ministry of spiritual direction, we generally refer to the journey towards spiritual transformation as occurring through a process, (Mulholland 2000; Benner 2004; Sperry 2005). Demarest (2003) in *Soul Guide: Following Jesus as Spiritual Director* aptly provides a working definition, “spiritual formation concerns the shaping of our life after the pattern of Jesus Christ. A process that takes place in the inner person, whereby our character is reshaped by

the Spirit” (Demarest 2003, 36). I examined a way to enhance the process with the inclusion of the expressive arts to spiritual direction.

Recognizing Christian, spiritual formation to be a continuous personalized journey comprised of uniquely individualized steps spiritual directors uncover and discover that there are myriads of ways and means that coalesce to accompany the sojourner. Together the spiritual director and directee engage in dialogue towards seeking spiritual formation, transformation and growth. For each of us this formative process is unique. However, I began to see commonalities in how my directees responded to the expressive arts tools. I became interested in what “takes place in the inner person” and how creativity could influence that. This formed the basis for the pivotal question: Can the role of the expressive arts yield a positive impact on spiritual formation?

Within the scope of spiritual formation, transformation occurs through what Howard (2008) calls the agent of change – the Holy Spirit. How this occurs within the process remains an unseen intangible. Philippians 2:12-13 speaks of God working in us to will and act according to his good purpose. The “working in us” remains elusive. I have merged two distinct practices that agree that creativity and imagination can supplement the transportation of the elusive. Both the expressive arts therapists Knill, Levine and Levine (2005) and Christian spiritual formation author Rohr (2003) recognize that creativity and the imagination enhances the process as the elusive resides in the sacred space that occurs at the

threshold of liminality. The liminal space retains what Malchiodi (2006) agrees is the mystery of how we move from the unknown to the known within the session.

The exchange of creative arts practices modalities between the expressive arts therapists and spiritual direction are symbiotic. As previously discussed in chapter three, the primary sources and claims referred to in this project stem from the individual therapeutic arts practices (music, art, dance, visual, and literary) (Table 4). The expressive arts (a multimodal approach) is a newer therapeutic model with fewer research and evidence-based studies (Malchiodi 2005).

Throughout this research, I recognize the term sacred occurring within the therapeutic conversation refers to a holistic approach. For example, there are “many creative arts therapist [who] draw on the interrelatedness of the arts, religion, healing, and cultural practices, allowing the client, via a “sacred” approach to bring the whole self – body, mind, emotions, spirit and soul to – recovery” (Malchiodi 2005,196). Within the scope of my approach and the accompanying research the term sacred is reserved solely to mean Christ-centric. I deliver my application of the expressive arts and spiritual direction through a Christian perspective. I proposed that the ability, propensity, and desired method of uncovering, discovering, and encountering God always remains an individualized endeavour. In order to meet the uniqueness of relating to God, there is a necessity for the spiritual director to be versed in multiple ways of igniting the conversation between God and the directee in order to nurture spirituality.

In this discussion, the expressive arts are a supplement to prevailing spiritual direction methods. The suggestion offered and examined here was and is to re-orient the practice of spiritual direction, towards embracing the inclusion of the expressive arts, always in concert with existing spiritual direction practices. The findings of this study support the expressive arts as a viable complement, an adjunct tool, filled with layers of possibilities to assist spiritual directors with individualizing directee sessions.

Research Challenge

McLeod (2015) claims that “the primary aim of research is to create knowledge products that take their place in a vast marketplace of knowledge” (McLeod 2015, 3). This research was an opportunity “to create a knowledge product” that sits on the cusp of an emerging topic. At this time, the study and discussion of the beneficial collaboration between the creative arts, and spiritual formation occupies a small niche in the “vast marketplace of knowledge.” A rigorous literature study found minimal resources, and or qualitative studies – specifically – on the use of the expressive arts and spiritual direction. Authors such as Juliet Benner (2011), and Margaret Silf (2012), provide resources for using art images in prayer, and Adele Calhoun (2005) includes examples of creative arts exercises in her *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform*. These authors outline techniques to add visual imagery to our prayer life and offer creative exercises to incorporate together with the spiritual disciplines. However, they do not address the expressive arts as a distinct method

that “involves using two or more expressive therapies to foster awareness, encourage emotional growth, and enhance relationships with others” (Malchiodi, 2005, 2). This lack of resources provided a primary opportunity to add this qualitative study as a resource to the knowledge base.

The project further addressed problems identified through a series of anecdotal inquiries. As a practising spiritual director, and a member of the TASD board I have encountered colleagues who have a desire to use and those who have utilized the creative arts. Both groups indicated an interest in locating resources and acquiring practical skills. These conversations with spiritual directors, determined that they were searching for the basic know how the where to begin in the practice of the expressive arts. One anecdotal query peaked my interest; Can any spiritual director trained in these methods, use and guide directees through an expressive arts session or are best-case outcomes particular to those with a gifted charisma? I provide substantive answers to these identified problems by focusing on a two-fold approach 1) to develop expressive arts competencies in Spiritual Directors and 2) to evaluate the teaching module created as a vehicle to deliver these competencies.

Research Response

I gathered this research together under the overarching question posed: Can the role of the expressive arts when used as an intentional and directed tool within spiritual direction yield a positive impact on spiritual formation. To yield the answer, the following four questions became the core of the investigation:

1. What is the current knowledge, and practice of the expressive arts within the community of spiritual directors?
2. What training, resources, and professional development are required?
3. How can I best develop, and facilitate a teaching module to deliver these expressive arts competencies?
4. How can I best evaluate the effectiveness of the experiential teaching module?

To answer these core questions, plus the anecdotal inquiries of the spiritual directors, the lack of training, and literary sources, I developed four parts of data collection and engaged two groups of participants.

Part 1: An on-line questionnaire confirmed the current needs of the spiritual directors

Part 2: A practical workshop met the training and resources component

Part 3: An in-situ questionnaire evaluated the teaching module

Part 4: Field notes of the spiritual directors offered, three areas of evaluation:

Three further research considerations and questions informed the study:

1. Replicability: How well were the practices taught in the workshop, reproduced by the spiritual directors?
2. Receptivity: How well were the practices received by the directees?
3. Effectiveness: What was the impact on the directees of the expressive arts in practice?

As the intention of my research was to re-orient spiritual directors to the use of an adjunct method, I began with the premise that to encourage their receptivity I would modify the expressive arts exercises on to existing spiritual direction practices. This created a sense of familiarity for the spiritual directors. I designed, introduced and taught a case specific curriculum by incorporating the following spiritual direction practices: Lectio, and Visio Divina, gospel contemplation, spiritual autobiography, group spiritual direction, and body prayer.

The addition of the expressive arts modules taught in relation to known methods both provided the scaffold for the expressive arts modules and quickened understanding; this method became a profitable teaching tool. Table 2 provides a visual of the corresponding six expressive arts modules, together with the four methods for integration as they relate to Part 4 of the research, (the experiential use of the arts by the spiritual directors in their practice). I offer further explanations of the points mentioned here along with the rationale and instructions for incorporating these methods, in the discussion on project, methodology, and methods.

Viewing the topic through multiple angles of inquiry enriched this discussion. The data gleaned from the four core points, the four phases of research, and the experiential workshop, substantiated the answers to the overarching question, positively. The final conversation concluded and affirmed the gain to the practice of spiritual direction, both through the voice of the spiritual director, and the directees.

Supervision, Permission, and Access

A series of permissions and supervisions were needed for this project (see Table 5). I received approval from the Tyndale Research Ethics Board on October 2016. I recruited participants from the Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors (TASD) and practicum students from the Tyndale University College & Seminary Spiritual Directors Internship program. I obtained the necessary permissions and access to the participants from the board of the TASD. Likewise, Dr. Barbara Haycraft provided the approval for access to the practicum students (Appendix B), and acted in the role of my accountability supervisor (Appendix A). The overarching supervision of the project resides with the Tyndale University & Seminary, Doctor of Ministry program. Dr. Mark Chapman, Assistant Professor of Research Methods oversaw and supervised this project in accordance with the course requirements.

I am a current TASD (Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors) board member. It was necessary to remove the appearance of personal influence over the discussion and subsequent decisions regarding the research project. In this regard, I presented the request to the Board Chair independent of regular TASD meetings. I also recused myself from the meeting, where my project was on the agenda. The board chair tabled and further discussed the research project on my behalf. Then, I attended a meeting on June 2nd, 2016, to answer any questions or concerns. At the conclusion, the TASD board approved the posting of the information letter in the summer e-newsletter (Appendix C). TASD also offered

their support and encouragement for the inclusion of their members and agreed that the research topic would be both timely and of value to the practice of spiritual direction.

There were two separate levels of participation. 1) A total of twelve anonymous T ASD participants entered responses to Part 1 via the Typeform® on-line questionnaire (Appendix I). The context section contains more details of participant demographics. The voluntary participation and completion of the on-line questionnaire provided inferred consents for the Part 1 group. For participant group 2) a total of ten T ASD participants volunteered for the workshop. This group engaged in Parts 2, 3 and 4, all of which, received information letters and consent forms two weeks prior to the workshop.

The participants with direct contact to me signed all consent forms, including the media release forms before participation in the workshop (Appendix H). For Part 3 directee field reports, I had no contact with or personal knowledge of the directees involved. The spiritual directors obtained consents from their directees and reported to me with pseudonyms to maintain anonymity (Appendix O). Additionally, Part 2 of the research project – the workshop – took place in the Alumni Hall at Tyndale Seminary & University. A condition of approval for the Alumni Hall rental was the necessity for liability insurance coverage for any potential risks. I obtained on November 1 2016 a policy from Holman Insurance Brokers (Appendix E) to meet this requirement.

Table 5. Supervision, permissions and access

Activity	Request to	Approval Date	Appendix
Supervision Approval	Dr. Barbara Haycraft, Director of Tyndale Formation Centre	August 26, 2016; email	A
Permission to attend practicum class	Dr. Barbara Haycraft, Professor of Spiritual Director's Practicum Course	October 19, 2016 email	B
TASD e-newsletter an invitation to participate in the research project	TASD board minutes approved on June 2, 2016 Board Secretary confirmed approval to Dr. Mark Chapman on October 20, 2016	October 20, 2016 email	C
Permission and booking for Alumni Hall for workshop booked for Nov 12, 2016	Tyndale University & Seminary Campus Services Coordinator	October 6, 2016; email	D
Professional and General Liability Insurance Coverage Invitation Letter	Lloyds of London Insurers	November 1, 2016	E
	TASD	June 2, 2016	F

Context

This project took place in Toronto, Canada. The participant community consisted of practising spiritual directors, and spiritual director practicum students from the Tyndale University & Seminary's one-year practicum program. Both the spiritual directors and the practicum students were members of the (TASD), the Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors. As indicated, 12 anonymous

participants from T ASD responded to Part 1, the Typeform® on-line questionnaire (Appendix I). Among the initial 12 responders, because of the anonymity, I was not aware if any of those participants, became, one of the further 10 who enrolled in Parts 2 to 4. This lack of information did not alter the research, as this factor was not germane to the outcome. The complement for Parts 2 to 4, consisted of ten self-selected volunteer participants. This mix provided an equal cross section (unplanned) of experienced spiritual directors (5) and spiritual directors in training (5).

The Tyndale Spiritual Directors practicum internship program is a post master's degree, two semester, one-year program. During the course of the research project, the participating practicum students all completed their theoretical studies and were in the process of gaining face-to-face hours in the practice of spiritual direction. The T ASD is a peer association, of approximately sixty members, governed by a voluntary board recruited from within the membership. The T ASD board also includes a faculty representative from the Tyndale Spiritual Formation Centre. Dr. Barbara Haycraft, who also served as my project's accountability supervisor, and held this position, for the period covered by my research. The T ASD mandate includes networking, providing resources, and professional development through workshops, seminars, and retreats.

Presently, I am a spiritual director and an expressive arts practitioner with an independent practice. I am also co-pastor at Broadview Faith Church located in Toronto, Canada. The extent of my experience with the arts, within the realm of

spiritual formation, extends for a previous twenty-year period. My education encompasses a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) with a major in Dance from York University, Toronto. My movement education and training include but is not limited to classical ballet, modern technique, and various ethnic dance typologies.

Independent studies within the degree included a minor in social and cultural anthropology with a specific focus on the ethnological role of dance within religious cultures and or societies with a specialized interest in dance and liturgy. Subsequent to York University, I gained further experience in the areas of performing, teaching, and continuing education within the scope of the arts. Additionally, I obtained a certificate to teach Adult Learners from George Brown College, Toronto as well as a certificate in Arts management from Harris Institute for the Arts, Toronto. I am certified as an expressive arts facilitator through the postgraduate program of the Haliburton School of Art and Design. I recently registered as a psychotherapist through CRPO (College of Registered Psychotherapists). I hold associate certifications with the CADT (Canadian Association of Dance Therapists) and the AADT (American Association of Dance Therapist).

This research took place outside of my church ministry role but within the context of my spiritual direction practice. I received my post-graduate Masters in Theological Foundations with a concentration in spiritual formation and training as a spiritual director through Tyndale Seminary. In my role as a spiritual director, I share a common education, training and internship history with all of the

participants. I also serve as a T ASD board member. In light of my educational background, experience, and focus on the arts it is evident that I view this research topic through a distinctive lens. I declare an inherent bias to the subject matter under investigation. Currently, within the context of expressive arts therapies although “research on the efficacy of expressive therapies is increasing dramatically there is much to be learned.” (Malchiodi 2005, 13). This is encouraging for the specialized community of spiritual directors there remains a bona fide professional curiosity into the outcome of these research findings.

Sources and Models

I am unaware of any comparative spiritual formation models or prior qualitative studies that address this topic specifically. This chapter will outline the diversity of theories, and practical creative applications I visited in order to illustrate, and support the benefits of the expressive arts together with spiritual direction. Knowing this, I invested the majority of my D. Min coursework in the study of adult learning theories, nurturing spirituality, creativity, and the research of the expressive arts, and spiritual formation. Consequently, this research evolved from two of my prior Doctor of Ministry course projects.

The first project developed a model of spiritual formation: *The Expressive Arts and Spiritual Formation: A Manual for Soul Care Practitioners* and the second created a curriculum: *Living in the Stream A Six Session Curriculum: Enhancing the Formational Reading of Scripture in Group Spiritual Direction via the Complementary use of The Expressive Arts* (Appendix M). The manual

(Appendix M) is a combination of these two course projects. The first project provided a foundational platform for my research, the second project, as a training resource was helpful because of the particular emphasis on group settings, and the singular focus of integrating the expressive arts, and sacred texts. I designed both the model and the curriculum projects to explore the theological basis, psychotherapeutic use of the arts, adult learning theories, and conduct a review of pertinent literary sources. I formed the framework for this research project around these class assignments and my course work.

A Model of Spiritual Formation

The model of spiritual formation in *The Expressive Arts and Spiritual Formation: A Manual for Soul Care Practitioners* supports that:

The power of the arts to convey a felt experience of mystery is profound if God is the creator and we are made in God's image or Imago Dei then we are in essence creators, artists. When we open ourselves to the expression of creativity, we also open to the movement of the Divine within us. (Paintner and Beckman 2010, 13)

Creativity, in all forms, plays an important role in the sacred story. I believe that creativity and the Divine are inter-connected. Music is a common thread; we see the hymnody of the Bible represented by the bounty of the psalms. Many creative expressions in the Bible work to frame, interpret, enliven, and minister to others. There are also many expressions of poetry to in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

Imagery, metaphor, and allegories are the preferred lexicon of Jesus. Movement is evidenced both through prayerful gestures – obeisance – and the

dances of triumph (Miriam and David) found throughout. One telling, example of the role of music in healing can be found in 1 Samuel 16:23, here we read an account of David who on more than one occasion, engages in the practice of playing the harp for Saul. We learn that the results were both restorative, and protective, as the music also became a viable defense against evil. For the purposes of this report, I offer a summation of the guiding biblical principles that support the model. This includes the use of creativity, the source of our transformation – the Holy Spirit – and the vocation of a spiritual director within the ministry of spiritual direction.

Creativity as a Gift from God

Creativity is a gift from the spirit of God, distributed to all for building of the Kingdom, internally, for ourselves, and externally, for others. As indicated the book of Exodus speaks to the importance of creativity, as a bestowed gift to the people of God (Exodus 35:31-35). The list of creative skills are not only utilitarian, they are intentional and purposeful. We all inherently carry the necessary creative expressions to fulfil our Kingdom of God directives. Creativity is not distributed here as a standalone talent; this verse shows us that the gifts were accompanied by wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. Discernment becomes a necessary filter, a guide to prompt us to use our creativity wisely.

Spiritual Direction a Vocational Call

The art of spiritual direction is a distinct Holy ministry; the role of the spiritual director is a vocation, a purposeful Holy calling. The prophet Isaiah in

chapter 50 verse 4 gives us a dutiful description, as we acknowledge the gift of this call: The Sovereign Lord has given me his words of wisdom so that I know how to comfort the weary. Morning by morning he wakens me and opens my understanding to his will. Spiritual directors wake up to this call daily. The vocational burden in ministry is universal; fueled by a desire to help, and encourage others. We, as spiritual directors become the “one” that heeds David cry in Psalm 142:4. “Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul.”

Spiritual formation is an ongoing process in the life of a believer. The irony of spiritual direction is that there is no direction in the literal sense of the word, but rather spiritual directors come alongside others to journey together, through the realm of mystery. The challenge in the role for spiritual directors is how to help others stop, listen, and discern the voice of God through the clutter of this world, our minds, and our own voices. Aided by the gifts of the spiritual director the – Holy Spirit – acts as a conduit for the directee. Spiritual transformation, then becomes the result of the Holy Spirit’s internal action within the directee “we can never accomplish this through our own power; we need the empowering of the Holy Spirit” (Wilhoit 2008, 23). The formation in transformation always remains a part of God’s master plan.

Literary Resources and Cases

Mezirow (2006) outlines the gift of the arts to make meaning for us:

Art, music, and dance are alternative languages. Intuition, imagination, and dreams are other ways of making meaning. Inspiration, empathy, and transcendence are central to self-knowledge and to drawing attention to the affective quality and poetry of human experience. (Mezirow 2006, 6)

This idea of the richness of the arts to make meaning for us, and so much more is as significant in spiritual direction, as in other areas. Mezirow (2006) is an educator, and the forerunner of – andragogy – the theory of adult learning who has embraced the inclusion of the arts as a viable teaching method. Educators, specifically those who specialize in andragogy are also shining a light on how different ways of receiving knowledge have legitimacy. Sharan Merriam (2011) predicts that:

Some of the most recent research and theory building in adult learning are based on the premise that knowledge construction and learning can be through the pathways other than those that depend on the mind. Scholars are now trying to explain and legitimize the role played by emotions, body and spirit in learning. (Merriam 2011, 32)

This future educational research to “explain and legitimize the role played by emotions, body, and spirit in learning” will do much to reinforce the use of the movement arts and spirituality in transformational learning and spiritual formation practices. I found the educational genre of transformational learning theories to have many parallels to the spiritual transformation process.

Curriculum Development

The curriculum teaching blocks (see Appendix P) for Part 3 the workshop, took into consideration educational theories specifically that, “learning occurs in one of four ways: by elaborating existing frames of reference, by learning new

frames of reference, by transforming points of view, or by transforming habits of mind” (Mezirow 2006, 19). I addressed all four ways in the design:

1. **Existing frames of reference:** the curriculum was built on current spiritual direction practices
2. **New frames:** the workshop introduced and applied to the practice of spiritual direction, theories on creativity, movement, human development, psychological and psychotherapeutic practices
3. **Points of view:** existing ideas on creativity and imagination, the biblical, theological and spiritual formation theories were expanded
4. **Transforming habits of mind**
the addition of the expressive arts, showed a new way to practice spiritual direction, changing habits by expanding the spiritual director's tool box

Creativity and Imagination

The pivotal assumption that underscored this research is we are all creative. Imagination, and creativity theorists Runco (2004), Cameron (2007), and art therapist Malchiodi (2007) agree. The initiation of the role of creativity in psychology begins with Carl Jung (1965), who lay the groundwork for much of the theories proposed by Paolo Knill, Stephen and Ellen Levine (2005), followed by many others including Robyn Cruz and Bernard Feder (2013). These scholars agree with the assumption that everyone has the ability to be creative. All do not easily digest this theory. Rather, it attracts opposition, the strongest by way of the

voice of our own inner critic. “I am not creative” is the most often spoken phrase and the greatest hurdle to overcome when introducing, teaching or practising the expressive arts (Paintner and Beckman 2010 and Malchiodi 2007).

Common to all forms of artistic expression is the role of the imagination as the human container for all creativity. The theological premise, as stated earlier, references God as the author of all creation, and subsequently the gift giver of our personal creative essence. Nonetheless, the words imagination and creativity within the realm of Christian spirituality can be suspect, and subject to adverse deviations. I incorporated efforts to ameliorate these misconceptions in the workshop curriculum by providing solid biblical evidence, and literary resources that explained and encouraged the spiritually healthy, nurturing role of creativity and imagination.

Most of the early discourse on imagination remains ensconced within the science of psychology. The early psychological theories of Carl Jung (1965) considered the forerunner in discovering the use of the arts in therapeutic counsel, posits that all human creativity initiates via the vehicle of the imagination. Stephen Levine (1997) in *Poiesis: The Language of Psychology and the Speech of the Soul* carries Jung’s thoughts further and deduces that artistic expressions used within therapy offer the remarkable ability of “the healing of the imagination by the imagination” (Levine 1997, 2).

Psychology, Psychotherapeutic, and Arts Therapies

This investigation placed a strong reliance on the evidence from studies that specifically surveyed the use of the arts in therapy. These included the psychotherapeutic use of music, visual arts, dance, literary arts, and art making. The stalwarts of expressive arts therapy research and practice are Cathy Malchiodi (2007), and Paolo Knill, Stephen and Ellen Levine (2005). These scholars contributed the neuroscientific evidence of the ability of the creative therapies to transform our brains physiologically.

Stephen Levine (1997) strongly reinforces that “art has the capacity to heal; even in extreme situations people will create” (Levine 1997, 3). Christine Paintner and Betsey Beckman (2010) are spiritual directors who readily embrace the spiritual and cognitive connection: I posit, that the underpinnings of psychological understanding together with the Holy Spirit’s leading in our soul care, is a marriage capable of greater application in our spiritual transformation.

Spiritual Direction and the Arts

The literature indicates there remains space for the inclusion of the arts within the practice of spiritual direction. Topical literature favours informing and directing others in the use of the arts to complement personal contemplative practices or as a contribution to corporate worship. Juliet Benner’s (2011) work in *Contemplative Vision: A Guide to Christian Art in Prayer* and Silf (2011) *Landscapes of Prayer* both focus on visual imagery as applied to prayer. The

contribution by Adele Calhoun (2005) *The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* offers the practices of journaling, labyrinth meditations, liturgical and walking prayer. Again, directed to enriching one's personal contemplative prayer habits.

I relied on the seminal work from Christine Valters Paintner and Betsey Beckham (2010) *Awakening the Creative Spirit: Bringing the Arts to Spiritual Direction* as they provide the only literary source that discussed both a Christian approach and the inclusion of the creative arts within spiritual direction. To support the cognitive theories addressed in the research authors that combined, psychotherapy, and spiritual direction were also surveyed both David Benner (1988), and Len Sperry (2005) provided contributions. These authors were integral to the projects underlying premise that is to encourage the integration of spiritual direction, and psychotherapy as a collaborative bridge to better enhance spiritual transformation. A recent stream of thought pointed to others who combined action research and creativity of which John McIntosh (2010) provided an interesting resource in his book, *Action Research and Reflective Practice: Creative and Visual Methods to facilitate reflection and Learning* (McIntosh 2010).

Spiritual transformation affects all parts of our being. Transformation is about change. It is an ongoing journey. Len Sperry (2005) calls it a lifelong process:

Transformation is the process of undergoing a radical change of mind and heart, a dying to false self, and a continually assenting to one's true self, which reflects the image and likeness of God. Transformation is a lifelong process. (Sperry 2005, 8)

I have amassed theoretical literary support for the use of the creative arts in spiritual direction mainly from the areas of psychology, education, creativity, and therapeutic arts practices. The use of the creative arts within the practice of spiritual direction remains largely under-researched. In my review I have found no evidence-based research that specifically supports the expressive arts and spiritual direction. Indeed, more dialogue would be beneficial surrounding the use of the arts as an agent that can enhance the process of spiritual transformation. My hope is that these authors and others continue to spearhead dialogue that strengthens this connection between spiritual formation and creativity.

Methodology and Methods

To research, the inquiry “Can the role of the expressive arts, when used as an intentional and directed tool, yield a positive impact on spiritual formation?” I divided the project into 4 parts: Part 1 the on-line questionnaire confirmed the current needs of the spiritual directors. Part 2 included designing and offering a practical workshop on integrating the expressive arts into spiritual direction; Part 3 was evaluation by the participants and involved an in-situ questionnaire to evaluate the teaching module; and Part 4 was an overall assessment including results from the spiritual director's field notes and addressed three areas of evaluation:

1. **Replicability:** How well were the practices taught in the workshop, reproduced by the spiritual directors?
2. **Receptivity:** How well were the practices received by the directees?

3. **Effectiveness:** What was the impact on the directees of the expressive arts in practice?

This section outlines the field, scope, and methods used to establish the results of the research. The data sources for Parts 1, 3 and 4, received their own analysis and in chapter 4 Findings, Interpretations, and Outcomes. I compared each part to each other where relevant. A beneficial variant to this research discussion was the project did not stop at listening to the voices of only the spiritual directors (SD) and spiritual director practicum students (SDP) participants. From the beginning, I chose to include the voice of the directees. Subsequently, the data for Part 4, the results of the experiential use came from the voice of the directees via their spiritual directors. I received this data anonymously as a third party. The arm's length nature of this data offered assurance that my, or the participants personal biases were minimized or eliminated. I am cognizant that there is the possibility that the spiritual directors somewhere in the process of their sessions may have introduced bias.

Participant Recruitment Methods

The field of participants consisted of two different groups of participants. One group participated in Part 1 Typeform® on-line survey and the second group participated in Parts 2-4 of the research. I sourced these participants from the membership of the T ASD and the Tyndale Spiritual Director Practicum program. Both groups registered directly via email to indicate their interest. The participants were a mix of seasoned spiritual directors, and Practicum students.

Research Part 1: On-line Survey

Recruitment of the participants for this section occurred in two ways: an invitation to participate in the research posted in June 2016, on the T ASD website via an e-newsletter (Appendix C) and on November 2nd, 2016, I conducted in class presentations to both course sections of the SDP students to offer an invite to participate. Subsequently, all participants through my email, self-selected to join the research project. In response, I sent the Typeform® on-line survey (Appendix D) link for access to the Part 1 questionnaire. This link remained active for a 30-day period from October through to November 2016, after which it expired.

Twelve participants responded to the Typeform® survey link. There were no personal email or other identifiers within the Typeform ® on-line questionnaire. All replies received were anonymous. However, prior to sending the link, I categorized them into two sections: SD (spiritual director) of which there were seven and SDP (spiritual director practicum students) of which there were five. I created two distinct link addresses to the Typeform® on-line questionnaire. This maintained anonymity within the survey results, but provided a secondary variable from the data received.

Research Parts 2, 3, and 4: Workshop, Post Workshop and Field Report Evaluations

Part 2 was the design and offering of an experiential 1-day “Expressive arts and Spiritual Formation “workshop; Part 3 was an in-situ workshop

evaluation; and Part 4 consists of a post-workshop experiential field application and evaluation (see Appendix P) for workshop curriculum timeline.

The initial research invite provided information on all parts of the project. Interest in attending the workshop came simultaneously from the originating two sources: 1) an invitation to participate in the research posted on June 2016, on the T ASD website via an e-newsletter (Appendix C) and 2) the November 2nd, 2016 in class presentations. These sections of the research (Part 1 and Parts 2 to 4) identified in the information letter as stand-alone segments. I indicated on the information letter that participation in Part 1 was not a precursor for parts 2 to 4, the attendance at the workshop. For this reason, Parts 2 to 4 could have included some of the participants from Part 1. However, as Part 1's completion of the questionnaire was anonymous there was no identifying data to cross-reference who from that group attended for Parts 2 to 4.

Parts 2 and 3 the *Expressive Arts and Spiritual Direction* workshop and in-situ workshop evaluation took place on November 12th, 2016 at the Tyndale University & Seminary Bayview campus in Toronto, Ontario. Participants by way of the invitation letter (Appendix F) understood that Part 2 would be limited to ten participants. Those who were interested emailed me directly their intention to participate. The workshop would run from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm and there would be no costs for those in attendance. As the SDP students were informed of the workshop on November 2nd, 2016 affirmative responses were due before the workshop date of Nov 12th, 2016. This met the requirement of the 7-day

minimum time allotted to read the information letter and consents (Appendix F and H). Ten participants attended the workshop, of these, five were Spiritual Directors and five were Spiritual Director Practicum Students.

Part 4 the post workshop field application consisted of all ten of the workshop participants being invited to apply the methods within their spiritual direction practice. These participants were given art making supplies, Soularium™ cards and sent further detailed instructions by email with the manual (Appendix M). Instructions also included the music, and poetry resource links (see Appendix O). This entire project ran from the initial contact that occurred in June 2016 until March 2017, the final date for collection of field data from the spiritual director's experiential use of the expressive arts.

Data Collection Methods

The data source chart (Table 6) indicates the three sources of data collected for this study. The results and analysis of these data sources provided the efficacy of the workshop and the praxis of taking the tools to the field. Parts 1, 3 and 4 the post workshop field use report submitted by the participants provided a large quantity of data.

Table 6. Data sources

Part	Data	Source
1	On line Questionnaire	Typeform® on-line survey
3	Workshop Evaluation	In situ evaluation forms Participants Log sheet Reports:
4	Post workshop SD field use reports	i. Use of expressive art mode ii. Use of Integrated method iii. Directees initial response iv. Session Comments

The data count response chart (Table 7) outlines the three corresponding parts of the research and the total responses received from each section to be analyzed. The data sources (Table 6) and the response chart (Table 7) show the entire scope of activity that I analyzed.

Table 7. Data count responses

Part	# Responses	Source
1	12	Typeform® on-line survey
3	10	In situ workshop evaluation forms
4	54	Post workshop Directee responses to Field Reports

For Part 4 the post workshop field application of the methods used were recorded by each participant on a (prepared fillable excel spreadsheet) log sheet (Appendix K). It was necessary for me to create pseudonyms for the participants and when I received the spiritual directors log sheet with their prescribed pseudonyms I amalgamated both together in order to maintain a reference back to which spiritual director was reporting on which directee session (see Table 8)

For purposes of anonymity, this research does not personally identify participants. All quotes, charts, and tables include acronyms under the source, examples, comments, or findings. Table 8 below shows examples of how I derived these pseudonyms (please note that the alpha identifiers are not proper name initials) for either the spiritual directors or the directees.

Table 8. Spiritual director and directee pseudonym identifier

Spiritual Director Pseudonym Identifier				
	Spiritual Director	Numerical ID	SD-Alpha ID	Published Pseudonym
Example	R	1	TM	R1-TM
Directee Pseudonym Identifier				
	Spiritual Director	Directee SD provided Alpha ID		Published Pseudonym
Example	R	1	BE	R1-BE

I asked the participants to complete and submit to me the following:

Date of session

Directees pseudonym

Expressive art module chosen from 1 to 6

Integrated method(s) included from A to E

Initial response of the directee to the invitation to participate from a 3 choice drop down menu

1) some resistance 2) accepted and 3) well received

Comments on the session

Table 9. Post workshop engagement with the expressive arts and spiritual direction: Field application reports received

# of Directors	# of Directees	# of Sessions
1	3	4
2	4	4
3	8	11
4	6	9
5	4	5
6	9	11
7	7	10
8	0	0
9	0	0
10	0	0
10	41	54

Table 9 expands on Table 7, the data count response chart, by outlining the breakdown of the total of field reports received in relation to the number of spiritual directors (7), number of directees (41) and total expressive art sessions (54). These interactions submitted by the spiritual directors, provided the data for the recollections of all of the in- session experiences.

These (54) interactions were input by the spiritual directors on log sheets (Appendix K). These notes supplied the answers to the core inquiries including the 1) replicability, 2) receptivity and 3) the effectiveness of the post application of the experiential use in the field. Determining who was speaking and what they were saying was very important to the research inquiry. The comment section of the log sheet (Appendix K) provided me with sufficient data to search and code the data, and to sort for these thematic voices 1) the spiritual director, 2) the directee, 3) the voice of God and 4) the voice of resistance. This began with the smallest voice, single words. Bell and Waters (2014) tells us that “it is not the

words themselves that matter but their meaning” (Bell and Waters 2014, 239). In order to extract meaning I first used those words to sort for the four common voices (who was speaking) as stated above and then looked for thematic clusters to assess what they were saying.

To determine the content of the comments I then collected, sorted, and grouped all the phrases into four major themes. 1) Self efficacy - how well was the expressive art received; 2) pedagogical – how well were the methods taught; 3) the spiritual director – how well did the spiritual director lead and maintain the integrity of the session, and 4) waiting on God – what was the effectiveness of the session? Where, when and how did God show up? These themes from the post workshop comments supported the evaluation of every area under inquiry. The pedagogical, integrative, and formational impact of engaging with the expressive arts came alive through the voices of the post workshop comments. The resulting conversations indicated beneficial enhancements to the director’s experience.

Study Design Methods

At the core of this studies design is Part 2, the teaching module. I created the workshop module with elements of a single case study, suited for adult learners, with prior theoretical and practical knowledge of spiritual direction. A background in the expressive arts, creative gifting or experience with any of the arts was not a pre-requisite. I provided all course materials and art making supplies. A take home post workshop resource and supply kit were also included. I limited the workshop to ten participants, considered a manageable size for the

content, time constraints, and teaching methods selected. I designed the content of the day to include a full range of expressive arts but catered the methods to include familiar integration items: music, literary arts, sacred texts and art-making (Malchiodi 2011).

In order to give a well-rounded taste of the expressive arts, the following modules would capture the flavour, and be suited for this research group. The workshop consisted of teaching six expressive arts modules (1-6) and the inclusion of the four integrated methods (A-D) (see Table 10 and Table 2). The participant chooses one module from 1 to 6 and integrates that exercise with A – a sacred text, scripture and prayer and one other integration method from B to D – music, literary or art-making.

Table 10. Modules and integration methods/exercises

6 Expressive Arts Modules		4 Integration Methods	
1	<i>Lectio Dei</i> using Blackout Poetry	A	Sacred Texts, scripture and or prayer
2	<i>Visio Dei</i> using Soularium™ Cards	B	Music
3	<i>Vocem Dei</i> gospel contemplation using The Rosebush Narrative	C	Literary- poetry/story/or creative writing
4	Memoir-Sacred Story using Antique Photographs	D	Art making
5	Community Garden art-making (Group spiritual direction)		
6	Sacred Movement		

In terms of the study design, the need to merge the existing spiritual direction methods with the expressive arts was important to facilitate learning.

Spiritual direction is not void of creative practices, there are, as indicated, many

found within the spiritual disciplines (see Table 2) for the relationship between the existing spiritual direction practices and the expressive arts modules. By layering the expressive arts modules on to existing methods and framing the process in a new conceptualized way a transfer of knowledge occurred. Patricia Cranton (1994) suggests “the learner observes skills as demonstrated by the expert educator, practices those skills, and achieves some competency in reproducing the behaviours advocated by the educator instrumental knowledge is acquired” (Cranton 1994, 11). This foundational connection enabled them to have a frame of reference to offer the directees as they introduced these new methods within the session.

I delivered the course through an innovative teaching paradigm; I framed the entire workshop around a spiritual direction session. In this way, participants also uncovered the benefits of the creative exercises for themselves. Participants experienced both physically and spiritually as they sensed for themselves the response that the use of the arts provides. I bracketed the workshop with an opening centering prayer and a closing prayer. I asked the participants to stay in an attitude of receiving from God. Side chatter was discouraged while engaging in the activities. I injected moments of silent reflection and sharing was encouraged, these moments of companioning had the added blessing of spontaneous prayer for those who were willing to share. The debriefing of the exercise was encouraged after each module experience and again at the end of the workshop. This method

facilitated both teaching and engaging in spiritual direction. This experiential education tool provided specific content that was comprehensive and practical.

Data, Methods and Coding Rationale

I chose to develop methods that would find answers to the research question through four core points of inquiry:

1. What is the current knowledge, and practice of the expressive arts within the community of spiritual directors?
2. What training, resources, and professional development are required?
3. How best to develop, and facilitate a teaching module to deliver these expressive arts competencies?
4. How best to evaluate the effectiveness of the experiential teaching module?

The answers to these four core points informed the research. (Part 1) uncovered the current climate, (Parts 2 to 3) looked at what do we want to know now and how best can this be disseminated. (Part 4) spoke to the responses of the directees from the field. This was crucial in terms of evaluating the replicability, receptivity, and effectiveness of the workshop and the premise explored.

I determined that this would need to be a practical class. I knew learning the six expressive arts exercises and the four integrated method for many participants would be new. I created the expressive arts inter-modal tools taught in the workshop for this project specifically. For this reason, my approach for this study warranted full hands on engagement by the participant for better learning. I

managed time and resources by conducting the group class in a one-day setting. Through this workshop, I accomplished re-orientation for the spiritual directors through delivering a new series of expressive arts modules to their spiritual director's toolbox.

This project was a collaborative conversation between the participants and the facilitator. I encouraged suggestions and comments, welcomed the participants to share, since we were all discovering together. All evaluation forms used, whether on-line or in-situ contained space for comments. The research methodologies that best captured all aspects of this project were to use principles of participatory action research and aspects of a single case study approach.

Working with the participatory action research definition of Bramer and Chapman “research takes place in the situation to effect positive individual and social change to develop transferable and theoretical knowledge (DMSF0943 Course lecture notes, 2016). I addressed facets of the definition in the overall planning with an emphasis on the workshop created to develop transferable and theoretical knowledge while being guided by a leader with the participation of others. In deciding on a delivery method for the workshop, I recognized a bridge between participatory action research and case study methods, as for both, the research takes place in the situation (Merriam 1998; Cresswell 2010; Sensing 2011).

I included some of the theories from case study methods, in particular the idea that this would be an “inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon

within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin 2013, 23). Although I held the belief, that the findings could be positive there was no previous research data to support that premise. It was necessary to put the theoretical supposition within its real-life context to either confirm, deny or adjust the hypotheses.

The study design necessitated I collect data from a variety of sources as indicated. This approach asked the data to speak to the pivotal inquiry – the impact of the expressive arts on spiritual formation. Additionally, I built questions into the in-situ questionnaire delivered post workshop to evaluate the efficacy of the workshop as a teaching module. The presenting data covered pedagogical, integrative, and formational evaluations. The comments provided from the spiritual directors’ fieldwork (Appendix K) provided strong themes that I grouped to match the research inquiry.

The Time Frame of the Research

The timing of the data collection proved to be fruitful. This research did not rely on one set of measurements from one specific event. As this occurred over a six-month period from October 2016 to March 2017 (Appendix G), each section of data collected, represented an individual data set. The method of collection of four different data sets at four different times was beneficial as the instruments in each instance captured only the data they were required to measure. I built the analysis of results at each stage as they happened. Taken as a

collective assessment this strengthened the results favourably and allowed for cross-referencing of results.

Ethics in Ministry Based Research

The reality of the relational role of the D. Min researcher is they are often not at arm's length from the participants. This relationship can hinder openness and may unintentionally create dual role conflicts. In the light of these peculiarities, D. Min researchers are to remain ethical stewards. I understood clearly and adhered to the tenets of the Tri- Council policy (www.pre.ethics.gc.ca) on ethics to ensure that I did not cross any boundaries. This includes but is not limited to not engaging minors, obtaining informed consents, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. I met the requirements of offering honest disclosure of the intended purpose of the research – both the inherent risks and the benefits.

The participants did not come under the breadth of my home church ministry; there were no dual roles as leader or minister. However, as a graduate of the Tyndale spiritual directors training program, and a member of the T ASD board there was the expectancy that many of the participants may know me, or see my T ASD Board member role as a power differential. I addressed this in the introduction of the workshop. I reminded participants this was a collaborative discussion, we would learn, and discover together. In order to minimize any perceived discomfort, I framed the dialogue to emphasize our relationship as peer-to-peer professional development.

At their own discretion, the participants voluntarily attended the workshop to learn. I did not pose a question in my data gathering to determine the participant's intention for attending. Some may have attended out of curiosity or others for professional development. I acknowledge the topic of creativity and spiritual direction could have created a desirability bias in those that self-selected to attend. The participation in this experiential workshop could be considered beneficial to them. In addition, permissions to contact the T ASD members were adhered to (Appendix C). The T ASD member's attendance for all phases of this research was voluntary. Participants chose independently to take the workshop and registered by email their desire to attend. This minimized any sense of pressure to participate. The June 2016 T ASD e-newsletter provided the membership with an early notification of the research project. All Phases and Timetable (Appendix G) remained in compliance with the REB approval. I was careful not to release further information or consent forms until after the October 2016 date. Only at that time were interested spiritual directors contacted and given the opportunity to register as participants.

The spiritual directors received instructions in the workshop to discuss the research project with their directees; they were free to show them the invitation letter with full details of the scope of the research. In addition, permissions and consents from their directees where necessary. Directors were to advise directees that their names and comments would remain confidential and not publicized. I as project lead would not know who they were. I reminded the participants that

professional practices remained in force regarding privacy, hospitality and soul care as we ministered to one another. In addition, I stressed the importance of confidentiality within the workshop amongst the participants, as portions would involve both one to one, and group sharing.

The idea to engage in the unknown may have caused other areas of emotional discomfort, a sense of vulnerability, or nervousness at producing something creative or when asked to engage and move the body. I made efforts to reduce this anticipatory anxiety. I emphasized the entire course was a process over product endeavour, and they would not be taught or required to dance but would engage in pedestrian movement.

Integrity in research is paramount. Conserving ethical standards resulted in good practice and unharmed participants these factors were complementary to the field of research and enlivened the process of inquiry. Within the parameters of my research, I continuously reviewed and addressed ethical requirements as necessary to ensure I maintained guidelines.

Findings, Interpretation and Outcomes

In any journey, as in this research project, there is an implied and a desired destination. McNiff (2013) suggests that we do some sifting, and sort through what we thought might happen to see if the “perceptions of the situation are accurate, or do you need to revise them in light of what you have discovered about the current situation” (McNiff 2013, 25). This section presents all the data, interprets the findings and describes the outcomes of this project. The analysis

will show that I found support for the pivotal inquiry: can the role of the expressive arts yield a positive impact on spiritual formation.

Additionally, I believe and the results show the achievement of the replicability of the model. The spiritual directors incorporated well the methods into their sessions. Receptivity by the directees occurred without much resistance or difficulties. The impact of the expressive arts, through the modules introduced showed to be effective at encouraging and delivering a connection with God for both the spiritual director and the directee.

There are areas that required, or will require adjustments in the workshop for example, out of ten participants, I received reports from only seven (7) who completed and submitted the post workshop participation from the fieldwork. I received regrets from two (2) due to personal circumstances and one (1) no response. This did not hinder results as those who submitted provided sufficient data to analyze. For future reference, I will look at how to manage this as I could have included a progress step and examined the reasons in a follow-up contact questionnaire.

Research Part 1

Part 1 of the data collection included twelve (12) anonymous on-line respondents who answered the following nine (9) questions. These participants established the current climate of the spiritual director's knowledge as it pertained to the expressive arts in general and spiritual direction specifically.

Results of the Typeform® On-Line Survey are reviewed below.

Questions 1-3: Demographics

The results of the part 1 Typeform® on line survey, questions 1 through 3 outlines the demographics of this group (Table 11). These questions were optional and provided additional information on gender, age, and church affiliation.

Table 11. Questionnaire Part 1, Questions 1-3

Gender		
Male	Female	Non-identified
3	7	2
Age		
45+	35-44	25-34
10	1	1
Church Affiliation/Denomination		
Non- denominational	5	
Brethren, Mennonite and Brethren in Christ	3	
Baptist	2	
Pentecostal	1	
Salvation army	1	

I made this section optional and I created questions pertaining to the current climate from spiritual directors in general, as I did not intend to analyze my research inquiry against the variables of gender, age or denomination. All the participants opted to answer. The results showed the make-up of the respondents to be mature (over 45), more female than male and a cross section of evangelical denominations. I did not find where these demographics altered my Part 1 inquiry in any way. However, I recognize these demographics may provide content to develop further research possibilities.

Question 4: How Long Have You Been a Spiritual Director?

Results: 1.75 was the average years these respondents had been in practice. Practicum students answer 0. The length of time in practice indicated to me that those who were interested in the topic were new to spiritual direction. This could have determined their interest level. As I do not have demographics from T ASD (Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors) on the average years of practice their members have, I could not analyze if this was the norm or an exception for my participants. Additionally, of the twelve (12) respondents there were six (6) SDP (practicum students) with minimal practical experience but showing an interest in the topic.

Question 5: What Type of Training in the Expressive Arts Would Be of Benefit to You?

Figure 3 shows the immediate needs of the spiritual directors. The participants had three options; they could choose one or more: 1) specialized training, 2) resources, and 3) certification. There was not a great disparity between the SD and the SDP's. Total combined responses: 91% (11) specialized training, 83% (10) resources, and 42% (5) indicated they would also be open to certification. These answers supported and encouraged my research as I had anecdotally responded to spiritual directors who asked me to create a workshop in order for them to learn the techniques and gather resources in the expressive arts. Notable was five (5) of the twelve (12) also indicated certification would be of benefit to their practices. This could open up further dialogue to look into combining

expressive arts certification programs together with current spiritual direction programs as a future consideration.

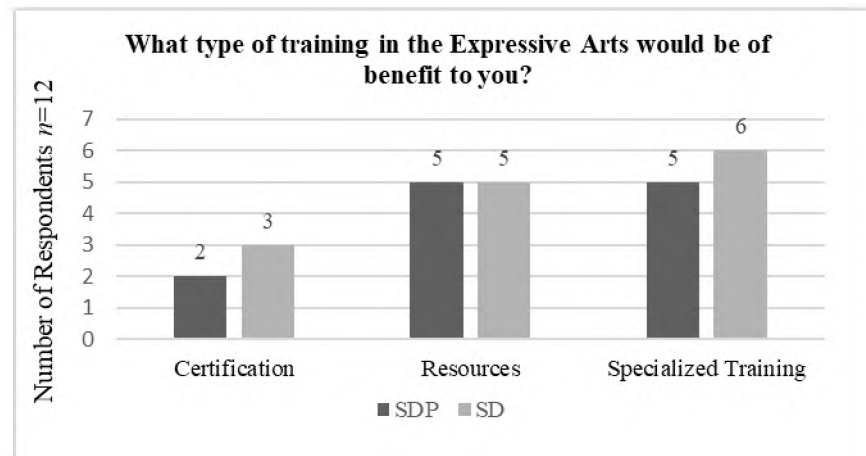


Figure 3. Comparison of areas of immediate need

Question 6: Are You Familiar with the Use of the Term “The Expressive Arts”?

Figure 4 is a comparison of both the SD and SDP responses. Both were equal in their familiarity with this term. Four (4) respondents each, a total of eight (8) combined resulted in an average of (66%). 1 SDP and 3 SD (33%) had no previous knowledge of the term. These results show a high degree of familiarity as for Part 1 eight (8) replied yes. From my experience with Part 2-4 workshop participants I discovered that they were familiar with the terms arts as it relates to music, visual arts, literary and movement but did not have knowledge of the expressive arts as explained to them in the workshop. As the expressive arts is an emerging term I extrapolate that there is a probability this may be the case here too but I cannot be sure without the data to support. Four (4) participants had no

knowledge but were still willing to complete the questionnaire I took this to be a further indicator of the interest in the topic among spiritual directors.

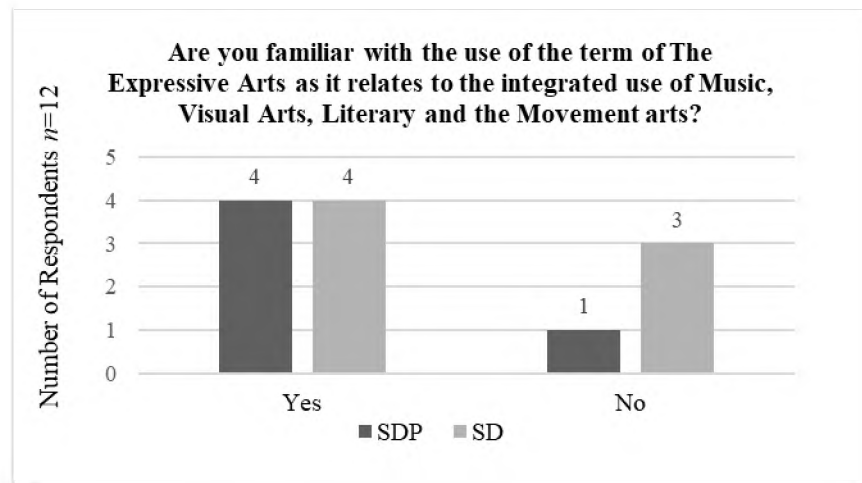


Figure 4. A comparison of familiarity with the expressive arts between spiritual directors and spiritual director practicum students

Question 7: In What Particular Area of Spiritual Direction Do You Find the Use of the Creative Effective?

Respondents received a list with these seven (7) choices and one (1) not applicable and asked to check all that apply. The graph in Figure 5 collates and compares SD and SDP responses for the effectiveness of using the creative arts. The SD column results show that: Uncovers the voice of God; opens up dialogue, and adds variety become the preferred top three. For the SDP replies, “helps to unblock/re-direct sessions”, “Opens up dialogue” are the top two areas and “uncover the voice of God” received three responses. This suggests that these respondents determined (from their use to date) that the infusion of the arts had the ability to positively affect practices in one or more of these seven (7) ways.

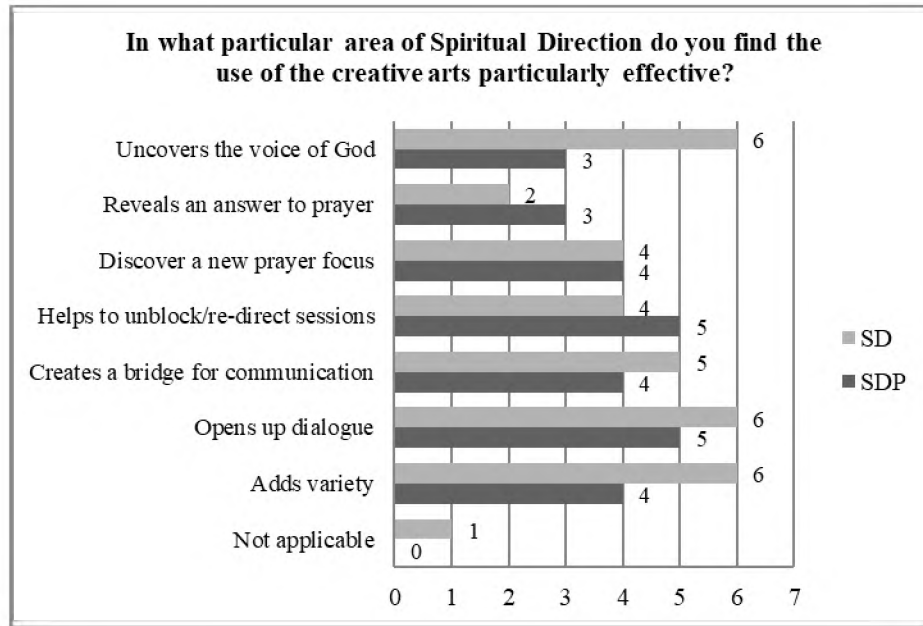


Figure 5. A comparison by group type (SD vs SDP) showing areas of effectiveness in using the creative arts

Question 8: What Types of Experience Do You Have with the Expressive Arts?

An overview of the current experience with creative modes is shown in Figure 6. It records the similarity in experiences for the SD and SDP participants. Combined, the results were 83% (10) Visual Arts and Music, 58% (7) Literary Arts, 16% (4) for both Movement Arts, and “not familiar,” which ranked the lowest.

The Literary Arts ranked lower for SDP at 16% (2), with 41% (5) for SD. These results support general spiritual direction practices in that *Visio and Lectio Divina*, and music are all foundational to the sessions. The movement arts are not part of the spiritual director’s toolbox I anticipated low usage in the results. My model of spiritual formation (chapter 3) develops a conversation to support the

somatic in spiritual direction in response to this general gap in understanding. In that chapter, I also devote and expand on the literary arts to address more ways to incorporate these arts into the practice.

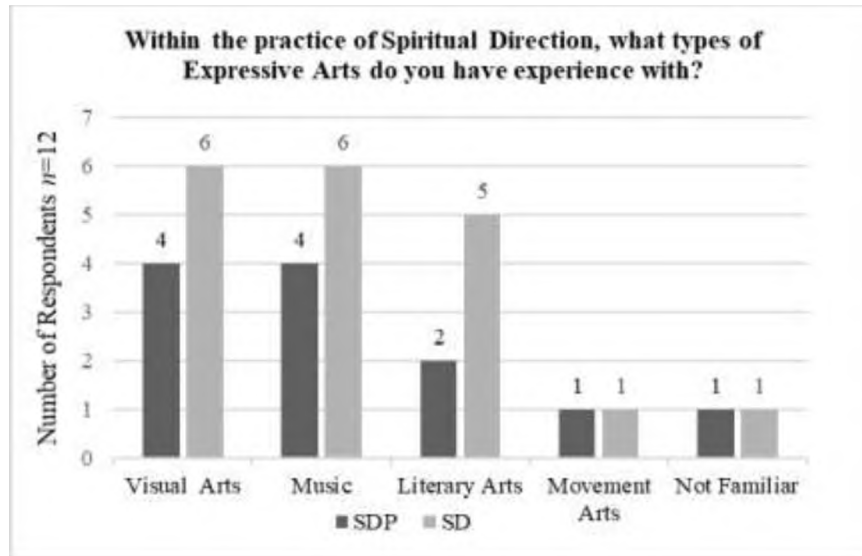


Figure 6. An overview of the current experience with creative modes

Question 9: Do You Currently Use the Expressive Arts Within Your Practice?

Figure 7 indicates 75% (9) of both SD, 6 and SDP 3 are currently using the arts in their practice. Equally, 2 No responses were recorded. (1) Participant did not respond.

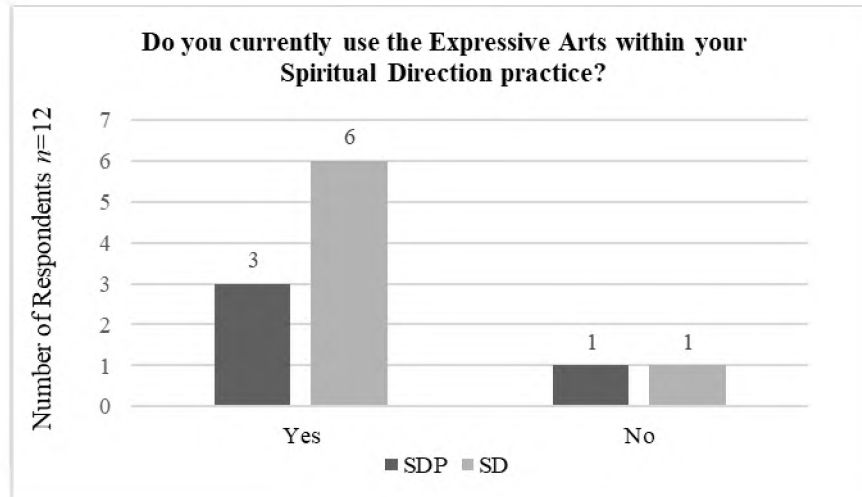


Figure 7. A look at who is using the arts in practice now

The Expressive Arts Workshop and Field Reports

Parts 2 to 4 of the research involved ten (10) participants as stated. I do not know if any of these ten were participants in the Part 1 Typeform® on line survey as that was anonymous. Of these ten (10), all attended Part 2) the one-day workshop and completed Part 3) the in-situ post workshop questionnaire. For the Part 4) experiential use of the expressive arts in the field results show only seven (7) of those who participated in parts 2 and 3 continued on to complete Part 4.

The Expressive Arts Workshop and Workshop Evaluation

Part 3 of the research phases, the in situ on-line questionnaire completed at the November 12th 2016 1-day workshop provides post workshop results (Table 12. Respondents evaluation of workshop content through Table 15). Ten (10) participants answered the post workshop evaluation (Appendix J). The questionnaire covered sixteen (16) evaluation questions in six (6) main areas of

inquiry: 1) Workshop content, 2) workshop design, 3) facilitation/ instructor, 4) Accomplished objectives, 5) Self-paced delivery and 6) Suggestions for future workshops. The results of these findings speak to the pedagogical aim of the research. The participants answered using an ordinal scale method for five of the six sections. Tabulation of the replies reveal all were positive with no raised flags.

Legend for Tables 16-20

SD: Strongly disagree

D: Disagree

N: Neither agree nor disagree

A: Agree

SA: Strongly agree

Table 12. Respondents evaluation of workshop content

	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	I was well informed about the objective of this workshop	0	0	0	0	10	10
2	This workshop lived up to my expectations	0	0	0	5	5	10
3	The content of the workshop was relevant to my Ministry	0	0	0	2	8	10

Table 13. Respondents evaluation of workshop design

	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
5	The workshop objectives were clear to me	0	0	0	3	7	10
6	The workshop activities stimulated my learning	0	0	0	1	9	10
7	The activities in this workshop gave me sufficient practice and feedback	0	0	0	6	4	10
8	The difficulty level of this workshop was appropriate	0	0	0	3	7	10
9	The pace of this workshop was appropriate	0	0	0	5	5	10

Table 14. Participants evaluation of instructor

	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
10	The instructor was well-prepared	0	0	0	1	9	10
11	The instructor was helpful	0	0	0	0	10	10

Table 15. Participants evaluation of accomplished objectives

	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
12	I accomplished the objectives of the workshop	0	0	0	5	5	10
13	I will be able to use what I learned in this workshop	0	0	0	5	5	10

Question 16a. Preferred Time Frame

The time frame for this workshop as a research instrument was condensed. In general, what would be your preference for workshops?

This question had a composite of choices regarding suggestions for future course length. They could check all that applied a two-day, a four-day or a weeklong retreat. Results of preferences were eight (8) respondents opted for a 2-day format, three (3) respondents chose their main choice as four consecutive Saturdays, one answered hold the course monthly, and three (3) opted for a single weeklong retreat. The consensus was that the course needed to be longer than the one day allotted for this research.

Question 16b. Interest in further education

Are you interested in receiving other educational materials or attending other workshops about the expressive arts and spiritual direction?

Participants could choose to check a box indicating Yes or No. All ten respondents answered – yes. To summarize the findings for Tables 12-15, respondents generally rated the questions between agree and strongly agree. There were no questions rated within the strongly disagree, disagree or neither agree nor disagree. These responses confirmed the pedagogical delivery methods supported answers on how well the content, design, pace, and the instructor met the expectations and needs of the participants.

I note my response to the workshop content and length and agree that the day was full. I recognize the participant's feedback to this as Question 16a) indicates that participants would like to see a longer workshop in the future. The level of difficulty, pace and content relevant to their ministry were also rated agree to strongly agree. Evenly divided were the answers to "I accomplished the objectives of the workshop and I will be able to use what I earned in this workshop" each received five (5) agree and five (5) strongly agree. All of the Part 2 results were encouraging and supported both the necessity to teach these methods and to do so through these experiential hands-on workshop formats.

Post Workshop Field Use Reports

Part 4 the post workshop field use reports captured the implementation evaluation. The experiential phase gathered responses from the use of the expressive arts exercises in practice. Part 4 received via email a total of seven (7)

out of 10 post workshop reports (Appendix K). These seven (7) spiritual directors (workshop attendees) produced 54 (see Table 7 Data count response chart) experiential accounts of the expressive arts between them. I collected all the data presented in Figure 8 from these spiritual directors' log sheets (Appendix K).

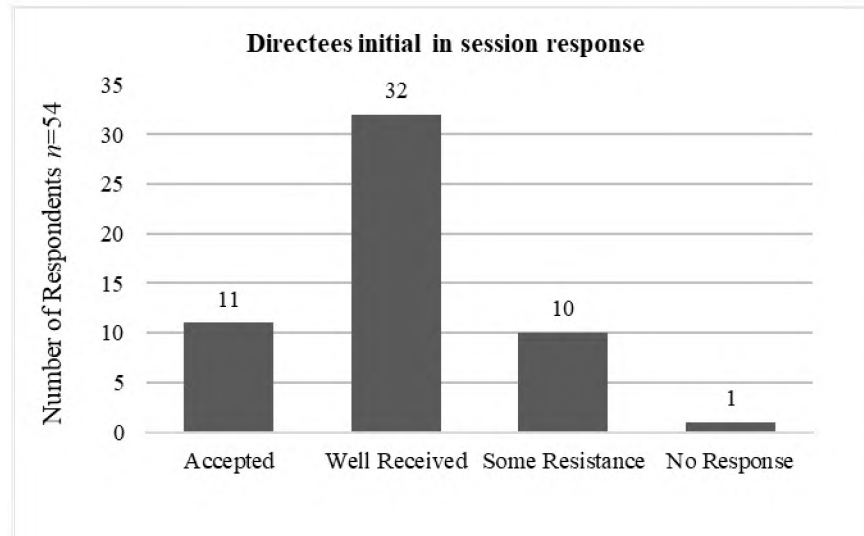


Figure 8. The initial response of the directee to the expressive arts

Figure 8 records the spiritual director's observation of the directee's initial response to the introduction of the expressive arts to the session. The post workshop log sheet (Appendix K) asked the spiritual director to indicate: the initial receptivity of introducing the expressive arts in session. The directors were given three choices by using a drop-down menu on the log sheet 1) Accepted, 2) Well received and 3) some resistance. 10 of 54 indicated Some Resistance while 43 of 54 Accepted and Well Received combined. Overall the responses were more than well received. There were ten (10) who rated some resistance These results I would consider within the norm of acceptance of any new tool. Without

the ability to assess factors such as personalities, the rapport between spiritual director and directee or how long the directee has been engaging in spiritual direction or their experience with the arts and creativity it is difficult to determine what this reluctance reveals and how to remedy if necessary. For the ten (10) that showed some resistance the comments support that this early reluctance gave way to acceptance after more dialogue and explanations. For the future under this section - some resistance - I would add an area for the spiritual director to comment on this more fully. However, this does show the ability of the spiritual director to achieve compliance even with initial reluctance.

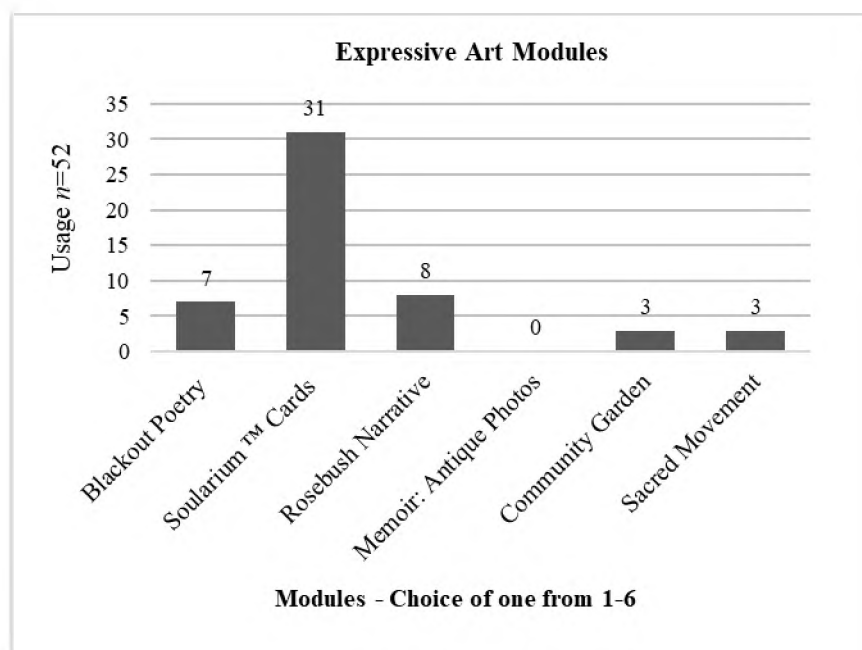


Figure 9. Usage of expressive arts modules

Figure 9 represents the modalities chosen for the sessions. What modules the spiritual directors preferred. This graph shows n=52 and not n=54 because 2 respondents engaged with *Visio Dei- Soularium™ Cards* Module 2 using another

product. The adjusted # for module 2 would increase from 31 to 33 Results: 61% (31) *Visio-Soularium™*, 14% (8) Gospel Contemplation-Rosebush narrative, 13% (7) *Lectio Dei*-Blackout Poetry, and 5% (6) equally for Groups spiritual Direction-Community Garden and Sacred Movement.

From a pedagogical view, the spiritual directors used the modules they were the most familiar with prior to taking the workshop. This supports the high response to the use of visual art cards. *Soularium™* Cards were prevalent and each spiritual director used those cards or two (2) used another version of the same module. Additionally, these are the most suited to one to one spiritual direction as the Rosebush narrative; community garden and sacred movement are designed and taught in the workshop for group spiritual direction.

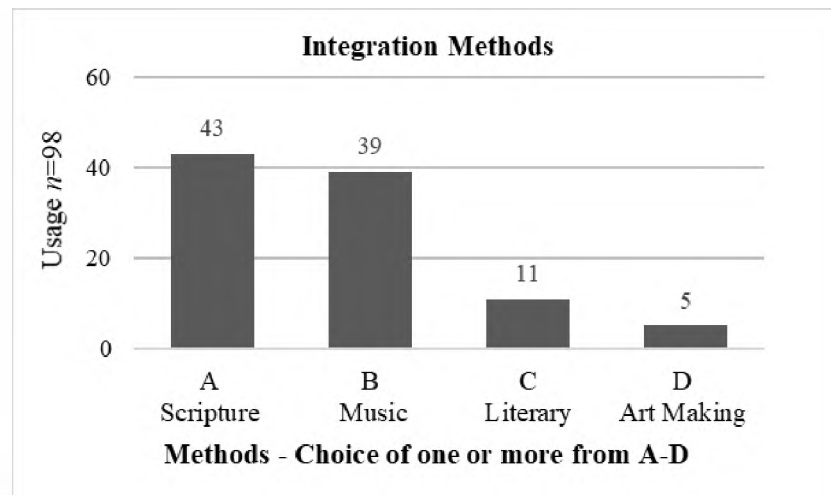


Figure 10. Usage of integration methods applied

Figure 10 results: A-scriptures, (43) B-music (39) were predominant choices followed by, literary at (11) and art making at (5). An integration of the modules together with the expressive arts module is crucial (Table 2). These

results confirmed that the competency of integration translated well into the fieldwork. It was evident that the spiritual directors understood the integrative aspect of the expressive arts. I anticipated a preference for music and scripture as these are usual spiritual direction accompaniments. For the scripture count as it should always accompany every session I would have expected to see fifty-four (54) uses. However, this category could have been clearer for the participants as it also includes using prayer or sacred texts. The comments confirm the use of these in lieu of scripture.

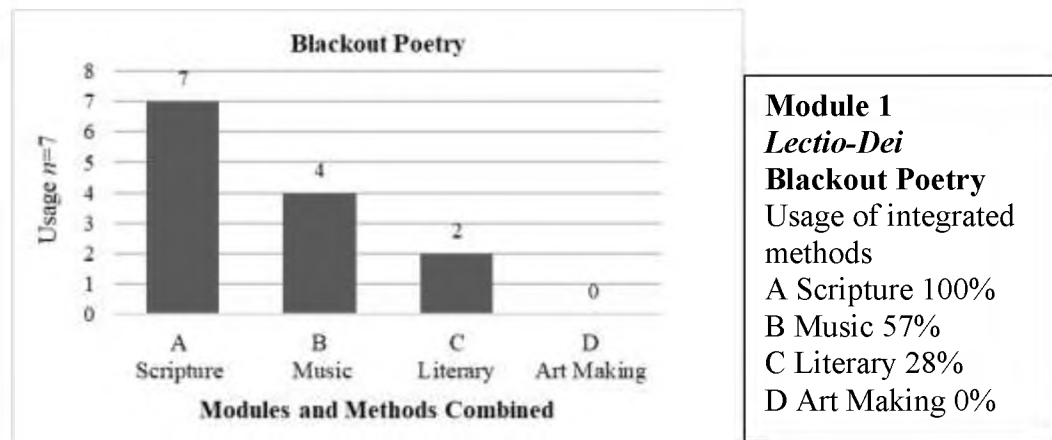
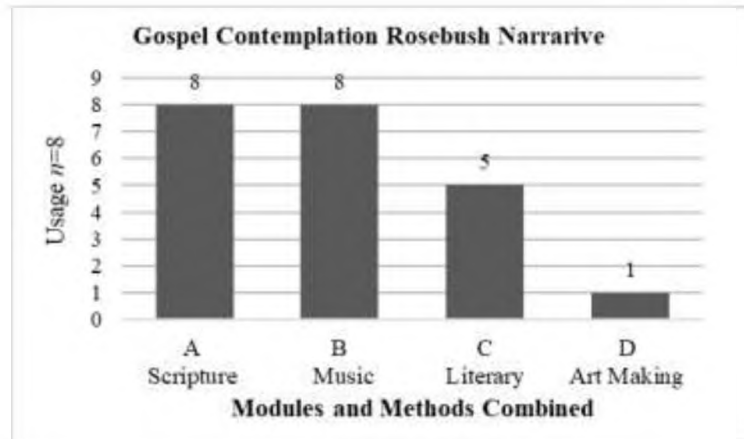


Figure 11. Integration patterns for Blackout Poetry



**Module 3
Gospel
Contemplation
Rosebush
Narrative**

Usage of integrated methods

A Scripture 100 %

B Music 100 %

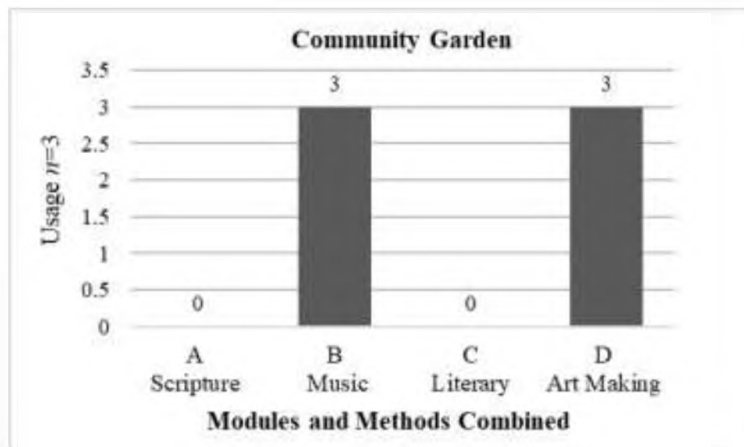
C Literary 62 %

D Art Making

12%*

*Appears to be a

Figure 12. Integration patterns for Gospel Contemplation Rosebush Narrative



**Module 5
Group Spiritual
Direction
Community
Garden**

Usage of integrated methods

A Scripture 0%*

B Music 100%

C Literary 0%

D Art Making

100%

*SD & SDP

comments indicate

in session worship

music was used

Figure 13. Integration patterns for Group Spiritual Direction–Community Garden

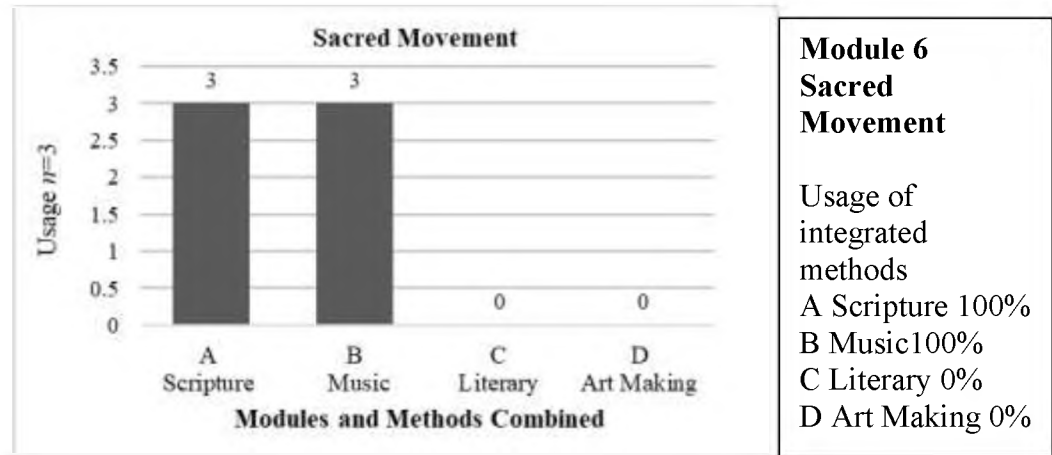


Figure 14. Integration patterns for Sacred Movement

Figure 11 through Figure 14 refine Figure 10 by further reducing the aggregate application of the integration methods to compare and contrast the usage of the integration methods to the modules individually. Practitioners again, showed no difficulty in applying the integrative methods.

The spiritual directors log sheet reports generated four (4) banks of data for analysis. These provided the core of evidence to support the research inquiry as it pertains to 1) receptivity (was the infusion of the expressive arts readily accepted amongst directees?) 2) replicability (did the spiritual directors reproduce well what was taught in the workshop?) and 3) effectiveness (did the expressive arts have a positive effect on spiritual formation?).

Research Summary Reports

Next, I reinforce the research results presented thus far by summarizing the discussion uncovered through the first-hand conversations of the spiritual directors as they documented their field experiences. I generated these through a

data sort more completely explained in chapter 4 Data methods and coding rationale) from the comments section of the spiritual directors' log sheets (Appendix K). From these comments I looked for who was speaking and what they were saying. Dominating the comments were the following key speakers: 1) the voice of the spiritual director, 2) the voice of the directee, 3) the voice of God and 3) the voice of resistance. Table 16 provides definitions and examples to support these key speakers.

Table 16. Data coding: Key speakers, definitions and examples

Codes	Definitions	Examples	Source
Voice of the Spiritual Director	Occasions where the Spiritual Director voices a comment includes: their own experience, and a reflection on the directee's response	" [before the session] as a director I seek through prayer and discernment whether I should pursue a particular direction"	R0-SK
Voice of the Directee	Occasions where the Directee voices a comment This includes: directee experiences, comments about the artistic mode used	"As I tried to relax and listen to the Holy Spirit I let go of my desire to paint well and just painted what came to mind"	R3-BT
Voice of God	Occasions where either the Spiritual Director or the Directee refers to the Holy Spirit/God. Specifically, a sense of the awareness in the activity that affirms a uniquely personal encouragement or direction from God	"The Holy Spirit led me to write a powerful and timely poem that spoke to the depth of my being. This process facilitated a connection to the Creator's desire to communicate through a variety of tools including verbal and non-verbal mediums	R0-XS

Codes	Definitions	Examples	Source
Voice of Resistance	Occasions where hindrances, obstacles or instances that in some way hijacked the session. This included comments about discomfort, unwillingness to participate or any other unfavourable result	"Frustrating, I need time to take in what's in front of me and that took time away from actual painting"	R3-AP

Table 16 also charts the major voices (who was speaking) and gives an example of (what was being said). I tasked the spiritual director with leading, holding space, and the introduction of the expressive art to the session. They were integral to the process, responsible for their directee while observing reactions to a process that was new to them and possibly the directee all while listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit within the session. I was encouraged by the comments from the spiritual directors. These showed a strong commitment to the process, an ability to adjust to difficulties and genuine awe at the power of God to become present in their work with whatever module they introduced.

Through the voice of the directee, I through reading the accounts and the spiritual directors from journeying with them gained a unique perspective on their encounters with God. They provided first-hand experiences for the entire process. The directee's comments moved from their initial response, to how they engaged with the expressive art module and the moment of liminality where they recognized the shift from the unknown to the known. This moment became the voice of God. I sorted and recorded for the voice of God all the comments that

emphasized - mystery - exclamation, surprise, amazement, and the unbelievable. In addition, I noted words that revealed answered prayer, as well as words of encouragement, comfort, peace, and joy. Lastly there were comments that expressed hindrances, obstacles or instances that somehow distracted or created an in-session issue.

The data displayed in Table 17 through Table 20 expand on the comments from these key speakers to provide detailed examples of how the data contributed to the research.

Table 17. Data coding: Self efficacy definition and examples

Code	Definitions
Self- Efficacy	The self-efficacy code covers the belief that we have adequate knowledge, or expertise and the ability to complete the task. The data was combed for all words and phrases that captured a sense of improbability of being able to complete the exercises at any level
	Examples
Apprehension/fear	“The directee showed resistance and had difficulty doing the exercise. Took a very long time to cross out words”
	R5-KN
Perceived lack of creativity	“Found it really interesting the things people added to my picture. It turned into something”
	R4-AP
Inner critic	"Found this exercise difficult I am not an artist"
	R3-BT
Pre-established ability in one or more artistic modes	“Loved the watercolour aspect as you can convey things with one brushstroke, Markers would not work well”
	R4-AP
Triggers: emotional, theological or cultural bias	“directee was uncomfortable, a relatively new Christian from an extremely idol driven religion”
	R10-SK

Table 17 notes the areas that could hinder the spiritual direction session due to self-efficacy. I collected comments from those instances where the directee hesitated engaging in the activity due to fear, a perceived lack of creativity or inhibited by the voice of their inner critic. The comments also showed that having a proficiency in art-making became as detrimental to the process as fear of art-making. In both scenarios the spiritual directors were able to continue past this initial response in the session and achieve good results.

Table 18. Data coding: Pedagogical code, definitions and examples

Code	Definitions	
Pedagogical	The pedagogical code refers to all instances where either the teaching methods of the workshop or the instructions of the Spiritual Director to the Directee enhanced or created a miscommunication about the nature, anticipated outcome or the process of the exercise	
	Examples	Source
Insufficient explanations	“I saw the exercise as art therapy, where your immediate response gives insight into your personality”	R4-AP
Emphasis misdirected	“I was not disappointed with my picture but it had a lot of white space I wanted to fill. It was incomplete”	R4-AP
Highlighting product over process	" one woman who is an artist, her painting turned out the worst artistic wise, I wondered what her reaction to that was"	R10-DH
Artistic interpretation	I was concerned about ruining an artist’s painting”	R4-BT
Critiquing the finished product	“the poem was disjointed and incoherent”	R10-SK
Teaching tips used to assist with understanding	“Directee mentioned they were not creative and I seized the opportunity to help them see that they are. I used the model magic to encourage them to make a container for their negative thoughts as taught in the workshop”	R5-GK

Table 18 show moments when a misdirected emphasis, concern over artistic interpretation, and negatively commenting on the artistic expression can potentially derail the spiritual direction session. The spiritual director has to remain attentive and maintain the focus of process over product. The spiritual director should interject at these moments to reclaim and re-direct the session.

Table 19. Data coding: Spiritual director code, definitions and examples

Code	Definitions	
Spiritual Director	The code for the spiritual director looks at their role, and responsibility in maintaining the integrity of the session. I searched for all instances where the SD appeared to be interpreting on behalf of the directee, misdirected agenda, prompting or leading the outcome in a way that was not spiritual direction	
	Examples	Source
Scriptural foundation	"Listened to a song first and read Ecclesiastes 3:11 before starting the Soularium exercise. The card the directee picked tied in well for her with both of these. Directee had a lot to talk about it was a joy to see how God was using this exercise to affirm and direct the directee through a recent situation in her life"	R0-GK
Focus: Intentional and directed	"the directee picked 3 images from the few I had pre-selected, meditated with music"	R3-IN
Integration: Expressive Arts components	"I noticed that the directee would kneel to pray, so I wanted to use sacred movement in the session, this allowed the directee to respond, they felt God called them to engage in the movement, a sense of acceptance"	R10-SK
Interpretation versus Directional	"However, I (SD) pointed out that the eye looked very red and tired, seemed to be lacking in sleep, He (D) then saw that it might be something"	R7-BK

Table 19 notes the areas of oversight for the spiritual director. The workshop met the preparation of the spiritual director well. All sessions included a scriptural foundation and or a sacred text. Sessions were intentional and focused. Comments support that the spiritual director prayerfully considered the expressive art modules chosen. Each step requires an intentional and directed

focus including the choosing, linking and the integration of the modalities.

Spiritual directors were shown to be very aware and alert within the session they noticed apprehension, acceptance and recognized God within themselves and their directees. Included above is a teaching tip example of how to turn off the inner critic. For my research, I took note that the workshop manual could have included a list of common issues and possible solutions for a handy reference. The spiritual directors resolved all the pedagogical examples listed.

Table 20. Data coding: Recognizing God code definitions and examples

Code	Definitions	
Recognizing God	The code for recognizing God searched for those instances where the directee uncovered for themselves within the session how through the use of the expressive arts they experienced a personalized response from God	
Examples		
	Source	
Waiting on God	"This was a healing experience I was able to connect with a part of me that has been dormant for many years. I distinctly felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as I surrendered to the joy that the movement was creating inside of me"	R10-XS
Holy Spirit	"shocked at the outcome, I was in awe of the power of the Holy Spirit"	R9-M2
Surprised/Amazed/Joy	"It was an extremely revealing, releasing and emotive experience"	R10-SK
Discovered Interpretation	"We engaged with the image for 35 minutes of contemplation the directee was able to recognize their relationship with God in a new and meaningful way"	R10-SK
An answered prayer	In the end the directee was able to hear God speak through this exercise, helped me also to see how gracious God is even though the directee found the exercise difficult"	R5-KN
A sense of peace	"It was a very powerful session, ended in tears from the encounter and experience with God"	R7-CF

Noted in Table 20 are those comments that affirm the expressive arts provided a conduit for the Holy Spirit. The comments for recognizing God supported the research favorably in that the expressive arts when used as an intentional and directed spiritual direction tool – works.

The data sort that generated Tables 16 through to 20 provided a rich resource in order to evaluate the workshop and the subsequent use of the expressive arts tools in the hands of the spiritual directors. As stated, I sorted the data with the intention to corroborate the inquiry under investigation.

Predominant and common themes emerged that helped me to understand what worked well and those issues that required more attention in future workshops. To trouble shoot, I searched the comments for spiritual director led issues, as well as any pedagogical and self-efficacy concerns. To support the research inquiry can the expressive arts positively affect spiritual direction I culled the comments for those conversations that affirmed God's presence in the session. Specifically, through the vehicle of the expressive art module. I compiled these results and quoted examples to confirm my interpretations.

Interpretations

I anticipated the self-selection of participants would attract those with a creative inclination or a curiosity towards the arts. I expected that participants would in all likelihood have a desire to see the project do well. Some of the positive results of this study can be attributed to a propensity towards the topic under investigation and a bias towards a favourable outcome. Spiritual direction can incorporate many aspects of the creative arts. These include music; some spiritual directors incorporate imagery through using *Visio Divina*, and the literary through the reading of sacred texts during *Lectio Divina*. I knew that prior knowledge and their experience with aspects of the arts would be advantageous

but could also pose a challenge. I did not adjust my expectation level in the design or implementation of the workshop based on the results of the Part 1 on-line questionnaire that indicated the spiritual directors polled had prior knowledge of the expressive arts and that some had used creativity in sessions. I recognized that the expressive arts as introduced to the participants was an entirely new process. The results affirmed and reinforced there remained a want in filling the needs in areas of specialized training, and resources.

Workshop Evaluation

As previously discussed the term expressive arts is relatively new. For this reason, I recognized during the workshop that participants, who indicated they had prior knowledge of the creative arts, did not. Participants began to express to me that they did not have familiarity with, the following terms: expressive arts, multi-modal application, integrated methods, intentional and directed focus statements, aesthetic response, of process over product all terms that are particular to this emerging ministry. I knew the information on the expressive arts was an introductory concept. The results gleaned from Part 1 helped to shape Part 2, the workshop content and material. Notable was the lack of experience with the literary arts, this was lower for the SDP in contrast to the SD's. As familiarity with the movement arts are significantly less it was determined, this area needed pedagogical attention. The participation in the teaching of this module also supported these findings. Movement on a whole is not an easy module to garner acceptance. Fear, intimidation, shyness in front of others, or church ethos

restrictions can create apprehension. This was not surprising, as previously stated this is a high area for self-critique and avoidance. The directee responses of post workshop use also confirmed a reluctance to introduce or engage in this module. For those who reported using this module, I recognized the substitution of body prayer in lieu of the sacred movement module taught. Subsequent workshops will need to spend more time on allaying these concerns and ensuring the role of movement in this context becomes better understood.

Workshop Repairs

I recognized time constraints as the most problematic for participants. In two areas: 1) the in-session delivery pace of the exercises and 2) a preference indicated to expand the content over a two-day seminar or a weeklong retreat. Some comments related to feeling rushed and not being able to complete each section. I made a real time modification within the workshop. I adjusted for this by 1) reinforcing the idea that the gain was in the aesthetic response, not the artistic product. Finishing the item was not the goal, but listening and recognizing the voice of God within the process was. 2) I eliminated the practical hands on experience of module 4, the section on a sacred memoir. I introduced it and verbally explained the theory and advised the exercise followed the same procedures as Soularium™ cards. Out of all the experiences recorded, there was not one use of this module. I extrapolated that the hands-on teaching tool used throughout the workshop was an essential educational delivery method.

Ironically, I took care to avoid an emphasis on art making alone and encourage creativity in the use of the other modules. I illustrated all other methods of integration equally as valid supports for the modules. Participants (see Figure 9) showed a clear preference for *Visio Divina* using images from the Soularium™ pack. *Lectio Divina* using blackout poetry technique was also popular. I provided continuous encouragement and stressed the importance of the aesthetic response in this work. Process over product is paramount, the intentional and directed role of the spiritual director in the session is crucial to the flow and to steer and redirect the session if stumbling blocks, or hindrances – the voice of resistance – is encountered.

Prior to starting this research, I did not factor in the possibility of participants attending the workshop but not engaging in the post workshop fieldwork. I encountered three workshop participants who were non-compliant in that they did not introduce the methods taught to their directees or complete log sheets (Appendix K). I did not predict the need to design a research instrument to collect for analysis comments from those spiritual directors as to their reasons for non-compliance. This reduced the data for Part 4 logs from seven (7) participants. However; I do not believe this was detrimental to my summary as the data provided by the seven (7) participants provided ample information for analysis.

Workshop Limitations

At the onset, and throughout the duration of the project, I adjusted the parameters of the research in the following ways:

1. Workshop course length
2. Post workshop evaluation changed to in-situ from an on-line format
3. Interview and video record practising expressive arts specialists
4. Review footage, code and analyze video recordings of the Part 3
Workshop

1. Initially, I prepared for a two-day weekend course. However, the one-day workshop became the better fit as permissions and recruitment did not take place until between October and November 2016. In addition, Part 4 had a post-practice field assignment. At their discretion and within the parameters of their practice, the participants were to use the methods taught and report the findings. With the later start date of November 2016, I did not adjust for the season and that many of the spiritual directors would close their practices and resume with directees after Christmas. Many contacted me to ask for extra time. For this reason, I extended the return date for these reports twice. The original 8-week turnaround time became 12-weeks, and the final date for submission of reports became March 2017, 15-weeks post workshop.
2. The Part 3 post workshop evaluation I originally intended to administer as an on-line form. Due to the date of the workshop being moved from September to November, this delay, necessitated the form be completed by the participants in-situ.

3. I decided to eliminate the inclusion of video-recorded interviews with related professionals. The intent was to capture the experience of practicing specialists who are presently working with the expressive arts and spiritual direction. I located and contacted these specialists but time constraints prohibited recording, collecting, and being able to code and analyze this data in a timely fashion. This data would have lent the voice of experience and positively supported this research from the perspective of working expressive arts practitioners.
4. Likewise, I excluded video footage of Part 2 the workshop showing the participants in action although recorded. This could not be included in the project without analysis and time constraints did not allow for this. I do not believe this video would have enhanced the analysis but the visuals would have enlivened the explanations and descriptions of the process.

The comments made available on the Part 4 post workshop field use log sheet (Appendix K) provided rich dialogue from all the participants about the formative impact of the session. A desire to know undergirds those seeking spiritual direction. This drives a pattern of a questioning; what is God saying? How can I hear the voice of God, what am I being asked to do? How can I confirm that this voice or unction is from God? What decision should I make and when should I make it? It was in this area that the voice of the directees showed valuable results (see Table 20). Not only did the expressive arts yield answers, but they also surprised and reminded many of the recipients of the power of the Holy

Spirit in the role of their spiritual transformation. Many directee comments supported as intriguing that the expressive arts module and integrated method chosen by the SD or SDP would become a conduit to the voice of God.

I gained insight and support for my premise from the field voices of the directors and the directees. The supportive dialogue from those on the receiving end was overwhelming. It should be noted that my use of the word positive in my analysis directly relates to the use of the expressive art tool and not the content of the directee's emotions. The content of the session would have included a full range of emotions some of which could be called negative as in areas of deep pain or suffering. There is in spiritual direction an interconnected component. Both the spiritual director and the directees commented on this for example "as a spiritual director, I was surprised to see the images chosen by the directee. This helped me to see the inner world with a different perspective . . . the image served as a wonderful tool" (R6-PR). The directees all recognized the place where God came alive for them within the session.

Directee comments were telling of the process from reluctance to acceptance I include examples of the descriptive words under self-efficacy issues. Many had to identify and corral a very loud inner critic in order to move on. The workshop results confirmed there was replicability; the spiritual directors reproduced well the practices taught. Receptivity by the directees was evident in the ability to engage. There was an effective transfer of knowledge between both the participants and the directees. Results confirm that initial reluctance

disappeared quite rapidly to receptivity and embraced the revealing of the -the voice of God- in the session.

As I interpret these results now the personal conclusions drawn through my education, practice and experience as an expressive arts practitioner did not have the support of a qualitative study. This research became the crucial discussion that provided the practical hands on conclusions for or against the benefits of the expressive arts to the practice of spiritual direction. The results (Table 17 through Table 21) confirm that of the fifty-four (54) experiences collected and coded, all the directees regardless of initial reluctance, previous art knowledge, cultural bias, fear and apprehension experienced the transformational ability of the expressive arts as it relates to their own personal spiritual formation.

Outcomes

The intention of my research as per the title of the project was to accomplish three directives: 1) engage spiritual directors in a spiritual formation experiential case study, 2) design and facilitate a teaching module to develop competencies in the use of the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction, and 3) the experiential evaluation of this premise. This research conversation and the results positively affirm that: the role of the expressive arts when used as an intentional and directed tool within spiritual direction does yield a positive impact on spiritual formation.

As stated, the objectives of this emerging ministry offered the participating spiritual directors' re-orientation through education and practical

engagement with a variety of expressive arts methods. Interestingly, my decision to delineate (where possible) between the SD and SDP categories positively contributed to the conversation. Particularly, the reorientation process is similar for those embarking on this vocation and those who are experienced. The interjection of this workshop as an educational training tool can occur anywhere along the learning continuum. Although this qualitative research is based on a small sample, I posit that findings from this single case-study, could be replicated and results applicable to other groups of spiritual directors.

As noted, I ground this research project in well-founded educational and psychotherapeutic studies that reinforce the use of creativity as presented here. Throughout the conversation with the participants, I emphasized that the use of the creative in spiritual direction does not replace or substitute current practices. Nor are the expressive arts touted as a quick fix elixir that easily remedies our formative needs.

Table 21. Yes–The expressive arts do enhance spiritual direction

	Enhancements	Examples	Source
1	Uncovering the voice of God	"There was the sense that God was speaking to and watching over him . . . heard be grateful, because God is in control of everything . . . God spoke to the personal circumstances in a very prophetic way"	R3-NC
2	Nurturing spirituality	"The rosebush narrative sparked the directee to recognize God's care for the rosebush was the same as the care for them, they would be spiritually healthy overall but ongoing there were still some brown leaves and parts that needed tending to"	R5-J5
3	Support inner healing	"This exercise was a healing experience since I was able to connect with a part of me that had been dormant for many years. I distinctly felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as I surrendered to the joy that the movement was creating inside of me"	R0-XS
4	Foster spiritual formation	"Soularium cards helped them to see Gods love and acceptance . . . no matter how dirty they look or feel they were able to see beauty come out of dirty messy lives in the same way that beauty can come out of messy looking paint containers"	R5-GN

Table 21 provides examples that bear out the introductory claim that the practice enhanced spiritual direction in these four ways: 1) Uncovering the voice of God, 2) nurturing spirituality, 3) supporting inner healing, and 4) fostering spiritual formation.

Replicability, Receptivity and Effectiveness

The results show that all the participants were able to replicate well the methods taught. There were no incidents of an inability to achieve an outcome in session with the modules chosen. As noted, there were instances where modules did not get chosen at all - sacred memoir – or chosen less as with sacred dance. I am unable to defend the anecdotal charisma challenge, as I did not pre-determine charisma aptitudes, conduct spiritual assessment inventories or poll participants on their spiritual gifting. I can provide data that confirms that during the workshop session all ten participants were equipped and empowered to replicate some of what they learned with their own directees.

The scope of the research encouraged personalization. Participants were free to implement their own choice of which module, and integration method to use. As the facilitator, I recognized from results that mostly everyone kept to those that were comparable to existing methods. The use of photo cards integrated with music and a sacred text was popular, as was *Lectio Dei* – Blackout poetry. Only two participants used sacred movement. For the - sacred memoir - exercise where we use antique black and white photos together with storytelling or prose I explained the process in theory but did not include hands on exercise for the participants. This was the only exercise not used by any spiritual director in their implementation weeks. This underscored the necessity when teaching a workshop, the value of the practical demonstration becomes the more easily learned and replicated method.

Future Improvements

I recognized the need to create or locate a spiritual assessment tool that would capture the prior knowledge, experience and familiarity with the creative arts from the directees. Prior to the session, I did not have the participant's record the directee's prior knowledge or experience with the creative arts. I believe this omission would have provided another layer of analysis in terms of the directee's response to the expressive arts. The suggestion here is that I could have created a pre-session survey for the spiritual directors to capture the directees prior experience.

Additionally, I would have conducted structured interviews with the participants 1) during the November 2016 to March 2017 practice period and 2) again post receipt of their log sheets. Although there was contact to discuss, clarify and provide missing details this was not formal or designed as an additional research measure.

Finally, I would address and include more in the workshop about the potential range of responses from the directees in session. The spiritual director needs to be aware of the depth and range of reactions. The caution involves not being sidetracked by the wonder and failing to keep the session on track. Many were surprised and used exclamatory adjectives to describe this unexpected elated sense of God within the session. This for many sealed the experience as authentic. Sharan Merriam (2011) provides a transformational learning theory that parallels

the process of spiritual formation the suggestion is that the sudden and the dramatic can help:

transformational learning is about the cognitive process of meaning making. The essence of transformational learning is that through sudden or dramatic experience, people are changed in ways that they themselves and others can recognize.” (Merriam 2011, 31)

The suggestion or implication here is not that the use of the expressive arts should evoke a sudden or dramatic result in order to be effective, but experiencing the unique or intriguing can also be dramatic. Results bear out that “sudden” in the session came through the movement of the Holy Spirit. In addition, the directors reported that not only recognition of change in the directee but they also experienced personal change. The outcomes as reported by the Spiritual Directors affirmed this. The Spiritual Directors managed the inclusion of these new tools well.

Future Implications

This research study holds a significant position in my sacred story. This culminates as the sweet spot of my vocation as a Spiritual director, expressive arts practitioner and dance therapist. I can envision, the magnitude of implications that the expressive arts could provide. Paintner and Beckman (2010) provides the suggestion that we ought to “consider the possibility that a primary way we can experience the revelation of God’s mystery is through the process of our own creative expression” (Paintner and Beckman, 2010, 3). My research began with

and supports the premise that creativity and imagination through the expressive arts became a conduit for God's mystery.

The art of spiritual direction is both a time honoured and a resurgent practice. As the field of spiritual formation enjoys the depth and breadth of this resurgence one of the areas that have garnered interest are the roles of imagination and creativity as it relates to spiritual formation. The impact of developing and facilitating expressive arts workshops for those in the practice of soul care, point to a larger vision, an emerging ministry. Results (Table 21) revealed that the inclusion of the expressive arts supported the ministry of spiritual direction in uncovering the voice of God, nurturing spirituality, supporting inner healing, and fostering spiritual formation.

There is a call to meet this need. The collaborative nature of this research provided a multi-voice conversation. Every level of engagement with the participants confirmed this need. The findings and outcomes provided robust answers to the research question. Particularly supportive of the premise was the experiences of the directees. Suggestions were encouraged and opinions surveyed in order to fine tune the gaps. The consensus revealed a need for more specific information concerning creativity, and how it enables our ability to hear from God. I established that the spiritual Directors involved were educated, equipped and reoriented towards the adjunct use of the creative arts in spiritual direction.

There is the potential for ongoing educational seminars, professional development, and the need to generate resources. One of the themes to emerge

from my analysis is the room for an opportunity for growth in the ministry of spiritual direction. There remains a dearth of training programs, certification or practice for spiritual directors in these methods outside of the psychotherapeutic courses. The hope of this case study was to meet the need for training in the expressive arts competencies within the practice of spiritual direction. This could lead to the creation of an Expressive Arts and Spiritual Formation certificate-training program.

There is also a provocative go forward suggestion, which points to a recommendation to broaden spiritual direction training to be inclusive of the research that supports creative art therapies and psychotherapeutic models. This information greatly enhanced the workshop in terms of understanding a Christ centric and psychotherapeutic overlap would be beneficial. Inner healing can take many paths to restoration. There can be positive support for a spiritual process through neuroscientific evidence and practices. I acknowledge that although psychotherapeutic findings support the creative therapeutic practices spiritual directors do not need to accept the wholesale application of these methods. There are several areas where spiritual direction differs. A major distinction is that spiritual direction is directee led, and under-girded by the reliance on the Holy Spirit. Spiritual direction conversations are not curative of a clinical diagnosis met with psychotherapeutic interventions.

However, there remains a gap in the area of Christian spiritual formation. In the area of methods, research, and applications that specifically address the

effects of creativity and imagination on spiritual direction practices. Indications are that at present, specialized training, and resources in this area are lacking. There are no accredited expressive arts programs that offer a Christ centric approach to training or certification, in the expressive arts.

Although the research results did not provide sufficient data to assess the effects of the sacred movement module, movement remains a viable module. This expressive art shows potential for use in spiritual direction. Currently, the topic is gaining much neuroscientific support. Studies on the role of movement in neuroplasticity and neurorehabilitation are rising. Prabhjot Dhami, Sylvain Mornoa and Joseph DsSouza (2015) have put forward that the combined physical and cognitive benefits of dance can yield profound results:

Other elements contribute to it being a cognitively stimulating activity. This may allow dance to have a positive impact on not only physical, but cognitive functioning as well, in part due to fitting the framework of what are known as combined, or multimodal, therapies, which incorporate simultaneous physical and cognitive activity in a stimulating environment. (Dhami, Moreno and DeSouza 2014, I)

This research set in motion a discussion, and sought a conclusion to support the use of the expressive arts as a viable adjunct tool for spiritual directors. The secondary implications are that there could be, and should be more. There is the hope that the expressive arts and spiritual formation could emerge as a distinct ministry. This is an opportunity for growth in spiritual directors individually and the ministry of spiritual direction as a whole.

The premise and conclusions of this project within this context will help spiritual directors begin to embrace the acceptance of the bestowed gift of artistry

as a spiritually transformative agent. Imbued with the Holy Spirit enlisted to aid in our spiritual transformation. God's personal conversation with us enhanced by creativity and imagination.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION

Haase (2008) states that when “we commit to spiritual direction; we are dedicating and devoting ourselves to a process of attention, discovery, and articulation (Haase 2008, 130). With this statement, Haase (2008) grounds this entire conversation. Foundationally, I have looked at part of the “process” of spiritual direction. I initiated this project in response to anecdotal observations pulled from my practice in spiritual direction. I listened to the direct requests from peers who asked me to explain and share these expressive arts techniques. Many spiritual directors myself included uncovered a gap in the “process” a need for practical enhancements, particularly in the area of using creativity as a communication tool.

Spiritual direction as a practice builds through communication. There can be “resistance – unconscious avoidance – we are often unaware of the fear that prevents us from claiming and intending what we desire” (Ruffing 2000, 35). Introducing tools that reduce initial uneasiness, spur dialogue, and aid in removing conversation blocks are beneficial. Tools, which foster spiritual formation, reveal an answer to prayer, uncover the voice of God, and promote inner healing, are not only beneficial but also integral to spiritual direction. Our

formation and spiritual growth improve when inadequacies, confusions, doubts, even fears give way to God's clarity.

I remain buoyed by the scope of this project, future implications, and the research results. To address the gap in available literature, research studies, and experiential training I undertook to incorporate my creative arts background, together with my spiritual direction training into adding another voice to the ministry of spiritual direction. The content design of the workshop featured a combination of existing spiritual direction practices together with the newly introduced expressive arts modules. The layering of the new on to the familiar proved essential as it “enlarged our capacity to see the holy at work in the world [by reclaiming] an ancient tradition of allowing the arts to open us to the multiple ways in which the sacred speaks to us” (Paintner 2016, xix).

I began with creativity, cognitive strategies, and spiritual formation. This agenda promoted the symbiotic nature of these three areas. First, came the theoretical model of spiritual formation that introduced the expressive arts to the practice of spiritual direction. Next, I wrote the curriculum, outlining the requisite competencies that would be required to facilitate a day-long expressive arts workshop. This enabled the experiential reorientation of spiritual directors towards the necessary cognitive and educational theories. The workshop participants utilized a variety of expressive arts modules and instructions on how to supplement the integrative holistic approach within their practices. Subsequently, those trained practitioners applied their newly acquired knowledge

and skill sets by taking the model to the field. The results proved favourable for the inclusion of these creative exercises. I recorded for future consideration the participant's desire for more training and resources. Then, I explored the idea, that these expressive arts integrated method, inclusive of the supportive cognitive theories should be a required component of all programs offering training in spiritual direction.

Finally, I presented the findings of my research study to the TASD (Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors). The directors in attendance embraced the results as a positive contribution – a way forward – within the ministry of spiritual direction. As I have previously acknowledged this study remains modest in terms of research sample size. However, the project was as shown supported by extensive literature from the therapeutic arts. When understood as a whole, inclusive of the model, the training manual, and the expressive arts exercises together with the subsequent results presents as an important addition to the area of spiritual direction. After an extensive literary review, in terms of this specific emerging subject matter, I believe these qualitative results to be the first study of its kind.

The Clarifying Space of Spiritual Direction

During my experience as a practicing spiritual director, and listening to the responses of the research participants along with verbal comments from the presentation to TASD (Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors) new for me was a general recognition of a shift in the presenting focus of the directees.

Directees remain devoted to seeking their personal truth. They may touch on, or journey around the topic of past or present shortcomings, but typically they ask questions about their next steps, choices, decisions and finding their purpose – their divine call or God purpose. For many, today's focus is on their gaining an ability to decipher, and clarify parts of their journey as they move and grow. In its broadest sense, a large portion of the sacred space of spiritual direction involves clarification.

My idea of clarification is not an oversimplification. I recognize spiritual formation as a complex process within the spiritual journey. Nevertheless, clarification is a necessity. In Luke 24:45 in forming the disciples we gain an example of how Jesus “opened their minds so they could understand”; in other words, he clarified for them. In Mark 8:17-18 again, Jesus elicits understanding as he chides the disciples towards clarification, “Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? Jesus points to the dots and has the disciples connect to what they should have noticed and remembered. Jesus asked questions to increase their perspective (what do you see?) and perception (what do you understand?). The disciple's formation was partly encouraged through this process of clarification.

As spiritual directors, some of our most life altering formative work we can describe as clarification. This is not in the vein of instructing, advice giving or interpreting. As spiritual directors, like Jesus, we pull their attention to what they

or we notice. The directee then journeys towards a better understanding of the in-session revelation, or can connect the dots from their walk so far. Directees are seeking to clarify their relationship with God, their walk, decision making, and to define their Kingdom purpose. The use of the expressive arts, as seen in the research results played a definitive role in the opening of minds to increase understanding and the maintenance of our spiritual equilibrium. The results from the spiritual director's fieldwork affirmed that an image, a scripture, a poem, or a song fueled by the Holy Spirit stepped into the room and provided the confirming truth that God is at work in their directee's lives. The expressive art activity assisted in this clarification.

Kingdom Purpose and Spiritual Formation

We are all the repository of an innate God given destiny – a divine plan (Jeremiah 29). I believe this truth is both our quest and our stability, that which compels us, and that which grounds us. For this reason, my philosophy of spiritual formation has grown to include the idea of Kingdom purpose and destiny. I believe that our spiritual formation runs in tandem to our purpose. As we move towards becoming more like Christ, we begin spiritually forming into the shape of our Kingdom of God purpose. Our journey in the uncovering of this truth, the searching for, and the discovering of this divinely implanted seed unlocks the keys to our ongoing spiritual formation. The sacred story of our lives – our spiritual autobiography – begins to make sense. As clarity falls into place

concerning our purpose, we begin to see the necessity of our seemingly fragmented pieces of our lives more clearly.

The Kingdom of God purpose (Christ likeness) always includes our being in service to others. As we mature in Christ, our uniquely designed capacity to serve emerges. I believe that God gives us the impetus to seek out a call, a vocation, and a specific destiny shaped walk. Evan Howard (2008) states that yes, “God initiates and offers relationship, but God also, invites and acts” (Howard 2008, 204). God acts, moving in us for a purpose. This implantation of destiny is often what causes us to seek out and engage in sacred dialogue with a director. The God prompt is more than just a call for conversation as this offer of relationship is pregnant with all the promises of the kingdom of God. As we transform, we seek journey companionship to determine and clarify the plans for us as spoken of in the Jeremiah promise.

Practicing the Expressive Arts with Caution

As I have theorized, the journey is spiritual formation; one mode of transportation is via the expressive arts and spiritual direction. This use of creativity is unique, adaptable, and accessible. However, the intention of this dialogue is not to tout this model as a one-stop solution for Christian growth. The soul care practitioner should be cognizant of the cautions and limitations in the choice of applications and even in differing outcomes with the same directee. The expressive arts can create “a longing for God or an awareness of God, but it cannot give us a life lived under God” (Brand and Chaplin 2007, 89). The caution

for “a life lived under God” is a concern for the spiritual director as well as the directee. To be a good steward of the vocational call, a spiritual director must be in communion with the Holy Spirit, and living a life that enhances the spiritual preparation needed for sessions. The directee remains responsible in nurturing and tending to all aspects of their spiritual growth.

As we move to integrate cognitive theories, and the therapeutic use of the arts we are mindful that “vigilance is required when using an approach that integrates spirituality and psychology, in order to avoid collapsing spiritual direction into therapy and thereby losing its distinctive character and purpose” (Buckley 2005,86). We remain foremost spiritual directors. We also recognize the imagination as a powerful tool to help explore thoughts, feelings, and impressions. However, the spiritual directors should be wary of incorporating methods that are better in the hands of a trained counselor, because “the emotions triggered can be so powerful that it is wise to have someone who can guide [clients] through the process” (Tan and Ortberg 2008, 60).

I emphasize throughout this project that the expressive arts are included in directee sessions as an adjunct method. They are one component, a single strategy used at the discretion of the spiritual director. The expressive arts are a suggested use modality and should not supplant other spiritual direction tools available but complement the practice. Mulholland (1993) who favours a model that is personality designed cautions us to turn our attention to the concept of “our shadow side and one-sided spirituality.” Spiritual directors may have the tendency

when choosing spiritual disciplines or practices to gravitate naturally to their favoured preferences. This impulse can be detrimental “for in order to develop holistically in our spirituality, we also need to nurture our shadow side” (Mulholland 1993, 62). The awareness of our shadow side becomes a positive attribute in incorporating balance in our approaches. However, for many, the inclusion of the expressive arts may speak to their shadow side but if not monitored correctly this may lead to a one-sided focus.

Sacred texts, scriptures, and holy writings are by their God given nature malleable (by the Holy Spirit). I lean towards a *theopoetic* orientation to support the spiritual director’s usage of the words of God. A verse of encouragement for you in one situation can become corrective in another. Interpretations differ, the use of scriptures between the spiritual director and the directee require that we “deal sensitively with such differing views [knowing] that such texts can be used in constructive and helpful ways with religiously committed clients who hold them to be authoritative and divinely inspired” (Tan 1996, 375). Within the scope of spiritual direction, the words of God are case specific and contextual. For a spiritual director who remains attuned to the promptings of the Holy Spirit the scriptures prove invaluable.

Notwithstanding, poetry, or other secular writings used together with scripture when introduced in the workshop were found to be as impactful. Poetry has a transcendent quality that cuts through our reasoning. I like Gorelick (2005) believe that:

Poetry is multilingual, speaking in the languages of all the psychotherapies. Poems reveal the unconscious, explore relationships, manifest the clarity of reason, exert indirect influence on behaviour, and promote the journey of growth. (Gorelick, 2005, 125)

Again, discernment on the part of the director becomes paramount in following the leading of the Holy Spirit to prepare for and direct sessions when including disparate readings and materials.

Inroads to the Expressive Arts and Spiritual Direction

Overall, this study should contribute to a greater awareness of the ministry of spiritual direction. The focus here primarily connects to spiritual directors within private practice, church, or spiritual retreat ministries. However, results may have a bearing on expanding the vocational scope of spiritual direction. There are prospects in hospitals, clinical/mental health centers, therapeutic arts practices, palliative/hospice care, and chaplaincy roles. I suggest the following four implications for the expressive arts inclusive of Christian spiritual direction:

1. Implications for spiritual direction
2. Implications for clinical soul care practitioners
3. Implications for chaplaincy roles
4. Implications for ecumenical, multi-faith and secular communities

Implications for Spiritual Direction

The natural progression of this work would be to continue using the model as a teaching tool for spiritual directors. The T ASD (Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors) have expressed interest in continuing to offer workshops for

their membership. There is also the potential to create professional development courses for spiritual directors outside of the T ASD. The participants who attended my workshop also asked for a teacher-training course. The idea would be to teach interested directors to lead workshops.

Another avenue for this pedagogical tool would be to teach the course in spiritual direction programs. The goal would be to re-orient practicum students, existing practitioners, and spiritual director supervisors towards the benefits of the expressive art tools. The introduction of supporting cognitive strategies would be a necessity. It is crucial that the psychological underpinnings of the role of creativity receive ample attention, not just in a “cursory way” as Patricia Coughlin (2005) warns us that:

most programs teach the Enneagram and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator as relatively easy to grasp without a lot of psychoanalytical background. The relative accessibility of these two typologies can be a problem if the program teaches them in a cursory way. Weekend workshops or short lectures do not do justice to the subjects. (Coughlin 2005, 83-84)

In the introduction of this project, I suggested that adherence to current teaching models would not be sufficient to address the psychological, social, and cultural climate of today. Re-vamping the educational formation of directors perhaps becomes one way to address this point. There is room for a general review, in the educational content of existing spiritual direction programs, across the board at the diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Implications for Clinical Soul Care Practitioners

The changes proposed in the education of spiritual directors could also accommodate the opening in the medical, clinical, and mental health fields, with the adoption of the BPSS – (Biopsychosocial Spiritual Model) as an assessment tool. The BPSS has created space at the table of patient care for spiritual directors. This speaks to a new type of trained integrated spiritual director that honours diverse ways of practicing. Palliative/Hospice care also requires spiritual care providers who can deliver a holistic, transcultural, comprehensive and patient centred approach. The change in numbers in the area of gerontology are real “on July 1 2015 for the first time there were more persons aged 65 years and older in Canada than children aged 0-14 years” (www.statcan.gc.ca (accessed April 2018)). We are stepping into the era of the greatest aging population – a season of great change. The inclusion of the spiritual in the clinical model will have an impact on the role of spiritual directors, soul care practitioners, chaplains, pastoral and clinical Christian counselling.

Implications for Ecumenical, Multi-faith and Secular communities

I submit to embrace the ‘otherness’ in others is within the accessibility of Christian spiritual direction. Through my experience, I have witnessed the all-inclusive generosity of the Holy Spirit. On many occasions, non-Christian opportunities have resulted in a welcoming response. Spiritual direction is a directee-initiated ministry. The directee seeks out, evaluates, (even amongst

Christians) and determines the suitability of the director before engaging their services. For this reason, directees have a preliminary understanding of the persuasion, and methods of the spiritual director. Additionally, directees can disengage the services of their directors at any time. The possibility of a Christian spiritual director as a director for a non-Christian directee is not a rarity. There are directors currently ministering in a variety of these non-traditional settings. Suzanne Buckley (2005) states that “those of us directors called to work across traditions need to be free to sit without agenda in service of the directee’s unfolding relationship with the Holy Mystery” (Buckley 2005, 162). I believe this idea of an eclectic accessibility to Christian spiritual direction to be controversial but plausible.

The SDI (Spiritual Directors International) founded in 1989 experienced a backlash when it changed its mandate to include and become a resource support to spiritual directors from all faiths and traditions. Their association “includes more than six thousand individuals on six continents who represent more than fifty spiritual traditions, from Anabaptists to Zen Buddhists” (www.sdiworld.org (accessed August 2018)). There are other traditions looking to cross the divide. Rabbi Howard Addison (2000) shares the way forward for spiritual direction would be to widen the net to receive not only interfaith directees but also non-believers. The Rabbi suggests we ought to find “a way to honor traditions and their ongoing practice while sensing God’s unique movement within, a way open

to long time believers and to those who have had little or no religious training” (Addison 2000, 20-21).

Vinita Wright (2005) presents a case for Christian spiritual direction to provide direction to those working in creative occupations. Wright makes a direct suggestion to working artists:

the guidance you need for your creative life, is similar to the guidance a spiritual director gives [who] are taught to get out of the way of what God is already doing in a person’s life while reflecting to you what you may not see clearly. (Wright 2005, 153)

The probabilities and implications for spiritual direction are evident. Whether I move into these different areas or not I believe the prompting will come from God’s invitation. Ephesians 2:10 reminds us “we were created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them”. Psalm 90:16 reinforces the truth that “God establishes our work”. As I begin “establishing” future practice opportunities, I leave the door open to my bringing the workshop to a secular, ecumenical, creative, or multi-faith community.

Future Research and Practice

I have devoted a significant portion of my model to the formative role of the somatic, through the inclusion of sacred movement within the expressive arts modules. Due to the time constraints of my research, I was unable to teach the scope of this module fully. In keeping with my specialized knowledge as a dance educator and therapist, I intend to expand on the sacred movement theories specifically within the practice of spiritual direction discussed here. As uncovered

through the research results, the sacred movement section required more detailed training than what I could accomplish as part of a day workshop. For these reasons, I would further expand the sacred movement section into a workshop or course offering more in-depth specialized training. I would include and expand on the topics of sacred movement, embodied prayer and the psychotherapeutic dance therapy theories that provide evidence to support the body as a container for trauma and negative emotions (Rothschild 2000; Levine 2010; van der Kolk 2014). I would offer this as a separate workshop module.

I have launched and taught this project with the construct that we pull revelation through the exploration of the ordinary – the pedestrian. We use ordinary images, to stoke the divine within; secular poetry can reach in to pique the soul like holy texts. This also translates to our encounters with movement as described in the *Living in the Stream* course instructions. The ordinary in movement – standing, sitting, and walking – are functional movements common to our everyday use. I conscript the pedestrian ordinary items as vehicles, conduits for the voice of God. Wright (2005) confirms creative, “engagement involves living in the moment or finding God in the ordinary and the ordinary regularly opens up to become extraordinary. This is just one-way creativity enhances the spiritual life” (Wright 2005, 33).

I intend to produce future written work in conjunction with expanding into multi-media as an audiovisual teaching tool. This will better facilitate explanations; provide live demonstrations during both workshop, and post

workshop use. There is a continued opportunity to add to the paucity of information, literature, and lack of research in this underdeveloped area.

Salient to spiritual formation models is the need to assess the accomplishments of the aim. I have used three qualifiers 1) the acceptance of theories as presented, 2) the ease of application, and 3) the adherence to the practices in the ongoing professional development of the spiritual director. Results to support the first two aims are included in the research. In future research, I will include a follow-up section to determine if directors continue to use the skills taught post workshop. I affirm a new model can only provide a springboard, the place where we begin. It is my hope that I continue to develop these theories into ongoing professional development courses or ideally create a required course in the formal practical training programs for spiritual directors.

Final Considerations

As I consider the future, I do so through the lens of the Tyndale Seminary, Doctor of Ministry objectives: 1) personal spiritual growth and practice, 2) academic study of spirituality and 3) the ministry of spiritual formation. I reflect on the longevity of these commitments and hold them as ongoing aspirations. My formation includes spiritual growth, academic study, and being involved in the ministry of spiritually forming others. I achieved this doctoral project through the generosity of the Doctor of Ministry spiritual formation program who provided a supportive container to hold the contents of my very individualized project. A team of like-minded God loving educators, and gifted cohort members taught,

equipped, and enabled my steps in this journey. I began a project with a premise that centred on knowing creativity to be an “action-oriented process that encourages new behaviors and symbolically communicates hidden emotions, releases anxiety, and serves as a vehicle to integrate body, mind, and spirit” (Loman 2005, 68). To see this premise come to fruition becomes an enormous realization of God’s divine *aleatoria* in directing me to Tyndale.

To shape the conclusion of this project, I embrace these words, from Habakkuk 2:2-3a: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so they may run who read it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time”. I have written a resource for those who are engaged in the practice of spiritual direction. I have cast a vision for an integrated approach to spiritual formation that argues for the expressive arts, and supporting cognitive theories to be included within the ministry of spiritual direction. I engaged in this project as I believed, and the research has shown that within the current re-imagining climate of the practice of spiritual direction this could be the appointed time.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A:
Supervision Approval**

Re:
project
supervisor

From: Ouida Pihulyk (ouida@rogers.com)

To: Bhaycraf@tyndale.ca;

Date: Friday, August 26, 2016 12:33 PM

Thanks Barb much appreciated! We can connect about scheduling later.

O

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

From: "Barbara Haycraft" <Bhaycraf@tyndale.ca>
Date: Fri, Aug 26, 2016 at 12:23 PM
Subject: project supervisor

Hi Ouida,

I checked with both Paul and Markand they said this would be minimal work for me . . . but we do need to meet sometimes for accountability. So, yes,

I will do this for you and with you,

Barb

APPENDIX B:
Permission to access Practicum Participants

Copy of email: Barb Haycraft
Date: Oct 19 2016

Good morning Ouida,
The Practicums have supervision this week, not class. Next week is the seminary reading week so there is no class. The next class day is Nov 2nd. You would be welcome to have a few minutes with them (8:30 class and 2:15 class) to invite them to participate.
Barb

Barbara Haycraft, DMIN
Director, Tyndale Spiritual Formation Centre
3377 Bayview Ave, Toronto, ON M2M 3S4

**APPENDIX C:
TASD Invitation Letter**

Susan Murphy <susan@smurphland.com>

To

mchapman@tyndale.ca

CC

liveandmove@rogers.com

10/20/16 at 2:26 PM

Dear Mark,

This is an email to confirm to you that at our Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors (TASD) board meeting on June 2, 2016, the TASD board members agreed and approved Ouida Pihulyk's request to have her invitation to our TASD members to participate in her D.Min. research study included in our next members' e-newsletter.

If you wish any further information on this board approval please feel free to contact me at susan@smurphland.com / 905-201-0563.

Blessings,

Susan Murphy


**APPENDIX D:
Permission and Booking for Alumni Hall,
Tyndale Seminary**

Copy of email: Blessan Cherian: Date: Oct 21 16


Hi Ouida

I have made a booking for you for November 5th. Thank you for confirming the details.

Regards Blessan

	<p style="text-align: center;">Campus Services Tyndale University College & Seminary 3377 Bayview Ave. Toronto, ON M2M 3S4 416-226-6620 / 416-226-6746</p>												
Confirmation													
Customer Ouida Pihulyk D.Min 3377 Bayview Ave Toronto, ON M2M 3S4 Canada	Reservation: 39504 Event Name: Ouida Pihulyk Status: Wait List Phone: 2138												
Bookings / Details D.Min D.Min Spiritual Directors research	<table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"></th> <th style="text-align: right; font-weight: normal;">Quantity</th> <th style="text-align: right; font-weight: normal;">Price</th> <th style="text-align: right; font-weight: normal;">Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="4">Saturday, November 12, 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Ouida Pihulyk (Confirmed-Internal) BAY 200 - A211</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Quantity	Price	Amount	Saturday, November 12, 2016				8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Ouida Pihulyk (Confirmed-Internal) BAY 200 - A211			
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Saturday, November 12, 2016													
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Ouida Pihulyk (Confirmed-Internal) BAY 200 - A211													
Invoice Copy 1 - Customer Invoice Copy 2 - Business Office Invoice Copy 3 - Campus Services													
Statement of Community Standards and Expectations:													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We welcome you to Tyndale University College & Seminary Guest Room Residence. Although you are a guest on our campus for a short time, you will be staying among our permanent residents. It is important that we maintain consistency in our expectations for those who stay on our campus. Our residence provides a place for prayer, study, and fellowship in an atmosphere of Christian discipline and community. Therefore, as a guest of Tyndale we expect the following standard of conduct to be carried out by everyone. • Tyndale is declared an alcohol-free, drug-free, smoke-free campus. All students, staff, faculty, residents and guests are expected to refrain from the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco while on campus. Possession of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on campus. • Tyndale reserves the right to charge any guest the amount of \$100.00 fine accordingly, for any non-returned or lost Guest Room Keys (changed door locks required) or Security Access cards. • Tyndale reserves the right to refuse admission or to dismiss/remove guests who in school's assessment are not in compliance with Tyndale community standards by way of action or attitude or who have not paid in advance for their overnight accommodation. • At least 50% security deposit on hold is required to reserve and confirm the booking. This security deposit is not charged unless there has not been proper cancellation notice. The full payment for the booking is due upon arrival and check-in. • Cancellation Policy: Cancellation notice of at least 5 days before date of check-in of guest room is required. Should cancellation occur for any booked guest room within 5 business days of arrival, the guest is required to pay for the outstanding balance for loss of business. 													
As a guest of Tyndale, I have read and agree to the above standards and expectations and will abide by them.													
Key # _____ - _____ Security Access Card _____													
10/21/2016 12:13 PM	Page 1 of 2												

APPENDIX E: Holman Insurance Policy Coverage

	Professional and General Liability Policy Effected with certain Lloyd's Underwriters (the Insurers) through Lloyd's approved Coverholder: Holman Insurance Brokers Ltd. 3100 Steeles Ave East Suite 101 Markham, Ontario L3R 8T3 (Defined herein as "THE COVERHOLDER")
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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

- NEW** - The Insurer will provide the insurance described in the Policy in return for the premium paid by the insured and his compliance with the terms of this insurance.
- ENDORSEMENT** - Previous declarations, limits of insurance and coverages are now cancelled and replaced or amended as shown herein. Any coverage wordings, notes or endorsements attached herein will replace the corresponding previous wordings.
- RENEWAL** - In return for the agreement of the insured to pay the premium stated this insurance Policy is continued in force for the period of insurance indicated. It is renewed subject to the limits of insurance and declarations shown herein. Should coverage wordings, riders or endorsements be attached hereto, they will replace the corresponding previous wordings. Otherwise all terms and conditions remain the same.

THIS IS A "CLAIMS MADE" POLICY, PLEASE READ YOUR POLICY CAREFULLY

POLICY DECLARATION

For the purpose of the Insurance Companies Act (Canada), this document was issued in the course of Lloyd's Underwriters' insurance business in Canada. The Insured is requested to read this policy, and if incorrect, return it immediately to the Coverholder whose name and address appears above, for attention. In the event of a claim or a circumstance likely to give rise to a claim under this insurance (or other such request for indemnity hereunder), immediate notice should be given to the Coverholder. All inquiries and disputes are also to be addressed to the Coverholder. The Application submitted by the Insured to Insurers shall be the basis of, and be incorporated into, this policy, and shall be considered a warranty with respect to the information provided by the Insured and contained therein.

Policy Number:
Name of Insured:
Mailing Address:
Policy Period:

Professional Services Rendered: Spiritual Therapy/Direction, Dance Movement Therapy, Expressive Arts Therapy, as per application dated October 27, 2016
Professional Membership: Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors - TASD
Retrospective Date: November 1, 2016

As a condition precedent to the right to be indemnified under this policy the Insured undertakes that the Premium will be paid in full to the Coverholder prior to the inception of this policy. The Insurers agree to provide the insurance as stated in this policy, subject to all its terms, conditions, limitations and exclusions.

Limit of Liability	\$1,000,000	Any One Claim, Including Defence Costs & Expenses. And
Policy Aggregate	\$2,000,000	In the Aggregate For All Claims During The Policy Period
Deductible	\$1,000	Each and Every Claim
Premium	\$100	MINIMUM RETAINED PREMIUM 100%

THIS INSURANCE POLICY CONSISTS OF THIS POLICY DECLARATION PAGE ALONG WITH THE COVERAGE WORDINGS, RIDERS AND ENDORSEMENTS ATTACHED HERETO AS FOLLOWS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| AGO Canadian Therapy Policy Wording 2014
Biological or Chemical Material Exclusion - NMA2583
Electronic Data Exclusion - NMA 2315
Electronic Data Recognition Exclusion (EDRE) - NMA2760
Emergent Exclusion (Abuse) - LMA5018 | Radioactive - Contamination Exclusion Clause - Physical Damage direct - NMA1181
Sanction Limitation and Exclusion Clause - LMA3100
War and Terrorism Exclusion Endorsement - NMA2018
Lloyd's Notice Concerning Parasitic Inclusion LSW1544
Lloyd's Underwriters' Policyholders' Complaint Protocol LSW1542C
Lloyd's Underwriters' Code of Consumer Rights and Responsibilities - LSW165C |
|---|---|

IDENTIFICATION OF INSURERS/ACTION AGAINST INSURERS

This insurance has been effected in accordance with the authorization granted to the Coverholder by the Underwriting Members of the Syndicates whose distinctive numbers and proportions are shown in the Table attached to the Policy No. indicated on the face hereof (hereinafter referred to as "the Insurers"). The Insurers shall be liable hereunder each for his own part and not one for another in proportion to the several sums that each of them has subscribed to the said Policy. In any action to enforce the obligations of the Insurers can be designated or named as "Lloyd's Underwriters" and such designation shall be binding on the Insurers as if they had each been individually named as defendant. Service of such proceedings may validly be made upon the Attorney in Fact in Canada for Lloyd's Underwriters, whose address for such service is 1155, rue Metcalfe, Suite 2025, Montreal (Quebec) H3R 2Y6.

Notice

Any notice to the Insurers may be validly given to the Coverholder. Contract #707418 UMRS1033DR16971500

Its witness whereof this policy has been signed, as authorized by the Insurers, by:

Per: _____

 Holman Insurance Brokers Ltd.

Print Date: November 7, 2016

**APPENDIX F:
Participant Invitation Letter**

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

RESEARCH WORKING TITLE:

Engaging Spiritual Directors from the community of Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors in a spiritual formation experiential case study: Designing, facilitating and evaluating a teaching module to develop competencies in the use of the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction

PARTICIPANTS: Spiritual Directors and Practicum Students training to become Spiritual Directors

RESEARCHER: Rev. Ouida Pihulyk is a Tyndale graduate. A Spiritual Director and a current member of the board of the T ASD. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in Dance from York University and has been practising with the Arts in Spiritual Direction for many years.

PURPOSE: The research being conducted will form part of the analysis of Ouida's D.MIN (Doctor of Ministry) in Spiritual Formation Action Research Project.

Seeking to determine the prevalence of the use of the arts amongst Spiritual Directors

To gather narratives from those currently using the arts as to their experience

To design, facilitate and evaluate a training module to develop competencies in the expressive arts specifically for spiritual directors

To evaluate the impact of the workshop course to the spiritual director's practice

DEFINITION: The expressive arts can include a variety of artistic modalities – music, visual, literary and movement arts. The distinction is in the integrated versus the singular use of these themes in practice

METHOD: The research involves two (2) sections of participant involvement

Participation is voluntary

Participation in both parts one (1) and two (2) is not mandatory

Participation in Part one (1) is not a pre-requisite for Part two (2)

Participants can indicate if they are willing to engage in either section or both

Part 1) Participants will be asked to complete a short anonymous on-line survey. Questions will primarily seek to determine a spiritual director's: knowledge, use and experiences with the expressive arts

Part 2) Expressive Arts and Spiritual formation – 1-Day Workshop

- Participants will be asked to attend a day workshop on the Expressive Arts and Spiritual formation
- The workshop will cover psychological, theoretical and theological discussions on the use of the arts in spiritual formation
- The workshop will involve experiential – hands on and spiritual – engagement in spiritual direction
- Participants will minister one to one or within a group setting
- Facilitator will teach how to engage these methods together with scripture and the expressive arts

Part 3) Participants will be asked to fill out an on-line post workshop survey

Part 4) Participants will be asked to include at their discretion within their own practices: one, some or all of the methods learned. This will be conducted over a set period of time after which a final on-line survey will be completed to record the directee's response.

Subsequent questionnaires – Dates TBD

Anticipated Date(s): Part 1 survey and Part 2 Workshop will be October to November 2016.

Location: The workshop location is TBD high probability Toronto, Ontario Canada area

Workshop Notes:

- Due to the nature of the workshop it will be limited to a maximum of ten (10) attendees
- Media consent is required as some portions of the workshop may be audio/video recorded
- The sacred movement section requires physical mobility

Costs and fees: There will be no fee for attending the workshop and no costs for the workshop manual or materials.

Confidentiality: All directees comments submitted for section 4 should be coded to maintain anonymity

Questions, Comments or if you would like to complete a survey or participate in the workshop please email Ouida at: liveandmove@rogers.com

RESEARCH TITLE: *Engaging Spiritual Directors in a spiritual formation experiential case study: Designing, facilitating and evaluating a teaching module*

to develop competencies in the use of the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction.

RESEARCHER: Rev. Ouida Pihulyk is a Pastor and a spiritual director. A current member on the board of the T ASD (Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors). Ouida has a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in Dance from York University. In addition, she holds a graduate degree – (MTS) Masters of Theological Studies with a concentration in Spiritual Formation from Tyndale Seminary and is currently a DMIN candidate in the Tyndale Doctor of Ministry – Spiritual Formation track.

PARTICIPANTS: Spiritual Directors and Practicum Students training to become Spiritual Directors

PURPOSE: The research being conducted will form part of the analysis of Ouida's DMIN (Doctor of Ministry) in Spiritual Formation Action Research Project.

This research

- Primarily seeks to answer the question *Can the role of the expressive arts when used as an intentional and directed tool within spiritual direction yield a positive impact on spiritual formation?*
- Will determine the current ethos amongst the spiritual direction community towards the understanding, inclusion and implementation of the expressive arts to the practice of spiritual direction.
- Will gather narratives from both the practitioners and student directors as to their training, education and experience with the use of the expressive arts within spiritual direction
- Will evaluate the impact of the expressive arts methods learned in the workshop within the practice of the participants

Definition (s):

The expressive arts include a variety of artistic methods and their derivatives: – music, visual, literary and the movement arts. There are two key distinctions that set apart the expressive arts from art therapies and the worship arts

1. Art therapies for example, art and or music therapy are studied and certified as singular therapies. The expressive arts therapists differ in that they favour an integrated multi-disciplined approach i.e. the use of more than one artistic modality at a time
2. The expressive arts while similar in nature to the worship arts differ in the intent. The latter broadly seeks to enjoin participants together in

common worship. The expressive arts are intentionally and prayerfully utilized by the director in concert with the Holy Spirit and through the engagement of scripture as a discernment tool.

The distinct use of the expressive arts in the practice of spiritual formation is that the artistry acts as a conduit to assist the facilitator to guide the participant to seek, see and hear the voice of God through the use of the artistic methods.

Therapist versus practitioner

The study of the Expressive Arts and Spiritual formation is an emerging conversation. The historical research and current dialogue are largely generated by psychotherapeutic practices. As such, the term therapist is common throughout the literature, quotes, and discourse used. It is noted that spiritual directors are not therapists and do not practice within the definition of psychotherapy. The term expressive arts practitioner is generally preferred when addressing the use of the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction

What you will be asked to do in the research:

Part 1. Participants are invited to complete a short on-line survey. Questions will primarily seek to determine a spiritual director's: knowledge, prior use, experiences and attitudes concerning using the expressive arts within the practice of spiritual direction

Part 2. Expressive Arts and Spiritual formation Day Workshop
Participants are asked to attend a day workshop on the Expressive Arts and spiritual formation

The workshop will cover psychological, theoretical and theological discussions on the use of the arts in spiritual formation. the workshop will involve experiential – hands on and spiritual – engagement in spiritual direction
Facilitator will teach six (6) different expressive arts methods.
Focus will be on: how to integrate the methods, engage activities together with scripture and how to respond to the Directee within the process

Participants will operate in the role of a spiritual director: one to one or within a group setting

Part 3. Participants will be asked to fill out a post workshop survey

Part 4. Participants will be asked to include at their discretion within their own practices: one, some or all of the methods learned. This will be conducted over a set period of time after which a final on-line survey will be completed to record the results of the Directors

Procedures

This research will collate and analyze the data from a two-part inquiry. Participation in both parts is not mandatory. Participants can indicate if they are willing to engage in either section or both. Participation in Part 1 is not a pre-requisite for Part 2.

DATES: Part 1 on-line survey will be uploaded November 1st 2016 an email link will be sent to participants

Part 2 Workshop will be held at Tyndale Seminary Bayview Ave Alumni Hall Saturday November 12 2016. 9am to 4pm

Post Practice survey – Return date TBD

Workshop: Due to the nature of the workshop it will be limited to a maximum of ten (10) attendees.

Note: The sacred movement section requires a certain degree of physical mobility

Costs and fees:

There will be no fee levied for attending the workshop and no costs for the workshop manual or materials used in the session.

Risks and discomforts:

There are no anticipated risks associated with engagement in this research. Research section 2 b) Expressive Arts Workshop does include a self- directed movement portion. Comfort level will be gauged by participant and can be stopped at will if discomfort is apparent,

Benefits of the research and benefits to you:

This research will benefit those practitioners involved in nurturing the spirituality of others. The research discussion will inform and uncover attitudes, omissions, insights and needs as they pertain to the use of the expressive arts as a means of transformational change in spiritual formation. Analysis and supportive data will be both applicable and practical while adding an educational value to the practice.

Voluntary participation and Withdrawal from the study:

Your participation in the research is completely voluntary
Participants may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason.

Confidentiality:

Will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

The directees identifying information submitted by Spiritual Directors for the survey section 2c should be removed prior to submission to maintain anonymity

All identifying details for research participants will be removed. Pseudonyms or alpha-numeric codes will be substituted unless consent to remove anonymity is given.

Researcher's notes, video/audio recordings, photographs and digital data will be stored securely by the researcher. The researcher alone retains and holds access and availability to the stored data. Data will not be destroyed after the study. The researcher will also retain archive control of all the material collected.

Copies of the completed analysis and final written results for this Research project will be placed in library circulation, library archives, DMIN office and TREN.

Approvals: This research has been reviewed and approved by the Doctor of Ministry faculty and the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, Tyndale University and Seminary Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines.

**APPENDIX G:
Phases and Timetable**

Phases	Dates:	Approvals	Action
2016			
Preparatory	May		Completion of Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics (PRE) Course on Research Ethics (CORE) based on the <i>Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2)</i>
	June		Developed a contact list for relevant personnel concerning access, supervision and required permissions Began Workshop design and expressive arts modules
		June 16	TCPS Completion Certificate
	July		Began to source location space for workshop
Active	August		Peer review of Project proposal
		Aug 26	Supervisor: Prof Barb Haycraft
	September		Created research invites/consent forms/on-line survey
	October		Completed REB and submitted application
		Oct 11	Approval: REB Research Project approved Oct 6: Auditorium booked
	Nov		Nov 2: Speak at Practicum class x 2 Recruit Email: Info/Consents-2wks before Workshop Workshop prep: supplies/Food/PP/Manual
		Nov 12	Workshop 9-3pm Auditorium Tyndale
Analysis	Nov		Participants: Take away Supply kits Emailed: log sheet/resource list/links
2017			
			Code: Post workshop evaluation Data Analysis and Coding Part 1

Phases	Dates:	Approvals	Action
Write Report	Jan		Prepare Peer review Report
			1 st extension to Participants to Feb
	Feb		2 nd extension to Mar 15th
			Delay due to participants office closures in Dec. Restart SD
			Implement: Jan-March
	March		Follow-up email: Final call for log sheets
			Analysis/Coding/Write up final report
	March		17th: Final deadline 7 Participants
			Log sheets received
	Mar – May		Begin Coding & Analysis of Data
June – July		Complete Final Coding/Analysis//Write final Report	
August		Project completion due	

**APPENDIX H:
Parts 2 to 4:
Participants Consents**

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I [Click here to enter text.](#) , consent to participate in The Expressive Arts and Spiritual Formation Workshop study facilitated by Ouida Russea-Pihulyk. I, have read the information letter and understood the nature of this Doctor in Ministry Action Research project and agree to participate. By signing this form, I am not waiving any of my legal rights. My signature below indicates my consent to participate:

Signature: _____ **Date:** [Click here to enter a date.](#) _____

Participant Name: [Click here to enter text.](#) _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** [Click here to enter a date.](#) _____

Principal Investigator Name: Ouida Russea Pihulyk

Additional consent(s)

I understand that video, audio recordings and digital photographs may form part of the analysis and as such will be included in the final research document. The analysis will be viewed by select members of the Tyndale Seminary dissertation academic panel. The final Research project will be placed in library circulation, library archives, DMIN office and TREN.

I authorize the researcher to videotape and or audio tape the conversation/interview or my workshop participation

Signature: _____ **Date:** [Click here to enter a date.](#) _____

Participant Name: [Click here to enter text.](#) _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** [Click here to enter a date.](#) _____

Principal Investigator Name: Ouida Russea Pihulyk

I authorize the researcher to photograph my participation

Signature: _____ **Date:** Click here to enter a date.

Participant Name: Click here to enter text.

Signature: _____ **Date:** Click here to enter a date.

Principal Investigator Name: Ouida Russea Pihulyk

I waive my rights to anonymity

Signature: _____ **Date:** Click here to enter a date.

Participant Name: Click here to enter text.

Signature: _____ **Date:** Click here to enter a date.

Principal Investigator Name: Ouida Russea Pihulyk

Additional Questions or Comments can be directed to

Researcher: Ouida Russea-Pihulyk at liveandmove@rogers.com

or

Dr. Mark Chapman Project Research Coordinator & Assistant Professor of
Research Methods Tyndale Seminary mchapman@tyndale.ca

or

The research ethics board at reb@tyndale.ca

APPENDIX I:
Part 1:
Typeform® On-line Questionnaire

1. Are you familiar with the use of creative arts within the practice of Spiritual Direction?
 Yes No If No skip to Question 7

2. If so what types of creative arts do you have experience with?

Music Visual Arts Literary Arts Movement Arts

3. Do you personally use the creative arts in your current practice?
 Yes No If No skip to Question 7

4. What is your personal motivation for incorporating the creative arts into your practice?

Comment

5. How have your Directees responded to the injection of the arts within a session

Comment

6. In what particular area of Spiritual Direction do you find the use of the creative arts particularly effective?

Check all that apply Uncovers the voice of God / Reveals an answer to prayer /
Discovers a new Prayer focus / Helps to unblock/re-direct sessions / Creates a bridge
for communication / Opens up Dialogue / Adds Variety / Not Applicable

7. What type of training in the creative arts would be of benefit to you?
Check all that apply Specialized training Resources Certification

8. How long have you been a Spiritual Director? Years _____ For Practicum students enter '0'

The following questions are optional, they help to categorize the research

9. Do you want to declare your gender? M or F

10. What is your Church affiliation or denomination:

11. Which range includes your age _____ 25-24 _____ 25-44 _____ 45 – over

12. ***Please add additional comments you may have on this topic here.***

APPENDIX J:
Part 3:
Workshop Evaluation Form

Workshop Name: Engaging Spiritual Directors in an experiential workshop case study on: The Expressive Arts & Spiritual Formation_____

Location: Alumni Hall at Tyndale Seminary____

Participant Name (optional): _____

INSTRUCTIONS

Please circle your response to the items. Rate aspects of the workshop on a 1 to 5

Ordinal scale:

1 = “Strongly disagree,” or the lowest, most negative impression

2 = “Disagree”

3 = “Neither agree nor disagree,” or an adequate impression

4 = “Agree”

5 = “Strongly agree,” or the highest, most positive impression

Choose N/A if the item is not appropriate or not applicable to this workshop.

Your feedback is sincerely appreciated. Thank you

WORKSHOP CONTENT (Circle your response to each item.)

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neither agree nor disagree 4= Agree

5= Strongly agree N/A= Not applicable

I was well informed about the objective of this workshop

1 2 3 4 5 N/A

This workshop lived up to my expectations. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The content is relevant to my ministry. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The manual & materials provided helped. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

WORKSHOP DESIGN (Circle your response to each item.)

The workshop objectives were clear to me. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The workshop activities stimulated my learning 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The activities in this workshop gave me sufficient practice and feedback.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The difficulty level of this workshop was appropriate. 1 2 3 4 5

N/A

The pace of this workshop was appropriate. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR (FACILITATOR)

(Circle your response to each item.)

The instructor was well prepared. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The instructor was helpful. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

WORKSHOP RESULTS (Circle your response to each item.)

I accomplished the objectives of this workshop 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

I will be able to use what I learned in this workshop 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

SELF-PACED DELIVERY (Circle your response to each item.)

The workshop was a good way for me to learn this content 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

How would you improve this workshop (*Check all that apply*)?

____ Provide more information before the workshop. _____

____ Clarify the workshop objectives. _____

**APPENDIX K:
Part 4:
Post Workshop Data Collection**

		Expressive Art Modules						Integrated Methods: Tick all that apply Pick: 1 of 3 from choices					
2016	Directee's Pseudonym	Blackout Poetry -	Soularium	Rosebush Narrative	Memoir: Antique Photos	Community Garden	Sacred Movement	Scripture	Music	Literary: Creative writing, poetry	Art Making	INITIAL RESPONSE	The Expressive Arts and Spiritual Direction
		1	2	3	4	5	6	A	B	C	D		Comments
2016-11-22	SD1-Sample	X						X	X	X	X	Well Received	<i>Sample : Explanation for selections & Comments . EA mode used = Mode 1- Blackout Poetry. Integrations = scripture/music/Creative writing. Pull 1 of 3 choices from the initial response drop down menu. Explain how the exercise transpired. What the process was like for the Directee, your aesthetic response. Any difficulties, concerns or positive outcomes. It is Ok to provide lots of details. If you need to add a comment sheet just put the Directees pseudonym so I can match the exercise to the name</i>
2016-11-17	SD1-In-vivo example	X						X	X	X		Some Resistance	
2016-11-25	SD2- in-vivo example			X					X		X	Some Resistance	<i>Celtic Prayer Music and art making. Directee mentioned they are not creative, so we did the Model Magic exercise and directee enjoyed it. But directee still had reservations about using paint and paintbrush to create rosebush painting. While music is playing in the background, directee is painting their rosebush. When they are done, I begin to ask the suggested questions regarding their rosebush, e.g. the kind of rosebush they are, where they are located, what's around them, who takes care of the rosebush, if people are visiting them, if insects and animals come to visit, what color they are, if they have thorns, and how healthy are their roots and leaves. The directee was able to recognize God's care for the rosebush/them, and that the rosebush/they are healthy/spiritually healthy overall but there are still some parts that need to be tended to (such as some brown leaves).</i>
2016-12-07	SD3- in-vivo example		X					X	X			Well Received	<i>Listened to "Seasons Change" song first and read Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 before starting the Soularium exercise. Directee said they are very visual, so this type of exercise suits them. The card directee picked reminded them of a recent episode in their life and their current circumstance. This tied in well with the song and the Scripture passage they had just heard. Directee had a lot to talk about from just that one card and it was a joy to see how God was using this exercise to affirm and direct the directee over a recent situation in their life.</i>
Totals	SUMMARY >>												

**APPENDIX M:
Living in the Stream Manual**



David Middleton "Isle of Skye" 2017 ca

Ouida Pihulyk

Living in the Stream

A Manual for Soul Care Practitioners:
Expressive Arts and the Formational
Reading of Scripture

LIVING IN THE STREAM: A MANUAL FOR SOUL CARE PRACTITIONERS

Living in the Stream: A six – session curriculum enhancing the formational reading of scripture in spiritual direction via the complementary use of the Expressive Arts.

OBJECTIVES

This manual supports the *Living in the Stream* workshop. Facilitators will gain an understanding using the expressive arts and spiritual formation.

Introductory workshop participants learn how to incorporate six expressive arts exercises together with the word of God

Experiential hands on interactive workshop

Formational training on how the inclusion of scripture as a conduit for the voice of God informs, and transforms us

Integrative and Complementary use of scripture and the integration of the expressive arts as they intertwine with music, sacred readings, poetry, wordless journaling, collage, and somatic movement.

ANTICIPATED AUDIENCE: TRAINERS, LEADERS, WORKSHOP AND RETREAT FACILITATORS

- Spiritual Directors
- Ministry Leaders
- Christian Coaches
- Christian Educators
- Christian Counsellors
- Wellness Practitioners
- Psychotherapists
- Expressive Arts Facilitators
- Soul Care Providers
- Christian Counsellors

FACILITATORS INSTRUCTIONS

- This course is a teach the teacher training module
- It is largely inferred that course participants have previous knowledge of spiritual formation and some practical training or experience in the area of soul care
- Knowledge of the Spiritual Disciplines, Contemplative Practices and the traditions of Monastic soul care will be a definite asset
- A proficient facility in: Prayer, Contemplation, Centering, Holy listening and discerning the voice of God is expected

- Although this is an experiential, practical hands on, and movement course- artistic dexterity or expertise in any particular art form while helpful is not a pre-requisite or a requirement
- Emphasis is on the process not the end product

WORKSHOP

- **Expressive arts modules:** Choosing and learning to integrate modules
- **Emphasis:** Course is process focussed not end product oriented
- **Instruction style:** Part lecture, Q & A sections, and assigned tasks
- **Mode:** A mix of small and large groupings
- **Physicality:** A combination of seated, standing and movement work will be used
- **Engagement:** All participants will engage in the expressive arts practices presented in the session
- **Noticing:** Learning to recognize how the expressive arts connect
- **Reflection:** the roles of group convenor, responder, companion and closing prayer will be rotated
- **Post workshop:** Participants are encouraged to listen for opportunities to integrate these practices in session

NOTE:

- The contents are suggested examples
- Change Prayer, focus statements, centering exercises, images, and more importantly scriptures to suit each facilitator focus and requirements as prompted by the Holy Spirit via prayerful considerations

COMMON GROUND

COMMON GROUND: ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

The Bible: Our primary source is the Word of God

The Bible is a compendium of sacred narratives about and for God's people, containing God's desirous hope for humanity. The truth embodied in His son Jesus. Who undergirded by unconditional love gave up life sacrificially for others. Why? In order that: believers can live a relational life with God and, other people. Showing and sharing Agape love through the prompting of the Holy Spirit and engaging in the practice of divine hospitality.

The Holy Spirit: Our primary conduit

Exclusive role of the Holy Spirit as our teacher, comforter and guide
(John 14:16-18)

What are we asking from the word of God?

When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as you can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent. Exodus 16:15-16

Each person receives from the word of God (the bread) what the Holy Spirit intends

LECTIO DIVINA 7 STAGE METHOD

COMMON GROUND: A FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORK

1. *Lectio* – reading
2. *Meditatio* – meditation
3. *Oratio* – praying
4. *Contemplatio* – contemplation
5. *Operatio* – action
6. *Tentatio* – struggle
7. *Statio* – intentional space between two actions

WORKING DEFINITION:

Lectio Divina, which literally means divine reading, is a process of formational reading that emphasizes a slow dwelling with the text (Wilhoit and Howard 2012, 18).

This definition from *Discovering Lectio Divina: Bringing Scripture into Ordinary Life* offered by Wilhoit and Howard (2012) allows for less rigidity in the practice and becomes the favoured working definition for this course. This definition provides creative flexibility by including three notable variables not widely utilized in many practices of *lectio divina* the order of stages is not formulaic:

though they form a logical order they may happen in any order or simultaneously” The idea of Operatio – the action that lectio divina can ignite the truth of Tentatio – the struggle – the push and pull that lectio divina provokes in us (Wilhoit and Howard 2012, 18)

Lectio divina will provide the framework used to surround and ground each session. Continuing to pull from the Benedictine traditions, I include a seventh stage – *Statio* – the intentional time between two actions. This stage allows for building moments for stopping and reflecting. This amalgamation of stages develops the flow and the interconnectedness of the expressive arts and the engagement of scripture

COMMON GROUND: ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

The inherent power of scripture: Specific, precise, malleable and lingering

- **It will be specific to the receiver:** Within the group each will eat what they gather . . . “Gather the bread according to each household” a personalized quantity of truth
- **It will be surgically precise:** Direct to the issue, concern or question For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12-14
- **It will be malleable:** this is the prerogative of the Word. The same scripture can morph to each person and each situation and release fresh understanding in this season even if it met needs in another way last season
- **It will be lingering fragrance:** There will be both a real time interpretation and a marinating quality to the word of God – it continues to tenderize and impact the soul as it lingers long after receiving the word 2Corinthians 2:15-16

WE BRING OUR EXPECTANCY: A DIVINE PERCOLATOR

- A heart and mind focussed in prayerful expectancy will yield results- Answers become apparent – confusion gives way to clarity. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (James 4:8)

“LIVING IN THE STREAM” SESSION GUIDELINES

This chart provides a common overview applicable for each session

Guidelines

Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator covers all the necessary comfort requirements• Determines: Seating, standing and/or movement area• Distributes: Hand- outs, supplies and any equipment required for session• Agenda-time line discussed
Session Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator explains the W5: Who, What, Where, When and How of the session• Facilitator answers any questions, concerns
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• determines if a mini-break is necessary before the session begins• Facilitator centres and directs the group by beginning the session with prayer• Release the participants from things that would hinder the voice of God
Convening Prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very important to bring cohesion to the group pray for unity, that the word of God would have its course• Pray that the bread would be broken and distributed according to each need• While it is not necessary to add a focus statement to sessions as the scripture is the main focus it can help those who require a launch-pad a concrete prompt to use when they begin to engage with the scripture
Focus Statement (s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus Statement(s) should be brief, clear and concise. The focus statement is read only once• Questions to ponder can also form part of a focus statement but these should be a limited number• What is the most pressing question you have for God right now?
Key Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator reads or presents the scripture according to the session type• Lectio Divina and imaginative contemplation the scripture will usually be read 3 times

Guidelines

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Moment(s) of Silence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For all other sessions, the scripture can be on screen, read aloud, or given to the participant to read as they engage in expressing the outcome through the art form chosen• Facilitator will ensure that there are observable moments of silence weaved in to the sessions• Most sessions will take place in silence however in group art-making, journaling and collage silence is not mandated• Facilitator should bring the group to silence prior to the reflection phase |
| Moment(s) of Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants will be asked to individually briefly share their experience, insights and any pertinent results gleaned from the session• Facilitator: Instructs that only those who want to share do so – this is a voluntary step• Participants: will be asked to encourage others if the Lord has given them a subsequent word to share with the responder or any further discernment |
| Companioning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator: Instructs the group to all listen in Holy attention to what the spirit of God is saying• A response from group members is also only as prompted by the Holy Spirit – not a requirement• Be encouraging, offer words of wisdom and empathy without interpretation, correction or critique• Receive each person's sharing in quiet reverence discourage side chatter |
| Prayer for the Individual(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator prays for both the reflection and companion participants before moving on• This is repeated for each one who shares |
| Sealing the Session | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator uses a phrase to signify the close of sessions e.g. – “Amen”, “Thanks be to God”• Prays to close the session and for the group as a whole |

Guidelines

Debriefing the Session

- Ensuring what has been shared within the group and from the Word would be sealed in their hearts and that the Word would continue to have free rein to flourish in the hours, days weeks ahead until the fullness of the engagement would be revealed to them
- Prayer of protection or a Benediction
- Facilitator listens to participants feedback on how they experienced the session generally
- Any critiques or comments can be noted
- Allow room for general banter and discussion some may not have been ready to share in the reflection or companioning portions but will share in this section
- Important for the Facilitator to include this section in the timeline on the agenda
- Course evaluation forms (if used)

OUTLINE OF SESSIONS

Session 1 *Lectio Divina* – Divine Reading

Session 2 Imaginative Contemplation

Session 3 *Visio Divina* – Divine Visualization

Session 4 *Scribens Vocem Dei* – Writing the voice of God

Session 5 Prayer Collage – Wordless journaling

Session 6 a) Sacred Movement

Session 6 b) Course Conclusion

SESSION 1: LECTIO DIVINA - SACRED READINGS

SOURCE TEXTS:

Prayerfully choose a portion of scripture

Pray (*Oratio*) to begin,

Read (*Lectio*) the scripture three times

Pause (*Meditatio*) between each reading

Contemplation (*Contemplatio*) savour the image or words that come to mind.
Statio – after a timed period of silence or direction change, move to next stage of session

Operatio – Begin activation-artistic expression component of session.

CURRICULUM GUIDE CHART:

Facilitator Instructions

This session familiarizes the participants with the templates and demonstrates each session. The chart also becomes as an easy guide to follow when creating new sessions

Music, Sacred texts, poetry, and other writings of the facilitator's choice is included in these sessions. Do not use in place of scripture *Lectio Divina*: engage in one example session without art to bring the class to a common understanding of the practice

Closing and Reflection: Facilitator follow steps 7-12 on curriculum guide chart

SESSION 2: IMAGINATIVE CONTEMPLATION

The healing of the imagination by the imagination (Levine, 1997)

We understand “imagination is an important element in *lectio divina*. When the imagination responds to the Word, a storehouse of memories opens up to us. (Paintner and Wynkoop 2008, 37)

Gospel contemplation prompts us to use the gift of a sanctified imagination to unpack the word of God

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Participant will listen and imagine themselves in the gospel reading

- **Personal contextual frame:** As you settle and centre yourself in prayer, take notice of: your mood, state of mind about participating, religious constraints, or freedoms and the socio-cultural filters these will all bring something to bear on our ability to imagine, absorb and interpret the intention of the Holy Spirit
- **Choose a role:** Picking out a particular character, scene, sight, smell or sensation they will write about or draw their role in the story
- **Gospel contemplation:** can also be used for dramatic re-enactments or movement interpretations
- **Questions to ponder:** What did you see? Who were you in the story? What did you say? How did you feel?

FOCUS STATEMENT:

Become absorbed, fully immersed to allow your imagination to re-create and bring the narrative to life. Remembering that “Contemplative prayer . . . means paying attention to and becoming at least slightly absorbed in the person of Jesus, in God or in biblical persons or outstanding Christians” (Barry and Connolly 1982, 49)

Scripture: Acts 12:1-18- Facilitator reads three times

Closing and Reflection: Facilitator follow steps 7-12 on curriculum guide chart

SESSION 3: *VISIO DIVINA*- DIVINE VISUALIZATION

WORKING DEFINITION:

We will be reading biblical passages contemplatively and then looking prayerfully at visual representations of the stories . . . because we will be attending in this contemplative way to God, we will be practicing prayer (Benner 2011, 13)

Juliet Benner (2011) in *Contemplative Vision: A Guide to Christian Art and Prayer* underlines the contemplative aspect of praying with art. Benner introduces *Visio Divina*

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Provides instructions for *Visio Divina* portion

- Praying with art can include nature, objects, sculpture, and modern art
- There are also images that reflect and suggest emotions: joy, crying, grief, and anger
- Images do not necessarily have to be scenic, pretty, or benign
- Images that provoke and evoke emotions or show a negative narrative can often uncover surprising responses
- Participants receive a copy of the image
- As we view the image the scripture will be read 3 times
- Meditate and ponder on the image, the scripture and the focus statement
- What does the Holy Spirit bring to your heart?
- Try not to censor the voice within: remember or jot down what you hear

FOCUS STATEMENT

- As we enter into prayer let us reflect on our walk with God as it relates to our willingness and or our discomfort as we step out into the mystery of our next steps
- Margaret Silf in *Simple Faith* (2012) asks a self-reflective question: Am I yearning for certainty, or am I open to the risk of mystery? Is faith for me more like a journey of discovery, drawing me constantly beyond all my limited certainties and toward a mystery that will always lie beyond my understanding? (2012, 14)

Scripture Luke 3: 21-23a Christ's Baptism

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age . . .

The Baptism of Christ by Hermann Corrodi
(Italian, 1844-1905) accessed: allposters.ca, 2016



Closing and Reflection: Facilitator follow steps 7-12 on curriculum guide chart

SESSION 4: SCRIBENS VOCEM DEI-WRITING THE VOICE OF GOD

WORKING DEFINITION:

The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord is over many waters the voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.
Psalm 29:3-4

FACILITATORS INSTRUCTIONS:

This is a 2-part exercise

The voice of God so eloquently ascribed in Psalm 29 is indeed very powerful. In this session, we will experience the power and the majesty of God through our own writings.

“Writing is also a way to unburden yourself of negative thoughts-to spill them on the page-allowing you to move past them” (Lyubomirsky 2007, 112-124).

SUPPLIES:

Paper, pens, scroll paper, red ribbons and a basket or container

Part 1:

- Everyone anonymously writes either a personal favourite scripture or an encouraging thought that has been persistent with them over the past week
- This can be a scripture, a positive quote, or a line from a poem or a verse
- Write this on the scroll, tie the roll with the red ribbon provided and place it in the basket
- Do not share this information

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Keep basket with scrolls until end of session

Part 2:

Focus Question: What is the most pressing question you have for God at this time?

FACILITATOR:

Begin *Lectio* portion with Psalm 29 scripture read it three times, as they begin to engage in writing the voice of God

- **Intention:** Begin with a prayer of Intention as you pose this question

- **Anticipation:** Wait in expectancy and the answer will come
- **Action:** Ask participant to write in the format of a short verse, poetry, story, prose, or a narrative whatever comes to mind

Closing and Reflection: Facilitator follow steps 7-12 on curriculum guide chart. As participants leave the session, ask everyone to take a scroll from the basket. These words on the scroll are for them even if they pick their own from the basket.

Part 1 and Part 2 combined are the *Scriben Vocem Dei* – the written word of God

SESSION 5: PRAYER COLLAGE – WORDLESS JOURNALING

WORKING DEFINITION:

- There is a difference between daily journaling (a daily discipline) and wordless journaling (creating a specific piece of art that can be used as a prompt for prayer)
- The term wordless journaling used to describe creating a collage with images is a misnomer. The collage can include words

SUPPLIES:

- Bristol board, Small Canvases, Writing, Drawing art supplies, Glue
- Ephemera: Magazines, Newspapers, old Photographs, trinkets

SCRIPTURES: 3 PRINTED SCRIPTURES PROVIDED BY FACILITATOR

FACILITATOR:

Participant will choose 1 or 2 scriptures to cut and paste in to their collage all other content will be images or objects.

FOCUS STATEMENT

- Reads scriptures as participant are prompted they pick one of the scriptures
- Meditate on the scripture(s) as they select and cut out images
- Collate the images together on Bristol board
- Participant(s): Shares as comfortable the prayer the collage evokes

Closing and Reflection: Facilitator follows steps 7-12 on curriculum guide chart.

SESSION 6 (A) THE SACRED ART OF MOVEMENT

Even our fear wants to dance. Watch a person in pain. They rock. At times, the movement of the sacred is so interior we feel it only in hidden places within. Yet our body wisdom sometimes longs to reach beyond our ordinary self to reunite with Mystery. (Winton-Henry 2009, 17-18).

WHAT KIND OF MOVEMENTS?

- Sacred movement sessions intentionally do not advocate a method, dance technique or a prescribed dance style. There are no set phrases, gestures, or taught patterns included
- Facilitators with dance training are cautioned to avoid interjecting classical movement vocabulary
- Facilitators will need to be cognizant that participants will come to the session from differing theological, denominational or life sensibilities. Include some discussion on the body and Christianity before the session begins.

DeLeon in *Praying with the Body* reminds us that:

while Christians may have one – if not the – highest theology of the body among the religions of the world; they also have one of the lowest levels of embodied spiritual practice . . . in Judaism, the body – mind – spirit is a seamless entity named not by three different words but by a single word: *Nefes*. (De Leon 2009, ix)

- *Nefes* is the holistic goal of this model.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

This Session is in three parts and also requires the following:

Supplies: Music Player

Handouts: Poem (s)

Part 1 – Group Direction

FOCUS STATEMENT

Opening Prayer for session facilitator reads poem aloud

We come without agenda, prepared to uncover the mystery

Our intentions focused on meeting with the Lord in this session

As we ponder these words of the poet, take time in the silence to hear God's voice in terms of his guidance for today and within your sacred story.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO PROVOKE OUR THINKING:

- Have I truly allowed God to lead me in the sacred dance of my life?
- Do I run ahead?
- Am I performing a solo when the Lord has choreographed a duet?
- Am I willing to trust even when the turns will take me around blind corners?
- The sacred dance between the Lord and I takes “surrender, willingness and attentiveness” how have I experienced this and can I recognize any blocks
- Lord, what do you want me to do?

Part 2: Sacred Movement Session (begins after a short break)

Supplies: Instrumental music: a mixture of choices even in tempo – enough for 30 minutes

Facilitator will journey with the group by walking the circle and attending to those stuck or blocked or in need of attention

Mirroring and Companionship Techniques will be demonstrated in session

Session should be more than 30 mins, 45 being preferable

NOTES:

- Instrumental music should for the most part be anonymous. Do not use instrumental hymns or familiar contemporary worship songs.
- Fabric or Scarves optional (some participants find movement from following the flow of the material.) Important to keep them small to avoid distraction to those who do not want to use them.

SCRIPTURE (S) FOR SESSION:

- The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Isa 58:11
- Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying this is the way; walk in it. Isa 30:21.

FACILITATOR:

Provides Detailed Instructions about the session

We will begin by listening to the session scripture(s) being attentive to part 1 of this session and the work that has already begun in us.

Start by walking in a circle

All movements expressed should be initiated from within by the prompting of the Holy Spirit

Do not feel intimidated or a need to edit or censor what is flowing from you

This is not a dance class. Movement will for the most part be pedestrian i.e. walking, running, swaying, jumping, and turning.

If prompted include level changes. It is Ok to go down to the floor

We want to be authentic in our movements-true to yourself and the one who guides

As the Spirit leads, you can tangent away from the circle and continue your *sacred movement* in your own space- be mindful and hospitable to others, use a soft focus

The centre of the circle will be home base- a safe place to return to and sit out if needed

If you are prompted to stillness move in to the centre of the circle and stand or sit

Come back to walking in the circle as necessary

Facilitator will give a 5 min prompt before we conclude the movement session

Everyone returns to walking in the circle. and then sit in silence before we move to the final reflection portion of the session

Answers to the most asked question: How do I start moving? Internalize these four steps

- **Preparation:** Allow yourself to hear from the Lord tune your inner ear for the voice of God
- **Incubation:** Take that thought and sit with it a while, until it becomes clearer or louder in your Spirit
- **Inspiration:** The movement – your dance – will begin to take shape from within you; the steps will bubble up from your sacred space
- **Activation:** Move! Trusting that the Lord is your Guide

Part 3 Group reflections on experience

Closing and Reflection: Facilitator follow steps 7-12 on curriculum guide chart.

Facilitator needs to pay particular attention to ensure that any “issues, wounds or truths” that were uncovered in the session today are prayed for and that the Lord would continue to unwrap, bring healing and peace to those areas.

Poem 18

GUIDANCE

*When I meditated on the word GUIDANCE, I kept seeing "dance" at the end of the word.
I remember reading that doing God's will is a lot like dancing.
When two people try to lead, nothing feels right.
The movement doesn't flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and
jerky.*

*When one person realizes and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the
music.
One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one
direction or another.
It's as if two become one body, moving beautifully.
The dance takes surrender, willingness, and attentiveness from one person and gentle
guidance and skill from the other.*

*My eyes drew back to the word GUIDANCE.
When I saw "G," I thought of God, followed by "u" and "i." "God, "u" and "i" "dance."
God, you, and I dance!
This statement is what guidance means to me.
As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life.
Once again, I became willing to let God lead.*

*My prayer for you today is that God's blessings and mercies be upon you and your family
on this day and every day.
May you abide in Him as He abides in you
Dance together with God, trusting Him to lead and to guide you through each season of
your life
I hope you dance!!!*

Rick Wilkes "Guidance – God, You and I." This poem is unpublished and originates from the heart of Jean Rhodes with influences by other unknown author(s). <https://www.thrivingnow.com/guidance-god-you-and-idence>. (Accessed September 2018).

Poem 19

DOUBT

*Maybe some doubt is exactly what I need; the staleness may be temporary,
the emptiness may be self-perceived.*

*I know being humble is exactly what I need; forgetting who I have been
and seeing who I can be.*

*Maybe this monocacy is really what I need; a self-governed dictatorship
that disqualifies my needs.*

*I hope feeling insecure is exactly what I need; a push from behind will only make
a non-believer be believed.*

*But, maybe decision describes my every need; without the aid of a constant bicker
and without putting off of my heat.*

*I feel that this disclosure of the real life I should lead,
may bring back the epic epicenters of things I can't believe.*

But, maybe it's this doubt that fringes the end of human being.

Or maybe it's the chattering of hate I've built while teething.

Or maybe it's the "no one" that stands beneath my feet.

Or maybe it's the "no one" that hovers over me

This is doubt pure and true-and I know it wants a piece of you

Nick Burns ©2010 (accessed www.poetry.org, 2014). Used with author's permission.

SESSION 6 (B) LIVING IN THE STREAM COURSE CLOSING SESSION

Reminder: The power of permission and intent

Never discount the power held in your intention- your purposefulness gives permission to the Holy Spirit to do a wonderful work within you

Pay attention to:

- The Holy Spirit
- Participants
- Time
- Space for Silence
- Mood
- A need for flexibility
- Open Discussion

8. Closing Prayers: Offer a Benediction

Prayerfully commit yourselves to intercede for each other as you are apart for those things spoken and unspoken that they be revealed and sealed in his Grace.

**APPENDIX N:
Doubt Poem Permission**

Subject: Nick Burns sent you a message

From: Hello Poetry (no-reply@hellopoetry.com)

To: liveandmove@rogers.com;

Date: Monday, June 12, 2017 4:06 PM

Nick Burns:
Hello,

Thank you for reaching out to me and for your kind comments.
Feel free to use that piece in your thesis and good luck with all of
your endeavors.

-Nick Burns
Respond to Nick Burns

APPENDIX O:
Part 4:
Post Workshop Field Instructions

Copy of email: To workshop participants
November 28 2016

Hi all:

Thanks for your patience. I will send three emails as follows:

1. Resources

Music links, poetry and the general guidelines for the workshop (this is a workshop protocol from the facilitators perspective but it has some necessary preparatory info)

2. Log sheet and Instructions

Blackout Poem, Soularium Visio and the Rosebush Narrative

3. Group SD exercises

Community Garden and Sacred Movement

As discussed during the workshop please obtain consent from and maintain confidentiality of your directees in accordance with prescribed spiritual direction practices.

When you submit log sheets to me use pseudonyms to maintain anonymity.

Send any comments you have on your use of whatever types of arts and spiritual direction as this is vital info for the project.

The reactions to the artistic/creative methods are as important as your choice of methods

Blessings

Ouida

Rev. Ouida A. Russea-Pihulyk
BFA, MTS, D.MIN (cand)
Co-Pastor & Spiritual Director

In Him we live and move and have our being. Acts 17:28

**APPENDIX P:
Part 3 Workshop: Curriculum timeline**

Activity	Materials	Music	Times
Registration – Meet and Greet	Locations AV technician to set-up audio player and check PPT presentation plays through overhead system	Opening worship and Prayer	8:45 – 9:00
Introduction and Welcome Brief Bio - who am I? Explain and thank participants for their important role in the research. Workshop itinerary and housekeeping	Review, explain and open discussion: Research Introduction letter, Parts 1 to 4 of the research Consents to be signed Reiterate confidentiality, pseudonyms and responsibility for directee consents		9:00 – 9:15
Teaching block: Discuss and explain the model of spiritual formation. Theological cognitive and theoretical orientations	PPT presentation Discuss: resource table, books and materials available		9:15 – 9:45
Creativity block: Make container for inner critic Ice breaker: draw a bug exercise	Moulding clay, paper and Pen		9:45 – 10:00
Teaching block: Define and explain what the expressive arts are, then discuss the 6 modules and the 4 integrated methods to be taught today	Poetry – Explain using literary techniques for integration and the 3 types of poem structures 1. <i>Haiku</i> 2. <i>Cinquain</i> 3. Prose or free form		10:00 – 10:15

1.Expressive art module Blackout Poem	Copy of poem for each Hi-Liters, felt pens Notepaper or Journal	Music	10:15 – 10:30
Debrief & Share			10:30 – 10:45
2.Expressive art module Soularium Cards Participant chooses image & Scripture is read	Notepaper or journals to write a literary response to module e.g. prose, <i>haiku</i> , <i>Cinquain</i> or journal the experience	Music	10:45-11:00
Debrief & Share 1 to 1 or small groups to a maximum of 3	Participants journal		11:00 – 11:15
Break	Set-up: each desk Watercolour paper/water and paints		11:15 – 11:30
3. Expressive art module Rosebush Narrative	Make available: Art/mark - making materials, ephemera, fabric and other mediums	Music	11:30 – 11:45
Debrief & Share			11:45– 12:00
Fun Movement Activity		Music	12:00 – 12:10
Lunch			12:10 – 12:45
4 Expressive art module Sacred memoir: Vintage photos	Set up: Selection of vintage black and white photos Participants journal	Music	12:45 –1:00
Debrief & Share			1:00– 1:15
5 Expressive art module Community Garden	Watercolour paper, paints and water pots at each desk	Music	1:15 – 1:45
Debrief & Share			1:45– 2:00
Break	Set up for Movement Session		2:00 - 2:15

Teaching block: Movement session	PPT	Music	2:15 – 2:30
6 Expressive art module Sacred Movement	Scarves/Fabric	Music	2:30 – 3:00
Discussion on entire day	Participants journal		3:15– 3:30
Part 3 Workshop in- situ survey	Part 4 Field work participants receive a take home tool kit with instructions	Closing Prayer	3:30 – 4.00

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