ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

WHAT CONSTITUTES GOOD PRACTICE IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AND WHAT IS THE CONTRIBUTION OF SUPERVISION TO THAT PRACTICE?

LYNETTE HARBORNE

**A thesis in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of Anglia Ruskin University
for the degree of Professional Doctorate**

JULY 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

**WHAT CONSTITUTES GOOD PRACTICE IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
AND WHAT IS THE CONTRIBUTION OF SUPERVISION TO THAT
PRACTICE?**

LYNETTE HARBORNE
JULY 2017

Little has been written on the practice of spiritual direction in the United Kingdom and I was unable to locate any relevant empirical research into what practitioners and recipients consider constitutes good practice. Furthermore, whilst supervision for spiritual directors is recommended by some organisations, I could not find any research relating to its contribution to good practice. My research question therefore became "What constitutes good practice in spiritual direction and what is the contribution of supervision to that practice?"

In order to address the above question I adopted a phenomenological approach within a paradigm of practical theology and designed the research in two phases. The first phase consisted of a focus group and a questionnaire, from which qualitative and some contextual quantitative data were collected. In the second phase I conducted six individual interviews with participants who had been selected by purposive sampling and who all held significant roles in the training and provision of spiritual direction in the UK.

The research revealed the primacy of the personal spiritual life of the director and of the director/directee relationship. It also identified that spiritual direction is a charism indicating that spiritual directors have a significant part to play in the missio Dei. These conclusions offer a horizon in which all the research outcomes can be examined creatively and constructively, particularly those that emerged in relation to the tension between professionalism and charism. The results of the research also identified that the limited amount of experience of some directors raises questions of competence, and that prohibitions on charging for spiritual direction by some institutions may be inhibiting the development of good practice and accountability. The contribution that supervision makes in providing a place in which to examine all the above issues was established.

This research makes a contribution to what is known about the *telos* and practice of spiritual direction in the UK and provides a foundation for the future development of both spiritual direction and supervision.

Key words: spiritual direction, good practice, supervision, charism, missio Dei.

LIST OF CONTENTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem
AISGA	All Ireland Spiritual Guidance Association
APSCC	Association of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling
APSE	Association for Pastoral Supervision and Education
BACP	British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
BIAPT	British and Irish Association for Practical Theology
CCC	Catholic Catechism of the Church
CTF	Cambridge Theological Federation
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
GT	Grounded Theory
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LCS	London Centre for Spirituality
RA	Retreat Association
SCRTP	South Central Region Training Programme
SDI	Spiritual Directors International
SPIDIR	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Spiritual Directors' Network
UKCP	United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy

CHAPTER ONE
THE GENESIS OF THE RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will introduce the question that the research seeks to answer and identify the gap in knowledge from which it arises. I will also introduce myself as the researcher, and briefly describe the genesis of the research, including aspects of the personal and professional background and context that have given rise to my interest in the subject. I will then give an overview of the structure of the thesis.

THE GAP IN KNOWLEDGE AND THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The purpose of this research is to address the gap in knowledge that gives rise to the question: "What constitutes good practice in spiritual direction and what is the contribution of supervision to that practice?"   This gap is evidenced by both the lack of literature addressing the subject and the fact that I have been unable to find any relevant empirical research in the United Kingdom (UK). Current practice of spiritual direction is informed by tradition. This tradition deserves to be honoured. However, the lack of evidence to support assumptions about good practice indicates that this research is needed.

At the outset I realised that the research process might result in a confirmation of traditional and historical views and assumptions. This would have the value of providing evidence for what has previously been anecdotal. The purpose of the research was therefore to provide evidence to confirm understanding of the effectiveness of current practice as much as to confound it. I saw the research as having the potential to provide a base line for future investigations and, above all, I wanted it to inform my own practice as a spiritual director and teacher of spiritual direction, and to help me to evaluate the quality of what I personally offer.

INTRODUCING MYSELF AS RESEARCHER

THE ORIGINS OF THE RESEARCH IN MY PERSONAL BACKGROUND

In reflecting on the origins of the research, I can see links with my early life experiences. I was born in Cheltenham in 1943.   I grew up in a family where faith was an accepted part of daily life, my mother being a practising Anglican and my father and paternal grandparents being Methodists. Religion was always present, and I was a very religious child, despite the

frustrations and sheer boredom of services in a country village church in the 1950s. It was in this climate that a determination to challenge religious certainty and rigidity began to germinate.

I also found the restrictions of life in a very traditional girls' school irksome, so it was probably not surprising that, at 18, I adopted a somewhat unconventional life style living in Paris and London and enjoying a career in the hotel industry. During this time I came into contact with a wide variety of people, many of whom were marginalised by society in general and by churches in particular. These were people who enriched my life, taught me a great deal and gave me insight into how different life could be if you weren't born with the financial and educational privileges that I had experienced. I learnt how easily life could become chaotic and unproductive. A sense of solidarity with the marginalised took root and affected subsequent career choices that I made.

I was becoming increasingly aware that the dogma with which I had been brought up was insufficient for me to make adequate and coherent sense of life. I wanted a faith that had the potential to integrate belief with all aspects of life. I can now see that the resulting tendency to challenge unquestioned views and received wisdom would underpin my interest in the individual's lived human experience which in turn would be reflected in my work as both a psychotherapist and a spiritual director.

In due course I married, had two daughters and moved to the small Buckinghamshire town where we still live. I continued asking questions based on a desire to find a theology that integrated all aspects of my life rather than just Sunday observance, questions which met with unsatisfactory responses from a kind but clearly baffled septuagenarian rural rector. Not finding answers in church, and feeling frustrated and unsettled by this, I started looking elsewhere for more purpose in my life. As a direct result I found myself drawn to working with the marginalised, and started teaching business studies to disaffected teenagers and young adults in a college of further education, then as now the 'second chance' sector of the education system.

THE ORIGINS OF THE RESEARCH IN MY PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

I taught at the college for over 25 years and eventually took over responsibility for teacher training. I also completed a Masters in Post Compulsory Education, part of which was a counselling module which increased my sense of vocation to support the educationally marginalised.

I completed a counselling diploma course and then enrolled on a five-year MSc in psychotherapy at the Metanoia Institute in London. This was at a time when religion, and even spirituality, were viewed with some suspicion in many counselling arenas, yet I was determined to find a way of integrating my faith and my work. It was with this in mind that I simultaneously began a two year spiritual direction course at the London Centre for Spirituality (LCS).

I hoped that in engaging with these two courses concurrently I would find a model of integration that would serve me well. A particularly important part of these trainings was the respective requirement for psychotherapy and spiritual direction throughout. This experience helped me to explore at greater depth questions of integration, and to start to develop my own model of practice of these two disciplines.

In 2003 I resigned from the college and embarked on private practice as a psychotherapist, supervisor, spiritual director and trainer. From the start, my practice has always included a high proportion of clients for whom issues of faith and spirituality were significant, both lay and ordained. This pattern has continued, with the overlap between psychotherapy and spiritual direction becoming increasingly more apparent. Looking back, there was also a pattern of being drawn to work with the disadvantaged, troubled, and those experiencing difficulties with churches and organised religion, a pattern that has continued.

My interest in both spiritual direction and supervision led to an invitation to run a workshop on supervision for the Oxford Diocesan Spiritual Directors' Network. I was then asked to join the leadership team of a newly formed ecumenical group of nearly 100 spiritual directors which, over a period of time, became independent and moved out of diocesan control. Thus the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Spiritual Directors' Network (SpiDir) was formed.

SpiDir played a significant role in the genesis of this research. As I became involved in the training of directors and supervisors, in the management and monitoring of a list of directors, and in running courses on a variety of subjects, I became aware of a range of expectations and assumptions regarding practice which raised questions about the quality of spiritual direction being offered.

There were also varying levels of training and differing attitudes to supervision. These factors were instrumental in the development of my interest in the question that this research seeks to answer, that of what constitutes good practice of spiritual direction and the role of supervision.

My role in SpiDir placed me in a unique position in that I was in touch with a possible constituency of research participants. Initial conversations with SpiDir members and others about the possibility of some research into the quality of spiritual direction met with interest and enthusiasm. Another part of my work during this period was as a member of the Human Development team at a Roman Catholic seminary where I taught pastoral psychology and also saw seminarians for one-to-one personal development sessions.

It was during this time that I first became aware of Roman Catholic priest and theologian, David Tracy, whose life and writings influenced my attempts to integrate my own faith and work. I was drawn to his statement that "The ethical dilemma of the Christian theologian … is both painful and clear. Traditionally, his (sic) fundamental loyalty was to the church community … Now all seems changed … the modern Christian theologian cannot ethically do other than challenge the traditional self-understanding of the theologian" (1975, pp.6-7). He later wrote of the theologian's search for what he called "internal coherence" in his statement: "That coherence will basically be forged by a theologian's correlation of some personal interpretation … of the tradition … and some interpretation of the situation" (Tracy, 1981, p.407). These statements are central of the overarching perspective of my research.

I subsequently became chair of the Association of Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling (APSCC), one of the divisions of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). The role of APSCC was to raise awareness of issues relating to religion and spirituality in counselling practice, and encourage discussion of how these may be addressed. It was also during this time that I wrote a book with the title *Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction: Two Languages, One Voice?* (Harborne, 2012) in which I addressed similarities and differences between the two practices. One of my motives in this was the hope that the process might bring some resolution to my own continuing questions about the integration of these 2 disciplines. However, whilst it helped me to clarify my views, it also raised further questions, particularly about the role of supervision. Initially I had planned to include a chapter on supervision, but this was omitted at the suggestion of the editor that it was a subject that merited an entire book.

Having published the book, I began to think about writing the proposed book on the supervision of spiritual direction. However, although I was very interested in the subject, I lacked the energy and commitment that I knew would be necessary to complete the project. I just could not face another two years of working in isolation. At that time, my own spiritual director was talking with me about the various doctoral programmes in practical theology. I began to make links between the idea of the doctorate and that of the book. By the time

I had applied to the Cambridge Theological Federation, (CTF), been interviewed and accepted, I was feeling excited at the idea of doing the research. Writing another book was no longer the primary goal, asking the questions and researching the answers was what now interested me.

My initial intention therefore was to focus the research exclusively on the supervision of spiritual direction. However, as I reflected on this, I began to realise that, in order to identify what supervision could contribute to the good practice of spiritual direction, I would first need to establish what was meant by 'good practice' and a modified research question began emerge.

I consider that all the above experiences have contributed to my interest in human and faith development. It was in my early experiences that my questioning about the integration of faith into all aspects of life originated, leading to my sense of vocation to work with the educationally and socially less-advantaged and marginalised. In turn this developed my interest in how individuals make sense of their personal life experience, an interest that resulted in my career as a psychotherapist and spiritual director. All of these influences will also have implications in relation to the question of the reflexivity of the researcher that I address on page 36.

My interest focused on exploring what might be considered to be the hallmarks of good practice in spiritual direction, drawing on lived experience and with particular reference to the role of supervision. As a result of this identified interest, I could locate the research in a paradigm of practical theology with an emphasis on enquiry into the phenomenological experience of practitioners and recipients of spiritual direction. It is from this position that I approached the questions that this research seeks to answer, resulting in the thesis structure described below.

OVERVIEW OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter 1: the genesis and context of the research: I have introduced the research subject in the light of the gap in knowledge; I have explained the intended purpose of the research and identified the research question. I have described the personal and professional contexts which have given rise to the research and the process that has led me to undertake the professional doctorate in practical theology.

Chapter 2: locating the research theoretically and the key concepts: I locate the research in the spiritual direction tradition, in current practice, in the literature, in practical theology and in relation to other disciplines. I define the key concepts of the research in terms of scripture and tradition, as well as in relation to the contemporary practice of other disciplines.

Chapter 3: conceptual framework and methodology: I describe the conceptual framework and structure of the research in terms of the practical theology paradigm and the theoretical justification for the research methodology. I then outline the principles of grounded theory (GT) and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and justify them in relation to my choice of approach.

Chapter 4: research methods, data gathering and analysis: I describe the 2-phase research approach including the methods used and the process of data collection and analysis. I address ethical considerations and reflect on the research choices made in terms of practicalities and effectiveness, and consider aspects of reflexivity in relation to the process.

Chapter 5: overview of the findings from Phase 1: I give an overview of the findings from the analysis of the Phase 1 data and identify the emergent themes.

Chapter 6: overview of the findings from Phase 2: I give profiles of the participants in the Phase 2 individual interviews, an overview of the findings of the analysis of the data and a discussion of the themes that emerge from the data. I then describe the process of identifying the 3 super-ordinate themes that result.

Chapter 7: super-ordinate themes and key issues to be pursued: I identify the key issues of the super-ordinate themes indicated by the findings from both Phases 1 and 2 and discuss their significance to the practice of spiritual direction.

Chapter 8: the implications of the research for future practice: I consider the implications of the research for future practice in a general context and in both my professional and personal contexts. I discuss how the outcomes of the research may be disseminated and make recommendations for the way forward. I also identify issues for future research.

Chapter 9: review and final reflections on the research: I summarise the research and consider its limitations. I return to the original research question and summarise the contribution to knowledge that I consider this research has made, and finally I reflect on the doctoral process.

CHAPTER TWO
LOCATING THE RESEARCH THEORETICALLY: THE KEY CONCEPTS

INTRODUCTION

In order to justify my methodological approach and subsequently to evaluate the eventual findings, I first need to establish my over-arching perspective. In this chapter I will therefore define the following key concepts that are central to the research question in order to locate them in the research process:

- Good practice
- Spiritual direction
- Supervision

Throughout the research process I have adopted a dialogical approach between theology, the Christian tradition and the related disciplines of pastoral care and psychotherapy. I will also refer to the literature already cited in the three Stage 1 papers, (Appendices 1, 2 and 3), and I draw attention to additional relevant material that has been published more recently.

THE KEY CONCEPT OF GOOD PRACTICE

My understanding of 'practice' is influenced by the work of practical theologian Elaine Graham who states: "… the theological values of practice are only manifested in the concrete *praxis* of the community in a given context" (Graham, 1996, p.140). She points out that this is in contrast to Browning's view that "…the objectives of pastoral care are to foster the expression of human rational moral principles" and continues: "… I want to assert that faithful and purposeful practice springs from participation in a value- and vision-directed tradition." This view establishes that 'practice' is grounded in a theology that is not merely abstract but relates to "… caring for what concerns God, caring for God's concerns in daily life, and caring for God above all" (Stevens, 1995, p.7).

I have also been influenced by the work of philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, a key voice in the recent discussion of the philosophy of practice, and about whom American theologian Stanley Hauerwas says, "Few dispute that Alasdair MacIntyre is one of the most important philosophers of our time" (Hauerwas, 2007, p.1). In relation to virtue ethics, MacIntyre was influenced by the teaching of the New Testament as well as the Aristotelian tradition. In identifying 'virtue' in New Testament terms, MacIntyre states: "A virtue is, as with Aristotle, a quality the exercise of which leads to the achievement of the human *telos*. The good for man

(sic) is of course a supernatural and not only a natural good, but supernature redeems and completes nature" (2011, p.215).   MacIntyre defines the concept of 'practice' as follows:

> By a "practice" I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established co-operative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially constitutive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended." (2007, p.218).

In progressing his views on good practice MacIntyre also states: "A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules as well as the achievement of goods. … We cannot be initiated into a practice without accepting the authority of the best standards realised so far" (2011, p.221). In this he is asserting that it is through such continuing achievement that standards are raised for subsequent practitioners. In proposing that there is a moral dimension in such a commitment to excellence, he continues: "*A virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such good*" (p.222, italics original). It is worth noting that in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988) MacIntyre subsequently referred to 'internal goods' as 'goods of excellence'.

MacIntyre continues: "Every practice requires a certain kind of relationship between those who participate in it" (2011, p.223) and goes on to say:

> To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point. It is thus the achievement and, *a fortiori,* the authority of a tradition which I then confront and from which I have to learn. (p.226).

As MacIntyre says: "Someone who achieves excellence in a practice … enjoys his (sic) achievement and his (sic) activity in achieving" (2007, p.229). Similarly, MacIntyre scholar, Kelvin Knight, reflecting on MacIntyre's view of craftsmanship, states: "… those practices which are productive crafts are valuable both because the craftsperson is perfected through and in her or his activity and because of their 'good product'" (Knight, 2007, p.156).

MacIntyre further develops his views on good practice when he addresses the role of institutions in relation to practice. Whilst accepting the necessity for them in terms of distributing money, power and status, he is also mindful of the potential for the 'corrupting power' that he perceives they hold. He states:

> (Institutions) are involved in acquiring money and other material goods; they are structured in terms of power and status … Nor could they do otherwise if they are to sustain not only themselves, but also the practice of which they are bearers. For no practices can survive for any length of time unsustained by institutions. (2011, p.226).

He continues by linking this statement to the necessity of virtues: "Without them, without justice, courage and truthfulness, practices could not resist the corrupting power of institutions" (p.226).

In addressing the question of what constitutes good practice, MacIntyre proposes that excellence is achieved by continuing to engage in a practice with resulting internal goods for the practitioner and external goods for others. Relating the above views to the practice of spiritual direction, it can be said that both participants benefit from the director's practice of excellence. He also suggests that institutions are necessary if practices are to be sustained and developed, although he recognises that they may also have some deleterious effects.

In the current absence of any over-arching organisation with responsibility for spiritual direction in the UK, the question of the potential role and contribution of institutions in the development of good practice is particularly relevant to this research and will be highlighted and discussed in Chapter 8.

American professor of philosophy, Christopher Lutz, summarising the four distinctive characteristics that MacIntyre attributes to practice, states:

> (1) People pursue the practice because they want to … (2) A practice has internal goods. There are things that can be gained only through participation in the practice, and it is the pursuit of these … that leads to true excellence in the practice. (3) A practice has standards of excellence that develop along with the practice. (4) The success of a practice depends upon the moral character of its practitioners." (2012, p.157).

In the context of this research I therefore base my understanding of good practice on a dialogical process involving the community of practice and the body of literature, a process in which I am inevitably also involved as both a reflexive practitioner and researcher.

THE KEY CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

In defining spiritual direction, I draw on scripture, tradition and learning from contemporary disciplines. The research itself will draw on the lived human experience.

As discussed in Paper 1 (Appendix 1, p.164) the literature that emanates from the United States (US) context is more developed than that originating in the UK. However, when interrogating this literature, some caution is necessary. As US missiologist Stephen Bevans (2002, pp.5-7) points out: "Contextualization ... is the sine qua non of all genuine theological thought, and always has been." There are considerable differences in culture and practice of spiritual direction in the UK and US, a fact which I have discussed in Papers 1 and 2 of Stage 1 of the professional doctorate. (Appendices 1 and 2). In these two papers I pointed out the lack of literature concerning both spiritual direction and supervision of spiritual direction in the UK. I also addressed the literatures relating to spiritual direction and supervision in a US context, to spiritual direction in the UK, and to the supervision of other disciplines in the UK. In addition I discussed the differences in culture, training and practice of spiritual direction between the US and the UK.

However, since I completed Stage 1 of the professional doctorate, there have been some significant developments in the UK. A professor of counselling and spiritual direction was appointed at Chester University in 2015, and there have been additions to the supervision literature (Paterson and Rose, eds., 2014), and to spiritual direction (Gubi, ed., 2015; Gubi, ed., 2017). I have also become familiar with the book on supervision written by Margaret Benefiel and Geraldine Holton (2010) which makes some useful comparisons with the supervision of psychotherapy and pastoral care. However, despite its origins in the context of the Republic of Ireland, much of the content of this book reflects the experience of the contributors' practice of supervision in the US.

Locating the concept of spiritual direction in scripture

Any attempt to find exact examples of what is now called 'spiritual direction' in the Bible would be anachronistic. However, it is legitimate to reflect on incidents where features of the process of spiritual direction are in evidence, for example the expression of deep human feelings in the Psalms (Psalms 69, 70, 86), the way in which Jesus ministers to people in the

Gospels by listening, (Mark 5:34-36; John 4:1-26) and the encouragement that is a theme throughout the Pauline pastoral letters.

In the Gospels there are frequent references to the fact that Jesus takes time apart, (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12; John 22:41-44) and in Luke 5:16 we read: "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." In Luke 10:38-42 we also read how taking time aside, to eat, to be with friends and family, to listen to Jesus, is integral to the Gospel story, and how Jesus privileges this element over the more practical activities of Martha.

The importance of both telling our stories and being heard is also evident from the account of the road to Emmaus where "They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus came up and walked with them" (Luke 24:14-15).   In the experience of talking and listening, Jesus became present.

Locating spiritual direction in the Christian tradition and in contemporary knowledge

I included definitions of the term 'spiritual direction' in Stage 1, Paper 2 (Appendix 2, p.187). However, during the process of the doctorate, my understanding of the definition and purpose of spiritual direction has developed so I return to this subject here. Historically spiritual direction has been mainly curated in the Roman Catholic tradition and, in seeking to define the concept, I therefore draw substantially on Roman Catholic sources.

When defining what constitutes good practice in spiritual direction, it is important to consider whether the purpose is implicit in the definition and, if so, how that purpose can be exercised. The term 'spiritual direction' may be considered to be an unfortunate one, implying as it does a directive rather than an exploratory process. Because of this potential for misunderstanding, it is sometimes known as spiritual friendship or spiritual accompaniment. However, it is also possible to relate the phrase to life's journey and the direction that this is taking, and it is this interpretation to which I am drawn. I also value the links between the historical tradition and contemporary practice that the phrase implies and I therefore use this term consistently throughout this research project. In this I emulate the practice of Jesuit Gregory Carlson who states: (1988, p.74) "I retain the word 'direction' … simply because it is the traditional terminology for this particular area of religious life." This also reflects MacIntyre's view of the importance of relationship with both the past and the present community of practice previously quoted (p.8).

In the 16th century, founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola, defined spiritual direction in relation to its purpose in the following statement:

11

God freely created us so that we might know, love, and serve him in this life and be happy with him forever. God's purpose in creating us is to draw forth from us a response of love and service here on earth … All the things in this world are gifts of God, created for us, to be the means by which we can come to know him better, love him more surely, and *serve him more faithfully.*" (Fleming 1978, p.23, italics mine).

In the twentieth century, perhaps taking a more psychological view of the purpose of spiritual direction, monk and influential spiritual writer Thomas Merton defined spiritual direction as follows:

The whole purpose of spiritual direction is to penetrate beneath the surface of a man's (sic) life, to get behind the façade of conventional gestures and attitudes which he presents to the world, and to bring out his inner spiritual freedom, his inmost truth, which is what we call the likeness of Christ in his soul. (1960, p.16).

More recently, psychiatrist and theologian Len Sperry (2004, p.172), points out that:

There are various ways of defining spiritual direction in the Christian tradition. Definitions span the gamut from 'Spiritual direction is the application of theology to the life of prayer' (Thornton, 1984, p.1) to 'Spiritual direction … is a seeking after the leading of the Holy Spirit in a given psychological and spiritual situation' (Leech, 1977, p.34). It is noteworthy that two themes 'life of prayer' and 'seeking after the leading of the Holy Spirit,' are reflected in many descriptions of spiritual direction.

In contrast to the above statements, in their seminal book on spiritual direction, Roman Catholic priests, William Barry and William Connolly focus on the relational element between director and directee in their definition:

We define Christian Spiritual Direction, then, as help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God's communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship. (1986, p.8).

Similarly, director of the US Centre for Christian Spirituality of the General Theological Seminary, Margaret Guenther, using the term 'spiritual friend', says:

... a spiritual friend is one to whom we can entrust all the secrets of our heart and before whom we can place all our plans. In other words, a spiritual friend offers a

safe place to try things out, to stretch and to grow: we need not fear shaming or ridicule, no matter what we might say. (1996, p.27).

When discussing the role of spiritual directors, professor of psychology and spirituality David Benner states "… the essence of their role is discernment - or better, co-discernment" (2002, p.94) which suggests mutuality and shared intention.

In relation to the practice of spiritual direction, former US professor of religious studies, Alice McDowell, explicitly points out "If the process is working, the director gains help and comfort from the seeker as well" (1981, p.100) echoing the view of MacIntyre referenced above (p.8) that the practitioner benefits from the practice of excellence as much as any recipient that there may be.

In reflecting on the process of spiritual direction, Fleming (1988, pp.110-111) distinguishes five ways of identifying spiritual direction, namely institutionalised, interpersonal, charismatic, sacramental and incarnational and, whilst stressing that he does not privilege one over the other, concludes by stating: "If I were to opt for a pivotal model for our own day, I would choose direction described as incarnational" about which he had previously stated: "… no aspect of a person's life is left apart from the direction context, since as a whole – physically, psychologically, and spiritually – man (sic) must grow in his response to God's unique call to him."   However, Fleming is clear in his statement that:

> Spiritual direction does not concern itself only about growing in relationship with God. … Christian spiritual direction necessarily makes all Christians – those busy in the activities of secular life and those identified as cloistered contemplatives and those who follow the vocation of hermit – prophets who are responsible for a Kingdom still to come. (1988, p.7).

The above statements resonate with Jesuit Howland Sanks' comment (1993, p.704) on Tracy's revisionist model of theology (1975) that religion is a dimension of *all* human activities.

The purpose of spiritual direction

Whilst different terminology may be used, there is a common theme in the literature concerning the development of the directee's relationship with God. In none of them is there any suggestion that the process of spiritual direction is confined to the theoretical understanding of matters spiritual and theological, it is not "… aimed at mastering mystical/ascetical theology, nor an exploration of theories about spirituality or spiritual

growth, nor training in the practice of virtues or moral discipline" (Barrette, 2004, p.56). One of few UK authors on the subject of spiritual direction, Anglican priest, Gordon Jeff, actively discourages any potential hint of the heresy of Gnosticism that might be implicit in an attitude that considers spiritual direction as:

> … a self-indulgent luxury for the specially elite – monks and nuns, some clergy, the leisured intelligentsia. It carries with it an aura of escape from real life into some disembodied 'spiritual' world … This elitist view … has done immeasurable harm, and has inhibited many Christians from going to talk through where they are with some understanding person. (2007, p.3).

The qualities necessary in a spiritual director are implicit in the above definitions. More explicitly, Barry and Connolly (1986, p.126-27) state: "Spiritual directors who want to foster a relationship between … people and their God need to have a 'surplus of warmth' … This kind of warmth shows itself in patient listening more than in any other way." Again, this quality is evident in Jesus' relationships described in the Gospels.

The purpose of spiritual direction lies at the heart of the question that this research seeks to address. As evidenced in the above definitions, this purpose is to discern God's vocation for us, and then to engage fully in it. It is about developing an awareness of God's presence in all areas of life, and for the revelation and clarification of His will in all things. As we read in Ephesians 2:10: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Spiritual direction is not, therefore, an end in itself, it is a means to helping us respond to God's vocation for us.

THE KEY CONCEPT OF SUPERVISION

The research question specifically enquires about the role of supervision; supervision is therefore a key concept to be examined.

I am aware that, like the word 'direction', the word 'supervision' may sound authoritarian, whereas in practice it is more likely to be collegial and, continuing the theme of mutuality, have benefits for both supervisor and supervisee. In Paper 2 (Appendix 2, p.187) I gave an overview of the concept of supervision to which I now return for further examination.

In the absence of empirical research, there is little evidence relating to the quality and practice of supervision of spiritual direction in the UK. However, the multi-disciplinary

literature of supervision, together with the specific literature of supervision of spiritual direction from the US, can provide a relevant overview. In addition, I have contributed chapters to two books, (Paterson and Rose, 2014, Gubi, 2015) which also address the subject of supervision of spiritual direction and which discuss the generic nature of supervision and the transferability across disciplines.

The practice of supervision has developed in the twentieth century in medical, social work, educational and other disciplines. Donald Winnicott (1958), writing in a therapeutic context in the UK, proposed the idea of the 'good enough mother' who is able both to respond to the negative emotions of her baby and to contain the feelings without either over-reacting or being personally overwhelmed.   Developing this idea, psychoanalyst Patrick Casement states: "From reading Winnicott I have come to think in terms of a 'nursing triad' , whereby the mother is emotionally held ... there needs to be someone in the new mother's life whose chief function is to be there to support the mother-and-baby ... " (Casement, 1985, p.22). This 'nursing triad' forms the basis for our understanding of the triadic relationship found in supervision, that of supervisor, supervisee and client, which can also be said to parallel the triangular model of spiritual direction that may be seen as the director, directee and the Holy Spirit which is proposed in the opening sentence of the work of Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship:* "Here we are, you and I, and I hope a third, Christ, is in our midst" (1974, p.51).

Supervision and the Christian tradition

The concept of supervision in the context of spiritual direction is relatively new, although the imperative of accountability, that is, telling the story or giving account of events, has Biblical and historical origins that are consistent with the philosophy underpinning current practice in secular disciplines. Whilst it would be anachronistic to try to find exact parallels between historical and contemporary practice, as discussed in Stage 1, Paper 2 (Appendix 2, p.187), ethical practice is a concern of that tradition.

Pastoral theologians Jane Leach and Michael Paterson (2010, p.7), in discussing the supervision of pastoral practice, draw on Mark 6: 7, 30-32 as follows:

> He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two … The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.

Leach and Paterson point out that "… the ministry the disciples exercise … is the ministry of Jesus himself: … their accountability is made concrete in their willingness to discuss with Jesus what has been going on" (p.8).

This Gospel example gives what might be considered to be a model of good practice for any church context. It is in this spirit that the Methodist Church has recently embarked on a project to introduce formal, structured supervision for its ordained ministers, a project in which I am currently involved. The purpose of this programme is clearly stated as follows: "The intention … is to support a change of culture in the life of the church from one of isolated and vulnerable practice, to one of accountability, support and more safety for ministers and for those amongst whom they work" (Methodist Church, 2017, p.14) The model being introduced offers "… a collegial and accountable process … by which Christians in ministry can 'watch over each other in love' for the sake of everyone involved" (p.16). Thus the programme combines aspects of both oversight and accountability with support.

An element of consultation can be seen in the traditional role of abbots, priors and other spiritual leaders which would include a supervisory element. For example, the Rule of St Benedict suggests that discussion with others is seen as an essential part of good decision making:

> When anything important has to be done in the monastery the Abbot must assemble the whole community and explain what is under consideration. When he has heard the counsel of the brethren, he should give it consideration ... for it is written 'Take counsel about all you do and afterwards you will have no regrets'. (Parry, 1995, pp.5-16).

Similarly, Barry and Guy (1978), also recommend that spiritual directors might consult with a more experienced colleague: "They could begin by ... conferring with someone more experienced, noting well what he (sic) finds more useful and what less so" (p.409). This resonates with Conroy's statement:

> Supervision is the key practical learning experience for spiritual directors. It is an arena for experiential understanding – that is the 'intimate knowledge and relish of the truth' that Ignatius of Loyola mentions in the Spiritual Exercises, where theoretical knowledge becomes experiential insights. (1995, p.149)

Whilst the above examples would not have been described as 'supervision', the elements of consultation and discussion would have provided very much the same function and outcome, even if in a rather more task than process focused way.

The generic nature of supervision

The title of one of the seminal books on supervision in the UK, *Supervision in the Helping Professions* (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) indicates that supervision can be considered to be a generic process across disciplines.   In the introduction, the authors state that they have used their supervision material in a range of settings including marriage guidance, local government, probation, church, hospital, general practice, management consultancy, education, social work, police and coaching as well as in the context of refugees and asylum seekers.   As Peter Hawkins and Robin Shohet state: "We have found it has been a useful model for those supervising right across the range of people professions …" (2006, p.81), a phrase which would seem to include spiritual direction.   Whilst the content presented in supervision may vary, Hawkins and Shohet suggest that the process of exploration and reflection is consistent across disciplines.

To date there is little or no empirical evidence about the value of supervision of spiritual direction in the UK. However, the literature from the US, for example Conroy, (1995), Silver (2003), and Bumpus and Langer (2005), and the practice of other disciplines such as pastoral care and psychotherapy in this country, together with the argument stated above that supervision is a generic process across the helping professions, all indicate that supervision has a significant contribution to make to effective and accountable spiritual direction.

Aims, functions and tasks of supervision

Drawing on the literatures of supervision of psychotherapy and pastoral care outlined in Paper 2 (Appendix 2, p.187), the aims, functions and tasks of supervision can be identified as follows:

Aims

- To protect the directee
- To develop good practice
- To develop professional competence
- To explore new ideas
- To celebrate 'successes'
- To learn from 'mistakes'
- To provide support
- To hold practitioners accountable

- To monitor the quality of work
- To create a professional community

Functions

Supervisors Frances Inskipp and Brigid Proctor (1993) define the main functions of supervision as follows:

Formative (Educative): where the focus is on the development of supervisees and in which the supervisor acts as teacher and facilitator in order that supervisees can work competently and can develop new skills.

Normative (Managerial): where the focus is on monitoring and maintaining good standards of practice.   The purpose of this function of supervision is to ensure accountability and the provision of a 'good service'.

Restorative (Supportive) where the focus is on supporting and encouraging supervisees so that they can work with confidence, creativity and enjoyment. Supervision provides a safe space in which supervisees can be open about their concerns, and the supervisor provides support and containment.

Tasks

Psychotherapist Michael Carroll (1996) identifies seven specific tasks which are implicit in achieving the aims stated above: teaching, evaluating, creating a learning relationship, counselling, monitoring, administrative and consulting and are implicit in both director/directee and supervisor/supervisee relationships.   Which task is privileged will vary from session to session depending on individual circumstances and priorities and influenced by the context of the individuals concerned.

Scriptural resonances can be seen, either explicitly or implicitly in the above tasks. In Luke 11:1-12 the disciples specifically ask Jesus to teach them to pray and Jesus responds with the Lord's Prayer and teaching about the nature of God. In Mark 9:29 we read that the disciples ask Jesus about the reason for their failure to heal the boy with seizures and Jesus' response: "This kind can come out only by prayer." Similarly, Paul emphasises the importance of prayer. (1 Timothy 2:1).

The process has the same 'flavour' as Kolb's (1984) learning cycle which I described in Paper 1, (Appendix 1, p.164) in which reflection on experience leads to change and

development.   Above all we learn of the developing relationship between Jesus and his disciples, for example at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1) and the Last Supper (John 13:1-38). We read of Jesus' willingness to get alongside people and the transformation and healing that can then result. We also read of arguments amongst the disciples (Matthew 17:1), their failures (Matthew 17:19-20) and their need for reassurance and further support and 'training' from Jesus.

Methods of supervision

Methods of supervision include a range of creative models such as psychodrama, sculpting, imagery, sand tray and a variety of other approaches as described by Anna Chesner (1994), Mooli Lahad (2000), Caroline Schuck and Jane Wood. (2011).

As well as face to face meetings, supervision by Skype, email or telephone is becoming increasingly common. These are particularly helpful methods of engaging in supervision when lack of provision and availability of supervisors make face-to-face meeting difficult or even impossible.   However, they do have limitations in terms of nuance of tone and body language, not to mention technical difficulties, and there are still also questions about the security and confidentiality of meeting electronically, although as newer systems are introduced, these problems are being resolved.

In some cases the method will be dictated by circumstances, for example Skype may be the only possibility when there isn't a suitable supervisor available or accessible for face-to-face meeting and this also raises a general question about the provision of supervision across the UK, about which there is currently little information.

Models of supervision

Hawkins and Shohet (2006) have effectively introduced their generic '7 eyes' or modes model into a variety of disciplines in both individual and group supervision. The process of supervision is seen through what they identify as 7 different aspects of the relationships between supervisor, director and directee, giving a range of perspectives on the work being discussed.

Hawkins and Shohet also suggest that good supervision will inevitably range across modes rather than staying exclusively in one or two. In response to a personal email from me asking about a rumour that they were considering introducing Spirituality as Mode 8, they said that they felt that spirituality should be implicit throughout the model rather than be isolated in a separate mode.

Individual supervision allows time for in-depth exploration of material and for the development of understanding of parallel and unconscious process, transference and countertransference. There is also the advantage that, once the supervisory relationship has been well established, supervisees are more likely to feel able to be frank about their concerns and fears, inadequacies or lack of competence.

Group supervision has the benefit that members can learn from each other's experience and, where cost is involved, this can be shared. Group supervision can offer a sense of community which can be a valuable resource for spiritual directors, providing welcome support.

The size of group varies and some groups can have as many as 12 participants which can affect the effectiveness of such groups and which can result in a lack of rigour in the supervision experience. The justification for large groups is that not everyone attends each meeting and that therefore the group size becomes more manageable, but this raises questions about commitment, both to supervision and to the group itself.

The type of group also varies. Proctor (2000, pp.37-56) describes 4 different types of supervision group:

1.   *The authoritative group* in which the supervisor supervises the work of each member of the group in turn.
2.   *The participative group* in which the main responsibility rests with the primary supervisor but where there is also an expectation that other group members will make a contribution.
3.   *The co-operative group* where responsibility for what is brought and discussed lies much more with the group members, and the function of the primary supervisor is more one of oversight and group facilitation.
4.   *The peer group* in which supervision is by the group and all the members take responsibility and accountability for the process.

SUPERVISION AND PASTORAL CARE

Interest in pastoral supervision in the UK has increased in the past few years with the inauguration of the Association of Pastoral Supervision and Education (APSE which defines pastoral supervision as "*a regular, planned, intentional and boundaried space* in which a practitioner skilled in supervision (the supervisor) meets with one or more other practitioners

(the supervisees) to look together at the supervisees' practice." (2017, Italics original, www.pastoralsupervision.org.uk/about/pastoralsupervision).

Leach and Paterson, founders of APSE, define supervision as follows:

> … a relationship between two or more disciples who meet to consider the ministry of one or more of them in an intentional and disciplined way. … Pastoral supervision is practised for the sake of the supervisee, providing a space in which their wellbeing, growth and development are taken seriously, and for the sake of those among whom the supervisee works, providing a realistic point of accountability within the body of Christ for their work … (2010, p.1).

Lamdin and Tilley (2007, p.9) also address the question of accountability when they state: "… all individuals … are accountable to Christ for their discipleship."

The above statements acknowledge the necessity for accountability in all aspects of Christian discipleship, a necessity to which supervision can make a substantial contribution.

It is worth noting that a recent BACP publication, based on a review of literature published between 2002 and 2015 on the subject of good practice of supervision, states: "People who offer and provide counselling, psychotherapy, pastoral care or coaching … are included in the definition of 'practitioners' who are required to be accountable under the BACP Ethical Framework and thus need to be informed and made aware of the developments in supervision." In this statement BACP is specifically linking the supervision of pastoral care with that of psychotherapy. (BACP, 2016, p.12).

SUPERVISION AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Supervision is compulsory for practising therapists in the UK, although this is not the case in the US, where it is only required for trainees.   Writing in a counselling context, Inskipp and Proctor (1993, p.1) define supervision as: 'A working alliance between a supervisor and a counsellor in which the counsellor can offer an account or recording of her (sic) work; reflect on it; receive feedback, and where appropriate, guidance.'   BACP includes the following in its definition of supervision (2016, p.11) "Supervision provides practitioners with regular and ongoing opportunities to reflect in depth about all aspects of their practice in order to work as effectively, safely and ethically as possible." Similarly, the British Psychological Society

(BPS, 2007, s.2.1) states: "Supervision support is a contractually negotiated relationship between practitioners for the purpose of supporting, evaluating and developing professional practice ... informing ethical decisions and facilitating an understanding of the use of self."

BACP states that one of the purposes of supervision is '... to maintain ethical standards as set out in the Ethical Framework' (Mearns, 2008) thus explicitly linking supervision and the ethical practice of therapy.   However, Tim Bond (2010), a Fellow of Bristol University with particular expertise in legal and ethical issues relating to therapy, draws our attention to the fact that research evidence in favour of the beneficial effects of supervision is very limited, particularly for experienced practitioners rather than trainees. Nevertheless, he goes on to say:

> I ... write these questions about supervision from a position of ... having greatly benefited from a series of very constructive supervisory relationships. I can also think of many instances where my clients have benefited considerably from discussions in supervision. Ongoing, regular and good quality supervision has helped to keep me ... receptive to my clients' issues, supported me when I have felt stuck, challenged my assumptions, helped my self-awareness and kept counselling alive to me. (Bond 2010, p.195).

West, whilst acknowledging the benefits of supervision, also mentions possible negative experiences, "… supervision can have its downsides and instances of supervision abuse have occurred" (West, 2000, p.110).

A research overview recently carried out by BACP, (2016), states that it: "… laments the lack of validated measures to evaluate the efficacy of any supervision model. At best, the existing evidence is mixed" (p.15)

THE CASE FOR SUPERVISION OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Supervision in other disciplines such as medicine, nursing, therapy and pastoral care, is already well-established in the UK. The above references to the literature state the purpose and practice of supervision in relation to pastoral care and psychotherapy. Bearing in mind the similarities between spiritual direction and psychotherapy (Harborne, 2012; Gubi, 2015; Gubi, 2017), it would seem justifiable to advocate a similar approach to the supervision of spiritual direction and, as Jeff (2007, p.xi) reminds us: "The boundaries of therapy and spiritual direction ... are becoming more blurred."

The literature on supervision of spiritual direction emanating from the US has substantially developed in the past five decades where post-graduate training programmes are available. For example, Barry and Guy, (1978, p.402) state "... the experience the authors shared as supervisor and supervisee during a ten month period at the Center for Religious Development ... is the basis for the article" Conroy (1995), Silver (2003), and Bumpus and Langer (2005), writing on the subject of supervision of spiritual direction, are all involved in university level education of spiritual directors in the US.   This is very different from the current situation in the UK where, at the time of writing (2017) no training programme merits validation by a national awarding body.

Various groups in the UK, including LCS, the Anglican South Central Region Training Programme (SCRTP), and the Retreat Association (RA), are currently promoting guidelines for good practice with include a compulsory requirement for supervision. However, these documents are appearing at a time when churches are particularly exercised about safeguarding and the pending results of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (https://www.iicsa.org.uk/ay), and it could be argued that the rationale is more defensive than developmental, providing top-down models of regulation with a view to pre-empting problems and possible challenges rather than improving quality.

A requirement for supervision is increasingly being introduced in the context of spiritual direction, which is a reminder of the argument about title or function that arose in relation to psychotherapy registration at the beginning of the twenty-first century and to which I refer elsewhere (Harborne, 2012, p.135). This debate focused on whether it was the title that defined the activity of therapy, or the purpose and process, that is the function, involved. It is possible that if at any time it were determined that function is the defining criterion, spiritual directors would be required to meet standards similar to those of therapists.

As discussed both in this chapter (p.15) and in Paper 2, (Appendix 2, p.187), supervision provides an element of accountability in the practice of spiritual direction and it is hard to see where else this can be realised in its absence. The generic nature of supervision and the similarities with other disciplines such as pastoral care and psychotherapy support this view.

Bearing in mind the experience of supervision of practitioners of other disciplines, and reflecting on the Biblical imperative for accountability to God, to Church, to others, espoused in the Christian tradition, it is likely that the requirement for supervision of spiritual direction will also increase. The aims, functions and tasks that the literature describes are consistent

with the purposes of spiritual direction, and the wide variety of possible methods and models would indicate that individual needs can be met across a range of contexts.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I have addressed three key concepts that are central to the question of what constitutes good practice of spiritual direction and the role of supervision.

In defining the term 'good practice' I have drawn on the work of practical theologian Graham and philosopher MacIntyre. In exploring the question of the nature of spiritual direction, I have referred to a wide range of relevant sources reflecting the view of both the Christian tradition and the contemporary literature in relation to the purpose and practice of spiritual direction.

The nature of the practice of supervision is also a key element of the research question. In addressing this topic I have drawn attention to the generic nature of supervision and referred to the more specific experience of supervision of spiritual direction in the US. I have also referred to the literature and experience of the disciplines of pastoral care and psychotherapy. Having interrogated the corpus of literature, I have identified the contribution that supervision can make in terms of accountability in the ministry of spiritual direction.

In the next chapter I will describe the conceptual framework of the project in relation to practical theology, epistemology and phenomenology and explain the research methodology that has influenced this research.

CHAPTER THREE
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

As previously described, this research seeks to identify and explore what practitioners consider constitutes good practice in spiritual direction and to examine the role and contribution of supervision in establishing and maintaining such practice. In this chapter I will locate the research in a paradigm of practical theology and describe my conceptual framework with particular reference to the theological, epistemological and philosophical assumptions that underpin the study. I will demonstrate how this determines a qualitative approach to the research, and indicate the relevant methods that will instantiate the identified methodology and which will be described in the next chapter.

The task was to gather a multi-faceted or 'thick' description of what constitutes good practice in spiritual direction and the contribution of supervision, a description that includes the context and lived experience of the participants. In order to do this, an inductive methodology was indicated, that is "… the generation and justification of a general explanation based on the accumulation of lots of particular, but similar, circumstances" (Gibbs, 2007, p.4). In Paper 1 of the doctorate (Appendix 1, p.164), I identified the current gap in knowledge about the perceptions of the lived experience of both spiritual directors and directees. In seeking to answer the research question I was interested in finding out what was happening in the community of practice and then to discuss the meaning that participants attribute to their personal experience. In order to do this, I set out to gather data from spiritual directors across a range of contexts.

CONTEXT AND SCOPING

As explained in Chapter 1, my interest in the question originated in my experience of writing a book in which I addressed the similarities and differences in the practice of psychotherapy and spiritual direction (Harborne, 2012). In writing this book, I drew on the work I was doing as a spiritual director, psychotherapist and supervisor across a range of contexts, and in my role with SpiDir. I was also aware that there was considerable discussion and a general enthusiasm amongst practitioners to improve the quality and provision of spiritual direction, and I felt very encouraged both by this and by comments from a range of colleagues and professional acquaintances.

For practical and logistical reasons I decided to limit my research to the experience of a cohort of practitioners already known to me who would provide experience of a wide range

of contexts including Anglican and Roman Catholic dioceses, a spirituality centre, a seminary and several ecumenical projects in which spiritual direction plays a significant part. I felt that this gave me sufficient variety of experience and diversity of context, whilst making the practicalities of the individual interviews that formed part of the study realistic and manageable.   I had to bear in mind the time constraints under which I would be working and the potential costs involved if travelling further afield.

THE PRACTICAL THEOLOGY PARADIGM

Consistent with the context of the doctorate, I located the conceptual framework of the research within a paradigm of practical theology. My understanding of practical theology was influenced by the four key principles highlighted by Swinton and Mowat (2006, p.9):

- It is critical
- It is theological reflection
- It is located not only in the church but in human experience
- Its primary task, its *telos,* is "… to ensure and enable faithful practice"

I noted that Swinton and Mowat (2006. p.4) state that: "Practical Theology … is dedicated to enabling the faithful performance of the gospel and to exploring and taking seriously the complex dynamics of the human encounter with God." They go on to acknowledge the possible diversity of how the "performed Gospel" may be interpreted and further add:

> Practical Theology therefore finds itself located within the uneasy but critical tension between the script of revelation given to us in Christ and formulated historically within scripture, doctrine and tradition and the continuing innovative performance of the gospel as it is embodied and enacted in the life and practices of the church as they interact with the life and practices of the world. (p.5).

They continue: "Practical Theology is critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world."   In discussing this definition, they emphasise the fact that practical theology does not reside exclusively in the Church and with Christians and that, whilst "… theology provides the hermeneutical framework within which practical theology carries out its task … the theological reflection that *is* practical theology also embraces the practices of the world" (p.7).

Bearing in mind that practical theology provides the paradigm for the professional doctorate within which this research is located, (http://www.anglia.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/professional-doctorate-in-practical-theology), it is necessary to identify the epistemological foundations which underpin qualitative research in general and this study in particular.

EPISTEMOLOGY

In designing the study I was aware of the importance of addressing the question 'How do we know what we know?' professor of counselling John McLeod (2001) identifies three types of knowledge that can emerge in qualitative research:

- Knowledge of the other.
- Knowledge of phenomena.
- Reflexive knowledge.

Knowledge of the other is relevant in this study as it "… allows previously hidden life experiences and narratives to come to the fore and to develop a public voice" (Swinton and Mowat 2006, p.33). In a situation where little is known about the spiritual direction encounter, this will contribute to the understanding of what *actually* happens and whether this matches perceptions and assumptions of what the practice offers.

Knowledge of the phenomena will highlight aspects of the experience of both receiving and giving spiritual direction and gather data about how these experiences are perceived by participants.

Reflexive knowing will address my own experience and the process that both affects and is affected by involvement in the research.   My own awareness and the acknowledgement of my role in the qualitative aspects of the construction and development of theory is central to the research. As professor of educational psychology, John Creswell (2003, p.182), says: "The qualitative researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study."   Swinton and Mowat (2006, p.59) state "Reflexivity is a mode of knowing which accepts the impossibility for the researcher standing outside of the research field and seeks to incorporate that knowledge creatively and effectively".   Inherent in the reflexive position is the premise that the researcher is the primary research tool; that my research will be affected by the fact that it is *my* research rather than anyone else's, and that I too will be changed by and through the process.

This emphasis on the centrality of reflexivity in qualitative research resonates with Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics in which he in turn draws on the work of fellow-philosopher Martin Heidegger, both of whom acknowledge the importance of what Heidegger (1962/1927) calls 'the fore-conception' or 'pre-knowledge'. This concept acknowledges that it is impossible completely to lay aside or ignore assumptions or pre-conceptions in our attempts at interpretation, thus discounting Husserl's concept of 'bracketing' all our prior experiences. As Gadamer states:

> A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. … Working out this fore-projection which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there … interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones. (Gadamer 1990/1960. p.267).

HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY

Having located the research in a paradigm of practical theology, and identified that a qualitative approach would be most appropriate, I considered the perspective, or hermeneutic, that I would be adopting. Hermeneutics are concerned with the interpretation of the lived experience, not merely from a theoretical standpoint but from a position of being in and inhabiting the world in which the experience occurs from an ontological position. Professor of counselling, John McLeod, summarises hermeneutics thus:

> … a broad agreement has emerged, exemplified in the writings of Gadamer (1975), that hermeneutics involves the appreciation that an interpretation is from a perspective, takes place from a position within history, requires sensitivity to the use of language and leads to a shift (of learning) on the part of the person making the interpretation. (2011, p.28).

Hermeneutic phenomenology seeks both to describe and to interpret experience. Theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher, (1998, p.92-93), considered by some to have been one of the founding fathers of practical theology, was one of the first to address the subject of hermeneutics, recognising as he did the role that both the text and the person of the author play in the process of interpretation. Schleiermacher states: "(Interpretation) depends on the fact that every person, besides being an individual themselves, has a receptivity for all other people. But this itself seems only to rest on the fact that everyone carries a minimum of everyone else within themselves, and divination is consequently excited by comparison with oneself", a statement which has a very contemporary ring.

Drawing on the work of Heidegger (1962/1927) and Gadamer (1981), I adopted a hermeneutical phenomenological approach. Swinton and Mowat state that hermeneutic phenomenology "sits on an interesting borderline between method and methodology" (p.105) and that it brings together descriptive and interpretive elements of enquiry in order to "… provide a rich description of the experience and a necessary interpretative perspective on lived experience" (2006, p.109). They further define phenomenology as "… a philosophy of experience that attempts to understand the ways in which meaning is constructed in and through human experience. This perspective views a person's lived experience … of and within the world as the foundation of meaning" (2006, p.106).

My research question was one which would invite participants to describe their own experience, drawing on both giving and receiving spiritual direction, and to reflect on what they have found to be the most helpful aspects of that experience. As a researcher, I would be expressing my curiosity about the participant's lived experience or, as McLeod says, "Phenomenology strives to describe the *essence* of everyday experience" (2011, p.24 italics original) and van Manen states "Phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. Phenomenology asks 'What is this or that kind of experience like?'" (1990, p.9).

My approach to this research has also been greatly influenced by the concept of the hermeneutical circle in which the interpretation moves from the "whole to the part and back to the whole" (Gadamer 1981, p.259). This iterative process offers a method of making meaning which examines the relationship between the part and the whole at a number of levels, taking into account the use of language and linguistic patterns. Whilst initially this may be a process in which two people are engaged (the researcher and the participant), I am also interested in the part that the third person (the reader) ultimately plays in the interpretation of the text and the implications of this for the research outcomes.

THE CHOICE OF A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO THE RESEARCH

The epistemological and phenomenological factors described above suggested that a qualitative approach to the research would be most appropriate. Swinton and Mowat (2006, p.34) point out that "Qualitative research takes place within what has been described as an interpretative paradigm." They also state that "Qualitative methods are … seen to be at their most useful when little is understood or known about the situation" (p.52) which particularly chimes with this study in the absence of any apparent previous empirical research in this country.

Reflecting on the definition of qualitative research methods, reader in research methods Graham Gibbs makes the following statement:

> It has become more and more difficult to find a common definition of qualitative research which is accepted by the majority of qualitative research approaches and researchers. … Qualitative research is intended to approach the world 'out there' … and to understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomena 'from the inside' in a number of different ways. (2007, p.x).

Describing the aim of qualitative research, professors Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln state that it is: "… to study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of … phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring them" (1998, p.3) very much reflects the aim of this study. They further define qualitative research as: "… multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring them" (1998, p.3). They also identify "… the open-ended nature of qualitative research which leads to a perpetual resistance against attempts to impose a single umbrella-like paradigm over the entire project" (2000, p.xv).

Similarly McLeod (2001, p.3), states: "Qualitative research … produces formal statements or conceptual frameworks that provide new ways of understanding the world, and therefore comprises knowledge that is practically useful for those who work with issues around learning and adjustment to the pressures and demands of the social world." It was this commitment to the research being 'practically useful' that I saw as being consistent with the philosophy and ontology of both practical theology and spiritual direction.

I was also mindful of Swinton and Mowat's assertion that "qualitative research thus provides the data that will enable future researchers to explore the possibility of transferability and to find models that describe a situation and that have transferable structures" (2006, p.46). This thesis therefore ends with pointers for further research.

CONSTRUCTIVISM

In approaching this research, and in a context of practical theology, it is also necessary to consider the different epistemological positions of positivism and constructivism. The positivist tradition of the natural sciences is based on the assumption that there is an objective truth, an assumption that suggests that the researcher is detached from the

research process. However, the constructivist position is that reality is socially constructed and therefore different meanings may arise from human interactions and the interpretation of individual experiences. Traditionally the Christian doctrine of revelation also assumes that truth is objective and that it can be known, albeit partially.   This is therefore a tension that I held in mind throughout the research process.

Denzin, (1997) takes the view that constructivism is all there is and Swinton and Mowat describe constructivism as follows:

> … this understanding of knowledge does not assume that reality is something that is somehow 'out there' … simply waiting to be discovered. Rather, it presumes that 'reality' is open to a variety of different interpretations and can never be accessed in a pure, uninterpreted form. Instead, constructivism … assumes the existence of multiple realities. (2006, p.5).

I therefore find myself questioning the consistency of Swinton and Mowat's position as, despite their avowal that "The model of mutual critical correlation opens up the opportunity to challenge interpretations of scripture and tradition that may have become distorted, forgotten or deliberately overlooked" (2006, p.82), they go on to ask "*How can a system of knowledge created by human beings challenge a system of knowledge that claims to be given by God?"* (2006, p.83, italics original). They continue their argument by drawing on the work of Van Deusen Hunsinger and conclude that "… the voice of theology has logical precedence within the critical conversation" (2006, p.86). This is a view that is in conflict with the work of other theologians to which I am drawn such as Tracy who argues, "… one cannot investigate a cognitive claim with intellectual integrity if one insists simultaneously that the claim is believable because the tradition has believed it" (1975, p.6).

Rosanna Hertz' asserts that "Reflexivity is ubiquitous. It permeates every aspect of the research process …" (Hertz, 1997, p.viii). Bearing this in mind, together with my personal views about positivism and constructivism, philosophically, sociologically and epistemologically I am drawn to a constructivist view as described by Gibbs (2007, p.7): "Constructivism … stresses that the world we experience arises from multiple, socially constructed realities. These constructions are created because individuals want to make sense of their experiences."   I am also aware that, in terms of theology, I have been influenced by Tracy's revisionist model (1975) and the call for a dialectical "mutual critical conversation" described by practical theologian Stephen Pattison (2000, p.7) as follows:

"Practical theology is a place where religious belief, tradition and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions, and actions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transforming."

MUTUAL CRITICAL CORRELATION

As indicated above, my methodological approach has been influenced by the work of both Tracy and MacIntyre.   Tracy's theology was strongly affected by the work of Jesuit Bernard T Lonergan who, after Vatican II, developed what became known as 'transcendental Thomism' (Sanks, 1993, p.699). At a similar time, MacIntyre was moving from a Marxist philosophical stance to a more Christian and Thomist theological position, where his view of what constitutes virtue and goods developed into an understanding of God and his conversion to Roman Catholicism in the early 1980s. As Hauerwas (2007, p.8) comments about MacIntyre "His Thomism came when he became convinced that in some respects Aquinas was a better Aristotelian than Aristotle … he learned that his attempt to provide an account of the human good in social terms was inadequate without a metaphysical grounding."

A trail of influences can therefore be seen leading back from 20th century Tracy and MacIntyre to the Christian theology of Aquinas (1225–1274) and thence to the philosophy of Aristotle (384-322 BC).   These links have influenced the research design resulting in the inclusion of the following elements in the methodological approach that I adopted:

- Body of literature
- Community of practice
- Human experience
- Christian tradition

Tracy's revisionist model correlates Christian scripture and tradition with post-Enlightenment knowledge and the lived human experience.   In his Third Thesis Tracy (1975, p.43) states: "The Theological Task Will Involve a Critical Correlation of the Results of the Investigations of the Two Sources of Theology." He identifies the first of these sources as Christian texts and the second as lived human experience and language.   He further suggests (p.49) that an investigation of the second of these sources can only succeed through "... continued conversation with those human sciences which investigate the religious dimension in human experience and in conversation with other philosophical methods ..."

Tracy's model of critical correlation (1975) invites a discourse between contemporary disciplines, theology, scripture and the tradition. He suggests that secular problems can no longer satisfactorily be solved solely by reference to theology. It is also important to state

that Tracy is not alone in identifying the contribution that other disciplines can make. Practical theologian David Lyall (2001, p.34) writing about the nature of practical theology, emphasises the "… process of mutual giving and receiving …" that is evident in the dialectical relationship between the theological tradition and contemporary culture and which effects our understanding of practical theology.

This reference to contemporary culture is also reminiscent of American theologian Richard Niebuhr's comment in *Christ and Culture,* (1951/2001). In his typology he describes what he calls 'the architectonic type' as follows:

> Both the imperatives of nature and those of the gospel are recognised as divine imperatives; … though there are in it some things that cannot be apprehended by reason. The discontinuity involves no real antithesis. In fact, the values and imperatives of nature known through culture prepare for the reception of the values and imperatives of the gospel, though they do not mediate them. (Niebuhr, 1951/2001 p.l).

To summarise, my conceptual framework has been influenced by the theological method represented in the work of, amongst others, Niebuhr, MacIntyre Tracy, and Swinton and Mowat, all of whom express a radical view of and commitment to gospel values, a view which supports, perhaps even demands, an interpretative approach of enquiry. It is this conceptual approach that informs my research design.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of the research had already been established as seeking to find out more of what was happening in the field of spiritual direction. Having reflected on the conceptual framework, the design of the project began to emerge. The task was therefore to gather data from spiritual directors practising across a range of contexts and with a variety of backgrounds and trainings. This data would relate to their experience and perceptions, both as practitioners and as supervisees.

Because of the lack of previous research, I did not want the scope of the study to be too limited but I also wanted the study to have depth. With these aims in mind, I adopted a two phase design: the purpose of Phase 1 of the research would be to gather data from a relatively large number of participants whereas the purpose of Phase 2 would be to investigate the data at greater depth by purposive sampling of a small number of people holding significant leadership roles in a variety of contexts.

I was also attracted to Denzin and Lincoln's use of the metaphor of 'bricolage' (1994). "The qualitative researcher-as-bricoleur uses the tools of his or her methodological trade, deploying whatever strategies, methods or empirical materials as are at hand … if new tools have to be invented or pieced together, then the researcher will do this." (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p.2) with its emphasis on practicality and the getting the job done. Bearing all this in mind, I adopted a bricolage approach of naturalistic enquiry to the two different phases of the research, drawing on the general principles of grounded theory (GT) for the first phase and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) for the second.

I was also mindful of Swinton and Mowat's statement that:

> It is our opinion that the most effective way that practical theologians can use qualitative research methods is by developing an eclectic and multi-method approach which seeks to take the best of what is available within the accepted models of qualitative research, but is not necessarily bound by any one model. (2006, p.50).

The description of the implementation of the selected methods will be included in the next chapter, but the rationale for their selection is described below. Having decided on a two phase approach to data gathering, the first addressing breadth and the second addressing depth, the next step was to consider possible methods which would instantiate my methodology.

After considerable reading about GT as both methodology and method, I decided to adopt its general principles in Phase 1 of the project with a focus group and a questionnaire as the methods of implementation. Once the data from Phase 1 had been analysed and themes identified, Phase 2 would consist of purposive sampling and in-depth, semi-structured interviews, transcription and analysis in order to develop my understanding of the meaning that participants attributed to their individual experience. For this I chose IPA as an appropriate method of enquiry.

THE RATIONALE FOR ADOPTING GROUNDED THEORY AS METHODOLOGY

My rationale for taking this approach was based on the writings of the founders of GT, Barry Glaser and Anselm Strauss, and the views of Kathy Charmaz, drawn from her personal experience of working with them (Charmaz, 2015), I was also mindful of McLeod's question "… should grounded theory methodology be more appropriately viewed as a set of broad principles (as originally articulated by Glaser and Strauss over forty years ago) that can be

implemented in different ways according to individual preferences and circumstances?" (McLeod, 2011, p.142).

The principles of grounded theory

Charmaz emphasises that the purpose of GT is to find out what is happening, in her phrase "the sociology of the gerund" a phrase that clearly reflects the title of Glaser's 1996 book *Gerund Grounded Theory.* How actually this is done is much more open to interpretation; as Barry Gibson and Jan Hartman state:

> … it is quite clear on reading *Discovery* that Glaser and Strauss (1967) were constantly at pains to avoid foreclosing alternative ways of generating grounded theory. Throughout *Discovery* they indicated that the project of grounded theory was just the beginning and that other ways of generating theory may be found and described. '… we shall often state positions, counter positions and examples, rather than offering clear-cut procedures and definitions, because at many points we believe our slight knowledge makes any formulation premature' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.1).

Referring to Strauss and Glaser in her discussion with Gibbs, Charmaz states:

> In the early years both Anselm and Barney had this notion that, rather than going out and reproducing what they had outlined, the students would adopt and adapt it in their own ways and that was fine then …. Anselm realised that people would take a perspective, a concept, and do with it what *they* want not what he might have wanted … (Charmaz, 2015).

In reflecting on GT as methodology, I was particularly drawn to the principles of openness which stands in opposition to the notion of applying preconceived theory which is seen as 'forcing' the research and the data. My initial reluctance to consider GT as a methodology was based on my inaccurate understanding that no literature review was 'allowed' in GT which I thought was impossible stance as I was already steeped in the literature of my subject. However, on investigating the subject at a deeper level, I discovered that I was under the wrong impression. Gibson and Hartman (2014, p.35) comment: "Doing research without having preconceived notions is of course impossible." Glaser is quite clear about this. Indeed, he claims that it is important for researchers to be well-read in the literature on social theories, since this will help him or her to find what is relevant. However, Gibson and Hartman go on to state "It is in some way like the epoché of the phenomenological method,

preconceived notions should be bracketed" (p.36).   Similarly, Charmaz (2015) goes so far as to say that the idea that literature can be ignored as 'naïve'.

However, the role of the researcher and the question of reflexivity in the context of GT cannot be ignored.   As Gibbs (2007, p.36) points out: "Reflexivity is the awareness and acknowledgement of the role of the researcher in the construction of knowledge." He later adds "The qualitative researcher… cannot claim to be an objective, authoritative, politically neutral observer standing outside and above the text of their research reports" (2007, p.91). Charmaz claims that constructivist grounded theory "… recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed" (cited in Gibson and Hartman 2014, p.46) and that it acknowledges the interaction of researcher and research participant, thus demonstrating the possibility of a double hermeneutic.

Traditionally GT has suggested that, when no significant new data is emerging from the process, the researcher should consider this to have reached saturation point and should stop the analysis. However, Charmaz (2015) suggests that, rather than viewing this as saturation, a bigger picture may emerge at this point with the possibility of new questions and directions emerging from the data.

As already stated, the purpose of GT is to answer the question 'what is going on?' which is the question that this research project seeks to address. The resulting theory must be relevant and must work for those involved in the area of study. There must always be the possibility of modifying the theory in the light of new data.

The implementation of GT will be described in the next chapter.

THE RATIONALE FOR ADOPTING INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS (IPA) AS METHODOLOGY

The purpose of Phase 2 of the project was:

- to gather more in-depth data in response to the survey questions.
- to test whether the data from the interviews triangulated with the data from the survey.
- to identify what significant issues for more detailed study.

Bearing the above aims in mind, adopting IPA as a methodological approach seemed appropriate. Jonathan Smith, Paul Flowers and Michael Larkin, (2009, p.1) describe IPA as

"… a qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences. IPA is phenomenological in that it is concerned with exploring experience in its own terms". They go on to say:

> It wants to know in detail what the experience for *this* person is like, what sense *this* particular person is making of what is happening to them. This is what we mean when we say IPA is idiographic (sic). IPA studies usually have a small number of participants and the aim is to reveal something of the experience of each of those individuals. (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.3).

Commenting on the purpose of IPA, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, p.80), state: "Although the primary concern of IPA is the lived experience of the participant and the meaning which the participant makes of that lived experience, the end result is always an account of how the analyst thinks the participant is thinking …", thus emphasising again the element of the double hermeneutic implicit in the research: the researcher offers an interpretation of the participant who is offering their own interpretation of their lived experience.

Smith, Flowers and Larkin further state: "(IPA) is an approach to qualitative, experiential and psychological research which has been informed by concepts and debates from three key areas of the philosophy of knowledge: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (sic)". (p.11) and describes IPA as being concerned with:

> … the detailed examination of human lived experience. And it aims to conduct this examination in a way which as far as possible enables that experience to be expressed in its own terms, rather than according to predefined category systems. This is what makes IPA phenomenological and connects it to the core ideas unifying the phenomenological philosophers. IPA concurs with Heidegger that phenomenological enquiry is from the outset an interpretive process." (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.32).

It was because of the emphasis on this 'detailed examination of human experience' within a phenomenological hermeneutic that I adopted an IPA approach for the individual interviews that formed the second phase of this research project. The implementation of IPA as method will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I have identified my conceptual framework, located the research in a paradigm of practical theology and explained the hermeneutic phenomenological approach. I have outlined the theological foundations that are consistent with the principles of practical theology and I have described the methodological approach adopted. I have identified and justified the inclusion of both GT and IPA in terms of methodology and described their core principles. I have then explained why these principles are appropriate to this study and how they might be adapted to the particular circumstances.

In the next chapter I will describe the implementation of GT and IPA as research methods and the process undertaken. This will include the procedures followed in planning and executing the practical elements of the research. I will also describe the data analysis process that I adopted.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I described the conceptual framework and methodology and introduced the rationale for the methods selected for the two phases of the project. In the light of this methodology, and having established appropriate methods, in this chapter I will now describe the research process that took place between September 2014 and November 2015. I will discuss the ethical issues that were considered in the planning, I will include the selection and recruitment of participants, and describe the methods and process of data collection and analysis adopted. The findings that arise from the data will be identified in Chapters 6 and 7, and the implications of these findings will be discussed in Chapter 8.

The methodology and rationale described in the previous chapter resulted in a multi-method, two- phase structure for the data collection and analysis. The aim of Phase 1 was to achieve rich data across a range of participants with different backgrounds and experience as spiritual directors and directees. The aim of Phase 2 was to examine in more detail the experience of a selected number of participants, all of whom held a significant role in the provision of spiritual direction in the UK. The intention was also to establish to what extent the Phase 2 data offered an element of triangulation with that of Phase 1, to identify key issues to be pursued further and to identify questions for future research.

THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The initial proposal for the research process was described in Paper 3 of the professional doctorate (Appendix 3, p.211), in which I identified that the project would consist of the following:

- *Phase 1:* A focus group
    A questionnaire
- *Phase 2:* Individual interviews

I subsequently realised that I needed to pilot, review and, if necessary, amend the questionnaire before general circulation in order to ensure as much as possible that the questions would elicit the most relevant data.

I drafted the questionnaire and the schedules of questions for both the focus group and the individual interviews and submitted them to Anglia Ruskin with the Research Proposal form. I also submitted the application for Ethics Approval and ethics approval was subsequently received.

I identified the 93 members of SpiDir as potential participants. I approached the leaders of SpiDir and obtained their permission to involve the membership in the research. There was at least a theoretical possibility that, as a result of my role in SpiDir, my relationship with individuals might influence their decision whether or not to participate. However, I was also aware of the dangers of what Swinton and Mowat (2006, p.34) call "subtle modes of colonialism" if the researcher is external to the group being researched. On reflection, I came to the conclusion that the fact that I was, in the broadest sense, a member of the group, was overall a positive factor.

In order to minimise any risk of influence, I therefore emphasised the following in the Participant Information Sheet:

- That participation in the research was voluntary.

- That participation arose out of my professional doctorate research and was not in any way connected with the administration of SpiDir.

- That the data submitted by individual participants would not be made available to other SpiDir members.

- That all data would be anonymised.

- That participants would be free to withdraw from the research at any time.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Having identified potential participants and obtained ethics approval, the project was implemented in two Phases. Phase 1 consisted of 4 steps:

1. A pilot questionnaire to be sent to 12 spiritual directors.
2. A focus group of spiritual directors who were also supervisors of spiritual direction.
3. A revised questionnaire to be circulated to a further 99 spiritual directors.
4. Coding and analysis of the above data based on the broad principles of GT.

Phase 2 consisted of 3 steps:

Step 1: Purposive sampling of 6 participants holding strategic roles in the provision and development of spiritual direction.

Step 2: Individual interviews with the above participants.

Step 3: Transcription and data analysis using the principles of IPA.

**THE PHASE 1 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCESS**
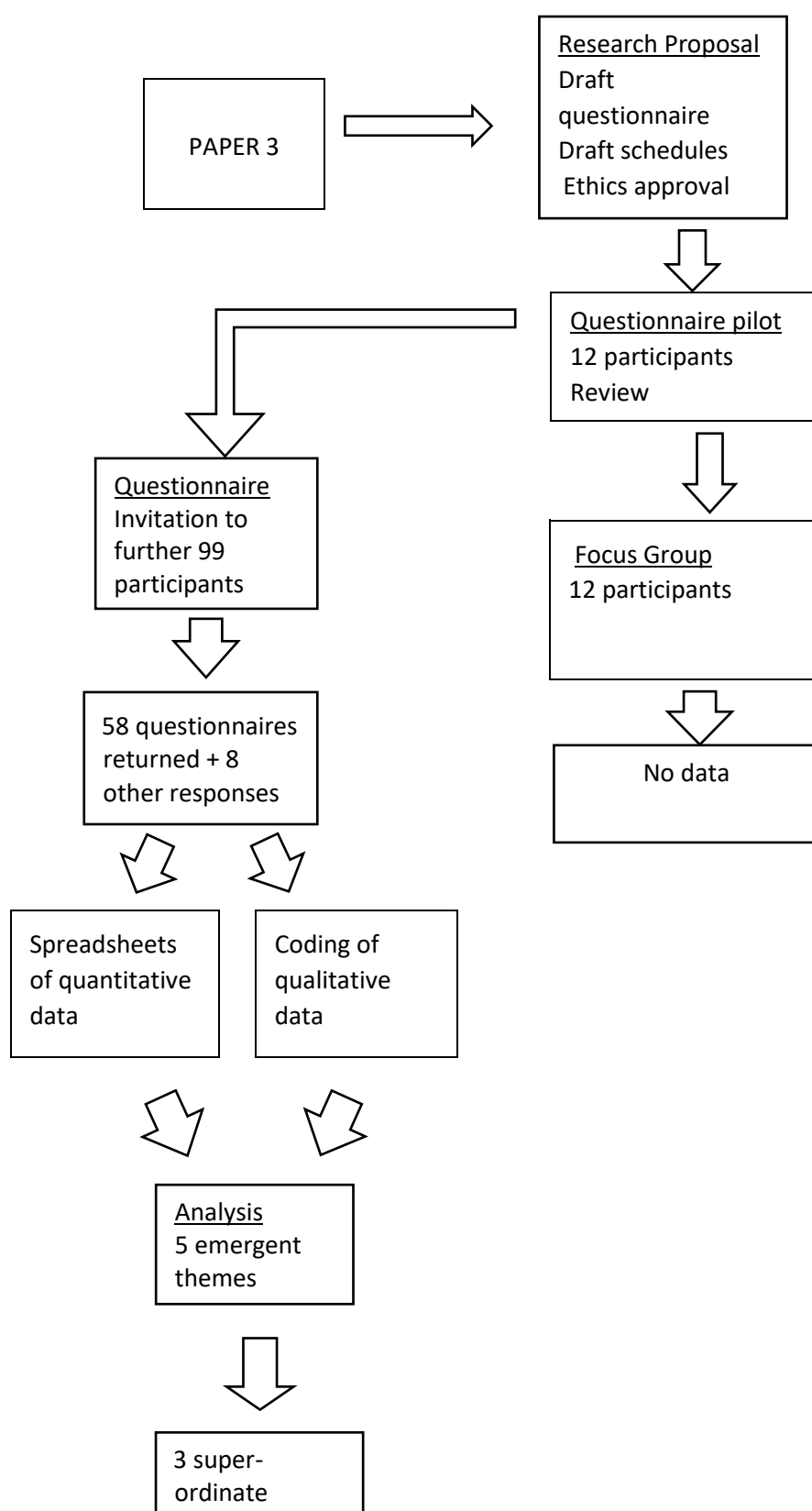
Figure 4.1

Flowchart of the Phase 1 process: focus group and questionnaire

PHASE 1: THE PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE, THE FOCUS GROUP AND THE GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE

THE PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

I decided that the pilot questionnaire should involve the twelve SpiDir members who were also to be invited to take part in the focus group. This was in some part opportunistic as I was already in touch with them and we were due to meet on an agreed date. I sent the invitation to participate in both the questionnaire and the focus group in advance of this planned meeting. All twelve completed and returned the questionnaire which formed the pilot, and 6 agreed to participate in the focus group.

Having reviewed the completed pilot questionnaires, I decided that no significant amendments were necessary.

THE FOCUS GROUP

The focus group took place as agreed with six supervisors. The purpose of the focus group was to explore specific questions about the provision and practice of supervision drawing on their particular experience as supervisors. For unforeseen reasons I was not able to facilitate the group myself and the group agreed to be peer led.

I had planned to include the resulting data in the Phase 1 analysis but, due to technical problems, the recording was unsatisfactory and no usable data emerged as a result. I considered the possibility of reconvening the focus group, but difficulties of geography, logistics and timing made this impossible. The failure of this attempt to gather data from this group of practitioners was disappointing, but it had the benefit of raising my awareness of potential difficulties in recording which I was then able to address before undertaking the individual interviews in Phase 2.

THE GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Planning and preparation

The main rationale for choosing a questionnaire was that I wanted to draw on the varied experience of the relatively large number of spiritual directors to whom I had access. I was aware that these practitioners might have very diverse backgrounds in terms of age, experience, training and tradition which made them a particularly rich group from which to gather data. It was clearly not possible to interview everyone because of the number and the timescale involved, but I wanted to hear of the experience of as many of as possible. This factor was central to my choice of questionnaire as method. I also planned to use the

thematic coding methods suggested by Gibbs (2007, p.38) for analysing qualitative research: "Coding is a way of indexing or categorizing the text in order to establish a framework of thematic ides about it."

Initially I designed the questionnaire as a SurveyMonkey instrument (https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk).   However, throughout the process I was aware of a sense of unease about this on my part.   It was only when I had completed the first draft that I realised that this was because, if I were to use Survey Monkey, I would have no personal contact with the people whom I was asking to give their time and expertise to help me in my research.   The use of Survey Monkey lacked what I later learnt to call 'sensitivity to context' (Yardley, 2000, pp.2015-228).

I then reviewed my approach and redesigned the questionnaire into a more traditional format (Appendix 4, p.240) and considered whether to distribute it via email or as hard copy by post. I was aware that paper and post might give an undesirably old fashioned image to my research; however, I was also aware that some of the misgivings about the lack of personal engagement with participants that I had identified with Survey Monkey could also apply to an email questionnaire. On the other hand, there were issues of cost to be considered: using email would be free, whereas using the post involved the costs of printing and postage, including that of providing a stamped addressed envelope for the return of the completed questionnaire.   As a self-funding student, this would have an immediate and personal impact.

Having taken all the above into account, and despite the costs involved, I opted for hard copy by post because it seemed to be a much more personal approach which I hoped would elicit a good response. I decided to send a letter of invitation to each potential participant with a personal, handwritten salutation and signature in which I would state that, if preferred, the questionnaire was available by email, an option that was taken up by four participants. I also included the participant information sheet, two copies of the consent form, one to be returned and one to be retained by the participant, an option to withdraw form and a stamped addressed envelope with the letter of invitation.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

1.   A personal and professional profile of participants.
2.   Participants' experience and perceptions of what constitutes good practice of spiritual direction.
3.   Participants' experience and perceptions of supervision of spiritual direction.

The participant profile section included some initial quantitative questions, (Questions 1-10) which was in the interests of clarity in obtaining data relevant to the personal and professional background of the participants, and to establish their context and experience of spiritual direction practice.   My intention was to interpret this data in terms of general rather than statistical significance. I was interested in the individual experience of each participant and what this might say about their practice.

Participant selection and recruitment

As stated above (p.40), I had already gained the necessary SpiDir leadership approval and had piloted the questionnaire. I now sent the questionnaire and associated paperwork to a further 81 SpiDir members. The task of Paper 2 of Stage 1 of the professional doctorate had included writing a publishable article. At the end of my article (Harborne, 2014), I had invited interested readers to contact me if they would like to participate in the research and received four responses to whom questionnaires were also sent. In addition I sent questionnaires to a further fourteen personal contacts who had expressed interest in being included.

To summarise, I now had 111 potential participants for the questionnaire:

12	spiritual directors/supervisors who took part in the pilot.
81	further SpiDir spiritual directors.
04	participants who had responded to the journal article.
14	personal contacts.

The response to the questionnaire

I hoped that, having invited a total of 111 spiritual directors to participate, the response would be sufficient to provide significant data. In fact 66 people responded, 8 of whom sent personal communications explaining why they couldn't complete the questionnaire, (for example, emigrating, not currently seeing any directees, undergoing intensive chemotherapy), but wishing me well with the research. I was delighted by the enthusiastic response, but did not fully appreciate quite how great the task of coding the 58 completed questionnaires would be, a situation which is reflected in Gibbs' statement (2007, p.2) that "Sorting through all these data … is a major headache."

I had considered introducing some form of selective sampling for the analysis but was reluctant to discard a percentage of the completed questionnaires when one of the main reasons for approaching this group of practitioners was that I particularly valued the wide range of backgrounds and experience that it offered. On reading the completed questionnaires, it was clear that most people had taken a great deal of trouble in answering

the questions. I also appreciated the enthusiastic and encouraging comments that so many participants added to their responses indicating that they were pleased that someone was taking the practice of spiritual direction so seriously, that they hoped that one day they might be able to read the outcomes and wishing me well as the research proceeded.   Fifty of the 58 participants also indicated that they were willing to be interviewed. So as well as losing potentially valuable data, discarding any of these questionnaires also felt almost like a betrayal of the goodwill that was being shown to me.

PHASE 1: DATA ANALYSIS AND THE CODING PROCESS

At this point I was mindful of Mcleod's comment that "Grounded theory is primarily a method of analysing data, rather than a technique for collecting data" (2011, p.119). In line with the principles of GT I started coding the qualitative data immediately I began to receive completed questionnaires with a view to identifying significant concepts and emergent themes.   This analysis would also identify areas of particular interest for further exploration which might be included in the semi-structured interviews that would form Phase 2 of the project.

CODING THE QUANTITATIVE AND CONTEXTUAL DATA

In order to analyse the data, I needed to organise the material so that detailed information would become more easily accessible and I created the following spreadsheets (Appendix 5, p.247):

1.   Data of male participants comparing each quantitative/contextual variable with every other variable.
2.   Data of female participants comparing each quantitative/contextual variable with every other variable.

At this stage I could not anticipate whether gender would be significant, but decided that the process of differentiation would in any case help me to familiarise myself with the data.

In the interests of anonymity, my first step was to allocate a number to each participant which was then used throughout the coding and analysis process. I designed the spreadsheets with the participant numbers in a one column and all the other variables in rows so that each one could be compared with any one other. This process not only resulted in useful documents for easy reference, but also had the added benefit of raising my awareness of the data and giving me an overview of the general background and context of those participating in the research.

CODING THE QUALITATIVE DATA

The second task of the analysis was the coding of the qualitative data from the questionnaire.   Initially I had intended to use NVIVO for this coding, but, having undertaken training, I had difficulty downloading the programme on to my own computer. I also found the required data entering process more laborious than using Word, and this eventually led me to abandon NVIVO in favour of word processing and cutting and pasting.

Drawing on Gibbs (2007, Ch. 4), I made an initial transcript of all the responses to the three main qualitative questions and found that immersing myself in the data in this way was very valuable in that it increased my familiarity, which in turn developed my understanding and appreciation of the responses.

At first I adopted the coding terminology of Strauss and Corbin, (1990) which Gibbs (2007, p.50) summarises as follows:

"1.   *Open coding,* where the text is read reflectively to identify relevant categories.
 2.   *Axial coding,* where categories are refined, developed and related or interconnected.
 3.   *Selective coding,* where the 'core category', or central category that ties all other categories … together, is identified and related to other categories."

However, because I planned to use IPA for Phase 2, and despite the fact that in GT the word 'category' was used, I decided to use the IPA term 'theme' for the grouping of frequently emerging and interconnected ideas and principles throughout the analysis process. I therefore referred to these steps as open coding, leading to concepts from which themes emerged.   This was in the interests of clarity and to maintain consistency with the analysis of the Phase 2 data.

I was also influenced by the question of the value of concept-driven coding versus data-driven coding, (Gibbs, 2007, p.44).   If I adopted a concept-driven approach I would be coding the data in line with my own hunches about topics and ideas, whereas if I adopted a data-driven approach the coding would be led by what I found in the text of the responses. As the purpose of the research was to find out what was happening in the field, a data-driven approach of open coding was more consistent with my methodology.   I spent a considerable amount of time reading through the responses to the question and writing memos as described below.

Although participants were given the opportunity to answer the questions freely, the structure of the questionnaire did not invite lengthy, in-depth comments. This was intentional as the purpose was to gather data from a relatively large number of participants and I feared that

fewer people would respond if completing the questionnaire were too time consuming. I wanted a 'snapshot' of views which I could analyse and from which issues of particular interest would emerge.

I continued the analysis by reading and re-reading the responses.   I then followed Gibbs' (2007, p.44) model of line by line open coding using coloured pens, a process that led to the identification of concepts from which themes were to emerge. These themes will be discussed further in Chapter 5. I then immersed myself in what Gibbs calls 'intensive reading' (2007, p.41) and much additional memo writing in order to familiarise myself with the text and with the data.

THE MEMO-WRITING PROCESS

Throughout the analysis, I adopted the note writing process that in GT theory is known as memo-writing. In considering these memos I found the model suggested of organising them into four categories helpful, (Gibbs, 1997, p.31) and which I summarise as follows:

Observational: notes about what has actually been observed.
Methodological: notes about practical issues relating to data collection.
Theoretical: notes relating to hunches or interpretation of data.
Personal: notes relating to my feelings about the research.

My memo-writing was not as systematic as the above might suggest but, more in retrospect than at the time, I can see that the notes do fall into these categories. I did not write the memos in four discrete sections but much more randomly. However, awareness of these categories was helpful in that they suggested different aspects of the research that might be addressed at any one time.

I was also aware of a certain self-consciousness in writing the notes. In GT, memos are only intended for personal use, and I was aware of Gibbs statement: "… memos are for your eyes only … so you can be forthright and they do not have to be polished pieces of writing" (2007, p.31) but initially I felt somewhat inhibited in my writing. Throughout the research process I had been aware of my determination that there should be a water-tight audit trail from the data to the analysis, from the analysis to the findings and thence to my interpretation. I found it difficult to accept that my memo-writing would not be judged or questioned by anyone else, and to have the freedom to write exactly how and what I wanted.

Observational memo-writing

In these memos the focus was mainly on concrete issues that participants included in their responses consisting of descriptive words which raised my awareness of the general issues that were being identified.

In synthesizing the memos in this category I was also particularly aware of the choice of language common to many of the responses to the questions. Much of this seemed to reflect counselling terminology, for example the use of the phrase 'core conditions' which is a direct reference to Rogers' (1951) theory of the counselling relationship, and the itemising of these conditions which appeared with great regularity, namely empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence. The use of the word 'boundaries', whilst obviously not exclusive to the therapeutic discipline, was also reminiscent of counselling language, as was the idea of creating an initial 'contract' between director and directee.

These were all subjects that consistently appeared in my memo-writing noting the frequency and the language in order to familiarise myself thoroughly with the data.

Methodological memo-writing

The main consideration that came into this category related to the subject of saturation of the data. GT theory suggests that the analysis should start as soon as it becomes available and should stop once it is clear that further data will not reveal any significant new material. However, as already stated (p.34) my intention was to draw on general GT principles rather than be ruled by them.

Having analysed the data from 29 of the 58 returned questionnaires, I began to question again whether saturation point had been reached as considerable repetition was emerging. I therefore reflected on this and wrote memos on the subject. I think I was trying to convince myself that I did not need to continue the analysis further, largely because of the time that it had already taken and would certainly take in the future if I continued.

However, in the end I decided to continue with the analysis of all the returned questionnaires for 2 reasons. Firstly, as already mentioned, (p.45), I had a sense that it would be disrespectful to the participants if I ignored their responses when they had expressed such interest and enthusiasm in my research and had clearly taken time and trouble to complete the questionnaire. The fact that 50 of the 58 participants had indicated that they would be

willing to take part in a further one-to-one interview was also evidence of their good-will towards the project which I very much wanted to honour.

Secondly I was influenced by the idea of 'the grace of the fifty-ninth minute', This was something that had featured in my training as a spiritual director and related to the possibility that, in a time-boundaried, one hour period for prayer and spiritual reflection, the true grace might emerge during the last minute of that hour.   This was seen as an encouragement not to cut short or abandon time spent in this way even when it felt as if it were not proving particularly fruitful.   Relating the idea of the grace of the fifty-ninth minute to the analysis of the questionnaires, I did not want to eliminate the possibility that significant richness might emerge even after a point of saturation might seem to have been reached.

As well as the question of saturation, I was also aware that there might be lessons to be learnt for the implementation of Phase 2 if all the questionnaires were analysed. My memos therefore included reflections and comments about the focus of the individual interviews and possible amendments to the schedule of questions Phase 2. Writing these memos helped to ensure that I didn't lose ideas that I could carry through to Phase 2 of the project.

Theoretical memo-writing

I found this to be the most interesting and fruitful of all the memo-writing categories as I was now able to start reflecting on the meaning of what I was reading in a more creative way than the mechanistic approach that coding offers.   However, I was very aware that it was in fact the rather mechanistic task of coding that facilitated the emergence of these more creative ideas. I enjoyed writing these memos, as they gave me an opportunity to 'allow' myself to identify interpretations and consider hunches and to reflect on how best I might explore these ideas in Phase 2.

Personal memo-writing

The memo-writing process described above, including the theoretical memos, increased my positive feelings and commitment to the research project and provided a reflexive opportunity which I found very valuable. It gave space for doubts and fears about whether the questionnaire would provide data of sufficient quality and quantity and whether I could be a competent analyst.   In the 58 completed questionnaires, only one included a negative comment about the questions themselves stating that he "… didn't always understand the question …" and I was aware of the disproportionate effect that this had on me. Writing a memo helped me to process the feelings of criticism that I experienced, and to remind myself of all the encouragement I had received from so many other participants.

Summary of memo-writing and coding

The coding and memo-writing gave me the opportunity to reflect on my feelings about my experience of the process of the research project. I had included in a journal my reflections on the ups and downs of writing the three papers of Stage 1 of the doctorate, but I now found that I could write about my personal process more authentically. There was some confusion in terms of the question of where I should be writing this – as reflections in my journal or as part of the memos. Memo-writing has remained part of my research process, and I haven't really resolved this question, using both journal and memos somewhat indiscriminately.

EMERGENT THEMES

Once I had completed the memo-writing process and identified the core concepts, I was able to identify five emergent themes from the Phase 1 data. These themes will be described and explored in the next chapter.

PHASE 2: THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS AND THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The aims of Phase 2 were:
- to gather more in-depth data.

- to test whether the data from the interviews triangulated the data from the questionnaire.

- to identify key issues to be pursued.

- to identify questions for possible future research.

In the light of the analysis of the Phase 1 data, I made only minor alterations to my schedule of potential interview questions.

```
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │ PURPOSIVE SAMPLING  │
          │  & INVITATION TO    │
          │    PARTICIPATE      │
          └─────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │    6 INTERVIEWS     │
          └─────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │ ANALYSIS: DESCRIPTIVE/│
          │ CATEGORIES/CONCEPTS │
          └─────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │     5 THEMES        │
          └─────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │  FURTHER ANALYSIS:  │
          │    PATTERNS &       │
          │    CONNECTIONS      │
          └─────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │ 3 SUPER-ORDINATE    │
          │     THEMES          │
          └─────────────────────┘
```
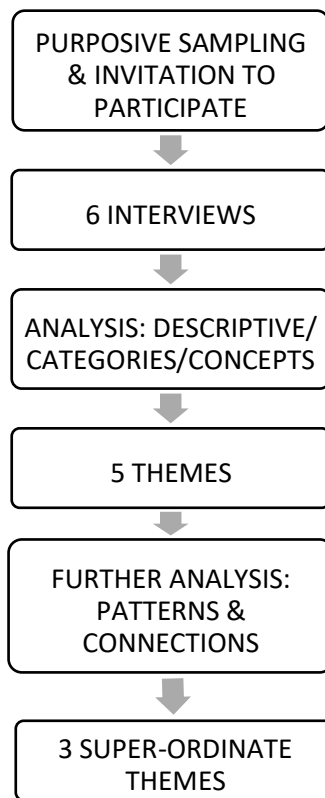
Figure 4.2
Flowchart of the Phase 2 process: individual interviews

PURPOSIVE SAMPLING OF PARTICIPANTS

Having made an initial list of all those who, in the questionnaire, had indicated their
willingness to participate in an individual interview, I highlighted those who held significant
leadership roles and who were influential in the development of practice as well as in
thinking and writing in this area of expertise. I selected a sample which reflected the
diversity of participants in terms of male and female, lay and ordained, whether or not trained
as a counsellor, and as much as possible across the age range.   I then approached eight
people by email inviting them to be interviewed. One failed to respond despite previously
having indicated willingness to be interviewed, one subsequently declined for personal
reasons that had not been evident when she completed the questionnaire, and six contacted
me to say that they were willing to take part. The general profiles of the participants is given
below:

Participant Male/Female	Lay	Ordained	Anglican	Roman Catholic	Age	Role
F1[1]	X		X		50+	Diocesan Adviser/Trainer
F2[2]	X		X		60+	Leader ecumenical group of spiritual directors/Trainer
F3[3]	X			X	50+	Trainer employed by a Roman Catholic Religious Order
F4[3]		X	X		50+	Diocesan Adviser/Chair ecumenical group/Trainer
M1[3]		X		X	50+	Spiritual director to RC seminarians/Trainer
M2[3]		X	X		50+	Leader spirituality centre/Trainer

Figure 4.3
Participant profiles: Individual Interviews

<u>Note</u>
1   interview took place at my home.
2   interview took place at her home
3   interview took place in their work setting
4   interview took place by Skype

As stated in the previous chapter, I had decided to follow the general principles of IPA in Phase 2. This decision was based on the fact that IPA provides a framework which is designed for relatively small numbers of participants. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, (2009, p.52), referring specifically to the case of professional doctorate students, state "Typically, numbers of interviews (rather than participants) of between four and ten are adopted … and that range seems about right."   This was consistent with the fact that I had identified eight possible interviewees on the basis of their roles in the field of spiritual direction, of whom I could interview 6.   In all cases this role included some element of monitoring and oversight in a recognised organisation such as a diocese, religious order, retreat house, seminary or spirituality centre. All participants also had some responsibility for, or involvement in, the

training of spiritual directors in England and Wales. Detailed profiles of Phase 2 participants will be given in Chapter 6 (pp.77-79).

Once I had received their agreement to participate, I arranged dates, times and venues convenient to the participants. I sent out an information sheet and two copies of the consent form by post. (Appendix 4, p.238).

THE INTERVIEWS

Three of the interviews were held at work venues.   In one case I went to the participant's home and one participant chose to come to my home to be interviewed.   One interview was held, at the participant's suggestion, by Skype. After my experience with the focus group, I recorded all the interviews using two sets of equipment, (analogue and digital), to ensure successful recording.

Although I had drawn up a schedule of questions that I might like to address in these interviews, I was constantly mindful of Smith, Flowers and Larkin's insistence that "… it may be that the interview moves completely away from the schedule and instead follows a course set by the participant," and they go on to say "Good research interviewing requires us to accept, and indeed relish, the fact that the course and content of an interview cannot be laid down in advance." (2009, p.65).

I found the interview process to be rich and rewarding.   Throughout the sessions I was very aware that I was listening to the experience of spiritual directors who had been practising for many years and who were drawing on different trainings and traditions.   There was also considerable variety in the exact roles they held which will be detailed further in Chapter 6. This variety added to the richness of the interviews.

THE TRANSCRIPTION PROCESS

I transcribed each recording as soon after the interview as possible and, in five of the six cases before embarking on the next interview. Although initially I considered this to be a somewhat laborious task, I quickly became very involved in the process and alert not only to the content but also to the nuances of language, tone and pace. Having completed the initial transcripts, and in accordance with the principles of IPA, I listened again to each recording to check the transcript for accuracy and also to gain a further sense of these nuances.

PHASE 2: DATA ANALYSIS AND THE CODING PROCESS

CODING THE INTERVIEWS

Following Smith, Flowers and Larkin's suggested strategy, (2009, pp.93-95) I arranged the text of the transcripts on the page with 2 margins, one for initial comments and the second for emergent themes.   This practical task of organising a page ready for analytical exploration was in itself valuable as it increased my familiarity with the text which was helpful preparation for the task ahead.

Having transcribed all the interviews, checked the transcripts and prepared the sheets of text for analysis, I started line-by-line analysis in accordance with the general principles of IPA in order to identify emergent themes. In the main I followed the step-by-step model suggested by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, Chapter 5) as I found this gave me a structure in which to start the analysis, yet with enough flexibility to support the process.

Step 1: reading and re-reading:

Reading a transcript through whilst listening to the recording as described above helped me to internalise the voice of the interviewee during subsequent readings and to immerse myself in the worldview of the interviewee.   At this stage I made preliminary notes of my immediate reactions and responses to the text. I found this helped me not to feel overwhelmed by the task ahead as it gave me a sense of personal agency in the analysis process. This was consistent with Smith, Flowers and Larkin's comment (2009, p.80) that "There is no clear right or wrong way of conducting this sort of analysis, and we encourage IPA researchers to be innovative in the ways that they approach it."

Step 2: Initial noting

This was the natural progression from the preliminary note-taking described above and involved adding further exploratory comments in order to start a more in-depth analysis rather than a merely superficial commentary.   Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, pp.83-96) emphasise that it is the *process* of noting that is valuable rather than any particular method, but suggest that these notes may incorporate descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments, paying attention to what was said and how it was said before moving to a more interpretative position.

I found this process helped to develop my awareness of both the content and the emphasis that participants attributed to particular aspects of the data. I also noted the recurrence of certain topics and views across the different responses. Rather to my surprise, I found the

process of deconstruction to be helpful (p.91), suggesting as it does that sections of the text might be read backwards in order to avoid an over-simplistic interpretation and give a deeper appreciation of the participant's intended meaning.

Having annotated the text of the transcriptions, I then made and remade lists of the concepts that I had noted and subsequently organised and reorganised these lists many times to identify common themes.

Step 3: developing emergent themes

At this point in the research I was aware of the double hermeneutic of the participant and the reflexive element of myself as researcher as I began to analyse and interpret the text and identify emergent themes. I was therefore mindful of the possibilities of different interpretations of the text and also of different perspectives in grouping and differentiating particular concepts.

Ultimately I recognised that there would never be a 'perfect' model of categorisation and that I would have to accept a 'good enough' version. This process resulted in the identification of five emergent themes which will be examined in Chapter 6 (p.77).

Step 4: moving to the next case

At this point I found that I transposed the order of steps suggested by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, p.100) in order to have an overview of connections across all the data.

Whilst it is impossible completely to ignore what has emerged from each individual case as it is analysed, Smith, Flowers and Larkin, (2009, p.100) point out that "… in hermeneutic parlance … your 'fore-structures' have changed." This was a helpful reminder of the importance of bracketing the data already analysed from other cases as much as possible when approaching subsequent cases. It was also helpful in reminding me of the reflexive part that I play in the interpretation of the data. I found that the IPA structure offered a supporting rigour in the continuing process.

Step 5: Looking for patterns across cases

This step helped me to identify themes common across cases and also highlighted the unique qualities that were emerging in individual cases, contributing both by the nature and the degree of importance to the super-ordinate themes. I mapped these themes across the individual transcripts and found a consistent pattern across cases.

Step 6: searching for connections across emergent themes

Having identified five themes, the task was now to seek out further patterns and connections which was achieved by further distillation of the data in order to put them into clusters by processes that Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, p.97) call 'abstraction' and 'subsumption' leading to the development of 'super-ordinate themes'.   They suggest that this process may be based on a number of possible criteria, for example the context and/or frequency of reference in the data or a particular function that they perform.

Consistent with this IPA process, I discovered that certain aspects had a high degree of recurrence, emphasis and importance. I therefore brought together these related aspects resulting into two super-ordinate themes which will be explored in Chapter 6 (p.77). I also identified a third super-ordinate theme by the IPA process of examining emergent themes in the light of their specific function in the transcript and the meaning attributed by participants. (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.98-99).

Throughout the process I was mindful of the challenge of approaching each interview as an individual and unique encounter, whilst bearing in mind the enriching possibilities of the experience of previous interviews in terms of triangulation. I was also aware of the impossibility of total bracketing in these circumstances, and of the possible impact of my role as researcher.

TRIANGULATION BETWEEN PHASE 1 AND PHASE 2 ANALYSIS

Having completed the analysis of the Phase 2 data, I returned to the coding and memo-writing of Phase 1, at the end of which I had identified 5 themes. I now checked whether my interpretation of the Phase 1 data could legitimately be organised into the same three superordinate themes emerging at the end of the Phase 2 analysis and found consistency between the 2 phases. These super-ordinate themes will be described and discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH CHOICES MADE AND MY EXPERIENCE OF THE PROCESS

Clearly, whatever preparation I had made to record the focus group was inadequate. I still do not have a full understanding of what went wrong, but at least the experience taught me to be more careful and very vigilant when it came to recording the individual interviews. Once I had recovered from realising what had happened, my main feeling was one of shame and embarrassment about how I would explain the situation to the six participants who had so enthusiastically engaged with the process. However, the response from all those

involved was of humour and good will. The experience also gave me the opportunity to reflect on those elements of personal perfectionism that can be unhelpful, and to get a sense of perspective.

My experience of NVIVO was also disappointing as I had enjoyed the training and was optimistic about using the program. However, not only was the technology troublesome and the data entering process laborious and tedious, but I also found that I was not getting a nuanced sense of the meaning of participants' contributions that I was entering. At the point that I reverted to Word, I was feeling resentful and that the time and effort that I had spent in doing the training had been wasted.

Having completed the two phases of research, I was aware that I needed to reflect on the choices and decisions I had made in designing the project, and to pay attention to reflexive factors, either implicit or explicit. In particular I found myself considering what the implications would have been if I had reversed the order of the two phases of the project. If I had undertaken the individual interviews first, I could then have explored the possibility of generalisability of the results through the medium of the questionnaire with the much larger number of participants. However, the data that to some extent informed the individual interview questions would not have been available.   I also reflected on the fact that the order in which I had undertaken the research did not necessarily negate the possibility of generalisability across the range of the participants in Phase 1.

It could be argued that, if Phase 1 had consisted of the individual interviews, it would have been difficult to identify appropriate participants. However, in practice the individuals that I approached are well known as leading figures in spiritual direction circles and I would have been able to draw up a list of possible interviewees whom I could approach from the outset. In favour of the order in which the research took place was the fact that, in Phase 2, I was able to examine more closely themes that had already emerged from Phase 1. Had I chosen the other way round, I might have ended up with a considerable amount of disparate data but without the opportunity for deeper exploration.

My conclusion therefore was that, while this was an interesting question, there were advantages and disadvantages to whichever decision I had made. Overall, I felt that I had made the right choice.

I also reflected on my decision to apply the general principles of GT in Phase 1 and of IPA in Phase 2.   I was aware that the amount of data collected in Phase 1 was more than would probably be typical of a grounded theory study, but GT offered a flexible methodological

framework rather than a rigid template, and I had never intended to follow a purist GT model. Whilst the task of coding the data from the questionnaires had been considerable, it had not proved unmanageable, and the process had provided a sound basis for Phase 2 of the project.

Throughout the implementation of the research project I was mindful of the comment made by IPA proponent and practitioner Finlay that: "To increase the integrity and trustworthiness of qualitative research, researchers need to evaluate how intersubjective elements influence data collection and analysis" (2002, p.531). Having accepted that my approach could not therefore be value-neutral, I was aware from the outset of the part that reflexivity could play in the analysis of the data. McLeod urges us to "*Be serious about reflexivity"* (italics original) and goes on to say:

> The experience, motivation and interests of the researcher are significant in all forms
> of research … It is essential for anyone undertaking qualitative research to work out
> his or her own position around reflexivity, and develop practical strategies for
> articulating that position both in the conduct of their research work and in the way it is
> written up. (2011, pp.274-275).

Gadamer (1981) points out that the understanding of anything involves what he calls "the fusion of horizons", the coming together of the two worlds of interpreter and text or event, and says "… understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating in an event of a tradition" (1975, p.290). In all our encounters, our understanding is shaped and informed by the context and culture of our lives and, as a researcher, I needed to be critically aware of my own position and possible assumptions, that is, to be reflexive.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I have described the process and methods adopted in relation to the focus group, the questionnaire and the individual interviews. I have acknowledged the failure of the focus group as a source of data and the lessons learnt from that experience have been recognised.   I have outlined the methods of analysis used, and indicated how the five emergent themes were identified. I have subsequently described the development of the three super-ordinate themes and have also commented on my reflexive process at this stage in the research.

In Chapters 5 and 6 I will give an overview of the findings that emerged from the analysis of the data from Phases 1 and 2 respectively. The initial five themes and the subsequent three

super-ordinate themes that emerged from the data will be examined, and the key issues to be pursued further will be identified.

CHAPTER FIVE
AN OVERVIEW OF THE PHASE 1 FINDINGS:
FOCUS GROUP AND QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I outlined the data collection and analysis process of Phases 1 and 2 of the research. In this chapter I will give an overview of the findings from the analysis of the 58 returned questionnaires of Phase 1. I will then group them into concepts and identify 5 emergent themes.

SUMMARY OF STAGE 1 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The pilot study

Having reviewed the twelve completed questionnaires from the pilot study, I decided that no amendments were necessary. I therefore started coding these questionnaires as soon as they were returned.

The focus group

As explained in Chapter 4, no usable data emerged from the focus group.

The questionnaire

As described in the previous chapter, the questionnaire was designed in 3 sections, each of which addressed a particular area of interest:

- The contextual personal and professional background and experience of participants.

- The participants' experience and perceptions of what constitutes good practice of spiritual direction.

- The participants' experience and perceptions of supervision of spiritual direction.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE QUANTITATIVE AND CONTEXTUAL DATA: QUESTIONS 1-10

The purpose of collecting the quantitative data included in Questions 1 – 10 was to establish the personal and professional context of the participants. My intention was to examine the data for any overarching patterns rather than for statistical significance. This was in order to highlight any aspects that invited particular interpretation in the light of the research

question. I was also aware that this data might suggest topics for future investigation. As stated in Chapter 4, I prepared the following spreadsheets of the quantitative data (Appendix 5, p.247):

- Data of male participants comparing quantitative/contextual variables with each other.
- Data of female participants comparing quantitative/contextual variables with other.

Summaries of the responses to the questions are given below:

Gender and age of the participants

A total of 111 spiritual directors were invited to participate in the research, 89 of whom were female and 22 of whom were male. Figure 5.1 shows the age range of male and female participants. It also shows that nearly half the participants were aged 65 or over.

	Number of Participants	Aged 35-45	Aged 46-55	Aged 56-65	Aged 66+
Male Participants	12	0	2	4	6
Female Participants	46	1	10	13	22
Total	58	1	12	17	28

Figure 5.1
Age range of male and female participants

The population of spiritual directors invited to participate in the research already consisted of a higher percentage of women than men, 89 to 22 of the total of 111, but the response rate was similar at approximately 50% in both cases. Of the 58 who completed the questionnaire, 46 were female (57% of the total invited) and 12 were male (55% of the total invited), indicating an almost identical percentage response across genders, 79% of the actual participants being female and 21% male. There are various possible interpretations of this data. It may be that women are more drawn to become spiritual directors, which may in turn be because of a natural inclination or because traditionally it has been something they were 'allowed' to do. It is also possible that this imbalance is a result of the fact that Anglican women could not be ordained priest until 1994 and that Roman Catholic women still cannot be ordained. In these circumstances it is possible that women consider spiritual direction to be a way in which they can exercise their vocation.

Anecdotally, I am also aware that it is sometimes suggested to women who have not been accepted for training in the Anglican church that they should consider spiritual direction as an alternative. I would have liked to ask a question about this but, because of my experience of working as a therapist with such clients, I was aware of the shame that this might evoke.

Training

Of the total 58 participants, 53 (91%) had received some form of training for spiritual direction. All 46 of the female and 7 of the 12 male participants had been trained. The 5 male exceptions were all priests, and it is possible that they considered ordination training was sufficient, a point to which I will return in Chapter 6.

Experience in years as a spiritual director

Figure 5.2 shows that, of 58 participants:

    30 (52%) had been practising 10+ years
    15 (26%) had been practising 6+ years
    13 (22%) had been practising 1-5 years

Number of Participants	1-5 years	6-9 years	10+ years
Male	2	1	9
Female	11	14	21
Total	13	15	30

Figure 5.2

Experience in years as a spiritual director

These figures indicated that the numbers were pretty evenly distributed between the possible categories.

Counsellors

Because of perceptions about the overlap between counselling and spiritual direction, a question to establish the number of counsellors was included in the question. 12 females and 1 male indicated that they had received counselling training, ranging from basic counselling skills to post-graduate diplomas and masters qualifications, indicating different levels of practical skills and experience.

Ordained status

24 (41%) of all participants were ordained, 9 of the 12 men and 15 of the 46 women participants. I had deliberately decided against asking a question about the denomination of the participants as I did not wish them to feel that they were being 'pigeon holed' in any way. I subsequently wished that I had included this in the questionnaire to provide additional data about the background of the participants. However, I had included a question about the training institutions the participants had attended which indicated that a range of denominational training was represented, including Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic, and one specifically identified as Interfaith.

Bearing in mind the age of many participants, it would be interesting to know how many were already acting as spiritual directors before ordination training. It was noteworthy that only 2 of the 24 ordained directors were seeing 16+ directees, perhaps indicating that they did not consider spiritual direction to be a core activity of their priesthood.

Number of directees and frequency of meetings

24 participants (41%) were seeing between one and 5 spiritual directees at the time they completed the questionnaire; 25 (43%) directors were seeing between 6 and 10, and a further 4 (7%) were seeing between 11 and 15 directees. 5 directors (9%) were meeting with over 16 directees, 4 of whom were working in spirituality centres or retreat houses.

Only 3 participants indicated that, in general, they saw their directees more frequently than once every 6 weeks. When taking into account the factors of number of directees and frequency of meeting, it can be seen that, for the majority of directors, spiritual direction is not a core activity. Even those who were seeing 10 directees every 6 weeks would only be averaging between one and 2 meetings a week and some might not be seeing a directee every week. It could therefore take a considerable length of time to gain a substantial number of hours of practical experience, an outcome that I will consider further in subsequent chapters.

Figure 5.3 shows the number of directees being seen by male and female directors:

	1 - 5 Directees	6 – 9 directees	10 – 15 directees	16+ directees
Male	5	3	2	2
Female	19	22	2	3
Total	24	25	4	5

Figure 5.3
Number of directees being seen by male and female directors

The responses to the question about the number of directees being seen raise interesting underlying questions about experience and competence of practitioners which will be addressed in considerable detail in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Charging and payment for spiritual direction

34 (59%) of the participants stated that they did not charge, 19 (33%) indicated that they did, at least sometimes and in some contexts, and 5 (8%) asked for a charitable donation. Two clergy, both male, made a charge, one being a member of a Roman Catholic religious order for whom this was a main source of income, and the other being an Anglican parish priest.

It is perhaps worth stating that directors on the SpiDir list are permitted to make their own decision about whether they charge or not. I speculate about whether the history and culture of spiritual direction discourages charging, and perhaps therefore also discourages younger people from becoming spiritual directors.

Codes of practice

Participants were asked to identify any code of to which they adhere as a spiritual director and the responses were wide ranging.   Codes or guidelines relating to counselling were the most numerous, 21 (36%) of participants making specific reference to either the BACP Ethical Framework (1996) or, more generally, to codes of specific counselling training courses, for example, Psychosynthesis Trust, Westminster Pastoral Foundation, Institute of Pastoral Counselling. The codes produced by Spiritual Directors International (SDI, 2015/2016) and those of specific dioceses were also mentioned, as were codes relating to other disciplines, for example, medical and social work. It was clear from these responses that practitioners are aware of and influenced by a variety of codes of practice, but that there is currently no standardisation in this area.

Summary of the quantitative and contextual data

Analysing the quantitative, contextual data helped to give me some sense of who the participants were and of the rich variety of their backgrounds and experience. The process of doing the analysis was probably as important as the information that it realised in that it made me familiar with the data which was helpful when it came to starting the analysis.

The following two issues recurred throughout the research and are of particular significance in relation to the research question:

- The lack of practice hours of many directors, resulting in slow development of experience and competence.

- Attitudes to charging and payment for spiritual direction.

I will return to the implications of both these issues in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

As I am not aware of any comparable database relating to the practice of spiritual direction in the UK, I consider that this data can provide a valuable base line for future research so that changes in demographic and background can be explored and analysed further.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE QUALITATIVE DATA: QUESTIONS 11 – 20.

I have described the process of the coding and analysis of the Phase 1 data in Chapter 4. As stated, this process led to the identification of concepts and themes. The examples of findings given below all related to the topics that were consistently and commonly found throughout the responses. In the main, these references were so frequent that to list the participant numbers in each case would become unwieldly and even distracting.

Overview of the findings from question 11: *What do you consider are the main features of good spiritual direction?*

Responses to Question 11 included reference to the centrality of the relationship between God and the director. This included the importance of the director's personal spiritual life, of regular of prayer, personal spiritual direction, and the sense of vocation of the director. Participants also commented on the primacy of the relationship between director and directee, and of a sense of welcome and hospitality. Reference was also made to the

charism of spiritual direction and the gift of discernment. The value of being included in some form of faith community was also identified

The concepts that emerged from the coding of Question 11 included boundary issues, establishing an initial contract, maintaining appropriate confidentiality and avoiding dual relationships.   Phase 1 participants specified the necessity of demonstrating certain personal qualities such as compassion, acceptance, respect and self-awareness. They also mentioned empathy and offering encouragement to directees, as well as being able to maintain a non-judgmental stance, being able to provide a safe environment and being open to different interpretations of faith.   In addition the responses emphasised the importance and value of supervision, and aspects of training and continuing professional development.

Practical skills such as active listening, questioning techniques, and the ability to stay with silence and to honour the directee's autonomy were all included in the responses. Knowledge of specific topics included working with clergy and ordinands, different personality types, issues of vocation, and addiction.   Some of the concepts that emerged were more explicit than others. For example, accountability was specifically mentioned by participants but with no suggestion to whom this accountability might be. Similarly, awareness of the director's limitations was mentioned, together with the possibility of referral, but how this might work in practice was not indicated.

Overview of the findings from question 12: *What ethical Issues do you think are particularly important in spiritual direction?*

The questionnaire had acknowledged that there might be overlaps between Questions 11 and 12 and this proved to be the case, revealing many of the same concepts. However, in some cases the emphasis was different in that more participants included accountability and safeguarding in their responses than was the case for Question 11. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality was emphasised, as well as knowledge of legal requirements. The importance and value of training, supervision and continuing professional development were particularly stressed, as was awareness of personal limitations as a practitioner. Adequate knowledge of psychological issues was also specified.

Overview of the findings from questions 13 – 20: Participants' perceptions and experience of supervision.

Recognition of the relevance and importance of supervision is relatively new in spiritual direction and is not yet an expectation or requirement in all settings and contexts. The concept of supervision is drawn from, among other disciplines, pastoral care and counselling, and this question was included in order to gather data about the experience of participants and their perceptions of what is actually happening in supervision.

However, responses to this question indicated that the necessity for supervision was widely accepted by participants. Typical contributions emphasised the value that participants placed on their supervision and their perception that it helped them to identify their own developmental needs and that it provided continuing professional development, as well as support, for their practice.

Figure 5.4 shows the number of directors and the frequency of their supervision:

Number of Directees	Number of Directors	4 weeks	6 - 8 weeks	10 -12 weeks	No information given
1+	26	2	8	6	10
5+	24	5	12	3	4
10+	4	0	1	1	2
16+	4	2	2	0	0
TOTAL	58	9	23	10	16

Figure 5.4
Frequency of supervision meetings

From the above table it can be seen that the frequency of meeting for supervision varied considerably, and that no general pattern could be identified. This was partly because some participants did not answer the question which asked for details about their supervision arrangements, for example, whether it was individual or group, peer or facilitated. However, although it may not be possible to draw generalities from the answers that were given, it was clear that there is a very wide range of practice, from monthly individual supervision to a group of 8 that meets twice a year. It was also interesting to note that participants had little or no information about the training and experience of their supervisors, suggesting that perhaps there might be an element of having to accept whatever and whoever is available, although it was clear that all participants received supervision of some sort and that 35 out of

58 participants (60%) made some financial contribution to the cost of their supervision. This lack of data about the training and experience of supervisors was disappointing and is perhaps an area for future research. Nevertheless, all participants responded to Question 20 which asked about the three main issues that were raised in supervision.

Many of the concepts that arose in response to Questions 11 and 12 were also mentioned in response to Question 20, including ethics, boundaries, limitations of the director, professional development and the relationship between director and directee. Specific issues mentioned in response to this question included strategies and skills, the context in which spiritual direction is taking place, working with particular content, process, psychological and personality issues and the resourcing of directees. Discernment was also mentioned in relation to both directees' material and the reactions and responses of directors. It could therefore be seen that some of the same concepts that were identified from the responses to Question 11 and 12 also related to Question 20. However, the main theme that emerged in answer to Question 20 related to the impact of the work of spiritual direction on directors and their personal response to the material brought by directees.

Participants were also invited to comment on any needs that were not being met by their current supervision. Thirty participants either didn't answer the question or said there were no needs that were not being met in their current arrangements. Two directors who were having individual supervision commented that they missed the collegial element of group supervision and the possible limitations in knowledge that might be a consequence.

Disadvantages of group supervision included lack of time to present their material, potential narrowness of approach when all members of the group share the same 'modality', and differentiation of needs in a group of experienced and inexperienced supervisees. However, whilst many of the concepts overlapped across Questions 11, 12 and 20, there was an additional emphasis in the responses to Question 20 relating to the impact of the work on the director in general and the over-identification with directees' material in particular. The responses also indicated that positive experiences were rarely mentioned in supervision, the focus being on problems rather than celebrating 'successes' despite the fact that this is one of the aims of supervision previously identified. (Chapter 2).

In the main, the focus of the participants' responses was on their own feelings and comments such as "How the work is impacting me" (Participant 28); "Feelings about issues" (Participant 29); "Issues directees raise that reflect my own" (Participant 43) were common. From the findings, it was clear that participants considered that supervision offered the opportunity for

self-exploration.   This raises the question of the primary purpose of supervision of spiritual direction which will be addressed further in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

OVERVIEW OF THE EMERGENT THEMES

As described in Chapter 4, throughout the coding process I was writing memos about my observations and my immediate thoughts and responses to the data that was emerging. The coding was a repetitious process to which I returned over and over again, trying to reach a perfectly systematised model in which to present the data, until I reached a stage where I realised that there would always be some ambiguities in my interpretation, not least because of the overlap of responses between questions. However, I concluded that the data could justifiably be categorised into the 5 following themes:

- The director's personal spiritual life
- The director/directee relationship
- Professional practice
- Competent practice
- Supervision practice

These themes are summarised in Figure 5.5 below:

CONCEPTS AND EMERGENT THEMES

CONCEPTS IN THEME 1: THE DIRECTOR'S PERSONAL SPIRITUAL LIFE	CONCEPTS IN THEME 2: THE DIRECTOR/ DIRECTEE RELATIONSHIP	CONCEPTS IN THEME 3: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE	CONCEPTS IN THEME 4: COMPETENT PRACTICE	CONCEPTS IN THEME 5: SUPERVISION PRACTICE
Director's relationship with God	Welcome and hospitality	Boundaries	Purpose/focus	Necessity
Holy Spirit as director	Core conditions	Contract	Skills	Purpose
Personal prayer	Directee autonomy	Training and CPD	Working with particular groups (eg clergy)	Accountability
Own spiritual direction	Encouragement	Confidentiality	Staying with silence	Support and Encouragement
Sense of vocation	Awareness of power	Limitations/ referral	Knowledge	Sense of community, support and collegiality
Community and support	Challenge	Safeguarding	Psychological issues	Development of knowledge and skills
Selfawareness and care			Personality types	Availability
Discernment			Addiction	
Spiritual direction as charism				

Figure 5.5
Phase 1 concepts and emergent themes

I give below an overview the five themes and the concepts that contributed to each of them. I will return to these themes in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

THE THEME OF THE DIRECTOR'S PERSONAL SPIRITUAL LIFE

Of all the concepts that emerged from the responses to the questionnaire, those relating to the personal qualities of the director were given priority, both in terms of the frequency of reference and of the importance attributed to them by the participants. These qualities were not externally apparent, but more recognisable through experience than by outward and

visible signs. I have included in this theme references made to spiritual direction as charism, and also the emphasis placed on the gift of discernment. It is all these concepts that contribute to the theme that I have identified as the Director's Personal Spiritual Life.

The spiritual and prayer life of the director was at the core of this theme and was evident in the responses to Questions 11, 12 and 20. However, other personal qualities were also mentioned, such as trustworthiness, valuing the individual and respect for diversity which were all identified as being essential for good practice of spiritual direction. Again, I would suggest that these are qualities that pervade every aspect of spiritual direction and are therefore core across all themes.

Engaging in their own spiritual direction was mentioned as vital for spiritual directors. Humility, self-care, self-awareness, and an ability and willingness for self-reflection were also identified as requirements for a spiritual director, as well as willingness to engage in appropriate personal development. The importance of being part of a faith community was also mentioned, although there were only two specific references to church.

Although there were concepts in this theme (particularly self-care and personal development) that have been adopted in both a pastoral care and a therapeutic paradigm, the emphasis of the qualities mentioned were drawn much more from a theological and spiritual context.

THE THEME OF THE DIRECTOR/DIRECTEE RELATIONSHIP

The attitude of the director, both to the directee and to the process of direction, was considered to be a significant theme by participants, with particular reference to hospitality and a sense of welcome. Maintaining directee autonomy was seen as particularly important, as was the ability of the director not to collude or interfere with the directee's process. Typical comments were: "The director is giving the directee space to engage with God in whatever way is best for them," (Participant 31); "Non-directive listening …" (Participant 36).

Across Questions 11, 12 and 20 the importance of the core conditions of empathy, congruence and being non-judgemental was specifically mentioned and was also reflected in references to the idea of the director as 'soulfriend' and companion on the spiritual journey. Offering encouragement to directees in their relationship with God was also frequently mentioned, as was the importance of the recognition of the Holy Spirit as the real director.

Whilst it may be considered that the relationship between director and directee was implicit in the responses to Question 11, it was explicit in the responses to Question 12, and was evidenced by reference to maintaining an appropriate relationship between them and the issue of the use and abuse of power. This was also the case with Question 20, where relationship dynamics and personal identification with directees were both specifically mentioned.

THE THEME OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

I interpreted the concepts that I have included in this theme as issues which provide the foundations and scaffolding within which spiritual direction can safely be practised and which I have termed 'professional'. Whilst there may be discussion about whether the use of this word is helpful in this connection, there is undoubtedly an expectation that spiritual direction will be practised with due care for the wellbeing of the directee, and it is those elements that go towards ensuring this that contribute to professional practice.

The theme of professional practice relates essentially to those aspects that provide a context in which spiritual direction can take place safely and ethically, some relating to the director and some relating to the provision of an environment that supports and facilitates safe practice. Many of these concepts would seem to be drawn from other disciplines, for example from pastoral care, therapy, and nursing, and included boundary issues, contracting, confidentiality, time keeping, training and professional development, supervision, regular reviews, referral, accountability, complaints and safeguarding.

Reference to the importance and benefits of these aspects of practice was a constant in the responses to Questions 11, 12 and 20, typical comments being: "Holding a safe space for the directee, confidentiality, boundaries …" (Participant (10); "Boundaried relationship; confidentiality; safe space; uninterrupted time; contract …" (Participant 14); "On-going training and enhancement of skills and developing awareness of own limitations" (Participant 2); "Commitment to one's own supervision" (Participant 39).

It was clear from the responses to the question that the majority of participants considered the provision of a safe and confidential space to be essential for the good practice of spiritual direction and, whilst the focus of the specific aspects of this may have varied from individual to individual, there was general consensus about the importance of these issues.

THE THEME OF COMPETENT PRACTICE

The fourth theme that emerged from both Questions 11 and 12 was that of competent practice which included abilities that could perhaps be seen as the 'tools of the trade' that a directee might reasonably expect a director to possess. The theme therefore related to the knowledge and skills that a director should be able to demonstrate. This knowledge included different forms of spirituality and prayer, the significance of beginnings and endings, personality types, life experience, relationships and scripture.   Sufficient psychological understanding to be able to recognise clinical anxiety and depression was also identified, as was the ability and confidence to recognise when the issues presented would be beyond the practitioner's limits of competence. Responses also included a requirement for spiritual directors to have adequate knowledge and information about other resources and agencies to offer directees if circumstances suggested that this would be relevant.

Some participants were explicit in identifying specific skills. Listening at depth was frequently mentioned, for example "Listen with mind, heart and whole body" (Participant 34); "Listening to directee, Holy Spirit and self", (Participant 37);   "To give full attention to directee … to listen for as long as it takes for the directee to express themselves." (Participant 3). These skills and knowledge were also reflected in the responses to Question 20. Sensitive questioning was also identified by some participants.

The ability to engage in the discernment process emerged as a significant concept, for example, "To help directees discover how God is working in their life (Participant 3); "Director … working gently … in a process of discernment in the service of the directee, God and the world/kingdom" (Participant 58). "Discernment including what lies behind and beyond the words …" (Participant 36); "Discernment … in relation to what the directee brings" (Participant 40).

Other skills included the ability to establish the purpose and focus of the work, being able to challenge without shaming the directee, and being able to stay with silence. Knowledge of the Bible, of the history of spiritual direction, and of different spiritualities was also mentioned, as was familiarity with a variety of resources, for example "Some knowledge of helpful reading" (Participant 12).

The responses to Question 20 refined in greater detail some of the more generic responses previously given to Questions 11 and 12, for example such issues as working with clergy and working with addiction were specifically mentioned as issues arising regularly in

supervision, rather than the more generalised points of 'strategies' referred to in response to Questions 11 and 12. .

A basic knowledge of some legal matters was also strongly indicated, particularly in the area of maintaining confidentiality. However, it was clear from the responses that in this respect there was a certain degree of confusion about what is mandatory by law, what is defensible and what is required by employers such as the church, the NHS and third sector organisations, and I will return to this topic in Chapter 7.

THE THEME OF SUPERVISION

The theme of supervision was slightly different from the other four themes in that there was a specific question directed at obtaining participants' views on the subject. However, there were also many explicit references to supervision in the responses to Questions 11 and 12 as well as implicit allusions that would be seen as central components of supervision, such as "insights from spiritual training and objective reflection" (Participant 17); "ensuring my own growth" (Participant 26); "Anxieties about being good enough" (Participant 21).

The purpose of supervision was also both implicit and explicit in the responses, particularly to Question 20. Typical responses included "Exploration of director's feelings and thoughts" (Participant 2); "Rubbing points in a direction session that touch/affect directee" (Participant 36); "Feelings arising from relationship with directee" (Participant 26). Challenge and accountability, both issues that are central to supervision, were also mentioned by many participants.

Many of the concepts mentioned in response to the question on supervision were also found in connection with other themes, supervision offering an opportunity to address almost any issue relating to spiritual direction. The data therefore suggested that various aspects contributed to a strong theme of the centrality of supervision in the good and ethical practice of spiritual direction.

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE FIVE THEMES

As already described, the coding process identified a number of common concepts in the responses to Questions 11, 12 and 20 of the questionnaire. In analysing the concepts into themes, I was aware of the danger of developing a 'silo' mentality which could lead to a mechanistic approach to the practice of spiritual direction rather than looking at the overall

experience of the directee. This is something that I held in mind throughout the analysis process.

Although I have identified five separate themes, I would suggest that the first theme, that of the director's personal spiritual life, is present in all the other four and from which it cannot be separated.   As previously stated, the qualities mentioned are inherent in the presence and person of the spiritual director rather than because of anything overt and visible.   The director's presence suffuses the whole of the directee's experience of every spiritual direction encounter rather than being experienced in isolation. The personal spiritual life of the director cannot be observed, measured or evaluated, but it can be experienced and recognised as core to who the director is; it is ontologically present. As Participant 34 said: "I know when I am with a person of prayer."

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The outcomes of the analysis of the responses to the Phase 1 questionnaire provided quantitative data about the context and personal profile of the participants, and qualitative data drawn from the participants' experience of both direction and supervision.

From the above data, the five main themes that emerged were:

- Director's Personal Spiritual Life
- Director/Directee Relationship
- Professional Practice
- Competent Practice
- Supervision Practice

Participants in the individual interviews that constituted the Phase 2 of the research also addressed many of the same concepts and themes in greater detail and I will examine the evidence from these interviews in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX
OVERVIEW OF PHASE 2 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:
THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I described the analysis of the findings from Phase 1. In this chapter I will give an overview of the analysis of Phase 2 of the research. This phase consisted of individual, semi-structured interviews with six participants who had previously completed the questionnaire, who had indicated a willingness to be interviewed, and who had been sampled because the significant roles that they currently held in the provision of spiritual direction in the UK.

Before embarking on the interviews, I reviewed the schedule of questions in the light of the findings from the Phase 1 data. During this process I held in mind the possibility that these findings might result in an unhelpful bias or, alternatively, that ignoring these findings might be detrimental to the second phase of the research. However, having reflected on these two possibilities, and taking my experience of analysing the Phase 1 data in account, I came to the conclusion that the original schedule of questions submitted for ethics approval did not need any major amendments.

PROFILES OF THE PHASE 2 PARTICIPANTS

The gender, age, denomination, ordained or lay status of the Stage 2 participants is shown in Figure 4.3 in Chapter 4 (page 53) I give below further contextual information about each of the Phase 2 participants.

Participant F1 was an Anglican lay woman, aged between 46 and 55, who had worked as a spiritual director for between 6–9 years. She described herself as "diocesan broker" in an Anglican diocese. Her role as a volunteer was to respond to general enquiries about spiritual direction and to deal with requests for information about how to find a spiritual director. As she explained:

> My role is known as broker for spiritual direction in my diocese. What that means is that effectively I am the list holder and I have responsibility for matching people enquiring about spiritual direction with a spiritual director. It's not just about matching people based on their location or whatever, it's about finding someone who's suitable, who fits the needs of the person who is seeking …

She was also involved as administrator and personal tutor to diocesan courses on spiritual direction and spirituality, ran an annual resourcing day for the spiritual directors on the diocesan list, and had oversight of ten supervision groups in the diocese.   Supervision was a requirement for all spiritual directors and those who were not members of one of these groups, preferring to make their own arrangements, were expected to give her details of their supervision arrangements.

Participant F2 was an Anglican lay woman, aged over 65 who has been working as a spiritual director for over ten years.   She described herself as a spiritual director who, as a volunteer, was involved in an independent, ecumenical spiritual direction network. She was also involved in initial and on-going training of spiritual directors and helped to manage and maintain the list of spiritual directors in her area.

Participant F3 was a Roman Catholic woman, aged between 46 and 55, who had worked as a spiritual director for over ten years. She was currently offering spiritual direction and running training courses as well as supervision workshops.   She was a member of the team of retreat directors in two Roman Catholic retreat centres for over 14 years, and had been director in one of them for over five years.

Participant F4 was an Anglican ordained female, aged between 46 and 55, who was the spirituality adviser for an Anglican diocese.   This was, unusually, a full time, paid position and included running training courses. She also arranged and ran quiet days in the diocese and held information about spiritual directors.

F4 was also involved in helping enquirers in finding a spiritual director, although not through a 'matchmaking' service as described by F1, and she held the diocesan list of 'approved' spiritual directors.   Those on this list agreed that no money would change hands, either as payment or donation and also agreed to Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) and to operating under specific diocesan guidelines. Being on this list meant that they were covered by the diocesan insurance for public liability, although not for professional indemnity.   F4 was also aware of other spiritual directors who did in fact make a charge and commented that, in effect, the diocesan list did not include some of the most experienced practitioners in the area. She did not offer a matchmaking service to people seeking a spiritual director.

Participant M1 was male, aged 46 and 55, and a Roman Catholic priest.   He described his role as having three layers:

- Spiritual director in a house of formation where the role was about the spirituality of the whole house as a corporate body.
- Spiritual director for all seminarians in their first year in seminary, and also subsequently if that is their choice. This model was common to Roman Catholic seminaries world-wide.
- Spiritual director to others from outside the seminary who were not necessarily clergy.

M1 saw his role as spiritual director of seminarians, for whom spiritual direction is a requirement, as being very different from his role as spiritual director to non-seminarians because of the residential context in which it occurred.

Participant M2 was male, aged between 56 – 65 and an ordained priest in the Anglican church as well as a practising counsellor.   When asked to describe his role he stated: "The three main areas are practitioner, being responsible for a training programme which is management of staff but also course content and good practice … and running workshops for other people's training or on-going development around the country." He also specifically identified dealing with problems that from time-to-time arose in the training course as part of his role.

DATA ANALYSIS: IDENTIFICATION OF CONCEPTS AND THEMES

The emergent themes are shown in the following diagram:

CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN THEME 1: THE DIRECTOR'S PERSONAL SPIRITUAL LIFE	CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN THEME 2: THE DIRECTOR/ DIRECTEE RELATIONSHIP	CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN THEME 3: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE	CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN THEME 4: COMPETENT PRACTICE	CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN THEME 5: SUPERVISION PRACTICE
Personal spiritual practice	Essence of relationship	Boundaries	In-depth listening and essential skills	Necessity for supervision
Personal charism and vocation/discernment	Welcome and hospitality	Training and professional development		Benefits of supervision
Personal spiritual direction	Trusting relationship	Contracting		Purpose of supervision
Community	'Love' directee'	Confidentiality		Models of supervision
Self-awareness and humility	Dual relationships	Codes of practice and accreditation		Accountability
Freedom to follow Holy Spirit		Money and charging		Links to competent practice
Intelligence				Cost of supervision

Figure 6.1
Phase 2 concepts and emergent themes

As described in more detail in Chapter 4, the first stage of the analysis was to transcribe, check, read and re-read the transcripts of the recorded interviews. I then coded the text descriptively line by line, and subsequently analysed the descriptions to identify concepts. I created Word files for each concept for easy reference during the rest of the analysis process. I was very aware that any time spent examining the data was beneficial in terms of familiarisation. Whilst some of the concepts that were identified in this process were different from or additional to those included in the analysis of Phase 1, there were considerable overlaps, and, when grouped, produced the same themes as can be seen when comparing Figure 5.5 (p.71) and Figure 6.1 above.

From the concepts that the coding and analysis identified, the following themes emerged from the Phase 2 analysis:

Theme 1: The director's personal spiritual life
Theme 2: The director/directee relationship
Theme 3: Professional Practice
Theme 4: Competent Practice
Theme 5: Supervision Practice

THEME 1: THE DIRECTOR'S PERSONAL SPIRITUAL LIFE

In identifying what contributes to good and ethical practice in spiritual direction, the first theme that emerged from the Phase 2 analysis was that of the director's personal spiritual life. The elements of this theme would be evident as part of their personhood rather than being anything specifically behavioural, aspects which would be recognised through experience rather than by observation of particular actions or skills.   However, whilst it was the outworking of these qualities that would be sensed by directees, the participants suggested aspects of spiritual practice that they considered to be a sine qua non in the life of spiritual directors and which would permeate all the actions and skills that they might demonstrate in their practice.

In reflecting on the quality of personhood, their own and that of others, the Phase 2 participants raised a variety of factors depending on their personal contexts, experience, and circumstances. However, despite variations in emphasis, an overarching recognition of the personal spiritual life of directors clearly emerged as making a particularly significant contribution to the good practice of spiritual direction, and all participants made reference to the importance of recognising the work of the Holy Spirit.

Many of the aspects of the directors' lives that were named were based on a sense of vocation to the role of spiritual director and to their personal spiritual life. This included a commitment to prayer and to their own spiritual direction, together with a recognition of the charism of spiritual direction, an acknowledgement that the Holy Spirit is the true director, and the sense of humility that followed from this awareness. A willingness and openness to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit was also mentioned.   The importance of the director being part of some sort of faith community (not necessarily church) was also identified as significant.   All these attributes were considered to be essential and implicit in the good practice of spiritual direction, out of which a gift of discernment would develop.

F1 spoke of the sense of peace and assurance that she witnessed in colleagues, which did not mean an arrogance but "… more a humility because they exercise a ministry of listening to God whilst listening to their directee, so the ones who've had the most impact on me are

those who kind of manage … that lovely Thomas Merton thing of the Holy Spirit being the director par excellence" and went on to say that "I am comfortable with using the title of spiritual director, as there is an element of signposting in the ministry, it's a little bit like St John pointing the way to Jesus saying: 'Behold the Lamb of God.'"

F2 highlighted the need for personal prayer, particularly when she found the work as a director stressful, for example when facilitating the Ignatian exercises. Bearing this in mind, she limited the number of such directees to two at any one time.

F3 saw personal qualities as necessary in a spiritual director, and considered that, together with personal experience, discernment and good skills, they formed the foundation for practice. She stated that: "I think primarily the person's own experience of God and discernment is a very firm foundation … recognised by a wider community." She also drew attention to the necessity of "… the humility before the surprising experience of God", going on to say: "Frankly if they haven't got the personal experience and personal attributes it doesn't matter how skilled they are."   When talking about the gift of discernment, F3 stated: "Discernment, it's not a skill, but you kind of know it when you see it."

F4 identified what she thought was the most important facet of a spiritual director as follows: "The most important thing is that they themselves are a person of prayer and are daily opening themselves up to God and going through that experience of finding that there are fewer and fewer places to hide … that as the journey goes on, the spiral gets tighter …" She also spoke of the necessity for humility and to do what she called '"the inner work" and stated: "I think the best way to learn discernment is to learn it on yourself, … to go on IGRs, have a good spiritual director yourself …" Whilst she emphasised that discernment is a charism, she was also clear that supervision could play a part in its development "… it just increases the clarity of your awareness and the quality of your discernment."

F4 expressed a particular interest in the personality type of directors and their directees and the part that this might play in spiritual direction, recognising the differences in personality and reflecting on how this might affect the direction process. She was particularly interested in how to develop effective direction with extrovert directees for whom contemplative models did not always offer a good 'fit', stating "I'm wondering … how to help people relate better to God and extroverts love God too!" She also expressed a concern that, coming as she does from an apophatic tradition of silence, she might be imposing something on her directees which would, as she put it, "make them wither."

Of all the participants, M1 had perhaps been the most influenced by his own spiritual director of 27 years, whom he identified as his 'spiritual father' and from whom he considered he had learnt all he now knew. He emphasised the importance of being able to "… observe the Holy Spirit operating" and considered that spiritual direction "… hangs on the gift of discernment, a gift of the Holy Spirit … knowing the thing from the inside is everything." He was quite clear that that, for him, "… spiritual direction is a charism rather than a profession …" although he went on to express the view that "… you have to be professional … but what I jib at is anything that would cramp the spontaneity …" He also commented on the importance of recognising that director and directee are on a common journey, and was clear that he would not want any codes of conduct or professionalism to:

> … obscure what is fundamentally a sacramental relationship because you've got two baptised people engaged with each other … to hold the beginner's mind so then you are open to everything because the Holy Spirit is speaking to me as I'm listening to the other person at the same time.

M2 stressed the importance of being in "… right relationship with God with prayer and with the practice of discernment going on in one's life …." He also recognised his own charism in terms of public speaking and workshops and valued the sense of community that he derived from working with other directors and which he saw as supporting him in his work. He saw spiritual direction as a process of facilitating God's call to closer relationship with Him and recognised the element of the work that dealt with quite practical elements of this, for example discerning how many directees it is wise for a particular director to be seeing. M2 also made an interesting distinction between the practice of spiritual direction and that of spiritual accompaniment in which he suggested that "… spiritual direction …would always have an element of discernment …" based on what would be consistent with the will of God. M2 also emphasised the need for on-going formation through, amongst other possibilities, supervision, but acknowledged that there were other effective means of securing this, such as living in community and participating in the monastic routine of offices and contemplative prayer.

I will return to the question of spiritual direction as charism in the next chapter where I will critique the concept in the light of theological understanding and consider the significance for spiritual directors.

THEME 2: THE DIRECTOR/DIRECTEE RELATIONSHIP

The nature of the relationship

Whilst in the responses to Phase 1 some of the material that related to the director/directee relationship was more implicit than explicit, all the participants in the Phase 2 interviews identified the relationship between director and directee as a central theme in the good practice of spiritual direction. Implicit in establishing this relationship was a sense of welcome and hospitality. Reference was also made to idea that the director/directee relationship has parallels with that between supervisors and supervisees.

The nature of these relationships was demonstrated in such statements as: "… the capacity to bear one another's burdens …" (F1) and "… you probably have to … love the directee …" (F2), who went on to say "I can find that people who would normally irritate me no end …I do actually love them …", and also referred to the greater depth of relationship that she had experienced when doing the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and meeting with her director weekly rather than less frequently. Issues of trust, the offering of a safe space and feelings of being accepted were also raised in this context.

F3 commented on her belief that setting a clear contract is part of establishing the relationship with a directee. She also acknowledged that people differ in personality and said that the relationship with her directees was "… partly conditioned by her temperament …" She also stated that she would suggest a directee change director if a relationship of trust was lacking.   M1 referred to the "… phase of having to acquire a kind of alliance and trust …" and speculated whether establishing the relationship with a directee would take as long as establishing a psychotherapeutic relationship.   He was particularly interested in, and aware of, the unconscious relationship, stating "… I'm convinced that there is communication operating at several levels, conscious to conscious … and my unconscious and their conscious and unconscious connecting …" reflecting on how this might play out in the session.

Dual relationships

F3 was realistic about the complexity of dual and multiple relationships stating "… we know what the world is like and there's a very good chance you will know people from another context" going on to say that, whilst ideally you would keep the relationships very separate, sometimes "There is no other way and that is just how they do it …"

M2 also reflected on the difficulties of overlapping relationships, particularly in rural areas or tight- knit communities, and made particular reference to the power dynamics that might be involved, for example when either director or directee is ordained and the other isn't, or one holds a position of defined authority in a church community. He also questioned whether, when so many people are training as spiritual directors, it is really necessary for someone to choose a director with whom they have another relationship, although he also acknowledged that the Holy Spirit did not always seem to agree with him!

THEME 3: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Participants in both Phases 1 and 2 considered that the good practice of spiritual direction includes elements which can be taught, learnt and developed, elements which contribute to what I would consider to be a professional approach to practice and which I describe below.

Boundaries

All participants considered boundaries to be a significant issue, but there was also consistency in the view that there needed to be some flexibility, particularly in relation to issues of contracts and dual relationships. For example, Participant F2 stated:
It's important … to have clear boundaries, simple boundaries about things like when you're meeting, where you're meeting, length of time, and then to adhere to those boundaries … you do basically have to stick to them, although obviously there's always going to be the odd occasion when you consciously go outside them.

She continued: "There are always exceptions … I have no problem about occasionally and consciously going with exceptions".

Participant F3 also took a pragmatic approach to boundaries, and mentioned that, on the training courses in which she was involved, much time was spent discussing how to navigate multiple relationships, and gave the following example of the range of views expressed:
"You shouldn't have multiple relationships at one end of the scale and actually we know what this world is like and there's a very good chance you will know people from another context at the other." She also stated that she was aware that there are "all sorts of very dodgy boundaries around …" but stressed that, although having some guidelines about this would be helpful, she was also of the opinion that it was better if spiritual directors could reflect on their own situations so that they could recognise for themselves that "… it still depends on the person … to understand the implications of their behaviour …"

Participant F4 also indicated a flexible approach when she said that, with a directee, she would include issues of confidentiality and its limitations, safeguarding and regular reviews when contracting. She said that she did not normally maintain firm time boundaries stating that, because she is busy, she likes the spiritual direction sessions to take place at quite long intervals and said "In general I'm happy to let the session take as long as it takes because I know it's a long time before they'll see me again … this is how I like to work."

Training and continuing professional development

All the participants in Phase 2 were involved in training courses, ranging from one and two year part-time courses to a fortnight's intensive training for Roman Catholic priests and advanced seminary students. Several were also involved in the organisation and delivery of on-going training for practising spiritual directors which included day and half-day workshops.

F1 considered that training courses provided the environment in which trainees could develop their ability to listen to 'the bass line' of what was being said and to link it to "… what the Spirit might be saying within a session, what is being sensed or perceived … listening at lots and lots of different levels …" F1 also stated that there was an expectation that directors on her list would keep up their training and professional development. With this in mind she arranged an annual 'resourcing day' to which all the directors in the diocesan scheme were invited and expected to attend at least once every other year. These days were offered free of charge, which was seen as something of a quid pro quo for their agreement not to charge for spiritual direction. F1 also commented on what she called "…. the whole conceit that people who have been trained as priests somehow think that they are adequate as spiritual directors and my experience … says it doesn't mean that at all …"

F2 had some responsibility for the organisation of a one year, part-time introduction to spiritual direction course as well as for a course of continuing professional development for practising spiritual directors. She considered that there were some people who were instinctive spiritual directors, but nevertheless considered that everyone benefited from training stating "Do I think that they (*instinctive spiritual directors*) must have training? I'm not 100% sure. I think it is better … because I think the training helps them to gain expertise …" She was also aware of the necessity for continuing professional development whilst acknowledging that this was sometimes difficult to find "… if nobody's offering any, you can't do it." She had a particular interest in Ignatian spiritual direction and commented on the shortage of continuing professional development opportunities in this area of expertise.

Much of F3's involvement in spiritual direction was related to training courses, particularly those with an Ignatian focus. She commented on the fact that there had been charismatic spiritual directors throughout the ages but that "… there are things that we can take and polish on training courses …" and went on to say "… and if people don't naturally have them they can probably be taught to be safe pair of hands for spiritual direction."   However she also stated that "I still get people being shocked by the idea that directors … actually need any training – it's worked for two thousand years so why are we messing with it now?" F3 also had clear views about the necessity of formative and summative assessment of practice which she had introduced into several courses. This process provided evidence on which to base decisions about whether a particular trainee should be recommended for inclusion in various lists of spiritual directors, and also to support references that might be requested in the future.

F4 held responsibility for a one year evening course for spiritual direction and for ensuring that all directors on the diocesan list took part in regular on-going training. She commented that she thought the hardest thing to teach was discernment, which she considered could only really be learnt through the individual's experience of personal inner work.   Her experience had also led her to consider whether people who love going on courses are necessarily the best people to become spiritual directors, adding "… the more you make a course look attractive because it means they're a special person, because they get to hang a brass plaque up saying 'I'm an accredited spiritual director', the more you're kind of playing to that kind of person."

She also recognised the good work done by clergy who have not had a formal training in spiritual direction: "… they may not be working in quite the same paradigm as those who have been through a direction training, but many of them are probably pretty good despite that …" and added "… you get the spiritual direction ghetto where you have one particular model and if you don't fit that particular model, you're not 'proper'". It is worth noting that a 'bridgeing' course was inaugurated in 2016 for retired clergy in the south of England to develop specific spiritual direction skills.

M1 had not received any formal spiritual direction training himself and felt that much of his learning had come from his experience of being a directee. He had also been influenced by studying for a Masters' degree at Heythrop College which had involved a great deal of reading about spirituality.   He expanded on this by saying "… I think what fundamentally matters is to know what you're talking about by experience because … if you've experienced what it means to pray, what it means to observe the spirit operating, then there's more

chance that you will see it operating in someone else's life". Part of his role was now to facilitate an annual two week intensive spiritual direction training programme for priests and senior seminarians.

M2's responsibilities included the management of a three year Ignatian spiritual direction training programme, although he did not have a teaching role. However, he did teach on workshops around the country. Like other participants, it was his view that trainees should not consider that they have finished their training on completion of a course, but that they should engage in on-going formation through supervision and other activities such as "… training days, social events, gatherings, lectures … that's very, very useful."

Contracting and covenanting

It was clear from the six individual interviews that there was a variety of both understanding and practice in relation to contracts or covenants and that, whilst the practice of some participants was fairly structured and consistent, for others there was a considerable degree of flexibility. However, it was also clear that there was a consensus about the desirability of clarity of expectation between director and directee. The participants in Phase 2 described a number of different practices in relation to establishing a contract or covenant that would set out the expectations to be agreed by both director and directee. None of the participants was defensive about their lack of consistency in practice, reflecting that taking a more structured approach would probably be very beneficial.

F1 left this agreement to the individuals whom she had 'matched', although she stated that the idea of a contract would be addressed on the training course:

> … we present a kind of framework with regard to payment, duration, timings, frequency, all that sort of thing, so because no-one gets paid in (*the specific diocese*), then we wouldn't really expect anyone to see someone more than once a quarter, but it is up to the individual director … it's far more a verbal agreement rather than anything available to download.

F2 was clear about her understanding of the nature of contract: "Being a lawyer … I wouldn't describe it as a contract because as a whole a contract is something that is binding at law ... I think I usually call it an arrangement … but you know it is a contract" and she went on to say that she was very careful to be clear with directees about the limitations of confidentiality and other boundaries such as timing and frequency of meetings. In her role as a supervisor,

she was aware of difficulties in which practitioners sometimes found themselves because they hadn't been sufficiently clear about expectations at the outset.

F3 stressed the importance of clarity when setting up a new spiritual direction relationship, and stated:

> … it's about clarity, whatever you're going to use, be clear about what you think it is. … It's that initial meeting and initial review after 2 or 3 sessions, saying 'what do you expect, this is what I can offer, what are you looking for?' … it's a fundamental part of setting up the relationship.

She also commented on the fact that some practitioners prefer the term 'covenant', likening it to the discussion about the terminology of spiritual direction versus spiritual accompaniment which she called "linguistic gymnastics".

F4 stated that she was used to the idea of an initial contract that would include confidentiality and its limits, safeguarding, boundaries and review. Because she was a stipendiary priest, she did not charge and she took a flexible approach to time keeping, so neither of those issues would be raised as part of her contract with directees. She also stated that supervision would be mentioned and explained. However, she said that she wouldn't necessarily raise all these issues at the first meeting, for example she might not introduce the idea of review at the outset.

M2 worked on the basis that a contract did exist between himself and his directees but one which he allowed to emerge as the sessions proceeded. He stated "I understand a contract or a covenant exists between us, but it gets filled in as we go along, so I suppose I begin with relationship and then look to put in things as they emerge …" His view of his contract with directees was also influenced by the fact that he personally was not being paid for direction, the money received going to the centre at which he worked, a point which he stated he would explain to the directee. He said that: "(*This)* means I feel freer to be who I am but I also feel that somehow there isn't the contractual relationship to quite the same degree …" M2 was also aware that contracting was an issue that was raised by supervisees in supervision on a regular basis.

Confidentiality

This was a boundary issue that was mentioned by all Phase 2 participants. Although they all stressed the importance of offering confidentiality to directees, there were differing views

about exactly what this meant depending on the context and background of the participants, for example whether they were coming from a counselling or a diocesan background, and whether influenced by the theology of confession.

F1 explained that there was a confidentiality clause included in the diocesan scheme for spiritual directors which listed a range of issues that would not be held to be confidential including danger or threat to anybody, and criminal activity. Unlike some dioceses of which she was aware, her diocese did not consider all spiritual directees to be vulnerable adults, but the position relating to safeguarding and the necessity for Disclosure and Barring Service3 (DBS) was unclear: "It's one of those areas that is still a little bit woolly … and I'm still in discussion with the safeguarding officer …" As stated above, F4 said that there was a compulsory DBS check for directors on the diocesan list.

It was F2's view that confidentiality was essential if the freedom of the directee was not to be restricted.   She explained that she was not a priest and therefore was not bound by the confidentiality of confession, and expressed some rather general limitations to confidentiality. These limitations focused on criminal activity or child abuse, in which case she stated that she would have to stop the conversation with the directee immediately and report to the police "… or wherever, depending on what it is."   She later specifically mentioned that a requirement to report a young person taking drugs "… once you hear that you've got to take it somewhere."   She later modified her previous statement about the necessity to report crime depending on her personal view of the severity of the offence, for example exceeding the speed limit versus "… bashing an old lady on the head."
F3, working in a Roman Catholic context, was aware of the complexity of the subject, particularly in relation to confession. Reflecting on the possible need for disclosure, she spoke of "… an informal charismatic version of spiritual direction where it's treated more like confession …" and the possible difficulties that this posed, particularly in terms of the legalities and policies that might be in place depending on context.

F4, a priest in an Anglican diocese, was clear that she followed the diocesan protocol relating to safeguarding in that she would break confidentiality if there were issues of abuse. She also expected other diocesan directors to do the same. She was mindful of her own experience of direction which included the element of confession, and sensed that this added a certain formality to the process that not all directors or directees would expect.

M1 explained that, in his role as seminary director, if he felt a directee was at risk of selfharm he would inform the Rector. This would also apply if there was any suggestion that the good

name of the church was at risk because of scandal. These were aspects of confidentiality that were perhaps peculiar to the context of the seminary. He also elaborated on the subject of confession and the distinction that would be made: "I would make a clear distinction if somebody … wants to go to confession as well, which does happen, then they would be slightly separate so that it's clear when we're starting the liturgy of confession …"

Because of the particular circumstances of his role, M1 stated that the only subject that he inevitably raised during the initial meeting was that of confidentiality. He also commented on whether, in his case as a Roman Catholic priest, comparisons with confession might be assumed by some directees: "… there's a kind of tacit confidentiality because of the confessional, people expect the priest to be confidential. It's kind of … my sense is that it's accepted." In relation to those coming for direction from outside the seminary, he said: "To be honest, I probably don't say it (*confidentiality)* to people on the outside. I've never had an occasion where it's been a problem."

M2, a counsellor as well as an Anglican priest, stated that he was more influenced by his role as priest than as counsellor in relation to confidentiality in general and to confession in particular. He also mentioned legal requirements to break confidentiality in the case that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk. He commented that "… confidentiality and the legal stuff … get more air time …" suggesting that there might be an over-emphasis on these issues.

Codes of practice and accreditation

F1, in her role as spiritual direction broker in an Anglican diocesan context, was already working to a diocesan code of practice. She considered this to be a very helpful support to her work in that it specified requirements with which practitioners must agree to comply, for example participating in supervision and training, and which she could therefore expect of anyone joining the scheme. F1 noted that this was particularly relevant because of the current lack of any national scheme of accreditation.

She was also one of a small team of people working under the auspices of the RA to draw up guidelines for good practice which would be acceptable nationally. Members of the team saw the benefit of such guidelines in terms of an overlay to local schemes and giving more consistency to the national practice of spiritual direction. At the time of the interview, this process was not yet complete, but the underlying intention was about "… creating an environment whereby all that happens is for the good of the person seeking God's will in their life …" However, since the interview took place, these guidelines have been completed, and are on the RA website. (*www.retreats.org.uk* accessed 10 March 2017).

F2 felt that a code of practice "… could very easily inhibit the true gifting … the opportunity for real spiritual direction", although she was in favour of less formalised guidelines which would encourage good practice, particularly in relation to boundaries and contracting. She also mentioned that there would be a necessity for a complaints procedure and sanctions to be in place in the event that a formalised code was broken. Whilst she would not 'veto' a scheme for accreditation, she recognised potential difficulties in its administration, and could not see how this could be put in place in the absence of any nationally recognised body with overarching responsibility for good practice.

F3 could see a place for a code of practice and, in her work as a trainer, emphasised the importance of ethical practice. Having mentioned the SDI Code of Ethics, she went on to say that she thought that a framework would possibly be more practical. She was aware that students on courses were working in a wide variety of contexts, some of which would already have their own guidelines in place. She also commented that she thought that the work that the RA was then doing (2015) in this area could be very useful. However, she pointed out that it would be very difficult to implement a nationally agreed code in the absence of any overarching organisation with responsibility for practice.

F3 also referred to virtue ethics stating "… one of the (people) I've done some work with is into virtue ethics, looking far more at the person acting ethically rather than looking at a set of rules … and I'm moving to 'look, this still applies but because of context it's never going to be fully pinned down,' so what's more important is … discernment in the context."

When reflecting on the possibility of accreditation, F3 referred to the experience of The All Irish Spiritual Guidance Association (AISGA *www.aisga.ie*) which accredits spiritual directors in Ireland. However, she was very aware that the situation in the UK was very different from that in Ireland, with many denominations and a variety of leadership structures which would make overall agreement difficult to negotiate. It was her opinion that the way forward was to establish more formalised assessment procedures on training courses that would increase confidence in the competence of someone who had completed a course and received a formal, positive recommendation.

F4 had produced guidelines for good practice which all the spiritual directors on the diocesan list were required to accept. She felt that these guidelines were sufficiently flexible to be helpful in all circumstances without being restrictive or legalistic. She commented that she saw the possibility of undesirable and unintended consequences in relation to accreditation as it could attract just those people who would be most unsuitable to become spiritual

directors because: "… if I say 'here's a nice shiny prize' that's going to make them want to do it even more."

When asked about a code of ethics, M1 thought it might be helpful as long as it didn't straitjacket the director, so much would depend on what it actually contained.   As a Roman Catholic priest and in the seminary context, he was bound by Canon Law.   He further stated "… in principle I'd be very much for anything that's safeguarding morals and ethics."

M2 offered trainees several codes of ethics and conduct including that from SDI and others which originated in the US, although he didn't specifically name them. It was his view that national enforcement was unlikely: "… there just isn't the will in the market place as far as I can see from the various courses … we're just not in the area, in the place of being able to have that …"   He said that he could see advantages and disadvantages, although he did not specify what these might actually be.

Although none of the participants in Phase 2 was actively against having a code of good practice, the general consensus seemed to be in favour of guidelines which could be sufficiently flexible to accommodate different situations. The idea of virtue ethics was also being discussed. Again, no-one was hostile to the idea of some form of accreditation, but equally no-one was committed to its introduction, recognising as they did the problems related to complaints procedures, infringements and sanctions that would inevitably and necessarily be involved.   The participants also recognised that there was little will in the spiritual direction community for the introduction of an accreditation scheme at the current time.

Charging and payment for spiritual direction

F1 and F4 both described situations where the Anglican diocese for whom they work insisted that spiritual directors involved in their diocesan schemes did not make a charge. They both reflected that this led to some of the most experienced directors choosing not to make themselves available through these schemes, although F4 did keep a record of those who had made this decision.

M1, who as a priest already received an income from the church, commented: "One of the things I feel uncomfortable about for myself would be accepting money. Now I understand that some people have to, but as soon as there's a transaction of money there's going to be something in the rapport which changes …"
M2 commented: "Somehow not receiving money means I feel freer to be who I am …"

From these responses it is clear that there are mixed views on the subject of charging and I will return to this subject in Chapters 7 and 8.

THEME 4: COMPETENT PRACTICE

Participants in both Phases 1 and 2 identified that, in order to be a competent practitioner, certain skills need to be in place. These are skills that can be taught and learnt, a point that is reflected in the phrase used by M1 "grace builds on nature."

Essential skills

F1 identified the ability to listen at different levels and said that she could get a sense of whether this was happening when observing trainees engaging in triad work.   This idea of deep listening was supported by F2, who stated "… it's very important to listen, it's primarily a listening ministry, so it's very important to listen … with the whole of yourself, not just with your ear …" and she thought that some element of training in listening skills "… wouldn't do (*trainees*) any harm …" whilst acknowledging that some people are just instinctively very good listeners, a view that was echoed by F3 who said that "… skills can be polished by learning basic active listening skills …". F3 also raised the subject of assessing listening skills and whether or not these skills necessarily go together with wisdom and personality. In her role as the leader of a training team, she stated: "… we say they go together."
F4 agreed that listening skills could be taught and assessed but suggested that the "… place of deep listening … was more effectively learnt from the inner journey of the trainee, particularly through participation in individually guided retreats, and personal experience of spiritual direction.   She also suggested that those who demonstrate poor listening skills in training may themselves be seeing inexperienced ineffective spiritual directors.   M1 and M2 mentioned the learning of skills and particularly self-knowledge that happens through the experience of both personal spiritual direction and supervision.

THEME 5: SUPERVISION PRACTICE

Supervision

All those invited for Phase 2 interview were in roles that promoted supervision and had information about how the directors for whom they held some responsibility accepted it as a requirement. They all considered supervision to be essential for good and ethical practice. Several of the Phase 2 participants considered that supervision provided a strong element of continuing professional development, a fact which they also felt emphasised the importance of adequate supervision training.

F1 co-ordinated the supervision of spiritual directors in an Anglican diocese. Supervision was a requirement for all those on her list, most of them choosing to attend the groups run by the diocese, although some also engage in their own supervision externally. The diocesan groups comprise three or four directors plus a supervisor, meeting a minimum of twice a year for approximately two hours.

However, F1 did comment that there were directors who were very reluctant to attend supervision, stating "I've had instances … with people who have refused to go to supervision and who've needed quite a lot of gentle persuasion to see the benefits … and to understand that it doesn't mean they are being judged, it's helping them to get an overview of their work …" She later stated that "What I have found is that, by and large, it is older clergy of the male persuasion who are not willing to have their spiritual direction practice 'put under the spotlight' shall we say, in supervision" and continued "… I have fought some pretty heavy hitters to really expound the benefits of supervision …." When questioned further, she stated that supervision was a requirement of the scheme to which members therefore had to agree. She then commented that she was aware of several people in the diocese "in quite high places …" who were currently operating outside the diocesan scheme and wondered if this requirement was one of the reasons they chose to do so.

F1 saw direct links between supervision and the existence of a code of practice "… with all the legalities around, I think it's (*supervision*) imperative." In the case of her diocese, supervision was also seen as a mechanism for ensuring good practice:

> I think it's that lovely image of actually protecting the person who is not in the room, about it being part of the due diligence to ensure that the director is behaving appropriately, exercising best practice, is being the best director they can be, then the directee … is receiving the best of the supervision and is getting the best of ministry that they can possibly have.

F1 specifically mentioned the idea of supervision: "It's presenting the relationship to God to ensure that it's the best it can be." This was an interesting statement as it seemed to diverge from some of the comments from other interviewees that the main purpose of supervision is to meet the needs of the director rather than explicitly relating to the best interests of the directee. I will return to this question in Chapters 7 and 8.

F1 also commented that, on occasions, she wished that her counselling supervision could be more like that of her spiritual direction in being less 'busy' and with more time and space for

reflection.   Again, this was an interesting outcome, indicating that counselling has something valuable to learn from the practice of spiritual direction rather than just the other way round.

In addition F1 was very mindful of the responsibility of "putting a stranger with a stranger" and considered that supervision played a significant part in ensuring safety for both parties because "… supervision grounds people, it puts them with their peers … there's something about that that feels really important."

F2's views of the necessity for supervision were somewhat different (and perhaps somewhat inconsistent). She initially stated that "I think it's irresponsible actually to operate as a spiritual director without some appropriate supervision in place" but then, later in the interview when talking about a supervision group that she facilitates, said "… I encourage people to turn up regularly every time … making it clear that people have an obligation to the group … but not making it compulsory that they have to. … I don't like absolute requirements …" This was of particular interest when previously it had been clearly stated that the organisation in which she has a leadership role makes supervision a sine qua non of membership.   She also stated "I would basically say it (*supervision*) is essential, though I could see that there might be odd situations where it wasn't possible" and went on to mention directors who might be practising in other countries where even Skype and telephone contact might be difficult.   So in this case the espoused theory and the theory in action were different.

Some ambivalence about the size of groups was also demonstrated in that F2 stated that the average attendance at the group that she facilitates is five directors and herself; this group meets every six to eight weeks for two hours. However, F2 commented that the group that she attends for her own supervision is quite a bit larger (she didn't state the exact number) and she found this unsatisfactory, but nevertheless she would be reluctant to change groups because much of what the group offered was Ignatian-based, which she found invaluable because of the direction she was offering.

F2 also made a specific comment about the difficulties of maintaining confidentiality in groups where, if individual directees were actually named, it was not unlikely that someone in the group would recognise their identity.

It was particularly interesting to note the difference in perception about the main purpose of supervision between F1 and F2. F1 stated that it was to ensure the directee received the best direction possible whereas F2 stated that:

It's not about 'are you doing it right?' it's more about … helping you to deal with your own issues, … that to me is the … almost perhaps the prime, thing. Sometimes as a director you can feel very disturbed by a situation or by an individual and you need to be able to take it somewhere.

Whilst at face value this statement would seem to indicate the primacy of the director's needs, it could be argued that this is not necessarily the case, and the possibility of interpreting this in terms of director/directee transference will be discussed in Chapter 7.

F3, working for a Roman Catholic religious order and mainly in retreat houses, considered supervision to be essential and that it was part of a process of accountability for the directors. However, she recognised that the idea of supervision was relatively new for many spiritual directors and that it could be argued that the tradition of spiritual direction did not include supervision.

In the context of her work as retreat leader and trainer of spiritual directors, supervision was provided in groups 'in house', although she also had one-to-one supervision for her spiritual direction work that was not connected to a retreat house. She saw group supervision as having particular developmental advantages for novices who would benefit from learning from more experienced practitioners. She was also mindful of the value of the support that individual supervision could offer, and which was not always possible in a group situation.

F3 said that she considered that the purpose of supervision was primarily for the directee although it was often about about the director's experience. She also stated that she would often find herself telling supervisees "I only need to know as much as I need to know to help you, supervision is more about you than them (*the directees*)." The question of whether supervision is primarily in the interests of directees or of directors was also evidenced when she later went on the say "I think a lot of supervision is consultation, others say it's not and again the reality is that it is, and it's because people are novices for a very long time. There might be some notice about what's going on in them (*directors*) but a lot of it is 'what do I do next?'" She further commented that this novice status could continue for a considerable length of time as many directors were seeing few directees; as a result it was quite possible that they would only have supervision two or three times a year. In turn this sometimes led to people training to become supervisors when they had relatively few practice hours themselves, which gave her cause for concern. I will return to this subject in Chapters 7 and 8.

F4 commented that she considered supervision to be essential, although she was aware that, when she included it in the guidelines for good practice being introduced in the Anglican diocese where she was working, several directors left her list just because they didn't agree that supervision was necessary. She commented further that most of these were people who had been practising 'for ever and a day' on the basis that they were parish clergy.

F4 also stated "I explain (*to potential directees*) that I am in supervision and that, while I talk about the session, it is about my reaction to the material that the person brings so that I would not be replaying the session in supervision" from which I gathered that she saw the main focus of supervision as being more about the impact of the work on the director rather than the directee. This impression was further supported by her later comment "… there's probably a lot of 'that didn't go well, what should I have done?' although really that's not what supervision is for…"   She also made a clear differentiation between supervision of spiritual direction and supervision of counselling, commenting about counsellors on the training course "I think this was something that they found hard to learn … that spiritual direction supervision is much more with the focus on the director and how they responded to the material that is brought …"

In F4's context, there was a requirement that directors on the diocesan list would attend supervision a minimum of twice a year.   F4 organised both peer and facilitated group supervision that was funded by the diocese. The peer groups consisted of between five and eight participants, and none of the facilitated groups had more than six members.

F4 saw supervision as offering some form of accountability and maintaining good boundaries. She also saw it as providing a good learning environment, particularly in the case of group supervision, although she was aware of the difficulties of groups consisting of too many beginners "… pooling their ignorance …"   The training course for which she had responsibility included a session on how best to use supervision well, and she was particularly drawn to Hawkins and Shohet's seven-eyed model of supervision which she had introduced to the diocesan supervisors.

M1 stated that, in the seminary context he did not necessarily inform seminarians/directees that he had supervision although he added "I wouldn't withhold the information but I wouldn't necessarily think to say it … students here all know it …" However he was clear that he would inform external directees that this was the case.   He went on to say that he considered supervision as part of his own accountability process.

M1's own supervision was based on what he thought of as a more US than UK model as his supervisor had previously been his analyst and "… once it was completed I asked her to keep me on for supervision because I thought it was a healthy thing …" His view of the nature of supervision was influenced by his previous experience with this supervisor in that:

> … it was a Jungian analysis and her understanding of supervision is that it's really a continuing exploration of your own psyche and therefore what you brought to supervision is not about solving the directee's problems but actually their impact on my psychological growth, so that's how the supervision operates.

M1 considered it wise for most people to have supervision because "… doing things on your own you don't always know what you're handling …" and went on to say "I think it keeps me on guard and observing my psyche and its reactions … all the time. … I actually think that the development of the director is also a help, a catalyst spiritually and psychologically for the directee …"

Unlike any of the other interviewees, M1 did not have any experience of group supervision although he could see possible advantages. On the basis that he could easily be doing ten hours of direction a week, he liked to have supervision every four to six weeks, although sometimes that wasn't possible because of diaries. From M1's comments, it seemed that his supervision had a strong psychological foundation, drawing on Jungian theory and with an emphasis on unconscious process and dream analysis, which sounded rather different from the supervision experienced by any of the other participants.

M2 summarised his view of supervision as follows "The key for me is that it's about on-going formation … supervision enables reflection and growing self-knowledge that leads to evermore hopefully mature work in direction."   When talking about his experience of his own supervision, he stated: "… it's the things that trouble me that I take. It might be an issue or a circumstance where I feel out of my depth …" and went on to say that he also liked to check out ideas with his supervisor before putting them into action.   In his own role as supervisor, he estimated that 65% of the issues brought would relate to possible ways forward in particular circumstances, and he also mentioned that time was frequently spent on the director's practice issues such as taking adequate breaks, and contract issues such as beginnings and endings. A third category of material related to psychological issues such as projection and parallel process.

In general terms M2 saw supervision as "… enabling the supervisee to come to a freer place

…" and he made particular reference to the necessity for directors to achieve an appropriate work/life balance rather than to allow themselves to be driven by a misguided sense of vocation and duty.

As a supervisor himself, M2 saw supervisees both individually and in groups, some of which consisted of eight to twelve participants. These might be geographically quite distant and would meet for six hours with a shared lunch. His role would be to "tighten up the process". When considering the value of supervision, M2 was of the opinion that:

> … what is critical and essential is that everyone reflects on the work that they do in such a way as to enable growth and challenge to happen, and I would say that spiritual direction will die or be dangerous if that isn't enabled. … I think supervision is the most secure and effective way for that to happen, but it doesn't mean to say that the practice of open reflection shouldn't be happening alongside it. So we're talking here about a version of a particular examen I guess. But you know, I think that a scripture passage could speak to one about a particular situation … and challenge one and make one come to see a directee … in a new light so basically supervision has just happened.

M2 went on to reflect on the fact that, whilst supervision is important, in his experience "things happen outside the formal time of supervision that are supervisory …" He also expressed the view that, whilst he considered that directors should be in supervision, he could see that people living in a contemplative community would be receiving enough "open, attentive, challenging reflection …" from the Holy Spirit through their daily practice of the rhythm of prayer that could make attending formalised supervision unnecessary.

In a situation where spiritual directors have received relatively little supervision, it is difficult to know how effective it is in terms of providing support and contributing to the development of good practice.   For example, a spiritual director seeing four or five directees every six weeks might well be receiving two hours supervision every three or four months in a group of six people. In this example the actual supervision time for each director would be approximately twenty minutes, and thus even a conscientious spiritual director might in reality only be experiencing just over an hour's supervision in any one year which seems inadequate. However, as a requirement for supervision is in its infancy, it may be necessary to accept the current situation whilst encouraging more extensive and effective models of supervision in the future. I am reminded of Voltaire's maxim "Don't let the excellent be the enemy of the good."

Accountability

F1 suggested that any of the supervisors might come to her if they had concerns about poor practice by any of the spiritual directors.   In this event, or in the event of a complaint being made against a spiritual director by a directee, F1 would report to a colleague who chairs the diocesan spirituality group. This colleague was responsible to the Archdeacon who was ultimately responsible to the Bishop.

F2 saw the main instrument of accountability to be that of her own supervision.   When discussing the possibility of a complaint being made against her, it was clear that there was no structure of accountability in place in the framework in which she was practising as a spiritual director.

F3 considered supervision to be the starting point of accountability. She also clarified that, in retreat houses where spiritual directors were employed to offer direction, accountability is to the director of the individual house.   F3 saw her own accountability to the Provincial of the religious order to which she was attached.

F4 was accountable to the head of the Mission, Discipleship and Ministry team and considered that the supervisors were part of the accountability process, providing an element of 'quality assurance' in terms of the spiritual direction being offered by directors in that diocese.

M1 identified his accountability in the different areas of his role as follows:

- In his role as spiritual director to the seminary and to the seminarians, his accountability was to the Rector who represented the Bishop.

- In his role as spiritual director to people coming from outside the seminary, his accountability would be under the code of Canon Law and would therefore rest with his Bishop.

However, M1 also spoke about the role that supervision plays in his accountability to be a competent practitioner. He reflected on the unique situation in which he finds himself as spiritual director to seminarians with whom he is also living. It was his experience that the men were sometimes reluctant to make the choice to change directors at the end of their first year for reasons of practicality and familiarity, and also because it would take more effort to find a spiritual director outside the seminary who would then need formal approval from their diocese. The practicalities of the time and travel that would be involved in attending spiritual direction elsewhere also played a part. These were all factors in which M1 identified that supervision had a particular role of accountability to play in order to ensure that he did not

collude with inappropriate decisions that seminarians might possibly make for purely pragmatic reasons.

M2 identified his accountability in the different areas of his work. When running workshops he was accountable to the organisation or individual who was employing him, which could be a diocesan representative or retreat house. In the case of the course of which he was director, the accountability lay with him. Whilst the staff members were accountable to him, he also saw himself as accountable to them and meetings were held for mutual feedback. However, he was aware that on occasions this process could slip and he also recognised that some members or the team would welcome the introduction of a panel of trustees, to whom ultimately they would all be accountable, which was not currently the case. Whilst he could see the advantages of this route, he was aware that if this were introduced he might consider it time for him to review his position.

In his work with directees, M2 considered that his accountability was to them. This view was influenced by the fact that no charge was made. His view was that responsibility for raising any questions about whether he was providing what they needed lay with the directees themselves.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF SUPER-ORDINATE THEMES

As shown in Figures 5.5 (p.62) and 6.1 (p.80), the analysis of Phases 1 and 2 resulted in the identification of the five following emergent themes:

- The director's personal spiritual life
- The director/directee relationship
- Professional practice
- Competent practice
- Supervision practice

At this stage in the analysis process I returned to the emergent themes and the contributing concepts in order to identify further connections, patterns and links. In the light of this further analysis, and consistent with IPA practice, (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.97-99), I then adopted the processes of *abstraction* to identify and develop two themes which had super-ordinate status. These two super-ordinate themes were:

1. The person and presence of the spiritual director, drawing together the emergent themes of the spiritual director's spiritual life and the director/directee relationship.

2. The professional framework, drawing together the emergent themes of professional practice and competent practice

In addition I identified the following theme which, because of the meaning and significance that participants attributed to issues of supervision and accountability, and because of the research question itself, I considered also had super-ordinate status:

3. The role of supervision

In analysing the data associated with these three super-ordinate themes, I identified significant issues that make a particular contribution to answering the research question, and it is these that I will address in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The outcomes from Phases 1 and 2 were consistent across the study, those from the Phase 2 analysis offering a considerable degree of triangulation with those from Phase 1. This analysis resulted in five emergent themes being identified. Further distillation and interpretation of the data resulted in three super-ordinate themes being established.

In the next chapter I will interrogate the findings further and highlight the significant key issues which contribute to these three super-ordinate themes.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I identified the five initial themes that emerged from the Phase 1 and Phase 2 data and, after further analysis of the findings, three super-ordinate themes were developed.

In this chapter I will examine and analyse these super-ordinate themes in greater detail in order to support my identification and interpretation of the following key issues. I will also critique them in the light of wisdom from other disciplines such as theology, spirituality, philosophy and psychology. These three super-ordinate themes consisted of seven issues of particular significance to the research question, and are as shown in the table below:

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 1: THE PERSON AND PRESENCE OF THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR	SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 2: THE PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK	SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 3: THE ROLE OF SUPERVISION IN THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
The director's personal spiritual life	Attitudes to professionalism	The purpose and practice of supervision
The director/directee relationship	Developing competent practice	Accountability in supervision
Spiritual direction as Charism	Attitudes to charging for spiritual direction	

Figure 7.1
Super-ordinate themes and key issues

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 1: THE PERSON AND PRESENCE OF THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

This super-ordinate theme resulted from the abstraction of the two themes of the spiritual director's spiritual life and the director/directee relationship. The research highlighted the importance of the contribution of the director/directee relationship in establishing what constitutes good practice of spiritual direction. This relationship was evidenced in a sense of genuine welcome and unconditional acceptance, together with a quality which can be described as 'presence'. It was the perception of participants that all these qualities, together

with the gift of discernment, are rooted in the director's personal spiritual life and that they are a God-given grace, a charism.

THE KEY ISSUE OF THE DIRECTOR'S PERSONAL SPIRITUAL LIFE

Whilst it is neither possible nor necessarily desirable to evaluate the quality of the director's personal spiritual life, it was participants' perception that it makes a significant contribution to good practice, with particular reference to the concepts of discernment and charism. In this section I will therefore develop my interpretation of these findings.

The gift of discernment

Throughout the Phase 2 interviews, the responses to questions about what contributes to good practice demonstrated that participants considered that it is contingent upon the director's close relationship with God. Participants also made strong links between the director's personal spiritual life and the process of discernment, a process that they considered to be an essential part of good spiritual direction. For example, F3 was very clear that the individual's personal experience of God is foundational to spiritual direction, a fact that she privileged over acquiring skills. She also emphasised the centrality of discernment when she said "What might God be saying? … It puts discernment more in the centre and takes seriously the action of God in the spiritual direction session …"

Roman Catholic theologian and monk, Joel Giallanza (1996, p.21) states: *"*Etymologically, discernment means "to separate apart", that is, to distinguish something so it can be perceived clearly" and The Oxford Paperback Dictionary (2009, p.260) defines discernment as "showing good judgement" which, in the context of spiritual direction, will privilege the desire to discover and follow God's will. Half a century previously, Roman Catholic monk and priest Merton, (1951, p.27), had stated: "The presence of discernment and detachment is manifested by a spontaneous thirst for what is good – charity, union with the will of God …" and Roman Catholic theologian, Richard Sweeney points out:

> Most treatises on Christian discernment identify Jesus' teaching: 'By their fruits you
> shall know them' (Mt 7:16) as the general principle of discernment in the gospels. In
> other words, the ultimate test of an authentic movement of the Holy Spirit … is its
> enduring fruitfulness. … Specifically, this implies that the test of the authenticity of
> any approach to discernment or spiritual direction is its effectiveness in guiding a
> person to union with the Father and loving service of humankind. Above all,
> discernment is a matter of faith … (1988, p.354).

US theologian and educator in the field of spiritual direction, Rose Mary Dougherty, writing about discernment in the Christian tradition, locates it firmly in prayer, stating: "Prayer, then, is the starting place for discernment … It fine-tunes the heart to the prayer of God in us, God's desire for us" (1995, p.25). She goes on to discuss how prayer changes and in itself requires discernment, and asks whether prayer continues "… to honour and reflect God's presence in my life " She also comments: "Discernment on prayer is really prayer about our prayer. In this prayer we open ourselves to God's gaze, looking with God at God's desire for us, our desire for God, noticing how our prayer reflects these desire" (1995, p.27). Expressing a similar view, Anglican priest David Runcorn states: "Guidance is not a technique to be mastered but life to be entered. The question 'What decision is God guiding me to make?' is part of a much bigger and more important question: 'What kind of person is God willing that I may become?'" (2003, p.5*).*

Through prayer we can discover, uncover perhaps, what God wills for us and our true vocation. As Cardinal John Henry Newman (1925, p.5) wrote several decades before Vatican II: "God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission ..."

Merton also expressed this understanding of discernment when he wrote:

> My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going, … Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. … And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. (Merton 1975, p.81).

Participants also considered discernment to be a natural outcome of a close relationship with God. "Discerning and praying" were linked in Phase 1 (Participant 5), and there were other references connecting discernment, vocation and a call from God, for example: "The belief that God has called me into this ministry to accompany others discerning the way God leads them" (Participant 28).

F4 stressed that it is by doing what she called "the inner work" that discernment is best learnt and M1 expressed the following view: "I think what fundamentally matters is to know what you're talking about by experience … if you've experienced what it means to pray, what it means to observe the Spirit operating, then there's more chance that you will see it operating in someone else's life … I think (*spiritual direction*) hangs on the gift of discernment." M2 also commented on the importance of the director's personal spiritual life

in the process of discernment.   The gift of discernment was thus perceived as a fruit of personal inner spiritual work and, as US professor of theology Wendy Wright (1995, p.10) says: "Discernment is about foundational identity."

Participants emphasised the importance of the quality of the director's spiritual life in which a sense of vocation and gift of discernment are assumed. This understanding is consistent with the theological view described above that discernment develops as a result of a close relationship with God.   The evidence also showed that many participants made a link between the concept of discernment and that of spiritual direction as charism, and it also showed the value that they placed on the director's gift of discernment as part of that charism, a gift from God.

THE KEY ISSUE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE DIRECTOR/DIRECTEE RELATIONSHIP

Participants indicated that this relationship was foundational in facilitating the physical, emotional and spiritual environment that they considered necessary for spiritual direction. Furthermore they identified a number of aspects which they considered to be essential. As well as the awareness of the director's personal spiritual life discussed above, these aspects included a sense of welcome and hospitality, together with unconditional acceptance on the part of the director. .

A sense of welcome and hospitality

The findings indicated that this sense of welcoming hospitality is an essential factor in establishing the director/directee relationship, a view that is consistent with what Episcopalian priest Margaret Guenther writes in her seminal work on spiritual direction, (1992, p.13): "... we invite someone into our space, a space that offers safety and shelter. The host's needs are put aside, as everything is focused on the comfort and refreshment of the guest." This sense of hospitality resonates with the Rule of St Benedict (2003, Chapter 53, p.74) which states, "Any guest … should be received just as we would receive Christ himself, because he promised that on the last day he will say: I was a stranger and you welcomed me" which predates Guenther by nearly fifteen hundred years and which reminds us that hospitality was a foundational charism of many monastic communities.

Participants emphasised the importance of a sense of welcome and hospitality in establishing the director/directee relationship and indicated what this meant in practice. Examples demonstrating the importance that participants placed on their experience included: "Offering hospitality which takes into account the directee's physical, emotional

and spiritual needs"; (Participant 1); "To be welcoming" (Participant 3); "Being welcoming and affirming" (Participant 5); "Offer a welcoming space …" (Participant 34).

In Phase 2, F1 expressed a similar view when she said: "But there is something about creating an environment whereby all that happens is for the good of the person seeking God's will in their life … something to do with the facilitating environment, something to do with spiritual direction being a ministry where people know that they are safe …"

The nature of the relationship

Participants consistently located the quality of the relationship at the centre of good practice and highlighted a number of specific attributes. In this section I will examine these attributes and, in line with the precepts of practical theology as described in Chapter 3, I will also consider how our understanding of these concepts might be informed and developed by the experience of other disciplines.

Typical Phase 1 responses to the question of what contributes to good practice of spiritual direction were: "It's a relationship of trust." (Participant 26). "An engaged, open, authentic relationship …" (Participant 29); "Creating and maintaining a safe, respectful relationship" (Participant 37); "Honesty in my relationship with the person in direction." (Participant 48); "Appropriate director/directee relationship." (Participant 52).   Comments such as these were echoed throughout the Phase 1 responses.

With the opportunity for more in-depth exploration in the Phase 2 interviews, participants were able to expand on the nature of the relationship.   For example, F1 said: "… the relationship is our sacred space …" F2 expressed something of the nature of the relationship when she said:

> I think I've said you actually have to listen which is important but you have to like, probably to love the directee actually, and on a personal note I can find that people who would normally irritate me no end in that role of directee I find that I do actually, if you like, love them ...

F2 also commented: "the format of actually meeting up with somebody so frequently, is … transforming" and speaking about the relationship, continued: "… I think it's a gift to be used for God …"

M1 made a similar comment:

> I always feel that this is slightly unfashionable or not de rigueur, but I'm convinced that the rapport, the real rapport between the director and the directee matters a lot. That you actually have got to love them, I mean you don't have to like them but there's something, a quality that develops … I'm not quite sure how that works …

M2 stated: "I begin with relationship …"

In order to critique the above views, I shall draw on the wisdom of the other disciplines of psychotherapy and philosophy.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER DISCIPLINES

With reference to the discipline of psychotherapy, Professor of Counselling and also a spiritual director Brian Thorne states:

> To be in the presence of someone who does not pass judgement but who extends deep understanding and total acceptance is to be able to relax into being … Love freely offered without conditions meets the frozenness of the defended heart. (Thorne, 2003, pp.68-69).

Similarly, professor of counselling and spiritual direction, Peter Gubi, addresses the centrality of the relationship who, writing in the context of counselling and spiritual direction, states:

> Relationship is the key to 'becoming' … the ability to listen, and to truly 'hear' the Other *in relationship,* is fundamental. It is even more fundamental than having a theological or ordination training in order to become a Spiritual Accompanier. (Gubi 2015, pp.25-26 italics original).

Whilst the above views relate to relationships in a specifically spiritual context, much has also been written about the therapeutic relationship in a secular context by, amongst other therapists and psychologist, Carl Rogers, (1951), Charles Gelso and Jean Carter, (1985), Petruschka Clarkson (1995), Michael Kahn, (1997) and Dave Mearns and Mick Cooper, (2005). Whilst in some cases the language may be different, the ideas expressed and the experiences described are similar, particularly in relation to the importance of American psychologist Rogers' concept of what he called 'the core conditions.'

The core conditions

Explicit reference to what therapist, Rogers, (1951) termed the *core conditions*, was made by several Phase 1 participants, and not only by those with a counselling background where it is a very familiar concept. The core conditions are those conditions that are at the heart of

Rogers' theory of person centred therapy, and which he considered were sufficient and necessary to facilitate change. Rogers (2015) identified six conditions, four of which relate to the therapist, namely the necessity for psychological contact, empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard. The other two refer to the client's state of incongruence and his/her experience of the therapist's empathy and non-judgmental acceptance. Whilst there may still be some debate amongst therapists about whether these core conditions can be considered both necessary and sufficient in all circumstances, they have nevertheless been widely accepted as contributing to effective practice by many schools of therapy other than person centred.

Presence

Participants expressed their experience of true listening and the director's presence with a wide variety of words and phrases, for example "compassionate and empathic" (Participant 13), "… a prayerful encounter" (Participant 31), "listening from the heart" (Participant 26) and many others, all acknowledging what they considered to be the quality of a significant experience. Phase 2 participants also referred to in-depth listening, for example F1 said: "It's a ministry of listening to God whilst listening to their directee; listening on lots and lots of different levels; listening to the undercurrent, to the bass line …" and M1 stated: "learning to listen at a significantly deep level … to begin a relationship", a view that was consistent with that of other participants.

Rogers later added the concept of what he called *Presence* to his understanding of the relationship, and although participants did not specifically use the word *Presence*, many referred to the fact that, whilst much of what constitutes spiritual direction can be taught, there remains an element that is beyond teaching and which emanates from the director's essential being, which very much resonates with what Rogers described as follows:

> When I'm at my best … I discover this characteristic, when I'm in touch with the unknown in me … then whatever I do seems to be full of healing and simply my presence is healing and helpful. There is nothing I can do to force this experience but when I'm relaxed and close to the transcendental core of me … it seems that my inner spirit has reached out and touched the inner spirit of the other. Our relationship transcends itself and has become larger. (Rogers, 2015).

Peter Schmid, a person-centred counsellor and anthropologist, (2006, p.35) states: "Presence means to be authentically as a person; fully myself and fully open; whole; fully living the individual I am; fully living the relationships I am." Mearns and Cooper, also

person-centred counsellors, (2005, pp.37-38) explore how, in a therapeutic context, the experience of presence can facilitate the development of working at relational depth. The quality of presence described above also resonates with what philosopher Martin Buber identified as the I-Thou relationship.

The I-Thou Relationship

As I have described elsewhere, (Harborne, 2012, p.86), "Buber's construct of the *I-Thou* experience suggests an encounter with the other of a significantly deep nature embodying mutuality and equality which can be sustained even in the absence of the other." What is often ignored when this I-Thou relationship is mentioned, is Buber's assertion that: "The Thou meets me through grace – it is not found by seeking … But I step into direct relation with it" (1958, p.24), the reference to grace, a mysterious supranatural experience offering healing and growth, indicating this this encounter is a gift from God. Whilst grace might be an expectation of spiritual direction, there might nonetheless be no conscious recognition of the intersubjective moment of co-creation that would be implicit in the experience of such an I-Thou moment.

The use of the word 'Thou' implies the presence of another as there can be no 'thou' without the presence of an 'I.' This is expressed by the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas when he states: "the I says "you" to a You who, as an I, says "You" to the I" (1983, p.148), going on to comment on Buber's writing: "It is in the extension of the I-Thou relationship and that of the social existence with man that, for Buber, the relation to God is produced." (p.149). Perhaps the poetry of e e cummings expresses this particularly succinctly: "i am through you so i" (Firmage, 1991 p.537).

The findings indicate that participants consider that the essence of the director/directee relationship is located in an experience of genuine acceptance, an opportunity for meeting at relational depth, and the quality of the director's presence. It is in such an experience that the relationship with God can be sensed, developed and flourish. These findings are consistent with insights from theology, psychotherapy, and philosophy.

I will discuss the implications of these aspects of the relationship, both in general terms and with particular reference to my own context, in the next chapter.

LOCATING SPIRITUAL DIRECTION WITHIN THE CONCEPT OF CHARISM

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the outcomes of the research indicated that participants considered spiritual direction to be a charism, a grace given by God, infusing the

person and identity of the spiritual director and marked by a vocation to serve the whole people of God. It is this quality of a gift from God that is recognised by directees in their experience of the person and presence of the director and in the relationship that develops between them.

Thus the purpose, the *telos*, of spiritual direction widens from being solely that of meeting the needs of the individual directee to joining in with the work of God in the world, the *missio Dei*. In this section I will therefore return to the subject of charism in the light of the challenge that this obligation to engage in the *missio Dei* presents for spiritual directors.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the view that spiritual direction is a charism is part of the tradition of spiritual direction, a view that was expressed by Phase 2 participants who explicitly stated their understanding that a charism is a gift from God and that spiritual direction is a charism. For example F2 stated: "I think it is a vocation, a gift if you like, to be able to ... to use the posh word a charism, and I think it needs to be … I think that's part of it". F3 also made a link with vocation or calling saying that there must be: "… some sense of a calling to the work of spiritual direction, so not just coming out of their own desire but something that could be described as a charism that's also recognised by a wider community."

M1 held a similar view stating: "… I fundamentally think that spiritual direction is a charism rather than a profession …' and M2 commented on the sense of vocation of practitioners saying: "A lot of what they're doing is driven by vocation …"

The scriptural basis of charism

The use of the word "charism" in the Christian vocabulary stems from the Greek in 1 Cor. 12 to describe a gift of God's grace. Paul states that, whilst there may be different gifts, they all come from the same God, "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men (sic)." (1 Cor. 12:4-6).   In this passage we see a reflection of the Trinity acting in the world in the reference to Spirit, Lord and Father, Paul goes on to say: "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (v.7), a view that is reflected in 1 Peter 4:10: "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." There is clearly a Biblical injunction that God's gifts are to be used for the good of all, not just for the benefit of self.

In his seminal work Summa Theologica, (2000), saint and doctor of the Roman Catholic Church, Thomas Aquinas identified what he called the *gratia gratis data (grace freely given)* which he argued were for the common good of the church. In the Second Vatican Council document *Lumen Gentium* (1964) this Thomist expression was replaced by the word 'charism' which was perceived as a gift of the Holy Spirit given to lay as well as ordained individuals for the benefit not only of the church but also of all people:

> It is not only through the sacraments and the ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the People, leads them and enriches them with his (sic) virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (cf. Cor. 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church, as it is written, "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit" (1 Cor. 12:7). (21 November 1964, paragraphs 114 – 116) *Lumen Gentium* Chapter 2 n.12).

In addressing the *telos* of all charisms, the Roman Catholic Catechism of the Church (CCC) Paragraph 799 states: "Whether extraordinary or simple and humble, charisms are graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, ordered as they are to her building up, to the good of men, (sic) and to the needs of the world." CCC continues:

> Charisms are to be accepted with gratitude by the person who receives them and by all members of the Church as well. They are a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit and are used in full conformity with authentic promptings of this same Spirit, that is, in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms.(Second Vatican Council, 1965(a), Paragraph 800).

Furthermore the Second Vatican Council document The Decree of the Apostolate of the Laity, the Apostolicam Actuositatem, (AA) of 18 November 1965, reiterates that such gifts are to be used in both church and the wider world, stating:

> From the acceptance of these charisms, including those which are more elementary, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of men (sic) and the building up of the Church, in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where He wills" (John 3:8). (AA, 1965(b) Chapter 1, S*ection* 3).

Not all denominations have developed such clear teaching on the concept of charism as gift from God as the Roman Catholic Church. However, Martyn Atkins, in his Presidential Address at the Methodist Conference in July 2007, identified Vatican II as his favourite model of renewal stating: "… (it) catches this energizing balance between what God alone can do and what lies with us.   Not that renewal comes because you have rediscovered your charisms. Rather that … you rediscover who you are in God's continuing call."   Atkins also draws attention to the purpose of a charism when he says: "These charisms, though given to a founder, properly belong to the resulting Christian community, who employ them for others" (Atkins, 2007, p.239-240).

The spiritual director's personal charism

The question of the personal spiritual life of directors is linked to the concept of charism and what this means for them and for their vocation. However, whilst it may not be possible empirically to evaluate any individual's experience of charism, their sense of vocation or their commitment to their personal spiritual life, it is nevertheless possible to maintain that these attributes are essential qualities for the committed spiritual director. It is also appropriate to look for evidence of the individual's gifts and graces as part of the process of discernment of vocation as is clearly demonstrated in the practice of the Methodist Church and other denominations. For example, in the case of applicants for spiritual direction training courses, it would be fitting to discuss with individuals whether and to what extent people already seek them out for informal conversations about spirituality and the life of faith.

Relating the concept of charism specifically to spiritual direction, Fleming states:

> As in every Christian ministry, spiritual direction is rooted in God's call first, and then our human response to that call. … Direction is first of all a charism, a gifting of Christ's Spirit in a special way to a particular person. … spiritual direction is one example of the ministry which calls for our identifying and acknowledging of its charism root – a gift of the Spirit – as the indispensable foundation for anyone who seeks to exercise this ministry. (Fleming 1988, p.4-5).

Fleming confirms the fact that spiritual directors are called to exercise their charism as part of God's purpose in the world.

> The focus of spiritual direction is as wide as a person's whole life. No activity, no suffering, no relationship, no good action or bad action is exempt from being looked at in spiritual direction. … A spiritual director knows that God's call is constant and all

of us are necessarily involved in the bringing about of that part of the Kingdom where God is working in and through us. (1988, p.7).

The vocation to spiritual direction is therefore to be exercised in the service of God's mission in the world, the *missio Dei* and each director will need to examine their own interior spiritual life and reflect on their vocation and the part they are called upon to play in this.

Having been challenged by the research findings to consider the implications of the concept that spiritual direction is a charism, I will now consider what this means for future practice in terms of engaging with the *missio Dei.*

DEFINING MISSIO DEI

I am aware that previously I have defined the *telos* of charisms largely though Roman Catholic literature. I now turn to other traditions in order to explore how a contemporary understanding of *missio Dei* might underpin good practice in spiritual direction.

During the twentieth century, and particularly in response to World War II, understanding of the nature of the mission of God gradually changed, greatly influenced by the work of Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Christ's life, death and resurrection – 'the Christ event' - was central to Barth's theology and was expressed in his extensive work *Church Dogmatics,* published between 1932 and 1967. In his writing, (2010), Barth shifted the basis for Christian mission from church doctrine and the doctrine of salvation, to the doctrine of the Trinity, seeing God as defined by the interrelationships of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The implications of this doctrine in relation to spiritual direction will be addressed later in this chapter (p.118). Furthermore, in 1952 a resolution produced by the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council linked mission with the essential nature of God as Trinity. The nature of missionary work, previously largely seen as the sending of missionaries to non-Christian territories for the purpose of conversion, began to develop in a different direction.

In his seminal work on missiology, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, theologian David Bosch (1991, p.391) states:

> Since God's concern is for the entire world, this should also be the scope of the *missio Dei …* it takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the church. The *missio Dei* is God's activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate.

Similarly, Anglican priest and missiologist, Paul Avis, (2005, p.5), when explaining that the

Latin term *missio Dei* holds a deeper meaning than the English translation of *mission*, states: "*Missio Dei* speaks of the overflowing of the love of God's being and nature into God's purposeful activity in the world."

Missiologist Stephen Spencer, (2007, p.13) confirms this view when he argues that: "… *missio Dei* should not be restricted to the church's sphere of influence". All these statements resonate with theologian Jurgen Moltmann's earlier call for Christianity to "come of age" when he said (1977, p.12) "(*Lay persons*) should be trained to become men and women who can think independently and act in a Christian way in their own vocations in the world." As Matthews, reflecting on the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, states: "Bonhoeffer's great study Ethik … drew him to the conclusion that the quest for the Kingdom of God should not remain within the personal and spiritual realm but should involve the whole of our social existence" (Matthews, 2005, p.102).

Drawing on a Biblical example, we can see what Spencer calls "the Galilean principle" (2007, p.33) described in Mark 1:14-45 where Jesus draws alongside people where they are and calls for a personal response from his listeners "to repent and believe" (v.14). Jesus teaches "with authority" (v.21) and heals the sick both physically and mentally. This passage also shows that Jesus calls on others to join this work as he gathers together a collaborative team of ordinary working people (vv.18-19). As Bishop and missionary, Lesslie Newbigin, (1958) said: "You cannot have fellowship with Him *(Lord Jesus Christ)* without being committed to partnership in His mission to the world, a statement which invites reflection on what the word 'mission' might mean in a 21st century context.

Whilst this understanding of the call to all people to exercise their personal vocation may have had a new voice in the twentieth century, its origins can be seen in scripture. 1 Peter 2:9 says, "You are a royal priesthood and a priestly kingdom," and Revelation 5:10: "Through your blood you have made us into priests and kings." This resonates with what has become known as the Reformation concept of "The priesthood of all believers." Martin Luther believed that all baptized Christians could be designated as priests and similarly Calvin, critiquing monastic practices, suggested what Smith (2013, p.155) terms "… a celebration of the 'monkhood of all believers'." Mission is not to be solely the responsibility of the church and its leaders, all are called to serve God, to use their gifts and to engage in the *missio Dei*, a belief that lies at the heart of the Protestant paradigm.

MISSIO DEI AND THE CHURCH

In examining the role of the church in *missio Dei,* Spencer (2007, p.4) states "Whether or not the church grows or declines is secondary. Christian mission is about assisting with what God is doing in the world: mission is human development." He later adds (2007, p.12): "It is not 'the Church going out and saving people.' Rather it is *God creating and saving the world….* It is therefore something immensely greater than the Church. So the Church is a product of mission, rather than the other way round."

When describing the mission of God, Bosch states:

> In the new image mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. … Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world, the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission …To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people. It takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the church … (Bosch 1991, p.390-391).

This view of God's activity in the world is reflected in *Ad Gentes*, the significant document on mission that emerged from the Second 2 Council, which states: "Missionary activity is nothing else, and nothing less, than the manifestation of God's plan, its epiphany and realization in the world and in history;" (Second Vatican Council, 1965(c) p.444-453).

Similarly, Spencer states: "To be part of mission … is not just to be an agent … it is to participate in the very heart of who God is, to be caught up *within* and *contribute to* the interactive and flowing interrelationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a relationship that gives life and gives it abundantly" (Spencer, 2007, p22. Italics original). This interrelationship of the Trinity is expressed in the concept of *perichoresis,* the interaction of the three parts of the Trinity in relationship with each other. This raises questions about the interpretation of this concept in the practice of spiritual direction.

Spencer (2007, p.17), also draws on the literature of the twentieth century, when he reminds us that: "Barth famously placed discussion of the Trinity at the start of his *Church Dogmatics* reminding the churches that because God has revealed himself as inherently three in one, all theology, ethics and pastoral work must begin, and end, here." Spencer also quotes theologian Moltmann (1977, p.65) who states "It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfil in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church".

Spencer subsequently summarises the role of the Church as follows:

> … the Church is only one among three players, the other two being the society in which it lives, and the coming kingdom of God, which is the participative and saving movement of the Trinitarian God within the world. The Church must always see its place and role within this wider drama: it does not exist to serve its own ends but has been formed *to point to* the inauguration of that kingdom within that society. (Spencer, p.32-33).

As stated above, the *missio Dei* is the manifestation of the activity of God in the world in which we are all invited to engage. This raises the question of the contribution that good and ethical practice of spiritual direction makes to the *missio Dei* and the role of spiritual directors; it also raises the question of how spiritual directors participate in the Trinity

 and in God's movement of love in the world.

Baptist theologian Paul Fiddes, (2000) points out that: "… the earliest theological use of the verb *perichoreo* was in discussion of the humanity and divinity of Christ, by Gregory of Nazianzus and Maximus" where it is used to portray "… the reciprocity and exchange of the divine and human *actions* in the one person of Christ." (p.73, italics original). Commenting further on the Greek word *perichoresis*, with its analogy of 'dancing around', he continues, (p.71): "The term 'perichoresis' thus expresses the permeation of each person by the other, their coinherence without confusion … In the divine dance, so intimate is the communion that they move in and through each other so that the pattern is all-inclusive."   Spencer points out that Fiddes emphasises: "… that this kind of relationship … allows (people) to participate within God's life itself – they will be *joining the divine* interrelationship" (2007, p.20).   Perichoresis is not imitation but rather participation.

Fiddes also says: "We need to become aware of the way that we are actually engaging in the triune life of God, sharing in the currents of the personal relationships of God. Language of Trinity … is not that of observation but participation" (2000, p.71) and he goes on to develop the metaphor of the divine dance of the Trinity, stating: "… the image of the dance makes most sense when we understand the divine persons as movements of relationship, rather than as individual subjects who have relationships" (2000, p.72).   This sense of dynamic co-creation is also demonstrated in the experience of the director/directee relationship.

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 2: THE PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK

I am aware that there might seem to be a tension between the concept of charism and that of professionalism, but as is demonstrated in the case of other charisms, the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A charism can be exercised in a fruitful and creative way and even inspire the implementation of elements of professionalism. This in turn can provide a framework for reflection to support the charism of spiritual direction. Supervision could then be seen as a space in which both elements can be examined and held accountable. This super-ordinate theme was the result of the abstraction of the two themes of professional practice and competent practice.

THE KEY ISSUE OF ATTITUDES TO PROFESSIONALISM IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

I now return to the question of the professionalism of spiritual direction in order to examine the data in greater detail and to interpret the findings in the light of the identification of this super-ordinate theme.

The findings indicated that participants perceived certain issues to be linked to professionalism', about which some expressed reluctance. For example, the concept of accepting any form of monitoring of spiritual direction was viewed with caution, together with the connected suggestion that a national regulating organisation might be developed.   The introduction of a formal and accepted code of practice was also viewed with suspicion by some participants. In reflecting on these concepts, the view of spiritual direction as charism and vocation rather than profession was reinforced.

However, the imperative of "doing a professional job" was also very much evident in the findings.   M1 explicitly expressing the view that:

> … I fundamentally think, feel, that spiritual direction is a charism rather than a profession, I feel a resistance to it. Now, that isn't the same thing as saying that spiritual directors should not be professional in what they are doing so those two things have to be made distinct because you have to be professional, but I suppose what I jib at is anything that makes it, anything that would cramp to some extent the spontaneity of what can operate in the direction of rapport, that's really what I mean. So professionalism is one thing, but making it anything that moves towards it being a profession must be very carefully thought about.

F3, commenting on professional practice and the training courses in which she was involved, said: "The thing we're often accused of … is that there's too much concentration on the skills." Similarly, F4, when describing her own attitude to professional practice, stated: "I prefer to keep it more towards the professional end" and went on to elaborate further on the importance of boundaries in the director/directee relationship, which she gave as examples of a professional approach.

It was clear from the findings that participants considered the debate about the introduction of a code of practice to be central to the question of professional practice.

The introduction of a national code of practice

I first addressed this topic in Paper 2 (Appendix 2 p.187) in which I drew on my experience as a psychotherapist and discussed the arguments for guidelines rather than a more prescriptive code of practice. Such guidelines provide a framework in which practitioners can reflect on the circumstances of each situation rather than being required to adhere to the more legalistic 'rules' included in a code which may not always serve individuals well. Both BACP and UKCP have developed frameworks rather than codes of practice. These codes offer guidelines and encourage collegial discussion and consultation in the event of ethical dilemmas. There is always the implicit understanding that professionals should be able to justify the decisions they are making depending on circumstances and, when necessary, drawing on the expertise and experience of others. This understanding very much resonated with F3's comment about holding virtue ethics in mind. (Chapter 6, p.91).

In Paper 2 (Appendix 2, p.187), I also raised the question of the consequences of how a breach of a code would be addressed and the necessity for a complaints procedure and sanctions in such an event, a point to which F2 referred explicitly.

In relation to the possibility of adopting a national code of practice, some Phase 2 participants expressed some ambivalence about advantages and disadvantages. F1 stated:

> I've already been working to a code … I've seen so many more advantages to disadvantages to having it. … I don't feel comfortable with the thought of people practising spiritual direction as, the word that comes to mind is mavericks, doing it off their own bat with no accountability whatsoever - that makes me nervous.

However, others were not altogether in agreement.   F2 stated: "I think a code of practice could very easily inhibit the true sort of gifting ... the opportunity for real spiritual direction" and, as already mentioned in Chapter 6 (p.92), M1 felt that a code might potentially undermine the essential nature of spiritual direction.   M2 also expressed the opinion that, as far as he could see, there was a reluctance towards the idea of the introduction of a common agreement: "There just isn't the will in the market place as far as I can see …"

Participants were more inclined to accept the idea of flexible guidelines rather than a code of practice. F2 stated: "I think guidelines could be helpful, I think they have to be guidelines rather than imposing a definite code of practice which directors have to abide by, which I wouldn't be comfortable with at all."

It should be noted that, since the Phase 2 interviews took place, the RA has brought out suggested national guidelines (www.retreats.org.uk) which some organisations, for example LCS, SCRTP and SpiDir, have already accepted. These guidelines focus on six areas:

- What is spiritual direction?
- The nature of the relationship
- Core skills and qualities
- Key areas of formation
- Guidelines for good practice
- Suggestions for the implementation of the guidelines.

Phase 2 participants linked the question of codes of practice with the possibility of the introduction of an overarching national organisation with responsibility for enforcing such a code of practice and for the accreditation of spiritual directors.

The development of a national occupational organisation and the accreditation of spiritual directors.

The findings indicated that participants, whilst being committed to 'doing a professional job' and having a positive attitude towards guidelines for good practice, were nevertheless cautious or even hostile to the concept of a formalised code of conduct, and even more so to any suggestion of a national regulating body and the accreditation of spiritual directors.

The claim that spiritual direction is a charism was sometimes used to argue against embracing the necessity for a professional approach. However, the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive, nor can it be said that the concept of charism is antithetical to what would be considered acceptable professional standards in other disciplines. For example, teaching and healing are among the charisms named in 1 Corinthians 12, and, whilst perhaps a rather

simplistic a comparison, it would be unthinkable for medical practitioners to be unqualified, uninsured and unaccountable. In other disciplines a lack of accepted standards of practice is seen as unethical and potentially dangerous, yet spiritual direction still has a long way to go before such standards are agreed or achieved. The gift of such a charism may certainly indicate a vocation, but this does not obviate the necessity for investment in training to acquire appropriate knowledge and to develop necessary skills.

Implicit in the introduction of a formal national code of practice rather than more flexible guidelines is the necessity for some overarching organisation with the authority to monitor and regulate the activities of practitioners and address any breaches of the code.   The findings demonstrated a clear lack of enthusiasm on the part of the participants for any possibility of accreditation by such a national body. F2 expressed the view that:

> I think the administration of accreditation would be murder and I'm not sure that at the moment it's appropriate as a result. I can't quite see how accreditation would work, again, with spiritual direction, I'm not vetoing it but in a way I can't see how it would work for example without a code of practice. So I'm not in favour of it, I think ... and who's going to do ... I mean it would have to be so carefully thought through and so well organised that I suspect it's not possible. I think there needs to be ... you know there's a lot of talk about accreditation but who's doing the accrediting, who's then accrediting the accreditors, so I think it's a long way, to get something like that operating well I think is a long, long way down the road.

F3 stated: "I never see the will for accreditation among experienced directors." F4 saw actual disadvantages to accreditation, expressing the view that it would be the wrong sort of person who would be drawn to it:

> … accreditation isn't just something that would be difficult to implement, actually there is a down side to it, there are disadvantages … the wrong people would be attracted by the shiny gold star (*indicating that*) they're a special person … an accredited spiritual director.

Acceptance of the concept of professionalism in relation to spiritual direction does not therefore eliminate an expectation of competence supported by theory, conventions and practices from disciplines such as theology, psychology, pastoral care, and supervision, as well as issues of adequate training to ensure sufficient knowledge and experience on the part of the director.

THE KEY ISSUE OF DEVELOPING COMPETENT PRACTICE

Developing Skills

One of the most significant issues that emerged from the findings related to the limited number of hours of practical experience some participants were accruing, raising concerns about the development of spiritual directors from trainee to competent practitioner and the maintenance of competence thereafter.   In order to establish and maintain competence in any activity, regular practice of the skills is necessary and it could be argued that those directors who are accruing very few hours are taking a dilettante approach which is hard to reconcile with the claimed concepts of charism and vocation discussed earlier in this chapter.

In such circumstances it is hard to consider practitioners to have reached anything other than continuing trainee status, rather than the status of a competent practitioner.   As F3 pointed out: "By the end of the year you might have thirty sessions under your belt … you're still a novice for a very long time."

The findings suggest that it could take several years for a director to build up anything like the 100 hours of practice that are required before counsellors are considered even to have completed their training. This requirement for counsellors is also the minimum for eligibility to sit the examination that gives inclusion in the national register of counsellors. Accrediting bodies vary slightly in their requirements, but practitioners are subsequently required to complete a minimum of 450 hours in order to apply for professional accreditation in the UK, although in the US this number is considerably more. Furthermore, in order to maintain some professional registrations, a minimum number of practice hours is required each subsequent year and, according to a recent consultation document being circulated by UKCP, it is suggested that inclusion in the register of supervisors will be contingent upon 5 years and 1600 hours of psychotherapy practice. (UKCP, 2016).

Whilst it is perfectly possible that someone with little practical experience may nevertheless be working competently, the example of other professions would suggest that the andragogical necessities of skills learning of recency and frequency are also absent in these circumstances, leading inevitably to questions about developing and maintaining competence. It can therefore be seen that in other disciplines it is not considered to be

professionally satisfactory to be practising for relatively few hours a year, as would seem to be the case with of many spiritual directors.

Developing Knowledge

The evidence showed that there is considerable confusion relating to knowledge about potential legal implications in relation to confidentiality and that assumptions were being made about when, in legal terms, it is mandatory to break confidentiality and when it is defensible.

Because many of the participants were either working in a church context or had received church training, there was the assumption that the safeguarding requirements for church workers and spiritual directors would be the same. This would be the case if they were practising as spiritual directors under the auspices of the church, or any other organisation which has its own specific protocols about these issues. However, for those practising independently, there is currently no mandatory legal obligation to volunteer to break confidentiality even in cases of abuse, although in certain circumstances it may be considered to be legally defensible or become the subject of a Serious Crime Disclosure Order. Legal expert Peter Jenkins, when discussing whether the law should be changed and, commenting on the assumption that reporting is a legal requirement, states: "This is not currently the case, although this may change at some stage in the future, (dependent on the outcomes of the … Goddard (sic) Inquiry, see www.iicsa.org.uk/)" (Jenkins, 2016, p.33).

It also emerged that participants were unclear about the law relating to the maintenance of confidentiality when hearing of criminal activity and, when this was pursued in Phase 2, one participant differentiated between crimes of different severity, giving an example a case of mugging and a driving offence.   Again, it was evident that participants were unaware that a *mandatory* requirement to report is limited to acts relating to The Terrorism Act, 2006, and The Proceeds of Crime Act, 2002, although, as indicated above, organisations such as the NHS, local authorities, churches and others may have their own additional requirements. Participants were also unclear about to whom they would report any such events, for example, to employers, police or social services.

The findings also suggested that there is little understanding of the complexity of circumstances where a directee might be called as a witness in a court case and the associated risks of an accusation that the evidence has been contaminated by engaging in spiritual direction. Such a situation might more commonly be associated with counselling

than with spiritual direction, but there is no reason to suppose that the same procedures and expectations might not arise.

The lack of performance criteria

In considering the question of developing the skills and knowledge of spiritual directors, the fact that currently there are no generally agreed performance criteria for either good practice or supervision in relation to spiritual direction inhibits the potential for improving competence. In the absence of such criteria, it is difficult to see how a complaints procedure could be introduced or against what criteria a complaint could be evaluated.

This research has highlighted the lack of practical experience of some spiritual directors which has implications for good practice which will be discussed in the next chapter. The lack of accurate knowledge of legal issues may also, in some circumstances, detract from good practice and is particularly significant at a time when safeguarding and working with vulnerable adults is high on the national agenda. These are both issues in which supervision can play a role in developing competence.

THE KEY ISSUE OF ATTITUDES TO CHARGING AND PAYMENT FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Charging for spiritual direction

The Phase 1 data indicated that twenty-one women (three ordained) and two men (both ordained) made a charge for spiritual direction, five of whom asked for a charitable donation. These figures show that less than half the participants received payment for their services. Some participants reported that charging was prohibited in the context in which they practised, the rationale being that: "spiritual direction is a charism." This attitude in relation to charging for spiritual direction is inconsistent with that towards payment for other relevant vocational areas of work, for example clergy, youth workers, organists, cleaners. There are also questions of propriety in the case of clergy who are already being paid for their services, raising the question of whether or not they are offering spiritual direction as part of their role as a priest, as a church employee, or officer, or in a private capacity.

Both F1 and F4 were required by their respective Anglican dioceses to insist that no charge is made by those on their list of 'approved' directors. This led to the unintended consequence described by F4 of some of the most experienced directors in her area not being on the diocesan list. This also had negative consequences in relation to participation

in, and effectiveness of, diocesan supervision groups which lacked the contribution of the more experienced practitioners

M1 felt that charging could become manipulative to the process and M2, whilst stating that he charged those directees whom he saw in his role as an employee at a spirituality centre, added that he felt 'freer' when he didn't charge those who came to him privately.

The prohibition of the option to charge for spiritual direction has implications for the maintenance of consistent standards and the development of good practice. Some of these implications may, in practice, have negative consequences which are unintended and unforeseen and which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Charging for supervision

The research outcomes identified supervision as a key issue in the development of good practice, and the financial implications, both implicit and explicit, must therefore be considered. There may be some experienced spiritual directors who have already undertaken generic supervision training in other contexts, for example as social workers or therapists, but this may not be the case for many. Spiritual directors with a sense of vocation to offer themselves as supervisor are likely to require training which will inevitably cost money.

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 3:   THE ROLE OF SUPERVISION AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

The third super-ordinate theme of supervision and spiritual direction was identified from the function that participants attributed to the meaning and significance of the issues of supervision and accountability, these issues having particular significance to the research question.

THE KEY ISSUE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF SUPERVISION TO THE GOOD PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

One of the questions that this research seeks to answer relates to the role that supervision can play in the good practice of spiritual direction, so participants' views of the importance of supervision, a common understanding of its purpose, and how this differs from the prevailing view in other disciplines are key issues to be considered.

The purpose of supervision

All the participants in Phase 2 perceived the purpose of supervision to be primarily about the effect of the work on the director rather than privileging the interests of the directee which, even for the 2 counsellor-participants, was inconsistent with the theory and practice of supervision in general.   F4 said: "… supervision is much more with the focus on the director and how they responded to the material that is brought, how aware they are of their own inner processes…"; M1 stated: "… it's really a continuing exploration of your own psyche and therefore what you brought to supervision is not about solving the directee's problems but actually their impact on my psychological growth …" This raises the question of where accountability to the directee may lie, a question which is addressed both implicitly and explicitly in the theory underpinning a number of models of supervision.

I discussed models and practice of supervision in Paper 3 (Appendix 3, p.211) and have described the theory and process of supervision in Chapter 2, with particular reference to the work of Carroll and Gilbert (2011), Inskipp and Proctor (1993) and Hawkins and Shohet (2006), all of whom offer generic frameworks for supervision across disciplines and contexts. Drawing on the UK literature on supervision, Carroll and Gilbert identify generic features of supervision, the first of which is "To ensure the welfare and best-quality-service for clients" (p.11).

As previously stated, (Chapter 2, p.18) Inskipp and Proctor identify 3 functions of supervision, namely formative (educative), normative (managerial) and restorative (supportive). The findings from Phase 2 of the research suggest that the participants privileged the restorative function virtually to the exclusion of either the formative or normative functions, with the result that the aim of ensuring and maintaining at least adequate standards of ethical practice is largely neglected or ignored. As I have stated elsewhere: "… fulfilment of this function ensures that there is accountability and responsibility and provision of a 'good service'"; (in Gubi, 2015, p.133). Focusing exclusively on the restorative function, on encouraging supervisees and attending to their needs, risks ignoring that most important precept of spiritual direction, namely that the interests of the directee must always be paramount. As Bumpus, referring to supervision of spiritual direction, (2005, p.5) states: "Supervision is a conversation between peers that … fosters the well-being of an absent other." This notion of supervision puts the emphasis on the well-being of the directee.

Similarly, writing as a counsellor with a particular interest in the inclusion of spirituality, West states "For many therapists, supervision is experienced as the support of a more seasoned colleague, a

safe setting within which difficulties … can be explored *with the aim of improving the effectiveness of the therapy for the client involved."* (West 2000, p.110, italics mine).

As stated in Chapter 2, (p.17) Hawkins and Shohet's model has been used effectively by a considerable number of disciplines and in a variety of contexts. It is based on 7 'eyes', or Modes in which Modes 1 – 3 focus on the interactions between director and directee, Mode 4 addresses the director's process, and Modes 5 – 7 consider the supervisor's process, the supervisor/supervisee relationship and the wider context respectively.   The Phase 2 data suggest the perception that Mode 4 has primacy in the supervision of spiritual direction.

I recognise a possible argument that I am overlooking a more sophisticated understanding of Mode 4 in my interpretation of the transcripts, in that being aware of, and paying attention to, the director's process may well lead to transferential insights into that of the directee. Transferentially, through naming their own experience, supervisees may well be identifying with the experience of their directees and this possibility can then be explored further in supervision.

However, this is not the impression that I gained during the interviews themselves, or the interpretation I made when transcribing the recordings, as none of the participants made any attempt to offer links between their own process and any possible transferential material of the directee. Thus the process of supervision pays little or no attention to the content of the directee's narrative, but focuses extensively on the director's experience of personal responses and reactions.

Drawing on the focus of the above models, it is possible to see that the consequences of a limited understanding of the purpose of supervision may not serve the directee well. Ignoring Modes 1 - 3 in supervision is antithetical to the good practice of spiritual direction.

This research has identified that many practitioners consider that the primary purpose of supervision is to address their own responses to their experience as directors and that their needs take precedence over those of their directees as far as supervision is concerned. The questionable quality of some supervision denies directees a level of expertise that they might justifiably expect, as well as raising issues of accountability. The implications of these issues will be considered further in the next chapter.

The practice of supervision

 Supervision was widely mentioned in Phase 1 as making an important contribution to good practice, and the findings indicated that all the participants in Phase 2 considered it to be essential, for

example F1 said: "Supervision is non-negotiable"; F2 said: "I think it's very, very important … to ensure that you have good supervision, … I think it's absolutely vital" and F3, when asked whether she thought supervision was desirable or essential, replied "I think it's essential." F3 also reflected on the relative effectiveness of different models of supervision.

There was no common view on the optimum frequency of supervision amongst the Stage 2 participants, F3 being the most specific when, in relation to a possible ratio of practice hours to supervision, she stated:

> Well, one to ten (*sessions of spiritual direction)* maybe, but again it would mean that those directors with a couple of directees that would mean they have supervision about once every six months which seems inadequate so I don't tend to give a figure and I say this is advisory, one to eight, one to ten seems to be what they do in other professions, but if you've only got a couple of directees what you need is regular supervision, hence being part of a group is a good thing.

The competence of supervisors must also be relevant when considering the effectiveness of the practice of supervision. When considering suitability for supervision training, one of the factors that might be taken into account would be both the quality and quantity of the practitioner's previous practical experience. Consultant psychologist Joyce Scaife (2001, p.134), in the context of specifying the standards of competence required of supervisors of psychologists, raises the question "Do supervisors conscientiously practise the skills they are helping their trainees to learn?"

The limited practice and experience of some spiritual directors discussed above, is also relevant to the question of the quality of supervision, particularly in the case of peer group supervision where perhaps none of the group members could be considered to be an experienced practitioner, leading to a possible situation of 'the blind leading the blind.'   This is potentially a serious problem in terms of the quality of supervision, with inevitable consequences for the quality of the spiritual direction being offered. It also raises the issue of accountability.   As formal requirements for continuing professional development for spiritual directors are not usually specified, supervision is the only opportunity that some practitioners may have in which to explore their practice, to learn from the experience and expertise of others and to develop their own level of competence. However, it should also be noted that, in their recent Research Overview, BACP warns against "… making supervision a substitute for additional and further training … it is only a resource and support, but does not take the place of academic or theoretical training." (2016, p,14).

THE KEY ISSUE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The question of accountability featured strongly in the findings of Phase 1 and all the Phase 2 participants placed a great deal of importance on this subject in general and their personal accountability in particular. In this section I will consider the findings with reference to both ecclesial and secular imperatives.

As already quoted above, F1 stated that she was uncomfortable with the idea of people practising spiritual direction 'off their own bat'. F2, F3 and F4 all mentioned supervision as being a place where they could be held accountable for their work, and F3 was clear about the lines of accountability within the religious order for whom she worked. F4, M1 and M2 stated that they were accountable to the denominations to which they belonged, and also to other groups, such as colleagues, employers and charitable trustees.

This experience and attitudes of the participants towards their own accountability is consistent with the literature as discussed in Chapter 2.

Ecclesial and secular imperatives

In Paper 2 I explored the question of accountability and noted that Keith Lamdin and David Tilley (2007, p.9) address the question of accountability stating: "... all individuals ... are accountable to Christ for their discipleship." They continue: "There are (sic) a range of accountabilities here and they need to be set out clearly and managed effectively, without in any way undermining the accountability of all to Christ". Similarly, Langer states: "Supervision is an act of being accountable not only to those we serve, but also to the faith community at large" (Bumpus and Langer, 2005, p.35). This understanding that accountability is fundamental to all aspects of Christian discipleship, raises questions of how and where accountability can be located in the practice of spiritual direction. Supervision would seem to provide an obvious setting in which accountability can be addressed.

Taking a broadly similar position, practical theologians Graham, Walton and Ward state:

> When considering the question of accountability, there are two imperatives: firstly, an
> ecclesial imperative which demands accountability to the body as part of its ethos; secondly,
> there is an imperative driven by a secular culture which is concerned with abuses of power
> and which very much reflects gospel priorities about attitudes to poor, needy, sick, and
> outcast members of society. This understanding is reflected in Graham's vision of pastoral
> theology described as "Transformative practices are the embodiments and witnesses to

'Divine activity amidst human practice' … as glimpses of the Word made flesh." (2005, p.195).

Similarly Leach and Paterson, writing in the context of the supervision of pastoral workers, suggest that supervision "… provides a realistic point of accountability within the body of Christ for their work ..." (2010, p.1).   If the purpose of supervision is to ensure good practice in the interests of the directee, and to support the director in providing such practice, then supervision offers accountability both to the directee and to Christ. However, whilst aspiring to accountability, this did not seem to be the prime focus of supervision for the participants in this research.

As discussed above, the contemporary literature on supervision across disciplines, for example Leach and Paterson (2010, p.1 and pp.141-142), Lamdin and Tilley (2007, p.9); Hawkins and Shohet, (2006, Chapter 1); Carroll and Gilbert, (2011, p.5), Bond (2012, Chapter 12, pp.181-195) all encourage consultation with a more experienced other to ensure competent practice. As also mentioned in Paper 2 (Appendix 2, p.187), Lyall, in the foreword to Leach and Paterson's book on pastoral supervision (2010, p.x) emphasises the importance of accountability stating: "As communities of faith play 'catch up' in developing their own structures of support and accountability, the authors … draw upon familiarity with this theoretical base and succeed in harnessing it in the service of pastoral supervision."

The research evidence demonstrated inconsistency in the responses of the participants. On the one hand they espoused accountability, yet on the other hand they saw the main purpose of supervision to be that of exploring the director's feelings rather than engaging with the directee's material. This apparent misunderstanding of the purpose of supervision contributes to a lack of accountability.

Participants showed commitment to the concept of accountability which is consistent with the literature of similar disciplines, and supervision was identified as a place where this could be explored. However, whilst the theory is widely accepted, further research is necessary to establish both how and whether this is reflected in practice.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND THE WAY FORWARD

In this chapter I have identified eight key issues that make a significant contribution to the three super-ordinate themes. I have established that the nature of the relationship between director and directee is foundational to good practice and is contingent upon the personal spiritual life and the charism of the director.

Drawing on the findings, I have identified other aspects that impinge on good practice.   It was clear that there is some tension in relation to adopting professional standards in the practice of spiritual direction which seems to be linked to practitioners' understanding of spiritual direction as charism. The consequences of lack of practical experience, and the recognition of gaps in knowledge, particularly about legal requirements, were also identified.

The question of attitudes to money and payment has implications in relation to good practice of spiritual direction.   Training and continuing professional development cost money; good supervision may cost money; the introduction of monitoring and evaluation would certainly cost money. As long as those who hold authority over many spiritual directors prohibit charging, and as long as the acceptance of spiritual direction as charism is considered antithetical to receiving payment, a case can be made that the development of consistent good practice may be inhibited.
The apparent misunderstandings about the purpose of supervision which gives rise to a consequent lack of accountability, is also a significant issue.

In the next chapter I will address the question of the implications for the future that arise out of these key issues, both for the practice of spiritual direction generally and for my own practice as a spiritual director. I shall also identify areas for future research.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS FOR THE FUTURE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

INTRODUCTION

In this research I have engaged in a dialogical process involving the community of practice, the body of literature, human experience and the Christian tradition. Inevitably this has been mediated through my own reflexive process and personal experience. This has resulted in evidence of the following four specific areas which I will address in this chapter:

- The implications and significance of aspects of the 3 super-ordinate themes for the future practice of spiritual direction.
- The dissemination of the research outcomes within the spiritual direction community.
- Recommendations in relation to the implications identified.
- Suggested topics for future research.

In the previous chapter I concluded by identifying the following three super-ordinate themes that emerged from further exploration and analysis of the data:

- The person and presence of the spiritual director
- The professional framework
- The role of supervision in the practice of spiritual direction

Having gathered and analysed the data, and interpreted and summarised the findings, the following issues that contributed to the three super-ordinate themes were identified:

- The director's personal spiritual life
- The director/directee relationship
- Spiritual direction as charism
- Attitudes to professionalism
- Developing competent practice
- Attitudes to charging for spiritual direction
- The purpose and practice of supervision
- Accountability in supervision

In this chapter I will consider the implications of the above issues, discuss what they indicate for future practice, and suggest recommendations for the introduction and implementation of innovations and developments. I will locate the implications of these key issues both in a general and more specifically in my personal context as a member of the organising group of SpiDir. I will acknowledge the challenges that the research continues to raise for me personally in my private practice as a spiritual director and supervisor. I will also consider how the outcomes of the research may best be disseminated in the spiritual direction community and will conclude the chapter with recommendations for future practice and research.

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 1: THE PERSON AND PRESENCE OF THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

The implications of recognising the centrality of the director's personal spiritual life

Participants emphasised the importance of the director's personal spiritual life as significant, providing empirical evidence for what Cameron, (2010, p.54), calls 'espoused theology', that is, what we say we believe rather than what is necessarily being lived out. As already stated, this is impossible to measure or evaluate but the evidence supports paying considerable attention to this element in the training, development and supervision of spiritual directors.

The implications in relation to the director/directee relationship

The research outcomes demonstrated that participants considered the director/directee relationship to be central to good practice which very much resonates with the experience recognised in the literatures of pastoral care and psychotherapy. The concept of relationship provides the building bricks on which both spiritual direction and supervision are founded.

The research also identified the importance of the sense of presence and hospitality in the director/directee relationship. The importance of offering welcome resonates with Abraham's hospitality at Mamre in Genesis 18: 2-8, and with the injunction in Hebrews 13:2 "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." As Gubi, reminds us: "… spiritual direction can be described as a ministry of presence and attentiveness and a ministry of hospitality" (Gubi, 2015, p.29). This resonates with the reflection previously described (p.117) that the concepts of hospitality and charism are expressed in the concept of the divine dance of the Trinity, the perichoresis, into which we are all invited.

As evidenced in Chapter 6 and discussed in Chapter 7, the outcomes highlight participants' perception that the spiritual director's personal spiritual life is linked to the concepts of charism and vocation. Part of the challenge to future practice would therefore be the examination, or more hopefully the re-examination, by individuals of their personal vocation. This raises questions about perceptions of the purpose, the *telos*, of spiritual direction which, as discussed in Chapter 3, the literature suggests is to deepen the directee's relationship with God and to serve God's purpose in the wider mission in the world.

Raising SpiDir members' awareness of the evidence of the centrality of the significance of the director's personal spiritual life and the director/directee relationship would only seem to

be a legitimate aim if members of the the SpiDir leadership team are themselves first willing to engage in such a process. This would call for reflection on personal spiritual practice in order to discern how this supports and develops them in their work and what this might be modelled to both colleagues and directees, consciously or unconsciously. The implications for the SpiDir community in terms of emphasis, for training, and in terms of personal reflection, are therefore potentially considerable.

The implications implicit in exercising the charism of spiritual direction in the missio Dei

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the outcomes of the research indicated that participants considered spiritual direction to be a charism, a grace given by God, infusing the person and identity of the spiritual director and marked by a vocation to serve the whole people of God. It is this quality of a gift from God that is recognised by directees in their experience of the person and presence of the director and in the relationship that develops between them.

In this section I will therefore return to the subject of charism in the light of the challenge that this obligation to engage in the *missio Dei* presents for spiritual directors. The question of how the role of spiritual directors may be understood in the *missio Dei* at this point in the twenty-first century generates a considerable challenge to the spiritual direction community, a challenge that I will examine below.

Jesus gives a clear indication of how his mission is to be continued: "Again Jesus said, '…, as the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). In 1 Cor.3:9, we are called to be God's co-workers in the *missio Dei*: "The man who plants, and the man who waters have one purpose, … for we are God's fellow-workers" or, as Franciscan Richard Rohr (2016) in his Daily Meditation puts it, we have "… a vocation to share the fate of God for the life of the world."

Thus the purpose, the *telos*, of spiritual direction widens from being solely that of meeting the needs of the individual directee to joining in with the work of God in the world, the *missio Dei*. This leads to reflection on what might be involved if spiritual directors are to engage wholeheartedly in this call to exercise their vocation.

The identification of *missio Dei* as the *telos* of spiritual direction offers a horizon within which the implications for practice can be examined. This raises the question of the extent to which individual spiritual directors accept this understanding of the concept of charism with its implicit commitment to exercise their vocation. MacIntyre's views about the development

of excellence through practice referred to in Chapter 2 are also relevant here. Directors will need to examine their own interior spiritual life to identify how their charism is to be applied in the situation in which they find themselves, in the place where their vocation calls them to be. As outlined above, the gift of a charism calls for it to be used in the service of God. It therefore follows that, in accepting the concept of spiritual direction as charism, there is an imperative to reflect on vocation and how it is to be exercised in the *missio Dei.*

In the context of SpiDir, how this examination would be approached will be for members of the leadership team to discern, both individually and as a group. The process and outcome of such an examination cannot be pre-empted.   However, the importance of starting with ourselves should not be underestimated, and would include theological reflection on the purpose and practice of spiritual direction and the role of supervision. An exploration of the concepts of welcome, charism and *missio Dei* would be foundational to such an undertaking and would apply not only to SpiDir members but to the whole spiritual direction community.

The implications for SpiDir and for the spiritual direction community incorporate those stated above in relation to the person and presence of the spiritual direction. In addition there are implications of discernment in relation to selection for training, both as directors and as supervisors. Spiritual directors also have a responsibility to consider whether or when the time to stop practising might arrive.

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 2: PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK

The implications of the findings in relation to attitudes towards professionalism and spiritual direction

The question of professionalism was figural in the findings of the research and raises strategic questions about future practice. Whilst acknowledging a sense of ambivalence in responses, it is likely that this question will continue to be a subject for discussion.   The changing of attitudes will be a process rather than a single event, a process that can be generated by raising awareness of the possible advantages and disadvantages of adopting what might be seen as a more 'professional' approach. It may also be necessary to consider whether and how the apparent reluctance being shown towards embracing greater professionalism is consistent with the experience of other contemporary disciplines such as pastoral care and psychotherapy. Is this reluctance perhaps a reflection of an attitude that prefers to look backwards in order to maintain the status quo?

The question of a national regulating body is another strategic question for future consideration and discussion. This discussion might be informed by the experience of other

relevant disciplines, for example psychotherapy and pastoral care. In the case of psychotherapy, UKCP, BACP, and BPS are well established regulating bodies. In the case of pastoral care, the inauguration of APSE may have been relatively recent, but the organisation is growing fast in terms of both numbers and influence. The introduction of the RA guidelines for good practice perhaps indicates some willingness to consider national agreement of standards in relation to certain aspects of practice.

Whilst there may currently be resistance to the idea of an overarching national institution, it is perhaps worth reflecting on the fact that in the past spiritual direction was located almost exclusively in monasteries and the church. It is also the case that in contemporary times there are already regional and local organisations in place, (for example, SpiDir, LCS, many diocesan groups) which, at least to some extent, already have oversight and take responsibility for monitoring the practice of particular sectors of the spiritual direction community. However, in the absence of a national body, it is hard for consistency of practice to develop between local organisations in terms of evaluating and monitoring standards of practice. It is also possible that some unforeseen event (for example a particularly unsympathetic media story or legal case) may precipitate further action towards introducing more formalised monitoring and regulation of spiritual direction. In these circumstances the introduction of some organisation with national oversight may be forced on the spiritual direction community.

Perhaps the participants' responses, innately and out of awareness, to a degree reflect MacIntyre's sense of caution in relation to institutions whose interests do not necessarily serve practitioners well in terms of prioritising the practice of excellence and the development of internal goods which benefit the whole community. (Chapter 2 p.8). However, I also bear in mind his statement regarding the necessity for institutions stating: "For no practices can survive for any length of time unsustained by institutions" (2007, p.226).

The leadership team of SpiDir is already addressing some of the issues relating to professionalism that the research has identified as significant to good practice of spiritual direction. Supervision is a condition of membership and the RA have been recommended to practitioners. As stated above, the question of whether introducing further regulation would necessarily be beneficial must also be considered in the light of MacIntyre's warnings about the priorities of institutions being different from those of individual practitioners and the potential for a deleterious effect that their corrupting power may have on good practice.

(MacIntyre, 2007, p.226). I recognise that it will be for both the SpiDir leadership team and its membership to consider this matter further.

Whilst acknowledging that the Christian tradition may be considered to have different expectations from those of contemporary culture, is there, perhaps, a danger that the apparent reluctance to accept increased professionalism may be seen as yet another example of organised religion seeming to be out of touch with the reality of life in the twenty-first century? As Australian academic and writer on spirituality, David Tacey states: "The religious institutions have been marooned by history. They are based on an ancient three-cornered cosmology (earth, heaven, hell) that was undermined by the findings of science and philosophy … The tragedy of our time is that the faith traditions still don't 'get it'" (Tacey, 2014).

The community of spiritual directors should therefore be willing to consider whether this reluctance to embrace the idea of a national organisation might be hindering the development of good practice, and if this were found to be the case, how might the charism of spiritual direction be more effectively exercised.

As well as the above implications relating to the practice of spiritual direction, I also find myself reflecting further on the relationship with the *missio Dei.* As traditional forms of church continue to decline in northern European societies, the question arises whether spiritual direction might be a form of church for some people. My own experience of over twenty years as a spiritual director, seeing between twenty and thrrty directees at any one time, is that a significant proportion would be considered to be "de-churched." I also work with clergy directees who share similar misgivings about working for an organisation that they fear is becoming irrelevant to the community in which they serve. This situation resonates with the fact that participants in the research made very few references to 'church' (eight in Phase 1 and seven in Phase 2). This raises questions about how spiritual direction and the community of spiritual directors might be seen in relation to Fresh Expressions. The definition of Fresh Expressions is staged as follows:

- A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church.
- It will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples;

- It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the gospel and the enduring marks of the church and for its cultural context. (Fresh Expressions, 2009).

The website also makes reference to those who have left church "for whatever reason (dechurched)." My own experience suggests that spiritual direction can be a more incarnational and responsive way for faith to be nurtured than through traditional institutional means, particularly for the de-churched. Whether it can be developed intentionally as a way of making new disciples, and what further work might be needed for spiritual direction to be considered a form of church rather than a para-church activity is beyond the scope of this study, but there are certainly questions here to be explored.

As evidenced in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the findings of the research demonstrated the conviction of participants that spiritual direction is a charism. As discussed above (p.117), the literature states that a charism is to be exercised in the interests of God's activity in the world, the *missio Dei*. It can therefore legitimately be asserted that the *telos* of spiritual direction includes engagement in this *missio Dei* which offers a horizon before which the implications for practice can be examined.

Acknowledging that accepting this commitment is exercising a God-given vocation perhaps offers a more hopeful horizon in which to consider the issue of professionalism than the rather defensive perspective that emerged from the research which focused on questions of regulation. By adopting this more developmental approach, and through training and professional development, the potential benefits may be revealed, benefits such as raising standards through increased cross-fertilisation of experience, ideas and wisdom, as well as engendering a deeper sense of community among practitioners.

Returning to Gadamer's concept of the fusion of horizons previously mentioned in Chapter 4, a fusion of the horizon of *missio Dei* and that of the practice of spiritual direction could provide a vehicle for creative reflection and constructive action. In order to embrace a vocation as a spiritual director and to engage fully with the *missio Dei*, the priority must be to develop and improve all aspects of practice.

I would like to think that the introduction of some institution would make a significant contribution to this goal in terms of monitoring and developing standards and providing a community for the critical examination of practice and the support of practitioners. However, at this stage, in the face of the apparent reluctance of directors to accept such an institution, a willingness to be open to dialogue on this possibility is what is important.

The implications of the findings in relation to developing competent practice.

As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, the lack of practical experience of some directors raises serious questions about the development of competence. The previous lack of awareness of this fact is in itself concerning, and the implications potentially serious.   There is no indication in the various diocesan or other lists and registers of spiritual directors that this is a situation that is in any way monitored.   Whilst some may not consider accreditation to be desirable, differentiation between trainee, novice and experienced directors would nevertheless be helpful for those looking for a director.

In reflecting on this situation, I am reminded of MacIntyre's statement in relation to practice that: "… goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence …" (2007, p.218), a view that is summarised by Lutz as characteristic of MacIntyre's work that "A practice has standards of excellence that develops along with the practice" (Lutz, 2012, p.157).   These statements draw attention to the fact that excellence is achieved through practising the activity.

In the case of SpiDir, inclusion in the list of spiritual directors is subject to training, a reference, and in some cases an interview.   Members range from directors who have recently completed training and who are now looking for their first directees, to practitioners with many years of experience. This situation causes me to reflect on whether the information given on the list should identify those directors who have reached a specified threshold of experience in terms of practice hours, the actual number to be agreed by the SpiDir leadership team. The response of members to such a suggestion cannot be anticipated, and my proposal may be rejected, but a discussion itself would draw attention to the current situation and the value of developing skills and experience through continuous practice. There are also considerable implications in the current lack of performance criteria for spiritual directors.

The implications of the findings in relation to attitudes to payment and charging for spiritual direction

The prohibition on charging is mainly to be found within church settings, for example, as a diocesan requirement being implemented by senior clergy. This is inconsistent with the payment of priests, chaplains, vergers, organists, cleaners and others, and also raises questions of power within institutions. It could also be alleged that there is a feminist issue in this context where the majority of practitioners are female and the majority of church

leadership is male. This attitude would also seem to be inconsistent with Jesus' saying "The worker deserves his (sic) wages." (Luke 10:7)

Two of the Phase 2 participants, both working in diocesan contexts that prohibited charging, made it clear that, because of this, they did not expect directors to see directees very frequently, one specifically stating: "… because no-one gets paid … then we wouldn't really expect anyone to see someone more than once a quarter" clearly indicating that financial arrangements rather than the needs or wishes of the directee was the driving factor. This does not sit well with the idea of spiritual direction as service in the *missio Dei.*

The question of charging for spiritual direction has implications in relation to the key issues of competence, professionalism and supervision, all of which involve costs.   The figures from the research indicate that over half the participants received no payment for spiritual direction. Not charging may have the unintended consequence of reducing the provision of the spiritual direction being offered rather than, perhaps paradoxically, making it more widely accessible. This is because it may have the effect of limiting those who can afford to practice.   Being financially secure does not guarantee good practice and, when opportunities for access to supervision, professional development and indemnity insurance are limited because of cost, the quality of direction may be impaired.   Directors may also be deterred from engaging in further training activities or taking out professional indemnity insurance because of the cost.

Additionally, the lack of payment may, if only unconsciously, imply a lack of value, and if the service is undervalued by recipient or provider, it is likely that the process will not be experienced as particularly rewarding for either.   There is also a potential link with the subject of gaining experience as a spiritual director. Practitioners who are required to work in a voluntary capacity may only be able to dedicate a limited amount of time to spiritual direction with negative consequences for developing competence. This contrasts with MacIntyre's views that developing excellence requires sustained practice referred to in Chapter 2, (p.9).

A possible result of the prohibition on charging may be that some highly effective potential directors with a true vocation may be prevented from practising their charism which is, as already indicated, a gift of the Holy Spirit. Equally, some less competent but financially secure people may be practising, albeit inadequately, and in so doing, may be diminishing the reputation of spiritual direction as a discipline. There will also be consequences in terms of progressing the practice of spiritual direction which is consistent with MacIntyre's view that

the individual development of competence makes a contribution to the general excellence of all practitioners (2007, p.222). Financial security should not be the defining criterion for whether an individual may exercise their vocation in this area.

SUPER-ORDINATE THEME 3: THE ROLE OF SUPERVISION

The implications of the findings in relation to the practice and purpose of supervision

Supervision practised in awareness that the *telos* of spiritual direction is *missio Dei*, will aspire to bring this horizon into dialogue with practice, providing a physical, emotional and spiritual space in which directors can examine their work, while at the same time listening for the promptings of the Holy Spirit in the exercise of their charism, their vocation, their vision. As Leach and Paterson (2010, p.11-12) state: "The metaphors of sight buried in the word 'supervision' suggest that ministry which does not attend to its vision is short-sighted … supervision becomes a practice which can help us see our ministry in broader perspective and in particular which can help us attend to our vision."

The movement towards the introduction of supervision of spiritual direction is gathering momentum and it is now compulsory for SpiDir members. All directors on the SpiDir list are required to engage in supervision and I hold a list of possible supervisors. Most of these supervisors have received at least some training, even if this has been rather limited. The RA, the LCS Community, and SCRTP guidelines also make supervision a requirement, and the findings identified a conviction that supervision makes an essential contribution to good practice. The increased interest in supervision of pastoral care, as evidenced by the development and influence of the activities of APSE, also indicates perceptions of the value of supervision.

However, the possible consequences of misunderstanding the purpose of supervision should not be underestimated. The evidence indicated that there is a danger that supervision may be seen as an extension of the director's own spiritual direction rather than privileging the interests of directees. There is a considerable challenge in addressing an attitude which the research suggests is widespread, and which potentially has significant implications for good practice and accountability of spiritual direction.

As outlined in Chapter 2, other disciplines take a broader perspective of the purpose of supervision in considering how it relates to the interests of both supervisor and supervisee. While this may include the recognition and acknowledgement of the individual needs of supervisees, the focus is much wider, with priority being given to responsibility for the

interests of those with whom supervisees are working.   It would therefore seem imperative and urgent that this issue is addressed in relation to the practice of spiritual direction.

As a result of identifying key issues from the research, I am already introducing changes into how I train and monitor supervisors. In the light of the findings, in order to undertake supervision training, or be included in the list of supervisors, applicants will in future be asked to give evidence of sufficient actual experience as directors as some indication of competence as practitioners. In response to this research evidence, it is also my intention to address the issue of the primacy of the directee's needs over those of the director, drawing on the literature of supervision in general and relating it to the practice of spiritual direction in particular.

The implications in relation to the purpose and practice of supervision therefore seem considerable, particularly when it is remembered that supervision is still not a universally accepted requirement in the community and there is still some resistance to its introduction by some practitioners.

The implications of the findings in relation to accountability in spiritual direction

This question clearly links with that of whether or not increased professionalism is desirable or even essential. In Chapter 2, (p.15-16) I have discussed the ecclesial and secular imperatives for accountability in the practice of spiritual direction and drawn attention to the fact that supervision provides the forum and opportunity for related issues to be addressed.

The implications of the current situation are not encouraging. In the absence of a professional body with responsibility for oversight of spiritual direction, and consequently no recognised procedures for complaint handling, levels of accountability are likely to remain limited and in many circumstances be restricted to denominational protocols. At a time when safeguarding is being taken very seriously in all areas of life, the lack of any framework for dealing with complaints is unsatisfactory. However, in the absence of agreed performance criteria for spiritual direction, it is hard to see how a complaints procedure could effectively and legitimately be introduced. In the current climate and circumstances, dissatisfied complainants will have only the limited option of private legal action, the basis on which this could take place depending on individual circumstances. With no national structure of accountability, the directee can be very vulnerable.

The integration of the above implications

There is a danger of seeing the above as 'silos' or stand-alone issues and ignoring the potential interaction between them.   Acceptance of the centrality of the person and presence of the director, together with the recognition of a vocation to spiritual direction as a charism, must inevitably influence the director's attitude to the other key issues. There are costs involved in developing and maintaining competent practice and engaging in supervision. Without supervision, accountability is difficult, if not impossible, to monitor. Without a professional body with oversight, it is hard to see how competence and accountability can be assured.

THE DISSEMINATION OF THE RESEARCH OUTCOMES TO THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTION COMMUNITY

As it is unlikely that this doctoral thesis in its present form will be widely read, the impact of the outcomes of the research on the practice of spiritual direction in the UK depends to a great extent on how the findings are disseminated. I am therefore already investigating the possibility of publishing a book summarising the research and the implications for practice, with particular reference to the above key issues. Such a book would be directed at a general rather than academic readership, and would be promoted as a core text for courses in spiritual direction.

I also foresee opportunities for journal articles and for introducing some of the ideas into the development days and training courses with which I am already involved. However, in considering the dissemination of the outcomes, I realise that such opportunities may be either more limited or more extensive that I can currently envisage.   I am also reminded on my previous awareness of the role of the readers of the research findings who will also be making their own interpretation of the outcomes and implications and the possibility of further dialogue on the key issues identified.

If any or all of the above aspirations are met, it is hoped that general awareness of the key issues may be raised and that conversations will take place between practitioners, supervisors, trainers and directees themselves. Such awareness-raising has valuable strategic potential in terms of challenging the somewhat 'silo' mentality that can be the result of little cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences between centres of practice in the spiritual direction community.   It is also hoped that such discussions would raise individuals' awareness of the key issues, and will also encourage practitioners to reflect on their personal experience as directors in the light of the findings.

Despite initial support from the SpiDir leadership team, it is unlikely that members will read this thesis, so I plan to prepare and present a report of the themes in general and the key issues in particular and thus to draw attention to the implications for good practice and the role of supervision.   Having raised issues of particular significance to SpiDir in this way, there will then be the question of how to involve the general membership of the network in further reflection and possible implementation. This is most likely to be achieved through including the dissemination of information and the discussion of ideas in a workshop and I have already been asked to facilitate such a day for SpiDir members.

As a member of the SpiDir Training Group, I have already started to discuss with tutors possible modifications to the Introduction to Spiritual Direction training course being offered. In order to ensure that those completing the course can be considered competent to practice, I have had conversations with tutors about the introduction of more formalised protocols for assessment and feedback throughout the course in order to monitor standards of competence. I have also suggested changes in relation to training about the purpose and use of supervision, as well as the understanding of legal issues.

In the future I hope to develop the assessment procedures further in order to increase rigour and would also like to introduce some requirement for giving 'real' direction, rather than the current practice which is limited to working with fellow students. Such a requirement would then become necessary for satisfactory completion of the course. This would emphasise the necessity for genuine experience rather than role play for the development of practitioners.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RELATION TO THE IMPLICATIONS IDENTIFIED

The recommendations that follow are to a certain extent contingent upon the dissemination of the outcomes and the writing and publication of a 'Handbook for Spiritual Directors' described above.   If there is to be change, there must first be raised awareness of the issues involved, both at national and at a more local level. As has been evident in this research, there is considerable variation in the understanding of the purpose and practice of both spiritual direction and supervision, influenced by tradition, habit, contextual and denominational considerations.

The first recommendation that I make is to increase awareness of the understanding of spiritual direction as charism in the community of spiritual directions and to initiate discussion about how the ensuing vocation can fully be exercised. The aim would be to address the contribution of spiritual direction to the *missio Dei*, give recognition to and honour the

vocation of directors, and encourage dialogue between practitioners, in order to support the cross-fertilisation of experience mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Such a dialogue would also provide the opportunity to draw attention to and discuss the key issues that the research has identified. This could be achieved by:

- Introducing training days devoted to the subject of spiritual direction as charism to both trained and trainee directors within the SpiDir Network.

- Gathering together groups of spiritual directors with the purpose of exploring together the implications of this aspect of the research outcomes. This could be achieved by advertising in the RA annual handbook, *Retreats.*

- Speaking or running workshops at national conferences, for example The British and Irish Association of Practical Theology (BIAPT); APSE; Continuing the Journey; British Association for the Study of Spirituality.

- Developing links with APSE and BIAPT in order to explore the possibility of introducing special interest groups for spiritual directors.

- Contributing articles to journals, for example, Contact, Thresholds, SDI Journal.

- Considering further the idea of spiritual direction in the context of Fresh Expressions.

The second recommendation that I make is that a working party of experienced spiritual directors should be established to address the question of identifying agreed performance criteria for spiritual direction in the UK. This seems to me to be fundamental to the development of good practice of both spiritual direction and supervision and would offer a valuable safeguard to directees that is currently absent. The process of agreeing such performance criteria would also implicitly address many of the questions that have emerged in the course of this research, for example issues of professionalism and payment.

THE PARTICULAR CHALLENGES THAT THE RESEARCH RAISES IN MY PRIVATE PRACTICE

Having identified the challenges that the outcomes of the research raise for spiritual directors in general, and for SpiDir in particular, I am very aware of the challenges that I face in my private practice. These relate particularly to the imperative of reflecting on my own spiritual life and to exploring my own sense of vocation in relation to the concepts of charism and the *missio Dei*.

As researcher, I am very familiar with the outcomes of my research. However, it does not necessarily follow that this familiarity has automatically and immediately resulted in the personal processing of the implications for my own practice as a spiritual director. Perhaps

inevitably my role as researcher has been more that of observer than participant, and there is a particular challenge in making a conscious the shift to considering what the outcomes mean for my own practice. I am also aware that there may be as yet unforeseen consequences and implications that will only emerge with time and further reflection.

The research has also highlighted the question of the purpose of supervision and I am currently asking supervisees about their understanding of the process and encouraging them to read the literature on the subject. However, it is becoming clear that as the majority of those who come to me for supervision of spiritual direction are also therapists, they are already familiar with models of supervision that give priority to the client or directee rather than primarily focusing on the needs of the director.

I am also challenged by the question of increased professionalism. Whilst I recognise the possible benefits of an organisation with national oversight, from my experience in psychotherapy, and in tune with MacIntyre's fears about institutions, I am also aware of an element of resistance in my own attitudes. I have experienced the draining effects of bureaucracy and the frustrations that the heavy, sometimes deadening, hand of hierarchical systems can engender.

As well as the implications of the key issues for my own future practice, there are the added questions about to what extent and how I pursue them in terms of awareness raising and the dissemination of the information more widely. How much I feel drawn to engaging with the individual issues is something to which I will need to give attention through prayer and reflection in due course. I will also need to discern to what extent I involve myself in the recommendations that I make in this thesis.

Many of the implications and recommendations identified above would be for consideration and implementation in the near future. This raises questions about how I envisage my own future at this particular stage in my life. I must discern where my personal vocation lies in relation to addressing these issues in the future. I must also consider how this may be expressed, bearing in mind the limitations of time and energy that may be available. This refers me back to a familiar question about where my own vocation lies in terms of psychotherapy and spiritual direction, and my belief that the former is every bit as much part of my vocation as the latter. I also hope that the outcomes of this research may leave a legacy for others to explore in the future.

I am also recommending specific topics that could usefully be the subject of future research. Some of these could possibly form part of a longitudinal study to see whether attitudes change over time, particularly in relation to the increased professionalism and to the question of charging and payment for spiritual direction.

TOPICS MERITING FUTURE RESEARCH

I have identified the following issues which this research did not specifically address but which would merit future investigation and which have emerged as a result of the outcomes:

TRAINING OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

- Details of training courses for spiritual directors (student selection, length, content, practice requirements, assessment).

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

- Investigation of group spiritual direction.

- Attitudes of both spiritual directors and directees to using electronic means.

- Current experience of electronic means and related training needs.

SUPERVISION

- Content and experience of supervision.

- Models of supervision adopted in practice.

- Supervision requirements for spiritual directors in different settings.

- Details of training courses for supervisors (student selection, length, content, practice requirements).

As well as the above implications relating to the practice of spiritual direction, I also find myself reflecting further on the relationship with the *missio Dei.* This raises questions about what contribution spiritual direction might make to such movements as Fresh Expressions, New Monasticism and Pioneer Ministries, as well as to deepening discipleship in more traditional forms. Research into this subject would therefore be an interesting and valuable undertaking.

CONCLUSIONS AND CHAPTER SUMMARY

Interpretation of the findings has highlighted the importance of paying attention to the purpose and vision of both spiritual direction and supervision. There are general implications for good practice that emerge from the research and there are also more specific implications in the particular contexts in which my own work is located. As a result of the research, I need to reflect on the implications of the outcomes for my private practice and how they can be integrated into both my life and my work. As a result of the outcomes of the research, I need to review my own vocation and discern how in future it should be exercised in relation to the *missio Dei*.

In the next and final chapter I will return to the original question that the research sought to address and to the gap in knowledge from which it originated. I will then summarise the contribution to knowledge that I consider this research has made. I will also review my personal doctoral journey and reflect on my own vocation as a spiritual director.

CHAPTER NINE
REVIEW AND REFLECTIONS ON THE DOCTORAL PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter I will reflect on the limitations of the research and identify issues for possible future investigation. I will then return to the research question and consider the contribution that the research has made to the identified gap in knowledge and to the future practice of spiritual direction.

Finally I will reflect on the personal impact of the doctoral process with particular reference to the question of how I take stock of my own spiritual development and how I exercise my vocation.

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Inevitably this research project has limitations which have been influenced by several factors. Firstly, the choice I made to adopt qualitative methods in both Phases 1 and 2 and the subsequent choices and interpretations that I made when analysing the data. As practical theologians John Swinton and Harriet Mowat state: (2006, p.34) "Qualitative research takes place within what has been described as an interpretative paradigm." These choices and interpretations will also have been affected by the fact that I am a practising spiritual director myself and therefore inevitably bring an element of my own lens to the interpretation of the outcomes. I am therefore reminded of McLeod's statement: "the meaning of the findings of this study may have been shaped by me …" (McLeod, 2011, p.50).

A second limitation of the research is that many of those invited to participate in Phase 1 came from the same group in that they were members of SpiDir. As well as being part of the same community, there was also the possibility that some participants might have undergone the same training, might now attend the same on-going training events that SpiDir provides, and might even be in the same supervision group. In these circumstances at least some of the resulting data would be grounded in a similar context.   However, in Phase 2, only one of the participants was a SpiDir member, so the data gathered at this point reflected a more varied range of experience in terms of training and supervision as well as representing a wider spiritual direction community.

Thirdly, the number of participants (fifty-eight in Phase 1 and six in Phase 2) is also a possible limitation, and further research that would extend these numbers and would offer the potential for further triangulation between the two phases and also contribute to the possibility of generalisability of the findings. However, it should also be acknowledged that equally this might not be the case, and data suggesting disparate viewpoints might result.

A fourth limitation that I have identified relates to the use of electronic means for spiritual direction (email, Facetime, Skype, Zoom and others, both synchronous and asynchronous). Since starting the research in 2012, I have become increasingly aware of the importance and potential of offering both spiritual direction and supervision by these electronic means. With hindsight I wish that I had asked participants what, if any, experience they had of these method and their views about advantages and disadvantages.   As a result of this reflection I have already initiated a brief survey with the SpiDir membership to enquire about the SpiDir members' experience of using such technology.

A fifth limitation is the fact that the research was restricted to participants' experience of individual spiritual direction and did not attempt to address experience of direction in groups.

RETURNING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION: THE CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND THE FUTURE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

The purpose of the research was to address the question of what, in the experience of practitioners, constitutes good practice of spiritual direction and the contribution of supervision. In order to do this I adopted the methodology and methods described in Chapters 3 and 4 and analysed the resulting data as described in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapters 5 and 6 identified five emergent themes which arose from the data in Phase 1 and for which the evidence from Phase 2 provided triangulation. The five themes then formed the basis for the identification of the subsequent three super-ordinate themes:

The data gave a clear picture of those aspects of spiritual direction that participants considered to be central to good practice. As well as these positive factors, the findings also identified common areas of deficit and misunderstanding, particularly in terms of gaining competence through practice and the understanding of the purpose of supervision. All of these themes were then examined further resulting in the identification of the three superordinate themes of the person and presence of the director, attitudes to professionalism and the role and purpose of supervision. In Chapter 8 I discussed the

implications of the outcomes for the spiritual direction community in general and for my own professional and personal practice in particular.

The focus that participants placed on the concept of charism led to insight into spiritual direction as vocation and the part to be played in the *missio Dei*, an insight which has significant implications for future practice. If spiritual directors are to take their vocation seriously, which would seem the imperative for committed Christians, the practice of spiritual direction must be seen in a much wider context than has perhaps previously been the case. A charism implies a call to engage in God's mission in the world in the widest sense and not exclusively within the church.

This research fills a gap in knowledge about perceptions of the experience of spiritual direction and provides empirical evidence where none existed before. The data support a critical dialogue about good practice and identify significant implications for the future in terms of attitudes to professionalism and payment for spiritual direction. The research therefore makes a distinctive contribution to current thinking. Whilst some of the data may not have revealed anything particularly new or unexpected, it does provide empirical evidence of what had previously only been anecdotal. This evidence may be considered as a baseline for future research.

It is also from this baseline that action can be initiated in terms of:

- disseminating the evidence about good practice of spiritual direction
- raising awareness and initiating discussion about the issues identified
- inviting reflection and action in connection with identifying performance criteria for the good practice of spiritual direction and supervision.

REFLEXIVITY AND THE DOCTORAL PROCESS

The personal effects of having undertaken the doctorate have been profound, not only as a practitioner of spiritual direction, but also on my life in much broader terms. It has raised questions about my own perception and understanding of spiritual direction as a charism, particularly in relation to the issues of my personal spiritual life and vocation. Returning to the work of Tracy, I note his view that practical theology "… a personal involvement in and commitment to a particular community or cause for authentic praxis will assure the truthbearing character of theology, perhaps describable as doing-the-truth" (Tracy, 1983, p.14).

During the process of this research, I have on more than one occasion seriously considered whether I should continue with the project or whether the real purpose of undertaking the doctoral programme was to give me the opportunity to reflect on my own practice as a director and its shortcomings. I questioned whether the priority was to review my own spiritual life rather than to continue the academic pursuit of evidence to answer the research question. Reflecting on my doctoral journey made me increasingly self-critical in terms of my own prayer life and spiritual practice: if these were considered to be the sine qua non for a 'good' spiritual director, then I was a complete fraud. Who was I to be drawing attention to the centrality of the director's personal spiritual life when my own might bear little scrutiny? I therefore began to question whether addressing my experience of this 'impostor syndrome' was to be the real outcome of the research.

This question caused me to reflect, not for the first time in my life, on the story of Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22:1-19) and considered whether it is the willingness to undertake something rather than its actual completion that is of itself the task. As St Theresa of Calcutta is anecdotally reported to have said: "God has not called me to be successful; He has called me to be faithful." Questions of discernment about the nature and structure of my practice frequently arise in the course of my work as a therapist. In my work with Roman Catholic seminarians, who were undertaking six or even seven years formation, we would often reflect on the idea that their vocation at that particular time was to be a seminarian, whether or not it was to be ordained would only be revealed in due course. Similarly, I was aware of a discernment process in asking myself whether my vocation was to engage with the professional doctorate programme, but not necessarily to achieve the apparent end goal of being awarded a doctorate.

This question of discernment was more than just a response to the normal reversals of any programme of academic study. I suspect that one of the causes of my question about whether to continue with the doctorate was the experience of an apparent lack of interest in my work which was demonstrated by some colleagues and spiritual directors. In some circumstances this even amounted to a sense of suspicion or even hostility which was in stark contrast to the enthusiasm with which my initial invitation to participate in Phase 1 was met, and the continuing interest shown by many others. On reflection, I wondered whether this might be because I had not invited them to participate in Phase 2 of the project, despite the fact that they had indicated their willingness to participate. However, this experience was offset by the enthusiasm and encouragement that I received from other participants.

I also considered that this lack of interest might have arisen because I have deliberately not divulged any information about the findings throughout the doctoral process. I now suspect that my silence, rather than giving reassurance that nothing completely unexpected and possibly negative was likely to emerge, was having the opposite effect of raising anxiety. This has been an unexpected and disappointing outcome for me personally and a source of much reflection and learning on my part.   I am now processing this unforeseen consequence, and am highly aware of the need for sensitivity and diplomacy, so that fears can be diminished yet the challenges that the research raises can be acknowledged and addressed with transparency.

As I continued to immerse myself in the data, to reflect on the impact that it was having on me, and to consider my own vocation in terms of the concept of *missio Dei*, I began to have a new sense of the meaning of 'Finding God in all things'. I was beginning to accept in a new way that this means exactly what it says, and this has helped me to discern that continuing the research was in itself just as much part of my spiritual life as any other activity. I can now see that the doctoral process has in itself been part of my 'spiritual discipline' during the past 5 years and central to my personal vocation. My reflection on the concept of *missio Dei* has brought me back to my own perceptions of the origins of this research as described in Chapter 1.

This process has also confirmed my conviction that my vocation, my personal engagement with the *missio Dei,* relates to my work as a psychotherapist every bit as much as in spiritual direction.

As stated in Chapter 1, for many years I have been aware of a theme of working in relationship with people who were experiencing particular challenges in their lives but who were also willing to reflect on their personal experience and to initiate change. In the main these were not people with any church connection and, as I come to the end of the doctoral process, I am again aware that it is in these relationships that I am able to express my vocation as a Christian as well as in some cases as a teacher, psychotherapist, spiritual director, and supervisor. I have also noted my early resistance to elements of religious certainty and I have never been afraid to question orthodoxy. I think this attitude has served me served me well in the doctoral process.

I have been changed by this doctoral process, not only in how I practise as a spiritual director and, incidentally, as a psychotherapist, but inevitably I am a different person as the end approaches from the one who started in 2012. I have become increasingly aware of

(even embarrassed by) my own ignorance in so many areas, and new interests and ideas now demand attention. There have been epiphany moments, sometimes when I have come across something completely new and sometimes when I have become aware of something previously known but which I now understand in a different way. I have found these moments both encouraging and affirming.

CONCLUSION

It would be a big claim to state that this research provides the complete answer to the question that it set out to investigate. However, I am satisfied that the outcomes provide an authentic picture of what a range of practitioners in the UK consider constitutes good practice and the role being made by supervision. I am also confident that it offers a sound basis for further discussion of perhaps contentious issues as well as for future research.

In reflecting on the implications for future practice of the research I have borne in mind the context of practical theology in which it is located and Swinton and Mowat's definition (2005, p.6), "Practical theology is critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world." The model of spiritual direction that is emerging from the research would seem to be entirely consistent with this statement.

Both the process and the outcomes of the research have increased my understanding and knowledge of the practice of spiritual direction. I am aware of significant challenges to my future practice in general, and to my perceptions of how I am called to exercise my vocation as a spiritual director in particular. I have found the process of the research to be enriching, valuable and, above all, enjoyable and I hope that the outcomes will provide a legacy for others. I also hope that ultimately it will contribute to the development of the future practice of spiritual direction, whether in the immediate or long term future.

58,731 words

REFERENCES

Aelred of Riveaulx, 1974. *Spiritual Friendship.*Translated from Latin by M.E. Laker. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications*.*

All Ireland Spiritual Guidance Association, 2004. *Code of Ethics.*[online] Available at http://www@aisga.ie/home/about/codeofethics   [Accessed 10 April 2017].

Anglia Ruskin University. 2016. Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology. [online] Available at http://www.anglia.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/professional-doctorate-in-practicaltheology [accessed 9 March 2017].

Aquinas, T., 2000. *The Summa Theologica: Complete Edition.* New edition. Notre Dame, IN: Avemaria Press.

Association for Pastoral Supervision and Education, 2017. About Pastoral Supervision. [online] Available at: http://www.pastoralsupervision.org.uk/about/pastoralsupervision [Accessed 27 March 2017).

Atkins, M., 2007. *Resourcing Renewal: Shaping Churches for the Emerging Future.* Peterborough: Inspire.

Atkins, M., 2007. *President's Conference Address.* [online] Available at: http://www.methodist.org.uk/conference-archived/conference-podcasts/presidents-addressto-methodist-conference [Accessed 27 March 2017].

Avis, P., 2005. *Ministry Shaped by Mission.* London: T. & T. Clark.

Barrette, G., 2004. Spiritual Direction in the Roman Catholic Tradition. **In**: G.W. Moon and D.G. Benner, eds. 2004. *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A guide to Christian approaches and practices.* Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press. pp.55-77.

Barry, W.A. and Connolly, W.L., 1986. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction.* New York: HarperCollins.

Barry, W.A. and Guy, M.C., 1988. The Practice of Supervision in Spiritual Direction. **In**: Fleming, D. ed. 1988. *The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction.* St Louis, MO: Review for Religious. pp.401-409.

Barth, K., 2010. *Church Dogmatics, vol 1: The Doctrine of the Word of God.* London: T & T Clark.

Benefiel, M. and Holton, G., eds. 2010. *The Soul of Supervision: Integrating Practice and Theory.* Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing.

Benner, D.G., 2002. *Sacred Companions:The Gift of Spiritual Friendship and Direction.* Downers Grove, Il: Intervarsity Press.

Bevans, S.B., 2002 *Models of Contextual Theology.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Bond, T., 2010. *Standards and Ethics for Counselling in Action.* 3rd Edition. London: Sage.

Bosch, D.J., 1991. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2013. *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* Lutterworth: BACP.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2016. *Good practice in Action 043: Research and literature overview of supervision within the counselling professions.* Lutterworth: BACP

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2017. [online] Available at www.bacp.co.uk [accessed 24 March 2017].

British Psychological Society, 2007. *Professional Practice Guidelines: Division of Counselling Psychology, S.2.1.* Leicester: BPS.

Buber, M., 1958. *I and Thou.* Translated from German by R.G. Smith. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Bumpus, M.R. and Langer, R.B., eds., 2005. *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery.* Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing.

Cameron, H., Bhatti, D., and Duce, C., 2010. *Talking about God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology.* London: SCM.

Carlson, G.I., 1988. Spiritual Direction and the Pastoral Mystery in D.L. Fleming, ed. 1988. *The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction. St Louis, MO:* Review for Religious. pp.72-81.

Carroll, M. and Gilbert, M.C., 2011. *On Being a Supervisee: Creating Learning Partnerships.* 2nd Edition. London: Vukani Publishing.

Carroll, M.,1996. *Counselling Supervision:Theory, Skills and Practice.* London: Cassells.

Casement, P., 1985. *On Learning from the Patient.* London: Routledge.

Charmaz, K., 2015. *A Discussion with Kathy Charmaz on Grounded Theory.* [online]. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5AHmHQS6WQ. 36'52" [Accessed 23 March 2017].

Chesner, A*., 2014. Creative Supervision across Modalities: Theory and applications for therapists, counsellors and other helping professionals.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Clarkson, P., 1995. *The Therapeutic Relationship.* London: Whurr.

Conroy, M., 1995. *Looking into the Well: Supervision for Spiritual Directors.* Chicago: Loyola Press.

Creswell, J.W., 2003. *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K., 1970. Grounded Theory and the politics of interpretation. In A. Bryant and K. Charmaz, eds. 2005. *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory.* London: Sage.

Denzin, N.K., 1997. *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the Twenty-first Century.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin N.K. and Lincoln Y.S., eds., 1994. *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S., 1998. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S., eds., 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research 2nd Edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dougherty, R.M., 1995. *Group Spiritual Direction, Community for Discernment*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Fiddes, P.S., 2000. *Participating in God: a Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Finlay, L., 2002. "Outing the Researcher": The Provenance, Process, and Practice of Reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research* vol. 12 no. 4, pp.531-545.

Firmage, G.J. ed., 1991. *e e* cummings: *Complete Poems 1904-1962. New* York: Liveright.

Fleming, D.L. ed., 1975. Spiritual Direction: Charism and Ministry. In D. Fleming, ed. 1988. *The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction.* St Louis, MO: Review for Religious. pp.3-9.

Fleming, D.L., 1978. *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*, St Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources.

Fresh Expressions, 2009. *An Introduction to Fresh Expressions* [online] Available at https://www.freshexpressions.org.uk [accessed 10 March 2017].

Gadamer, H., 1981. *Truth and Method.* London: Sheed and Ward.

Gadamer, H., 1990/1960. *Truth and Method 2nd revised edition.* New York, Crossroad.

Gelso, C.J. and Carter, J.A., 1985. The relationship in counseling and psychotherapy: Components, consequences and theoretical antecedents. *Counseling Psychologist*, Vol. 13 pp.155-243.

Giallanza, J., 1998. 'Discerning God's Will.' *Human Development* (*19)* 25 Summer 21-25.

Gibbs, G., 2007. *Analysing Qualitative Data.* London: Sage.

Gibson, B. and Hartman, J., 2014. *Discovering Grounded Theory.* Los Angeles: Sage.

Glaser, B.J., 1996. *Gerund Grounded Theory: The Basic Social Process Dissertation.* Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.J. and Strauss, A., 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* Chicago: Aldine.

Graham, E. 1996. *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty.* Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.

Graham, E., Walton, H. and Ward, F., 2005. Th*eological Reflection: Methods.* London: SCM Press.

Gubi, P.M. ed., 2015. *Spiritual Accompaniment and Counselling: Journeying with Psyche and Soul.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Gubi, P.M. ed., 2017. *What Counsellors and Spiritual Directors Can Learn from Each Other: Ethical Practice, Training and Supervision.* London: SCM.

Guenther, M., 1992. *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Guenther, M., 1996. *Toward Holy Ground. London:* Darton, Longman and Todd.

Harborne, L., 2012. *Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction: Two Languages, One Voice?* London: Karnac Books.

Harborne, L., 2014. Supervision of Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction. *Thresholds: Counselling with Spirit.* 2014. Summer, pp.24-27.

Hauerwas, S. 2007. T*he Virtues of Alasdair Macintyre* [online] Available at https://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/10/the-virtues-of-alasdair-macintyre. [Accessed 10 March 2017]

Hawkins, P. and Shohet, R., 2006. *Supervision in the Helping Professions. 3rd Edition.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Heidegger, M., 1962/1927. *Being and Time.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Hertz, R. ed., 1997. *Reflexivity and Voice.* Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Investigating the extent to which institutions have failed to protect children from sexual abuse. [online] Available at https://www.iicsa.org.uk [Accessed 10 April 2017]

Inskipp, F. and Proctor, B., 1993. *The Art, Craft and Tasks of Supervision.* Twickenham: Cascade Publications.

Jeff, G., 2007. *Spiritual Direction for Every Christian.* London: SPCK.

Jenkins, P., 2016. Reporting historical sexual abuse. *Therapy Today.* Vol 27, Issue 1, p.33.

Kahn, M., 1997. *Between Therapist and Client: the New Relationship.* New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Knight, K., 2007. *Aristotelian Philosophy: Ethics and Politics from Aristotle to MacIntyre* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Kolb, D., 1984. E*xperiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Lahad, M., 2000. *Creative Supervision.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Lamdin, K. and Tilley, D., 2007. *Supporting New Ministers in the Local Church: a Handbook.* London: SPCK.

Leach, J. and Paterson, M., 2010. *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook.* London: SCM Press.

Leech, K., 1977. *Soul Friend: A Study in Spirituality.* London: Sheldon Press.

Levinas, D., 1983. *Of God Who Comes to Mind.* Translated from French by B. Bergo. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

London Centre for Spirituality, 2014. www.spiritualitycentre.org [accessed 10 April 2014].

Lutz, C.S., 2012. *Reading After Virtue.* London: Continuum.

Lyall, D., 2001. *The Integrity of Pastoral Care.* London: SPCK.

MacIntyre, A., 1988. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

MacIntyre, A., 2011. *After Virtue: A study in Moral Theory* 3rd ed. London: Bloomsbury Academic Press.

Matthews, M., 2005. *Lit by the Light of God.* London: SPCK.

McDowell, A., 1981. The Three Dimensions of Spiritual Direction. In: D.L. Fleming, ed, 1988. *The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction.* pp.95-105.

McLeod, J., 2001. *Qualitative Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* London: Sage.

McLeod, J., 2011. *Qualitative Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* 2nd Edition. London: Sage.

Mearns, D. and Cooper, M., 2005. *Working at Relational Depth in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* London: Sage.

Mearns, D., 2008. *Information Sheet S2.* Lutterworth: BACP.

Merton, T., 1951. *The Ascent to Truth.* Burns and Oates: Tunbridge Wells.

Merton, T., 1960. *Spiritual Direction and Meditation.* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Methodist Church, 2017. *Interim Supervision Policy.* [online] Available at: http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2547799/counc-MC17-46-Supervision-april-2017.pdf [Accessed 23 April 2017]

Moltmann, J., 1977. *The Church in the Power of the Spirit.* London: SCM.

Moon, G.W. and Benner, D.G., eds. 2004. *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls.* Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press.

Newbigin, L., 1958. *One Body, One Gospel.* [online] Available at www.newbigin.net/assets. [Accessed 10 March 2017].

Newman, J.H., 1925. *Meditations and Devotions.* London: Longmans, Green & Co.

Niebuhr, R.R., 1951/2001. *Christ and Culture.* New York: HarperCollins.

Oxford Paperback Dictionary, 2009. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paterson, M. and Rose, J., 2014. *Enriching Ministry: Pastoral Supervision in Practice.* London: SCM.

Pattison, S. and Woodward, J., 2000. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Proctor, B., 2000**.** *Group Supervision: A guide to creative practice*. London: Sage.

Rogers, C.R., 1951. *Client-Centred Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. 2015. *Carl Rogers on Empathy and Presence* [online] Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0Xv6Tb2k0E 1-16 [Accessed 25 March 2017]

Rohr, R., Meditations@cac.org 2016. Meditations. [email] Message to L. Harborne (lynette@innpact.co.uk). Sent Wednesday 27 July 2016, 0700. Available at: https://cac.org/following-jesus-2016-07-27/archive [Accessed 27 March 2017].

Runcorn, D., 2003. *Choice, Desire and the Will of God.* London: SPCK.

Sanks,T.H., 1993. David Tracy's Theological Project: an Oversight and Some Implications. *Theological Studies, Vol 54 Issue 4.*

Scaife, J., ed., 2001. *Supervision in the Mental Health Professions: A Practitioner's Guide.* Hove: Brunner-Routledge.

Schleiermacher, F., 1998. *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings*. Translated from German by A. Bowie. Cambridge: CUP.

Schmid, P.F., 2006. *In the beginning there is community. Implications and challenges of the belief in a triune God and a person-centred approach.* Norwich: The Norwich Centre.

Schuck, C. and Wood, J., 2011. *Inspiring Creative Supervision.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Second Vatican Council. 1964. *Lumen Gentium: The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church.* [online] Available at *www.vatican.va/archive/hist.../ii.../vat-ii_const_19641121_lumengentium_en.html* [Accessed 26 March 2017].

Second Vatican Council, 1965(a). *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* [online] Available at: *www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/ccc_toc.htm* [Accessed 23 April 2017]

Second Vatican Council, 1965(b). *Apostolicum Actuositatem*: Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity. [online] Available at: www.vatican.va/.../ii.../vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicamactuositatem_en.html [Accessed 23 March 2017]

Second Vatican Council, 1965(c). *Ad Gentes: Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church.* [online] Available at: www.vatican.va/archive/hist.../ii.../vat-ii_decree_19651207_adgentes_en.html [Accessed 23 March 2017]

Second Vatican Council, 1965(a) *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* [online] Available at: www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/ccc_toc.htm [Accessed 23 April 2017]

Silver, A.W., 2003. *Trustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction.* Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P. and Larkin, M., 2009. *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research.* London: Sage.

Smith, J.K.A., 2013. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

Spencer, S., 2007. *Christian Mission.* London: SCM.

Spiritual Directors International, 2005-2016. Guidelines for ethical practice, revised edition. [online]. Available at www.**sdi**world.org/sites/default/files/.../**Guidelines**%20Revised%202014-proof1-2.pdf [Accessed 27 March 2017].

Spiritual Directors' Network for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. 2015. [online]. Available at www.soulfriend.org.uk [Accessed 23 March 2017].

St. Benedict, 1995. *The Rule of St Benedict,* translated from Latin by A. Parry 1995. Gracewing: Leominster.

Stevens, R.P., 1995. *Living Theologically: Toward a Theology of Christian Practice* in *Themelios 20.3 pp.4 – 8.* Leicester: Religious and Theological Students Fellowship.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J., 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Surveymonkey. 1999. [online] Available at www.surveymonkey.co.uk [Accessed 22 March 2017]

Sweeney, R.J., 1980. Discernment in the Spiritual Direction of St Francis de Sales. **In:** D.L. Fleming, ed., 1988. *The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction.* St Louis, MO: Review for Religious. pp.354-367.

Swinton, J. and Mowat, H., 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research.* London: SCM.

Tacey, D., 2014. Spirituality and Religion in a Secular Age. [blog]. The Carmelite Library Blogspot. Available at http://thecarmelitelibrary.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/david-taceyspirituality-and-religion.html [Accessed 10 April 2017].

Sperry, L., 2004. Spiritual Direction and Psychotherapy: Conceptual Issues. In: G.W. Moon and Benner, D.G., 2004. *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls.* Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press. pp.171-186.

The Bible. New International Version. 1973. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

The Proceeds of Crime Act, 2002. London: HMSO.

The Retreat Association, 2017. [online] Available at www.retreats.org.uk [Accessed 20 March 2017]

The Terrorism Act, 2006. London: HMSO.

Thorne, B., 2003. *Infinitely Beloved: The Challenge of Divine Intimacy.* London: Darton Longman and Todd.

Tracy, D., 1975. *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology.* New York: Seabury Press.

Tracy, D., 1981. *The Analogical Imagination*: *Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism.* London: SCM.

Tracy, D. and Cobb, J.B., 1983. *Talking About God: Doing Theology in the context of Modern Pluralism.* New York: Seabury Press.

United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy. www.psychotherapy.org.uk [last accessed 10 April 2017].

United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, 2006. *Code of Ethics.* London: UKCP.

United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, 2016. *UKCP Supervision Standards of Education and Training, For Consultation.* London: UKCP.

Van Manen, M., 1990. *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy.* New York: State University of New York Press.

West, W., 2000. *Psychotherapy and Spirituality: Crossing the line between therapy and religion.* London: Sage.

Winnicott, D.W., 1958. *Collected Papers: Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis.* London: Tavistock Publications.

Wright, W., 1995. *Passing Angels: The Art of Spiritual Discernment.* Weavings, Vol 10, No. 6:10.

Yardley, L., 2000. Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology and Health. 15, pp.215-228.*

APPENDIX 1

PAPER 1

Lynette Harborne   SID 1219677

STAGE 1 PAPER 1 PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND   THE ETHICAL PRACTICE   OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

July 2013

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Lynette Harborne (SID: 1219677)

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND THE ETHICAL PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION July 2013

As research into the provision and practice of spiritual direction in the United Kingdom is very limited, this paper seeks to define what constitutes ethical practice. The transferability of knowledge and experience from the disciplines of theology, psychotherapy and pastoral care is discussed. The work of practical theologians Browning and Tracy on critical correlation is considered as a model for exploring and integrating insights from both the Christian tradition and modern secular disciplines. Questions of power and accountability are raised, themes of co-creation and intersubjectivity are explored and supervision is identified as having a central role in ethical practice. In the light of the above, further research is proposed.

Keywords: spiritual direction; ethics; psychotherapy.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

This paper seeks to define and discuss the factors and influences that contribute to the development of ethical practice of spiritual direction in the United Kingdom (UK), drawing on wisdom from both the Christian tradition and secular disciplines with particular reference to the ideas of practical theologians Browning and Tracy.   This discussion raises theological, philosophical and psychological questions about power and accountability, co-creation and intersubjectivity, from which the central contribution that supervision can make to good practice emerges.

Spiritual direction may be considered to be as old as Christianity itself, with a continuous history over two thousand years; the current development of training courses and conferences would seem to indicate that interest is increasing in the twenty-first century.   However, there seems to be no systematic research into the experience of either directors or directees in the UK and no reflection on whether what is being offered and received constitutes ethical practice. This lack of research is what draws me to examine the current situation. In this paper therefore I shall explore the principles that underpin the ethical practice of other disciplines such as psychotherapy and pastoral care where codes and guidelines are already well established in order to ascertain what may be considered transferable. The contribution that practical theology can make will also be explored with the intention of correlating secular and theological thinking.

In this paper the term 'spiritual direction' refers to an intentional and boundaried meeting between director and directee which Barry and Connelly (1984 p.8) define as "... help given by one Christian to another which enables that person ... to respond to God, to grow in intimacy with God and to live out the consequences." Whilst informal spiritual direction may take place in a variety of circumstances, in the main the focus of both literature and training courses relates to this formalised model.

My interest in examining the ethical practice of spiritual direction in the UK arises out of my personal experience of both receiving and giving spiritual direction for nearly 20 years and my current involvement as a member of the leadership team of the ecumenical Spiritual Direction Network (SPIDIR) based in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.   All these experiences have made me aware of the wide range of views about the nature and purpose of spiritual direction, about the necessity or desirability of formal training, about the involvement of the laity, and about what is

considered to be good practice.   There seems to be a striking lack of any systematic reflection on the ethical questions that underpin good practice.

This gap is exacerbated by a general lack of literature relating to spiritual direction in the UK as to date most of the literature that is available has emerged from a north American context, where practice is much more developed and formalised.   There are also fundamental differences in culture and practice between spiritual direction in the United States (US) and in the UK.   These differences perhaps start with attitudes towards religion and spirituality in the general population and in the north American culture and are evident in the training of directors and the expectations of directees, as well as ideas about ethical issues such as boundaries and supervision.   The provision of training courses is also considerably different, with first and second degree programmes being widely available in the US.   However, even in north America, little attention seems to be paid to the underlying sources, norms and origins relating to ethical practice and it is this gap that I am interested in exploring.   Because of the lack of literature in the UK it will inevitably be necessary to draw on the American literature to a certain extent, but it is important to bear in mind the essential differences between the two contexts in terms of culture and practice.

As my interest in this subject has developed out of my own experience, it is perhaps useful to describe both the personal and professional contexts that have increased my curiosity and influenced my thinking.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONTEXTS

Much of my adult life was spent teaching business studies in a college of Further Education, the post-compulsory and often Cinderella sector of the educational system. I made a conscious decision that I wanted to be involved in this sector, which I saw as providing second chance opportunities for often disaffected teenagers, as well as for adults returning to education or training. This was at a time when Further Education was embracing competence and evidence based learning with its emphasis on performance criteria in which the teacher was seen as 'expert', whereas I was very influenced by the work of Carl Rogers, his belief in the self-actualising tendency and his confidence that all individuals are the expert on themselves.

As time progressed, I became leader of the teacher training team which is when I became fully aware of the significance of Kolb's learning cycle (1984).   Kolb's emphasis on the process of learning and the importance of reflective practice was also central to my way of working and underpinned all

my teaching strategies at this time.   Now, some years later, I can see just how much this attitude has influenced my thinking about developing and evaluating the ethical practice of psychotherapy and spiritual direction and which is also consistent with models of reflection in practical theology.

KOLB'S LEARNING CYCLE

Activity

Application   Reflection

Learning
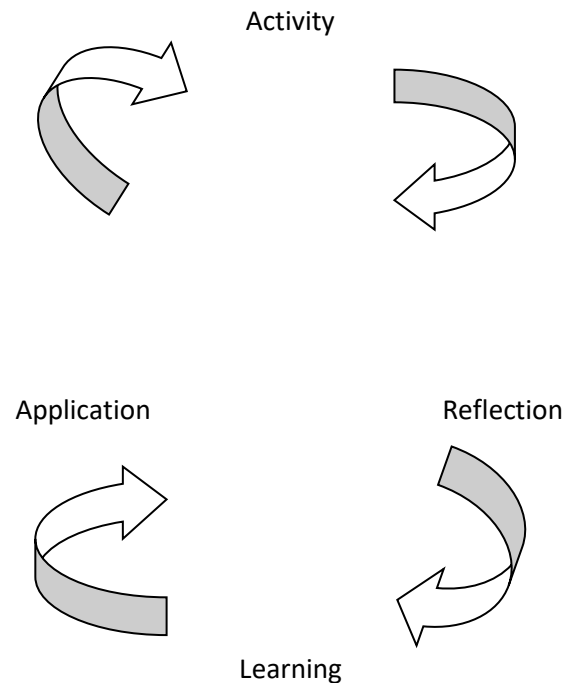
At this time I was unaware of the ideas expressed by Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) in which he promoted a dialogical approach to education with reference to personal experience and practice, but I now realise just how much I would have embraced them had I known about them! Freire's statement (ibid, p.12) "All persons are subjects with the right and ontological vocation to exercise transformative agency in "naming" their world" represented my fundamental belief about teaching and learning. Freire goes on to say "The goal of education or conscientization for the oppressed is freedom to reject the internalized oppression of the dominant interpretations of reality through the exercise of critical consciousness and agency". (Ibid, p.53-54)

My work in the college eventually led me train as a counsellor and subsequently to gain an MSc in Integrative Psychotherapy.   I also undertook training in spiritual direction, with the result that I was learning theory and developing skills in the two areas simultaneously giving me the opportunity to develop an integrated model of practice and enabling me to identify for myself differences and similarities between the two disciplines.   I subsequently resigned from my teaching role in order to work exclusively as a therapist and spiritual director in private practice.

As well as private practice as psychotherapist, spiritual director, supervisor and trainer, I also work as teacher and therapist in a Roman Catholic (RC) seminary, I provide supervision training for Anglican clergy, I chair the Association for Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling (APSCC) and write about therapy and spiritual direction. My approach to the subject of the ethical practice of spiritual direction thus emerges out of all my experience as a psychotherapist, teacher and supervisor and is based on a desire to improve what is offered to directees.

ETHICS AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

As indicated above, the examination of ethical practice in spiritual direction in the UK is in its infancy, the literature on related theory and practice is extremely limited and the provision of training courses sparse and spasmodic.   Many practitioners still have no formal training, and there is no overarching body to standardise, evaluate or regulate good practice; even Spiritual Directors International , an organisation active mainly in the US, disseminates information rather than monitors standards.   It must also be said that there is considerable resistance, even hostility, amongst some practitioners, towards recognising agreed acceptable professional standards, even the use of the word 'professional' being seen as negative secular language by some.

Nearly thirty years ago Thornton (1984, Chapter 10) called for a dialogue between moral theology and Christian ethics in relation to spiritual direction,   He discussed the potential difficulties inherent in such a conversation where moral theology describes the RC view of how to live in order to please God, and inevitably is strongly influenced by the 'rules' of dogmatic theology, whilst Christian ethics invite consideration of how to live in ways that are consistent with the will of God as discerned in and through scripture.   He comes to the conclusion that "Christian ethics may help to make the map; only moral theology can tell each unique human being how to make the journey" (ibid, p. 86). This raises interesting questions about the relevance of differentiation for them between ethics and moral theology as well as for practical theologians.

Most of the literature relating to ethics in spiritual direction (eg Conroy, 1995, Bumpus and Langer, 2000, Silver, 2003) originates in a US context although even here, Silver comments on how little she could find on the subject when she embarked on her spiritual direction training and it seems clear that much of her own thinking is influenced by her background as a counsellor.

Some useful attempts have been made to draw up Codes of Ethics, for example by Spiritual Directors

International (1999), the Center for Sacred Psychology, (Hedberg 1992)), and the All Ireland Spiritual Guidance Association, (2004). However, these documents focus on behaviour and practice with very little discussion of underpinning source, norms and origins. The codes and the literature usefully address such issues as contracting, boundaries, confidentiality, payment, dual and sexual relationships and other practical topics, thus providing a valuable contribution to the identification and implementation of acceptable standards of practice. However, this literature notwithstanding, in my role with the SPIDIR Network I am regularly faced with a complete lack of understanding of basic good practice in terms of ethical issues, for example I recently heard a spiritual director stating that he didn't need to have supervision as he always discussed everything with his wife.

However, I suggest that the above documents are derivative, drawing on what is already accepted practice in other professions such as law, medicine and psychotherapy. They do not address questions of accountability, consequences and sanctions when practice falls short of the stated ideal, something of which I am regularly made aware when, in my role as supervisor of directors, I hear examples of unethical practice such as a director encouraging a directee to leave her husband because of the director's personal views about the situation.

ETHICS AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

I am aware that my own approach to ethical practice in spiritual direction has been very influenced by the principles and conventions that prevail in the practice of psychotherapy, where particular attention is paid to core interpersonal schema, that is, the fundamental beliefs held about relationships with self and other, and to the unconscious process inherent in any dyadic relationship. In turn, these principles owe much to the medical, nursing and teaching professions in which the tradition of the reflective practitioner based on Kolb's learning cycle is well established.

The main contributor to the literature on ethics in counselling and psychotherapy in England is Tim Bond (2010) who identifies six primary sources of professional ethics:

- Personal ethics
- Ethics and values implicit in therapeutic models
- Agency policy
- Professional codes, frameworks and guidelines
- Moral philosophy
- Law

Moral philosophy

Bond discusses the moral philosophy that underpins good practice and also provides a table which compares the Statements of Ethical Standards of the five main professional bodies that monitor the profession across the UK (ibid, pp.57-60).

Drawing on experience of the medical profession, Bond identifies deontological ethical maxims, based on the ideas of Kant, of duty and obligation. He also identifies utilitarian ethics, based on the ideas of Bentham and Stuart Mill, where the consequences of any action are considered in the light of the greatest good for the greatest number of people. (ibid, p. 49).   However, these models gave rise to the response that they reflect only male life experience and thus necessarily ignore the experience of caring for children and the elderly that is traditionally allotted to women.   This 'ethic of care' resonates with Aristotle's ethic of virtue where ethical behaviour is seen as growing out of personal qualities and values.

The therapy world has engaged in debates and discussions around these different ethical frameworks, considering their relevance and merits and how they might be combined and integrated. The work of Beaucham and Childress (2008) also made a significant contribution by proposing four underpinning principle:

- Respect for individual autonomy (literally self-government)
- Beneficence (a commitment to benefiting the client)
- Non-maleficence (avoiding harm to the client)
- Justice (a fair distribution of services within society)
  (Bond 2000:50)

Bond adds two further principles to this list based on the work of Thompson (1990:51):

- Fidelity (honouring the promises upon which the trust between client and counsellor is founded)
- Self-interest (the counsellor's entitlement to all the preceding five principles)

Whilst drawing attention to the fact that Thompson himself admits that the addition of the principle of self-interest may be considered controversial by some practitioners, Bond maintains that "... self-

interest is invariably present in ethical decision-making and can be a distorting influence when it is left as an unacknowledged factor". (ibid p.51).

Bond draws our attention to what he calls 'ethical mindfulness' (ibid: p.242) which he defines as follows: "A commitment to professional and personal integrity by acting in ways that are informed by ethical sensitivity and thoughtfulness in response to the complexity and diversity of contemporary social life" which he sees as an antidote to adopting a position of rigidity in order to establish rules and certainty.   This very much chimes with the Ethical Framework developed by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), which encourages reflection and consultation rather than prescribing specific attitudes and actions. However, this may have unintended consequences as, for example, a therapist supervisee of mine became paralysed and ineffective because of the fear of making a 'wrong' decision.   I am also aware of a fear in many therapists of addressing spiritual issues – and of an outright refusal to do so in some cases.

Summarising his own work on ethics in psychotherapy, Bond states (ibid, p.52) "Partly as a result of my longstanding interest in the significance of relationship in counselling and the ethical challenges posed by cultural differences in identity and ethical points of reference, I have been turning my attention to a relational based ethic based on trust and being trustworthy" which has parallels withn McIntyre's view that the traditional view that moral values are accepted because of their origins in an authoritative culture no longer holds good in a world which privileges individuality.   McIntyre defines virtue as "an acquired human quality the possession of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving such goods" (1985, p.191). Such a definition of virtue is not predicated on a metaphysical worldview, but develops from factors internal to what he calls a practice of any ''socially cooperative human activity" (ibid, p.187) which results in the achievement of excellence.

Bond (2010, p.244) concludes "Being trustworthy involves striving to form a relationship of sufficient quality and resilience to withstand the challenges arising from difference, inequality, risk and uncertainty. " This raises points that are surely relevant to the practice of spiritual direction.

ETHICS AND PASTORAL CARE

Turning to the world of pastoral care, Lynch's contribution is helpful in reflecting on ethical thinking, particularly as he is writing from experience in the UK.   He suggests (2002, p.11) that Browning (1983) and Oden (1983) may, to some extent, share the view that current practitioners of pastoral

counselling tend to neglect the possibility that their work has any moral dimension, an omission that is borne out of a fear of being 'judgemental'. Lynch states: "Some practitioners may seek to deal with this bind by thinking about their practice as being in some sense 'value-free' " and continues: "If pastoral carers aspire to be value free in their work, Browning and Oden suggest that in practice their work tends to be informed by the dominant cultural values of the day, which in the case of contemporary Western society means hedonism, personal autonomy and self-fulfilment". (ibid, p.11-12). Perhaps Lynch is taking rather a negative view of the 'dominant cultural values of the day' as my experience with clients and directees is that, whilst in the majority of cases they do not claim to be influenced by Christian dogma or faith background, they do not privilege hedonism and show enormous concern for the welfare of others. I recently found myself in a situation of pastoral care where I was asked whether a particular action would be considered a sin, very much indicating a view in opposition to the 'dominant culture of the day' – and being expressed in a very secular context.

Lynch examines the whole idea of what 'living a good life' means (ibid, pp.12-13) and summarises his conclusions as follows: "... it seems clear that a full definition of the good life will need not only to set out what it means to lively happily and what it means to live morally, but also what the relationship is between happiness and morality". For Lynch, the phrase 'living the good life' means living a life based on moral and ethical virtues and he explores four elements of pastoral care that, as he puts it. "... invite moral reflection: the social context of the pastoral encounter ... the boundaries of the pastoral encounter and the interpersonal qualities of the pastoral relationship". (ibid, p.2).

Like Bond, Lynch draws on deontological thinking in his examination of ethical dilemmas, assuming that there are universal moral 'rules' applicable in all circumstances. The discussion then centres around who might make such a decision, and the process involved. There are various possible answers to this question, for example through conscience, although Kant would argue that this is achieved through rational thinking whilst others would refer back to divine revelation or an innate sense of what is right and wrong.

Lynch then turns to virtue ethics as examined by Hauerwas. Summarising 'virtue ethics', Lynch states "... as moral agents, we do not simply make rational decisions based on our judgements of the particular circumstances in which we find ourselves, but that we are people whose character will shape what decisions we can even contemplate ..." (ibid, p.93).

More recently, (2008), the inception of The Association of Pastoral Supervisors and Educators (APSE) was clearly a very significant event in the development in the practice of pastoral care. Their Code of Conduct offers succinct yet important guidelines to practitioners, and the fact that APSE exists at all is very encouraging to those of us concerned with improving competent and ethical practice in a variety of sectors. The particular interest in and focus on the training of pastoral supervisors, influenced by the psychological world and seeking to relate to a theological context, draws attention to the role that supervision has to play in developing good practice in pastoral care, a view which would seem equally to relate to spiritual direction.

ETHICS AND PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Whilst experience of the practice of both psychotherapy and pastoral care may inform our thinking about ethics and spiritual direction, it is also clear that practical theology has much to contribute to the discussion. The work of theologians Browning and Tracy, both American, the former a RC priest, the latter a Protestant professor of Divinity, is particularly relevant, proposing as it does a process of examination and evaluation in which tradition and scripture, as well as experience and knowledge from other disciplines, are all examined and correlated. This process provides a systematic and comprehensive model for exploring all facets of the subject which can effectively integrate and synthesise secular and theological ideas. The ideas of Browning and Tracy make a significant contribution to my own thinking and it is therefore important to explain their approach.

Browning

Browning, Protestant American theologian and ethicist, strongly advocates the integration of ethics and values into what he calls a practical theology of care and, as Woodward and Pattison point out, (2000, p.89) this model is grounded firmly in a Judaeo-Christian tradition and its understanding of theology: "Christian practice should be based on and contribute to theologically-based ethics", a statement that surely relates to the practice of spiritual direction.

Browning further states (in Graham, Walton and Ward 2005, p.193) "I find it useful to think of fundamental practical theology as a critical reflection of the church's dialogue with Christian sources and other communities of experience and interpretation with the aim of guiding its action toward social and individual transformation". Graham says of Browning (1996, p.87) "Ultimately, his programme is rooted in an understanding of theological ethics as a technical rational discourse" and goes on to say "Browning attempted to recover a process of 'practical moral reasoning' by which

the Church might develop an ethical framework that is rooted to Christian tradition, yet open to scrutiny and implementation within the public sphere*",* (ibid, p.114) which would indicate the inclusion of a contemporary approach.

Browning asserts (1976, p.15) that "Care in a Christian context ... should exhibit a kind of practical moral inquiry in the way life should be ordered' and suggests that the rationalistic and individualistic approaches that have developed in Protestantism mitigate against any consensus of morals and ethics, a situation which he **considers** to be in contrast to the firm tradition of moral theology found in the Roman Catholic church". He continues (ibid, p.25) "At a time when moral clarification is most needed because normative cultural values are in a state of crisis, pastoral care and counselling have, for the most part, abandoned the task of moral guidance ..."   The task as Browning saw it was to reclaim the underlying beliefs of ethical pastoral care, beliefs which he firmly believed were at root religious. He advocated a stance of practical moral rationality as the foundation of pastoral counselling stating that it should be seen as "incorporation of persons into a given moral universe" (ibid, p.90). However, Browning did not limit his vision of such a moral universe exclusively to the church community but adopted Tracy's revised critical correlational model, insisting as Graham (2002, p.87) states "... that the moral commitments inherent in Christian pastoral care must also be publically accessible and accountable ".

However, I would suggest that Browning ignores the fact that the values that underpin the work of many therapists are in fact Christian values, either as the outcome of personal belief or as an inheritance from the 'founding fathers' of psychotherapy.   It is also interesting to note the development in this country of charities committed to the provision and monitoring of good practice in counselling which had very strong Christian roots, for example, The Association for Pastoral Care and Counselling, (now the Association for Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling), BACP, and the Westminster Pastoral Foundation.

Tracy

Tracy, whose background would seem to exemplify Browning's reference to the RC tradition of moral theology, expresses the ethical necessity for theologians to challenge traditional thinking :

> "The ethical dilemma of the Christian theologian ... is both painful and clear. Traditionally, his
> fundamental loyalty was to the church-community ...   Now all seems changed. The modern
> theologian ordinarily shares the morality of scientific knowledge of his contemporaries. He

recognizes that such a commitment imposes the ethical duty to provide the proper kind of evidence for whatever claim he advances. ... In fact, the modern Christian theologian cannot ethically do other than challenge the traditional self-understanding of the theologian." (1975, pp.6-7).

It is clear that any critique of the claims of the tradition versus post-Enlightenment thinking must have implications for ethical practice today.   Tracy himself critiques Tillich's (1952)correlation method which focuses on 'situation' and 'message' as follows: "... Tillich's method does not call for a critical correlation of the results of one's investigations of the 'situation' and 'the message'. Rather, his method affirms the need for a correlation of the 'questions' expressed in the 'situation' with the 'answers' provided for the Christian 'message'. Such a correlation ... is one between 'questions' from one source and 'answers' from the other. Even on the limited basis of the position defended ... one cannot but find unacceptable this formulation of the theological task of correlation ... Tillich's method of correlation is crucially inadequate". (ibid, p.46). In this model, there is a dissonance between the question and the answer which may seem to have an internal logic but which will not stand up to objective scrutiny.

Drawing on the work of Harvey (1966) Tracy argues that "... one cannot investigate a cognitive claim with intellectual integrity if one insists simultaneously that the claim is believable because the tradition has believed it" (ibid, p.6) and suggests that the modern Christian theologian shares the basic Christian faith of many church officials as well as the self-understanding of the contemporary secularist. (ibid, p.10). It is this synthesising of secular and theological thinking that is relevant here.

In his revisionist model for contemporary theology, Tracy (1975 p.43) states "In its briefest expression, the revisionist model holds that a contemporary fundamental Christian theology can best be described as philosophical reflection upon the meanings present in common human experience and language, and upon the meanings present in the Christian fact" and he goes on to say "The Theological Task Will Involve a Critical Correlation of the Results of the Investigations of the Two Sources of Theology".   Tracy is thus proposing a model in which the Christian tradition and post-Enlightenment knowledge can be integrated through his revisionist model for contemporary theology.

Tracy discusses whether an ethical or moral framework is necessarily predicated on any underpinning world view that may be historical or unconscious, stating "For the conventional wisdom in the secularist culture at large, it seems fair to observe, religion is widely considered a reasonably useful if somewhat primitive way of being moral. One *can* be moral without it; yet, by

providing paradigms parables, stories and rituals, religion serves the helpful function of stimulating us – or, at least, our children – to perform the right, the ethical action" (ibid, p.101).   I very much appreciate Tracy's acknowledgement that, whilst religion may be helpful, it is not necessarily essential to a moral response to life which reminds me of an occasion when I made a statement in a supervision group to the effect that a client didn't want a divorce because of her Christian faith and was challenged by an atheist colleague who, very reasonably, asserted that a moral opposition to divorce isn't exclusive to Christians.

POWER, RELATIONSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Tracy's emphasis on the necessity for Christian theologians to grapple with modern secular views and experience indicates a significant move away from the hierarchical position previously held by the leadership of organised religion in general and the RC church in particular leading inevitably to the possibility of change in the dynamics of power, with implications that are central to the consideration of the ethical practice of spiritual direction. Tracy's view that, through critical correlation of tradition and post-Enlightenment knowledge , a new theology can emerge, opens up to scrutiny any possibility of an abuse of power which a hierarchical structure can maintain - and which in the past has sometimes been in evidence in director/directee relationships.

At a time when churches of all denominations are under scrutiny and viewed with suspicion as a result of clerical child abuse, establishing a hermeneutic able to examine Christian ethics alongside secular moralities in order to minimise injustice and discourage the maintenance of traditional power imbalance, is particularly relevant and important. This aim would seem to be consistent with the process described by Browning and Tracy, and the model of critical correlation which moves from a traditional position where theologians and church leadership had complete power and unquestionable authority, to a more mutual search for meaning.

However, whilst acknowledging that the practice of spiritual direction cannot be considered to be ethical where there is an abuse of power or where the directee is encouraged to accept an external rather than internal locus of evaluation, it can also be argued that, when used appropriately, power may be considered to be beneficent if the result is empowerment.   It may be that the interests of a directee are best served by the director taking an authoritative, rather than authoritarian, stance as long as this results in the directee feeling empowered and also able to take responsibility for autonomous decision making.   As Proctor (2002, p.51) reminds us: " Foucault ... emphasises the

productive aspects of power ... that this mutual influence and intersubjectivity is not necessarily negative".

Elements of power may be considered to be inherent in Christian theology as well as in therapeutic theory but, at their best, they both offer models that move away from power and injustice to mutuality and respect, relationship being central in both contexts. It is the encounter with the Other, rather than any abstract or legalistic concepts, that formulates ethical practice in which there can be a shift from a power-based relationship to one of mutuality in which both parties are equal partners in the co-creation of meaning. In order to dissolve power in the relationship, the imperative becomes to honour and respect the Other rather than to privilege the rules regardless of the outcomes that may be the result. The 'flavour' of this process of mutuality and respect rather than dominance and control is acknowledged in both theology and psychology – and also in philosophical ideas about the relationship between self and other.

I am aware that, with my commitment to the ideas of Kolb, Rogers, Freire and others, my inclination is always to privilege ideas that prioritise mutuality and reciprocity rather than hierarchical structures. For example, I am drawn to Fiddes' interpretation of the concept of the Trinity and perichoresis as 'the mutual interpenetration of the persons' (2000, p.47). In this model, the immanent God extends the space and invites us in to join the dance and take part in mutual indwelling with and in the Trinity. Fiddes goes on to say "This vision of God lays stress upon the *equality, mutuality and reciprocity* of three persons" (italics mine, ibid, p.77), a statement which emphasises the interdependence of the relationship. Ward (2005, p.95), referring to the writings of Taylor (1972) states: "He develops the idea of God as there on the inside of human relating, undergirding the ways in which relatedness between self and other is carried forward without collapsing otherness into the self".

However, this is not the only possible interpretation of the Trinity; liberation theologian Boff (2000) sees the perichoretic nature of the Trinity as essentially non-hierarchical and interdependent, providing us with a model for a just and egalitarian community in which the poor and the disadvantaged are privileged. Alternatively, Feuerbacher (1957, pp29-30) suggests that the concept of the Trinity is a projection arising from human nature: "Man... projects his being into objectivity, and then again makes himself an object to this projected image of himself thus converted into a subject", suggesting that the concept of the Trinity is a projection arising out of human desires in relation to our understanding of God. In psychological terms, this is consistent with the notion of God as the ultimate selfobject.

179

Whilst not identical, Fiddes' interpretation of perichoresis resonations with the psychotherapeutic concept of intersubjectivity, that is the conscious and unconscious interrelated and non-hierarchical process that occurs between client and therapist which lies at the heart of the relational process and which can also be seen as a dance in which both participants engage. This has resonances with psychologist Winnicott's (1971) concept of therapy providing a space in which to play. Through this interaction, and the resulting co-creation of meaning, both parties will be changed.   The language may be very different from that of perichoresis, but both are describing a process of mutual meeting and engagement at relational depth resulting in change and the co-creation of meaning. Psychoanalysts Stolorow & Atwood describe this meeting as "the interface of reciprocally interacting worlds of experience" and go on to say that this results in "... a continual flow of reciprocal mutual influence". (1992, p.18). In this process the more traditional stance of therapist-as-expert in relation to patient, moves into therapist-as-mutual-partner in relation to client.   Similarly, Ogden describes the construct of this relational process as 'the analytic third' (1994), representing the unconscious co-creation that emerges in psychotherapy.

The concept of intersubjectivity is also recognised by such philosophers as Buber and Levinas who acknowledge the effect the relational experience has on *both* parties and who address the idea of the individual's relationship with the Other and the co-creation that develops in the intersubjective space.   Buber's construct of the I-Thou experience, suggests an encounter with the other as being of a significantly deep nature, embodying mutuality and equality, which can be sustained even in the absence of the other.   The very word "Thou" implies the existence of the "I" as speaker – there can be no *thou* unless there is also an *I*.   Buber also says," The *Thou* meets me through grace – it is not found by seeking ..." (1958, p.11). This emphasis on the element of grace is something which is usually ignored in the therapeutic literature but which seems to be particularly relevant in any attempt to correlate learning from psychotherapy and spiritual direction.

For Levinas, the face-to-face is a dimension of every personal relationship which he describes as: 'The I says 'you' to a You who, as an I, says 'You' to the I" (1998, p.148) and goes on to comment on Buber's writing "It is in the extension of the I-Thou relationship and that of the social existence with man that, for Buber, the relation to God is produced".   This idea of The Other would also seem to resonate with Boisen's (1936) phrase The Living Human Document (although this phrase perhaps gives a sense of the *I-It*!).   Gerkin writes of The Living Human Document (1984) in which he sees the encounter between pastoral counsellor and client as "a continuous process of question and correction, refinement and integration" (ibid, p.61) and Ward (2005, p.133)) states '"The living human document ... is embedded in dialogue, with words and thoughts going between self and

others in an ongoing conversation which is both internal and external". These statements would all seem to have parallels with the essence of the intersubjective process.

The language used by Fiddes and Taylor, Stolorow and Atwood, Buber and Levinas , Boisen and Gerkin may be different – and yet I suggest that there is an understanding of a relational process that is common to the concepts they are addressing, albeit with different nuances and in different contexts. I find the power of this encounter particularly well expressed in e e cummings' verse: "i am through you so i" (1991, p.537).

I would also suggest that It is in the focus on the Other that the essence of ethical practice lies, a position suggested by Holloway (2012, p.284) who, writing about the parable of the Good Samaritan, states "The story encapsulates Jesus's attitude to the danger we are in when we allow our moral codes and religious traditions to assume absolute authority over us. We need moral and religious systems to protect us from the chaos of our passions; but if we give them absolute authority they become a greater danger to us than the unfettered passions they are supposed to curb. By this parable and by his dismissive attitude to the rigidities of law and custom, Jesus rendered every code provisional and discardable when confronted with real human need". Holloway is not advocating that moral and religious systems should be discarded completely, but that they must always be considered provisional when faced with human experience.

Whilst it may therefore perhaps be argued that the essence of ethical practice of spiritual direction lies in experience both on and in relationship as much as through any particular tradition or texts, there must also be questions about accountability. To whom is this accountability due, for what, and how can this be established and, if necessary, regulated? The spiritual direction community in the UK is just beginning to ask these questions and, as a direct result, the necessity for supervision is increasingly being acknowledged.

It is in this context that questions inevitably arise about the expectations, provision, availability and experience of spiritual directors but perhaps the most useful starting place has to be what Leach and Paterson (2010, p.15), commenting on Lynch's writing, identify as the vision of the individual practitioner. Commenting on the writing of Lynch, they state: "In his book *Pastoral Care and Counselling* Lynch suggests that all practitioners of pastoral care have a vision of what they do and a vision of what makes for a good life. If this remains unexamined it can be unhelpfully imposed on others yet never internalized or embodied in the life and ministry of the pastoral carer" – to which I would like to add 'in the life and ministry of the spiritual director'.

Leach and Paterson very much reflect the views described above of Tracy and Browning. Commenting on Paterson's particular perspective, they state (ibid, p.3) "The need to bring to bear both the insights and secular disciplines and the perspectives of theology has been a passion of his ..." and I find their focus on maintaining constant attention to the vision (ibid, pp.8-9) both helpful and inspirational. My belief, therefore, is that in spiritual direction God invites us into a process of co-creation that can emerge out of consideration of all aspects of human knowledge and experience.

CONCLUSION

Drawing together the various influences described above, my conclusion is that research needs to be undertaken in order to develop a rigorous ethical framework appropriate for the twenty-first century. In the current absence of such a framework, and in a situation where the quality and length of training courses is so variable, it is impossible to establish with any certainty what currently constitutes good practice. The lack of accountability and only partial acceptance of the necessity for supervision also contribute to what is currently an unsatisfactory – and potentially dangerous – situation. Furthermore, I would suggest that it is through a cross-disciplinary critical correlation of underlying principles that this process should be undertaken.

The traditional stance of moral theology is to offer answers and guidance and will be seen as having power and authority, very much in contrast to a post-modern attitude which privileges individuality, accepts uncertainty and, some would say, ultimately leads to chaos. Whilst an empirical stance comes to a conclusion, a relational stance initiates a process. Is it possible to reconcile these two positions? I would suggest that practical theology can offer an accommodation between these perhaps polarised positions that honours tradition and scripture without ignoring or discounting wisdom and knowledge from post-Enlightenment and secular sources. The process of critical correlation offers the possibility of continued reflection and co-creation that is neither specifically authoritarian nor individualistic. Meaning can thus be co-created that honours the contribution of the individuals involved, integrates knowledge and understanding from secular disciplines whilst not dishonouring the wisdom of the tradition and of scripture. This would seem to offer a model which is both rigorous and accountable.

The ideas of Browning and Tracy and their paradigm of critical correlation offer the practice of spiritual direction a new framework in which to consider ethical practice. Research into the whole subject of the ethical practice of spiritual direction would be fruitful. I see this process as essential

in developing informed practitioners who can co-create what would be considered to be satisfactory ethical frameworks.   I would also suggest that it would take two stages:

The first stage of the process would be to undertake research into what is actually happening and to identify and evaluate positive and negative experiences of both directors and directees focusing on 'The Living Human Document' in order to promote the ethical practice of spiritual direction in the UK in the future.

The second stage is to encourage individuals to reflect on their own experience and practice, both as director and directee.   As stated above, I would suggest that supervision is central to the process of such development as it is difficult to foresee a situation in which an effective ethical framework for spiritual direction in the UK is likely to emerge whilst supervision is neither required nor particularly recommended.   The question of accountability must also be considered.   If ethical practice is codified, then consequences and accountability in the event of a breach must be identified.   In the current context and climate, to whom would the practitioner be accountable, and for what: to self, to the directee, to the spiritual direction community, to the wider world?   Would the process of codifying what constitutes ethical practice be as a result of a top-down approach or would it be a more organic process, would the accountability be a self-generated process one with some form of 'policing'? These are all questions that need addressing in the interests of the safe and ethical practice of spiritual direction.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

All Ireland Spiritual Guidance Association. 2004. *A Code of Ethics for Spiritual Directors* (on-line) Available at <http:www@aisga.org.ie> [Accessed 24 June 2013].

Association for Pastoral Supervisors and Educators. 2012. *Code of Conduct.* (on-line). Available at <http://www.pastoralsupervision.org.uk> [Accessed 24 June 2013].

Barry, W.A. and Connolly, W.L., 1984. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction.* New York: HarperCollins.

Beaucham, T.L. and Childress, J.F., 2008. P*rinciples of Biomedical Ethics.* 6th Ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Boff, L., 2000. *Holy Trinity Perfect Community.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

Boisen, A., 1936. E*xploration of the Inner World: A Study of Mental Disorder and Religious Experience.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bond, T., 2010. *Standards and Ethics for Counselling in Action.* 3rd Ed. London: Sage.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. 2010. *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* Lutterworth: BACP.

Browning, D. S., 1976. *The Moral Context of Pastoral Care.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Browning, D.S., 1983. *Religious Ethics and Pastoral Care.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Browning, D.S., 1991. *A Fundamental Practical Theology.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Buber, M. , 1958., I *and Thou.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Bumpus, M.R. and Langer, R.B., 2005. *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery.* Harrisburg, PA: Moorhouse.

Conroy, M., 1995. L*ooking into the Well: Supervision for Spiritual Directors.* Chicago: Loyola University Press.

cummings e e, 1991. In: *Firmage, G.J. (Ed), Complete Poems 1904-1962.* New York: Liveright.

Feuerbach, L., 1957. *The Essence of Christianity*. (Trans. G. Eliot) New York: Harper and Brothers.

Fiddes, P.S., 2000. *Participating in God: a Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Freire, P., 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Gerkin, C.V., 1983. *The Living Human Document: Re-visioning Pastoral Counseling   in a Hermeneutical Mode*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Graham, E., 2002.,*Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty.* 2nd ed. Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock:

Graham, E., Walton, H. and Ward, F., 2005. T*eleological Reflection: Methods.* London: SCM Press.

Harvey, V.A., 1996. T*he Historian and The Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief.* New York: Macmillan.

Hedberg. T.M. and Staff at the Center for Sacred Psychology.   1992. *A Code of Ethics for Spiritual Directors.*   Pecos, NM: Dove Publications.

Holloway, R., 2012. L*eaving Alexandria: A Memoir of Faith and Doubt.* Edinburgh: Canongate Books.

Kolb, D., 1984. E*xperiential Learning: experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.

Leach, J. & Patterson, M., 2010. *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook.* London: SCM Press.

Levinas, E., 1998. *Of God who Comes to Mind.* (Bergo, B. Trans). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Lynch, G., 2002. *Pastoral Care and Counselling.* London, Sage.

McIntyre, A. , 1985. *After Virtue: A study in Moral Theory.* 2nd ed. London: Duckworth

Oden, T., 1983. *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*. New York: HarperCollins.

Ogden, T.H., 1994. The Analytic Third: Working with Intersubjective Clinical Facts. *British Journal of Psychotherapy. Vol 11 Issue 1 pp171-174.*

Proctor,G., 2002. *The Dynamics of Power in Counselling and Psychotherapy: Ethics, Politics and Practice.* Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books.

 Silver, A.W, 2003. T*rustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction.*   Cambridge, Mass: Cowley.

Stolorow, R.D. and Atwood, G., 1992. *Contexts of Being: The Intersubjective Foundations of Psychological Life*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.

Taylor, J., 1972. *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission.* London: SCM Press.

Thompson, A., 1990. *Guide to Ethical Practice in Psychotherapy.* New York: John Wiley and Sons*.*

Thornton, M., 1984. S*piritual Direction: a Practical Introduction*. London: SPCK.

Tillich, P., 1952. *Systematic Theology* I, 3-11 and II, 5-10. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tracy, D., 1975. *Blessed Rage for Order.* New York: Seabury Press.

Ward, F., 2005. *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision.* London: SCM Press.

Winnicott, D.W., 1971. *Playing and Reality.* New York and London: Routledge.

Woodward, J and Pattison, S. (Eds), 2000. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Lynette Harborne: SID 1219677

Stage 1 Paper 2

WHAT ROLE SHOULD SUPERVISION PLAY IN THE ETHICAL PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

April 2014

CONTENTS

PAGE

ABSTRACT

Lynette Harborne (SID: 1219677)

WHAT ROLE SHOULD SUPERVISION PLAY IN THE ETHICAL PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

April 2014

This paper seeks to establish the role that supervision should play in the ethical practice of spiritual direction through a review of the historical literature of spiritual direction and the literatures of the United States and United Kingdom as well as those of the related disciplines of psychotherapy and pastoral care. The common themes that emerge are examined as well as ethical issues, codes of practice, accountability and the generic nature of supervision.

Key words: supervision, spiritual direction, psychotherapy, pastoral care, ethics, accountability.

INTRODUCTION

Little is known about the supervision of spiritual direction in the United Kingdom (UK) and the related question of the role that supervision could play to ensure ethical practice.   This is at a time when various groups (eg London Centre for Spirituality, The Retreat Association, The South Central Region Training Partnership) are engaged in conversations about monitoring the quality of spiritual direction, the accreditation of spiritual directors and the development of a national code of practice. Although supervision might seem to be central to all these aspirations, no attempt has been made to establish a rationale to justify such a proposition and it is in order to address this omission that a review of the relevant literatures is both timely and necessary.

There is no national requirement for supervision of spiritual direction in the UK, and practice varies depending to a large extent on 'local custom' and, although the importance of supervision is increasingly being recognised, little has been written on the subject. It is in this context that the question of what role supervision should play in the ethical practice of spiritual direction arises. As a result of the lack of attention to the theory or practice of supervision in the field of spiritual direction, there is also a gap in knowledge about what is actually happening .

However, the purpose of this paper is not to investigate whether and how supervision may be affecting the practice of spiritual direction in the UK as this would involve empirical research. The purpose is to interrogate the existing literatures in order to establish whether, in principle, supervision should be considered to be essential . This review will include the historical Christian tradition, the relatively recent case made in the American literature for the introduction of supervision in spiritual direction practice, and arguments made about ethical practice and supervision in the British literature of the relevant disciplines of psychotherapy and pastoral care.

The main gap in the literature is the lack of material on supervision of spiritual direction in a UK context. Despite the fact that two books with chapters addressing this subject are forthcoming, (Harborne, 2014 and Harborne, 2015), it is currently necessary to draw on the generic literature on supervision in the UK and the more specific literature on supervision of spiritual direction in the United States (US).

 In reading the various literatures, I shall be particularly interested in suggestions about:

(a) what constitutes ethical practice;

(b) what are the means for ensuring it;

(c) what is said about supervision in relation to ethical practice, either implicitly or explicitly.

My methodological rationale for reviewing these particular literatures acknowledges the fact that the word 'supervision' in this context may be relatively new, although the concept of accountability has Biblical and historical antecedents which resonate with current principles and practice in secular disciplines. I am therefore drawn to Tracy's (1975) revisionist model of critical correlation, which proposes a theological approach which critiques Christian scripture and tradition with post-Enlightenment knowledge. In his Third Thesis Tracy (p.43) states: "The Theological Task Will Involve a Critical Correlation of the Results of the Investigations of the Two Sources of Theology", and identifies the first of these sources as Christian texts and the second as lived human experience and language. Tracy suggests (p.49) that an investigation of the second of these sources can only succeed through "... continued conversation with those human sciences which investigate the religious dimension in human experience and in conversation with other philosophical methods ..."

Tracy's model of critical correlation invites a discourse between theology and contemporary disciplines. Unlike Tillich's model, this discourse goes beyond looking for solutions to secular problems through reference to theology, but engages in a process of dialogue in which the authority of the Christian tradition is temporarily suspended so that theology and secular disciplines can mutually critique each other and from which both can learn and potentially be transformed.

However, Tracy is not alone in asserting the valuable contribution that other disciplines can make to this theological dialogue.   Lyall (2001, p.34), reflecting on the nature of practical theology, stresses the dialectical relationship between the theological tradition and contemporary culture "... in a process of mutual giving and receiving" from which emerges a new understanding of practical theology.

These examples support the argument for exploring the literatures of other disciplines to identify the contribution they can make to the discourse.

The literatures of spiritual direction, psychotherapy and pastoral care suggest that supervision is essentially a generic process and my personal experience as a supervisor with a variety of practitioners, including therapists, spiritual directors, clergy, religious, pastoral workers, chaplains,

charity workers and teachers would confirm that view.   Drawing on the literature of therapy and pastoral care, a case will be made for the transferability of the skills of supervision across disciplines.

Conceptually, therefore, I am relying on the following assumptions: firstly, that ethical practice has been a concern of the Christian tradition even before spiritual direction and supervision were identifiable as discrete Christian practices; secondly, that spiritual direction is similar enough across contexts and eras to warrant comparison; thirdly, that supervision can be considered a generic task so that experiences in one field are broadly transferable to another, and fourthly, that critical correlation is a defensible theological method.

My conceptual framework is also based on the following definitions of the various terms that are relevant to this paper, namely supervision, spiritual direction, psychotherapy and pastoral care, drawing on the specific literature of each discipline.

DEFINITIONS

What is Supervision?

The word 'supervision' perhaps has connotations of authority and oversight rather than mutuality and collegiality, and there are certainly circumstances in which such oversight is appropriate and necessary. However, whatever the context, my view is that it is the *work* rather than the *practitioner* who is being supervised. I see this as an important distinction that helps to reduce the potential power imbalance in the relationship between supervisor and supervisee, thus challenging and encouraging supervisees to take more responsibility for their own work and to stand in their own authority, as I do not see the development of 'clones' of the supervisor to be either helpful or desirable.   However, this process of reflection and exploration will also inevitably have an impact on both the professional and personal growth and development of the supervisee. Supervision is much more than merely a function providing help and advice, checks and balances, care and encouragement: it also provides a relationship in which personal and professional development can evolve for both parties.

Hawkins and Shohet (2006) remind us that paediatrician and psychoanalyst Winnicott (1958) introduced the concept of the 'good enough mother' who is able to contain the negative emotions of the infant without being overwhelmed or overreacting.   Developing this idea, Casement (1985, p.22) states: "From reading Winnicott I have come to think in terms of a 'nursing triad' , whereby

the mother is emotionally held ... but there needs to be someone in the new mother's life whose chief function is to be there to support the mother-and-baby ...". This model also forms the basis of the supervisory relationship. In a secular context the triad may consist of supervisor, supervisee and client but, from a theological perspective, it might be linked with a sense that God holds everything in being and that the triad consists of God, supervisor, supervisee.

However, the definitions offered by lead bodies and the supervision literature are much more functional, for example:

In a spiritual direction context, Bumpus and Langer (2005, p.5) state: "Supervision is a conversation between peers that ultimately fosters the well-being of an absent other", and Conroy (2005, p.149), writes: "Supervision is the key practical learning experience for spiritual directors. It is an arena for experiential understanding ... where theoretical knowledge becomes experiential insight" suggesting a discourse between theory and phenomenological experience.

The British Psychological Society (BPS, 2007, S.2.1) states: "Supervision ... is a contractually negotiated relationship between practitioners for the purpose of supporting, evaluating and developing professional practice ... informing ethical decisions and facilitating an understanding of the use of self", which can equally apply to the practice of spiritual direction.

There is also the question of informal supervision which is any experience or encounter that results in an individual reviewing their beliefs, thoughts or actions so that a change takes place. This can be seen in scripture as well as in contemporary practice. For example, in Acts 11, Peter is challenged by the church leaders in Jerusalem about the fact that he has been eating with the uncircumcised. However, as a result of his explanation and teaching, they change their view 'When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life'". (Acts 11:v18).

What is spiritual direction?

The term 'spiritual direction' is also an unfortunate one as it implies a directive rather than the explorative process that it actually is. Because of the potential for misunderstanding, it is sometimes known as spiritual friendship or spiritual accompaniment, although personally I prefer to

stay with the word direction as it links contemporary practice with the tradition to which I am proud to belong.

Barry and Connelly offer the following definition: "... help given by one Christian to another which enables that person ...to respond to God, to grow in intimacy with God and to live out the consequences." (1986, p.8).

Jesuit David Fleming (1988, pp.110-111) distinguishes five ways of identifying spiritual direction, namely institutionalised, interpersonal, charismatic, sacramental and incarnational and, whilst stressing that he does not privilege one over the other, concludes by stating: "If I were to opt for a pivotal model for our own day, I would choose direction described as 'incarnational'" which he has previously described as follows: "This model of direction is also properly identified as incarnational in that no aspect of a person's life is left apart from the direction context, since as a whole – physically, psychologically, and spiritually – man (sic) must grow in his response to God's unique call to him." This resonates with Jesuit Sanks' comment about Tracy's model (1993, p.704) that religion is a dimension of *all* human activities.

Guenther, using the term 'spiritual friend', says:

> "... a spiritual friend is one to whom we can entrust all the secrets of our heart and before whom we can place all our plans. In other words, a spiritual friend offers a safe place to try things out, to stretch and to grow: we need not fear shaming or ridicule, no matter what we might say." (1996, p.27).

Nelson (2009, p.476) states "Direction typically involves periodic meetings where the directees discuss their spiritual life and practice with a director. This helps them to learn, avoid deception and maintain progress in their spiritual growth."

Whilst different terminology may be used, there is an explicit common theme of spiritual growth in all these definitions, indicating a process of personal change to which the interaction with a spiritual director is central.

What is psychotherapy?

The origins of the word 'psychotherapy' lie in the Greek words 'psyche' meaning breath of life and the word 'therapeia' meaning healing or attendance. West (2004, p.144) offers us the translation of

psychotherapy as 'soul attender', drawing our attention to the spiritual and transcendent element implicit in the role, whether conscious or unconscious.

Nelson states: "Psychotherapy can be broadly defined as 'the application of psychological insight to the growth, healing, or the process of maturing of a person.' (Kalam, 1980). This application occurs in the context of a helping relationship with another individual who serves as attendant to the process." (2009, p.487 the word 'attendant' resonating with West's suggestions above. Nelson continues to develop this idea stating: "... psychologists ... view psychotherapy as 'the art of nurturing and healing the soul' from psychopathology or relieving 'the suffering of the soul'", thus drawing our attention to common elements in the disciplines of theology and psychology.

More formally, the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) states:

> "Psychotherapy aims to help clients gain insight into their difficulties or distress, establish a greater understanding of their motivation, and enables them to find more appropriate ways of coping or bring about changes in their thinking and behaviour ... Psychotherapy involves exploring feelings, beliefs, thoughts and relevant events, sometimes from childhood and personal history, in a structured way with someone trained to help you do it safely."
> (www.psychotherapy.org.uk)

The inclusion of the word 'beliefs' in the definition indicates that this is something that is relevant to the process of therapy.

What is pastoral supervision?

The Association of Pastoral Supervisors and Educators, (www.pastoralsupervision.org.uk) defines pastoral supervision as "*a regular, planned, intentional and boundaried space* in which a practitioner skilled in supervision (the supervisor) meets with one or more other practitioners (the supervisees) to look together at the supervisees' practice". (italics original).

Leach and Pattison offer the following useful definition:

> "... a relationship between two or more disciples who meet to consider the ministry of one or more of them in an intentional and disciplined way. ... Pastoral supervision is practised for the sake of the supervisee, providing a space in which their wellbeing, growth and

development are taken seriously, and for the sake of those among whom the supervisee works, providing a realistic point of accountability within the body of Christ for their work ..." (2010, p.1)

The importance of this element of accountability within the body of Christ was explicitly stated during training for training incumbents that I recently facilitated for the Anglican Oxford Diocese, which reinforces my view that the question of accountability is an ethical imperative no matter what the context, and this will be discussed later.

FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

The above definitions all draw our attention to the familial nature of the spiritual and the psychological dimensions, both implicit and explicit, in spiritual direction, psychotherapy and pastoral care. It therefore seems a logical step to examine the literatures of these disciplines, paying particular attention to the understandings of what is considered to be ethical practice and the means by which this may be achieved, as well as what is said, explicitly or implicitly, about the contribution that supervision can make.

THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

It was the belief of practical theologian, Browning, (1976) that the underlying values of ethical pastoral care are rooted in religion. Graham, (1996, p.114) reflecting on Browning's work, states (1996, p.87) "Ultimately, his programme is rooted in an understanding of theological ethics as a technical rational discourse" and continues "Browning attempted to recover a process of 'practical moral reasoning' by which the Church might develop an ethical framework that is rooted to Christian tradition, yet open to scrutiny and implementation within the public sphere". Browning himself said: "I find it useful to think of fundamental practical theology as a critical reflection of the church's dialogue with Christian sources and other communities of experience and interpretation with the aim of guiding its action toward social and individual transformation." (in Graham, Walton and Ward 2005, p.193), a view which is consistent with Tracy's model of dialogue between Christian sources and the phenomenology of lived human experience and language. I would argue that it is in pursuit of this dialogue that Tracy's method of critical correlation makes a significant contribution and offers the potential for a mutual critique between theology and contemporary secular disciplines. It is therefore helpful to explore the literatures of other disciplines in order to identify the contribution they can make to this dialogue.

It would be anachronistic to search the history of the Christian tradition for arguments in favour of a model of supervision which has arisen in the contemporary western culture within the medical and psychological disciplines. However, an experience akin to the supervision process is clearly to be found in the Gospels. The disciples, having been sent out by Jesus with the authority to heal, find themselves unable to 'cast out demons'. They ask Jesus *privately* why this is "When he had entered the house his disciples asked him privately 'Why could we not cast it out?' He said to them, 'This kind can come out only through prayer'" (Mark 9:28-29), a conversation which reflects the nature of what happens in supervision, particularly with relatively inexperienced practitioners.

It is also worth noting that spiritual direction is a long established part of the Christian way of life, and examples of accountability for that work can be identified in the literature. Ignatian practice recommends consultation with a more experienced colleague: "(Jesuits) could begin by ... conferring with someone more experienced, noting well what he finds more useful and what less so." (Fleming, 1988, p.409), and the Rule of St Benedict recommends consultation as part of good decision making, (*The Benedictine Handbook*, 2003, pp.19-20).

THE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Some caution in drawing conclusions from the US literature may be necessary.   The danger of ignoring cultural differences in reflecting theologically is well demonstrated by Bevans (2002, pp.5-7) who draws our attention to the importance of context in theological reflection and goes on to say: "Contextualization ... is the sine qua non of all genuine theological thought, and always has been."

Spiritual direction training programmes in the US have developed extensively in the past four decades and it is in this context that the literature began to address the subject of supervision.   This is clearly indicated by Barry and Guy (1988, p.402) who state: "The experience the authors shared as supervisor and supervisee during a ten month period at the Center for Religious Development ... is the basis for the article." They continue by acknowledging the Ignatian practice of consultation described above and define the main purpose of supervision as follows: "We believe that the primary purpose of supervision ... is the personal growth of the spiritual director precisely as spiritual director".

Conroy, a trainer of spiritual directors at Creighton Jesuit University, (1995, p.xix), draws an analogy between Jesus as supervisor and the Samaritan woman as supervisee and suggests that together they "... with reverence and care look into the well of the spiritual director's interior directing

space". She develops this analogy throughout the book, emphasising her view that "... the focus of supervision lies with the inner experience of spiritual directors as they direct, not on the experience of the directees" (1995, p.14).

A decade later, Bumpus, (Professor at Seattle University) and Langer (Director at San Francisco Theological Seminary), acknowledge the tradition of informal supervision, but also draw our attention to the recent development of more formalised practice:

> "Supervision of spiritual direction is an ancient process within the Christian tradition. Informal conversations and correspondence ... have been going on for centuries. As a far as we can ascertain, however, what we think of today as the 'formal' supervision of spiritual directors is a relatively recent phenomenon. It has arisen within the past three to four decades, as the desire for spiritual direction has grown in both Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions". (2005, p.vi),

In the US several attempts to write codes of practice for spiritual direction have been made.   For example, The Center for Sacred Psychology has produced guidelines drawing on the existing statements of ethical principles of thirteen professional bodies in the US. Central to these guidelines is the commitment to supervision, the authors stating "One can never reach a degree of excellence that makes supervision no longer necessary" (Silver, 2003, p .120).   Spiritual Directors International (SDI), an organisation predominately representing directors in north America, promotes ethical conduct in their Code of Ethics which includes the following reference to supervision: "Spiritual directors engage in supervision by: (a) receiving regular supervision from peers or from a mentor (b) seeking consultations with other appropriately qualified persons when necessary." (Silver 2003, p.140).   This inclusion indicates that supervision is considered a significant part of the ethical practice of spiritual direction.

Silver, (2003), specifically addressing the ethical practice of spiritual direction, identifies boundary issues as central, differentiating between those that are clearly defined and which have a constructive and freeing effect, and barriers which feel negative and constricting.   She stresses the importance of an initial contract (or covenant) between director and directee to clarify expectations on both sides (Chapter 2) and she also addresses confidentiality, payment, dual relationships, limits of competence and erotic transference.   Central to the covenant is the assumption that the director will be receiving supervision.

It can thus be seen that the practice of supervision in the US, with its origins in training programmes, is increasing. It is also clear that this increase has been very influenced by experience of supervision in other contexts, for example Barry and Guy state: "The modern use of supervision in spiritual direction takes its cue from the development of the theory and practice of supervision in psychiatry and psychology" (1988, p. 402.)

THE BRITISH LITERATURE

In contrast to the US, the British literature on spiritual direction in general is very thin and little has been written about supervision, for example no reference at all is made in Thornton (1984), Leech (1994), Standcliffe and Ball (1999), Monk Kidd (2006) or Jeff (2007). There are currently no commonly accepted codes of practice, and although some organisations have made attempts to produce ethical guidelines, for example the All Irish Spiritual Guidance Association and St Alban's Anglican Diocese, these only apply to those practitioners directly under their jurisdiction.

However, turning to the disciplines that are influencing the development of supervision in spiritual direction such as therapy and pastoral care, the recognition of the link between supervision and ethical practice becomes clearer.   For example, membership of both UKCP and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) is conditional upon receiving sufficient supervision and BACP guidelines on supervision clearly state that one of the purposes of supervision is "... to maintain ethical standards as set out in the Ethical Framework" (BACP Information Sheet S2) thus explicitly linking supervision and the ethical practice of therapy.

Drawing on the experience of psychotherapy, it is interesting to note that, in 2002, BACP moved away from a Code of Practice towards an Ethical Framework which gives guidelines about what to take into account when considering ethical dilemmas rather than dogmatic rules about what is acceptable and what is not.   Whilst perhaps sounding counterintuitive, I would suggest that this change actually results in the process of decision-making becoming harder rather than easier, practitioners having to take personal responsibility – and accept accountability - rather than working to a prescribed algorithm.

Jeff points out (2007, p.xi) that "The boundaries of therapy and spiritual direction ... are becoming more blurred." and, in a counselling context, Bond (2010, pp.192-195) a Fellow of Bristol University who specialises in legal and ethical issues, raises a number of questions about the benefits of supervision, particularly in the case of experienced practitioners rather than trainees. These

questions relate to the resources and time involved, the limited evidence of the positive effects of supervision, the possible violation of clients' rights to confidentiality, and the impact on ethical practice of compulsory supervision. However, having drawn our attention to all these potential shortcomings, he is nevertheless convinced of the value of supervision, stating :

> "I ... write these questions about supervision from a position of ... having greatly benefited from a series of very constructive supervisory relationships. I can also think of many instances where my clients have benefited considerably from discussions in supervision. Ongoing, regular and good quality supervision has helped to keep me ... receptive to my clients' issues, supported me when I have felt stuck, challenged my assumptions, helped my self-awareness and kept counselling alive to me." (Bond, 2010, p.195)

THE PASTORAL CARE LITERATURE

The literature relating to supervision of pastoral care in the UK is again sparse, but it is here that we find reference to theological questions rather than a discussion limited to philosophical and pragmatic considerations.   Leach and Paterson (2010, p.7) assert: "... supervision is a core practice of the Christian Church.   Because any authentic ministry is a share in Christ's ministry, it is shared with others in Christ". They later identify three aspects of supervision that enhance the vision of practitioners, namely:

(1) Supervision helps in paying attention to the vision.

(2) Supervision helps identify discrepancies between vision and practice.

(3) Supervision helps practitioners to address assumptions about the aims of ministry.

Leach and Paterson (2010, p.10) draw on Inskipp and Proctor's functional model of supervision (1995) and, in referring to the normative element of the supervisory process, they specifically include questions about what codes of ethics are relevant and whether they are being adhered to, drawing our attention to the link between supervision and ethical practice in pastoral care.

Lamdin and Tilley (2007, pp.4-8) quote Wilson (1999) who identifies four functions of supervision in all aspects of ministry including pastoral care, namely support, education, management and mediation.   The authors draw our attention to theological aspects of these activities that relate to roles specifically mentioned in the Anglican ordination service: when offering support, the role is that of pastor; when educating, the role is that of teacher; when acting as manager, the role is that

of steward or shepherd and when mediating, the role is that of intercessor or mediator. It may therefore be argued that the supervisor is equally pastor, teacher, steward/shepherd and intercessor/mediator.

ANALYSIS

COMMON THEMES

Having taken a longitudinal approach to historical and contemporary literatures, common themes emerge and considerable consistency across the US and UK literatures can be identified. Whilst being mindful of the possible pitfalls and limitations of cross-cultural comparisons, these common themes include firstly, the importance of reflection, secondly, the beneficial effects of this reflection on the personal and professional development of the director, thirdly, the generic nature of the tasks involved, fourthly, the necessity for reverence and care in the various relationships, fifthly, the influences from other disciplines, and sixthly, the value and importance of consultation.

However, the absence of specific British literature on the subject of supervision of spiritual direction results in the necessity to draw not only on the US literature, but also on generic theory across disciplines which focuses clearly on the contribution to ethical practice that supervision plays. For this reason I consider that Tracy's model of critical correlation has much to offer in order to establish what constitutes ethical practice, how it can be achieved and the potential role of supervision. Tracy's thesis is based on what he sees as the ethical necessity to challenge traditional theological thinking: "... one cannot investigate a cognitive claim with intellectual integrity if one insists simultaneously that the claim is believable because the tradition has believed it!" (1975, p.6) and goes on to say:

> "The ethical dilemma of the Christian theologian ... is both painful and clear. Traditionally, his fundamental loyalty was to the church community ... Now all seems changed. The modern theologian ordinarily shares the morality of scientific knowledge of his contemporaries. He recognises that such a commitment imposes the ethical duty to provide the proper kind of evidence for whatever claim he advances ... In fact, the modern Christian theologian cannot ethically do other than challenge the traditional self-understanding of the theologian." (Tracy, 1975, pp.6-7).

Tracy's method requires a critical correlation between what the tradition has believed and what contemporary disciplines offer in order to engage in a potentially mutually transforming discourse, and it is the *mutuality* inherent in this process that adds another dimension to Browning's approach to adducing ethical principles from tradition.

Whilst the literatures may make it clear that supervision is a place in which to address ethical issues, this is often more for pragmatic – and even legal – reasons than for theological or philosophical considerations.   To be consistent with Tracy's model, the theological element cannot be considered in isolation, it must be the subject of discourse with other disciplines in a process of mutual critique. For example, Silver (2003) writing on ethics and spiritual direction in the US, and who subtitles her book *Trustworthy Connections*, and Bond, (2010), addressing ethics and psychotherapy in the UK, both emphasise the centrality of relationship.   In terms of critical correlation and the subject of supervision, this suggests a mutual critique of the nature of our relationship with a trustworthy God and the phenomenological experience of the fallibility of our human relationships.   Whilst we may aspire to emulate God's trustworthiness in these relationships, the reality is that we are less than perfect and society therefore chooses to impose external safeguards to ensure the well-being of those with whom we work.   Lyall (2001, Chapter 1) draws our attention to the contribution that practical theology can make to this inter-disciplinary critique arising out of its groundedness in the Christian tradition, at the heart of which lies God's selfrevelation through Jesus Christ as told in the scriptures.

The literatures reviewed all make useful contributions to the discussion of the role supervision should play in the ethical practice of spiritual direction. The focus of the American literature is theological, with a contemplative model being privileged, yet also offering a pragmatic approach to some ethical dilemmas (Silver, 2003).   However, this literature relates almost exclusively to experience of supervision offered as part of postgraduate level training programmes which may or may not be transferable to other, less formalised contexts.

Little reference is made in the British literature of spiritual direction to supervision and almost nothing is said on ethical issues, although interest is now being shown and various groups are now making attempts to address the subject.   The current debate, which seems to be polarised, would appear to take a very pragmatic approach and to focus on whether or not spiritual directors see the accepted conventions of therapy as desirable and acceptable.

However, the British literature on inter-disciplinary supervision is well-established and confident, suggesting that supervision skills and process are generic and that, with appropriate attention being paid to individual contexts, they are essentially transferable.

It is therefore clear that neither the American nor British literature on spiritual direction is sufficient on its own, nor does the British literature on the inter-disciplinary practice of supervision offer a complete answer. However, the synthesis of the three literatures, together with the integration of wisdom from scripture and tradition, can provide a starting point for further empirical research into the experience of practising directors and directees.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Supervision can provide a space in which ethical and boundary issues can be considered, explored and discussed. Without engaging in supervision it is difficult to see how and where directors can be helped to reflect on ethical dilemmas and develop safe practice.

In the absence of any formalised and agreed code or guidelines for good practice, many ethical questions and dilemmas go unanswered. For example, there seem to be no established conventions relating to the initial contract between director and directee, although these would be clearly defined in other disciplines. This is problematic for many directors who consider the idea of an initial contract, or covenant as some prefer to call it, to be against the ethos of spiritual direction. Whether or not spiritual directors should follow the conventions of psychotherapy in relation to the initial contract is a subject for discussion – but not for neglect. An understanding of the importance of initial contracting underpins many of the legal, practical and psychological issues that can arise such as confidentiality, working with complex legal issues such as abuse and adoption, selfdisclosure, dual relationships, and money.

The circumstances in which there is a legal obligation across disciplines to break confidentiality are limited, one being information relating to the Terrorism Act (2000) and the other to the Proceeds of Crime Act (2002). Contrary to popular opinion and assumption, there is currently no **legal** requirement to divulge information about child abuse, although many practitioners make risk of harm to self or others a third condition under which confidentiality will be broken. However, many organisations (for example church denominations, government departments, the NHS, charitable agencies) may require those working for them to report child abuse, but this is not a legal imperative. Practitioners in all contexts must also bear in mind that there are dangers in exploring

any issue that may become the subject of subsequent legal intervention, as evidence may be considered to have been contaminated and therefore discredited as a result of previous discussion. (Bond and Sandhu, 2005, pp.91-92).

The current debate about whether it should become statutory for social workers and therapists to report historic child abuse is a relevant example of the difficulties that may result from a code of practice rather than ethical guidelines.   A legal requirement to break confidentiality may have the unintended consequence that the 'victim' may refuse to provide evidence or may withdraw previously made statements, with the result that the risks to others are increased.   A more considered approach, built on trust and reflecting individual circumstances, may in practice lead to a more favourable outcome.

This raises the question of whether ethical guidelines rather than codes of conduct are more appropriate and effective. Mature Christianity would suggest a willingness to engage personally with ethical dilemmas and the ability to make considered and wise decisions that can be justified when examined.   In this context it is also worth reflecting on the point raised by Argyris and Schon (1974, p.6) about the importance of differentiating between 'espoused theory' and 'theory-in-use', namely the difference between what we claim we do and what we actually do in practice.

However, whilst it may be that many ethical dilemmas are better addressed by reflection rather than rules, there is also a case to be made for an authoritative rather than authoritarian use of power where this results in a positive sense of empowerment. As Procter (2002, p.51.) reminds us: "Foucault ... emphasis the productive aspects of power ... that this mutual influence and intersubjectivity is not necessarily negative". Implicit in this issue is the idea of accountability.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In the foreword to Leach and Paterson's book on supervision of pastoral care, (2010, p.x), Lyall stresses the importance of accountability stating "As communities of faith play 'catch up' in developing their own structures of support and accountability, the authors ... draw upon familiarity with this theoretical base and succeed in harnessing it in the service of pastoral supervision." Leach and Paterson stress the notions of: "... accountability within the body of Christ; the ethic of service and accountability to those we serve." (2010, pp.141-142), and this theme is reflected throughout the book, both implicitly and explicitly.

When considering the question of accountability, there are two imperatives: firstly, an ecclesial imperative which demands accountability to the body as part of its ethos; secondly, there is an imperative driven by a secular culture which is concerned with abuses of power and which very much reflects gospel priorities about attitudes to poor, needy, sick, and outcast members of society. This understanding is reflected in Graham's vision of pastoral theology described as "Transformative practices are the embodiments and witnesses to 'Divine activity amidst human practice' (Graham, 2000, p.113) as glimpses of the Word made flesh." (Graham, Walton and Ward, 2005, p.195).

Lamdin and Tilley (2007, p.9) also address the question of accountability in saying: "... all individuals ... are accountable to Christ for their discipleship." and they go on to say "There are (sic) a range of accountabilities here and they need to be set out clearly and managed effectively , without in any way undermining the accountability of all to Christ".

If accountability is fundamental to all aspects of Christian discipleship, this must also apply to the practice of spiritual direction, and supervision would seem to be the appropriate space for exploration and monitoring. There is also the question of where ethical issues can be addressed in the absence of supervision.

THE GENERIC NATURE OF SUPERVISION

Reviewing the above literatures and considering experience in other contexts, has reinforced my view that the skills of supervision are transferable across disciplines and that it is essentially a generic process.

Hawkins and Shohet, writing about supervision in the helping, and what they call 'people', professions, emphasise the developmental approach they adopt in their work which " ... includes a greater emphasis on learning and building on the positives in order to flourish ..." (2006, p.x). If spiritual direction, therapy and pastoral care are anything at all, they are certainly 'people professions'.

In the pastoral care world, practical theology students will be familiar with the writings of Clebsh and Jakel (1983, pp.32-66) who identify the four pastoral functions as healing, guiding, sustaining and reconciling. Healing can also be considered to be a common goal of both spiritual direction and therapy, and I would suggest that the other three functions can similarly be said to bear a familial, if not an identical, likeness.

It also seems relevant to pay attention to Frank and Frank's Common Factors Theory (1991) which proposes that there are four conditions necessary for effective outcomes in all the healing arts, whether magical or scientific:

1.   An emotionally charged relationship with another.
2.   A therapeutic setting.
3.   Some rationale for a healing process.
4.   A form of process or ritual.

As I have argued elsewhere, (Harborne 2012), a strong case can be made for these four conditions being as present in the practice of spiritual direction as in the practice of psychotherapy – or in conventional medicine.   The logical conclusion from this is that, if supervision is considered to be ethically desirable for therapists, then the same must be true for spiritual directors.

If the ultimate decision is that it is the *function* that identifies the nature of therapy rather than the *title*, it could be argued that other activities such as spiritual direction are essentially the same, in which case similar sanctions for negligence or malpractice are likely to apply.   Whilst such a situation has not yet arisen, it may only be a matter of time before a serious complaint arises against a spiritual director with possible legal implications

This view is echoed in the American literature. Driskill, (in Bumpus and Langer, 2005, p.106) points out the federal legal obligations in the US to which spiritual directors would be wise to adhere, and stresses the importance of being well informed on specific state law.   He also raises the question of whether or not spiritual directors might be considered to be what the America Professional Agency calls 'a mental health professional' and therefore subject to the regulations that apply to this category of practitioner, quoting a list of specific occupations and ending with the catch-all "... or any individual practicing other mental health disciplines approved by us". He continues: "Given the litigiousness of our society, I think it is only a matter of time until someone is sued for 'malpractice' in matters spiritual". (2005, pp.119-120). Whilst this may be written in a US context, there is no compelling reason to think that, in principle, the same would not apply in the UK.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has attempted to address the question of the role that supervision could play in the ethical practice of spiritual direction and has considered scripture and tradition, relevant US and

206

British literatures as well as those relating to pastoral care and psychotherapy. The paper has also examined what constitutes ethical practice, the provision of codes of practice, the generic nature of supervision and the subject of accountability.

Since the mid-twentieth century there has been a clear expectation, and in some cases a professional requirement, that practitioners in the 'people professions' will engage in supervision, and the British literature for therapists makes it clear that therapists are accountable for their standards of practice to their clients, to colleagues, and to society.   The literatures also assert that practitioners benefit from supervision.

Exactly how this supervision should be provided, practised, monitored and evaluated is the next step. In order to establish a way forward, research is now needed into how supervision is experienced by both spiritual directors and their supervisees, and the effect of this on the ethical practice of spiritual direction.

Bearing in mind the multiplicity of models of supervision described in the literatures, it would be unwise to privilege any particular approach or format without further research. However, despite reluctance in some quarters, I conclude that the argument for supervision of spiritual direction in principle is compelling in the interests of ethical practice and accountability.

However, it can be seen that there are considerable gaps in information about what is actually happening. In order to establish whether the practice of spiritual direction can be considered ethical in the absence of supervision, and, bearing in mind the experience of other disciplines, information about the current situation in the UK is essential. Further research is therefore needed into:

- provision and availability of supervision.
- regional expectations concerning supervision of spiritual direction.
- models and contexts of supervision.
- relative value of codes of practice and ethical frameworks
- perceptions of the value of supervision
- might something else be more effective than supervision?

These are all aspects of spiritual direction that merit further investigation.

6943 words

REFERENCE LIST

Argyris, C. and Shon, D., 1974. *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Association for Pastoral Supervisors and Educators. 2012. *Code of Conduct.* www.pastoralsupervision.org.uk [accessed March 2014].

Barry, W.A. and Connolly, W.J., 1986. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction.* San Francisco: HarperCollins.

Barry, W.A. and Guy, M.C., 1978. The Practice of Supervision in Spiritual Direction. In D. Fleming, ed. *Review for Religious Volume 7 pp.834-842*.

Bevans, S.B., 2002. *Models of Contextual Theology, Revised and Expanded Edition.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Benedictine Handbook, The. 2003. Norwich: Canterbury Press.

Bond, T., 2010.,*Standards and Ethics for Counselling in Action.* 3rd Ed. London: Sage.

Bond, T. and Sandhu, A., 2005. *Therapists in Court: Providing Evidence and Supporting Witnesses.* London: Sage.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy., 2011. *What is Supervision? Information Sheet S2.* BACP: Lutterworth.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy., 2013. *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* Lutterworth: BACP.

British Psychological Society., 2007. *Professional Practice Guidelines: Division of Counselling Psychology.* Leicester: BPS.

Browning, D. 1976., *The Moral Context of Pastoral Care,* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Bumpus, M.R., and Langer, R.B., eds. 2005. *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery.* Harrisburg, PA: Moorhouse.

Casement, P., 1985. *On Learning from the Patient*. London:Routledge

Clebsh, W.A., and Jaekle, C.R., 1994. *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective Paperback Edition.* Northvale, NJ: Jason Aaronson.

Conroy, M., 1996., L*ooking into the Well: Supervision for Spiritual Directors.* Chicago: Loyola University Press.

Conroy, M., 2005. In Bumpus, M.R., and Langer, R.B., eds. *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery.* Harrisburg, PA: Moorhouse.

Driskill, J.D., 2005. In Bumpus, M.R., and Langer, R.B., 2005. *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery.* Harrisburg, PA: Moorhouse. Ch. 7.

Fleming, D., ed. 1988. *The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction.* St Louis, MO: Review for Religious.

Frank, J.D., and Frank, J.B., 1991. *Persuasion and Healing: a Comparative Study of Psychotherapy, 3rd ed.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Graham, E., 1996. *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty.* Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock.

Graham, E., Walton, H. and Ward, F., 2005. *Theological Reflection: Methods.* London: SCM Press.

Gubi, P.M. ed., 2015. *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment: Working with Psyche and Soul.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Guenther, M., 1996., *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Harborne, L., 2012. *Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction: Two Languages, One Voice?* London: Karnac Books.

Harborne, L., 2014. In J. Rose, and M. Paterson, eds. *Enriching Ministry: Pastoral Supervision in Practice.* London: SCM. Ch.12.

Harborne, L., 2015. In P.M. Gubi, ed. *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment: Working with Psyche and Soul.* London: Jessica Kingsley. Ch.6.

Hawkins, P. and Shohet, R., 2006. *Supervision in the Helping Professions, 3rd Edition.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Holy Bible. 1973. *New International Version.* London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Inskipp, F., and Proctor, B., 1993. *Making the Most of Supervision Part I: The Art, Craft and Tasks of Supervision.* Twickenham: Cascade Publications.

Jeff, G., 2007. *Spiritual Direction for Every Christian.* London: SPCK.

Kalam, T. 1980.The role of spiritual guides from a psychologist's point of view. *Journal of Dharma, 5 262-269.*

Lamdin, K., and Tilley, D., 2007. *Supporting New Ministers in the Local Church: a Handbook.* London: SPCK.

Leach, J., & Paterson, M., 2010. *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook.* London: SCM Press.

Leech, K., 1994. *Soul Friend: Spiritual Direction in the Modern World (Revised Edition).* London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

London Centre for Spirituality: www.spiritualitycentre.org [accessed March 2014]

Lyall, D., 2001. *The Integrity of Pastoral Care.*London: SPCK.

Monk Kidd, S., 2006. *When the Heart Waits: Spiritual Direction for Life's Sacred Questions*.
Paperback Edition.   New York: HarperCollins.

Nelson, J.M., 2009. *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality.*   Valparaiso, IN: Springer.

Proctor,G., 2002. *The Dynamics of Power in Counselling and Psychotherapy: Ethics, Politics and Practice.* Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books.

Retreat Association: www.retreats.org.uk [accessed March 2014].

Rose, J., and Paterson, M., eds. 2014. *Enriching Ministry: Pastoral Supervision in Practice.*   London: SCM.

Sanks, T.H., 1993. David Tracy's Theological Project: an Overview and Some Implications.
Theological Studies 54.

Silver, A.W. , 2003. T*rustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction.*   Cambridge, Mass: Cowley.

Spiritual Directors International. www.sdiworld.org [accessed March 2014].

Spiritual Directors Network for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire: www.soulfriend.org.uk [accessed March 2014].

Standcliffe, D. and Ball, P. 1999. *Journey into Truth: Spiritual Direction in the Anglican Tradition.*
London: Continuum.

Thornton, M., 1984. S*piritual Direction: a Practical Introduction*. London: SPCK.

Tracy, D., 1975. *Blessed Rage for Order.* New York: Seabury Press.

United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy. 2006. *Code of Ethics.*

United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy. www.pscyhotherapy.org.uk [accessed March 2014].

West, W., 2004. *Spiritual Issues in Therapy: Relating Experience to Practice.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Wilson, A., 1999. *Promoting Wholeness: An Outline of Ministerial Supervision.* Diocese of Oxford*.*

Winnicott, D.W., 1958. *Collected Papers: Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis.* London: Tavistock Publications.

APPENDIX 3

PAPER 3

Lynette Harborne: SID 1219677

Stage 1 Paper 3

WHAT CAN SUPERVISION OFFER TO THE BEST PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

OCTOBER 2014

CONTENTS

PAGE

TABLES

ABSTRACT

Lynette Harborne (SID: 1219677)

RESEARCH PROJECT TO ESTABLISH WHAT SUPERVISION CAN OFFER TO THE BEST PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.

October 2014

This paper describes the proposed research project which will investigate the question of what supervision can offer to the best practice of spiritual direction.   It addresses the background, context and process that have inspired the project and influenced the rationale and conceptual framework of the research. It describes the research design and the methodology that have been selected.   The methods of data collection and analysis and participant recruitment are outlined and the proposed timescale described.   The delimitations and scope of the project, together with necessary resources, are identified and ethical considerations are addressed. The paper also identifies the key references that will be interrogated.

Key words: ethical practice, supervision, spiritual direction, research design, research ethics, methodology, methods, data collection, data analysis.

WHAT CAN SUPERVISION OFFER TO THE BEST PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION*?*

INTRODUCTION AND INDICATIVE TITLE

The question which my proposed research seeks to address is ***WHAT CAN SUPERVISION OFFER TO THE BEST PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?***   This paper aims to explain the background that has led to my interest in this question and the context in which it has arisen.   I will describe the rationale for my research and my conceptual framework and will also outline the research design, methodology and methods of the project.   The recruitment of participants, the proposed methods of data collection and analysis, and the suggested timescale will be outlined.   The delimitations and scope of the research will be discussed and the key references identified.   Ethical considerations will also be addressed.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

My interest in this subject is grounded in three significant aspects of my personal history:

- my life experience and faith journey
- my experience as a psychotherapist and spiritual director
- my role in a network of spiritual directors

My life experience and faith journey

I am very aware of the importance that my personal faith during a period of over 70 years has played in bringing me to the point where I decided to embark on this research. I always describe myself as a 'mother's knee' Christian as my upbringing was very much influenced by my mother's strong faith, as well as the rural Anglican community in which I lived. My father was nominally a Methodist but was above all a scientist with some scepticism, although not hostility, towards religion. Regular church and Sunday school attendance was always very much part of my life.   Looking back, I can see that my early church experience established a sense of a relationship with God from a very early age, a relationship that has remained, although changed almost beyond recognition, over the course of the intervening seven decades.

Despite some excursions into a more hedonistic life-style in my teens and early twenties (it was the 1960s after all …), on marriage in my mid-twenties I returned to the received wisdom of my

childhood religious experience.   However, a few years and two daughters later, everything was to change. I can remember a specific moment when I suddenly became aware that I had never really questioned traditional church teaching – or even the existence of God.   I can remember where I was, what I was doing, even what I was wearing, but above all I can remember the complete terror that this realisation evoked in me as I realised the possible implications of these questions.

As a result of this significant experience I came to the realisation that previously my life decisions had been predicated on an assumption of the existence of God, an assumption that I was now questioning. It became clear that future choices would have to stand up to much more rigorous scrutiny if such a belief were to be sustainable and have integrity and meaning for me. It was at this time that I began to train as a teacher in further education, the post-compulsory, 'second chance' sector of education.

Throughout the next fifteen years I wrestled with both church and faith issues and eventually felt I had achieved some resolution.   However, I was then to undergo a second period when I questioned church doctrine and values as I experienced what I subsequently came to see as a 'Dark Night of the Soul'. In order to support myself though this second process of deconstruction, re-evaluation and discernment, I embarked on my own personal therapy and spiritual direction and subsequently enrolled on a counselling diploma course, followed by a psychotherapy MSc.   At the same time, I started out on a two year, part-time, spiritual direction training programme concurrently with the first two years of my psychotherapy training. This was a deliberate choice on my part, as I was already finding the whole question of the similarities and differences between psychotherapy and spiritual direction very interesting and engaging and my exploration of this subject was therefore central to my personal and professional development in both disciplines.

Having successfully completed both trainings, I left teaching in order to develop a private practice as a spiritual director and psychotherapist and, once established, I turned my attention to training as a supervisor, which raised my awareness that supervision is a cross-disciplinary and generic activity and that, whilst the context and content may be different, the process is essentially the same.   My subsequent experience as a supervisor of therapists, spiritual directors, clergy, religious, pastoral carers, charity workers and chaplains has consistently reinforced this view.

Over the next ten years my practice developed, as did my interest in the interface between spiritual direction and counselling.   In 2005 I joined the Human Development team at one of the then four remaining Roman Catholic United Kingdom (UK) seminaries and for the next eight years I taught

216

pastoral psychology to seminarians as well as working one-to-one with many of them. All of these men also had spiritual directors, which again brought questions about the purpose and process of the two activities into focus for me. These were particularly rich years for me in terms of integrating spirituality and psychology and it was during this time that I first became aware of the work of Roman Catholic theologian, David Tracy, (1939 -) who was required reading for the seminarians. I found I was very drawn to his ideas which I found stimulating and exciting and I therefore embarked on reading the texts for myself and discussing the ideas with professors of theology and philosophy at the seminary.

I have since reflected on why I was so influenced by the views of a Catholic theologian and have come to an awareness that my previous struggles had been grounded largely in my inability to reconcile the claims of my early church experience around sola scriptura and the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible with my own experience of the world and then later with my training as a psychotherapist. To a great extent this underlying conflict had been unconscious, but was nevertheless a powerful influence on my thinking. For a time I had been drawn to the writings of authors exploring their own relationship with the authority of organised religion, for example Spong (2001), Jamieson (2002, 2008), Armstrong (2004), Cupitt (2010), and Holloway (2012), and had found some of their ideas to be liberating and others to be 'a step too far' for me. So the fact that Tracy, whilst remaining under the authority of the Roman Catholic magisterium, could include personal experience and empirical knowledge as well as Biblical authority and the church's tradition as sources for revelation, spoke to me with a particularly significant and liberating voice.

My experience as a psychotherapist and spiritual director

My decision to train simultaneously as a psychotherapist and as a spiritual director was a deliberate choice as I was aware from the outset that becoming a therapist was a vocational step in which integrating my faith was essential. However, I was also very clear that I did not want to become a 'Christian counsellor' with all the assumptions that such a label evokes about promoting an overtly evangelical Biblical stance and often only working with fellow Christians. Inherent to my vocation was a personal imperative that I become as professionally well-qualified and as competent a practitioner as I was able.

The accepted view in my spiritual direction training was that therapy and spiritual direction were not the same, and it was the differences that were constantly emphasised. During this training I sometimes felt that there was a slightly defensive view that therapy was seen as inferior to spiritual direction, and, at the time, to a certain extent I probably accepted this as the received wisdom.

Similarly, in many psychotherapy circles, spiritual matters were viewed with scepticism, and sometimes even hostility, and I was aware that during these years I kept pretty quiet about the fact that I was also training as a spiritual director.

As my practice and my experience developed, I became less and less convinced of the existence of the apparent gulf that others insisted lay between the two practices. Gradually I became sufficiently confident to offer workshops at a number of conferences in which I raised questions which challenged the widely accepted view that the two disciplines were essentially different.   I was also tasked by the Association of Pastoral Care and Counselling (APSCC), a division of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), with editing a report on this subject which was presented at the biennial conference of the division. I subsequently felt confident enough to submit a book proposal to Karnac Publishers and was surprised, delighted and terrified when this was accepted! *Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction: Two Languages, One Voice?* was published in 2012 and stimulated considerable interest and debate about the distinctive characteristics of the two disciplines.   As a result, I have since been asked to speak about my ideas and engage in dialogue with a number of interested groups, a dialogue which continues to engender debate – and sometimes disagreement – across a range of contexts including churches, academia, training programmes, spiritual direction networks and therapeutic agencies.

My role in a network of spiritual directors

I am currently a member of the 'Holding Group', the organising committee, of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Spiritual Direction (SPIDIR) Network, an ecumenical group that coordinates the provision of spiritual direction across the three counties. I am a member of a subgroup that maintains a list of suitably qualified and/or experienced spiritual directors in the area and I chair the Training Group which organises initial and on-going training of spiritual directors. I also have particular responsibility for the organisation and delivery of the training of supervisors.

The structure of this SPIDIR network is essentially – and apparently uniquely – collegial, democratic and non-hierarchical and the Holding Group is accountable to the members of the network and not to any particular organisation, church or denomination.   At regular intervals the Holding Group meets with the membership to explain what it has been doing since the last meeting and what it plans to do in the future in order that the members may give their approval and authorisation to continue – or to veto it if that is their wish.   It is in this spirit of mutuality that remaining on the list of spiritual directors has, in the past year, become conditional upon engaging in some form of

supervision and I have been involved in gathering and recording the information about what arrangements each person has in place. In order for this policy to be introduced, it was agreed that more supervisors in the geographical area would be required and I was commissioned with the task of organising, planning, recruiting and delivering a training programme to meet this need which has now been offered on two separate occasions.

As a result of the implementation of this training, I have subsequently delivered training to spiritual directors in the St Albans and Gloucester Anglican dioceses as well as supervision training to two groups of Oxford Diocese training incumbents. My experience of working with these different groups, each with its own slightly different and particular focus, has increased my conviction of the generic nature of supervision and the essential transferability of skills across contexts.

My experience of all these activities has made a significant contribution not only to the development of my views, but also to my realisation of just how little is actually known about the practice of both spiritual direction and supervision in the UK, and that much of what appears to be accepted as good practice is in fact anecdotal and without theoretical underpinning or supporting evidence.

The convergence of the above experiences

In the context of the wider spiritual direction community, the question of how to ensure safe practice is currently the subject of review and discussion, not only within the SPIDIR organisation itself but also with other organisations and individuals across the south of England. For example the South Central Regional Training Programme (SCRTP), an interdenominational group, has written guidelines which are currently being submitted to their individual boards of responsibility; a group convened by the Retreat Association, (RA), is in the process of developing guidelines and similar work is being undertaken by the London Centre for Spirituality (LCS).   Others involved in attempting to address the question of good practice include spirituality advisors from a number of Anglican dioceses and those involved in providing spiritual direction for Roman Catholic seminarians. Some of the participants in this work are on more than one of these working parties which might suggest that the process is being unnecessarily repetitive but, when looked at more carefully, it can be seen that each addresses a particular constituency with its own specific requirements and concerns.

As these agencies engage in drawing up of codes of practice and ethical guidelines, I am aware of my concern that they are starting with assumptions about what should be included in any code of

practice rather than exploring the underlying philosophy and purpose. There would also seem to be a strong sense of defensiveness arising from an unstated, and probably unconscious, motivation to pre-empt challenge, complaint or legal action rather than from a desire to increase accountability and to improve the quality of spiritual direction on offer, to support spiritual directors and develop good practice for its own sake. There are also questions about how these documents will be introduced or imposed on the spiritual directors working under their aegis. Above all, there seems to be no empirical data to support the decisions that are being made and the views expressed must therefore be considered to be anecdotal. I am also aware that this work is being undertaken at a time when BACP is in fact rewriting its Ethical Framework and paying particular attention to compliance with legal expectations that may also impinge on spiritual directors.

The convergence of the personal experiences described above has informed my thinking and has Influenced my decision to embark on research which seeks to collect data that will help to establish what supervision can contribute to the best practice of spiritual direction. It has also encouraged me in my conclusion that this research has something valuable to offer the constituency in which it is grounded.

THE PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

During the years since leaving teaching and embarking on a career as a therapist, spiritual director and supervisor I had been discussing my interests and ideas with other practitioners as well as seeing both a therapist and a spiritual director on a regular basis. Having published the book on spiritual direction and psychotherapy, it was suggested that a book on the supervision of spiritual direction would be the next step in order to fill a gap in the UK literature. Initially I was interested in this suggestion, but after some reflection I realised that I did not want to spend another eighteen months working in isolation on such a project and that for it to be life-giving for me, it would need to be grounded in a group or community setting.

As a result of this realisation, I gradually came to the conclusion that I should enquire about the possibility of further study, which eventually led to my enrolment on the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology offered by Anglia Ruskin University with the Cambridge Theological Federation. I saw this as a means of engaging with others at both a personal and theological level in order to support my continued exploration of how therapy and spiritual direction can inform each other's practice. But above all I saw it as providing the opportunity and the context in which to reflect on my own spiritual and religious beliefs and values and to pay attention to the teaching of the tradition

of practical theology which speaks so clearly into the questions that I have been asking for so many years. I was eager to find an environment in which to explore a range of approaches with as open a mind as possible. Above all I wanted to adopt "… a thoughtful, imaginative, persuasive and hermeneutically sophisticated use of the Bible." (Bennett, 2013, p.3).

And I have found that the DProf provides such an environment, although inevitably it has also raised some interesting and sometimes challenging reflections. In particular I have become increasingly aware that I am fundamentally an activist practitioner who, rather than being satisfied with theory alone, always wants to know what the practical implications and outcomes are likely to be. This is a motivating factor, as I see the doctorate not as an end in itself but rather as a means to the end of increasing professional dialogue amongst spiritual directors and ultimately (if not too grandiosely!) to making a contribution towards improving good practice.

The discipline of practical theology would seem to offer a framework that is particularly relevant to examining the questions that arise in connection with this research. Schleiermacher, (1768 – 1834), an influential figure in the development of modern, western, liberal practical theology, stated "Everything human is holy for everything is divine" (1988, p.88) presaging Boisen's interest in "The careful reading of the 'living human document'" (Schipani, 2012, p. 93), an interest that was later picked up by Gerkin (1984). Similarly Tracy, (1975) in his revisionist model of critical correlation, emphasises his conviction that human experience makes an essential contribution to our understanding of theology. Practical theologians have subsequently continued to discuss the question of how to conceptualise and engage with the nature of divine revelation and it is this spirit of curiosity, enquiry and exploration that draws me to my own research.

RATONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

The current absence of data in relation to the practice of spiritual direction in the UK and the effects of the role of supervision within that practice, invite investigation.

My previous exploration of the similarities and differences between spiritual direction and psychotherapy (Harborne, 2012) came to the conclusion that, whilst there might be distinctions between the practice of the two disciplines in terms of context and content, the process involved in both is essentially the same. This conclusion was supported by Frank and Frank's Common Factors Theory (1991) which identifies four common factors that are present in all forms of healing whether medical, spiritual, complimentary or alternative:

221

1.   An emotionally charged relationship with another.

2.   A therapeutic setting

3.   Some rationale for a healing process.

4.   A form of process or ritual.

As the provision of psychotherapy has increased in the UK over the past half century, the main professional bodies that monitor and regulate its practice have also introduced codes of practice or ethical frameworks, for example the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) and BACP, both make supervision a compulsory requirement for members. It is in this climate and culture that my own practice as a therapist and spiritual director has developed.   It was therefore perhaps not surprising that my initial approach to investigating the ethical practice of spiritual direction was heavily influenced by the psychotherapeutic paradigm.   However, even in the world of therapy, there is very little actual data about the effectiveness of the conventions that are generally accepted as contributing to ethical practice. Professor Bond, internationally renowned for his work in the area of professional ethics, states: "*What is the evidence for the benefits of counselling supervision?* Frankly, the evidence is not as convincing as one might hope."   (Bond, 2010, p.193, original italics).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

It therefore seems particularly relevant to gather data about spiritual direction at a time when it is becoming more well-known and popular as a spiritual discipline and, as a result, the provision and development of training courses is increasing. It also seems timely to be asking questions about what constitutes good practice and challenging unsubstantiated assumptions. The research will therefore seek to compare actual experience against assumptions previously held in similar disciplines, and, as a result, to develop theoretical understanding that can inform future training and practice.

I have also been concerned that the consequences of the introduction of any compulsory code of practice are barely being considered. For example, in the main, spiritual directors are working on their own; some have little or no training but have been offering their services for many years. My own recent experience with SPIDIR indicates that there are many who still only pay lip-service to the value of supervision and there are also questions about the availability and training of sufficient supervisors. If adherence to a stated code of practice is to be accepted by all those involved in spiritual direction, then it would seem likely that further training is going to be necessary, with all

the associated costs of provision and, as many directors do not receive payment, the financial implications must also be taken into account.

In addition, little attention seems to be paid to dealing with non-compliance and breaches of any proposed guidelines, whereas in secular organisations complaints and appeals procedures as well as possible sanctions would be an integral part of the preparation and introduction of such policies.

As already stated, my approach to this research has been greatly influenced by Tracy's (1975) revisionist model of critical correlation. Tracy proposes that "... a contemporary fundamental Christian theology can best be described as philosophical reflection upon the meanings present in common human experience and language, and upon the meanings present in the Christian fact" (p.43). He suggests that: "The two principal sources for theology are Christian texts and common human experience and language" (p.43) and continues by developing the argument for a dialogue between these two sources in which neither is privileged over the other. In contrast to Tillich's model (1952), this dialogue initiates a process that goes beyond seeking solutions for secular problems by theological reference, but rather involves a mutual and equal critique between theology and secular disciplines in the process of which the potential for the transformation of both is possible.

Similarly, Lyall (2001, p.34) identifies the dialectical relationship between contemporary culture and the theological tradition and the mutuality this necessarily involves from which emerges a new understanding of practical theology. It is the mutual quality of the relationship between secular and theological disciplines that seems particularly relevant and important in the research into the potential benefits that supervision can offer spiritual direction, as much of the available evidence comes from other disciplines, particularly that of psychotherapy which in itself has drawn on the experience of medicine and teaching in developing its own conventions and protocols.

Bearing in mind the context of my role as a student on the DProf, together with the influence of the work of Tracy, my research design draws on and is influenced by what Cameron (2010, p.54) has identified as "The Four Voices of Theology" and which she describes as:

- Espoused Theology: what we say we believe.
- Operant Theology: our lived out theology.
- Normative Theology: the theology of our tradition.
- Formal Theology: academic theology.

In the case of spiritual direction, there may be some anecdotal evidence of the voices of espoused and operant theology but it would certainly be difficult currently to identify what normative and formal theology might be saying in relation to its practice.

Despite the fact that interest in spiritual direction has increased considerably in the past thirty years or so, there seems to have been little or no empirical research into the benefits it offers, the possible dangers that may also be evident, and above all the quality and even the quantity of provision. It is interesting to note that, in contrast to this situation, the world of therapy in general and that provided in the health service in particular has become increasingly interested in qualitative studies and outcome measurement. Anecdotally, therapists were initially reluctant to engage in such measurement but, as funding is now often contingent upon outcome evidence, the practice of gathering data is spreading. It is now required in and by the National Health Service and many other counselling contexts and is seen as an indicator of good practice for organisations accredited by BACP.

Not so in the case of spiritual direction. I am not aware of any attempt to gather feedback or information about directees' perceptions of the spiritual direction they receive, and it is these questions about the quality of practice that this research seeks to inform. The role of supervision would seem to be central to the exploration of the quality of provision, offering as it does a forum for addressing issues of accountability. Without relevant data about the experience and practice of spiritual direction and the influence and impact of supervision, it is difficult to see how the provision and quality can be monitored and the experience of directees can be improved.

I can see that when I first joined the DProf with this research project in mind, the main paradigm influencing my conceptual framework was that of psychotherapy.   My view was that most, if not all, the conventions espoused in the practice of therapy purporting to be in the interests of good practice, would be transferable to the practice of spiritual direction. Whilst my investigation to date does not necessarily deny this, I have come to realise that there is also little data that actually supports my assumptions relating to psychotherapy.   It is this realisation that lies behind my desire to carry out the research in order to discover what the evidence actually indicates, what helps directors in their practice of good spiritual direction, and therefore what the way forward might be in terms of developmental support and training.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In the current absence of empirical data described above, the focus of the research will be to investigate the role of supervision in the best practice of spiritual direction with particular reference to the following:

- The regional provision and availability of supervision.
- Participants' perceptions of best practice in spiritual direction.
- Regional expectations concerning supervision.
- Participants' experience of models, contexts and content of supervision.
- Participants' experience of ethical issues that arise in supervision.
- Relative value of codes of practice and ethical frameworks.
- Participants' perceptions of the value of supervision.
- Participants' suggestions about what might be more effective than supervision.

As stated above, my interest in this subject is grounded in my own life experience, my experience as a spiritual director and psychotherapist and my role as a member of the SPIDIR Network.

METHODOLOGY

All the above circumstances and experiences have influenced my methodological approach to my research. In order to examine the ethical practice of spiritual direction in general, and the role that supervision can play in this in particular, I have established that it is first necessary to find out what is actually happening in practice. My curiosity about the actual experience of spiritual directors indicates an inductive and phenomenological methodology in order to ascertain the perceptions of practitioners.

This curiosity about the actual experience of spiritual directors also leads me to adopt a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. Swinton and Mowat (2006) define phenomenology as "… a philosophy of experience that attempts to understand the ways in which meaning is constructed in and through human experience. This perspective views a person's lived experience ... of and within the world as the foundation of meaning" (p.106). They go on to state that hermeneutic phenomenology brings together descriptive and interpretive elements of enquiry in order to "... provide a rich description of the experience and a necessary interpretative perspective on lived experience" (p.109).

Creswell states that "Phenomenological research … identifies the 'essence' of human experience …" (2003, p.15) and   Furthermore Van Manen states: "Phenomenology ... seeks to present plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the way the world works ... What is this or that kind of experience like?" (1990, p.9-10).   In the case of this study the essence is to explore the lived experience of practitioners in order to identify what contributes to and what detracts from best practice.   The data thus gathered will provide the second of Tracy's principal sources which he describes as "... common human experience and language" (1975, p.43)

An inductive methodology is indicated in order to ascertain the perceptions and experience of practitioners. The main emphasis of the research will be qualitative as the identified goals fit well with Denzin and Lincoln's statement that: "Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (1998, p.3). However, it will also be necessary to collect some quantitative data in relation to the demographics and levels of training and experience of directors in order to establish differentials across a range of practitioners. This will also lead to valuable information about potential improvements that can be made to future training programmes.

I therefore intend that the initial stage of the research will involve some deductive investigation to gather quantitative data about current practice, background, training and experience of those taking part in the research. This will be followed by more extensive inductive qualitative research for the phenomenological exploration of the experience of individual practitioners which will subsequently be analysed in order to evaluate what may be considered to be good practice.

I propose to adopt a mixed methods methodology in what Creswell identifies as a concurrent triangulation strategy (2003, p.214), which will include both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This strategy will enable me to integrate and interpret the findings in order to "note the convergence of the findings as a way to strengthen the knowledge claims of the study or explain any lack of convergence that may result" (p.217). This data will also enable me to examine whether and how training and experience affect ethical perceptions and practice. I therefore propose to gather certain quantitative data from all participants at the outset of the study with which to correlate the qualitative data collected through a variety of methods.

METHODS

Having reflected on methodology, the research will include three methods, will take place in three stages and will involve four cohorts of participants as shown in the following table:

Stage of Study	Method	Participants	Number of Participants to be Invited	Timescale
1	Questionnaire	Cohorts 1,2,3,4	125+	Oct - Dec 2014
2	Focus group(s)	Cohort 3	12	Oct 2014
3	Purposive sampling/interviews	Cohort 4	12	Jan – Sept 2015

All numbers of participants are approximate.

Figure 1: Summary of Research Methods

Methods to be used

1. Questionnaire.
2. Focus group(s).
3. Purposive sampling of strategic individuals for individual interview.

STAGE 1: Questionnaire to be completed by all participants. The questionnaire will gather quantitative and qualitative data to establish simultaneously the background, experience and perceptions of practising spiritual directors. It will also identify those who are also practising counsellors.

STAGE 2: Focus Group(s) of supervisors will explore the topics that are most frequently raised by directors in supervision. The experience of supervisors will give an added perspective to the data collected.

STAGE 3: Purposive Sampling of experienced spiritual directors holding strategic roles in a variety of contexts will form the third stage of the investigation.

FOUR COHORTS OF PARTICIPANTS

I have identified four cohorts of possible participants

Cohort 1 will consist of approximately 12 individuals who have contacted me in response to an article titled *The Supervision of Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction* that I wrote for *Thresholds,* the journal of the APSCC. In this article I mentioned my doctoral research and invited readers to become involved in my research, several of whom subsequently contacted me to say they would like to participate.   This cohort will be invited to complete a questionnaire.

Cohort 2 will consist of approximately 120 spiritual directors. Approximately 90 of these are SPIDIR Network members who are included in a list of individuals offering spiritual direction, some very experienced and others having only recently completed a training programme. Supervision is a requirement for anyone included in this list. Some of these individuals were added to the list many years ago with little or no actual evidence of competence, but for the past 6 years anyone applying to be included in the list is subject to a process of application, reference and, in most cases, interview.   The remaining number of this cohort are experienced spiritual directors who are not members of the SPIDIR Network.   The participants in this cohort therefore offer a range of different experience and will be invited to complete a postal questionnaire. Some may subsequently be included in those invited for individual interview.

Cohort 3 is a sub-group of Cohort 2 and consists of spiritual directors who also act as supervisors within the SPIDIR Network. This cohort of 12 individuals will be invited to participate in a recorded focus group. It is possible that some may also be in Cohorts 2 and 4.

Cohort 4 will consist of approximately 12 experienced spiritual directors who also hold a strategic role in the national provision of spiritual direction, for example Anglican diocesan spirituality advisers, Roman Catholic priests with responsibility for the spiritual direction of seminarians, trainers involved in spiritual direction programmes, academics and writers on the subject of spiritual direction.   This cohort will first be invited to complete a questionnaire prior to a recorded individual interview.

The number of participants and the range of their experience suggests that the data collected will be statistically significant.

DELIMITATIONS AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Confining the research to the above cohorts automatically delimits the size of the study. Cohorts 1 and 2 constitute the largest number of those participating in the initial questionnaire which will give

a broad over-view of experience and attitudes to what may be considered to be either ethical or unethical practice; cohort 3 is self-limiting and consists of not more than 12 participants; it is envisaged that the number of participants for cohort 4 will be not less than 6 and not more than 12 in order to gather data from as wide a range of experience as possible.

In order to address the central research question, the scope of the study will include:

1. Availability of supervision of spiritual direction.
2. Correlation between training and ethical perceptions and understanding.
3. Correlation between experience and ethical perceptions and understanding.
4. The comparative effectiveness of different models of supervision.
5. Ethical themes that emerge in supervision.
6. Ethical concerns as perceived by those in strategic positions.
7. Attitudes towards guidelines for good practice.
8. Issues to be included in guidelines for good practice.
9. Recommendations about how training programmes may address ethical issues more effectively.

DATA ANALYSIS

As data will be collected from several sources using three methods, they should provide a 'thick description', (Geertz, 1975), a description that "… demonstrates the richness of what is happening and emphasizes the way that it involves people's intentions and strategies. From such a 'thick' description it is possible to go one stage further and offer an explanation for what is happening" (Gibb, 2007, p.4).   In order to compile such a 'thick' description, sociological, psychological, theological and historical factors will be considered. Data from the focus group, from questionnaires and from individual interviews will be collected and, in the case of the focus group and individual interviews, transcripts will be prepared. Adopting a grounded theory approach, (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) this data will be coded using the three codes described by Gibbs (2007, p.44): descriptive codes, categories and analytic codes.

In order to facilitate the task of analysing the data I intend to use NVIVO computer-assisted qualitative data analysis as this will speed up the process of handling large volumes of data and also improve the rigour of the analysis (Silverman 2013, p.269).   There is the added advantage that the data becomes portable with the flexibility that this provides.   Using NVIVO will enable me to start

the process of analysis from the beginning of the data collection stage and I will also be able to incorporate the quantitative demographic data into the analysis. It will then be possible to identify core issues or themes which can be analysed further and conclusions drawn from the analysis.

RESEARCH TIMESCALE

1.   Ethics approval in relation to the questionnaire, the focus group(s) and the semi-structured interviews was submitted during September 2014.

2.   Invitations to participate in the questionnaire and the focus groups will be sent out to all cohorts in October 2014, with a requested deadline for return of the completed questionnaires by the end of December 2014.

3.   One, and possibly two, focus groups will be held in October 2014 and recordings transcribed by January 2015.

4.   Semi-structured interviews will be conducted between January and September 2015 and transcribed by January 2016.

5.   Data analysis will be conducted January – March 2016.

RESOURCES

This research project is self-funded and two main resources must be considered:

- Time
- Cost

Time

During the data collection and analysis period I anticipate allocating approximately 6 hours a week to the tasks which will include preparing and sending out questionnaires, organising the focus group(s) and conducting the individual interviews.   Training in using NVIVO must also be considered. Transcribing recordings, inputting information to NVIVO, and coding and analysing the data are also be included in this anticipated time allocation.

Costs

I have decided to send the questionnaires by post rather than by email.   The main cost of data gathering will therefore be in the preparation of documents and postage.   As I am self-employed, it is difficult to estimate the true cost as some loss of potential earnings time is inevitable.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I am also very aware that, as a member of the Holding Group of the SPIDIR Network, I will inevitably have some role in this research as participant-observer, a fact to which I am paying attention by emphasising the following points in the invitation to participate:

1. That participation in the research is voluntary.
2. That participation arises out of my Doctoral research and is not in any way connected with the administration of the SPIDIR Network.
3. That the focus group(s) will be facilitated by someone other than myself.
4. That the data submitted by individual participants will not be made available to other SPIDIR Network members.
5. That all data will be anonymised.
6. That participants will be able to withdraw from the research at any time.

KEY REFERENCES

This research will interrogate and critique the relevant literatures of spiritual direction, supervision, theology, psychotherapy, pastoral care and practical theology in order to establish what constitutes and influences best practice, what can be considered generic across disciplines and what contribution the experience of other contexts can make.   In reviewing these literatures, questions about the specific cultures in which they are embedded will also be examined in order to reflect on the transferability or otherwise from one context to another. This is particularly relevant in the case of spiritual direction where little has been written in a UK context and where much of what appears to be the prevailing wisdom originates in north America where attitudes and trainings are very different.

I am particularly interested in comparing participants' experience of receiving supervision with the theories and assumptions about supervision that are accepted in other disciplines.

CONCLUSION

I believe that this research will contribute new and valuable knowledge about the actual experience of spiritual direction as described by directees and the role that supervision can play in the development of good practice. This will have implications for the quality of the directees' future experience, as well as for the personal and professional development of directors and supervisors. I

also believe that this knowledge can inform training programmes, which will again be in the interests of all concerned. It would be my hope that greater competence will lead to an appropriate increase in confidence in practitioners, which in turn will decrease any defensive attitudes that may currently arise.

I am also aware that there may be directors who will see some elements of change as an unwelcome challenge to their practice, and it would be my hope that the evidence that this research project will provide will help all those involved in spiritual direction to evaluate what, if any, steps can be taken to improve the experience of directees.   It is also of central importance that any such developments are grounded in and consistent with the theology and history of the Christian church.

However, whilst I obviously hope that the results will be of value to the world of spiritual directors generally, I am also very aware that at the root of my commitment to carrying out this research lies a personal desire to examine my own practice forensically in order to become the best spiritual director and supervisor of which I am capable. This desire goes back to my aspiration to express every aspect my life and work in terms of personal vocation.

(6943 words)

REFERENCE LIST

Armstrong, K., 1997. *Through the Narrow Gate: A Memoir of Convent Life.* New York: HarperCollins.

Bennett, Z., 2013. *Using the Bible in Practical Theology: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives.* Farnham: Ashgate.

Boisen, A., 1936. *Explorations of the Inner World: A Study of Mental Disorder and Religious Experience.* New York: Willet, Clark.

Bond, T., 2010., *Standards and Ethics for Counselling in Action.* 3rd Ed. London: Sage.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy., 2013. *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* Lutterworth: BACP.

Cameron, H., Bhatti, D., & Duce, C., 2010. *Talking about God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology.* London: SCM.

Creswell, J.W., 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, 2nd Edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cupitt, D., 1984. *The Sea of Faith.* London: SCM.

Denzin, N.K., and Lincoln, Y.S., 1998. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Frank, J.D., and Frank, J.B., 1991. *Persuasion and Healing: a Comparative Study of Psychotherapy, 3rd ed.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Gerkin, C.V., 1984. *The Living Human Document: Re-visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode.* Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Gibbs, G., 2007. *Analyzing Qualitative Data.* London: Sage.

Glaser, B. & Strauss, A., 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* Chicago: Aldine.

Harborne, L., 2012. *Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction: Two Languages, One Voice?* London: Karnac Books.

Harborne, L., 2014. Supervision of Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction. *Thresholds: Counselling with Spirit.* Summer 2014, pp.24-27.

Holloway, R., 2012. *Leaving Alexandria*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books.

Jamieson, A., 2002. *A Churchless Faith: Faith Journeys Beyond the Church.* London: SPCK.

Lyall, D., 2001. *The Integrity of Pastoral Care.* London: SPCK.

Schipani, D.S., 2012. Case Study Method. In: B.J. Miller-McLemore, ed. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology.* Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. Ch.8.

Spong, J.S., 2001. *Why Christianity must Change or Die: a Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile.*

Swinton, J., & Mowat, H. 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research.* London: SCM.

Tillich, P., 1952. *Systematic Theology I, 3-11, and II, 5-10.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tracy, D., 1975. *Blessed Rage for Order.* New York: Seabury Press.

Trafford, V. and Leshem, S. 2008. *Stepping Stones to Achieving your Doctorate.* Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Van Manen, M., 1990. *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy.* New York: State University of New York Press.

APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF INVITATION

lynette@innpact.co.uk

February 2015

RESEARCH PROJECT

I am aware that you are an experienced spiritual director and I am therefore hoping that you may be willing to participate in the research that I am currently undertaking in connection with a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology with Anglia Ruskin University and the Cambridge Theological Federation. The title of my research is **WHAT CAN SUPERVISION OFFER TO THE BEST PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION***?* and it would be a great help to me if you would be willing to complete the enclosed questionnaire, which I anticipate will take you approximately 10 minutes.

In this envelope you will find the following documents:

- Participant Information Sheet which describes the research project.
- 2 copies of Participant Consent Form (one to be signed and returned to me, one to be retained by you).
- Form to be completed if you wish to withdraw from the research at any time.
- Questionnaire.
- Stamped addressed return envelope.

If you have any queries about the research, then please do contact me by telephone, email or letter.

Obviously you are under no obligation to take part in this research, but I am hoping that you may be willing to do so.

With thanks and best wishes,

Lynette Harborne

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Anglia Ruskin University

Cambridge Chelmsford Peterborough

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW)

INTRODUCTION

My name is Lynette Harborne and I am taking part in a Doctorate in Practical Theology at Anglia Ruskin University in conjunction with the Cambridge Theological Federation. I am conducting a survey to gather information from a wide range of spiritual directors about their experience of supervision. From this information I hope to discover what contributes to practice and what practitioners find helpful in their work. Please note that I am carrying out this research in an independent capacity and not in any way connected with my role with the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Spiritual Directors' Network (SpiDir), nor will the individual data that you supply be made available to other members of SpiDir.

SECTION A: THE RESEARCH PROJECT

WHAT CONSTITUTES BEST PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AND WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SUPERVISION?

In the current absence of empirical data about the above, this project seeks to establish the following:

- Participants' perceptions of best practice in spiritual direction.
- The regional provision and availability of supervision.
- Regional expectations concerning supervision.
- Participants' experience of models, contexts and content of supervision.
- Participants' experience of ethical issues that arise in supervision.
- Relative value of codes of practice and ethical frameworks.
- Participants' perceptions of the value of supervision.
- Participants' suggestions about what might be more effective than supervision.

This research seeks to make a valuable contribution to providing evidence to support the development of ethical practice to the benefit of both spiritual directors and their directees across denominations in England.

This research is in part fulfilment of my studies towards a Professional Doctorate (DProf) with Anglia Ruskin University in collaboration with the Cambridge Theological Federation.

The results of the study will be included in my Doctoral Thesis.

This research is self-funded.
If you would like further information, please contact me on: lynette@innpact.co.uk

SECTION B: YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT (INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW)

1. You have been invited to take part in this research because of your role in the provision and/or training of spiritual direction in England.

2. You can refuse to take part at this stage and need take no further action if that is your wish.

3. You can subsequently withdraw from the research project for any reason by completing the attached form.

4. If you agree to take part please complete the attached Participant Consent Form and return it to me either by email (lynette@innpact.co.uk) or by post. An individual interview will then be arranged at a time and venue of your choice. This interview will be recorded and transcribed.

5. Your identity will be protected throughout the research process and the data will be given a code known only to myself, Lynette Harborne. Any identifying information about you will be removed from the data to protect your confidentiality. In the event that anything you contribute is directly quoted, you will be sent a copy of the intended quote and invited to confirm, amend or delete before the thesis is submitted.

7. The individual data collected will not be available to anyone else or to any organisation. All data will be stored securely throughout the process.

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
(INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW)**

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Title of the project: What can Supervision Offer to the Best Practice of Spiritual Direction?

Main investigator and contact details: Lynette Harborne
Address:
Telephone:
Email: lynette@innpact.co.uk

Members of the research team: Lynette Harborne

1.   I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

2.   I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research as indicated in the Information Sheet for any reason and without prejudice.

3.   I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.

4.   I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5.   I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the University processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the

processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Name of participant (print)……………………….   Signed……………….……
Date………………

239

Name of witness (print)…………………………..   Signed……………..….

Date………………

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

Title of Project: What can Supervision Offer to The Best Practice of Spiritual Direction?

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____   Date: _____

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE

**WHAT CAN SUPERVISION OFFER TO THE BEST
OF PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?**

INTRODUCTION

My name is Lynette Harborne and I am taking part in a Doctorate in Practical Theology at Anglia Ruskin University in conjunction with the Cambridge Theological Federation. I am conducting a survey to gather information from a wide range of spiritual directors about their experience of supervision. From this information I hope to discover what contributes to best practice and what practitioners find helpful in their work. Please note that I am carrying out this research in an independent capacity and not in any way connected with my role with the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Spiritual Directors' Network (SpiDir), nor will your individual answers be made available to other members of SpiDir.

The questionnaire will ask you a series of questions related to your experience as a spiritual director and will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. If you would prefer to complete the questionnaire on line, please email me to this effect (lynette@innpact.co.uk). Otherwise please return the questionnaire to me in the stamped, addressed envelope provided.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Lynette Harborne

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name

Address

Telephone Number

Email address

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

1.	Please indicate your gender:	F or M

2.	Please indicate your age:

Under 35 [ ]	36 – 45 [ ]	46 – 55 [ ]	56 – 65 [ ]	65+ [ ]

3.	How long have you been practising as a spiritual director?

1-5 years [ ]	6-10 years [ ]	More than 10 years [ ]

4.	Have you received any formal spiritual direction training? If the answer is NO, please go to Question 5; if the answer is YES, please give the following information:

YES   NO
Dates of training:
Number and length of sessions:
Particular focus or orientation, if any (eg Ignatian):
Name of training provider:

5.	Do you also practise as a counsellor or psychotherapist as well as a spiritual director? If the answer is NO, please go to Question 6; if the answer is YES, please answer the following questions:

YES   NO

Level of training (eg counselling or psychotherapy; certificate; diploma; degree etc):

Membership of professional body if any:

National accreditation status:

6.   Are you ordained? If the answer is NO, please go to question 7. If the answer is YES, please answer the following questions:

YES   NO
Date of your Ordination:

Where did your Ordination training take place?

7.   What is the total number of spiritual directees that you currently see?

1-4 ☐   5-10 ☐   11-16 ☐   More than 16 ☐

8.   On average, how frequently do you see each directee?

Every week ☐   Every month ☐   Every 6-8 weeks ☐   Less than every ☐ 6-8

weeks

9.   Do you usually make a charge for spiritual direction, either directly or indirectly as part of your paid work role?

☐   ☐

YES   NO

10.   Please indicate whether as a spiritual director you adhere to any of the following formalised Codes of Practice:

Spiritual Directors International

All Irish Spiritual Guidance Association
United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy
British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
South Central Region Training Programme
St Albans Diocese
Health Professions Council
Other (please name)

If none of the above, please state what, if any, core principles you draw on, eg counselling, denominational etc:

11.   Please describe in 50 words what you consider to be the main features of good practice of spiritual direction:

12.   What ethical issues do you think are particularly important in spiritual direction?   (Your response may or may not overlap with your response to Question 11).

13.   Please state any subjects in which you would like further training:

14. Please give details of any particular role that you hold in connection with spiritual direction.

SUPERVISION

15. Do you have supervision?   If the answer is NO, then please go to Question 22.   If the answer is YES, please answer the remaining questions:

YES   NO

16. Do you pay for your supervision?

YES   NO

17. Please add your Supervisor's qualifications if known:

18. Is your Supervisor?

19.   Please give details of your supervision arrangements:

20.   What are the three issues that are most frequently discussed in supervision?

1.

2.

3.

21.   Are you aware of any needs that your current supervision doesn't meet?

22.   Other than supervision, do you have any support for your spiritual direction practice?

23.   Are there any further comments that you would like to make?

As part of this research, I am intending to ask a small number of participants to take part in oneto-one interviews. If invited, would you be willing to take part in this next stage?

YES ☐   NO ☐

Signature   Date

APPENDIX 4: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

Statement of their role.

1. How would you describe your role in the field of spiritual direction?

2. What features do you think categorise best practice in spiritual direction?

Professional role	Attitudinal	Production
Personal attributes	Practical	Core

3. Do you think that introducing a code of practice/guidelines/ethical framework would be beneficial to the good practice of spiritual direction? How important to you in your role are issues that arise in the context of the covenant?

4. If so, what might this include?

5. In your own context, can you identify a structure of accountability?

6. What contribution, if anything, do you think that supervision makes to the good practice of spiritual direction?

7. What is your view about the desirability of supervision? Do you consider it to be essential for the good practice of spiritual direction? If so, why?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add?

   - to gather more in-depth data in response to the survey questions
   - to test whether the data from the interviews triangulated the data from the survey
   - to identify what further questions might form the basis of future research

APPENDIX 5: Spreadsheets of Quantitative and Contextual Data Analysis.

<u>**MALE PARTICIPANTS**</u>

	Male	Trained	Not trained	Ordained	Counsellor	35-44[1]	45-54[1]	55-64[1]	65+[1]	D'tees 1-4[2]	D'tees 5-9[2]	D'tees 10-15[2]	D'tees 16+[2]	Years 1-4[3]	Years 5-9[3]	Years 10+[3]	Charge[4]
Male	12	7	5	9	1	0	2	4	6	5	3	2	2	2	1	9	2
Trained	7	7	-	7	1	0	1	2	4	3	2	1	1	2	1	4	0
Not trained	5	-	5	5	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	5	2
Ordained	9	3	5	9	1	0	2	4	3	1			1	0	1	8	2
Counsellor	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
35-44[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45-54[1]	2	1	1	2	0	0	2	-	-	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1
55-64[1]	4	2	2	4	1	0		4	-	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	1
65+[1]	6	4	2	3	0	0		-	6	4	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
D'tees 1-4[2]	5	4	2	3	0	0	1	0	4	-	-	-	-	1	0	4	0
D'tees 5-9[2]	3	2	1	3	1	0	0	2	2	-	-	-	-	0	1	2	0
D'tees10-15[2]	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	-	-	-	-	0	0	2	1
D'tees 16+[2]	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	1	0	1	1
Years 1 – 4[3]	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	-	-	-	0
Years 5 – 9[3]	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	-	-	-	0
Years 10+[3]	9	5	5	8	1	0	2	4	3	4	2	2	1	-	-	-	2
Charge[4]	2	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	-

<u>Notes:</u>

1   Age of spiritual director in years.
2   Number of directees being seen by director.
3   Number of years director has been practising as a director.
4   Whether a charge is made (includes those who sometimes make a charge and/or ask for a donation to charity).

FEMALE PARTICIPANTS

	Trained	Ordained	Counsellor	Age 35-44[1]	Age 45-54[1]	Age 55-64[1]	Age 65+[1]	D'tees 1-4[2]	D'tees 5-9[2]	D'tees 10+[2]	D'tees 16+[2]	Years 1-4[3]	Years 5-9[3]	Years 10+[3]	Charge[4]
Female	46	15	12	1	10	13	22	19	22	2	3	11	14	21	21
Trained	46	15	12	1	10	13	22	19	22	2	3	11	14	21	21
Ordained	15	15	3	1	3	3	8	5	8	1	1	3	4	8	3
Counsellor	12	3	12	0	4	3	5	5	5	0	2	1	4	7	8
Age 35-44[1]	1	1	0	1	-	-	-	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Age 45-5[1]	10	3	3	-	10	-	-	3	6	0	1	3	4	3	5
Age 55-64[1]	13	3	4	-	-	13	-	6	5	1	1	5	5	4	8
Age 65+[1]	22	8	5	-	-	-	22	9	11	1	1	3	6	13	8
D'tees 1-4[2]	19	5	5	1	3	6	9	-	-	-	-	8	1	10	10
D'tees 5-9[2]	22	9	5	0	6	5	11	-	-	-	-	3	12	17	3
D'tees10-15[2]	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	0	0	2	1
D'tees 16+[2]	3	1	2	0	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	0	1	2	2
Years 1-4[3]	11	4	0	0	3	5	3	8	3	0	0	-	-	-	3
Years 5-9[3]	14	5	3	0	4	4	6	1	12	0	1	-	-	-	9
Years 10+[3]	21	6	9	1	3	4	13	10	7	2	2	-	-	-	9
Charge[4]	21	3	8	0	5	8	8	10	3	1	2	3	9	9	21

Notes:

1. Age of spiritual director in years.
2. Number of directees being seen by director.
3. Number of years director has been practising as a director.
4. Whether a charge is made (includes those who sometimes make a charge and/or ask for a donation to charity.

APPENDIX 6

Samples from Interview Transcripts

and Worked Examples

Interview Transcript
Sample 1. Page 1

Exploratory Noting and Descriptive Comments	Transcript	Emergent Themes
<u>Research question</u>: gap in knowledge.	L: So when you're thinking about people to go on your list, I wonder what you think are the qualities that best categorise good spiritual direction?	<u>Outcome of own spiritual practice</u>.
Personal attributes of director/ humility & self-aware. Balance their own agenda & maintain the autonomy of directee. Listen to God. 'improve'?? challenge of Recognises challenge of this process, for others & for herself. Privacy Negative impact of being solution focused. Lack of understanding of the process.	F4: I would look for someone who is humble, someone who is self-aware enough to observe their own agenda taking over and be able to stop it before it actually comes out of their mouth, someone who is truly able to let the other person be themselves to hear what God is saying to them, and not have an agenda of teaching or helping them improve which is very difficult, it's difficult for me as well. I think those are the most important things. I was struck that the two people to whom we've had to say no, (on the training course) both of them the reason was that they had a 'let's fix this problem' agenda.	<u>Essence of the nature of director/ directee relationship</u> non-directive, enabling autonomy, open to God.
The most important thing — People who are willing & able to have a regular spiritual practice. Privacy of this respect. Making themselves open & authentic in God's presence.	L: So you are looking for someone who's humble and self-aware and without a personal agenda. Could you say a bit more about what you're looking for in your trainees and your spiritual directors?	<u>Personal spiritual life of director</u>. - emphasis on inner journey.
	F4: I think the most important thing is that they themselves are a person of prayer and are daily opening themselves up to God and going through that experience of finding that there are fewer and fewer places to hide and that you really need to be real in an increasing way, that as the journey goes on the spiral	

Sample 1. Page 2.

Exploratory Noting and Descriptive Comments	Transcript	Emergent Themes
Sine qua non/privacy.	gets tighter, and I think that without that you can forget all the rest.	Director's personal spiritual life
Breadth of knowledge of spirituality not exclusively about Christianity. Diversity.	And then after that I think the skills I would want them to bring apart from the humility and being able to hold back on their own stuff is being aware of the breadth of possible Christian spirituality or even beyond the bounds of Christian if they are willing to see people who are either searching or definitely rooted in another faith. Sufficiently aware of the breadth of what's available that they can sit comfortably with someone who's not in exactly their space I think that's important.	Competence in terms of knowledge
Offering acceptance welcome; able to engage with difference. Unconditional positive regard. Skills?		Nature of director/directee relationship
Discernment: gift from God = charism. Grounded in regular personal spiritual practice (skill or attribute?)	I mean listening techniques, those can be taught fairly quickly. I think again experience has reminded me that discernment's the thing that is harder to teach and is really a gift from God. Actually I think the best way to learn discernment is to learn it on yourself is to do the inner work to go on IGRs, have a good spiritual director yourself, and I think again the problem with both of the people we've essentially failed (although I don't want to use that word) is that I suspect their own spiritual directors aren't very experienced.	Skills (competence)
Learning through personal experience of good spiritual direction – some tradition of good practice. S.d. community. Discipleship.	L: Right.	Personal sp. life: – inner work – IGR/retreats – personal s.d.
Differentiation between what can be taught or acquire?		Accountability es spiritual directors?

Exploratory Noting and Descriptive Comments	Transcript	Emergent Themes
Q. Question 20 Phase 1. Identifies inexperienced supervisees as needing reassurance - is this the same for experienced as well? "Getting it right"; is this spiritual direction in the culture? Developmental need for inexperienced directors: unconscious incompetence → conscious incompetence etc. Supervisees' own feelings taking priority. Where is transference/countertransference in this? Unconscious process. Relates to supervisees' own experience & lack of self-awareness.	L: What are the things that most often crop up in your role as supervisor, what are the issues that most often crop up? What do people bring to you in supervision? F2: If they're inexperienced as a director they're quite often looking for reassurance and they will bring therefore an issue that they've had in one of their direction sessions with a directee. Sometimes people who are inexperienced get really quite bothered about ... always wanting reassurance about whether they're doing the right thing, they usually are of course but they can get worried and people can worry also, yes, are they doing it 'right' when quite often there isn't a 'right' way of doing it anyway, you do it your own way. So there's a certain amount of that with inexperienced people. Latterly I've had one or two situations actually where people have come to talk about difficulties they have with dealing with a particular directee, quite often because of their own feelings around it, either their own feelings of difficulty with that directee in some way, sometimes they don't quite even know what they are, not an uncommon thing I think and sometimes perhaps because they've got a difficult situation and they're finding it quite hard or it relates sometimes to a situation which they've got themselves and sometimes they don't even realize it.	Reassurance as benefit/purpose of supervision? Accountability to supervisor/supervisee - while is primacy? Think with it competent practice. Need for supervisor/supervisee relationship. The use of trust. Parallel director/directee relationship.

Sample 2. Page 2.

Exploratory Noting and Descriptive Comments	Transcript	Emergent Themes
As has acknowledged the value she places on supervision for herself. Does she generalise this?	L: So thinking about supervision, do you think supervision is essential or just desirable; you've already stressed the importance of it to you so do you think it is absolutely essential, it's as strong as that, or just desirable?	Supervision considered essential.
Yes! Research question: focus on in knowledge.	F2: I would basically say it is essential. L: So what do you think supervision actually contributes to good practice in spiritual direction, what is it that is so important and valuable?	Purpose & benefit of supervision.
Benefit of supervision in maintaining standards of practice. Contributes to accountability Previously emphasised importance of "contract"/arrangements. Issues/arrangements. Provides help/support when unsure what to do - developmental - stay with not-knowing Dealing w. own issues. Supervisee trusts supervisor, parallel process Director/Directee Provides safe place.	F2: I think it basically keeps your spiritual director, if you like on the straight and narrow, I think it's a huge help. I think it helps, is helpful in a variety of ways, I think it's helpful as a check on these various things which I've said I think are important like (practical) arrangements, it's very helpful sometimes when a spiritual director is a bit baffled or it's helpful sometimes when, as a director, you find a person difficult in some way, sometimes you don't have a clue why. It's not about 'are you doing it right?' it's more about helping you to be a better spiritual director, but it's also helping you to deal with your own issues, I mean that to me is the, almost perhaps the prime thing. Sometimes as a director you can feel very disturbed by a situation or by an individual and you need to be able to take it somewhere.	- maintain standards (where?) - accountability - supports & checks practice - link to competent practice - developmental - deal w. own issues (seen as PRIME PURPOSE?) - safe place to explore issues.